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TRANSLATION OF WORDPLAY
IN FRASIER

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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää sanaleikkien kääntämistapoja. Materiaali koostuu yhdysvaltalaisen tilannekomedia *Frasierin* videoiduista jaksoista, joista on poimittu esiin englanninkieliset sanaleikit ja niiden käännökset. Tutkielmassa pyritään vastaamaan kysymyksiin: 1) onko sanaleikki yleensä saatu siirrettyä kohdekieleen, ja missä määrin se on käännösongelma? 2) mitkä asiat vaikuttavat sanaleikin käännettävyyteen? Lähtökohtana on erityisesti sanaleikkien kielikohtaisuus, eli tarkasteltavana ovat myös kohdekielen tarjoamat mahdollisuudet toimivalle käännökselle. Tutkimus on kvalitatiivinen.

Lähdekielisten sanaleikkien rakenne pyritään kuvaamaan yksityiskohtaisessa käsittelyssä. Pääosin keskitytään kuitenkin käännösten tutkimiseen ja kuvailemiseen. Käännösratkaisuista muodostuu kaksi pääluokkaa; sanaleikin häviäminen sekä sanaleikin säilyminen käännöksessä. Näistä suurempi luokka (n.52%), sanaleikin häviäminen, on tulos neljästä eri käännöstyyppistä. Harvinaisin näistä on kokonaan kääntämättä jättäminen (4%), kun taas yleisin on vain primaarin, semanttisen merkityksen kääntäminen (24%). Näiden väliin jää kaksi käännösluokkaa. Kääntäjä saattaa kääntää molemmat lähdekielen sanaleikkimerkitykset erillisillä, semanttisesti vastaavilla kohdekielillä ilmauksilla. Toinen luokka osoitti, että sanaleikin ensimmäinen merkitys saatetaan kääntää semanttisesti vastaavalla ilmauksella ja sekundaari merkitys ei-semanttisella ilmauksella. Tapauskohtainen analysointi osoitti, että n. 37,5% sanaleikin häviämistapauksista oli tarpeettomia, sillä kohdekieli olisi mahdollistanut sanaleikin säilymisen.

Sanaleikin säilyminen käännöksessä on siis hieman vähemmän yleisempää kuin sen häviäminen käännösprosessissa. Sanaleikki säilyi kolmella eri käännöstavalla. Kääntäjä saattaa kääntää yhden sanaleikin merkityksistä semanttisesti ja johtaa tästä merkityksestä uuden, kohdekielellä toimivan sanaleikin. Yhtä tavallista (17%) on kokonaan uuden sanaleikin kehittäminen kontekstin pohjalta. Hieman harvinaisempaa (13%) on se, että lähdekielen ja kohdekielen välillä on niin suuri referenttien vastaavuus, että sanaleikin saattaa kääntää lähes sellaisenaan kohdekieleen.

Osoittautui, että erityisesti äännesanaleikit aiheuttavat käännösongelmia. Toinen erityispiirre on toiston jättäminen pois tarpeettomasti kohdekielisestä ilmauksesta, jolloin monimerkityksisyyskin katoaa. Useimmissa tapauksissa tähän ei vaikuttavana tekijänä ole edes tekstityksen tilanpuute. Sanaleikkien kääntämiseen pitäisi siis kiinnittää enemmän huomiota.

Asiasanat: translation. wordplay. ambiguity. sitcom. subtitling.

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INTRODUCTION

It is important to study the translations of texts of more entertaining nature, and not to concentrate only on the study of so-called more serious texts. After all, the entertainment business is spreading all over the world, and translations of such products are becoming more and more common. In addition, using of entertainment, such as television, is a growing part in every day life.

Even if the text is humorous and light, as sitcom dialogues are, it does not mean that it can be translated lightly, without it meeting the demands of good quality translation. Moreover, even though their status and image are often low, texts like sitcom dialogues are artistic results just as much as the more valued and serious texts are. Often sitcom is a product of several writers, which can be considered a signal of for example wordplays being carefully planned and bearing a special emphasis. Most importantly, the nature of sitcom is highly dependent on verbal (and nonverbal) play; it is the dominant characteristic of sitcom, and it separates it from other genres. Basically, the translator has two choices when translating a wordplay; either to preserve it or to delete it. I will concentrate on this in the present study, and discuss how this dominant characteristic of sitcom, ie. wordplay, is treated in the subtitling process.

Speakers and writers often use rhetorical techniques as a means of enhancing the impact and appeal of a discourse, and these techniques are not found in the routine forms of expression used in the so-called 'plain Jane' style of communication (Nida 1990). These techniques are thus widely used in situation comedies in particular, because the style and language in them have to be out of ordinary in order to create humorous effects for the target audience. Nida classifies these semantic techniques for example into figurative expression, similarity and contrast, plays on the meanings of words, sound symbolism, ambiguity etc. The present study will focus on the

wordplays and their translations in an American sitcom called *Frasier*. Purposeful ambiguity and plays on the meanings of words are often a challenge for the translator, because it is, after all, rare that a word with two or more meanings in the source language (SL) has the same meanings in the target language (TL). In addition, wordplays and their central role in creating humour in sitcoms cannot be overlooked in the subtitling process. Further, subtitling sets its own, strict limits for translating.

As mentioned above, wordgames are an interesting translation challenge because in most cases they cannot be translated word-for-word without losing the sense of the passage, and without causing damage to the idea behind the situation comedy, which is to entertain and amuse the target audience. For this reason, the present study will focus on studying the translations of the wordgames used in *Frasier*. *Frasier* was chosen to be analysed because such wordgame cases are relatively frequent in it. I will approach the subject by bringing up these cases and studying them in the light of the original text and the translated version. In addition, I will discuss other possibilities available for the translator. In other words, cases where the TL offers possibilities for other kind of translations will also be discussed.

I will try to find out in my present study what kind of solutions there is for the translator when he/she is faced with this problem, and which solution he/she has made. I will discuss the outcome of these solutions in the light of their character, ie. whether they preserve or delete the element of wordplay in the TL. The possible reasons behind the choice made by the translator will also be discussed case by case. Since the genre of sitcom, and the genre of TV in general, is strongly influenced by its so-called on-screen nature, I will also take into account and discuss the limits set by the television screen, such as the subtitles and their characteristics.

First, in the review of literature I will bring up the genre of sitcom and its features, after which the sitcom *Frasier* will be introduced as an individual

representant of the genre. Then, some general views of translation presented in the field of translation studies will be discussed briefly. In that section, I will consider such points of translation which are of importance to the subtitling of a sitcom (such as effect and function of translation). The concept of equivalence, which often is especially problematic in the translation of wordplay will also be looked into, after which the main subject of the present study, ie. the wordplay itself, will be in focus. Its ambiguous nature and its effect on translation will also be discussed in the light of other studies. As has been already stated above, subtitling and the television screen set their own limits on translation, and it will be reasonable for me to introduce them and their characteristics in the review of literature. In addition, dubbing will be briefly looked into as an alternative for subtitles, even though in Finland it is not a common form of translation, and it will not be present in the data of this study. However, it will be useful to discuss it, because it will give light to the concept of subtitles. Finally, I will study the views presented about good quality translation, and whether subtitles meet these demands.

After the literary review, I will briefly explain my research design. In that section I will discuss the central points of my research one by one, also chorologically. I will describe the nature of my data and how I collected it. After the research design I will analyze the present data case by case, after which the results of the present study will be discussed and conclusion will be presented, too.

2. INTRODUCTION TO SITCOM

Situation comedies, or sitcoms as they are commonly called, are classified as a form of light entertainment (Bowes 1990:130). This does not mean that sitcoms are badly written. On the contrary, it often takes several professional writers to write dialogues for one episode of a sitcom. The most succesful early sitcom was *I Love Lucy* in the 1950's. It was the first sitcom created

especially for the television, while other sitcoms were in those days transferred from radio to television (op.cit.130). From the days of *I Love Lucy* onwards, the American sitcom, as American entertainment in general, has spread all over the world, including Finland. This domination has been noted for example by Alaketola-Tuominen (1989:42), who in her study of the American culture and its influence on Finland points out that already in 1963 American television shows and films dominated the Finnish television. Thus, television translation has long been an important factor, and translation of sitcoms is not an uncommon challenge for the translators nowadays.

The genre of sitcom is characterized by its continuous nature, ie. it can be classified as a television serie. Television series can be divided into two classes (Bowes 1990:130; Steinbock 1988:5). The first class, the class of *the serials*, is characterized by a continuous plot, which goes on from episode to episode. The second class, the class of *the series*, is characterized by a narrative closure in each episode. In other words, there is a clear beginning and a clear end between which there is a problem resolved within the 25-30 minutes of the programme (Bowes 1990:129). The modern sitcom can usually be situated in both classes, because there is usually a problem solved in each episode. However, some features of the plot tend to continue from one episode to another (eg. one episode can introduce a character which may stay on the show for a couple of episodes). The characteristics of *a series* are thus more dominant in sitcoms than those of *a serial*, because the central problem is resolved in the end of each episode, ie. the theme does not stay the same. Instead, it changes from episode to episode. The main characters stay the same, as do the locations (op.cit 128). The most important feature in sitcoms is the humour manifested in many ways, eg. irony, wordplay, theme etc. As has been already pointed out, this thesis concentrates on the study of wordplay translations, and thus the element of wordplay will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.4.

Usually, sitcoms are broadcast at the same time of the week so the audience learn to know it and can develop a habit of watching it. The time of broadcasting is a crucial factor when determining the target audience wanted: the earlier the show is broadcast, the younger the audience is expected to be (and naturally vice versa). Most sitcoms are prime-time shows. Prime time, as defined by Steinbock (1988:4), is the time from 7.30 pm to 10 pm on weekdays other than Fridays and Saturdays. On Fridays, prime time is from 7.30 pm to 11 pm, and on Saturdays from 6.30 pm to 11.30 pm. Prime time is thus apparently the time people are at home and free to watch television.

In conclusion, sitcom has clear, genre-bound features, which help the audience to identify it. In addition, the time of broadcast tells the member of the audience what kind of sitcom to expect. It also reveals the nature (ie. age) of the target audience. Above all, the prime time characteristics of sitcom tells us that sitcom is a very popular genre which attracts a lot of possible consumers, and thus advertisers. Briefly, neither sitcoms nor television as a medium can no longer be treated as inferior to other forms of communication and entertainment. After all, television is in most cases the primary source of information and entertainment for people.

2.1. *Frasier*

As the data for this thesis was collected from the sitcom *Frasier*, it deserves to be introduced more closely here. *Frasier* is an American sitcom which debuted in the USA on 1993. It is based on the character of Doctor Frasier Crane, who was already familiar to the American viewers from the hit show *Cheers*. *Frasier* was the highest rated rookie show of the television network NBC and it has won awards like Emmys and Golden Globes (Graham 1996:4). In 1998, it made history by winning its fifth Emmy Award in a row for the best comedy in television. Thus, it is well-justified to say that *Frasier* is highly appreciated as a witty and sophisticated television comedy. As sitcoms in general, *Frasier* lasts less than a half an hour and is a typical

prime-time show, both in the USA and now in Finland, too. Interestingly, in Finland *Frasier* was not broadcast at the prime time until the season 1998-99. At least during the season 1997-98, *Frasier* was broadcast on early Friday afternoons at 4.35 pm. However, the broadcasting time for the season 1998-99 is the very prime time; it is on Saturdays at 10 pm. This must have meant a change in the target audience, too. Supposedly, the later time of broadcasting means that in 1998 the TL audience is approximately similar to the SL target audience, which is the well-educated adults (*Frasier* is a show born as a 'side show' of *Cheers* so the target audience is likely to be similar in both, and according to Feuer (1987:127), the target audience of *Cheers* was meant to be the high-consuming 'yuppie' audience).

In addition to this, one could say that *Frasier* is not exactly a whole family show, because the language in it is sometimes quite complicated. For example, Frasier Crane, as a doctor, uses terms unfamiliar to an average viewer or a child, and as a peculiar character he often uses allusions and loan words. In addition to this, the themes constantly brought up in *Frasier* suggest that the target audience is of older age; divorce, life after marriage, sexual needs, mental problems and relationships in general are constantly present. In addition, the humour lies in the language and the dialogue used, which in its turn can cause problems to the translator. Particularly, the amount of SL multiple meanings is large, thus providing the present thesis an easily collectable data. In the next chapter, the characters and settings in *Frasier* are discussed in more detail.

Frasier is situated in Seattle. The main character is, as mentioned above, Doctor Frasier Winslow Crane, who is a radio psychiatrist at KACL radio station. He is middle-aged, divorced and an upper class snob. One could say he is more European than the Europeans themselves; he loves Italian opera, French wine and German BMWs. His younger brother, Doctor Niles Crane, is as snobbish as Frasier, and is actually similar to Frasier but has more peculiar features in his behavior (eg. compulsive neatness). Frasier lives with

his old father Martin Crane, who is a retired policeman, wounded in the service. With them lives Daphne Moon, a home-care worker from Manchester, England, who helps Martin with his physical therapy. The second central female character is Roz Doyle, Frasier's producer and confidant at the radio station. She is a modern, single woman in her thirties, who is constantly chasing men.

Frasier is a modern sitcom. It does not represent a typical nuclear family, but a new type of family of a son and his father plus a so called outsider. Bowes (1990:132-133) states that sitcoms usually present the viewer with a 'problematic' family situation which is used as a source of humour. This is the case in *Frasier*, too. The central conflict is the social difference between Frasier and his father Martin. This conflict occurs when the scene is the home. Another location is the local café, café Nervosa, where the conflict is usually between Frasier and his brother Niles, and it is usually about their relationships with women or Frasier's and Niles's professions. The third location constantly used is the studio where Frasier works. In this location the theme is usually the relationships, either of the callers, of Frasier or of Roz. Daphne and Martin represent the middle class, which creates a contrast with upper class Doctor Cranes. The character of Daphne and her Britishness brings into the comedy the element of two different cultures bumping to each other, which also creates humorous dialogue. On one hand, there is a clash between the uses of American English and British English (ie. differences in pronunciation), and on the other hand, there is a clash between cultural-bound ways of behaviour.

In conclusion, *Frasier* is rich in humour and takes advantage of linguistic peculiarities, such as wordplays. That is why it is a good source when studying translations of wordplays. In the next chapter I will deal with the phenomenon of translation in general. In Chapter 3.4.1 I will discuss the views relating to translation of wordplay.

3. TRANSLATION

The phenomenon of linguistic translation is almost as old as the human race itself (Reiss 1977). There have been several views on translation and it has been defined in many ways. The more recent views have concentrated on the communicative aspect of translation and abandoned more and more the idea of the form of the message being superior to the content of the message and other aspects of translation (Nida and Taber 1969). Until the 20th century, translation concentrated merely on biblical and literal texts, but in the 21st century technical translation has been the dominating form of translation (Wilss 1982:18). During the last decades, mass communication has entered the world. One of its forms is the entertainment business (eg. television entertainment), which is a growing branch, as has already been briefly discussed in Chapter 2. Naturally, entertaining texts and films will be a growing branch in the world of translation, too.

