

Would you like root beer, lemonade or Kool-Aid?
The problems of translating culture-specific concepts from source
culture into target culture?

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Translation Studies (English)
May 2008

Tampereen yliopisto
Käännöstiede (englanti)
Kieli- ja käännöstieteiden laitos

IHATSU; KAISU: *Would you like root beer, lemonade or Kool-Aid?* The problems of translating culture-specific concepts from source culture into target culture

Pro gradu-tutkielma 86 sivua + suomenkielinen lyhennelmä 7,5 sivua
Toukokuu 2008

Tässä tutkielmassa käsitellään kulttuurisidonnaisten sanojen kääntämistä. Aineistona on käytetty Winston Groomin kirjoittamaa romaania *Gump & Co* ja sen suomenkielistä Erkki Jukaraisen vuonna 1996 tekemää käännöstä. Kyseessä on tunnetun elokuvan *Forrest Gump* jatko-osa. Valitsin tämän teoksen lähdemateriaaliksi, koska se on tiukasti sidoksissa lähdekulttuuriin Yhdysvaltoihin ja oletin sen tästä syystä sisältävän runsaasti kulttuurisidonnaisia viittauksia. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää mitä käännösstrategioita kääntäjä on näitä sanoja kääntäessään käyttänyt

Toinen tärkeä teema työssäni on kääntäjän kulttuurikompetenssi. Vankan kielitaidon lisäksi kääntäjän tulisi tuntea lähtö- ja kohdekulttuurien historia, tavat, normit sekä muut sosiokulttuuriset piirteet. Työssä pohditaan mm. sitä, kuinka kääntäjä pystyy kartoittamaan kohdekielisen lukijakunnan taustoja ja heidän odotuksiaan, jotta hän tietäisi mitä etukäteistietoa keskiverolukijalla on ja missä kohdissa hän kaipaa selitystä ja kulttuurista adaptaatiota.

Käännösstrategioiden luokittelu pohjautuu mukaillen Ritva Leppihalmeen malliin. Analyysiosuudessa tarkastellaan kulttuurisidonnaisten elementtien erityispiirteitä ja niiden merkitystä kääntämiselle. Tässä osuudessa esitellään myös kääntämisen perusstrategiat kotouttaminen ja vieraannuttaminen, jonka jälkeen tarkastellaan kääntäjän valitsemia käännösstrategioita (*minimimuutos, selittäminen, kulttuurinen adaptaatio, poisto ja muutos*) lähdemateriaalista löytyneiden esimerkkien valossa.

Tutkimus osoitti, että kääntäjä oli käyttänyt eniten *minimimuutoksen strategiaa* eli kääntäjä oli pyrkinyt löytämään lähtötekstiä lähellä olevia käännösratkaisuja. Lähdeaineiston esimerkkien perusteella voidaan myös todeta, että selittäminen ja kulttuurinen adaptaatio ovat myös usein käytettyjä strategioita. Tämän perusteella voidaan päätellä, että kääntäjä kokee velvollisuudekseen auttaa lukijaa lukemisprosessissa.

Avainsanat: kulttuurisidonnaisuus, kulttuurintuntemus, käännösstrategiat, Forrest Gump, Yhdysvallat

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1. Introduction

Translation between different source and target cultures is a complex and fascinating process, which has been (more or less) successfully practiced for centuries. The aim of this study is to examine the various factors involved in the translation process. The main focus is on the cultural aspect: my interest lies in how the translator has managed to render culture-bound elements across linguistic and cultural borders. Has s/he succeeded in capturing the essence of foreign textual elements? Has s/he decided to acculturate the otherness or deemed it better to leave foreign or exotic features visible in the text? What kind of concepts need to be explained or adapted to the target audience? In which cases has the translator resorted to omission?

As research material I have selected the novel *Gump & Co* written by Winston Groom and its Finnish translation because this story is deeply rooted in American culture and society. I hoped to find a wide range of culture-specific items in the source text, which would shed light on the nature of translation problems and the various strategies the translator has used when recreating the story for the Finnish audience.

First I present an overall view of the translation process. Formerly translating was regarded mainly as a linguistic phenomenon and researcher interest was directed to the translation of cultural monuments like the Bible and classic works of art, whose words were considered almost sacred. Texts used in everyday situations were dismissed as trivial, unworthy of scholarly interest. Nowadays the central role of the translator in cross-cultural communication is widely recognized, but, nonetheless, translation is still sometimes viewed as a secondary activity compared with the composition of the original text.

My goal is to demonstrate that translating is a highly demanding and versatile activity, which cannot be successfully performed solely on the basis of a knowledge of foreign languages. A working knowledge of source and target languages, which may suffice for booking a hotel room or ordering food in restaurants when travelling abroad, is of little help when translating real-life texts. The present study attempts to raise the translator's status and to illustrate the complexity of the process.

The starting point of translation is rooted in the need to render a text across cultural and linguistic barriers. The process ends with a (re)creation of a new text for a new readership in an altered socio-cultural setting. When texts are transferred into new situations changes are likely to occur because of differences in communicative situations. The translator pays attention to the overall situation and is aware of the differences between the production and reception phases.

The role of the recipient is also crucial in the translation process because texts become real texts only after they have been acknowledged by a reader. Reading is a reciprocal activity in which readers and writers participate (Oittinen 2001, 170). The translator is the first reader of a text. Hatim and Mason (1990, 224) state that the purpose of the translator's reading act differs from that of an ordinary reader because s/he reads with the intention of producing the text for another readership. Another feature of translation is that it inevitably involves change and interpretation – a translated text reflects the final decisions of one translator who was commissioned to translate a text.

In Chapter 3 I concentrate on the cultural aspect of translation. In this study 'culture' is understood as a wide concept, a "shared mental model" guiding the behaviour, beliefs, values, and actions typical of members belonging to the same cultural group (Katan 1994, 17). I discuss what it actually means to 'know' a culture. Many Finns consider themselves familiar with American culture and way

of life thanks to frequent exposure to a variety of American media. The USA seems much closer to a Finn than countries like Mexico, Peru or Ecuador, although all these countries lie on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. However, since the world view portrayed by television, Hollywood films and other media rarely reflects the everyday experience, values and beliefs of average Americans (and who are average Americans in a country which has become a melting pot for dozens of nationalities and has a population of over 290 million inhabitants), it might be asked if there is a fictional element in the image Finns have of the country called the United States of America?

In Chapter 3 I provide an overview of *scenes-and-frames semantics* developed by Charles Fillmore and consider its significance for translation theory. This chapter also discusses 'cultural competence', which is often listed among the requirements expected of a professional translator. It should be stressed at the outset that excellent language skills are not the only tools translators need when working as experts of intercultural communication. I consider this topic on the basis of writings by the German translation scholar Heidrun Witte.

I analyse the study material in terms of various translation strategies. My classification of translation strategies with slight modification is based on a model presented by Leppihalme (2001) in her article "Translation strategies for realia". This model proved useful and well-functioning when analyzing the different translation solutions used in the target text. The corpus yielded ample insight into the nature of problems encountered by a translator.

Another important decision a translator has to make is the choice of global translation strategy – whether to acculturate or foreignize the text? Does the target text reader need guidance and explication or will s/he be irritated if the translator smoothes out the textual path leaving no puzzles to be solved?

This study makes no attempt to provide prescriptive translation criticism in terms of how good or bad the translation is. Instead it provides an outline of the translation process using concrete examples taken from a real translation with an attempt to enlighten the complex nature and challenges involved in the translation process. In addition, the study presents some observations on clumsy and unnatural-sounding translation solutions.

2. Translation process

The translation process begins when there is a need to convey a text across linguistic and cultural barriers. During the process a source text travels through time and place and is recreated as a target text, reaching a new audience in another cultural setting. The author's intentions in the source language (SL) constitute the starting-point of the translation process. The author tries to select his/her words in the most efficient way to communicate his/her message to maximum effect. In other words, s/he hopes that the message is received without any protest on the part of the reader.

Translation is a multistage process, which hitherto has only been successfully performed by the human mind. A few decades ago there was much optimism about the potential provided by machine translation. The advent of computers seemed to offer unlimited opportunities to the field of translation as well. (Snell-Hornby 1988, 65-67) Later it has been realized that machines are unable to replace the creative power of the human mind, as the machine can only translate very straightforward texts, like standardized terminology which lack any ambiguity. Texts translated with the aid of a computer usually need pre- and post-editing, because the machine is incapable of performing the thinking process of a human brain. This type of translation is called *machine-aided translation*, where the translation process is controlled by a human translator. Although computers have undeniably benefited the field of translation, speeding

up the translation process and providing the translator with fast and easy access to information retrieval, it seems unlikely that the advances in modern technology will render the human translator obsolete. The translation process comprises several steps. It can briefly be divided into the following three stages: the translator makes an analysis of the text, transfers it into the TL (=target language) (a rough version), and then reconstructs the message in the final form without distorting the contents of the source text. (Nida 1975, 79-80.) This is, however, a simplified picture of the process and obscures the fact that each stage involves much effort and intense thought.

Translation scholars have not yet been able to yield a satisfactory and comprehensive explanation to the “mystery” of the translation process itself. We are still unsure how a translator’s brain actually functions during the translation process, when SL text is transformed into TL text. The readers receive the end product of the process, which displays the outcomes of the writer’s deliberations. The readers of the natural sounding, smooth-going target text have little idea of the struggles and endless decision-making, which the translator has endured in the quest for the most appropriate equivalents in the target language.

Researchers such like Janet Fraser, Wolfgang Lörcher, and Sonja Tirkkonen-Condit to name a few have investigated the mental processes involved in translation with the aid of the introspection method, also known as the verbal account or think-aloud protocol. In this method the translator is asked to verbalize his/her thoughts as completely and thoroughly as possible either simultaneously while translating (*think-aloud*) or a little later (*retrospective*). The result is recorded and later transcribed in a written form. The researcher makes an analysis on the basis of the written protocol. So far the introspection method has proved to be the only effective method that sheds some light on the mental processes involved in translation, but its use is not without limitations. Some subjects reported that the necessity to verbalize their thoughts put an extra

psychological load on their working process; others found it difficult to express their thoughts while translating. The protocol gives access to conscious and active thought-processes; it does not give access to over-learned automatic processes, which professional translators have ceased to be aware of. Thirdly, the retrospection method does not yield any short-term memory information, but rather describes the translator's general approach to similar assignments. In other words, delayed observation tends to give information about what the subjects think they did. (Fraser 1996, 65-68)

The studies that explored translators' mental processes with the help of introspective methods fell into three categories: some concentrated wholly on investigating students' performance, some compared students' translation strategies with those of professional translators, while others focused on surveying professionals' approach to problem solving. It hardly comes as a surprise that the surveys show that students and professionals apply a different set of translation strategies in their problem-solving approach. The studies revealed that beginners or learners experienced greater difficulty with micro-level problems, including "lexical choice, grammatical restructuring, or the unfamiliarity of particular idioms", while professionals devoted more effort to text-level features, "such as the kind of readership envisaged for the translated text and specific stylistic or functional differences between source and target-language genres" (Fraser 1996, 71-72). Researchers also observed that the assignment of a translation brief provided the guideline for determining the style of the translation for advanced students and professional translators, whereas first-year students paid little attention to it. According to one survey, professionals assumed a translation assignment when solving certain translation problems, even when it was not specifically mentioned or defined. (Fraser 1996, 70-74)

Such studies display the importance of a translation brief and the influence of experience. As in every *métier*, one gains more experience, improves one's

skills, and becomes a true professional only through a lot of hard work and practice. I believe that students achieve a better understanding of the translation process and increase their problem-awareness in translation, if they are exposed to the working-methods of professional translators at an early stage. According to Fraser (1996), “experience brings with it a shift from comprehension difficulties and a more literal translation towards an awareness of higher-level criteria of text-production” (74-75). Assigning a translation brief for every translation exercise starting from the very beginning of studies accustoms students to work in a professional manner. Unfortunately, most translation exercises involve creating an imaginary readership, since “real” assignments at this level are scarce and probably difficult to find. I think that with the aid of realistic (or preferably real) translation assignment students would sooner comprehend what professional translation is about, which would further increase their motivation towards studying.

2.1 Socio-cultural setting

Margret Ammann regards translation as a special kind of communication, which is always embedded in a communicative situation. Communication involves interaction, which makes translation a dynamic process. (Ammann 1990, 29-31) It is a cross-cultural event, which reaches the attention of another audience living in a different socio-cultural setting compared with the readership of the source text. During the translation process consideration must be given to the overall situation. (Who is saying/writing what to whom, why, where, and when the event takes place.) Hatim and Mason (1990) have defined translation as “a communicative process which takes place within a social context” (Hatim & Mason 1990, 3). The translator has to analyse the circumstances (time, place, social and historical situation) under which the source text was produced in order to render it as accurately as possible. He/she tries to place himself/herself in the ST reader’s position and attempts to see the world through the eyes of a SL

member, for whom the original text was intended. After careful analysis of the source text, the translator creates a new target-language text, which is used in a different communicative situation under changed cultural and linguistic conditions.

Since recipients of source and target texts belong to different linguistic and cultural communities, the readers of the TT (= target text) are offered new kinds of information. The translator offers as much information as he/she considers necessary and appropriate from the recipient's point of view. Consequently, the translator offers neither less nor more information than the author of the ST (= source text), but he/she offers another kind of information expressed in a different way. (Reiß & Vermeer 1986, 70) Traditionally, the quality of translations has been evaluated by comparing the translation with the original text. Earlier translations were considered good, if they were faithful renderings of the original with as few deviations from the ST as possible. Nowadays greater attention is given to the overall situation in which texts are produced and received, keeping in mind that as the ST traverses across linguistic and socio-cultural borders, the situation where the source text was written may considerably differ from that of the target text. However, comparison between the ST and TT may not always be the most effective way of assessing a translation; instead the focus of concern should be on how well the TT functions and its ability to create new relations in the contemporary target culture.

Lawrence Venuti represents the opposite on the scale of 'fluency'. He forcefully criticizes translations that have been adapted too well to the target cultural world of texts. He points out that TT readers easily forget the presence of a translator if linguistic and cultural differences are completely removed, which irrevocably lead to the drawback situation of translator's invisibility. He laments over the fact that hard-working but invisible translators "receive minimal recognition for their work. (Venuti 1995, 5-8).

Ammann is downright relieved, when the text is no longer examined out of context as an isolated item, but it is reviewed in the light of the situation where it was created (*Text-in-Situation*). The main emphasis no longer lies on the “holy” original text, but rather on the analysis of the situation and circumstances of the target text, which means that the source text is not regarded as the only true version. Who would benefit from a literal translation, which no longer functions in the TL cultural setting? (Ammann 1990, 58)

2.2 Text as an envoy of messages

“Translations (like wives) are seldom strictly faithful if they are in the least attractive.”

Roy Campbell, 1949

A communicative act begins when the sender of the message wants to have his/her ideas and thoughts read or heard. S/he formulates his/her text or speech to the best of his/her abilities, hoping that it will be favourably received by readers/ listeners. S/he does not choose his/her words randomly, but phrases his/her thoughts with care. According to Hatim and Mason (1990), “texts can be seen as the result of motivated choice”, and the source text can be defined as the representation of the author’s intended meaning (Hatim & Mason 1990, 4). Since messages are sent and received by human beings, who act and think individually, the sender can never be quite sure whether his/her message is interpreted in an agreement with his/her intentions. (Hönig & Kußmaul 1982, 23) Misunderstandings occur between people who share the same native language and cultural setting, so it is hardly surprising that the potential for misunderstanding increases when the message traverses across linguistic and cultural barriers.

Texts can be regarded as the verbalized part of a socio-culture; it is not possible to separate the word from its context, if the purpose of the word usage is unknown. (Hönig & Kußmaul 1982, 58) In short, words achieve their “real” meaning in a communicative situation. The same applies to translation. Translation of individual words removed from their context is frustrating guesswork, which leaves the translator unsure if he/she has reached the optimal solution unless further background information is provided. Words are analyzed within their overall context and the translator has to know to whom and for which purpose the text is to be translated before he/she can start translating.

Example 1. Sometimes the commissioner may be reluctant to give additional background information fearing that he will be charged more for the extra characters on paper that provide enlightening information. In the autumn of 2001 a translator was given an advertisement which read in Finnish *Mukavasti matkan varrelle* with no clue as to the nature of the company in question. After making enquiries the translator found out that this slogan was an advertisement of a Finnish pharmacy!

According to Hans Vermeer’s *skopos* theory (*skopos* = objective, purpose, aim), the objective of the translation determines and regulates the translator’s decisions (Reiß & Vermeer 1986, 55). Vermeer regards translation as a complex form of action, which involves much more than the replacement of the ST words with TL words. Translating takes place on the basis of source language material, which is then transformed into a TT text, which exists in a new situation and under different functional, cultural, and linguistic conditions, preserving the formal aspects of the ST as closely as possible. *Skopos* acts as a guideline for the translator, who has to consider the potential readership throughout the entire translation process. Translation can thus be characterized as a target-oriented activity.

