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THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING CONSISTENT
Comparison of translation strategies in two Finnish versions
of Oscar Wilde's most famous comedy

A Pro Gradu Thesis

By

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ABSTRAKTI

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA
ENGLANNIN KIELEN LAITOS

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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on vertailla kahta suomennosta Oscar Wilden näytelmästä *The Importance of Being Earnest* ja niissä käytettyjä käännösstrategioita. Käännökset ovat Seere Salmisen *Sulhaseni Ernest* vuodelta 1957 ja Kersti Juvan *Kuinka tärkeää on olla Uno* vuodelta 1995. Materiaali koostuu alkuperäistekstistä ja käännöksistä poimituista sanaleikeistä, joiden perusteella vastataan kysymyksiin: 1) Millaisia käännösstrategioita näytelmän suomennoksissa on käytetty? 2) Onko suomennosten käännösstrategioissa eroja? Jos on, niin millaisia? 3) Mitä syitä löytyy käytettyjen strategioiden ja niiden eroavaisuuksien taustalta? Lähtökohtana tutkimukselle on käännöstutkimus teatterikontekstissa käännöksen tarkoitus huomioiden.

Sanaleikkien käännösratkaisut luokitellaan tutkielmassa käännösstrategioihin lokaalien strategioiden luokittelumallin mukaisesti. Näitten yksittäisissä tapauksissa käytettyjen strategioiden perusteella päätellään suomennosten yleiset käännösstrategiat, eli se, onko kyseessä lähdetekstin kunnioitus, sopeuttaminen kohdekuulttuuriin vai käyttäminen ainoastaan inspiraation lähteenä.

Käännösstrategioiden erot suomennosten välillä löytyvät pääasiassa yksittäisten strategioiden tasolta. Salmisen yleisin ratkaisu sanaleikkien kääntämisessä on niiden poistaminen, kun taas Juvan yleisin strategia on niiden siirtäminen suomalaiselle ymmärrettävään muotoon. Juvan käännös on näin ollen luovempi ja säilyttää paremmin näytelmän hauskuuden ja nerokkuuden. Kuitenkin yleisen käännösstrategian tasolla molemmat käännökset ovat samanlaisia, ja sopeuttavat tekstin suomalaiseen kulttuuriin ja kieleen sopivaksi. Kumpikaan käännös ei ole yleisessä suuntauksessaan täysin johdonmukainen, sillä paikoin sanatarkka käännös heikentää molempien sujuvuutta.

Syitä käännösstrategioiden taustalta löytyy käännösten skopoksesta, eli tarkoituksesta naurattaa oman aikansa suomalaista teatteriyleisöä. Teatterikonteksti tuo vaatimuksen esitettävyydestä ja kielen luonnollisuudesta. Myös aika ja normit näkyvät strategioissa ja niiden eroissa. Normien vaikutus on osaltaan myös negatiivista, sillä alitajuinen vaatimus pitäytymisestä alkutekstiin on syynä yleisten käännösstrategioiden ajoittaiseen epäjohdonmukaisuuteen.

Asiasanat: translation strategies. drama translation. translation of wordplay.

1. INTRODUCTION

“... an unbiased opinion is always absolutely valueless.”

– Oscar Wilde –

The eternal problem of translation is the question of how tightly a translation should follow the original text and what kind of liberties a translator can take when translating somebody else's text, without violating the rights of the author or deceiving the recipients. A unanimous view on this can probably never be found. Many things affect the way in which a text is translated: the text type, the purpose of the translation, the recipients it is meant for, the norms and conventions of the time for translation. All of these have an effect on the solutions the translator makes when she/he has to decide how to translate problematic cases, e.g. culture-specific issues. These solutions are called translation strategies. Understanding the reasons behind translators' strategies gives us important information on translation as part of a wider context of culture.

The purpose of this thesis is to look at and compare translation strategies used in two Finnish versions of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and find reasons for the strategies used. I chose this particular play, because I find it very challenging for a translator. The language of the play is very colourful and it contains a lot of wordplay. Even the whole plot is centred around a pun, the name Ernest. Wordplay is a language and culture-bound issue and thus it is interesting to see what kind of strategies the translators have chosen to solve these problems and for what reasons.