There will first be a look into some basic views of translation in chapter 3.1. After all, there are many aspects of it. As the present thesis concentrates on intentional ambiguity and the translation of it, it is also reasonable to discuss some views presented of the role of the function and the effect as determiners in the translation process (chapter 3.2). Sitcom does have a clear function and effect, which is to entertain and to amuse. In particular, Reiss and Vermeer's theory of skopos will be discussed, because it is, after all, one of the central approaches to this.

Further, the concepts of meaning and equivalence will be discussed, too. They have a central role in translation. It is the meaning of the SL passage that has to be transferred into the TL in the translation process, and equivalence depends on this transfer. Equivalence and meaning have many aspects, and consequently, there are many views presented about them. Some of these will be looked into in chapter 3.3. Finally, the central idea of the present thesis, the concept of wordplay will be discussed, in addition to

ambiguity in relation to translation. As the data of the present thesis is characterized by its on-screen nature, it is necessary to bring out some central aspects of subtitling, too.

3.1 views of translation

Translation, as a term, can be defined in many ways. First, it can be seen either as a *process* of translating a text or as the *result* of the process (Wilss 1982:58). Secondly, there are several types of translation. According to Jakobson (1959), there exists three types of translation; *intralingual* (rewording), *interlingual* (translation proper), and *intersemiotic* (transmutation). In the present thesis concentrates on interlingual translation; translation is "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" (Catford 1965). Briefly, it is a process between two or more different languages. Zhongying (1990:99) has put the same a little differently by stating that translation is a channel which bridges the gap between different languages in the course of intercultural communication. In other words, translation has brought people together over the language barriers by transferring messages from SL to TL.

In addition, Reiss and Vermeer (1984) have defined five types of translation, of which the fourth one is of special interest for them. According to them, translation can be defined as an imitating information offer in the target language of an information offer presented in the SL text. The other four types are word-for-word translation, literal translation, philological translation and reproductive translation. Reiss and Vermeer claim that translation, as an information offer, is specified by *transfer* of three kinds: transfer that is not based on the SL text (ie. paraphrase), transfer that is only partly based on the SL text (free translation), and transfer that imitates the SL text (the modern view of translation). The latter form of transfer follows Reiss and Vermeer's rule of fidelity, which states that each translation should

be an optimal realization of the skopos of the text. Their theory of skopos will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.2.1.

Translation can also be defined as a process of creating a translated text, as Hlebec has done (1989:129). According to him, translation has then two aspects: recreation and modification, of which the first one is recoding in such a way that the intentions expressed in the SL are evoked in the TL, and the latter is a process by which the intentions of the original text are altered. Hlebec emphasizes that this redefinition helps to avoid the paradox of untranslatability by stating that not everything will be recreated in the translation. However, major part of the SL text may be recreated, and Hlebec claims that this justifies the use of the term 'true translation'. He also claims that the more recreation there is in a text, the more it deserves to be called a translation, and vice versa.

3.2 function and effect as determiners in translation

Majority of theories on translation take into consideration the function of the text, and acknowledge its vast importance on translation. The function of the original text affects the function of the TL text, and thus, the translation process itself. As Newmark (1991:27) states it: "... *the important factors of a translation (and its text) are its intention, its meaning, its tone, its impact, its 'texture', its function, the text as a unit*". These are the points which are defined by the SL text. Like many researchers, Ingo (1990:188) has pointed out that the function of the text is important in translation. He distinguishes between three primary functions (informative, expressive, and imperative functions) and three secondary functions (phatic, aesthetic, and metalingual functions). The text has an informative function, if it is primarily written for informative purposes, and the translation of such a text should preserve the informative function. The expressive function of a text is dominant when the text expresses feelings and not only information. The third primary function

of a text is the imperative function, and in such a text language is used to mediate models for behaviour and actions, ie. instructions etc. The first secondary function, the phatic function, comes into question when language in a text is used for creating a contact between communicators, eg. small talk. The second function, which is important also in sitcoms, is the aesthetic function. The text and its language represents then other kind of values than pure informative ones; language is used for aesthetic purposes, and wordplay is a good example of a piece of text which carries aesthetic value. The third secondary function is the metalingual function, ie. the text and its language is used to describe the language itself. In translation, these functions should be defined and preserved from the original to the translated version.

In addition, translation can be considered a communicative service (Reiss 1977); the TL receiver gets the same information as the SL receiver with the help of translation. Further, Newmark (1981:38-69) has defined two types of translation; *communicative* and *semantic*. Communicative translation is focused on producing the same kind of effect on the TL audience as the original text has on the original SL audience. This type of translation emphasizes the force rather than the content of the message. It also is likely to be smoother and clearer and it tends to undertranslate. The receptors are taken into consideration by the translator in communicative translation. Semantic translation tries to render the same contextual meaning as the original. It tends to be more complex, detailed, and it tends to overtranslate. Where the form of the language is as important as the content of the message, semantic translation is required. These two types of translations are likely to coincide; they are not distinct methods (Newmark 1981:40). In fact, where language is accompanied by action or is a symbol of it, the translation should be communicative, and when definitions, explanations and such are dominating, the translation should be more semantic (Newmark 1977).

In addition to Newmark and his communicative translation, Zhongying (1990:99), too, has emphasized the effect of the text in translation.

According to Zhongying, translation can be judged by its effects, and the impression of the translation on the TL audience should be similar to the impression of the SL message on the SL audience. He has defined impression as

”the receptor’s response in their mind after reading or hearing the message, including their knowledge and understanding of the ideas of the message and their feelings, sensations and impact resulting from the emotion and appeal of the message” (op.cit.99)

He has also suggested that the most important factor in attaining the same impression is that the translation should convey the same idea and the same spirit as the original (op.cit.101). On the other hand, he has pointed out that identical expression is not possible for certain reasons, which are that modes of expression vary from language to language and the audience of the original is not the same audience as the one of the translation (op.cit.102). In other words, it seems that the effect of the text should be taken into consideration when translating, but it should not blind the translator and prevent him/her from seeing the need for some required amount of semantic precision.

3.2.1 theory of skopos

The theory of skopos (Vermeer 1978, Reiss & Vermeer 1984) defines translation as an act which has to have an aim, *skopos*. In this theory, the source text is the primary act and the target text, the *translatum*, is the secondary act. The main principle is that the nature of the secondary act, the translation, depends on its skopos (Reiss & Vermeer 1984). Secondly, skopos is a variable dependent on the receptor. In other words, the translator has to know the purpose of the translation in order to translate it adequately, and, in addition to this, the translator should bear in mind the receptor at whom the translation is targeted. Reiss and Vermeer emphasize that the translator does not necessarily have to be consciously aware of the target

audience, but some amount of awareness is demanded. Vermeer (1998:43) has summarized the essence of the skopos theory like this:

‘By definition, translating includes the existence of a source text(eme), whether explicitly formulated or only sketched out in a few words. But the primary aim (‘skopos’) of translating is to design a target text capable of functioning optimally in the target culture’.

In other words, the theory of skopos and the term communicative translation can be considered to be quite close to each other, because both take into account the effect of the text on the receiver.

As stated above, the theory of skopos is a theory concerned with the aim of the text. The act of translation is considered to be a success if the reaction following it does not include a protest against it. However, it can be a protest not to react. In the case of translation-in particular, the protest can be against the information offer, ie. it is then against the information already offered in the SL message and which is only transferred to the TL. The translation itself, too, can be protested against. (op.cit.61-62).

When considering the skopos of the sitcom, it is undoubtedly to amuse the target audience, whether it is a SL audience or a TL audience. In other words, the subtitles should be as amusing as the original, spoken dialogue. Another question is the nature of the target audience. Thus, is the TL audience similar to the SL audience, or should the translation take into account a possible change between these? In this study of the translation of wordplay, the Finnish audience is likely to be similar to the original target audience so there is little need for such adaptations in translation. When the translation has not succeeded, it can be protested against by not reacting, ie. the TL audience does not laugh where this is an expected reaction, or it may find the translation inadequate. The problem is, of course, that there is usually no possibility to monitor the TL audience and its reactions to the subtitles without creating a special circumstance for it. Vermeer (1998:52) has suggested that the problem of measuring the effect could be resolved by

'a personal index', ie. the translator evaluates the result and the effect of the translation by studying his/her own reactions to it. Put briefly, the translator can consider himself/herself as an average member of the target audience and make translational decisions according to his/her own reactions to the translation result.

In conclusion, translation involves many aspects to consider. However, the average target audience is not aware of these more or less theoretical and scientific aspects. In fact, it may often be so that translation is not treated as a translation at all but has the status of an original text due to the so-called monolinguality of the target audience. Thus, at the same time as the translation transmits the ideas and functions of the SL text with equivalent TL words, it has to be fluent as a TL text. Even though balancing between communicative and semantic translations, creative freedom and loyalty etc. may seem like a mission impossible, there often is a natural way to solve these translation problems: the translator can consider himself/herself as an average member of the target audience and judge accordingly which aspect, which function to emphasize.

3.3 concepts of meaning and equivalence

Meaning is a dominant concept in communication, and thus, in translation. In order to translate a passage adequately one must first discover the meanings in it. Thus, it is the preservation of meaning across two languages that is essential in translation (House 1977). Several researchers have tried to give definitions of meaning, and some of them will be looked at in this chapter.

There can be defined several aspects of meaning. For example, House (1977) defines three aspects. *The semantic aspect of meaning* is meaning which consists of the relationship of linguistic units or symbols to their referents. Thus, a word 'chair' refers to an object which is commonly known as 'a chair'. *The pragmatic aspect* is meaning concerned with the particular use of

an expression on a specific occasion, ie. the meaning of an expression depends on the communicative situation. The third aspect of meaning according to House is *the textual aspect*, which is concerned with text constitution and the relationships of the text components to each other (eg. theme preservation).

Another view of meaning is presented by Nida and Taber (1969). They argue that there are three types of meaning. First, there is the case of *meaningful relationships* between words and combinations of words (ie. grammar carries meaning). Secondly, there is *the referential meaning* of the words and idioms. Thirdly, there is *the connotative meaning*, which deals with the reactions of the language users. In addition, they use the term *syntactic marking* to define meaning marked by grammar. Since syntactic marking is a frequently used element in creating ambiguity in meaning, it will be discussed more carefully later in the present thesis. Thus, Nida and Taber's (1969) term the referential meaning resembles House's (1977) definition of semantic aspect of meaning. In addition, Bell (1991:83) has stated that "although the meanings of words are problematic in themselves, the greater problem is meaning which derives from the relationship of word to word rather than which relates to the word in isolation", referring thus to the meaningful relationships discussed already by Nida and Taber. As can be seen, House as well as Nida and Taber have all made a distinction between meaning in relation to situation and meaning in relation to language. More recently, Newmark (1991:31) has made the same distinction, arguing that meaning in relation to situation covers degree of formality, generality and objectivity, while meaning in relation to language may be denotative, connotative, expressive, informative or imperative. Briefly, the views of meaning by different researchers are overlapping.

Meaning and equivalence in translation are tightly interwoven with each other. Equivalence depends on the transfer and aspects of the meaning. Meaning can, in most cases, be carried over from SL to TL, even though the

form changes in the process. This is due to all languages having universal meaning components, which can be classified semantically as things, events, attributes (quality, quantity) or relations (Nida and Taber 1969, Larson 1984:26). According to House (1977), it is "always necessary in translation to aim at equivalence of pragmatic meaning, if necessary at the expense of semantic equivalence" (p.28). Thus, she emphasizes the pragmatic meaning and equivalence at that level. In other words, equivalence is not a pre-given, unchanging category. Instead, it is created by the translator, as for example Sandúr (1993:12) points out. Next, some other views presented about equivalence will be looked at more closely.

The nature of translation is the reproduction in the receptor language of the closest natural equivalent on the SL message (Nida and Taber 1969). Further, the central problem of translation is that of finding TL translation equivalents (eg. Catford 1965). What is then translation equivalence? It has been defined in many ways, even though in Newmark's (1991:3) opinion it is fruitless to define it, because it is a common academic dead-end pursuit. However, Newmark *has* indeed tried to define different types of equivalence, and his views also will be presented in this chapter.

An adequate translation is often defined as a semantically and pragmatically equivalent one (eg. House 1977). In addition, *functional equivalence* is emphasized, too (House 1977). In other words, the translation has to be not only semantically and pragmatically equivalent, but also it has to have the same function as the source text. Related to this, one has to define the type of the text before one can define its function. For example Reiss and Vermeer (1984) state that there exist three classes of text types. These are informative, expressive, and operative. The present thesis is focused on studying the translation of wordplays in a sitcom. A sitcom is both expressive and operative. It is expressive as an artistic creation, and operative as it wants to persuade the audience to laugh. Thus, the informative function is secondary, and consequently it is not that important for the subtitles to be

equivalent on the informative level. The operative function, and thus, equivalence on the operative level, can be claimed to be the primary in the process of translating sitcoms.

In addition to the previous types of equivalence, there can be made a distinction between *formal* and *textual equivalence* (Catford 1965). In Catford's terms, formal equivalence is any TL category occupying the same place in the economy of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL, while textual equivalence is any TL text or portion of text being equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text. Formal correspondence is more rare of these two, because languages are structurally different.

The best translation does not sound like a translation. This is referred to as the *neutral equivalence* (Nida and Taber 1969). In addition, Nida and Taber (1969) have introduced the term *dynamic equivalence*, which is closely bound to the importance of the effect of the text. Dynamic equivalence is equivalence of the effect on the receptors, ie. "the degree to which the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same manner as the receptors in the source language" (p.24)- This type of equivalence is especially important for example in sitcoms, which are written for entertainment purposes. Naturally, the problem then is the difficulty to measure the effect produced.

Newmark (1991:3) focuses on classifying types of equivalence in cases where there is no semantic one-to-one equivalence. According to him, a *cultural equivalent* is a case where the SL word is bound to the SL culture, and it has no equivalent word in the TL. It is thus translated with a TL word bound to the TL culture. He points out, that these types are quite handy in subtitling and dubbing, because they help to transmit the same effect on the TL audience as the original word has on the SL audience. In addition, Newmark uses the term *descriptive equivalence* for a translation process where the SL word is translated with a descriptive TL word, ie. a word

which describes the qualities of the SL meaning. According to Newmark, the loosest equivalent is paraphrase, which is a TL product accomplished by generalising the SL term.

In conclusion, there are many aspects of meaning and many aspects of equivalence as well. It can be stated that the equivalence level varies according to the translator's judgement of the communicative situation.

3.4 WORDPLAY

Ambiguity in meaning can be purposeful or not. As intentional, it is a widely employed rhetorical process (Nida 1990:151), used to colour the dialogue. Ambiguity and puns can successfully be described as '*language on vacation*' (Redfern 1986:14), which is a suitable definition, since intentional ambiguity leaves the seriousness of the communication aside.

There are several ways to create ambiguity in meaning. As mentioned in chapter 3.3 concerning the concept of meaning, *grammar* can mark meaning. However, grammar also can cause ambiguity in meaning. In addition to grammar, the most obvious way to create ambiguity of meaning is the use of *polysemes* and *homonyms*. Malone (1979:209) defines polysemy as repetition of one and the same lexical item, even though the meaning might change from passage to passage. In contrast to this, homonymy is defined as two or more separate lexical items being similar to each other phonetically or graphically (Ingo 1990:151).