Vermeer stresses the future function of the TT as a decisive factor in translation. He observes that it is quite possible that the objective of the TT differs from that of the original text. If the purposes of the ST and TT remain the same, Vermeer speaks of *Funktionskonstanz* (function is unchanged), whereas the case where the function of the TT is changed, which involves adaptation of the ST to meet the special needs of the TT initiator, is referred to as *Funktionsveränderung* (function is changed). (Vermeer 1989, 175-182)

Snell-Hornby (1990) provides a clear example that differentiates between the two terms (in Bassnett & Lefevere 1990, 82). In the case of translating an advertising text, the function of the TT remains the same (*Funktionskonstanz*), if the purpose of the TT text is also to sell a certain product to the target culture audience. The translator has total freedom with the text as long as the TT is persuasive and appealing to potential customers in the target culture. Often the translator has to make radical changes to the text in order to achieve a natural sounding TL advertising text. The readers do not need to know that the advertisement is a translation. Sometimes the initiator wants a translation of an advertisement in order to be informed of the marketing strategies used in a different cultural area. In this case the function of the text is different (*Funktionsveränderung*), as it is strictly used for information purposes. In such a case the translator has to make the translation as literal as possible without any adaptations into the target culture. The commissioner of the translation should thus always inform the translator of the text's prescribed function; if s/he fails to do so, the professional translator inquires as to the purpose of the translation before accepting the translation assignment.

Example 2. An advertisement the purpose of which was to persuade travelers to stay at Hotel Satumaa in Somero was submitted for translation. The function of 'persuasion' was identical for both the source and target text. The source text consisted of a

quotation of the beginning of a well-known Finnish song which carries the same name as the hotel. The ST read: "Aavan meren tuolla puolen jossakin on maa, missä onnen kaukorantaan laine liplattaa." The interpretation of this text requires an insight into the history of Finnish popular culture and association with a song that was composed in 1962 and was very popular in the 1960s. To my knowledge it has not been translated into any foreign languages. Most likely even native Finns belonging to the younger generation miss the point of this advertisement. Thus a literal translation was out of question. After consulting the commissioner, who had totally ignored the needs of TT readers even though she had asked the text to be translated into English, the translator decided to create a totally new target text with nothing left of the original ST. The translation reads: "Hotel Satumaa is waiting for visitors from far and near. Whether you travel for business or pleasure come and experience the comfort and pleasant atmosphere of the hotel Satumaa, which is conveniently located in the heart of the town. Welcome!" Comparison of the texts reveals that this is a borderline case and according to the conventional conception of translation, hardly a translation at all, but it demonstrates the kind of radical changes translators are sometimes required to make in order to achieve a desirable impact on the TT audience.

André Lefevere reminds us that it is a fact of life that "loss occurs in all forms of communication, whether it involves translation or not." (in Bassnett & Lefevere 1990, 35) On the other hand, Bassnett-McGuire (1988) considers it a waste of time to contemplate how much a translation loses in terms of information and style. We should instead focus on what the new TL text gains with the translation, since translating may actually enrich and embellish the text to be translated. It is not uncommon that a translation may turn out to be clearer and easier to read than the source text. (Bassnett-McGuire 1988, 30) I believe that most professional translators agree with the last comment, since many texts to be translated seem to have been written under the pressure of time (an eternal problem also for translators) and since most writers cannot boast of possessing the writing skills of Hemingway or Tolstoi, the original text may contain slips and inconsistencies. These "mistakes" may be so minor in nature that the layman reader is usually unaware of, or s/he is at most mildly distracted but with no

interruption to the reading process. The translator is in a different position, because he/she cannot ignore and skip the sentences that seems to make no sense. Furthermore, he/she may not repeat the same mistakes, since it would be absurd to deliberately write something that sounds illogical and ridiculous. In this case the translator's duty is to help the ST writer by amending and revising the text so that the message is communicated more easily without straining the reader's attention span too much. In other words, the translator gives the text the final touch before sending it off to the world.

2.3 The role of the recipient

“Kirjan hyvä on tulla luetuksi. Kirja on tehty merkeistä, jotka kertovat toisista merkeistä, jotka puolestaan kertovat asioista. Ilman lukevia silmiä ei kirjan merkeistä synny käsitteitä ja kirja pysyy siis mykkänä.”
(Umberto Eco: *Ruusun nimi*)

Texts are produced to achieve a variety of effects such as to inform, guide, amuse, or warn recipients, or to influence their opinions or future actions, to name a few examples. Texts do not exist in a vacuum on their own and therefore the role of the recipient is essential in the communication process. Reiß & Vermeer (1986) suggest that the process of the text production is complete only after the text has been acknowledged by the recipient (Reiß & Vermeer 1986, 52). Ammann has adopted a similar view on communication, as in her opinion texts do not exist without text producers or receptors (Ammann 1990, 76). “Der Text wird zum Text, wenn der Rezipient ihn, aus einem bestimmten Grund, zu einer bestimmten Zeit, wahrnimmt” (“The text becomes a text when the recipient becomes aware of it for a particular reason at certain point of time”, (Ammann 1990, 56 my translation). This may sound like a truism but I think it is important to

emphasize the recipient's role in the translation process, since the main focus was formerly on the source text and every effort was taken to make the target text compatible with the source text. Vermeer has aptly defined translations as "special cases of text-bound pragmatic acts" (Hönig 1998, 9).

Reading is a subjective experience, and texts are bound to evoke different reactions in different readers. Every act of reading is a unique event, which cannot be repeated as such. (Hatim & Mason 1990, 4) Reading situations become new and different whenever changes occur in internal or external conditions. Time, place, and overall circumstances with concomitant historical and sociological events have an effect on the interpretation process. Human beings grow and change throughout their lives. A mature person with life experience thinks differently to a teenager. A well-educated university professor may have a different view of the world compared with a blue-collar worker. Even the thinking process of the same individual is likely to change as years go by. Books read many years ago are usually interpreted in a different light, if reread at a later stage of life. It is important that the translator has some kind of a mental picture of the prospective readers of the translation before the beginning of the translation process in order to be able adjust the language according to the target audience. For example, a medical text which was published in a medical journal and is primarily intended for medical doctors needs to be revised and popularized if it is to be translated for a family magazine, whose readers are mostly composed of educated laymen who are unfamiliar with medical jargon.

The source text is the product of a source culture with the intention of evoking a certain reaction among the source-language audience. The translation is intended for target-language readers, who interpret the text against the background of their own socio-cultural situation, which is bound to influence the overall interpretation process. Immediate feedback is hardly ever possible between the ST sender and the TT recipient because they are separated in time

and space (Nord 1991, 6). It is thus almost impossible for the sender of the ST to ensure that his/her message is transmitted to all potential target audiences across cultural barriers without distortions (assuming that the ST writer is even aware that his/her text is being translated). It is therefore the duty of the translator to help him/her accomplish the task.

According to Nord (1991), “the reception of a text depends on the individual expectations of the recipient, which are determined by the situation in which he receives the text as well as by his social background, his world knowledge, and/or his communicative needs ” (Nord 1991 16). However, it should be noted that recipients are not obliged to accept the information content offered by the sender. Treating the text with indifference and not commenting on it is one possible reaction, which is a form of response (although non-verbal in form), since it is indicative of the reader’s attitude toward the text (Ammann 1990, 31).

The translator is hired to aid the initiator to cross a linguistic barrier. Since initiators are usually not experts on intercultural communication, they may accidentally disregard the TT recipient’s needs. With his/her command of both source and target cultures, the translator makes a comprehensible target text out of a source culture oriented text, omitting, editing, or explaining the culture-specific parts of the source text, if need be.

Normally the recipient is not in the position to verify that the translated version is a “true” rendering of a ST or that it is a faithful representation of the spirit of the original. With the exception of legal documents, which require an affirmation on the part of the translator that proves the translation to be a faithful version of the ST, source texts are usually not attached to the target text. Because of the language barrier, the readership has to trust that the translation at hand is an accurate version of of the original (Bassnett & L  fevere 1990, 15). The translator

may not falsify or distort the sender's intentions since s/he is the initiator's advocate ensuring that the message gets across.

Nord has introduced the concept of *loyalty* into translation science. According to this principle, the translator has to remain loyal towards the ST sender and the TT recipient. In her theory Nord distinguishes between the concepts of "loyalty" and "fidelity" to emphasize the fact that translation is an interpersonal human activity. She classifies *fidelity* as "a technical relationship between two texts", whereas *loyalty* is defined as "a moral principle between human beings, who are partners in a communication process". In Nord's opinion the translator is morally committed both to the source text and to the target text situations. The translator has to respect the sender's wishes and intentions (or the initiator's, if their personalities do not coincide), but s/he also needs to take the TT recipient's differing cultural and socio-historical background into account. In other words, there exists a close relationship between the intention of the source text and the function of the target text. (Nord 1991, 29). Furthermore, "the skopos of translation must also be compatible with the intention of the source text author(s)" (Hönig 1998, 12). When these demands are met, the translation can be deemed a good, functionally appropriate rendering of the source text.

2.3.1 Translator as the reader of the text

Translation is a process in several stages, and the translator is closely involved with each phase; first s/he is a reader of the source text and next s/he becomes the sender, replacing the original writer (Bassnett-McGuire 19881, 38). Ammann gives a simplified description of the process stating that "after having received a source cultural text, the translator produces a new target cultural text" (Ammann 1990, 78, my translation). Translation differs from an ordinary text production act in that the translator's product is based on a previously existing text. Her/his choice of words is thus not totally free since usually the ST and TT should be

recognizable as having been inspired by the same source. The translation's theme, point of view or mood should not deviate too much from that of the ST, although the means to achieve the intended effect (sentence structure, word order, grammar, etc.) may well be different.

In the first stage when the translator assumes the position of a ST recipient, s/he reads the text carefully, trying to analyze the ST situation that gave rise to the creation of the source text. Hatim and Mason (1990) observe that the motive behind the translator's act of reading deviates from that of an ordinary ST or TT reader, because the translator "reads in order to produce and decodes in order to re-encode" (Hatim & Mason 1990, 224). It seems inevitable that the knowledge of the text requiring translation affects the translator's reading experience. S/he reads the text with a picture of a future TT recipient in her/his mind. During the reading process it is difficult to ignore the fact that the translator was given the text with the objective of creating a new text. Quite often s/he also has to work under a deadline, which places extra demands on her/his workload.

Consequently, the translator automatically pays attention to those parts of the text that might prove problematic for translation later on, or s/he writes down alternative translation solutions, while reading the source text for the first time (Reiß & Vermeer 1986, 42).

It was stated earlier that every act of reading is a subjective, unrepeatable experience that involves interpreting. Texts do not have any inherent meaning attached to them, but meaning is a quality adhered to the text during the interpretation process implemented by the reader (Hönig 1998, 20). Interpretation can also be said to be the prerequisite for translation, since every time we read a text we perform an act of interpretation. The same applies to the translator's reading process, although s/he is not an ordinary "layman" reader. Her/his reading experience is a goal-oriented activity that aims at the production of another text in another language.

A well-functioning translation cannot be produced unless the translator has internalized the message of the source text against her/his own cultural and personal background. A word-level translation (replacing ST words with TT words without a thorough and profound understanding of the text) is unlikely to yield any successful outcome. Hatim & Mason (1990) state that whenever we read a text we cannot resist feeding our own attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge into that process. It follows that the translation, to some extent, reflects the translator's personal and cultural views, no matter how hard s/he tries to remain objective. (Hatim & Mason 1990, 10) This explains why identical translations of the same source text do not exist. Each of us speaks and writes the language in a personal manner, lending it an individual stamp or touch. In linguistics this individual variant of language use is referred to as *idiolect*. (cf. Hatim & Mason 1990, 43). Many would claim this inherent characteristic of language to allow variation in expression is definitely a source of richness for language users. It makes the effort of finding the "perfect translation" futile and unworthwhile, since various translations, each of them displaying the translator's outlook on life, may all contain excellent translation solutions despite superficial structural differences.

So far we have agreed that the translator's interpretation of the text is but one version among several possible meaning potentials. However, Hatim and Mason (1990) observe that the translator's version receives more emphasis because it is the one that is presented to the TL audience. They claim that in literary translation the process of interpretation is at its highest level since such translation demands a lot of creativity. The majority of technical, scientific, and administrative texts provide little scope for interpretation because these text types reflect objective reality tending to exclude any subjective input. (Hatim & Mason 1990, 10-11.) For example, the initiator of a legally binding document is **not** interested in reading the translator's version of truth; instead s/he needs as faithful and objective a translation as possible for his/her purposes. It may be

claimed that creativity and astute mind are the prerequisite for all acts of translation. Naturally, the textual environment and readers' expectations differ from one text type to another (the goal of some texts is to elicit aesthetic experiences, while the purpose of others is to inform or give advice), but translating always involves interpretation as well as analysis- and decision-making abilities – skills unique to human beings only.

The translator's role is active during the whole translation process. S/he cannot remain a passive bystander. Her/his task is to make the TL text "alive", which is impossible, unless the translator is totally committed to her/his work. Hönig and Kußmaul have described the translator's role in the process by stating that "er handelt und verwandelt" (Hönig & Kußmaul 1982, 40). An ideal translator is said to be bilingual and bicultural. In other words, s/he is supposed to have an excellent command of both the source and the target languages and cultures. Since few of us were fortunate enough to have been brought up in a bilingual environment, the majority of translators have had to learn their working language(s) as a foreign language. Irrespective of how perfectly the translator commands the foreign language, sometimes s/he will inevitably encounter unfamiliar words, expressions, allusions, proverbs, or quotations.

In order to adopt (at least) two languages and fully comprehend both ST and TT culture-specific phenomena the translator needs to reside in two countries in order to keep abreast of current events and changes in both cultural areas. For example, Americans sometimes have difficulties understanding their English speaking British or Australian cousins, and vice versa, confirming that a lack of understanding is not strictly language-bound alone. There is variation in the use of vocabulary and expressions even within a single language group.

Example. The nouns 'chip', 'vest' or 'subway' mean different things for Americans and the British. Similar inconsistencies can be found

in smaller language areas: the colloquial Finnish verb “kehtaa” is interpreted differently in Eastern and Western Finland. A person living in Eastern Finland means “I don’t feel like doing it”, when they say “En kehtaa tehdä sitä”. In Western Finland, however, the same expression implies that the person is too shy or embarrassed to do something by people in Western Finland. And both groups are equally amused when they hear the Ostrobothnians call cows “itikka” (literally meaning ‘mosquitoes’).

Normally the understanding process proceeds automatically in the course of reading without any extra effort. The reader activates the sense of a word that is the most appropriate in the semantic field in question; in other words s/he selects the variant that fits in with the context and ignores the other alternatives. (Hönig & Kußmaul 1982, 94). For example, homonyms present few problems for native speakers, because they have learnt the contexts in which words are used in during the language acquisition process. For instance, the Finnish homonym *lehti* has two meanings: 1) “newspaper, journal” and 2) “leaf”, but rarely do misconceptions occur because of the duality. The semantic context provides the reader with enough clues to separate the two meanings. The translator, on the other hand, must be alert throughout reading process, especially when s/he is exposed to unfamiliar words. The translator’s understanding process is less automatic; s/he interprets all the time and actively seeks the optimal translation solutions. The above example of homonyms presents a problem only if s/he is unfamiliar familiar with all the possible meanings of the term.

The risk of misunderstanding is most acute when words carry new information; i.e. they are used prospectively to introduce new elements in the text instead of retrospectively to refer to preceding sections (Hönig & Kußmaul 1982, 95). Here the translator has no previous context to confirm or refute her/his assumptions,

but instead must trust her/his language skills, common sense, and knowledge of the subject and world in order to arrive at the right conclusion.

It is recommended that the translator should translate into her/his native language, with whose nuances and different shades of meanings s/he is more likely to command. In small language areas such as Finnish, it is impossible to follow this recommendation in practice, so the majority of translators also translate into the language which they have learnt as a foreign language. Therefore the target text should be proofread by a competent native speaker, whenever possible, to eliminate potential errors, which may distract the reader's attention from the message of the text. As in other fields, teamwork is an asset in translation.

2.3.2 Recipient as a member of the target culture

As previously mentioned, the translator's task is to create a well-functioning text for the target audience. The translator can thus be characterized as a bridge-building mediator between the ST writer and the TT reader. S/he should provide TT readers with a fluent, comprehensible text without distorting the ST writer's intentions. And s/he should also remain as objective as possible, suspending personal judgment and suppressing. In practice, however, total dispassionate neutrality is impossible to attain, since translators are human beings acting and working with their whole personality.

Identifying the likely "composition" of a TT readership is no simple task; especially, if the text to be translated is intended for the general public. The more general a text, the more heterogeneous the readership is likely to be. Readers represent different geographical and social groups, and each generation has a temporal dialect of its own (Hatim & Mason 1990, 40-42). All these variables are

reflected in the language use, both in the process of text production and reception. (It is well-known that the generations often fail to completely understand each other.) Readers with a broad all-round education and experience of foreign cultures can tolerate the existence of foreign elements in the text and require little additional explanation. In contrast readers with limited contact to foreigners and foreign cultures may be unable to comprehend a text which contains a lot of foreign cultural elements. Such readers may become frustrated by repeated occurrence of unfamiliar words and concepts and need the translator's help to guide them through the text. These two extreme demands lie so far from each other that the translator would, in fact, need to create two separate texts to satisfy the needs of both readerships. Since this is normally not possible, the translator should attempt to envisage the average reader (not always an easy task because it is hard to predict what people know and do not know) and measure her/his words accordingly. In some respects it is easier to translate for experts within a specific field as they form a more homogeneous group and are likely to be familiar with the relevant specialized terminology.

Hatim and Mason (1990) distinguish between author-centered, text-centered, and reader-centered translation. The skopos of the text determines which orientation the translator should follow. In a reader-centered translation process the translator carefully considers whom the text is intended for and chooses her/his words accordingly. According to Hatim and Mason, "the distinction between author-centered and text-centered (translation) has to do with the status of the text". (Hatim & Mason 1990, 16). Translators of expressive texts need to remain loyal to the spirit and style of the source text because TT readers have embarked on a literal journey to enjoy the writings of a particular author, not those of a translator, so the target audience wants to be under the illusion of reading the writer's authentic words. Examples of a text-oriented translation are documents and contracts, where the writer's personality has little importance. The style of documents is formal and complex, and the majority of readers find them difficult

to understand; sometimes legal texts brink on incomprehensibility except to the readers in the field. The translator's priority in this case is not to make the document more accessible to the reader, but to retain the exact meaning of the original text since such texts often have legally binding consequences.

It is important that the translator is familiar with the writing conventions of the target culture in order to be able to produce a TL text which conforms to readers' expectations. For example, business letters generally adhere to certain conventional forms and expressions, and if the conventions are neglected or violated, the reader might interpret it as arrogance or lack of education and thus her/his attention is distracted from the message of the letter. Hatim and Mason (1997) have introduced a term *audience design*, which describes where the focus of translation activity is found in their theory. Audience design is defined as "the adaptation of output by text producers to the perceived receiver group". (Hatim & Mason 1997, 6, 212.) I find this concept useful to translation theory as it emphasizes the central role played by the recipient in the translation process while also retaining the aspect of cultural differences.

When the translator knows the purpose for which the text is to be used for, s/he can decide how the source cultural information is expressed in the target culture (Ammann 1990, 59). For example, recipes are formulated according to certain writing conventions, which vary among different languages. The reader is accustomed to finding information in cooking instructions in a certain place and written in a particular style, and s/he may become confused if the order or the style is changed. Translating of recipes may, indeed, prove a problematic task if some of the ingredients listed in the SL recipe are not unavailable in the stores in the TL area. The translator can proceed according to two different strategies: 1) s/he can translate the name of the ingredient into the target language (*text-centered translation*) with the result that the TL readers are unable to use the recipe as such or 2) s/he can use her/his creativeness and replace the missing

ingredient by another product that can be easily purchased in any store (*reader-centered translation*) in the target culture.

Two examples of recipes found in an American cookbook that might pose insurmountable translations problems, if they were to be translated for the Finnish audience in a text-centered manner:

Candied or crystallized roots and stalks

(about 1 pound)

Wash: **2 cups of angelica roots and young stalks or cleaned scraped acorus calamus roots**

Place them in a crock. Pour over to cover:

1/3 cup salt

2 cups boiling water

Cover crock and let the angelica soak for 24 hours. Drain, peel and wash in cold water. Cook to 238°:

2 cups sugar

2 cups water

Add the cleaned angelica roots and stems. Cook for 20 minutes. Drain the angelica, but reserve sirup. Put the angelica on a wire rack in a cool, dark place for 4 days. Then bring the sirup and roots to 238° and cook 20 minutes or until sirup candies the roots. Drain on a rack until thoroughly dry. Store tightly covered.

(Joy of Cooking, vol. 2, 1974, 526)

Pastillage or gum paste

Dissolve in the top of a double boiler:

1 tablespoon gelatin

½ cup water

1 teaspoon cream of tartar

1 tablespoon powdered gum tragacanth

To keep paste white, add:

1 or 2 drops blue coloring

If you want different colors, work them later into separate portions of the paste as you knead it

(Joy of Cooking, vol. 2, 1974, 519)

(tragacanth = a gum from various Old World plants related to the American locoweeds that swells in water and is used in the arts and pharmacy)
(Webster's New Encyclopedic Dictionary)

TL readers bring in to the reading situation their own beliefs, values, and attitudes, which are based on their earlier experience of the world and texts in general (Hatim & Mason 1990, 226). The interpretation of the text is directed by the pre-text knowledge, which readers have acquired as members of a particular cultural community and as a result of their personal upbringing and general education: the more familiar the theme and style of the text, the easier it is to comprehend the message. The same statement applies to translation: the more the members of the source and target cultures have in common (i.e. they share the same kinds of values, norms, and perception of the world), the easier the translation assignment is likely to be. If the signs in the text trigger similar associations and connotations among both ST and TL readers, there is no need for explanations or additional remarks.

3. The cultural aspect in translation

“We are all born equal but learn to be different”

A Confucian saying

The translation process does not take place on the linguistic level only since texts are produced and embedded in socio-cultural and historical contexts, which is reflected to a greater or lesser extent in the surface level of the text. Translation thus involves intercultural transfer between target and source texts/audiences. In the early 1990s translation studies took a “cultural turn” when translation scholars such as Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere in the frontline began to place scholarly interest on cultural concepts shifting the attention away from the evaluative concept of ‘equivalence’ (Bassnett & Lefevere 1998, 3, 123). The focus thus moved from interlingual elements to extralingual phenomena, such as the links between language and society. As all professional translators know, extratextual constraints often pose greater problems to solve than finding appropriate expressions in the target language on the lexical or grammatical level.

In this work the term *culture* refers to “a shared system for interpreting reality and organizing experience”. It is the “shared mental model” which guides the behaviour, beliefs, values, and strategies of the members of the same cultural group (Katan 1994, 17). Culture gives structure to our reality and helps us make sense of our surroundings, and “reduces the chances of surprise by shielding people from the unknown” (Porter & Samovar 1998, 12). It is important to note that *culture* in itself is an invisible phenomenon; it is an internal reservoir within the human mind that contains collective memories, historical events, social institutions, artistic experiences, values, norms, rules and regulations the members of a nation have acquired during their lives and which are (more or less) congruent with other members of the society. Katan (1994, 241) calls *culture* “the framework of a context within which communication takes place.” The

definition of culture presented by Porter and Samovar highlights its complex and diverse nature, encompassing practically all spheres of human life:

"Culture is the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving."

(Porter & Samovar 1998, 12-13)

Douglas Kellner, who has investigated the central role of the media in our (post)modern world in his work *Media Culture*, regards *culture* and *communication* as equal, interconnecting partners in the process of the production, distribution and dissemination of messages/information between human beings:

"(...) the distinction between "culture" and "communication" is arbitrary and rigid, and should be deconstructed. Whether one takes "culture" as the artefacts of high culture, the ways in which people live their lives, the context of human behaviour, or whatever, it is intimately bound up with communication. All culture (...) is both a mediator of and mediated by communication, and is thus communicational by nature. Yet "communication", in turn, is mediated by culture, it is a mode through which culture is disseminated and rendered actual and effective. There is no communication without culture and no culture without communication."

(Kellner, 1995, 35)

Edward T. Hall likens culture to a "highly selective screen between man and the outside world". Thanks to this screening function, our nervous system is shielded against information overload in our daily lives. Hall states further that our decisions with regard to what we pay attention to and what we choose to ignore find their basis in and are regulated by our cultural approach (Hall 1990, 45). Things considered important in some cultures may have little significance in others. For example, in the USA individualism and the freedom of speech are

highly valued concepts, whereas in most Asian countries individuals are expected to sacrifice their personal needs and desires for the sake of the group or team which they are members of.

A recurrent theme in discussions on translation is the somewhat controversial concept of 'equivalence'. The concept has sometimes been criticized as misleading since it promotes the false idea that all phenomena and concepts have their counterparts in other cultural settings. Bassnett takes an example out of everyday life when describing different associations connected to the words 'butter-burro' in the British vs. Italian setting. Despite the superficial similarity of the two words, there are cultural differences in the usage of the food substance in question. According to Bassnett *burro* is "normally light coloured and salted" and "used primarily for cooking", whereas *butter* in Britain is "most often bright yellow" and "used for spreading on bread and less frequently in cooking". In addition to differences in daily use and appearance of the substance involved, *butter* carries a higher status evoking "associations of wholesomeness" and "purity" among British consumers. (Bassnett-McGuire 1988, 18-19). If a simple noun such as 'butter' can evoke such different associations among source / target text readers, it is clear that the amount and degree of discrepancy between seemingly equivalent words is bound to increase when dealing with more abstract concepts.

There are likewise marked differences between Finnish and American cultural contexts. An analogous example from everyday life is the concept of "the car" in the two cultures: many Finns consider the possession of (at least) two (relatively new) cars a sign of luxury, because this is less common in Finland. Those who have visited the United States and been to an American city providing fairly poor public transportation services understand that owning several cars, which is quite commonplace in American families, is not necessarily extravagance, but rather a necessity enabling people to move around more freely according to their personal schedules. Typically American families do not live in city centres within

walking distance of services but in suburbs often several miles from the nearest shopping mall and other services. In addition, automobiles and gasoline are cheaper in America, which means that purchasing and driving a car does not place the same kind of financial burden on the American family as on Finnish households.

When discussing phenomena and concepts related to the North American context, misconceptions may sometimes arise among the Finnish speaking audience due to their often misplaced stereotyping of the American way of life. Since the advent of television practically every Finn has been exposed to American lifestyle through imported TV shows. As a result of such exposure most Finns now believe they have a good understanding of American life and culture. However, experts in the field of intercultural communication recognise that enculturation into another linguistic and socio-historical system is a lengthy process, which does not take place merely with the aid of images mediated to us through Hollywood.

Charles Fillmore has developed the so-called *scenes-and-frames semantics*, which describes the relationship of novel and past experiences in written and oral communicative situations. The term *frame* refers to the linguistic code of the message, whereas the *scene* is understood as a scenario or an image, which is expressed in linguistic form. According to this theory, scenes and frames activate each other: certain linguistic forms evoke certain associations, which vary among different readers, especially if the readers do not belong to the same culture. As a result the same text can be interpreted in various ways, since the scenes activated on the basis of the frame of the text are not identical. Scenes and frames are thus closely connected to readers' subjective experiences and responses. (Snell-Hornby 1988, 79-81.) In other words, *scenes* (= word meanings) are stored in the recipient's memory, and they are activated by a *frame* (= a given linguistic form) during the understanding process. (cf. Vermeer,

1990, 51-54,60.) Frames are thus comprised of linguistic elements void of inner meaning until the moment they are filled by the reader/listener with a mental image. As *scenes* and *frames* are no static concepts, it is impossible for recipients and senders of a message to create identical scenes in their minds (Witte 2000, 112). Vermeer (1990, 51-52) points out that scenes are learned models of the world and schematic reflections of the reality containing more or less details depicting the actual circumstances. We need to keep in mind that reality is not a stable state of affairs, but constantly changes from society to society and time period to time period, and an objective depiction of reality is very hard to achieve.

Kußmaul (1995, 87) has formulated the above idea from the perspective of text linguistics. He considers written text in the following terms: (emphasis added): “Words as lexical units have only a **potential meaning**, and it is **through the context** that this potential is realized.” Translation is hardly a matter of automatic transcoding of scenes into frames, since the content of the scene is highly influenced by the individual’s socio-cultural background and earlier experiences. “Christmas”, for example, is a term where the same frame can evoke different scenes among different readers. Finns associate Christmas with cold, darkness and snow, whereas for Australians it is the warmest time of the year. But the scene varies even among Finns: for some it means spending time with the family in a relaxed atmosphere, for others it is associated with anxiety and pressure because of the commercial nature of modern Christmases. A successful translation activates similar kinds of scenes among the TL readers as the original did among SL readers despite the different textual elements found in the frame of the text.

Likewise the concept “city centre” (or “downtown” as used by Americans when referring to urban centres) prompts different images for Finns and Americans. Americans tend to associate “downtown” with high-rise office buildings, enterprises, restaurants,

and stores. It is a place to go to work, eat out or run errands, but hardly an ideal place to live and raise a family. In comparison, the centre of medium-sized Finnish cities/towns is usually quite an agreeable and popular place to live, and life continues in the centre after the business hours when offices are closed. Owing to the smaller scale of Finnish towns, distances are shorter and citizens living in the centre often have good access to recreational and outdoor activities. It is unlikely that the average American would associate “*closeness to nature*” to “*living downtown*”. On the other hand, a person living in Central Europe often expects city centres to have a beautiful old town, which is usually a pedestrian zone and surrounded by an ancient wall. (A feature lacking both in the American and Finnish urban scene.)

Attempts have been made to create an artificial language with a vocabulary that is culturally neutral and devoid of inherent values and beliefs, since no individual would have learnt it through the enculturation process. All speakers of such an artificial language would stand on an equal footing free from any sense of superiority or inferiority since no cultural group would have adopted it as their primary vehicle of communication. The best known example of such a language is Esperanto, which has so far failed to become the global lingua franca for which it was intended. Perhaps the reason for this failure to attain an universal status as a shared vehicle of communication is precisely because it has no cultural associations or bonds to any living nation. For a language to flourish it needs to be firmly rooted in the minds of human beings, who express their thoughts and communicate through it in their daily lives.

3.1. The role of translated literature in different countries

The Israeli translation scholar Itamar Even-Zohar has highlighted the fact that the need of translations (with focus on translation of literary texts) varies over history and from country to country. In countries where a minor language is spoken (defined as the number of people speaking the language in question as their mother tongue) translations play a more central role in literary traditions. (Gentzler 1993, 117.) (Personally, I find the division of world languages into 'major' and 'minor' a little problematic, as the term 'minor' also carries the assumption that its referant is 'of less importance'. For example, in *Webster's New Encyclopedic Dictionary* the lexical entry 'minor' is firstly defined as 'inferior in dignity, rank or importance' and secondly as 'relatively small in number, quantity, or extent'. As a speaker of 'a minor language', Finnish, I would like to emphasize that the concept is used strictly in the sense of the second definition.)

Even-Zohar has outlined "three social circumstances" in which translations assume a major role:

- a) When a literature is 'young', or in the process of being established
- b) When a literature is 'peripheral' or 'weak' or both
- c) When a literature is experiencing a "crisis" or turning point.

According to Ever-Zohar translations serve not only as a medium through which new ideas can be imported, but also as the form of writing most frequently imitated by "creative" writers in the native language (Gentzler 1993, 117).

In Finland translated literature has assumed an important position on the literary scene partly because of the relatively few authors producing literary texts in Finnish. Despite the influence of TV and the computer in the modern world, Finns are still avid readers and eager to broaden their world view through literature. Since the Second World War literary works of the Anglo-American culture have played a major role in literature. The year 1938 witnessed a breakthrough for

Anglo-American literature in Finland: for the first time the proportion of British and American literary works exceeded 50 % of the total number of translated books published that year, and twenty years later in 1958 the share of Anglo-American literature was even higher than 60 percent (Jalonen 1985, 127, 174). Today Anglo-American literary translations increasingly dominate the publishing market more than ever. According to the statistics from the period 1990-1998 the share of translated literature originally written in English is as high as 78,9%. In comparison the share of translated French literature is 3,3%, German 3,0% and Russian 2,0%. (Paasonen 2001, 9-10).

Venuti has noted the opposite trend taking place in the English-language publishing markets. He states that “since World War II English has been the most translated language worldwide, but it isn’t much translated into”. He severely criticizes the worldwide influence of Anglo-American culture accusing publishers and publishing houses of having become instruments of commercialism and supporting ethnocentric values. (Venuti 1995, 14-20). Venuti (1995, 15) expresses his disappointment by stating that British and American publishing houses have made notable financial benefits “producing cultures in the United Kingdom and the United States that are aggressively monolingual, unreceptive to the foreign, accustomed to fluent translations that invisibly inscribe foreign texts with English-language values and provide readers with the narcissistic experience of recognizing their own culture in a cultural other.”

In the modern world in which materialistic values prevail it is a fact that printing houses are usually interested in publishing literary translations that are expected to attract a large number of potential buyers. Like any other business publishing has to be profitable. Leppihalme (2000, 92) remarks that exceptions to this rule include translations which are financed by some cultural institution or published on the translator’s own initiative (“out of passion for the source text”), but these are minority cases. I believe that also in the years to come Anglo-American

literature will continue its triumphal march on the Finnish literary soil with no signs of slowing down.

Another approach to translation was introduced by the deconstruction theory, which focuses on the study of the end product of the translation process, diminishing the importance of the source text in the world of texts.

Deconstructionists, like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, “theoretically reversed” the line of thought and suggested that the “original text is dependent upon the translation”, and not vice versa, since it is quite possible that without translations into foreign languages the original text might cease to exist. (Gentzler 1993, 144-145).

The translated text is elevated to the status of the original, and thanks to this ‘afterlife’, it may live longer than its predecessor, the source text. This view on translation calls into question the traditional definitions of ‘originality’ and ‘authorship’. According to deconstructionists, the originality of the source text is cancelled, since the original text is dependent on a reproduction in order to resist the ravages of time. Texts that are chosen to be translated are deemed more valuable than texts that are not considered worthy of translation. In this light the act of translation plays a major role in literature, instead of being ‘secondary activity’, since it is through translation that a foreign text is canonized and celebrated on the international literary scene (Venuti 1992, 6).

3.2 Cultural competence

In order to solve culture-bound translation problems in a way that is accepted by the target audience and does not leave the reader puzzled or confused, the translator needs cultural competence in addition to linguistic skills. German translation scholar Heidrun Witte distinguishes between *communicative* and

cultural competence, both of which are required qualifications for a professional translator. Communicative competence refers to the ability to produce and receive meaningful messages appropriate to the situation/context in question when communicating with members of a foreign culture. Cultural competence is defined as the knowledge and command of a certain culture (Witte 2000, 208-216). A culturally competent person is aware of the extralinguistic associations attached to messages and is capable of analysing culture-specific verbal and non-verbal signals typical of a given culture. An essential requirement in translation is the competence to receive and produce messages both in and between two languages.

Witte makes the somewhat bold claim that cultural dissimilarities between source and target cultures instead of linguistic differences constitute the main problem for crosscultural communication. According to Witte, language is understood as one form of manifestation in a specific culture. (Witte 2000, 16.) *Culture* is thus the higher category to which language is subordinate, along with other manifestations of a culture, such as norms and values. However, it seems more probable that these two concepts (language and culture) are of equal importance to the translator since they are inextricably interwoven and continually exert an influence on each other. Languages exist in certain socio-cultural settings and serve as mouthpieces for culture-bound phenomena and instruments of expression for the native speakers of a certain language.