Homonymy can be divided into smaller classes. Lexical items with phonetic similarity are called *homophones* and items with graphic similarity are called *homographs*. In some cases, lexical items can be both, ie. homophones can be homographs, too, when both the spellings and the sounds are alike. The term *heterophone* (Hagan 1982:122) is used for words that are identical in

spelling but different in pronunciation and meaning (ie. homographs which are not homophones).

In addition, *paranomasia* and *paragrams* are other useful ways to play with language. Redfern (1986:18) defines *paranomasia* as near-relativity of language items, and *paragrams* as a play on words involving the alteration of one or more letters Redfern. Redfern has also pointed out that *paragram* is one of the commonest forms of punning. Clearly, Redfern's term *paragram* is closely connected with the homonymy cases mentioned above, since the alteration in a word can be not only graphical but also phonological.

Yet another class of wordplay consists of popular etymologies based on the *real or imagined meanings of proper names* (Nida 1990:151). It is justified to include *allusions*, too, in the class of wordplays, because they carry more than one meaning. As Leppihalme (1994:179) puts it, allusion is the use of proper names or preformed linguistic material in either its original or a modified form to convey implicit meaning. Since allusions are usually culture-bound, ie. it takes a member of the same culture to understand an allusion, in this thesis allusions that are intertextual are excluded, while allusions with real verbal play are included.

Finally, *idioms* can also be used in punning. Nida (1975:113) has described idioms as 'combinations of words which have both a literal and a nonliteral semantic structure'. In wordplays, the literal semantic meaning is equally possible as the nonliteral meaning in the context. In addition, Nida (1975:114) has also discussed *unitary complexes*, which are cases where two or more words (nouns) in combination together operate differently from the semantic class of the head word (eg. pine+apple). In wordplays, the meaning of the combination may be challenged with meanings of the separate components.

Multiple meanings are a common way to create humor in sitcoms. In sitcoms, one of the two (or more) meanings is expected by the audience, but the second meaning is in some sense 'unexpected', which brings in the humorous element (Vasconcellos 1986:134). In so called normal communication people know what to wait for, and thus they tend to understand multiple meanings as one meaning which seems correct in the situation, ie. the context plays a special role in understanding. The importance of the context of the utterance has been stressed for example by Wardaugh (1985:101), who has stated that it is the context which creates possibilities for interpretation and helps remove the ambiguities that utterance would have if they occurred in isolation. The context is relevant in understanding wordplays, too, because it provides the audience the key to a wordplay; it is about playing with meanings made possible by the context, ie. all the meanings of a wordplay are relevant in the context. Redfern (1986:22) has referred to this by stating that in the pun there are always two or more levels, and that all humour entails an ability to think on two planes at once. He has also pointed out that puns are situational and play with two contexts. Both of these contexts have to be accessible to the audience in order to the wordgame to be understood by them and most of all, recognized as such. The audience of sitcoms *does* know to expect the 'unexpected', and thus understand the ambiguous message in two ways, and do not reduce it to only one meaning. This is due to genre expectations, ie. the audience expects verbal play with meanings in sitcoms. As Nida (1978:116) points out, the term 'target audience' is commonly used, but as a term it implies that the receptors are passive, and Nida continues that people always have presuppositions and expectancies when they come to a text; in Nida's words 'they are never a cognitive *tabula rasa*'.

This kind of expectedness in discourse is also discussed by Bell (1991:169), ~~who has defined the levels of informativity. The first level introduces word choices which are clear and almost obligatory. Therefore, their informativity level is low, as is the case with function words which can be omitted in~~

telegrams. The second level represents unexpected, but not impossible choices (ie. Bell's example *coffee and tea are - dangerous drugs*). The third level represents choices that are entirely unexpected and impossible. Wordplay can be placed on the second level, because the second meaning is 'unexpected' (unexpected in not being the primary meaning) but possible in the context in question. Otherwise it would not be understood by the receiver.

3.4.1 ambiguity and translation

In translation studies, the focus has been on the removal of ambiguity, ie. it has been thought that ambiguity is not intentional, but rather a mistake, which should be corrected by the translator. This is a result of the fact, that translation studies were long concerned only with so called 'serious' texts, literal texts, like for example Nida and Taber's (1969) study of Bible translations. These type of texts rarely use intentional ambiguity and wordplay. However, when the field of entertainment (films, television programmes etc), and at the same time translation of entertaining texts has grown from the 1950's onwards, the study of translation has more and more taken into consideration the intentional ambiguity in texts, and possibilities of translating such cases. For example Newmark (1993:1), in his classification of translation methods of semantic and communicative translation, suggests that recreative translation could be the possible third method, used for advertisements, sitcoms etc. In this chapter the focus is on the translation of SL multiple meaning cases, where standard, literal translation is not adaptable and creativity is needed.

Creativity in translation starts when imitation stops (Newmark 1991:9). Creativity is a necessary element in translation, when the standard translation procedures fail and translation is "impossible". As Malone (1979:207) points out, two languages rarely show a total one-to-one equivalence. Thus, when SL expression has intentionally two different meanings (ie. wordplay), it is

most often impossible to find a TL expression with the same two equivalent meanings. It is suggested (Newmark 1977) that wordplay could be translated communicatively as well as semantically, ie. the translator could create a new pun in the TL as well as explain it. However, in subtitling this is an impossible procedure due to the technical limitations (see Chapter 6.1) and to the character of the sitcom: These demand the translation to be as effective as the original. Audience expects the situation comedy to raise a laugh.

Further, situation comedy has a special feature which other text or film types generally do not have. This is the 'canned laugh'. In *Frasier*, there is a live audience present at the studio, and consequently the expression 'canned laugh' is actually a bit misleading, because it is generally used about recorded laughter which is added to the film afterwards. Live or not, still it is an audible signal marking the jokes. This signal is audible to the TL audience, too, thus the translation has to meet the demands set by it. In another words, this signal requires the translation to include a wordplay at the same point of the the dialogue as is the case in the SL text.

If translating is defined as a process of creating a translated text, as Hlebec (1989:129) has done, the translation of wordplays, too, can be considered either modifying or recreative. It can be claimed that the intentions of the SL dialogue and the TL dialogue in a sitcom are the same. The intention of the dialogue is, as has already been stated in the present thesis, to make the audience laugh, and it does not change in the translation process. Thus, the translation of wordplays is recreative when the wordplay is succesfully transferred into the TL. If the intention changes, and the wordplay no longer raises a laugh in the TL audience, translating is modifying. It can be claimed from this that the genre expectations of the target audience expect the translation of wordplays to be recreative, because wordplays are the most characteristic feature in sitcoms.

Even though polysemy and homonymy are contrasted with each other, it is not their difference that has the important role in translation (Ingo 1990:151), but their ambiguous nature in general. In addition, in a case like sitcom wordplay is created with pronunciation, ie. with the use of homophones, and other phonetic similarity. The use of words with great phonetic difference would clearly not create ambiguity due to the audibility of the SL dialogue. However, in subtitles graphic similarity is an option. It has to be noted that for example Finnish is a language where the spelling system is phonematic, ie. if there is sound similarity, there is graphic similarity in spelling, too. This is not the case with English, where there are clear differences between spelling and pronunciation, ie. English is richer in homophones and homographs than Finnish.

There has not been many studies on the translation of wordplay on the field of translation studies. One of these rare studies has been made by Delabastita (1994). As a result of his study, he claims that there are two trends in translating wordplay. First, 'indecent' puns are more frequently disambiguated or moderated in their target text formulation. Secondly, there is a trend to replace phonetic wordplay by the more subdued or subtle effects of non-phonetic way of punning (op.cit. 233). Even though these trends are interesting results, they will not be in the main focus in the present thesis, because the main interest is to find out whether the wordplay has been transmitted into the TL at all, and what kind of translation solutions the translator has made.

3.5 SUBTITLING

Translated films, distributed in the cinema and on television, reach a larger audience than any other form of translation (Vöge 1977:120). However, translation studies have not concentrated much on the study of mass media translation. Instead, they have concentrated on the so called serious translation, as has already been stated. The characteristics of subtitling have

been studied for example by Delabastita (1989:198), who has defined the translational relationships between a source film and a target film. He has made a distinction between the sound channel and the vision channel, a distinction which on its turn affects the possible modes of film translation. This division between channels leads to Delabastita's scheme of potential translational relationships (1989:199), see Figure 1:

channel	code	repetitio	adiectio	detractio	substitutio	transmutatio
visual	verbal signs		subtitling			
	non-verbal signs					
acoustic	verbal signs					
	non-verbal signs					

Fig. 1 *Subtitling in Delabastita's scheme*

Figure 1 shows Delabastita's treatment of the transmission having two channels; the visual and the acoustic. Both channels can transmit verbal and non-verbal signs. This forms four categories which constitute the axis specifying the type of film signs upon which the various translation procedures will be performed (op.cit.199). The second axis, the axis of *repetitio*, *adiectio*, *detractio*, *substitutio* and *transmutatio*, specifies what types of operations are involved in the translation. *Repetitio* represents the formal reproduction of the sign in an identical manner. *Adiectio* describes reproduction of the sign with a certain addition. The third class, *detractio*, is the class where reproduction is incomplete and implies a reduction, while the fourth class, *substitutio*, is for cases where the sign is replaced with an altogether different sign. The final class of *transmutatio* introduces cases

where the sign's textual relations alter when the components of the sign are repeated in a different internal order.

Subtitling can be placed in Delabastita's scheme in the class of *adiectio* plus visual verbal signs, ie. the sign is reproduced with a visual, verbal addition of subtitles, while dubbing is a case of *substitutio* plus acoustic verbal signs, ie. the original, acoustic verbal signs are replaced by the target language acoustic verbal signs (op.cit.200). As Delabastita points out (1989:200), the translation procedures specified in his scheme can be applied to shorter segments. In other words, some parts of the film may be subtitled, while some parts, like the title, the theme song etc. can be copied directly (ie. the case of *repetitio*). This is the case with *Frasier*, where the dialogue is subtitled, but for example the theme song and the title are copied directly. The next chapter will explain first the technical limitations of subtitling, plus dubbing as a possible alternative to subtitling. Secondly, subtitles will be looked at as a translation, i.e. how they meet the demands of a translation.

3.5.1 technical limitations

Briefly described, subtitles are written translations which are shown (most often) on the bottom of the television (or film) screen at the same time as the dialogue is spoken by the characters. There is, however, a central problem in subtitling; the dialogue is usually delivered at a speed so fast that it is impossible to subtitle it by detail. The TL audience would not keep up with it (Delabastita 1989:203). This leads to reduction of text.

Further, the size of the television screen sets certain limitations for subtitles, too. These have been studied for example by Koljonen (1994:117), who claims that subtitles consist of one or two lines, ie. a *text block*, running on the bottom of the screen, though in fact she fails to mention that in some cases subtitles may appear on the top of the screen. This the case for example

in *Frasier* where in the beginning of each episode the actors' names are presented as original texts on the bottom, and they cannot be covered by the subtitles. Usually, the top of the screen has only one subtitling line, while the bottom has most often two lines, depending on the dialogue and its speed. Koljonen (op.cit.118) states that that each line can contain only a limited number of letters, approximately from 28 to 34 letters. In addition, she points out that a sentence should not be divided between two text blocks, because that would cause a collapse in the reading pace due to the 2-3 seconds of waiting time between the text blocks, and that each text block stays on the screen for 4-6 seconds. In other words, subtitling is quite limited both in space and pace. Still, it is a simple procedure which costs relatively little money and time (Vöge 1977:120). Due to this economic aspect, subtitling is often preferred to the other type of television translation, dubbing. The relationship between subtitling and dubbing will be introduced next, since they are alternative forms of television translation to each other.

3.5.2 dubbing versus subtitling

In this chapter dubbing will be discussed, too, since in some countries dubbing is preferred to subtitling. In Finland there is practically no dubbing on television, except for those (mostly animated) films that are targeted at children who are not yet capable of reading fast or reading at all, ie. not capable of reading subtitles. Still, some discussion of dubbing is necessary in order to give light to television translation in general.

The virtues and vices of dubbing versus subtitling have been studied for example by Vöge (1977: 120-124). First of all, he states that the translation of a film depends on the distributing factors, eg. in some countries the legislation prevents subtitling. The size of the linguistic area and the tradition of film translation can have an effect on the form of the translation (op.cit.120). The main virtue of subtitling versus dubbing according to Vöge is that subtitling is cheap and it does not take much time. However, he also

points out that subtitling necessarily involves abbreviating the film text, while in dubbing such abbreviations are not required. In other words, the screen sets more strict limits for the subtitles than the spoken language sets for dubbing.

In addition, dubbing means deleting the original sound world of the film. Thus, this type of screen translation means that the paedagogical factor of hearing the SL is deleted. This factor is not noticed by Vöge, though in fact nowadays hearing a foreign language through the medium of television is quite important in the process of learning it. Dubbing is, according to Vöge, also dependent on the ideal fantasy that the audience is not aware that it is hearing a language different from the language spoken by the original actors, but this is a goal which is obviously almost impossible to achieve, since dubbing cannot follow perfectly the oral movements on the screen. Since dubbing is an alternative rarely chosen in Finland, this brief discussion of its relation to subtitling is sufficient to present it.

3.5.3 subtitles and a 'good' translation

Translation is generally regarded as good if it is faithful to the original text and its language is fluent (eg. Zhongying 1990:97). Zhongying states that these qualities are often, but incorrectly, thought of as being opposites to each other, ie. if the translation is particularly faithful to the original, it cannot be very smooth, and vice versa, if the translation is smooth as a TL text, it cannot be very faithful to the original (op.cit.98). In addition, it has been stated that translation should be as fluent as if it were written in the TL in the first place (Ingo 1990:199). Since subtitling has strict limitations, it cannot imitate the SL text very faithfully. Instead, it is a free translation in that measure that only some points of the SL text are transferred into the TL, while to some extent it is paraphrasal, ie. it uses different expressions than the SL text. Thus, the fidelity rule characteristically followed by a good translation cannot be followed very strictly in subtitling, and consequently the

rule of fluency can be considered even more important. This has been noted by Vermeer, too (1998:44), who has pointed out that a faithful translation of a source text can lead to an unfaithful target text, and this does not serve the skopos of the target text.

Subtitling is partly communicative translation; the effect of the TL text on the TL audience has to be similar to the effect of the SL text on the original audience. In addition, there is not much room in the television screen for details or complex explanations characteristic of semantic translation. However, the screen often offers the TL audience one, the nonverbal, part of the content of the message, so the content of the SL message cannot be totally omitted in the translated form. In fact, this is a good example for Newmark's (1981:40) statement: "*A translation can be more, or less, semantic - more, or less, communicative*". In other words, each situation and text must be considered individually when translating. The subtitles of a situation comedy, and other types of translation in general, have to be communicative as well as semantic: the content is as important as the effect on the audience.

According to Neubert (1981), interpreting and translating live from the illusion of directness, ie. translations are text-induced texts which are supposed to hide their secondary nature. However, this secondary nature is impossible to hide in subtitling because of the immediate presence of the source text, which is usually audible (sometimes there may be additional, visual text, but this is rare and if there exist such, it is rarely translated because of the technical limitations of the screen). In addition to this difference, there are differences in the evaluation of the translation process. Newmark (1993:36), in his sliding scale theory of translation, suggests certain points to consider. According to him, the more important the text, the more closely it should be translated, and vice versa. In addition to this, he suggests that *the better written* a unit of the text is, the more closely it should be translated, whatever its degree of importance. In other words *Frasier*, as

a well-written and acknowledged situation comedy, though it is not as important a text as for example medical texts, should be translated quite closely. The problem is, again, the technical limits of subtitling set by the television screen, which in their turn limit the translation and its equivalence.

TRANSLATION OF WORDPLAY IN *FRASIER*:

4. DATA AND METHODS

The data that will be analysed in detail below were collected from episodes of the sitcom *Frasier* that were recorded mainly during the summer season of 1997. Since these episodes did not include a sufficient number of examples of SL multiple meanings, some episodes were also collected from the very first season in order to get more SL multiple meaning cases. In addition, since there was a chance to include a few episodes that were broadcast on the fall season of 1998, ie. at the time when this thesis was under work, such opportunity was taken.

SL multiple meanings as a translation problem were chosen to be studied, because there do not exist many studies on the subject, especially not on the translation of the intentional SL ambiguity, and since it is an interesting research subject. Since sitcoms are a popular form of entertainment today, and they often show examples of intentional SL ambiguity, it was reasonable to choose a sitcom to be analyzed. In addition, *Frasier* is a highly appreciated situation comedy show with a certain amount of wordplay, thus it served the purpose to collect the data from it. First, the taped episodes were studied, and after that the SL cases with multiple meanings were collected with their translations. However, when collecting data from the episodes, there turned out to be a major difference between the episodes. Some episodes contained no SL multiple meanings at all, and in some episodes, there were 4-6 such examples. This was due to the nature of the

theme of the episode; the more serious it was (ie. unwanted pregnancy), the smaller number of SL multiple meanings there were creating humour, and vice versa. This increased the amount of work which had to be done in order to find a reasonable amount of examples.

After the collection of the cases of the SL multiple meanings and their translations, they were analysed. It was meaningful to classify the examples according to the nature of the translations, because the purpose of the thesis was to find out how the problem of translating multiple meanings was resolved by the translator, especially when subtitling a sitcom, where multiple meanings are essential in creating humour. Since there were two obvious main classes to expect, ie. either the translation preserved the element of the wordplay or it did not, these classes were formed, and the translation procedures were classified under these two categories according to their nature.

The translations were done by three different translators; Marjaana Eronen, Suvi Heinonen and Sari Luhtanen. Since the present thesis did not concentrate on translational differences between the translators, there is no mention which one of them has been in question in the examples discussed. In addition, Luhtanen has translated major part of the episodes of this data, so there is no point comparing them unjustly. Further, such comparison would have been difficult.

It is reasonable to point out here that there were a few examples in the data which could not be included in the study. This was due to the fact that sometimes it was impossible to analyze the spoken dialogue line of the character, either because of the low quality of the film, or the character's speed of uttering. However, the loss of these examples did not affect the result of the study, since the number of examples was sufficient enough for analysis.

5. ANALYSIS OF DATA

To start with, it is clear that there exist two basic possibilities in translating SL multiple meanings, ie. wordplays, into the TL; either the aim is to preserve verbal play as an element creating humour, or verbal play is not transferred to the TL, which results in the loss of humour. In addition, it is necessary to note that there is a major difference between certain cases of wordplay, which has its influence on the translation, too. This is the difference between wordplay based on repetition, ie. when the meaning of an item changes from one sentence to another, and, on the other hand, wordplay which is based on a single occurrence of an ambiguous word or expression. The present analysis of the data, however, concentrates first on the character of the translation procedure, ie. whether it preserves or deletes the element of wordplay in the TL, and all the examples of the data has been classified under these two main classes. Each of the examples is discussed in detail. Loss of wordplay will be discussed first.

5.1 *loss of wordplay*

The data shows that wordplay in the SL dialogue is translated in four (4) ways that are characterized mostly by the loss of the element of wordplay in the translated text. These categories will be discussed in detail below. Twentyfour (24) cases of the total of fortysix (46) data examples belong to this group, thus indicating that 52 % of the wordplay cases are translated in such a way that does not aim directly at preserving the element of wordplay in the subtitles. However, as the following discussion will show, there are some cases where the loss of wordplay is compensated by other factors, such as the context and the presence of other translated wordplays. In addition, the loss of wordplay is not always preventable. These will be pointed out in the discussion.

As has been stated in the literary background, the loss of wordplay seems to violate for example Nida and Taber's (1969) idea of dynamic equivalence, since the effect of the dialogue changes in the translation process. Further, it seems to violate the idea of functional equivalence (House 1977), since the function of the dialogue changes, too. Thus, the loss of wordplay violates the whole meaning of sitcom, because it leads to loss of verbal humour, which is essential for the genre. Next, the cases in this category will be discussed in detail in order to find out why the wordplay is often not transferred successfully into the TL.

5.1.1 no translation

The procedure of not transferring the SL wordplay into the TL text is rare in the present data. There are only two (2) cases in fortysix (46) examples where SL wordplay is not translated at all. In both cases, this seems to be due to the limited space of the screen. This is shown by example (1):

- (1) setting: Frasier at the studio, on air, saying a farewell to the 'happy chef', a show host leaving the radio station for good.
Frasier: Leo, you stirred us with your passion, melted us with your charm and added spice to our lives.
- Leo, sulatit sydämemme, -
 ja annoit maustetta elämäämme.

First of all, there is not enough space on the television screen for the full translation. In addition, the untranslated SL expression is not as familiar to the TL audience as the rest of the verbal plays. The verb '*stir*' in English has the concrete meaning of 'mix something' (CC), eg. in the kitchen when baking or cooking as in this case when the discussion concerns a chef. The other meaning brought up in this dialogue is 'to make one react with a strong feeling' (CC). In Finnish there is a verb 'hämmentää' that would include both meanings, but the connotation is not altogether positive (it means 'to confuse'). Thus this verb is not appropriate in a speech which lists the positive points of a person. The solution, to leave this expression untranslated, does not disturb the nature of the sitcom because there are

several similar expressions which have been translated in this part of the dialogue. In other words, the TL audience hears the audible signal of a wordplay, ie. the canned laugh, and the loss of one multiple meaning expression in the TL text is compensated for by the other cases translated adequately.

Even though the previous example shows that leaving out a wordplay in the TL does not necessarily mean that the genre expectations of the target audience are violated, ie. the passage still raises laughter due to the other, translated, wordplays, the next example shows this is not always the case:

- (2) setting : Niles is hosting a costume party. Roz is pregnant, and Niles overhears Frasier and Daphne talking about it and he thinks Daphne is pregnant to Frasier. Niles gets upset and finally confronts Frasier, who does not know what Niles is referring to.
Niles: .. are you just going to abandon Daphne?
Frasier: Niles! Just because I gave her a ride doesn't mean that I have to spend the whole evening with her!
- Hylkäätkö sinä Daphnen?
- - -
Ei minun tarvitse olla koko
iltaa hänen kanssaan

The SL expression is ambiguous; it's primary meaning is common, ie. to drive someone to some place. In informal (slang) usage, 'a ride' refers to an intercourse (Rekiaro 1995:490). Since the topic of the episode is a pregnancy, the secondary meaning is clear. The canned laugh signals this wordplay, but in the TL text there is no wordplay. Thus there is a clash between the expectations of the TL audience and the TL passage. In addition, this follows the trend found by Delabastita (1994:233) that indecent puns tend to be disambiguated in the translation process. An alternative preserving the element of wordplay might have been to translate the SL expression in a following manner: *ei yksi kyyti velvoita mihinkään*, 'one ride does not obligate me to anything', ie. where the TL expression follows the SL theme, and the context provides the sexual meaning of *kyyti* to the TL audience.

In conclusion, the procedure of not transferring the SL wordplay at all into the TL text is rare (4% of the 46 cases). It shows that the translator aims at transferring as much information as possible from the SL into the TL. However, the second case shows that the element of wordplay might have been preserved, and consequently it has been unnecessary to leave it untranslated. It can also be concluded that sitcom wordplays carry valuable meaning in the SL dialogue, since it is rare that the information content carried by a SL wordplay is totally omitted in the translation process. The next three subclasses show, however, that even if the information of the SL wordplay is in most cases carried over to the TL, the wordplay itself as an element creating humour has often not been transferred into the subtitles. The reasons for this will be discussed case by case in each subclass.

5.1.2 translating with separate TL equivalents

In this category, ambiguity in meaning is created in the SL by repeating a word or a phrase by changing its meaning. The translation of such homonyms has its own special option uncharacteristic to other types of wordplay and their translation options. This is the translation of the SL wordplay with two distinct meanings in the TL. The data showed six (6) such cases (13% of the data). This strategy results in loss of wordplay and loss of humour, as is shown by example (3);

- (3) setting: Frasier and Niles in a mountain cabin with two ladies for a weekend, the ladies are outside.
F: Things are going rather well, aren't they?
Yes, they are, and I thank you for twisting my arm.
F: Feel like a new man, do you?
N: I feel like a new woman, and thank God I remembered to pack one.

Tämähän menee jo hyvin, vai mitä?

Kiitos

kun pakotit minut mukaan.

Oletko uusi mies? - Haluan uuden naisen. Onneksi pakkasin sen.

Here, the SL phrase *feel like something* has two meanings; in the first case, it is used to describe physical sensation, and thus the noun phrase modifies the subject. This is the normal usage, because the subject, the speaker, is male and the noun phrase modifier also has the semantic component of 'maleness'. But, in the second expression, the verbal phrase is used in another sense: Collins Cobuild (1995) defines this as 'feel like doing or having something, you want to do it or have it because you are in the right mood for it -'. In other words, the noun phrase *a new woman* does not modify the subject, but is rather an object of desire. Thus, the humour and ambiguity lies here in the sense that the object can be thought as a subject modifier as well as an object. This is especially humorous, because the gender does not stay the same, ie. it is impossible that the male subject would be seriously modified with a word with the semantic component of 'femaleness'. The Finnish language does not have an equivalent expression with both these meanings, so the translator has chosen to bring up those semantic meanings by choosing two separate expressions *olla* and *tuntua*. However, the first translation of *feel like* ('*oletko*') is not standard Finnish usage (ie. the standard inquiry would rather be something like *Oletko kuin uusi mies nyt*, or *Oletko kuin uusi ihminen*, which would preserve the element of comparison). In addition, the translation does not follow the common rules of communication, because the answer is not an actual answer to the question; it is merely a statement unrelated to the inquiry. This violates the rule of natural equivalence (Nida and Taber 1969), which states that the translation should not sound like a translation. Further, it confirms Vermeer's (1998:44) notion that a (semantically) faithful translation can lead to an unfaithful TL text.

Another example of translating both meanings of the SL wordplay is (4):

- (4) setting : Niles and Daphne at Niles' place, and Niles is anxious to have Daphne there for the night. Daphne notices she had forgotten her pills and she has to go and get them. Niles is disappointed.
Daphne: If I don't take my pills I tend to faint.
Niles: What's the point of having a fainting couch if you don't use it once in a while?
- Jos en ota lääkettä, pyörryn.
Divaani on juuri sitä varten.

The SL wordplay is, again, based on repetition. The repeated element is *faint*, first as a verb and then in a neologism. Finnish does not provide any possibility to create a proper neologism for a furniture *divaani* by using the element of *pyörtyä*, ‘to faint’. In this case, both TL meanings are SL-based, though the neologism has been neutralized by using a more common expression ‘divaani’. Newmark (1991:3) calls this phenomenon of translating a peculiar SL item with a generalised TL item a paraphrase.

In example (5) the problem is the SL wordgame based on phonological similarity, which is difficult to transfer into Finnish:

- (5) setting: Daphne complains to Niles that her passport has expired and she cannot travel with her friend to Mexico.
Niles: If I have to, I'll snuggle you under an old blanket.
Daphne: Don't you mean 'smuggle'?
Niles: I'm using code language. You can't be too careful.

Halaan sinua vaikka huovan alla
- - -
Tarkoitatteko salakuljetatte?
- - -
Käytin salakieltä. Pitää varoa.

The original wordplay plays with the sound similarity of *smuggle* and *snuggle*, while the translated words are quite distinct from each other phonetically, since the translator has chosen to transfer the semantic meanings of both verbs. The lack of phonetic similarity causes the question and the answer not to meet each other in the translation. This problem might be solved by creating a greater distance from the original text, ie. by leaving out the first SL meaning and creating a wordplay with the second meaning. For example: *Salakuljetan simut vaikka huovan alle / Tarkoitat kai huovan alla?* (I'll smuggle you under my blanket / Don't you mean 'under a blanket?'). This, of course, is quite a free translation, but it is one possible option in preserving the element of wordplay. In addition, it preserves the situation and the relationship between the characters, ie. Niles desires Daphne secretly and she does not understand his hints. Further, it preserves the phonetic nature of the wordplay. As Delabastita (1994:233) has

observed, this feature of wordplay is usually replaced by a nonphonetic way of punning. In this case, there is no verbal play at all in the translation.

The next three examples show that even though there have been obvious possibilities to preserve the element of wordplay in the subtitles by following the SL semantic meanings, ie. translating with semantic equivalents, for some reason they have been overlooked, as is shown by example (6):

- (6) setting: Frasier meets Niles' attractive neighbour Stephanie, who has seen him act at Harvard. They feel attracted to each other.
Stephanie: ...I brought my husband back to see you the next night. Well, he wasn't my husband then... Well, actually, he isn't my husband now.
Frasier: I'm glad to hear that... Oh no! ... Now that you have ex-husband - I have one, too... ex-wife!

Hän ei ollut mieheni silloin...
Eikä ole nytkään. - Hauska kuulla
- - -
Siis että teillä on entinen.
Minullakin oli... siis vaimo...

Here the original wordplay is based on the play with gender words; the word *one* refers to a male spouse, while it is not possible that the male speaker has an ex-husband (the world of the sitcom is similar in its regulations to the real world and its code). This aspect is lost in the translation, because the word *entinen* ('ex', 'former') can refer to both sexes. However, this might be avoided by following the SL structure and by simply repeating the word manifesting gender: *Siis että teillä on ex-mies / minullakin on... siis vaimo*. In other words, it would be unnecessary to step away from the original text when translating.

A similar case is shown in the next example, (7), where the repetition has been overlooked as an important factor in creating a wordplay, though it can easily be preserved;

- (7) setting : it's morning, Martin's sitting by the table and Sherry comes in
Sherry: Morning, handsome! Did I say that before?
Martin: Before AND after.

Huomenta, komistus.
Joko sanoin sen? - Ennen ja jälkeen

In the SL, the wordplay is based on the usage of *before*, first as an adverb (*before* as ‘on previous occasion’) and then as a preposition (‘before an event’, in this case it refers to the sexual nature of the speakers’ relationship). In other words, this is a case of homonymy. The translation lacks repetition and is not standard Finnish (the question and answer do not meet each other). In addition, Finnish provides a chance to use repetition by rephrasing the message, eg: *Huomenta, komea. Olenko / sanomut sen ennenkin? -Ennen ja jälkeen*. As in the example discussed earlier, the translation here, too, takes an unnecessary step away from the SL text and structure. It has in both cases lead to the loss of wordplay and a violation of the genre of the sitcom by the translation not meeting the audible signal of laughter marking a wordplay. In other words, here the semantic equivalent in the TL is not functionally equivalent. This is a violation against the aesthetic function of the SL passage. Like many researchers, eg. Ingo (1990:188) has pointed out that the function of the SL text should stay the same in the translation. Wordplay, in particular, has primarily an aesthetic function, and consequently, it is to be preserved at the expense of the other functions, if necessary.