Witte's approach stresses the dynamic nature of translation as an activity taking place between human beings that belong to different socio-cultural and linguistic realities. Witte calls translation "*cultural transfer*" and points out that while transmitting information across cultural barriers, the existing knowledge also goes through a change process. (Witte 2000, 38). It is quite possible that once familiarized with differing behavioural patterns or conventions, the individual (including the translator) after reassessing the prevailing norms is willing to

modify his/her own behavioural patterns, if s/he finds the conventions of another nation reasonable and agrees with them.

Example: An American couple, who lived in Finland for two years got accustomed to taking their shoes off before proceeding to the living-room during they stay. In the United States it is customary to leave the shoes on when entering someone's house. In Finland such behaviour is considered rude and a sign of indifference to the host's living quarters in Finland. After moving back to the United States they have stuck to this Finnish habit and continue to take their shoes off in the hallway, because they noticed how much less dirt is carried indoors. A Finn learns this convention during the socialisation process and it becomes a kind of an automatic reflex; it is a built-in model, which is difficult to "unlearn". Despite the knowledge that "leaving shoes on is not a reprehensible act in the United States", it still seems somehow wrong for a Finn to enter somebody's living-room with shoes on.

Human beings become members of a particular society and culture during the socialisation and enculturation process and learn to behave according to the norms, conventions and values prevailing in that society. They learn the communication strategies and adopt the behavioural patterns that regulate the society in question when communicating with other members of the society in order to be understood and accepted as full members of the society. The parties involved in a communicative act bring implicitly or explicitly their culturally bound "orientation models" into the situation (Witte 2000, 148). Communication between human beings is possible only if the parties involved in an interaction act share (more or less) common behavioural patterns and act according to these (unspoken) rules. (Witte 2000, 61,66). Interlocutors thus expect their communication partner to act and behave in a predictable way and as long as expectations are fulfilled, allowing for individual difference, communication proceeds smoothly without breakdowns during the transmission of the message.

Vermeer distinguishes between *primary* and *secondary* enculturation: the former refers to the individual's enculturation into his/her native culture, the latter to the

acculturation into a foreign culture (in Witte 2000, 61). In spite of the familiarization with another culture, the world of the primary culture, nevertheless, represents the “genuine”, “true” reality, a kind of a touchstone or yardstick upon which foreign phenomena are compared and measured against. According to Witte (2000, 64-64), complete enculturation into a foreign culture is no longer possible once the individual has become a full member of his/her primary culture. It follows that the translator’s cultural proficiency is also determined by the models of his/her native culture. Laypeople do not normally need to give much thought to intercultural differences, since they are mainly interacting with the members of the same society. In the modern world, however, even rather homogeneous countries like Finland have experienced cultural diversity through intermarriage, refugees, work-related placements in another country, etc. The cultural background, religion, values and beliefs of most immigrants differ from those of the host nation. Whenever a foreigner acts in a deviant, “non-Finnish” way, this is considered “unacceptable” according to the yardstick of the Finnish society; it and violates the Finnish behavioural code and is likely to be met with disapproval. In other words, foreigners who settle permanently in Finland are expected to adapt to Finnish society and adhere to Finnish norms and values sooner or later. For example, men and women share equal status in Finland and the use of a veil or circumcision of women are deemed strange (the former) or illegal (the latter).

David Katan (1994, 14) calls translators and interpreters “cultural mediators” who should be “extremely aware of their own cultural identity and understand how their own culture influences perception”. Thus the key to cultural awareness and proficiency is the ability to make observations and judgments on one’s own cultural surroundings in the first place and, secondly, to make comparisons between the primary culture and secondary culture(s).

In this context it is important to distinguish between personal behaviour or code of conduct, and the general awareness of behavioural patterns. Translators are not expected to behave in all aspects according to the norms and values to their 'working culture', but to be familiar with and understand a different set of norms and values, as well as the logic and motifs governing them (cf. Witte 2000, 52). To assume translators are able to "shed their skin" and adopt a different code of conduct and worldview in each new cross-cultural situation is unrealistic and well beyond the capacity of all but a few human beings. Total enculturation into a foreign culture is an unrealistic expectation once the individual has assumed the norms and values of his/her native culture. The aptitude needed in translation is the ability to make comparisons between one's native culture and the working culture(s). Witte stresses that access to new information is possible only through the old, previously acquired knowledge, and the perception and interpretation of foreign cultural phenomena always remains culturally bound (Witte 2000, 75-77).

Mental pictures or images of foreign cultures are the results of comparison that takes place at the conscious level. The recognition and acceptance of one's own inherent adherence to one's native culture (*Kulturgebundenheit*) is the prerequisite for making conscious attempts at overcoming limitations and problems arising from different world views (Witte 2000, 117). The "strangeness", "dissimilarity", or the "otherness" of another culture does not exist in itself, but is a target cultural concept attached to a foreign culture by non-members of the culture in question (Witte 2000, 135). In short, "foreignness" is not an inherent quality of a foreign culture but a characteristic assigned to it from outside; the "otherness" exists in the minds of the non-members of a society. Phenomena that are incoherent with the observer's worldview are classified as 'foreign' or 'exotic'. According to Witte, there is a difference between 'foreign' and 'exotic' phenomena: foreign concepts differ in form and appearance from those found in the native culture, whereas exotic phenomena refer to concepts that totally lack their counterpart in the receiving culture (Witte 2000, 81).

Following this argument, it can be stated that 'foreign' phenomena do exist in the receiving culture, but not in identical form. For example, all Western countries have an educational system, but there are national differences as to the length of compulsory basic education, syllabus and course requirements, school starting age, etc.

Example. Religion is a mandatory subject in Finland if the pupil is a member of either of the national churches, whereas in the United States the teaching of religion is not the duty of the school system, but administered by churches. Another example is the importance of foreign language teaching in countries like Finland, whose native language is rarely spoken outside its geographical borders, with the exception of Tallinn and its neighbourhood.

Theo Hermans (1995, 10) has aptly defined translation "as a socially regulated activity". Leppihalme states that "in order to be a competent ST reader, the translator needs not only language skills to comprehend the linguistic part of the message, but also extralinguistic knowledge of the source language culture". The translator has to recognize the extra-linguistic element and be sensitive to its implication in text, such as when translating allusions. However, Leppihalme also cautions against over-translation, if the translator is hypersensitive and exaggerates the significance of the culture-specific element. (Leppihalme 1994, 88).

Witte (2000, 121) reminds us that cultural differences do not necessarily always have a negative influence on the communicative situation. As in other spheres of life, it is easier to discern and comment on communication problems than show interest in smoothly functioning communicative acts that are usually taken for granted.

Witte also points out that the translator's position in an international setting differs from that of a foreign language learner in that respect that a translator acts in the interests of (at least) two interlocutors when adhering to the needs of his/her clients, whereas a language learner communicates with his/her personal interests in mind. Briefly stated, the translator is a mediator of communication whereas the language learner is one of the interlocutors in a communicative situation. Witte calls a translator 'a cultural affairs advisor (*Kulturberater*), which aptly describes the true nature of a translator's/ interpreter's line of work since it highlights the fact that translation involves much more than the mere mechanical transfer of texts from one language into another. (Witte, 1989, 208-216.)

Christiane Nord introduces a third competence category needed in translation: *transfer competence*, by which she means "the ability to do translation-oriented research" (Nord 1991, 26). As an expert of both source and target languages the translator should be able to anticipate those culture-specific concepts (e.g. names of people, institutional terms, historical events, etc.) that are likely to cause problems for the target audience and which, accordingly, need to be explained, omitted or adapted, depending on the significance and function of the textual element in the overall context. According to Nord (1991, 46), whenever a lack of information "interferes with the TT recipient's comprehension of the text, it should be compensated for by some additional piece of information". It is the translator's responsibility to seek out and provide the additional information for his/her readership with the aid of his/her transfer competence.

3. 3 Culture-specificity in texts

The reason problems sometimes arise when translating the meanings of words is because "meaning is not in-built but interpreted according to individual and culture-bound beliefs (Katan 1994, 60). Generally speaking, the more embedded a text is within its culture and the greater the distance in time and place between

source and target cultures, the larger the amount of culture-specific terms found in a source text. A bilingual and culturally competent translator is in a position to spot culture-bound differences. The first step towards the identification of problematic linguistic elements is, naturally, the recognition of the problem. Kußmaul (1995, 86), for example, has listed "self-awareness" (= the ability to recognize problems) as one of the hallmarks of a professional translator. I think that if the source text is set in an exotic environment, the translator is usually alert to culturally deviant terms. However, between apparently close cultures there might be differences that are more difficult to discern.

Kußmaul (1995, 15) warns speakers of foreign languages of "false friends", which refer to concepts that look alike at the textual level but differ at the semantic level, and may pose problems if an act of translation is performed mechanically, "as a linguistic reflex". "False friends" may lead to incorrect translation solutions particularly during the initial stage of language learning (e.g. *novelli* = a short story in Finnish vs. *novel* = a narrative story, *salad* vs. *salaatti*: in Finnish the word *salaatti* refers to both *lettuce* and *salad*), but even a competent translator needs to be alert to such superficially equivalent concepts.

When the translator is faced with reverbalization problems, s/he "has to switch from automatic reflex to reflection" (Hönig's term cited in Kußmaul 1995, 86). Text analysis plays a major role in this process: after a careful analysis of the source text and the situation of the target text the translator decides which features of the linguistic element are relevant for the communicative purpose and function of the translation and thus need to be preserved while ignoring features that are irrelevant to the overall purpose of the text. The translator must often make compromises and settle for the best possible solution under the circumstances; Kußmaul (1995, 87) cautions against translators trying to painstakingly recreate all the features of a linguistic sign at all costs since it may

turn out to be an impossible task, as is often the case with puns and word plays, for example.

Hönig & Kußmaul have formulated "the maxim of the sufficient degree of precision with regard to the above case as a guideline for translators. The maxim advises the translator to "try to reproduce just that semantic feature or just those features which is/are relevant in a given context with regard to the function of your translation" (Kußmaul, 1995, 92).

As an example of culturebound texts posing a high degree of translation problems, Bassnett (1988, 62) cites the translation of poetry, which sometimes contains obscure allusions to historical or cultural events which the reader is assumed to infer on the basis of the information not clearly stated. In order to arrive at a successful translation the translator clearly needs to be familiar with the history and culture of the environment in which the text was written in addition to a solid grasp of the language(s) involved.

Changes in the reading situation may lead to alternative interpretations or a lack of comprehension if the text refers to source cultural phenomena which are alien to the TT reader. Thus the overall situation in which the reading process takes place inevitably affects the reader's interpretation of the text. For example, texts produced in an era with different moral values and expectations with regard to social behaviour, the role of man/woman in society, etc. are interpreted in a different light by the contemporary reader who has either lived through or was born after the sexual revolution of the 1960s. When embarking on a literary journey neither readers nor writers start afresh totally afresh when they read/write texts. Instead they carry with them their world knowledge and earlier reading experiences. Frederic Will reminds notes that texts are always "trapped in an intertextual network", since they refer backward and forward (Gentzler 1993, 36).

According to Witte (2000, 84) the less the recipient knows in advance about the foreign culture, the more s/he makes observations and evaluations on the basis of his/her primary culture. Inevitably there is a danger of misinterpreting the “hidden meaning” of (verbal and non-verbal) messages and this increases/decreases in proportion to the recipient’s familiarity/unfamiliarity with the source culture.

Gideon Toury maintains that translations are never totally “acceptable” to the target audience, because they always introduce new information and forms that have a “defamiliarizing effect” on the target audience (in Gentzler 1993, 128). Taken at face value this would mean that TT readers are continually exposed to an overload of unfamiliar text elements, which inevitably hinders the pace of the reading and understanding processes. If this indeed were the case, successful intercultural communication at many levels would be an almost impossible task. I believe that although translations often undeniably contain new information that may not pre-exist in the target culture most readers readily accept and tolerate translated texts without protest provided the target texts are fluent and readable. In such cases the translator needs to anticipate which textual elements might pose problems for the reader (due to cultural differences, defects in the source text, etc.) and make greater efforts to elucidate these elements for the reader.

There are occasions when translators are confronted with the problem of “untranslability”, that is when translating concepts that lack a counterpart in the receiving culture. Gentzler (1993, 101) calls such conditions “inherent limitations in the target language”. Different cultures perceive reality in different ways, so that there is an overlap of meaning or an absence of certain concepts because of different socio-cultural and historical development of the linguistic community in question. There are also culture-specific gaps, when something cannot or must not be formulated in words, such as taboos. According to Vermeer (1990, 55), what is left unsaid often attracts the reader’s attention and stimulates her/his

imagination. The reader is thus expected to be able to read "between the lines" and fill in the gaps, which gives her/him a sense of togetherness or comradeship, being a member of the in-group sharing knowledge with the writer.

Catford has identified two types of untranslability: a) linguistic and b) cultural. Linguistic untranslability means that "there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in the TL for an SL item" owing to differences in the linguistic systems, whereas cultural untranslability is "due to the absence in the TL culture of a relevant situational feature for the SL text". (Bassnett-McGuire 1988, 32). In other words, culture-bound problems are encountered at the pragmatic level instead of the semantic or syntactic levels. The first category is seldom a serious problem for the translator since usually it is possible to convey the meaning with other forms of expression. However, culture-bound elements not found in the receiving culture may indeed pose insurmountable difficulties, since lengthy explanations or footnotes are not always feasible options in a translation.

If readers and writers share sufficient cultural background information there is no need to provide detailed explicit information (Leppihalme 1994, 87); indeed readers may find overexplanation tedious or patronising, if they suspect that their intellectuality and world knowledge is called into question.

The present chapter casts an overview of the cultural issues involved in translation. The objective here is to demonstrate that these cultural matters play a central role in interpreting/ rewriting of texts and that cultural competence is an indispensable requirement for the professional translator. The next chapter deals with the analysis of the translation of a literary work; it addresses translational issues by means of concrete examples found in the corpus under study.

4. Analysis of the material

The intention of this research paper is to examine how the translator has succeeded in conveying culture-specific concepts to the Finnish target reader and which translation strategies have been employed. I selected the novel *Gump & Co* written by Winston Groom as a corpus for my study as it is firmly embedded in an American setting and contains an abundance of culture-specific references to American culture and society. Today with one superpower left in the world – the United States – it is hard to completely escape the global impact of American culture and values no matter where one lives. The Finnish target audience is no exception and can thus be assumed to be somewhat familiar with the cultural setting in which the novel takes place. The purpose of this study is to examine which culture-specific terms have been translated without the need of additional information and in which cases the translator has deemed it necessary to provide further information for the target audience. The study also explores the way in which this process has been performed and in which cases textual elements have been omitted. As mentioned earlier in the Chapter 3, it is necessary to be aware that the Finnish audience overestimate their insight into the American way of life, owing to the overload of American movies, TV programmes and other forms of entertainment Finnish consumers are exposed to in their daily lives.

4.1. Overview of the novel

The novel *Gump & Co* is a sequel to *Forrest Gump*, which was made into a well-known Oscar-winning movie starring Tom Hanks. I assume that most readers of the novel are acquainted with the movie, and thus have expectations as to the contents and style of the book on the basis of the film. The hero **Forrest Gump** is a benevolent, well-meaning man with a low IQ and heart of gold, but who, somehow, always ends up in difficult situations causing tremendous damages and accidents that eventually change the course of history.

The sequel covers the period extending from the early eighties to the early nineties ending with such historical events as the outbreak of the Gulf War and the reunification of the Germanies, which paved the way for the end of communism and cold war. It also makes references to other real world events and personalities, including the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the Exxon Valdes disaster, Ayatollah Khomeini, Saddam Hussein and the Gulf War. He also meets many celebrities, including Colonel North, the Ayatollah Khomeini, Ronald Reagan, Donald Trump, Woody Allan, Kurt Vonnegut, Bill and Hilary Clinton, and Tom Hanks (!), who offers him a box of chocolates and suggests that someone should make a movie out of his life story. According to the story, Forrest Gump was involved and actually played a major role in all these events which have been noted down in history.

The novel is a manifestation of an American dream come true, since it is basically a story that demonstrates that anyone can succeed in life regardless of the individual's background. On the other hand, it is set in a period which can be characterised as a time when materialistic and ruthless values like acquisitiveness, greed and shameless exploitation of naïve, unsuspecting people prevail. In many respects the story of *Forrest Gump* portrays the very antithesis of the image of the American hero introduced to the public through numerous American movies made in the 1980s and early 1990s, such as the Rambo stories, Top Gun, Batman, and the like, where tough, witty, and at times ruthless people are the winners and succeed in life. Forrest Gump, by contrast, represents gentle, immaterialistic values, since he is incapable of fully grasping the social and economic benefits brought along with wealth and property. Every once in a while Forrest Gump earns a lot of money and as long as he is rich there is no shortage of the company of beautiful women and smooth-tongued men, but whenever he is parted from his earthly possessions these same people are the first to leave the scene accusing poor Forrest to be solely responsible for a

variety of criminal activities he had committed without realising it. Forrest Gump learns that in the end the only people he can trust are his son and lifetime friends with whom he had gone through the Vietnam War in the first episode. Family orientation is an important value in the American society and a recurrent theme in American stories.