One of the six examples in this category shows that even though the SL wordplay is translated with two separate TL items, it can be a procedure that works well:

- (8) setting: Frasier is showing Roz the invitation card Sherry had made for Martin’s birthday. Roz reads it aloud.
 Roz: ‘Come one, come all, let’s jump and jive, Marty Crane is turning sextyfive.’
- Nyt pitää jotain hauskaa keksiä

 Marty on 65 ja täynnä seksiä.

This case differs from the other cases in this class by its nonrepetitive nature, ie. the wordplay is not based on repetition of a word or an expression but on a single occurrence of it. The original wordplay is based on the pronunciation of the numeral ‘sixtyfive’ with the e-sound and thus bringing in the noun ‘sex’ into the numeral, ie. this expression is a sort of a neologism which is

created by a sound change and it combines 'sex' and 'sixtyfive'. This type of wordplay can also be called a paragram (eg. Redfern 1986:18). Briefly, it could be described as a twisted unitary complex case. In Finnish it is not possible to form an equivalent expression with both semantic meanings, so the solution has been to transfer both meanings into the TL text with separate semantic equivalents. Even though ambiguity is then lost, the translation has preserved rhymes and the idea behind the original text, ie. to describe the birthday person and it especially preserves the qualities of the language user (the writer of the card), ie. it can be described as informal and 'tasteless' as the original text. Thus, the loss in ambiguity is compensated by the generally humorous nature of the passage. Further, it can be claimed that the translation is here dynamically equivalent (Nida and Taber 1969) to the SL text, since the effect of the dialogue stays approximately the same.

In conclusion of this category, it can be stated that there were only two cases (examples (3) and (4)) where the procedure of translating the SL wordplay and its information with two separate semantic equivalents was unavoidable because of the limits set by the context. In addition, example (8) shows that this procedure does not always cause the loss of the humour of the situation, even though the wordplay itself did not exist anymore in the translation. However, examples (5), (6) and (7) show that the TL does offer more options than just to neutralize the wordplay by disambiguation. It is shown by example (5) that the solution can be to construct a TL wordplay by translating one semantic aspect of the SL wordplay and deriving a functional TL equivalent from it. In other words, the solution can be to form a TL wordplay based partly on the SL wordplay and partly on translational freedom within the limits set by the context. In addition, it is shown by examples (6) and (7) that this procedure of disambiguation can be an unnecessary step away from the SL wordplay, since in both cases there was a chance to follow the SL meanings and/ or the form of the wordgame and still transfer the wordplay into the TL. In conclusion, this translation procedure was a reasonable and justified form of translation only in three cases out of

total six cases. In three cases, this form of translation was due to the context restricting the translation possibilities, but in one case it even helped to preserve the humour, even though the translation did not preserve the wordplay itself.

5.1.3 translating with one semantic equivalent and one semantically nonequivalent expression

There are five cases in the data that belong to this category (appr. 11% of the data). The cases in this class are quite similar to the category 5.1.2, ie. in both categories the examples (except for one case) are based on repetition. In addition, in both categories the translation does not manifest any repetition. The difference between them is that in category 5.1.2 both SL meanings are transferred into the TL, while in category 5.1.3 only one semantic meaning of the multiple meaning expression in the SL has been transferred into the TL, and the other meaning of the SL phrase has been replaced with a 'new' meaning created by the translator herself. In other words, the SL wordplay has been translated with one semantic meaning and one dynamic equivalent, which tries to preserve the humour and the element of wordplay in the translated passage. This is shown by example (9):

- (9) setting : Niles and Frasier at cafe Nervosa, discussing that there are fewer hazelnuts ('pähkinöitä') in their biscotti, and that those have gone up 25 cents.
Frasier: Hmm. Fewer nuts, more money. Something to inspire my entire professional life.

Vähän pähkäiltävää, lisää rahaa.
Siinä urani tavoite.

Here, the SL wordplay is based on the change of meaning of the word *nuts*. The primary meaning of it is as a noun 'hazelnuts' (see the description of the setting), and secondly, it is a descriptive word (ie. as an adjective) used informally to refer to people who are 'mad, foolish' (CC). The context makes both meanings clear for the SL target audience. Since the noun *pähkinä* ('nut') does not have a similar kind of informal reference in Finnish, the translator has in the first appearance of the word translated its semantic

meaning (*pähkinöitä*). On the actual wordplay, she has chosen to change the semantic meaning, but preserved sound similarity (*pähkinä* - *pähkäiltävä*). This has led to some loss of wordplay. However, sound similarity does connect the two TL meanings and create some amount of repetition, and consequently the loss is not absolute. In addition, the new TL meaning suits well the context, because it can be considered to reflect the situation as well as the original meaning, ie. both meanings are related to the character's professional life (*pähkäiltävä* equals to 'something to think about'). In this case, the nonequivalent TL expression is nonequivalent on the semantic level, but it can be claimed to be more equivalent on the pragmatic and dynamic level, since the loss of phonetic punning is not absolute.

However, the rest of the examples (four out of five) show that this translation procedure is not as successful as the example (9) above leads one to assume. By translating the primary SL meaning semantically and replacing the secondary SL meaning with a TL item unrelated to the first TL choice, wordplay is then often lost. This is especially the case when the TL does not preserve the repetitive nature of the wordplay like the SL text does, as is shown by example (10);

- (10) setting: Daphne explaining to Frasier that she cannot quite pronounce American English
 Daphne: 'I'll see you later'. You see, that's the problem when I speak American, I don't know what to do with my r's.
 Frasier: Try rolling it out of here.

'Terve vaan'

En osaa vielä pyörittää ärrää
 oikein. - Pyöritä itsesi ulos

Here, the SL wordplay is based on the American pronunciation of *r's*. The primary character of the word is that it is a plural form of the letter 'r' of the alphabet. The next line of the dialogue, however, points out the other meaning of it by referring to it with a singular pronoun *it*, ie. this gives a signal of a wordplay being based on phonetic similarity (ie. homophony) of *r's* and *arse*, a British English word for the bottom, ie. *it*. The main point

here is that the translation does not show a similar kind of relationship of reference as the SL text does. The key to the SL wordplay is that the reference creates the secondary meaning. However, in the TL text there no longer is such a reference to the previous dialogue. Instead, there are two topics of which the first one is the alphabet, and the second one is the addressee of the discussion. This has led to a loss of wordplay, even though the target language provides a possibility to preserve it as an element. For example, since the topic is the pronunciation of the letter 'r', the translation might play with the Finnish pronunciation of it, eg. the sound 'r' and the sound 'l' remind each other. Thus, with this a new wordplay in the TL can be created: *ärristä tulee aina / älliä. -Vie ällisi pois*. In other words, the new TL wordplay can be created by twisting the SL primary meaning, ie. by creating a secondary meaning (*älli* is an informal word for 'brains') based on the primary meaning of the both SL and TL text. Further, this translation preserves the phonetic nature of the SL wordplay. Thus, the original translation confirms, again, that the phonetic way of punning is usually replaced by a nonphonetic translation (Delabastita 1994:233).

A similar case to the previous one is shown by example (11):

- (11) setting: Daphne helping Martin to exercise. She is bent down and Niles is watching her bottom. She is talking about her job and how rewarding it is.
 Daphne: ...I'm glad that I took this position.
 Niles: We're all glad you took this position.

 ... iloinen että otin tämän paikan.

 Me kaikki olemme iloisia siitä.

The translation does not manifest repetition, which is the cornerstone of the SL wordplay. The same noun, *position*, is used to refer to a job, and then to a physical position. The translator has at first chosen a TL equivalent noun which can be used for both meanings, ie. 'työpaikka', position as a job, has been neutralised and thus shortened to *paikka*, which covers both meanings. But then the repetition of this multiple meaning TL noun has not been carried out, and the TL text uses the pronoun *siitä* instead of repeating the noun

paikka. The result is a vague expression without humour, even though the visual aid (the scene shows Niles staring at Daphne's position) helps even the TL audience to realize what the Finnish pronoun *siitä* is referring to. The lack of repetition is probably due to the limited space of the subtitles, because the translation is only on one line, even though a two-line-block would have been possible. Briefly, in this case it is unnecessary to overlook the role of repetition and the wordplay, and it is possible to translate the wordgame with a semantic equivalent, which would be dynamically equivalent at the same time.

Again, the loss of repetition and thus the loss of wordplay due to the translation are visible in example (12):

- (12) setting: Niles is hosting a costume party, he overhears Daphne and Frasier speaking about Roz's pregnancy, and gets the impression that Daphne is pregnant for Frasier. Niles is drunk, gets upset, and confronts Frasier.
Niles:... and before you deny it, I have plenty of proof!
Frasier: From here, it smells like 80 proof!

Älä kiellä,
minulla on todisteita
- - -
Sinä haiset kuin rankkitynnyri

Here the SL wordplay is clearly based on the repetition of the item *proof*, and its meanings are clearly signalled and separated from each other. The primary meaning of *proof* is that it is a piece of evidence (CC), and the second meaning is 'the strength of a strong alcoholic drink' (CC), which is indicated by the number 80 used in the expression. As the repetition in the SL combines the two sentences together, there is no such cohesion in the TL dialogue, because the line of Frasier does not refer to anything that Niles has said, though it carries freely the same semantic meaning of 'being drunk' as the SL expression does. The loss of cohesion may be avoided by creating repetition but within the limits of the semantic message of the SL text, eg. *mimulla on todisteita* / *Niin, todisteita humalastasi*. By preserving the repetition the cohesion can be preserved in the dialogue.

However, repetition carried over to the TL text is not always available. Such a case is for example a SL proper name which carries a meaning and both are used in a word-game, as is shown by example (13);

- (13) setting: Niles has promised his father Martin that he will get him a Sherlock Holmes costume for the costume party Niles is hosting. Instead, Niles brings Martin a Peter Wimsey costume, and Martin does not accept that.
Niles: Tonight you'll be Lord Peter Wimsey.
Martin: ... Well, I'm not going anywhere if I have to tell people my name is whimsy
- Olet lordi Peter Wimsey.
- - -
Minä en semmoista esitä.

The name *Wimsey* has to be in its original form, since it is known as such in the TL culture; it is the main character from a series of novels by Dorothy L. Sayers. However, the SL wordplay is based on the sound similarity of the name and its near homophone, the uncountable noun *whimsy* which stands for a playful, unpredictable and unusual behaviour (CC). The original proper name does not carry any sound similarity to any TL item, and thus it does not carry sound similarity to any TL item with this particular (semantically equivalent) meaning. The translator has at first transferred the proper name in its original form and then solved the problem of semantic nonequivalence with a free translation (Reiss and Vermeer 1984) which still preserves the essence of the expression, ie. it reveals that the name Wimsey carries some unpleasant meaning for Martin.

In conclusion of this category, there were only two cases, examples (9) and (13), where this procedure was successful. In the rest three cases the TL did offer another possibilities for the translation of preserving the element of wordgame in the TL. Of these cases, example (10) showed that the wordplay could have been, though it was not, preserved in the subtitles by transferring the SL primary meaning and deriving a new TL meaning from it, and thus creating a TL wordplay based partly on the SL expression and partly on freedom and the TL itself. On the other hand, example (11) showed that the TL offered the translator a chance to follow the SL wordplay semantically

and structurally, though the translator had not done so. In addition, examples (12) and (11) are quite similar to each other; in both the wordplay could have been preserved in the TL by preserving the repetitive nature of the passage. In fact, in all three examples above the repetitive nature of the passage had been unnecessarily omitted. This is due to the characteristics of the subtitles; it is possible that the translator tends to oversimplify and reduce the message into the 'optimum' level even when there is enough space and pace on the screen for the longer version.

5.1.4 only the primary, semantic meaning transferred

This translation procedure is quite common; eleven (11) of a total of 46 cases (24%) belong to this group. Most of these losses of wordplay are unpreventable, as will be shown in the discussion. The losses of wordplay can be divided into two separate subcategories, 5.1.4a and 5.1.4b. The first subcategory includes five cases where the sound similarity is the cornerstone of the SL wordplay, but it cannot be transferred into the TL. The second subcategory includes six nonphonetic wordplay cases where the translation of only one meaning, ie. the primary meaning, results in the loss of wordgame, but which cannot be avoided even by a more free translation.

5.1.4a. lack of sound similarity

As has already been stated, in this subcategory, as well as in all the other categories, freedom of translation is limited by the context of the dialogue, and thus in this subcategory the result is the loss of sound similarity and the loss of wordplay. This is shown by (14):

- (14) setting: Frasier and Niles discussing their childhood. They especially remember a halloween they went from door to door as *The Bay of Pigs* and how nobody had realised what their costume was about.
Frasier: ... Finally, I had to take telling we were 'The Swine Lake'. They didn't get that either.

Sitten selitin,-

...
että esitimme Sikolampoa.
eikä kukaan tajunnut sitäKÄÄN.

Here, the SL wordplay is a twisted allusion based on sound similarity, ie. the SL expression resembles phonetically *Swan Lake*, the name of a well-known ballet. The TL version of it is 'Joutsenlampi'. The context limits the freedom of the translator, so she has translated the semantic meaning of the SL word-game, because here it is the topic of the dialogue and cannot thus be omitted. This results in the loss of sound similarity, which is here unavoidable. Still, the allusion is quite recognizable to the TL audience even without phonetic resemblance.

The next case is quite similar to the one discussed above. The scene presents Frasier and Martin playing chess, and Frasier gets upset when his father wins. In *Frasier* there are often so called headlines between the scenes. On some occasions, these headlines are word-games, like in this case (15): *Chess pains*. It is phonetically very near (almost homophonic) with the common expression *chest pains*. However, since the topic of the scene is the game of chess, the translation has to preserve this semantic meaning, and it thus results in the lack of wordplay based on any kind of sound similarity: *Shakkikipuja*. The same result is also shown by example (16):

(16) setting: Niles and Frasier discussing art and that Niles knows a trustworthy art restorer.
F:... He saved my life last year when Eddie licked my Lichtenstein.

Hän pelasti hankeni, kun
Eddie nuolaisi Lichtensteiniani

The humour in the SL passage is based on the repetition of the sounds of the verb in past tense, *lick'd' my Lick'dnstein*. Since the topic of the scene limits the freedom of translation, the translation is based on the transfer of the semantic meaning of the SL expression by using the TL verb *nuolaista*, 'lick'. However, the TL provides another verb in the same semantic field, and that is *lipaista*, which would at least preserve the element of alliteration

(*lipalsta Lichtensteinia*). In other words, here some sound similarity can be preserved in the TL.

In this subcategory, there are two more cases to discuss. The other one of them is a twisted SL allusion:

- (17) setting: Frasier giving a speech at a benefit for a theatre ensemble, thanking all for coming.
Frasier:... and I'll see you at the opening night of the *Run for your wife*.

Tapaamme *Juoskaa vaimonne - edestä*-ensi-illassa

This example shows that even though sound similarity between the SL item *wife* and its TL equivalent *vaimo* is nonexistent, a new form of wordplay has been born. This is due to the idiomatic nature of the TL expression, ie. the TL expression can have a literal and a nonliteral meaning. In other words, it can either mean 'run for your wife' or 'run in front of your wife'. The lack of sound similarity results here in the TL allusion being further away from its text referent than the SL expression is, because the Finnish title of the novel by Nicky Cruz (which the allusion is presumably referring to) is *Juokse henkesi edestä*. In other words, the verb is in singular form and not in plural as it is in the TL text. This example shows that in some cases the lack of sound similarity can be occasionally compensated by creating another forms of wordplay in the TL when the SL wordplay can only be translated by translating it only with the primary TL equivalent.

Next example introduces an SL idiom used in punning, ie. the idiom has a literal and a nonliteral meaning, which are both relevant in the context;

- (18) setting: Frasier and Martin playing a game of chess. Martin wins, though he does not understand the game at all.
Martin: I think the turning point was when I got that towery thing.
Frasier: It's called a rook.
Martin: (-) your little horsie guy into the corner.
Frasier: Can we call it a night?
Martin: Okay. When I cornered your knight.
Frasier: ... Can we call it a night?!

Pääsin niskan päälle, kun sain

sen korkean hökötyksen. - Tornin.

Tyrmäsin sinut,
kun ahdistin heppasi nurkkaan.

Riittäisikö tältä illalta?
-Valtasin sotilaasikin!

Ihan totta, lopetetaan jo.

Here the SL dialogue plays with the homophones *night* and *knight* and the usage of the expression *call it a k/night*, ie. if it is a phrase with the meaning ‘to stop doing what you are doing’ (CC) or if it is normal usage and means ‘to call a chessman a knight’. As stated already in the present study on previous occasions, the situation sets limits on the freedom of the translation, as in the example above the topic is chess and cannot be changed. Since there is no one-to-one equivalent available in the TL, the TL dialogue lacks wordplay. This is unavoidable, and consequently the translation follows the rule of faithfulness (eg. Vermeer 1998:44, Ingo 1990:199), ie. if the TL text cannot be faithful to the SL text, at least it has to be faithful to the TL itself, and thus follow its rules.

In conclusion of the subclass 5.1.4a, it can be stated that this translation procedure is usually reasonable, and that the loss of sound similarity (and thus the loss of wordgame) cannot be prevented in most cases. Delabastita (1994:233) refers to this as a trend of replacing the phonetic way of punning with a nonphonetic expression. In one case, (17), this procedure lead to a new form of wordplay in the TL, even though it was most obviously an accidental result of this translation procedure. But in general, the result is the loss of wordplay. This is due to the limits set by the context, ie. there is not much freedom for the translator because the topic of the dialogue has to stay the same. For example, it was usual that the SL wordplay was based on a proper name and its sound resemblance. In order to preserve the topic and the situation, the name had to be transferred as such into the TL.

5.1.4b. other types

The rest of the cases with only one semantic meaning transferred from SL to TL are not based on sound similarity but on idioms, real meanings of proper names or complex unitaries. First, example (19) shows an idiom used in punning. However, the TL text fails to preserve the element of wordplay, even though it is possible;

- (19) setting: Niles having a party for his new neighbours, but he has to stay hidden in the kitchen because his parrot had a trauma and has a grip on his head. Frasier tells Niles that Niles has to explain his guests why he is a bad host.
Niles: Very well. I'll go there. But if they ridicule me, let it be on your head.
- Hyvä on, mutta on sinun vikasi,
jos minua pilkataan.

The idiom *let it be on your head* can be used literally and nonliterally, and both senses are possible in the context (see the description of the setting for the literal meaning). The nonliteral meaning is 'you will bear the responsibility for any harm caused by the action' (DI). Even though there is no expression in the TL totally semantically equivalent to the SL expression, there still are many similar kind of expressions with the same meaning and with the noun *pää* ('head'). It is important to maintain this noun in the TL dialogue, it is, after all, the main theme of the scene. Such an expression is eg. *on sinun pääsi menoa*, which suits the context well, because it preserves the repetition of the main noun 'head' and the meaning of responsibility of some degree. In other words, it is here unnecessary to limit the translation to only one sense when a little more freedom, ie. usage of a dynamic equivalent, can help to preserve the element of wordplay essential for the sitcom.

The proper nouns and their use in punning are problematic for the translator, as can be claimed judging from the next three examples.

- (20) setting: Frasier telling a woman that he likes to act, and that he debuted in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.
Frasier: ...Not to toot my own horn, but my Bottom received a standing ovation.
woman: I'm not surprised (looks at Frasier's bottom).

En halua kerskua, mutta kanku-
rilleni hurrattiin. - Ei ihme

In this case, there already exists at least one standard translation of the SL name, and that is the translation of Cajander, ie. the name *Bottom* has been translated into *Pulma* in Cajander's translations of Shakespeare's play. The character of *Pulma* has been further described with the word *kankuri* ('an escaped prisoner'). Even though *Pulma* is an ambiguous name with the meaning of 'problem', this meaning does not fit to the situation presented in the scene, because the secondary meaning of the SL proper name *Bottom* is signalled visually (ie. the woman looks at Frasier's bottom). The ambiguous nature of the TL proper name could have created problems for the TL audience in understanding, because in Finnish it is not a very well-known allusion and it does not suit the situation. Probably for this particular reason, the translation overlooks the TL proper name and used the descriptive noun 'kankuri' instead which is clear in its meaning. Thus, there exists no wordplay in the TL dialogue, but there is no possibility for it either because of the problem created by the ambiguous nature of the SL proper noun.

Example (21) shows a case of similar nature with the previous one;

(21) setting: Frasier and Niles planning to start a practise together.
Frasier: Crane and Crane! I can see our logo already. A giant crane hovering over a human head.

Crane ja Crane!
Näen jo logomme:

Jättiläiskurki liihottamassa
ihmisen pään yllä

The SL wordplay is based on the real meaning of the name *Crane*, the surname of the main character, ie. *Frasier Crane*. However, the TL cannot bring out both meanings with one TL item, since the name has to stay in its original form to be recognized by the TL audience, and the semantic meaning of the name in the TL ('kurki') has no connections to the name itself and thus, most importantly, it has no connections to the situation. In other words,

even though it at first seems reasonable to translate the semantic meaning of the name in this passage, it would still be perhaps more reasonable to transfer the SL name as such into the TL text, ie; *jättiläis-Crane liihottamassa*. This translation would at least have some cohesion to the context, because *Crane* is already a familiar item for the TL audience while the first translation, *kurki*, has no such familiarity. In addition, when considering the humour of it, the transfer of the SL name creates a humorous image, ie. it is dynamically equivalent, while the conventional, semantically equivalent translation fails to preserve the humour. Further, the informative content of the expression is not as important as the expressive and operative functions in texts like sitcom dialogues, as has been pointed out by Reiss and Vermeer (1984).

There are still three examples in this subclass to discuss. Two of them are quite similar to each other;

- (22) setting : Daphne visiting Niles. The scene is like a Tennessee Williams play, hot and tensed with desire, because in this scene they both feel attraction to each other. Niles expresses his passion towards Daphne with a symbol.
Niles: Passionfruit?

Saako olla passionhedelmä?

- (23) setting: at the studio, Bulldog and Roz are making jokes about Frasier, because he has not had luck with women.
Bulldog: Frasier Crane's sexlife? Hey, there's a word for that! It's an oxy...
oxy...
Roz: Moron.
Bulldog: Hey! Well, easy! I'll get it...

Frasier Cranen seksielämä.

Sille on sanakin. Oksy...

Moroni. - Älä sotke.

Both SL wordplays are based on unitary complex cases. The first example introduces a noun, a fruit, with such a name which can be separated into two meanings, 'passion' and 'fruit'. The scene presents Niles who has passionate feelings towards Daphne, ie. the *passion* element of the noun is emphasized. The name of the fruit has a standard translation in the TL; *passiohedelmä*, and this noun does not directly bring out the passion ('intoshimo, himo')

between the characters into the awareness of the TL audience, since the word *passion* is a loan word used only in very few cases in the TL. In this case, the standard translation is a conventional solution, but an option for it would be to translate it unconventionally, ie. by using a form which brings out the element of passion in the TL, eg. *Saisiko olla intohimonhedelmä?*. However, this is maybe too a strange expression for the TL audience. On the other hand, understanding is visually helped by the scene, since the character of Niles offers Daphne a fruit at the time of utterance. In addition, the expression *intohimonhedelmä* can then refer to a fruit, but it is also known to refer to children, the result of the passion. Another way to preserve some kind of wordplay and humour would be to bring out the passion, the theme of the scene, in the form of a verb, eg. *Himottaako hedelmä?* ('Would you desire a fruit?'). To sum up, with some freedom of translation there does exist other choices than just the use of the standard TL translation.

The second example presented above is, as stated already, also a case of a unitary complex. The term *oxymoron* is, according to Collins Cobuild, used for a phrase combining two contradictory qualities or ideas and therefore it seems impossible. However, when used as an unitary complex, as it has been used in the TL wordplay, it includes the noun *moron*, which is an offensive word used for a stupid person (CC). This meaning is clearly signalled in the SL dialogue. But in the TL version, the term *oxymoron* has been used as such (ie. *oksymoroni*) because of the lack of an equivalent TL expression which could be used as a unitary complex. The result is that the TL dialogue treats the word *moroni* as if it had an offensive meaning generally known by the TL audience. In other words, even though there is no play with real meanings in the TL, there is still a slight wordplay based on a secondary, imaginary meaning.

The final example in this subcategory shows a wordplay based on single word with different associations and thus meanings, (24);

- (24) setting: Niles and Frasier going to a baseball match. Niles, wearing an elegant suit, comes to pick up Frasier. Frasier questions Niles' suit and its appropriateness for baseball watching.
Niles: Obviously, you failed to check this subtle siamond pattern in my tie.

Et huomannut pelikentän
muotoista kuviota.

The primary meaning of the word *diamond* is that it is a jewel, but here it also refers to the form of the American baseball field. However, this association to the baseball is not familiar to the TL audience, so the translation brings up the secondary meaning of the SL wordplay by replacing the primary meaning with it. This preserves the humour and the topic of the dialogue.

To conclude this subcategory, it can be stated that this translation procedure of transferring only the primary meaning of the SL wordplay can be successful as well as unsuccessful. Three of the examples (20,23,24) in the data shows that this was the only option for the translator, and that in two of these cases (23,24) it was a positive procedure, since it still managed to preserve the humour in the passage. In particular, in example (23) the semantic TL equivalent was treated *as if* it was ambiguous in the TL. Thus, the translation could preserve the wordplay as such, even though the procedure itself is disambiguating. In addition, the context helps to preserve the element of wordgame in the TL. However, there are two cases (21,22) where the wordgame is disambiguated even though the TL offers another solutions for the translation. Both cases are characterized by the use of names (a surname and a name of a fruit) in the wordplay. The wordgames in both cases could be preserved in the subtitles by a more free translation.

5.2 *Preservation of wordplay*

There are translation procedures which the translator can make use of and which aim at preserving the element of wordplay in the TL text. The data shows three such procedures., of which two follow the SL meanings at least

partially. The first procedure is to translate one of the SL meanings and recreate a functionally equivalent secondary meaning with it. The second procedure is the only procedure where the SL wordplay and its meanings are replaced with a totally new wordplay in the TL, ie. none of the SL meanings are transferred directly into the TL. The third procedure transfers both SL meanings into the TL, because there is nearly one-to-one equivalence between the languages in these cases. All of these three categories will be discussed next.

5.2.1 transfer with a semantic equivalent, derivation of a functional one

This category is the first one of the three procedures aiming at preserving the element of wordplay in the TL. There are eight cases in this category (17% of the data), and of these eight cases six are based on a singular occurrence of an SL item, and thus two are based on repetition. All eight cases show a procedure where the primary semantic SL-meaning is transferred into the TL, and a new, functionally equivalent TL-meaning is derived from it. Thus, the TL wordplay is only partially based on the original wordplay. The cases based on repetition will be discussed first;

- (25) setting: Frasier talking to himself and Eddie the dog listening.
Frasier: ...Oh, there is just so much at stake!
Eddie: Wuf
Frasier: Not that kind of steak!

Pelissä on niin paljon

Ei sellaisessa pelissä.

- (26) setting: at the studio, Roz is not paying attention to her work, and she lets the wrong callers to get through. Frasier is irritated by this.
caller: What are you talking about? I'm making an apple tart, and I'm out of cinnamon.
Frasier: I see. Listeners! For the fourth time this hour, I am not The Happy Chef. I am the irritated psychiatrist, Dr. Frasier Crane. (he ends the call, is very upset that Roz has not done her job well enough, and comments to her:)
Speaking of tarts...

Mitä höpiset? Leivon
omenahyvettä ja kaneli puuttuu.

Arvon kuuntelijat

Sanon vielä neljännen kerran
etten ole iloinen kokki

Olen ärtynyt psykiatri
Frasier Crane

Hyveistä puheenollen...

In both examples, the SL wordplay is based on repetition with a change in meaning. The example (25) is a case of homophony, ie. *stake* and *steak* are graphically different but phonetically similar to each other. The TL text includes the meaning of the first item (*stake - peli*, ie. both words are related to the world of risks and eg. gambling), and the second meaning *steak* ('pihvi') is replaced in the TL with a new functionally equivalent meaning derived from the first one. In other words, in the TL the word *peli* is used for two meanings, of which the new, derived one is presumably related to the world of dogs, eg. to *pallopeti*, throwing a ball with the dog.

Example (26) shows a similar case to the previous one, except that the SL items are alike not only phonetically but also graphically (*tart - tart*). The first item has the same meaning as the noun 'pie', but the second case refers to a woman who is sexually immoral (CC). The TL lacks an equivalent word with both these meanings. Instead, the TL does provide an equivalent for the first SL-meaning; *omenahyve*, which includes in its structure the abstract noun 'hyve' ('virtue'), ie. the TL word is ambiguous and can be used in punning. The translator has thus preserved the element of wordplay in the subtitles by deviating slightly from the original text, and it has been a successful choice, since the humour is preserved and the new wordplay suits the context; the topic is that Roz is not doing her job well enough, and that is not a virtue but a vice.

~~Next, the cases based on a single, ambiguous occurrence of an expression will be discussed.~~

(27) setting: Frasier at the studio, saying farewell to the host of the show 'Happy Chef'.

Frasier: Now, as you whisk yourself away...

Vatkataan kättä hyvästiksi

The SL plays with the meanings of the verb *whisk*. The first meaning of it is to move oneself away quickly (CC), and the second meaning is to ‘stir eggs, cream or such very fast’, and both these meanings are clear in the situation of the scene (see the description of the setting). The wordgame is preserved in the translation by deriving a new functionally equivalent meaning from the second SL meaning ‘to stir’. In other words, the translation creates a wordplay partially independent from the SL wordplay. The TL verb *vatkata* is equivalent to the SL meaning ‘to stir’ of the verb *to whisk* used in the wordplay, and from this TL equivalent the translator has created a wordgame by using it in another sense, ie. by using a common informal phrase *vatkata kättä* (‘to shake hands’). As the TL wordgame and its both formal and informal meanings fit the situation, the free translation has been successful and equivalent on the dynamic level. The next example (28) is similar to the previous one, and it, too, shows that this translation procedure is quite successful:

- (28) setting: Café Nervosa. Niles and Frasier sitting, and Niles has just been served with the divorce papers. He wants the divorce not to be discussed. The waiter walks to them.
waiter: Hi, may I get you guys anything?
Frasier: No, thanks. We have already been served.