David Kellner has analysed the impact of Hollywood films on the general public in his book *Media Culture*. He has studied movies like *Rambo* and *Top Gun*, which were produced in the Reagan Era, and noted how films that advocate conservative and military values helped to mould public opinion into accepting America's military intervention against nations that represent the embodiment of the enemy, giving face to the faceless evil. (Kellner 1995, 69-81) He describes the prevailing social attitude of the time period during Reagan's presidency in the following words (77):

” In the Reaganite universe, only the elite succeed and the faint-hearted must fall by the wayside, deprived of the success and honor reserved for the top guns and top dogs in the deadly competition for wealth and power in which only the winners succeed and everyone else is a loser.”

4.2. Culture-bound elements

According to Witte (1998, 16), the basic hypothesis is that it is cultural differences rather than linguistic problems that present the major problems for intercultural communication, but these differences do not inevitably have a negative impact on the overall communication situation (121). Readers (especially those belonging to a relatively small linguistic group like the Finns) assume foreign texts will include foreign elements. They are not necessarily baffled by the occurrence of culturally conditioned concepts, in particular if the translator has succeeded in smoothing out apparent obstacles to understanding. One obvious

source of “culture bumps” (i.e. “puzzling or impenetrable wording” (Leppihalme 1994:234)) that often give rise to translational problems is culture-specific terms that lack equivalent concepts in the receiving culture.

As discussed in Chapter 3.3. texts are usually easier to translate when source and target cultures are in relatively close cultural contact or share cultural history, or when the ST is oriented from the outset towards the target audience, such as tourist brochures for foreign visitors (cf. Chesterman 1997, 12). Clearly the more background knowledge ST and TT readers share, the less often the translator needs to ‘guide’ the reader through the text with the aid of additional information. Chesterman (1997, 21) characterizes translation as “rebuilding of texts”, but at the same time he calls into question whether words of different languages can actually ever mean exactly the same thing. In other words, do they evoke similar scenes on TL speakers’ minds? This point was discussed in the Chapter 3 in connection with the concept of ‘equivalence’ when considering different associations linked to ordinary everyday words such as “butter-burro”, or the image of Christmas for the inhabitants of cold, northern countries like Finland or people inhabiting the Southern hemisphere (e.g. Australians). Further examples of this kind are numerous, for instance, when an American makes a sandwich, s/he usually puts two pieces of bread against each other with a filling inside it, whereas for an average Finn the equivalent word ‘voileipä’ means an open sandwich.

Theo Hermans (in Snell-Hornby 1995, 15) remarks that “translated texts usually do not fit in their new environment, their new space as snugly and naturally as fully home-grown, non-translated texts”. Especially when a text is deeply rooted in its culture, it is likely to include culture-specific terms with no exact counterpart in the receiving culture. However, it is also true that readers of translated literature are well-aware of dealing with products created outside their home environment and probably tolerate the otherness, exotic and sometimes

inexplicable phenomena during their reading process. (cf. Chapter 4.3. Translation strategies).

Venuti firmly supports the view that translations should always contain an element of surprise, a piece of “otherness” that reminds the reader of the original setting. He criticizes translations that are transparent producing an illusion that a reader is being offered an original, native language text. (Venuti 1995, 7-17).

Venuti (1995, 16-17) writes:

“The translator’s invisibility can now be seen as a mystification of troubling proportions, an amazingly successful concealment of the multiple determinants and effects of English-language translation, the multiple hierarchies and exclusions in which it implicates. An illusionism produced by fluent translating, the translator’s invisibility at once enacts and masks an insidious domestication of foreign texts, rewriting them in the transparent discourse that prevails in English and that selects precisely those foreign texts amenable to fluent translation.”

Chesterman considers understanding to be one of the main goals of communication (naturally), and consequently one of the guidelines for translators. Thus the task of the translator is “to minimize misunderstandings of the text among included readers”, and, on the other hand “to minimize the number of potential readers who are excluded from understanding.” Chesterman points out that with English translations in particular, the translator should always be informed whether the translation at hand is intended for native or non-native readers. (Chesterman 1997, 183-186) The question remains how far this principle of “minimizing misunderstandings” can be applied to real-life situations: If it is to be taken at face value, will it lead to translations that are overtly explicit and leave no room for the reader’s speculation? Fortunately, the translator has the final say and can use her/his common sense in making translational decisions. Translation is, after all, creative work, and texts containing an element of surprise or obscurity are likely to catch the reader’s attention more effectively and leave a stronger impact on the recipient than predictable literary texts with all the bends straightened out. The views above are summarised by Leppihalme

(1994, 126) in the following comment which empowers translators to act independently as co-authors of the text: “Creativity requires the freedom to act.” (Bearing on mind that “translators do not act at random but consider the expectations and needs of their target culture readers” (Kußmaul 1995, 72).)

4.3. Translation strategies

The term “translation strategies” is used here in accordance with the definition given by Chesterman (2000, 82), who defines them as “potentially conscious, goal-oriented procedures for solving problems”. Other terms found in translatorial literature, which are (close) synonyms for this process include “method”, “procedure”, “shift”, “technique”, etc. Leppihalme (2007) notes that the advantage of the use of the term “translation strategies” lies in the fact that it underlines the translator’s position or status as a decision-maker in the translation process (365). This is an important observation and it is this sense of the term that is adopted in the present study. Translation strategies can also be said to be problem-centred operation models that are oriented towards finding an appropriate/acceptable translation proposition that does not infringe any linguistic rules or violate or disturb readers’ reading experience.

We should keep in mind that we are dealing here with translation strategies instead of norms or rules; i.e. the translator is not bound by them. The translator is free to reject a certain strategy and choose another one better suited to the textual situation. Again – the translator has the authority to decide.

I have classified the various translation strategies on a slightly modified model presented by Ritva Leppihalme (2001) in her article “Translation strategies for realia” published in a transdisciplinary book called “Mission, Vision, Strategies and Values”, which was compiled to mark 30 years of translator training in Kouvola.

Leppihalme makes a distinction between global and local strategies. According to her “global strategies apply to the whole text, local ones to particular points in the text, such as realia-type problems (Realia are lexical elements which refer to the real world “outside” language.) The choice of a local strategy depends on the translator’s global strategy for the text.” (Leppihalme 2001, 139-140). Global strategies have an overall effect governing the selection of words at the text level.

An example of such global strategies is the distinction between *domesticating* and *foreignizing* translation. The domestication strategy involves naturalisation and adaptation of the SL text: source language elements, particularly culture-specific terms are rendered as target language functional elements that conform to TL norms. Chesterman (1997, 108) calls this strategy “cultural filtering”, which aptly describes and illustrates the translator’s role in the process: s/he functions as a filter between the source text and the target audience dispelling or alleviating the foreign element, the “otherness” of the text.

Leppihalme (2001, 140) mentions an enlightening example of the domestication strategy found in children’s books that have gone through major changes in translations. In the French and German translations Astrid Lindgren’s defiant and boisterous Pippi Långstrump has been turned into a well-behaved girl, who respects authoritative figures. Another rather amusing example she cites is the young prince in Roald Dahl’s story the BFG, who has become the president’s son-in-law in the Finnish translation, because Finland is not a monarchy and Finnish children are assumed to be more familiar with presidents.

There were several instances of domestication in the material under study where the text was brought closer to the Finnish soil. For example, ‘milk and cookies’ (16) was translated as ‘maitoa ja pipareita’ (26), which literally translates as ‘milk and gingerbread cookies’, which is a certain kind of biscuit eaten mostly around

Christmas time. Likewise 'doughnuts' (18) was translated as 'munkkipossu' (29), although Finns are nowadays familiar with American style doughnuts ('donitsi' in Finnish); larger towns even have a branch of the doughnut-selling chain Arnold's donuts.

Similarly, a 'diner' (53) was translated as 'ruokakuppila' (65), which gives the Finnish reader a different mental image than the one evoked by the American English word. Both places offer food at a low price. A diner is "an in-expensive restaurant with a long counter and booths housed in a building designed to resemble a dining car" (<http://thefreedictionary.com/diner>). The Finnish word 'ruokakuppila' is any modest looking cafeteria or canteen serving simple food. Since there are no Finnish words that would make target readers automatically think of an eatery with an interior copied from the inside of a restaurant or a train, the translator has opted for the other common denominator – the low price level. There is further discussion on translating with a domesticating effect in Chapter 4.3.3. Cultural adaptation.

The foreignizing translation is the opposite of domestication. Foreign elements are left in the text as such or with minimal changes to remind the reader that the story takes place in another socio-cultural setting. Such a translation has an "exotic touch". There has been a lively discussion within the field of translation studies as to which overall strategy, foreignizing or domesticating, is the preferable solution in different contexts.

Both strategies have their advantages and disadvantages. Briefly, the domestication strategy is more welcoming to less experienced readers, who might find an abundant occurrence of foreign words intimidating and cumbersome. However, this strategy distances the reader from contact with the local culture. The domesticating strategy may even irritate more experienced readers who expect novels to contain local colour and look forward to encountering foreign

elements in the text. For example, most readers of Agatha Christie's novels would probably be disappointed if the village vicar was made to drink a cup of coffee with Finnish coffeebread 'pulla' instead of tea with milk and lemon, accompanied by a scone.

No doubt source cultural elements bring local colour to the TT and the retention of such elements is the norm for translations that are source-text oriented. House calls this strategy "overt translation": the target text is transparently a translation and the reader is conscious of it, whereas a "covert translation" is a translation "in disguise". It is practically indistinguishable from untranslated native texts like advertisements or business letters that are fully adapted to the source culture. (House, 1989, 159).

This strategy was advocated and supported by Schleiermacher as early as in the 19th century. Schleiermacher stated that translation of literary texts should aim at a style that is "deliberately marked, strange and foreign" to allow the reader to have a reading experience which feels "as if a foreign spirit were blown towards the reader". This argument is supported today by many writers with Venuti in the forefront, who strongly believes that "a good translation preserves the otherness by whatever means possible" (in Chesterman, 1997, 26-28).

It can be inferred from this that a foreignizing strategy gives more respect to the source text. Readers of such translations are expected to meet the otherness with interest and curiosity, welcoming the presence of foreign elements as it gives them a chance to escape their mundane everyday life. On the other hand, this strategy, especially if there exists a huge distance between the source and target cultures, may leave the reader puzzled and bewildered leading to a strenuous and exhausting reading experience, which leaves the reader in an outsider's position (in Leppihalme 2007, 372-373).

The novel *Gump & Co* is rooted in American culture and it includes several examples of lexical items that were left in their “foreign” form. One example is food-related items (e.g. popcorn, CokeCola, and chili con carne) that can be left untranslated, since many of them have been imported to Finland and have gradually become a part of Finnish diet. They serve as a good manifestation of the integration of the world. Further discussion on foreignizing effect follows in Chapter 4.3.1 Minimum change strategy below.

4.3.1 Minimum change strategy

Minimum change strategy (can also be called literal change strategy) refers to a translation strategy which retains transparently foreign textual elements. ST words are transferred to the TT as such or with minimal changes in spelling. Direct transfer promotes the creation of a foreignizing effect in the text, but, as earlier mentioned, frequent use may leave the reader perplexed and confused (in Leppihalme 2001, 141).

This strategy is often used when the TT culture lacks an equivalent concept or idea; i.e. there is a lexical gap in the receiving culture. Leppihalme (2007, 368-169) states that if a foreign language enjoys a powerful, well-respected status in the target culture, direct transfers are accepted quite easily.

Nowadays direct transfer is quite a common phenomenon between English and Finnish. The English language enjoys a prestigious status in Finnish culture in comparison with many other foreign languages (Russian, Arabic, Norwegian, Spanish, etc.) Young people in particular seem to absorb English elements into their speech quite readily. The use of English words in the middle of Finnish sentences is commonplace and widely accepted introducing an element of “coolness” in speech. In many cases English word is the preferred alternative.

For example, in the field of information technology the use of English words with a minimal change is often considered the better, more natural-sounding choice: e.g. ‘printteri’ (instead of ‘tulostin’), printata (instead of ‘tulostaa’), ‘seivata’ (not ‘tallentaa’), ‘monitori’ (instead of ‘näyttöpääte’), ‘lappäri’ or ‘laptop’ (instead of ‘kannettava tietokone’), and so on. Examples are numerous.

Similarly words like six-pack, freelancer, personal trainer, traileri, key account manager, etc. have become part of Finnish vocabulary on the basis of their frequency. In my opinion the direct transfer of English words into Finnish causes the problem of conjugation and spelling, especially in the written language. Since English and Finnish belong to different language families with vast structural and grammatical differences, it is hard to become used to hearing/reading sentences such as ‘Ostin kaupasta six-packin’, ‘Personal trainerin kanssa treenaaminen on hauskaa’, and ‘Etsimme key account manageria vastaamaan yrityksemme asiakkuuksien hallinnasta ja kehittämisestä’.

The novel Gump & Co contains several examples of minimum change strategy. For example, the retention of English measurements and monetary units reminds the reader of the cultural setting of the story as shown in the examples below.

- Example 1. ten yards (8) - kymmenen jaardia (18)
- Example 2. twenty-five cents (77) - neljännesdollari (89)
- Example 3. ten million gallons of crude oil (146) –
 kymmenen miljoonaa galloonaa raakaöljyä (163)

Names of places tend to be retained directly, unless they have an official, conventionally used translation, such as Lontoo (London), Hampuri (Hamburg), Tukholma (Stockholm), Pietari (St. Petersburg), etc.

Example 4. ST: “They has busted out all the winders on Peachtree street and looted most of the stores... (47)”

TT: “Ihmiset löi sisään kaikki Peachtree Streetin näyteikkunat ja ryösti useimmat kaupat...(57)”

Example 5. ST: “They was in a big ole skyscraper down near Wall Street.” (115)

LT: “Se oli isossa hienossa pilvenpiirtäjässä lähellä Wall Streetiä.” (129)

Bizarrely ‘the big old skyscraper’ has turned into a ‘big fancy (or perhaps elegant) skyscraper. This is no doubt a slip – maybe the frame ‘skyscraper’ activated the scene ‘a good-looking, great building’. Since there are no skyscrapers in Finland maybe the translator associates skyscrapers with “the wonders of America”?

Some English sayings are considered so international and well-known that they can be left untranslated. In the study material Gump’s ex-partner Jenny pays him a visit from beyond the grave saying ‘See you later alligator’ (125) on parting. In the Finnish version Jenny bids farewell with the same words “See you later, alligator” (140) the only difference being that in Finnish the words are printed in italics. Presumably most TT readers accept this translation solution without protest. In this respect there has been a radical change in the last couple of decades. Jalonen (1985, 140) quotes an example of a translation of an American story written by Quentin Patrick translated into Finnish in the 1940s. (See also Leppihalme 2000, 102). In those days the translator deemed it necessary to explain the meaning of O.K.:

“Sitten hän sanoi aivan rauhallisesti: - O.K. ja meni tiehensä (O.K. = lyhennys Ameriikassa käytäntöön tulleesta intiaanisanasta olleh merkiten kaikki hyvin, selvä.”

Other instances of direct transfer include references to internationally known food substances such as pop corn (41), CokeCola (41), Chili con carne (41), whisky sour (117), Tabasco (74), and Worcester (74).

Example 6. ST: “Well is there anything I can do for you? How about a CokeCola or perhaps a whisky sour?” (117)

TT: “No, voinko tehdä jotain muuta hyväksesi? Kävisikö CokeCola – tai ehkä whisky sour? (131)

The translator has also resorted to the minimum change strategy when translating the beverage 'lemonade' into Finnish. According to the definition found in Wikipedia, lemonade is “an uncarbonated mixture of lemon juice, sugar and water”, especially in the United States and Canada. Commonly this beverage undergoes a carbonation process in translation ending up as 'limonaati'.

Limonaati =limonadi is defined in Suomenkielen perussanakirja as a soft drink consisting of artificial flavours and carbonic acids (my translation).

Example 7. ST: “Slim had got the lady to serve us some lemonade...” (29)

TT: “Slim oli saanut naisen tarjoamaan meille limonaattia...” (40)

In the above example the nature of the beverage being served plays no major role in the overall context, and 'limonaati' can thus be considered a well-functioning translation solution.

In the following expressions or similes the translator has produced a translation solution that is unnecessarily close to the original wording. The Finnish translation sounds (in my opinion) somewhat unnatural and clumsy; i.e. the translator resorted to translationese (term used in e.g. Chesterman 1997, 155).

Example 8. ST: “The Ayatolja does whatever he wants – you don't like it, kiss my ass.” (89, underlining added)

TT: "Ajatollo tekee mitä tykkää ja jollei se miellytä sinua, saat silti nuolla minun persettä." (102)

Example 9. ST: "I am as quiet as a clam." (131)
TT: " Pysyin hiljaa kuin simpukka." (146)

The more conventionally used simile in Finnish is "to be as quiet as a mouse".

Example 10. ST: "Don't worry yourself, my boy", Mister McGivver says. "It was all probably a blessing in disguise anyway." (143)
TT: "Älä suotta sure, poika hyvä", herra McGiv ver sanoi. "Se oli luultavasti onnenpotku valepuvussa." (160)

The commonly used Finnish saying "onni onnettomuudessa" (literally translates as "good luck in an accident") is apparently a casualty of translationese.

4.3.2. Explication

This strategy can also be referred to as 'addition' or 'clarification'. It means that the translator has added clarifying information to make culture-bound textual elements more explicit for the target reader. Leppihalme (2001, 143) points out that this strategy aims at "removing potential culture bumps and is thus reader-friendly", whereas it may irritate readers who are more familiar with and feel at ease in the source cultural setting.

The corpus under study contains several instances in which the translator has felt the need to add an explanation or clarification for (presumably) unfamiliar concepts.