Saisiko olla jotain?
Kiitos ei, me vain haastelimme.

Here, the original wordgame plays with the two different meanings of the verb *serve*, ie. to serve food and drink to people and, as a legal term, to serve someone with a legal order, such as divorce papers (CC). Again, the TL lacks an equivalent verb with both semantic meanings, but the solution which preserves the element of wordplay has been to derive a new functionally, but not quite semantically, equivalent TL meaning from the secondary meaning of the SL wordplay. In other words, as the topic of the scene is a subpoena, ie. ‘haaste’, it cannot be omitted in the translation. However, it can be used in

creating a new wordplay, because it offers a secondary meaning for it by being close in form to the TL oldfashioned verb *haastella*, 'to talk'. The translator has taken this closeness of these two TL items into usage in order to preserve the element of wordplay in the translation, and it is a successful method here, too, since both TL meanings suit the situation.

As is shown by example (29), this translation procedure can be quite free;

- (29) setting: at the apartment. Niles comes in, he has been on a wedding in the woods.
Daphne: What's this sticky stuff all over your shoulders here? (looks at Niles)
Frasier: Did you finally find a date?
Niles: I asked Maris.
Daphne: Sap. (feels the sticky stuff with her fingers)
Frasier: I think Daphne speaks for us all! -
- Mitä tahmeaa teillä
on harteilla? - Saitko daamin?
- - -
Pyysin Marisia.
-Voi mähnä.
- - -
Daphne puhuu meidän kaikkien
puolesta -

Here, the SL wordplay is based on the multiple usages of the uncountable noun *sap*. First, it's primary meaning in this context is the watery liquid that is in plants and trees (CC), and it is secondarily used for a foolish person, an idiot (American English usage, CC), and this sense is brought up by the following dialogue (see the line of Frasier). The semantic TL equivalent for the SL primary meaning is the word *mahla*, but it does not have a similar kind of pragmatic aspect as the SL noun, ie. in the TL it is not used to describe the speaker's negative attitude. Instead, in the translation it is reworded in order to fulfill the secondary, pragmatic usage also in the TL. However, even though the TL word *mähnä* ('sticky stuff') is semantically quite similar to *mahla*, 'sap', it is merely used as an exclamation (*voi mähnä*). In other words, it has become the primary meaning, and the primary meaning of watery liquid in plants and trees has become secondary, if not omitted totally. However, the visuality of the scene to the TL audience, too,

helps to understand the TL exclamation ambiguously, but it would be reasonable to reform the reworded equivalent into a less exclamative form, eg. *mähmää*, because then it would work as a statement of the liquid on Niles' shoulders as well as a comment bringing up the speaker's negative attitude towards what has been said.

The next two examples show that the process of deriving a new meaning is not always based on the primary meaning of the SL wordgame, but can be done on the basis of the secondary meaning;

- setting: at the apartment, Daphne flirting with the handsome repair man. She gets him coffee, and asks if he would like to have something else.
- (30) Daphne: Honey bun?
man: Yes?
Daphne: I meant if you'd like one of these with your coffee?
man: I'd love one.
Daphne: Anything else?
- (31) man: No. Sugar.
Daphne: Yes?
man: I meant in the coffee.

Hunajakakku?
-Niin?

Tarkoitin, että otatko sellaisen kahvin kanssa? - Mielelläni.

Entä muuta?
-Ei. Sokeripala.

Niin? - Tarkoitin kahviin.

In these examples, the primary, semantic meaning is relatively easy to translate with TL semantic equivalents (*honey bun* - *hunajakakku*, *sugar* - *sokeripala*). The SL wordplay signals clearly the secondary meaning of both, ie. they have been used as vocatives to express affectionate feelings. However, the TL equivalents do not have a similar kind of vocative usage. Since the situation sets strict limits to the translation here, ie. the topic has to be related to coffee even in the translation. This translation problem is solved here by creating a new secondary TL meaning for the TL semantic equivalents. In other words, the TL semantic equivalents are treated as if they had a vocative meaning, ie. as if they were commonly used in the TL

culture to express affectionate feelings. In reality, this is not the case, but in this context it works, since the situation and the dialogue points out these meanings of the words to the TL audience. In addition, this effect has been emphasized by rewording the uncountable noun *sugar*, ‘sokeri’, into a countable noun *sokeripala*, ‘sugar lump’, which can be used to refer to a person. However, it can be argued that this translation violates the TL and its regulations, ie. it is not faithful to the TL, but on the other hand, this is compensated by greater faithfulness to the original text.

The final example (32) in this category shows yet another successful case of derivatives;

- (32) setting: the road, Frasier and Niles driving. They notice Roz picking up trash and scraping off roadkills as a community service and she hides in their car and starts a conversation with them)
Frasier: Weren't there any other service you could've performed?
Roz: The only other option was visiting old people in our retirement home.
Frasier: And you chose this?
Niles: Well, think about it. Walking the streets, picking up trash. It was obvious Roz would go to the familiar.
- Frasier: Etkö voisi tehdä muuta?
Roz: Auttaa vanhuksia.
Frasier: Valitsitko tämän?
Niles: Raatojen poimiminen kadulta... Sehän on tuttua Rozille.

Here, the setting is the road where Roz is literally picking up trash as a community service. The noun *trash* refers to actual garbage but also to a certain people, like the poor and the socially unrespected. In other words, the noun *trash* has a double meaning in this context. Since the character of Roz is a spinster after men, the word *trash* may have a submeaning ‘male’. The Finnish translation of this passage has replaced the noun *trash* with a noun *raato* (‘carcase’), which does not have the same referent as the original word. The semantic translation would have been *roskat*, but in itself it does not refer to people. In Finnish there exist a term *roskaväki* to describe people as trash, but that would have not preserved the wordplay because of the lost ambiguity. Instead, the translator has chosen the functionally equivalent noun *raato* which is a reflection of the beginning of the scene, where Frasier and

Niles see Roz on the road and she tells them she is *scraping off roadkills*. The Finnish noun *raato* is used to refer humorously to both dead animals and to males which Roz tends to pick up. This translation has the same basic idea as the original text, though the semantic meaning does not stay quite the same. Thus, the translator has preserved in her translation the secondary SL reference to people by using a noun *raato* which can refer to people and which has already been introduced in the previous dialogue. In other words, the primary meaning 'trash', garbage, is not transferred at all but replaced with a noun *raato*, 'a corpse', a noun already in usage in the situation. In this matter, this example differs from most of the previous examples, since in them the translation could have been done on the basis of the primary semantic meaning. In addition, the verb *to pick up* and its TL equivalent *poimia* are both ambiguous, and can be used in both senses, ie. to pick up a person or to pick up dead animals, 'poimia joku' or 'poimia raatoja'.

In conclusion, this translation procedure is successful and it is often used. The large amount cases in this subclass alone shows that there often exist possibilities for a dynamic translation. It also confirms for example Ingo's (1990:190) suggestion that when the informative function of the SL text is inferior to other functions, it is reasonable to give up the traditional way of translating. This notion is supported by the next category to be discussed, ie. it will show that the translator has created new wordplays in the TL, not based on the SL wordplay but on the context and the TL itself.

5.2.2 new wordplay

This category consists of eight (8) translation solutions, where the translator has created a new wordplay in the TL. Thus, she has chosen functional equivalents instead of semantic equivalents (17% of the data). Thus, the translation is more faithful to the TL and its regulations and less faithful to the SL text. Such a translation with a new TL wordplay is faithful to the

function of the text itself; and it thus preserves the element of humour, which is a crucial feature in sitcoms.

Five of these cases are so called 'headlines' which appear between the scenes, and are not a part of the dialogue. Yet they describe the scene beforehand to the audience, and point out the core of the scene, which is played with. See the next example, which appears before the scene resembling a Tennessee Williams play;

(33) The night of the I wanna
 Viittelyksen viinitarjoilu

The SL wordplay is a twisted allusion of a Tennessee Williams play *The Night of the Iguana*. It is based on sound similarity of the noun *iguana* and the informal phrase *I wanna*. As it is not possible to transfer both semantic aspects of the wordplay when one wants to preserve the element of wordplay, a functionally equivalent solution is chosen here. In other words, a new, twisted allusion is created within the limits of the topic, a Tennessee Williams play. The TL twisted allusion is thus based on another play by Williams, that is *The Streetcar named Desire*, (*Viittelyksen vaunu*), which is reworded to fit the situation of Niles pouring champagne into Daphne's glass and the scene manifesting the desire Niles has for Daphne. This translation solution is effective, since it preserves the nature of the wordplay; it is easily recognisable as an allusion to the TL audience, and brings up the essence of the scene.

The rest four (4) translations of the so called headlines will be discussed in the following paragraphs. The first one of them is a neologism based on phonetic similarity; (34) *Let's vuitton with it / Paljon melua matkalaaukuista*. Here, the neologistic verb *vuitton* in the SL wordplay resembles the phrase 'get on', as they are pronounced similarly, stressing the second syllable. 'Vuitton' refers to a designer label Louis Vuitton who manufactures mainly suitcases and bags. Since the name is not widely known in the TL culture, it is futile to try to create a TL wordplay with it. The translator has thus

created a whole new wordplay of a type of twisted allusion, which refers to a Shakespeare play, recognisable for the TL audience, *Much Ado about Nothing*, (*Paljon melua tyhjästä*), which has been reformed to fit the semantic situation, ie. 'matkalaukut', suitcases. They play a great role in the scene following the headline, and thus a reference to them is vital for the headline's wordplay in the TL, too.

Example (35) introduces a SL unitary complex; *Any port manteau in a storm / Myrsky radioaalloilla*. It is a twisted idiom, referring to the phrase 'any port in a storm'. The other aspect of the unitary complex phrase is that its two items, *port* and *manteau*, form a new meaning together unrelated to the semantic meaning of the noun *port*. Thus, *portmanteau* is a French loan word with the meaning 'suitcase'. The translation cannot take advantage of the original term, since the semantic meanings of its parts in the TL do not carry any meaning in the TL, and the term itself is unknown in the TL culture. Thus, in the translation a new wordplay is created within the limits of the original wordplay and its subject, that is *myrsky*, 'a storm'. The new wordplay is based on a new unitary complex in the TL, and it contradicts the concrete waves ('aallot') and the abstract radio waves ('radioaallot'). In addition, the translator has succeeded in creating a new wordplay in the TL within the limits of the topic of the episode which is Roz wanting a radioshow of her own.

The fourth headline is a SL idiom, used with both concrete and nonconcrete meanings; (36) *Get a grip / Tukkapölyä*. The concrete meaning is clear, to take a hold on something (CC), and it refers to the situation of the scene of a parrot gripping Niles' head. The idiomatic meaning of the phrase is 'to stop being foolish' (DI), and it refers to the foolish behaviour of Niles, who cannot control his panic in the situation. As there is no one-to-one equivalent idiom in the TL, the translator has created a new phrase, which brings out the concrete meaning of the SL idiom. However, even if the TL expression is not directly a wordgame, it can be classified as such. This is due to a slight

phonetic change bringing out the situation, ie. the parrot on the head; *tukkapöllyä* can be treated as if it was a unitary complex of which the second part reminds of the commonly known name for the parrot, Polly. In addition, with a slight graphic change, *Tukka-Pollya*, the translation would be even more clearly a wordgame with two meanings.

The final headline in this category shows that the context offers excellent help for the translator in creating new wordplays; (37) *Let's see Alec Guinness blow up one of those / Kwai-joen aasinsillat*. Here, the SL expression is not a direct wordgame, but the translator has created a new wordplay of it in the TL, and thus followed Newmark's (1981:7-8) idea of preserving the amount of wordplays in the TL at the approximate same level as it is in the SL text. In other words, here this solution compensates for the wordgames lost in the translation process. The TL wordgame is a unitary complex case, which combines the reference of the SL text to the film *The Bridge over the River Kwai* and the reference to the topic of the scene (Roz wonders how to tell her ex-boyfriend that she is pregnant). The SL expression refers to the scene of the character of Martin describing Sherry's underwear as something that one can cross the River Kwai on.

There are three more examples from the dialogue to discuss in this translation category. Two of these cases are homonyms, ie. one item has more than one meaning, as is shown by example (38):

- (38) setting: Martin suddenly wants to exercise, and Daphne starts to wonder why.
Daphne: Oh, I get the picture. Not too limbo with Sherry this evening, were we? Two hips but no hurray?
- Jassoo, ettekö ollutkaan vetreä
Sherryn seurassa?
- - -
Olitteko sittenkin liian jäykkä?

In English there is an exclamation phrase *hip, hip, hurray* which is quite common. Here the passage refers not only to this exclamation phrase but it also has a sexual reference: two actual hips (bodyparts) but no hurray (no

pleasure). Since it has become clear in the previous context that Martin Crane has a bad hip but a vital girlfriend, both references are accessible to the audience. The same exclamation phrase exists in Finnish, too: *hip hip hurraa*, but in Finnish the word *hip* does not have a reference to anything, at least not to a bodypart. The translator has chosen another type of ambiguity, which is in its style more direct than the original. The phrase *liian jäykkä* ('too stiff') refers to Martin Crane's physical condition, but also to his sexual condition. The reference to his physical condition is clear, since his hip makes him to move slowly and he has Daphne to exercise him. The reference to his sexual virility is in Finnish very direct, because some amount of *jäykkyys*, 'stiffening', is required in virility. The humorous effect in the translation is created by the word *liian* ('too'), because the phrase *liian jäykkä* is obscure when referring to a man in a sexual situation; usually the problem of older men is impotence, not being too virile. This case shows that indecent puns are not always moderated or disambiguated, which is in Delabastita's (1994:233) words a trend in the field of translation. However, it does confirm Delabastita's other observation of phonetic wordplays being usually replaced by nonphonetic ways of punning.

Homonymy is also shown by example (39);

- (39) **setting:** Martin gives a speech for Frasier at the Frasier Crane Day-party
 Martin: ...but, as someone ones quipped: a good psychiatrist never shrinks from a challenge.

...mutta joku on todennut,
 että hyvä psykiatri on pääasia.

The SL wordplay is based on the multiple meanings of the word *shrink*. First of all, as a verb in this phrase it means not to avoid a challenge. The other meaning comes from the noun *shrink*, which is an informal word for a psychiatrist. As the TL lacks an equivalent word for this case, the translator has created a new wordplay based on the TL and its common expression. The TL wordgame is created with a unitary complex; *pääasia* has a literal and a nonliteral meaning; 'main thing' and 'matter of the head'. In fact, this

wordplay is commonly known in the TL culture, and it fits well in this context. As does the translation in example (40);

(40) setting: Frasier at the studio, saying farewell to the host of the show 'Happy Chef'.

Frasier: ... let's not say goodbye but rather 'ta-ta' for now.

Työ kanssasi ei maistunut puulta

The SL wordplay is a case of homophony, ie. the pronunciation of the informal British English expression for thanks, *ta ta*, resembles the pronunciation of 'tartare' as in tartare sauce, thus related to cooking and eating. Though the TL has borrowed the word *tartare* almost directly (ie. 'tartar'), it has no other meaning. The TL does not provide any other possibilities to preserve the semantic meanings of the SL wordplay, so the translator has omitted it totally and used a suitable TL phrase with a literal and a nonliteral meaning, *maistua puulta* ('working with you did not *taste like wood*' / 'I did not *get fed up with* working with you'). It is thus functionally equivalent, since the element of wordgame is preserved in the TL.

In conclusion of this category, it can be stated that the translations here are free, and within the limits of the context of the sitcom and its scene. The cases in this category are often characterized by strong cultural markedness, ie. they play with terms and ideas typical to the SL culture and they are most often unknown to members outside that culture, such as in this case the members of the TL culture. Newmark (1991:3) calls this phenomenon cultural equivalence, ie. an SL word which is bound to the SL culture is replaced by a TL word bound to the TL culture. This procedure has been useful in cases where the TL has not offered any other possibilities. However, the next category to be discussed next will show that wordplays in some cases are not a translation problem, because sometimes there does exist near one-to-one equivalence of reference between the SL and the TL.

5.2.3 near one-to-one equivalence

In this category, the cases of near one-to-one equivalence are discussed. The data shows six (6) cases where the SL wordgame and its semantic meanings can be transferred into the TL with no or very slight changes (13% of the data). This is due to the similar types of reference existing in both languages. One of these cases is a mixture of two wordgames;

- (41) setting: Daphne on the phone, speaking in the American way. Frasier walks in and asks Daphne why she sounds so peculiar.
Daphne: I'm trying my American.
Frasier: Certainly trying this American.
- Testaan amerikkalaista.
- - -
Tätä amerikkalaista se ärsyttää.

The SL wordgame is based on the ambiguous verb *try* and the ambiguous word *American*. As can be seen, the repetition changes the meanings of these. The basic idea of the wordplay is to ambiguate the word *American*, ie. it can stand either for nationality or language. The translator has emphasized and topicalized this in the translation, and disambiguated the verbal usage. However, the basic wordplay is transferred into the TL by using an ambiguous TL form of the word *American*, ie. by preserving both aspects of the SL word by using the unconventional form *amerikkalainen* to describe the language when the standard form would be *amerikka* or *amerikanenglanti*. The form chosen can thus refer in the TL to both the language used and the nationality. In this wordplay, there exists a strong aural help for the target audience to understand the wordplay; Daphne's way of speaking is clearly heard, and the target audience knows from experience that she is not using her British accent. In addition, it would be possible to preserve some sound similarity in verb choices; here the translator has chosen to disambiguate the SL verb *try* with two TL equivalents ('*kokeilla*' and '*ärsyttää*'), of which the latter verb could be replaced with the equivalent verb '*koetella*', phonetically close to the first verb in question. Briefly, the SL wordplay in this case does not cause a translation problem,

since with a slight change in form the basic wordplay and references are transferrable.

A case similar to the previous one is shown by example (42);

- (42) setting: Daphne flirting with the handyman, and she has brought him a cup of coffee.
man: Smells great. Columbian?
Daphne: No, English... Oh, the coffee. Costa Rican.
- Tuoksuu hyvältä. Kolumbiastako?
-Englannista.
- - -
Ai kahvi. Costa Ricasta.

Here, the SL wordplay is transferred into the TL with a slight change in the form of the words in question, as was the case with the previous example, too. As the TL word and its form for nationality (noun *kolumbialainenko*) cannot refer to the coffee type and its origins (adjective *kolumbialaistako?*), the translation neutralises the expression in the TL in order to preserve the ambiguity of reference of the SL expression. The neutralisation has been achieved by using the name of the country as a kind of a hyperonym, ie. 'From Columbia? No, from England.', instead of adjectives and nouns standing for the similar meaning of origins. In other words, with this slight change the transfer of the SL wordplay into the TL has been successful.

The next three cases show translations where something has been left out in order to preserve the original wordplay;

- (43) setting: at the Frasier Crane Day, Daphne is complaining to the mayor of Seattle that because of her passport problems she cannot travel with her friend to meet the ship of the friend's mother.
Daphne: You see, my friend Xena and I, she is an alien, too, we're trying to get down to Mazatlán to rendezvous with her mother's ship.
mayor: Her mothership?
Daphne: Yes. And from what I hear, it's quite spectacular.

~~Minä ja Xena,~~
~~joka on myös muukalainen,-~~
~~---~~
~~haluamme Mazatlániin~~
~~hän äitinsä alusta vastaan.~~
~~---~~

Alustako?

-Se on kuulemma upea.

The SL wordplay is based on the pronunciation of the expression *mother's ship*, which is near-homophonic to the noun *mothership*, ie. both are pronounced quite similarly because the genitive '-s' usually disappears in pronunciation when it is followed by a word beginning with the letter 's', as in this case. This secondary meaning of it is emphasized by the previous dialogue; the noun *alien* is strongly connected with science fiction and in that context it is used to describe creatures from the outer space. The TL version of the SL wordplay follows the SL reference but with different means; the genitive form is not repeated since it bears no extra meaning in the TL, and consequently the wordplay gets through to the target audience by using the noun *alus* ('ship'), which is used in science fiction, but can also refer to a normal 'boat'. In other words, here the SL wordplay is transferred into the TL by removing the unambiguating or otherwise unsuitable element in the process of translation. This is the case in (44), too;

- (44) setting: cafe Nervosa. Martin and Sherry come in.. Martin says he'll get them a couple of coffees.
Sherry: You know how I like mine: hot and sweet.
Martin: Yeah, but how do you like your coffee?

Haluan omani oikein kuumana.

Entäs kahvisi?

Here, the wordplay in the SL is based on the ambiguous referent of the adjectives '*hot and sweet*'. In order to keep the referent ambiguous in the TL, the translator has chosen not to transfer the adjective *sweet* ('makea') into the TL, because it does not have the same usage as it does in the SL, ie. in the SL it can be considered to refer to a sexual relationship or to a person, in addition to the primary reference to coffee. Thus, the adjective *sweet* is left untranslated since the TL equivalent word, *makea*, has a negative connotation when used to describe a person ('a sugary person'). However, the first adjective *hot*, 'kuuma', is sufficient on its own to preserve the SL wordplay in the TL version, too, because the TL equivalent includes the

same connotations as the SL word, and can thus refer to sex. In addition, due to this slight omission of a SL word the translation does not sound like a translation, and its effect does not change in the translation process. Thus, it is a natural, as well as a dynamic equivalent (Nida and Taber 1969).

The third example where something is left out in the translation process in order to follow the SL wordplay and its limits is example (45), which is a headline between the scenes: (45) *Cat fight on a hot tin roof / Missit kuumalla katolla*. This wordgame is a twisted allusion, referring to the Tennessee Williams play '*A cat on a hot tin roof*'. Thus, the added element is the noun *fight* in the SL wordgame. The TL allusion is the same as it is in the SL, but it is based on sound similarity and not to an added noun, which is left untranslated in the TL. The Williams play is in the TL '*Kissa kuumalla katolla*', and the equivalent twisted TL-allusion *kissatappelua kuumalla katolla* is not as effective and precise as the translator's choice to use a phonetically close word 'missit'. In other words, leaving out one element of the SL twisted allusion has been compensated with by adding another kind of element, sound similarity, in order to keep the freshness and sharpness of the SL wordgame intact in the TL text, still preserving the essence of the SL wordgame. Here, the translation is quite the opposite than Delabastita's (1994:233) observation of a phonetic wordplay being usually replaced by a nonphonetic expression. After all, the TL wordplay is based on phonetic similarity, while the original wordplay is not. This may compensate the loss of phonetic similarity in other cases.

Next, the final case in this category shows a translation with a close-equivalent verb, but as usual, total one-to-one equivalence cannot be achieved even though the SL wordplay is successfully transferred as such into the TL;

- (46) **setting:** Frasier has made love to his boss at the radio station, and they did not notice that the microphone was on. Later, Frasier comes home in the evening and his father Martin asks where he has been.
Frasier: I spent the last three hours in the space needle, looking down on the city that's looking down on me.

Vietin kolme tuntia
näkötornissa -
- - -
ja tuijotin kaupunkia,
joka tuijottaa minua.

Even though the TL verb *tuijottaa*, ‘to stare at something’, is quite equivalent, it still does not bring out the concrete meaning of the SL verb ‘to look literally down’, but this lost meaning comes through in the context. After all, the character of Frasier has been in the space needle, above the city. However, the TL verb *tuijottaa* has the same connotations as the SL verb ‘look down on something’, ie. both have the semantic meanings ‘to look at something’ and ‘to consider something inferior or unimportant’ (CC). Briefly, there is near one-to-one equivalence, even though some aspects cannot be preserved in the translation.

In conclusion, this category can be stated to show cases where the wordplay does not problematize the translation process. In fact, with some slight changes there exists a near one-to-one equivalence in reference. 13 % of the data belong to this group, ie. it can be stated that in 13 % of the wordplay cases there is semantic equivalence with functional equivalence. In other words, in these cases the translator can simply transfer the SL passage nearly as such into the TL and still preserve the original wordplay.

6. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the aim was to study how wordplay has been treated in the translation process. The genre of sitcom emphasizes the role and importance of wordgames. However, when a sitcom is imported into a country like Finland, the wordplay can be problematic for the translator in the translation process. This is due to the problem of equivalence, because there rarely is one-to-one equivalence between languages and in wordplay cases especially,

there are more than one meanings to be transferred into the TL in one expression.

The present study shows that there are two main streams in translating a wordplay; a translation which cannot preserve the element of wordplay in the translation, and a translation which aims at preserving it. 52% of the data examples belong to the first class. This supports the hypothesis that wordplay really is a problem in the translation process, because 52% of the wordplay cases were not transferrable into the TL text without losing the humour and the ambiguity of the original wordplay. Approximately 48% of the data examples belong to the second class, aiming at preserving the element of wordplay. The great number of examples in the first class suggests that the element of wordplay, characteristic to the genre of sitcom, is often *not* transferred successfully into the TL. In addition, the idea behind the sitcom, that is, to entertain and play with the language in question, has not been preserved, and the translation and the genre expectations of the TL audience did often not meet each other.

Considering the first category, loss of wordplay, there were nine cases where less semantic translation, ie. more free translation, could have preserved the element of wordgame in the TL text. In other words, in as many as 37,5% of the wordplay loss cases the wordplay *could* have been transferred into the TL. This is a significant number. It states that 37,5% of the untransferred cases are unnecessary violations of genre expectations.

The loss of wordplay is caused by four different translation procedures. The present study of the translation problem shows that the first category of no translation at all is rare (4% of the cases). In the first case, this solution was due to the limited space of the television screen, but it did not violate the genre expectations of the audience because of the other wordplays translated. In the second case, the wordplay could have been transferred into the TL text, so the genre expectations were violated in the translation. On

the basis of the rest three categories of loss of wordplay, it can be stated that it is commonest to transfer only the primary meaning of the SL wordplay, and thus disambiguate it (category 5.1.4, 24% of the data). However, when studied in more detail, in most cases this translation procedure is obligatory, because there were only two cases where the translation could have preserved the wordplay in the TL. In addition, there were three cases where this translation procedure did not result in the loss of humour, because the original wordplay was compensated for with another elements, such as a new type of wordplay or the humorous context.

Next, one common solution for the translator is to translate both SL meanings of a wordgame with two, disambiguating TL equivalents (category 5.1.2, 13% of the data). Thus, the character of the wordplay is a dominating factor. If the wordplay was based on repetition, it was common to translate both SL meanings with two separate TL equivalents. If the wordgame was of single occurrence, it was disambiguated by translating the primary meaning of it. In this category, there were three cases where the translation, less semantic one, could have preserved the element of wordplay in the TL text, too. In only two cases this translation procedure, and thus the loss of wordplay, was obligatory due to the untranslatable character of the wordplay in relation to the TL choices. In one case this procedure did not violate the genre of the sitcom due to the nature of the situation itself. Thus, the present study shows that this procedure often tends to violate the genre expectations of the audience unnecessarily. There often are other ways to transfer the wordplay into the TL, and thus to preserve the humorous effect of the dialogue.

One of the four translation types not primarily aiming at preserving the element of wordplay was to translate the wordplay with two expressions of which one was a semantic equivalent and the other one was a semantically nonequivalent expression (category 5.1.3, 11% of the data). Thus, this was the second smallest category after the category of not translating at all. The

present study shows that this translation procedure often is a bad choice, ie. three cases of five were unnecessary violations towards the audience expectations. Thus, the element of wordplay could have been preserved in the translation.

The three preservative procedures are successful, but in this data they were used less than the procedures not aiming at preserving the element of wordplay. Thus, the present study shows that the wordplay is more probably lost in the translation than preserved. However, the preservative procedures are either creative or the SL wordplay can be transferred into the TL with only slight changes, ie. the translator is able to use either semantic equivalents, or create new, functional solutions within the limits of the situation of the scene (5.2.1, 17% of the data). As that category shows, it is possible to rely partly on the SL wordplay and translate one meaning of it with a semantic equivalent, but be 'creative' and derive a new meaning from the semantic equivalent. This procedure is naturally dependent on the TL choices, ie. whether there is any possibility in the TL to this kind of derivation. As common as category 5.2.1 was category 5.2.2, where the translator chose to create a whole new wordplay (or other humorous expression) in the TL, not based on the SL wordplay (17% of the data). It was slightly less common (category 5.2.3, 13% of the data) to translate the SL wordplay by following the SL semantic meanings, ie. it is only sometimes possible to transfer the SL wordplay nearly as such or with slight changes into the TL.

In general, the loss of wordplay can be caused by four different translation procedures, which often seem to be unnecessary. Thus, many wordplays can be transferred into the TL with certain adjustments. In addition, there often are unnecessary deviations from the SL wordplay, such as deleting its repetitive nature and thus the ambiguous nature of it. The present study shows that the loss of wordplay is even more common than it was believed to be at first. In other words, more than 50% of the SL wordplays were lost in

the translation process, and 37,5% of them were unnecessary violations towards the genre of sitcom and the audience expectations. The conclusion of this may be that, in Hlebec's (1989) terms, the intentions of the original passage are altered in many cases, and thus, translation of wordplay is often more modifying than recreating.

The present thesis concentrated on the procedures which the translator has taken when translating SL wordplays in a sitcom. However, it could have been fruitful to concentrate only on those procedures which cannot preserve the element of wordplay in the TL, and especially, study those unnecessary violations of the genre expectations more closely. The present thesis has thus been a study on the procedures in general, and has showed (with the examples of the data) the translator's choices, and on the other hand, the choices which were present in the TL but were not used. In other words, the result of the study is that even though the element of wordplay in a sitcom is an essential factor creating humour, it is often deleted in the process of translating. Most importantly, it is often deleted unnecessarily. As the wordplay, in the field of translation studies, has been considered a translation problem, the great number of losses of wordplay in this study proves that it really is problematic for the translator, though with less literal translations this problem could have been solved in many cases.

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