Example 1. ST: “It’s just their way down here in New Orleans. Why, they even throw stuff at people off their Mardi Gras floats.” (12)
TT: “tuo on vaan täkäläinen tapa täällä New Orleansissa. Ne heittelee roinaa ihmisten päälle Mardi Gras-kulkueen lavareiltakin”. (22, underlining added)

The concept 'Mardi Gras' may still remain vague and distant to TT readers, unless they have heard about the carnival celebrations with colourful parades taking place in New Orleans. The translator's addition helps the reader to create an image of a parade.

Example 2. ST: “Pretty soon we got all sorts of engineers and drillers and EPA people ... millin around on the farm”. (59, underlining added)
TT: “Kohta siellä sikafarmilla pyörii kaikenlaisia inssinöörejä ja ympäristöviraston ihmistä ja koneenkäyttäjiä...” (71)

EPA is an abbreviation standing for the 'Environmental Protection Agency', and certainly requires clarification in the translation. The aspect of “protection” is missing in Finnish - it might as well have been translated as 'ympäristönsuojeluvirasto' – but in this case the missing connotation carries no significance to the overall context.

Example 3. ST: “... and he (the colonel) says I can use 'Air Force One' to do it...” (87)
TT: “... ja eversti sanoi, että minä voin heittää sen reissun Air Force ykkösellä eli presidentin virkakoneella..” (99)

This is a good example of how a translator may intrude into the TT text making his/her presence visible by explaining what 'Air Force One' means. The

American reader is expected to know this without a clue. It would be interesting to learn whether a similar explanation would be necessary if this novel was published in the British, Australian or New Zealand book markets.

Likewise 'the folks on Capitol Hill' (98) were translated in plain Finnish as 'kongressimiehet' (111), and 'attorney general' (64) as 'osavaltion oikeusasiamies' (76), although according to Wikipedia 'attorney general' actually refers to "the head of the United States Department of Justice."

The biblical allusion to 'Jonah' referring to a person who brings bad luck or suffers misfortune has been eradicated in the Finnish text.

Example 4. ST: "Also, word had apparently got out that I am a Jonah or something, cause ain't nobody wants to speak to me except the sergeants..." (148)
 TT: "sitten joku oli pannut liikkeelle sanan, että mina olen pahanilmanlintu, koska kukaan ei halunut puhua minun kanssa paitsi kersantit..."(165)

Apparently Finnish language uses biblical references less frequently than English, although the story of Jonah and the whale is also widely known among the Finnish reading audience. Nevertheless, the name 'Jonah' does not convey the same allusive meaning as 'the bird of ill omen'. Leppihalme (1997, 73) reached a similar conclusion in her research on the recognisability of allusions. She discovered that the Bible is often alluded to in English whereas "in Lutheran Finland the language of the Bible is well-known only to the minority who are what is called "religious".

A direct quotation from Leppihalme's (1997, 66) research:

"The sources that proved to be most fruitful of allusions in the [English] corpus (the Bible and Shakespeare) not surprisingly reflect this cultural

conservatism and the consequences of exposure to these sources over many generations in the English-speaking world.”

An explanation has also been added to a beverage called ‘Kool-Aid’.

- Example 5. ST: “A feller drinkin from a big ole jar of Kool-Aid, an playing a hurdy-gurdy” (167, underlining added)
TT: “... joku kaveri, joka joi Kool-Aid-limpparia isosta kannusta ja veivasi posetiivia.” (185)

In fact this addition is misleading, because *Kool-Aid* is not a soda pop at all, but juice concentrate, which is mixed with water. Readers who have not tasted Kool-Aid probably accept this translation readily, but readers who are familiar with the beverage in question may find this translation solution irritating or disturbing – evidence that the translator has made a mistake.

In the following cases where the TT reader is left to work out the meaning of the references. The first example exhibits a reference to the ‘Teapot Dome scandal’. This historical reference can be assumed to be strange and unknown to the average TT reader, so a short explanation might have been appropriate.

- Example 6. ST: “Folks are sayin it’s the biggest scandal since Teapot Dome.” (131)
TT: “Ihmiset sanoo, että tämän on pahin skandaali sitten Teapot Domen.” (146)

Gump, who is a certified idiot, has no idea what his educated son is talking about and asks “Since who?”. The author thus reminds the ST reader that the hero of the novel is an ignorant man, whose teenaged son has more knowledge of the world and better all-round education than his father. Because of the temporal and

geographical distance of the scandal in question, the average Finnish reader is in the same position as the blissfully ignorant Forrest Senior – in the dark as to the meaning of the reference.

Teapot Dome is, in short, the name for a scandal that took place in 1921 during the administration of President Harding. It involved the secret leasing of federal oil reserves. Albert B. Fall, who was Secretary of Interior at that time, illegally leased the government-owned oil reserves to private oil companies accepting considerable amounts of “loans” and expensive gifts. Senator Fall was indicted for conspiracy and bribery and was sentenced to prison for one year. The scandal acquired its name from a rock that resembles a teapot and became a symbol for government corruption. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/teapot-Dome-Scandal>)

The role of a translation is, by no means, not to be a textbook of history, but in this case the translator could have added a footnote revealing the nature of the scandal at the bottom of the page or an endnote at the end of the story.

4.3.3 Cultural adaptation

Cultural adaptation brings the source text closer to the target text culture smoothing out potential culture bumps. The translator acts as a “tour guide” adding explanatory words or replacing foreign measurements with more familiar ones. For example, Fahrenheit is changed into centigrade, pounds converted into kilos, and inches and feet into centimeters and metres. However, monetary units usually remain the same. It would seem odd if Forrest Gump paid in euros (or marks) instead of dollars, since everybody knows that ‘dollar’ is the currency used in the United States and most people know its value against euro. The majority of readers also probably know that the units of measurement in the USA are inches and feet, but the conversion of feet to metres is a more complicated and time-consuming process, so the translator does the TT reader a favour by calculating the measurements into a more easily understandable format. In fact, one of the trickiest tasks in translation is to “predict” which textual elements can

be assumed to present problems and need domestication because of gaps in readers' socio-cultural background knowledge and which are familiar and can be left unexplained.

The translator of *Forrest Gump & Co* seemed uncertain whether to use a foreignizing or domesticating strategy when translating units of measurement. At the beginning of the story he used the minimum change strategy translating 'ten yards' (8) into 'kymmenen jaardia' (18), whereas elsewhere he dutifully converted the measures into metres and kilos.

Example 1. ST: "In case I ain't tole you yet, I am six-six and weigh about two hundrit forty – but these guys – they look about seven feet an three or four hundrit pounds apiece!" (7)

TT: "Siltä varalta etten ole vielä kertonut, olen satayhdeksänkahdeksan pitkä ja painan satakymmenen kiloa, mutta ne sällit näytti siltä, että niillä on pituutta rutkasti komatta metriä ja painookin jotain sadanneljänkymmenen ja sadankahdeksan-kymmenen väliltä." (17)

Example 2. ST: "He has grown about a foot an a half an is a fine-looking boy." (54)

TT: " Se oli kasvanut melkein puoli metriä ja oli oikein komea poika." (66)

Example 3. ST: "Wanda is back about twenty yards behin..." (76)

TT: "Wanda seiso i parikymmentä metriä meidän takana..." (88)

Example 4. ST: "... an when they got close he stepped on a button that set off a gas valve that shot a fire twenty feet in the air." (107)

TT: "... ja kun ne tuli tarpeeksi lähelle, kundi polkaisi nappia ja l
aukasi kaasuventtiilin ja sinkautti ilmaan kuusi metriä pitkän l
ieskan." (121)

Example 5. ST: "The (passengers) get their asses strapped into a city-block-
long steel cylinder an shot up in the air at six hundred miles an
hour..." (121)

TT: "Ne köytti perseensä penkkiin kaupunkikorttelin pituisessa
teräsputkessa, joka syöksyy ilman halki melkein tuhannen
kilometrin tuntivauhdilla..." (136)

Example 6. ST: "It was not one of them big ole ten-feet-tall totem poles, but it
was about three feet..." (142)

TT: "Se ei ollut niitä semmoisia isoja, kolmatta metriä korkeita
toteemi-paaluja, mutta oli silla pituutta metrin verran..." (158)

The study material exposed several metaphors or sayings that were adapted to
the TT audience. The connotations and associations of the ST textual elements
are transferred into target-cultural functional elements (Leppihalme 2001, 142)
making them smoother, more natural-sounding equivalents.

Example 1. ST: "I heard about you, Gump. Snake says you run like a bat out of
hell." (8)

TT: "Oon kuullu sinusta, Gump. Käärmeen mukaan sinä juokset
kuin hirvi." (18)

An elk is an animal which appears in Finnish textual contexts more often than
bats due to the threat they pose for the road traffic and the fact that they are
widely hunted as game. Bats lie dormant and hardly ever give cause to public

discussions. The changed metaphor is thus a valid translation solution, and it can also be said to be a more natural alternative because bats do not run but fly.

In the second example the connotation between the saying and the nature of business in question – hog farming - is lost, which exists in the ST. Gump was planning to earn money in the pig business and the man who wants to sell him the piggery talks him into buying with the following words:

- Example 2. ST: “It’s a dirty, low-down, smelly business, but there’s money in it. “Bring home the bacon” and all that crap.” (50)
TT: “Se on likaista, kurjaa, haisevaa hommaa, mutta rahakasta. Jostain se leipäkin on tienattava.” (61-61)

The following examples illustrate the kind of alterations similes can undergo in translation. Each language has its own reservoir of typical metaphors and similes, which are not necessarily interchangeable: in English the state of being ‘old’ is compared with ‘hills’, in Finnish with ‘the sky’, in English industrious people are as busy as bees, in Finnish as busy as ants, very thirsty people or heavy drinkers drink like ‘fish’ in English, they drink like ‘sponge’ in Finnish, and crazy people can be characterized ‘as mad as hatters’ in English (saying originating from the fact that in the olden days hat-making involved the use of mercury, which affected the nervous systems of hatters causing various side effects like trembling and apparent insanity); to my knowledge there is no established simile to ‘crazy people’ in Finnish. Sometimes sayings and similes overlap: both Finns and English ‘eat like a horse’, ‘sleep like a log’ and are ‘as strong as an ox.’

In Example 3 the translator has transformed the ST simile into a conventional Finnish one (it is commonplace to compare a dumb person with a ‘boot’ in

Finnish), in the Examples 4 and 5 he has created an original, non-standard simile in Finnish.

Example 3. ST: "Forrest Gump, who sources close to the Post describe as being 'dumber than a rock'..." (138)

TT: "Forrest Gump, jota Postia lähell olevat lähteet luonnehtivat 'tyhmemmäksi kuin vasemman jalan saapas'... "8154)

Example 4. ST: "Ivan Bozosky goes on like this for a while, an paints a pitcher of me, black as a beaver's butt." (134)

TT: "Ivana Pösilöwski jatkoi vähän aikaa samaa rataa ja maalasi minusta kuvan, joka oli musta kuin nokikanan pyrstö." (149)

Example 5. ST: "It is gold as a well-digger's ass, but we climbed up the ladder an gone onto the ship's bridge." (144)

TT: "Oli kylmää kuin eskimon jääkaapissa, mutta me kavuttiin tikkaita ylös ja mentiin komentosillalle" (1616)

4.3.4 Omission

It seems that omission is considered a valid strategy in literary translation only on rare occasions. Leppihalme (2007, 372) states that nowadays as a rule omission is considered an acceptable translation solution only if the translator is in a hurry with a deadline approaching, or s/he has an insufficient knowledge of the language or the source culture. The latter might be said to represent unprofessional behaviour on the part of the translator, if s/he accepts a translation assignment without the requisite cultural and/or linguistic competence for the task. Usually if a source text contains culture-specific realia in details, the translator may decide to choose a more generic, superordinate term keeping the core element of the expression while omitting detailed information. For example,

the Finnish language contains a large number of nouns related to different forms of snow (nuoska, sohjo, tykkylumi, räntä, etc), which lack a precise equivalent in English.

Leppihalme (1997) reports in her research that literary translators use omission only as a last resort and they usually feel dissatisfied with such a solution. The findings in the present corpus lend support to this observation. There were only a couple of examples where information was left out.

The following examples illustrate a case where a noun has been replaced by a superordinate term. In the first example 'high school' was translated as 'school' omitting the reference to the level of education.

Example 1. ST: "When they seen me comin, the high school band interrupted the mayor's speech an begun playin 'God bless America'..." (65)
TT: "Kun koulun soittokunta näki minun tulevan, se keskeytti pormestarin puheen ja rupesi soittamaan 'Jumala siunatkoon Amerikkaa'..." (77)

Another similar example in which a generic word is chosen to replace a more detailed ST word refers to the Anglo-Saxon Christmas time tradition of singing carols outdoors. In Britain and in the USA choirs often visit houses going door-to-door collecting money for charity at Christmas time. The popularity of singing carols in a group has also increased in Finland, but due to the cold winter climate Finns prefer to gather together indoors, usually in a church, to sing carols.

Example 2. ST: "Outside a group of carolers from the Salvation Army is singing 'Away in a Manger', an I can hear a Santa Claus ringin his bell for donation." (104, underlining added)

TT: “ Ulkonta kuului mitten Pelastusarmeijan kuoro lauloi ‘Heinillä härskien kaukalon’ ja joulupukki kilisti tiukua, jotta ihmiset ymmärtäisi antaa kiliseviä.” (118)

The reference to Santa Claus and the title of a well-known Christmas song, which is a translation from French, with its name slightly altered to add a humorous effect, naturally reveals the nature of this musical moment to the Finnish reading audience.

Example 3. ST: “The reverend had a wife called Tamny Faye, looked like a kewpie doll with eyelashes long as a dragonfly’s wings and a lot of rouge on her cheeks.” (107, underlining added)

TT: “Pastorilla oli vaimo nimeltä Tamny Faye, joka oli ihan nuken näköinen, koska sen silmäripset oli pitkät kuin sudenkorenon siivet ja sen poskilla oli paljon punaa.” (120)

A kewpie doll has been replaced by a superordinate word ‘doll’ (nukke). A kewpie doll is a specific kind of a baby doll with big cheeks, wide eyes and a round tummy. As far as I know Finnish lacks an equivalent word, so the use of a generic word is an acceptable and seemingly the only reasonable translation solution.

Another example of omission is a detailed description of a big bed in a hotel room. In Finland there are fewer sizes of beds than in the United States where there is a choice between ‘a twin bed’, ‘a double bed’, ‘a king size bed’, ‘a queen size bed’, or even ‘a California or Western King size bed.’ The Finnish translator has opted for describing the big size of the bed, omitting the reference to ‘a covered top’.

Example 4. ST: “Big ole king-size bed with a covered top and fireplace and a TV set built into the wall.” (118)

TT: “Sänky oli niin iso, että siihen olisi mahtunut nukkumaan vaikka kuinka monta henkeä, seinään oli upotettu takka ja televisio.” (133)

4.3.5 Change

I deal “change” in the connection of other translation strategies deviating from the list of translation strategies presented in Leppihalme (2000). By nature a translation process always involves change, since the very act of conveying messages in another language manifests changes occurring at the lexical, grammatical and morphological level. The translator aims at building a balance at the semantic level creating an illusion that the TT reader is offered a text that was originally designed for the target audience.

Changes can be intentional or unintentional. For instance, the translator may decide to recreate a dialogue written in a local English dialect into a more standard language after reflecting the negative side effects called forth by the use of a regional Finnish dialect, such as Savo, Karelia, or Helsinki slang. And which Finnish dialect to prefer, since they all sound unnatural coming out of an English-speaking character’s mouth? Some changes may be unintentional if the translator has misinterpreted the message in the source text, has (accidentally) made changes in the style or the tone of the narration, or has not managed to come up with a natural-sounding Finnish equivalent term.

The first discernible change between the ST and TT was the marked difference in Forrest Gump’s speech. Forrest Gump’s oral expression resembles the spoken language of a retarded or uneducated person, who has a lacking knowledge of the English grammar – he is classified as a “certified idiot” in the book. The translator has not made an attempt to transfer these features into the Finnish

translation, since this would probably have been an impossible task to implement, due to the different inherent nature of the source and target languages. As a rule Finnish words are spelled and pronounced identically, contrary to English. I will list a few examples illustrating the differences in speech between the English-speaking and Finnish-speaking Forrest Gump:

- ST: "We is thowed in jail" (2)
TT: "Ne heitti meidät putkaan" (12)
ST: "Ain't nothin goin on" (3)
TT: "Mikään ei pyörinyt" (13)
ST: "You ain't even got a job" (190)
TT: "Eihän sinulla ole työpaikkaakaan" (209)

The Finnish-speaking Forrest Gump sounds more grammatically correct and cultivated than the original with some features of colloquial language planted in the speech. I limit the study of stylistic features with these passing remarks, since they characterise Forrest Gump's personality instead of the social and cultural environment in which he lives.

The following examples illustrate cases where the translator has come up with a rather peculiar sounding translation solution.

Example 1. ST: "It tasted more like a combination of turpentine and bacon grease, with a little sugar and fizzy-water thowed in." (31, underlining added)

TT: "Lähinnä se maistui tärpätin ja pekonirasvan sekoitukselle, mihin on lorautettu sekaan vähän sokeria ja pihinävettä." (43)

Example 2. ST: "They is big heaps of what appear to be salami wrapped in cabbage an hams an olives an fruit an maybe cottage cheese or something..." (91, underlining added)

TT: “ Ne toi meille läjäpäin jotain, mikä näytti kaalinlehtiin kiedotuilta salamimakkaroilta, ja kinkkua ja oliivia ja hedelmiä siellä oli kanssa ja ehkä herajuustoa...” (103)

The first word 'pihinävesi' sounds to my ears strange and non-Finnish. The word is not found in Suomen kielen perussanakirja, whereas the more commonly used translation equivalent 'kivennäisvesi' and the more literal translation 'mineraalivesi' (cf. 'mineral water' in English) are listed there. I found no matching documents when entering the word 'pihinäve*' in the Google's search engine, while the English word 'fizzy water' generated 90,800 matches. The disadvantage of selecting non-standard expressions is that unnatural sounding translation solution may unintentionally draw the reader's attention to irrelevant details. (At least that was what happened to me when reading this translation.)

Hatim and Mason (1997, 39) point out that 'deliberately marked use of language defies normal expectations.' The translator's motive behind this deviant word choice remains obscure to me; I doubt that markedness was intended in this case.

The second word 'herajuusto' actually refers to 'whey cheese', so there is a slight translation mistake, although the cheese substance plays no role in this context, since we are not dealing here with a translation of a recipe. The better matching TT translation would have been 'raejuusto', which is in fact more widely eaten in Finland than 'whey cheese' - and therefore a preferable translation solution in my opinion.

The translator is faced with a real challenge when s/he encounters a lexical gap in the text, i.e. a concept that is missing in the target culture. The story of Gump & Co exhibits one example of a food item that is not widely sold in Finnish stores (yet), but well-known in the USA: rootbeer.

Example 3. ST: “Next I put in some rootbeer extract...” (41)

TT: “Kaadoin sitten kuppiin hedelmäolutuutetta...” (53)

In other contexts (e.g. in translations of the cartoon Peanuts written by Charles M. Schultz) ‘root beer’ has been translated as ‘inkivääriolut’. Both terms (‘hedelmäolutuute’ and ‘inkivääriolut’) are inaccurate and somewhat misleading: a Finn who has not tasted root beer may assume that this beverage contains alcohol and should not be served to children. In reality ‘root beer’ is a carbonated soft drink like Pepsi, Coke or Dr. Pepper, which is flavoured with extracts of roots and herbs. Finding a satisfactory translation solution to objects that are non-existent in the target culture remains a difficult task, and no patent translation solution can be given. Perhaps one day ‘root beer’ will be as familiar to the Finnish public as other imported American soft drinks like Coke, Mountain Dew and Sprite, but until then it remains a difficult task to come up with an one-for-all optimal translation solution.

The translator’s creativity and resourcefulness are also called for when translating wordplays, puns and humour in general. To begin with, humour does not always transcend national and cultural boundaries – jokes and comic sketches that make us Finns laugh may not amuse British or American audiences in the least. I do not forecast huge popularity for e.g. Kummeli sketches or Unto Turhapuro movies, if they were translated and exported to English-speaking countries, although, on the other hand many British and American comedies like ‘Keeping Up Appearances’, ‘Friends’, ‘Fawlty Towers’, or even Archie Bunker’s racist remarks in ‘All in the Family’ were appreciated and received with a warm welcome among the Finnish viewing audience. Humour does not seem to travel both ways.

Secondly, humorous elements are often embedded in the language structure. Word plays and puns make use of alliterations, allusions, rhymes, onomatopoeia, etc. to create an amusing effect. As a rule a humorous effect has to be produced with different TL means. Successfully recreated TL word plays and puns are rather few and far between.

First I will cite an example of a wordplay that I ran into on TV illustrating the kind of obstacles encountered when translating humour. This extract is taken outside the corpus from a British TV series called “Black Adder”. It aptly demonstrated challenges translators sometimes come across in translatory work.

Baldrick: “I heard they started the war when a bloke called Archie Duke shot an ostrich ‘cause he was hungry.”

Black Adder: “I think you mean it started when the Archduke of Austria-Hungary got shot.”

Baldrick: “No, there was definitely an ostrich involved.”

The translation reads as follows:

Baldrick: “Kuulin, että se (sota) alkoi kun Erkki Herttua tappoi ammun, koska hän oli ankara.”

Musta Kyy: ”Se alkoi kun Itävalta-Unkarin arkkiherttua ammuttiin.”

Baldrick: ”Ei, se liittyi jotenkin ammuun.”

The translator was faced with a wordplay whose translation we could almost call ‘a mission impossible’. He or she had tried to do his/her best to retain the amusing effect, but the witty wordplay has lost its sharpest edge in translation and the Finnish “joke” sounds clumsy and far-fetched flattening the humorous aspect.

In the corpus under study I found a wordplay which functioned well in the target language, but lost its playful tone in translation.

Example 4. ST: “That is licensed seein-eye hog”, Dan says. “Can’t you see I’m blind?” (75)

TT: “Se on rekisteröity sokeainsika”, Dan sanoi. ”Vai etkö muka näe, että minä olen sokea?” (87)

In English the nouns 'dog' and 'hog' rhyme, but since there is no such resemblance between the Finnish words 'koira' and 'sika' the pun goes missing, but the factual information is retained through literal translation. To compensate the loss of humour in this kind of context the translator has added humorous elements elsewhere in the text where the source text does not call for it. Hatim and Mason (1997, 115) describe this strategy as “compensation in place, where the effect is achieved at a different place from that in the source.”

Example 5. ST: “They laid it (food) all down in front of us on a big Persian rug...” (91)

TT: “Ne laski sapuskat meidän eteen persukkalaismatolle...” (103, underlining added)

Example 6. ST: “What is the Ayatolja of Iran got to do with it?” the President says.

TT: “Mitä tekoa Iranin ajatollolla siinä on?” presidentti sanoi. (97, underlining added)

In several cases the translator has managed to successfully retain the colourful and entertaining style found in the source text. On the list of typologies of compensation this procedure refers to “compensation in kind, where different linguistic devices are employed to recreate a similar effect to that of the source” (Hatim & Mason 1997, 115).

Example 8. ST: "Look what happened when that other numbnut president of yours came over here and tried to screw with our hostage-takin enterprise." (90, underlining added)

TT: "Katsokaa mitä tapahtui kun se teidän edellinen onttopönttö-presidentti yritti tulla sotkemaan meidän panttivankihankkeita." (102)

Example 9. ST: "Yeah, that's what some other crackpot told me..." (105, underlining added)

TT: "Joo, täällä kävi joku toinenkin latvalaho väittämässä semmoista..." (118-119)

Example 10. ST: "Gretchen and me caught a train back to Oogamooga or whatever it is that we lived." (161)

TT: "Gretchen ja minä ajettiin junalla takaisin Kritzkratzburgiin tai mikä sen kylän nimi taas oli missä me asuttiin." (179)

Example 11. ST: "Man, we had tanks and howitzers and bombers could sure bring down a lot of pee on the enemy." (150-151)

TT: "Jumaliste, meillä oli tankit ja haupitsit ja pelit, ja meidän pommikoneet näytti taatusti viholliselle, mistä reiästä kana kusee." (167-168)

4.4. General remarks

The translation under study was made quite recently in 1996; there were no strange words or sayings that could be traced resulting from a time gap between the time of production and the present. In general the TT was a comprehensible

rewriting of the ST and the style was fluent despite the occurrence of a few clumsy translation solutions.

As it could be predicted it seemed that the translator had struggled most with the problem of how to render culture-bound elements into natural sounding TT words. Witte's hypothesis (see 4.2. Culture-bound elements) on cultural phenomena presenting more problems than linguistic differences held true in the corpus under study.

The material under study demonstrated that culture-specific terms can appear in all kinds of situations and in various forms. The analysis of the corpus revealed that they can be references to food, names of places, measurements and monetary units, common sayings and similes, cultural and historical events, political institutions, traditions, and everyday objects like furniture and toys.

For most part the translator had found a well-functioning TT equivalent, even though sometimes the meaning was slightly altered (e.g. 'cookies' turned into 'gingerbread cookies', 'lemonade' into 'soda pop', or 'cottage cheese' into 'whey cheese'). In a couple of cases he had not managed to untie himself from the chains of the source language. As a consequence he had settled for a too literal translation that sounds clumsy in Finnish (see examples 8, 9 & 10 cited in 4.3.1.).

Chesterman (1997, 71) remarks that interference is a universal phenomenon and translators all over the world irrespective of the language pair they work with "tend to be influenced by the language of the source text, in a various ways". Professional translators are no exception to the rule, which proves how pervasive and ubiquitous this phenomenon is. No wonder that the study material also revealed a couple of instances that support this claim. (E.g. *good luck* was hiding "in disguise" and *yards* and *gallons* were occasionally left as such, although these American measurements are likely to puzzle the average TT reader.)

It was interesting to make comparisons between the source and target text in order to draw conclusions which translation strategies seemed to work best when rendering culture-bound elements. Based on the number of cases found in the TT (10 examples) the minimum change strategy seems to be the preferred alternative in various kinds of contextual situations. Quite often this is the easiest and quickest translation solution, since the words are “on display” as if “on a tray ready to be picked up”.

The minimal change strategy can be said to be source-culture oriented and foreignizing by nature. It adds local colour and a touch of otherness in the target text. It is customary to leave the names of places and people, and concepts like monetary units untranslated or “minimally changed”. In the corpus the translator had faithfully domesticated measurements into kilos and metres, but once he had left yards unconverted. I assume this to be lapse of memory, because it occurred only once.

The other strategies that yielded several examples include explicitation and cultural adaptation. This finding supports the fact that translators have internalized their role as mediators between two cultures. They are eager to smoothe out potential stumbling blocks or ‘culture bumps’ as Leppihalmi calls them in order to facilitate TT readers’ reading experience. Chesterman (1997, 71, 108) remarks that adding an explanation is one of the most commonly used translation strategies pointing out that comparison between original and translated texts indicates that translators have the tendency to make translations more explicit than the original text. I find this observation very human since it demonstrates that translators feel their duty to render texts with as few culture bumps and ambiguous passages as humanly possible. (Sometimes spelling out ambiguity that was left in the text by the author on purpose.) In these cases the

translator has used domestication strategy bringing the text “home” closer to the TT reader.

Omission is a translation strategy that translator as a rule try to avoid whenever possible. It is probably interpreted as a sign of weakness or failure if some information must be left out. Texts that contain a lot of culture-bound elements are source-culture oriented, and it is only natural if some ST elements do not find a perfectly matching TT equivalent. More often than completely eliminating a whole ST reference the translator chose a more superordinate term offering less detailed information to the TT reader (e.g. a *king-size bed* becomes simply a bed or a *kewpie doll* is just a doll).

The translator has become more visible in recent years. Today it is desirable that the translator’s voice is heard. Venuti (1995,2), among others, regrets that reviewers of literary texts usually comment on the fluency of the style only, neglecting other factors like “its intended audience, its economic value in the current bookmarket, or its place in the translator’s career.” Chesterman (1997, 125) has also noted that critics tend to make comments on the translation only when the relationship between the ST and TT is felt to be either better or worse than expected. (See also Koskinen 2007, 335).

These observations hold true to the review of the translation of Forrest Gump & Co, which was published in Savon Sanomat in April 1996. The critic first pays attention to negative things and softens the tone of the comments later in the review.

”Kirjan käännös saattaa äkkijyrkästä lukijasta tuntua alkuun nk. kökönoloiselta. Suosittelen äärimmäistä harkintaa ennen kiivastumista. **Erkki Jukarainen** on oivasti jättänyt mukaan mm. sana- ja nimileikit. (...) *ajatollo* on niistä vain yksi eikä välttämättä herkullisin.”

SS 108, 21.4.96 (bold letters in the original)

5 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to illustrate the various stages of a translation process and to examine the translation of culture-bound elements. I used an American novel "*Gump & Co*" and its Finnish translation as research material hoping to find ample instances of words that relate to the external world, which can be assumed to pose translation problems.

Translation is a multistage process involving many factors. Modern translation theories regard translation as a dynamic process which does not take place in a vacuum. Texts are viewed as vehicles of communication and the success rate of a translation depends on how well it is received among the target audience NOT on the basis of the number of deviations from the source text. In real life it is commonplace that target texts need to be revised and localized before they can start "a new life" in the target culture. (Cf. the example of a hotel advertisement cited in 2.2.).

According to the theories developed by Manipulation School a translated text is an independent entity and should not be judged on the basis of the equivalence between the ST and the TT. If the source text is considered an optimum model, almost approaching the state of holiness, it follows that recreation of a "good" translation is an unattainable goal and translations are by nature inferior copies, which reinforces the translator's status as a copier or a slave. I agree with Aaltonen, who objects to this kind of juxtaposition of the ST and TT, and reminds us that maximal loyalty is almost impossible and an absurd demand, because "a translation cannot become its source text". (Aaltonen 2001, 392-395).
Chesterman (1997, 11) also wonders why translations should be perfect "since no communication is perfect".

Reading is always a personal experience. Two readers of the same text are unlikely to create identical mental images evoked by a text. It is often heard that people feel disappointed after watching a movie made on the basis of a book they had earlier read. Somehow the characters did not seem “right” matching to the imagery pictures moviegoers had created inside their minds. On the other hand, if the process is reverse (a movie is seen before the reading experience), it is almost impossible to dispell the voices and faces of the actors/actresses on the screen. I am certain that all readers of Gump & Co who have seen the movie *Forrest Gump* picture the face of Tom Hanks in their imagination. It would be interesting to explore how the movie was translated into Finnish and compare the narration on the subtitles with Forrest Gump’s voice in the translated novel. How much does the medium through which the story is transmitted affect the translation solutions? I wonder if the Forrest Gump on the screen sounds more colloquial in Finnish than the one in the book.

The end of the reading process constitutes the starting point for the translation process. Translation likewise always involves interpreting. Meaning is “something that is negotiated during the communication or interpretation process itself” (Chesterman 1997, 14). In literary translation the created TT text is the end result of the translator’s interpretation process. It follows that there may exist several translations produced in different times that are all considered valid equivalents of the source text. Chesterman (1997,2) calls translators “agents of change” since they introduce new ideas and concepts into the target culture. The cross-cultural survival of texts depends on their translations. Since times change it is only natural that there is a social demand for the retranslation of the same novels. (E.g. the novels *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger and *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll have been translated more than once into Finnish.)

One intriguing issue in translation is the translator's role as the interpreter or mediator of the source text. Does the translator have free hands to make the kind of changes s/he deems inevitable and to what extent his/her decisions are influenced by the presence of external factors like the commissioner or the end-receiver of the text?

Besides excellent language skills, another important tool a translator needs to possess is cultural competence. This concept reminds us that translation is not only a linguistic phenomenon but it is always rooted in a particular time, place and socio-cultural setting. Besides linguistic and cultural knowledge translators also need to possess the ability to find necessary background information and estimate the degree of cultural adaptation (Chesterman 1997, 34). The most challenging translation problems often lie not in the inherent structure of the language but in the world outside the text. We can state that there is no optimal patent solution as to how to find appropriate TT terms for so called 'realia' words that refer to real life situations. A dictionary hardly ever offers a solution to the problem.

The two global strategies that determine the overall reception of a translation are *foreignizing* and *domesticating* strategies. Domesticated translations follow the expectancy norms and style of non-translated texts and are practically indistinguishable from native texts. The reader can fall into the illusion of reading a text originally written in the target language. The translations which adhere to the principles of the foreignizing strategy contain textual elements that remind the reader of the origin of the text. Source cultural features are left overt and the translator does not try to hide or disguise the fact that the source text was intended for a different audience living in a different socio-cultural setting. The corpus revealed that the selection of the strategy varies: at times ST words were domesticated (feet, inches, yards and pounds turned into centimeters, metres and kilos) whereas elsewhere foreignizing was considered to be the more

suitable strategy (the name of streets are untranslated and the saying *See you later, alligator* left in the original form).

Translators need to be alert at all times because culture-specific references can lurk in all kinds of contexts. The decision which translation strategy to use must be considered case by case. Leppihalme (1997, 5) points out that “translators need to be aware of TT readers’ needs and to take into account the expectations and background knowledge of potential TT readers in order to make decisions on appropriate translation strategies”. This instruction makes sense and emphasizes the role of the TT reader, who is after all the recipient of the services offered by translators. But this statement does not provide an explicit answer to the question I have often asked myself when translating that who is the average TT reader I am translating to. How can translators draw a profile of a target text audience? Is the basic knowledge level of a nation defined on the basis of the requirements listed on school curricula or on the supply of information transmitted by the media? It would be interesting to learn about methods that help the translator to make a chart of average TT readers. To my knowledge these issues have not yet been widely approached in translation studies and would prove an interesting starting point for further research.

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Suomenkielinen lyhennelmä

Would you like rootbeer, lemonade or Kool-Aid? The problems of translating culture-specific concepts from source culture into target culture

Kääntäminen on monimuotoinen ja monivaiheinen tarkkaa harkintaa ja analyysia edellyttävä prosessi, jota ei ole vielä koneellisesti onnistuttu suorittamaan. Kieli ja kielen konventiot ovat aina sidotut aikaan ja maantieteelliseen paikkaan; sosiokulttuurinen viitekehys muokkaa kielen olemusta. Ei ole esim. olemassa yhtä ainoaa standardienglantia, jota puhuttaisiin kaikkialla maailmassa, kielen sisällä esiintyy vaihtelua maantieteellisten alueiden välillä, varsinkin leksikaalisella tasolla.

Tekstejä voidaan pitää sosiokulttuurin verbaalisena osana (Hönig & Kußmaul 1985, 58); kääntäminen ei koskaan tapahdu tyhjiössä, vaan historiallisten ja kulttuuristen tapahtumien keskellä. Yksittäisten sanojen kääntäminen on usein pelkkää arvailua ja turhauttavaa puuhaa kontekstin puuttumisen vuoksi, vaikka maallikkoa saattaakin hymyilyttää – sanakirjahan on sanoja pullollaan!

Tämän tutkimustyön tavoitteena on luoda yleiskatsaus kääntämisen eri vaiheisiin ja keskittyä tarkemmin kulttuurisidonnaisten käsitteiden kääntämisen problematiikkaan. Tarkastelen eri *käännösstrategioita* eli kääntäjän käyttämiä toimintatapoja Ritva Leppihalmeen (2001, 139-148) esittämän mallin mukaan. Olen hieman muokannut hänen käännösstrategiamalliaan yhdistämällä strategiat 'Direct transfer' eli suora muunnos ja 'Calque' eli käännöslaina saman otsikon alle kohdaksi 'minimum change strategy' eli minimimuutoksen strategia sekä lisännyt loppuun kohdan 'Change', jossa käsittelen erikseen käännöksessä tapahtuneita silmäänpestäviä muutoksia. Tähän kategoriaan kuuluu mm.. päähenkilön puheen tyyli muutokset sekä käännösratkaisut, joissa lähtötekstin sana on jonkin verran muuttanut merkitystään kohdekielisessä tekstiympäristössä.

Tutkimusaineistoksi olen valinnut *Winston Groomin*_kirjoittaman romaanin *Gump & Co.* sekä sen suomenkielisen suomennoksen *Gump ja kumppani*.

Suomennoksen on tehnyt Erkki Jukarainen, joka on kääntänyt suomeksi myös mm. John Le Carrén, Kurt Vonnegutin ja Patricia Cornwellin romaaneja. Valitsin lähdemateriaaliksi *Gump & Co* teoksen, koska se on tiukasti kiinni amerikkalaisessa kulttuuriympäristössä. Luettuani romaanin totesin sen sisältävän useita kulttuurisidonnaisia elementtejä ja minua alkoi kiinnostaa tutkia kuinka kääntäjä oli onnistunut kääntämään ne kohdekielelle. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on vertailla deskriptiivisesti käännösratkaisuja alkuperäiseen teokseen, ei arvioida kriittisesti mahdollisesti löytyviä epäonnistuneita ratkaisuja.

Toisessa luvussa pohdin mm. lukijan roolia käännösprosessissa sekä kääntäjän asemaa tekstin lukijana. Kohdekielinen käännöstekstihän on aina kääntäjän tulkinta tekstistä. Oittinen (2001, 170) korostaa, että lukeminen on ”vuorovaikutustilanne, johon lukija osallistuu yhdessä tekstin kirjoittajan kanssa”. Hatim ja Mason (1990, 224) puolestaan pohdiskelevat, kuinka kääntäjän lukukokemus poikkeaa ”tavallisen” keskivertolukijan lukemistapahtumasta. Henkilön, joka lukee kirjoja paetakseen arjesta ja nauttiakseen kirjan suomasta esteettisestä mielihyvästä, tuskin tarvitsee vaivata päätään sillä, kuinka kulttuurisidonnaiset sanat kuten *rootbeer*, *diner*, *EPA people* tai *king-size bed* taipuvat suomen kielelle.

Kolmannessa kappaleessa tarkastellaan kulttuurin merkitystä kääntämiselle. Nykyisin käännöstieteellisessä kirjallisuudessa korostetaan erinomaisen kielitaidon ohella vahvaa kulttuurintuntemusta. Kääntäjän tulisi olla kielen asiantuntija sekä kulttuurin tuntija ja pystyä tekemään havaintoja ja vertailua lähtö- ja kohdekulttuurien välillä. Yhdessä Gumpin tarinan kohdassa eräs ei-amerikkalaiseen kulttuuriin kuuluva henkilö ihmettelee, kun eversti North syö ruokaa sormin eikä haarukalla ja veitsellä. Kääntäjä, joka tuntee Yhdysvaltoja ja

amerikkalaisia tapoja ei sitä ihmettelisi, koska hän tietää, että esim. pizzan tai hampurilaisen syöminen sormin on Yhdysvalloissa yleisesti hyväksytty tapa – ellei peräti normi.

Amerikkalainen kulttuuri ja elämäntapa ovat tulleet useimmille suomalaisille tutuksi television ja populaarikulttuurin kautta. Moni lukijakin ainakin luulee tuntevansa viitekehyksen, jossa tarinan päähenkilö Forrest Gump seikkailee. Mutta missä määrin luulo on tiedon väärtti? Monet suomalaiset, joilla on vankat mielipiteet Yhdysvalloista, joutuvat lopulta myöntämään, etteivät tiedä maasta juuri mitään, koska eivät ole siellä koskaan käyneetkään. Heidän tietonsa perustuu median välittämiin tietoihin. Ja kuinka luonnehtisi ”keskivertoamerikkalaisen” maassa, josta on vuosisatojen saatossa tullut kansojen sulatusuuni ja jonka väestöluku on jo ylittänyt 190 miljoonaa asukasta?

Analyysiosuudessa käyn läpi eri käänösstrategiat (minimimuutokset, selittäminen tai selkeyttäminen (vrt. Leppihalme 2007, 370), kulttuurinen adaptaatio, poisto ja muutos) sekä analysoin mitä strategiaa kääntäjä on eri tilanteissa käyttänyt. Leppihalme (2007, 373) toteaa, että ”valitut strategiat vaikuttavat paitsi itse käänökseen, joka niiden mukaan muotoutuu, myös lukijoihin ja koko vastaanottavaan kulttuuriin.” Ei siis ole aivan yhdentekevää MITEN teos käännetään. Yksi kiinnostavimmista analyysin kohteista käänösvertailua tehdessä on kiinnittää huomio siihen, onko kääntäjä valinnut tekstin kotouttamisen vai vieraannuttamisen perusstrategian.

Kotouttava käänös tuo lähtötekstin lähemmäksi lukijaa eli se tuodaan vieraasta ympäristöstä kohti lukijan turvallista kotiympäristöä. Tämän periaatteen mukainen käänös sisältää mm. selitystä ja kulttuurista adaptaatiota. Kääntäjä ikään kuin silottelee ohdakkeet lukemisen polulta ja tasoittaa ”kulttuuritöyssyt” (Leppihalmeen (1994:234) käyttämä termi, jolla kuvaillaan sekaannusta aiheuttavia tai vaikeaselkoisia kulttuurisidonnaisia käsitteitä), jotka saattavat

häiritä lukijaa. Sen vastakohta on vieraannuttava käänнос, joka on enemmän kiinni lähtökulttuurissaan. Käännökseen jätetään avoimesti kulttuurisidonnaisia piirteitä ikään kuin muistuttamaan lukijaa käännökseen alkuperäisestä kontekstista. Kysymykseen kumpaa näistä perusstrategioista kääntäjän tulisi noudattaa on lähestulkoon mahdotonta löytää yhtä oikeaa vastausta. Leppihalme (2007, 372) toteaa, että toisinaan on esitetty, että ”vieraannuttava eli paljon lähtökielen ja – kulttuurin piirteitä säilyttävä kääntämistapa on lähtötekstiä kunnioittava ja siksi suositeltava.” Asia ei ole kokonaisuudessaan näin yksioikoinen, koska esim. lapsille käännettäessä on perusteltua viedä teksti lähemmäksi pienen lukijan maailmaa, mikä ei suinkaan tarkoita sitä, etteikö kääntäjä arvostaisi lähtöteosta. Olisikin mielenkiintoista perehtyä tarkemmin siihen, kuinka vapaat kädet kääntäjällä on käännosratkaisuja tehdessään ja missä määrin hänen toimintaansa vaikuttaa toimeksiantajan tai kohdekielisen vastaanottajan läsnäolo.

Hans Vermeerin (Reiß & Vermeer 1986, 55) *skoposteorian* mukaan kääntäjän päätöksiä ohjaa käännökseen päämäärä ja tarkoitus. Eri vastaanottajat tarvitsevat erilaisia tekstejä, joten käännöstoimintaa voidaan pitää kohdekulttuuriin suuntautuneena toimintana. Näin ollen lähtötekstin sanaa ei enää pidetä ”pyhänä” sanana, jota pitää orjallisesti noudattaa. On monia tilanteita, joissa kääntäjän on radikaalisti muutettava lähtötekstiä, jotta se toimisi kohdekulttuurissa esim. mainosteksteissä.

Kulttuurisesti painottunut kääntämisen suuntaus korostaa ”käännösten funktionaalisuutta eli toimivuuden tärkeyttä ja niiden hyväksyttävyyttä kohdekulttuurissa, tekstin sopimista muiden kohdekielisten tekstien joukkoon (Leppihalme 2007, 367)”. Tätä ohjenuoraa minäkin olen pyrkinyt noudattamaan tarkastellessani tutkimuksen kohteena olevan käännökseen ”uutta elämää” suomenkielisten lukijoiden käsissä.

Kolmannessa kappaleessa (tarkemmin 3.1.) luodaan lyhyt katsaus käännöskirjallisuuden asemaan eri maissa. Suomessa käännöskirjallisuudella on vankka asema. Käännöskirjallisuuden roolia tutkinut teoreetikko Itamar Even-Zohar on todennut, että käännöskirjallisuudella on keskeinen rooli vähemmistökieliä puhuvissa maissa. (Ks. Gentzler 1993, 117). Suomen kieltä voitaneen pitää vähemmistökielenä, koska kieltä äidinkielenään puhuvia ei ole kymmeniä miljoonia, kuten esimerkiksi syntyperäisiä englantia, venäjää, ranskaa tai espanjaa puhuvia. Itamar Even-Zoharin toteamus pitää paikkansa myös Suomessa ja varsinkin englannin kielestä käännetty kaunokirjallisuus on huomasti nostanut päätään sodanjälkeisellä aikakaudella. Vuotta 1938 voidaan pitää angloamerikkalaisen kirjallisuuden läpimurtovuotena, jolloin englanninkielisen kaunokirjallisuuden osuus ylitti ensi kertaa 50%, ja suuntaus on ollut viime vuosikymmenien aikana edelleen noususuuntainen: tilastojen mukaan vuosina 1990-1998 englanniksi käännetty kirjallisuus oli jo lohkaissut leijonan osan eli 78,9% käännöskirjallisuuden kokonaistuotannosta. (Jalonen 1985:127, 174 & Paasonen 2001, 9-10).

Tilanne on toisenlainen angloamerikkalaisessa kulttuuriympäristössä. Venuti harmitteleekin käännöskirjallisuuden melko näkymätöntä roolia Yhdysvaltojen ja Ison-Britannian kirjamarkkinoilla. Hän myös arvostelee jyrkin sanoin tällä kieli- ja kulttuurialueella vallitsevaa kotouttamisen perusstrategiaa, jolloin vieraat, kulttuurisidonnaiset elementit pyritään häivyttämään ja tuomaan lähemmäksi kohdekielistä lukijaa. (Venuti 1995, 14-20).

Tutkimusmateriaalia analysoidessani löysin sekä kotouttamis- että vieraannuttamisstrategian mukaan tehtyjä käännösratkaisuja, joten päästrategia voi vaihdella tapauskohtaisesti. Esimerkiksi 'doughnuts' oli käännetty kotoisasti 'munkkipossuiksi', vaikka suomalaiset donitsejakin syövät, ja siellä ruokailtiin 'ruokakuppilassa' kun alkuperäistekstissä haukattiin välipalaa 'dinerissa'. Ruokakuppilasta tulee mieleen lähinnä joku laitakaupungilla sijaitseva

halpahintainen ruokapaikka, kun taas 'diner' on yleensä junan ravintolavaunua muistuttava ravintola – toki myös hintatasoltaan edullinen. Sanavalinnat ohjaavatkin niitä assosiaatioita ja mielikuvia, joita lukijan päässä syntyy.

Yleisellä tasolla voidaan todeta, että kääntäjä oli muutamaa kömpelöltä kuulostavaa käännösvastinetta lukuun ottamatta onnistunut luomaan sujuvan kuuloista suomen kieltä. Mutta esimerkiksi *pihinäveden* ('fizzy water') juominen tosin hieman hymyilytti, koska en ole tätä termiä kenenkään kuullut "elävässä elämässä" käyttävän kivennäisvedestä puhuttaessa. Myös jotkut kohdat, joissa kääntäjä oli käyttänyt minimimuutosstrategiaa eli lähdeteksti oli (tarpeettoman) lähellä lähdetekstiä tuntuivat hieman teennäisiltä. (Esim. "...*you don't like it – kiss my ass*" kääntyi "suomeksi" "...*ja jollei se miellytä sinua, saat silti nuolla minun persettä*" tai "*blessing in disguise*" oli käännössuomeksi "*onnenpotku valepuvussa*".)

Chesterman (1997, 719 huomauttaa, että *interferenssi* eli kielten vaikutus toisiinsa on yleismaailmallinen ilmiö (työ)kieliparista riippumatta. Ammattikäntäjätäkään eivät tältä ilmiöltä vältty, vaikka työnsä puolesta ovatkin tottuneet elämään kahden kielen ja kulttuurin välimaastossa. Ei siis mikään ihme, että lähdeaineistossakin löytyi esimerkkejä, joihin interferenssi oli lyönyt leimansa. Välillä *gallonat* ja *jaardit* olivat (vahingossa?) jääneet kääntämättä, vaikka ne eivät ole keskivertosuomalaiselle selkeitä mittasuureita ja *lemonade* (tarkkaan ottaen 'sitruunamehu') oli saanut hiilihapot sisälleen ja muuttunut *limskaksi*.

Leppihalmen tutkimuksen (1994) havaintojen mukaisesti myös tässä huomattavasti suppeamman lähdeaineiston perusteella voidaan todeta, että *minimalimuutos* on kaikkein suosituin käännösstrategia. Yleisten käännöskonventioiden mukaisesti esim. kadun nimet jätetään kääntämättä

eivätkä esim. kansainvälisesti tunnetut syömiseen liittyvät sanat kuten *pop corn*, *Coke Cola*, *chili con carne*, *Tabasco* ja *Worcester* selitystä kaipaa.

Kääntäjä oli useammassa kohdassa lisännyt lyhyen selityksen (esim. Mardi Gras-kulkue tai ”Air Force ykkönen *eli presidentin virkakone*) tai kotouttanut tekstiä lähemmäksi kohdekulttuuria (esim. mittayksiköt oli useimmiten muutettu suomalaisille tutuiksi kilometreiksi ja kiloiksi tai Gump oli laitettu juoksemaan kuin **hirvi** lepakon sijasta). Poisto on käänösstrategia, jota kääntäjät yrittävät viimeiseen asti välttää. Leppihalme (2007, 372) toteaa, että poisto on yleisesti ottaen hyväksytty keino vain ”jos kääntäjän kielitaito tai maantuntemus eivät riitä ja kiire painaa päälle.” Kääntäjät ilmeisesti kokevat sen ammattitaidon puutteeksi tai epäonnistumisen merkinä, jos he eivät onnistu löytämään lähtötekstin sanalle kohdekielistä vastinetta. Poistoa yleisempää onkin korvata lähtötekstin sana jollain yläkäsitteellä (esim. *king-size bed* muuttui ’tavalliseksi vuoteeksi’ ja *kewpie doll* pelkäksi nukeksi). Kääntäjä tarjoaa näin vähemmän yksityiskohtaista ja yleisluontoisempaa tietoa ilman että koko käsitteestä tarvittaisiin ”päästä eroon”.

Chestermanin (1997, 2) sanoin voidaan todeta, että kääntäjät ovat ”muutoksen agentteja”. Käännöstekstien mukana suomen kieleen on virrannut ulkomaisia vaikutteita vuosisatojen ajan. Vieraskielisten tekstien jatkoelämä on kääntäjien käsissä. Aikojen muuttuessa käänöksiltä odotetaan eri asioista, siksi onkin luontevaa, että samasta tekstistä voi olla useita versioita. Nehän ovat oman aikakautensa tuotteita. Voidaan mainita esimerkiksi J.D. Salingerin romaani *Sieppari ruispellossa* tai Lewis Carrollin klassikko *Liisa ihmemaassa* (tai *Alicen seikkailut ihmemaassa* kuten teoksen tuorein suomennos on nimetty). On melko mahdotonta keksiä mittapuuta, jonka mukaan eri käännökset voisi asettaa paremmuusjärjestykseen.

Yksi tutkimukseni tavoitteista oli valottaa kulttuurintuntemuksen tärkeyttä – ilman sitä kulttuurisidonnaisten käsitteiden kääntäminen on sokeaa arvailua. Kääntäjän

on oltava varuillaan, sillä kulttuurisia viitteitä saattaa löytyä minkä tyyppisistä teksteistä hyvänsä. Leppihalme (1997, 5) muistuttaa, että kääntäjien täytyy olla tietoisia kohdekielisen lukijan odotuksista sekä huomioida potentiaalisten lukijoiden taustatiedot ja tarpeet käännettäessä. Tämä ohje korostaa kääntäjän roolin tärkeyttä viestin välittäjänä, mutta kuka onkaan tuo ”keskiverto kohdetekstin lukija”? Minua kiinnostaisi tietää, minkä mukaan esimerkiksi taustatietoa mitataan? Onko mittatikkuna yleinen koulusivistys vai median välittämä tieto? Kuinka kääntäjä kahden kulttuurin välimaastossa työskentelevänä voi tietää mikä tieto lukijalta puuttuu? Lukijahan voi ärsyyntyä, jos hänelle selitetään tuttua asiaa tai toisaalta turhaantua, jos teksti sisältää paljon vieraita käsitteitä. Millä menetelmällä kääntäjä voi piirtää keskivertolukijan profiiliin ja kartoittaa hänen pohjatietonsa. Tietääkseni tätä asiaa ei toistaiseksi ole käänöstieteessä paljon käsitelty, ja tämä voisi olla mielenkiintoinen jatkotutkimuksen kohde.