Another reason for choosing this topic was the context of theatre, and the interest to see what kind of effect it has on translation. A drama text differs from other literary texts in the way that it is normally produced to be heard, not read by the recipients. This sets certain demands on the translation, as it has to be easily receivable and thus fit the picture the audience has of the world. I was

also interested to see how the theories of translation apply to drama translation, since most of them are based on other types of literary translation.

The first Finnish translation of the play, *Sulhaseni Ernest*, was done in 1957 by Seere Salminen, and the second, *Kuinka tärkeää on olla Uno*, by Kersti Juva in 1995. Since there is such a long distance in time between the translations, it is also interesting to look at the differences from the time perspective. Language changes in time, as do ideas of acceptable translation.

Juva's text has been translated from the four-act-version of the play, which is slightly longer than the standard three-act-version. However, this has no significance for my study, since I have gathered the material only in parts of the texts that are analogous.

The aim of this study is to analyse and compare the general translation strategies behind the two translations, i.e. whether the overall tendency is to be as faithful to the source text as possible, to create something new and use the source only as inspiration, to adapt the source text so that it fits the target culture, or something in between these three modes. The general strategy is concluded by looking at the local strategies used in translating wordplay. Local strategies refer to the choices the translators have made in translating the actual words and clauses, e.g. literal translation, omission, cultural filtering etc. I chose wordplay as the material for analysis, because it is such an essential ingredient of the play.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. After the introduction, the second chapter describes the context in which this study is placed, presenting the theoretical background. The background literature consists of theory that emphasises the importance of the target text and culture as the starting point in translation. Ideas of translation that apply to the topic are discussed, such as ideas of translational norms, the skopos theory, the context of theatre in translation, translation of wordplay and translation strategies.

The third chapter is a short introduction to the original play, and the fourth contains the analysis of the material and the local strategies used. The analysis is based on Andrew Chesterman's classification model for local translation strategies, which I have modified to suit this particular study. All the extracts that include wordplay in the original play or in the translations are presented and analysed according to this model.

In the fifth chapter, the discussion, the results of the analysis are summarised, and the general strategies concluded on the basis of the local ones. As the basis for reasoning the general strategies, I apply Sirkku Aaltonen's categorisation, especially applicable to drama translation. In this chapter the results are also reflected against the theoretical background. Conclusions are drawn in the last chapter. There is also a short biography of Oscar Wilde included in the appendix.

2. THEORETICAL VIEWS ON TRANSLATION

"I dislike arguments of any kind.

They are always vulgar, and often convincing."

– Oscar Wilde –

Ideas about translation have varied over times between source text oriented and target text oriented views. The former emphasise the importance of the original text, its value as a unique piece of work, and thus the need of equivalence in translation, i.e. aiming at a translation that is as close to the original text as possible. Target text oriented views, on the other hand, stress the importance of the target text and its function. According to this view, the translation is always an interpretation of the original and there is no one correct way of doing it. It is not so significant to preserve everything that is in the original, but to make the translation work in its target culture and for the recipients it is meant for. Thus the demand for equivalence is not so relevant, unless it is the aim of a particular translation. Adaptations can be made and the text manipulated.

Different viewpoints on a continuum between source and target text oriented views have prevailed at different times, reflecting the general values of their time.

In this study, I will concentrate on target text oriented views as my theoretical background, because of the nature of my material. In theatre, the whole process of translating starts from the target culture and its needs. A text is chosen to be translated if it is thought to “fill in a gap” in the target system. The most important thing is to make the play successful among the target audience and therefore it has to be made culturally comprehensible and the starting point has to be the target text, the translation.

2.1 Equivalence

The concept of equivalence is not a very clear one, and the way in which it is understood still varies from writer to writer. On general level it can be defined as a term “...to describe the nature and the extent of the relationships which exist between SL and TL texts or smaller linguistic units.” (Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997: 49).

Many source text oriented translation theorists, who underline the importance of the original text, present the concept of equivalence and its requirement in translation as a demand of ‘sameness’ of source text and its translation. Their definition of equivalence is based on formal, syntactic and lexical similarities, i.e. similarities in surface structure. These views focus on the act of translating, not the product, and accept only ‘correct’ literal translations. Target text oriented views criticise these ideas as too narrow and expand the concept of equivalence and thus that of translation as a whole. Translations that follow the original slavishly are not considered as the only real translations. “There is not much sense in translating a source texteme as “faithfully” – that is, as literally – as possible if such a “strategy” makes the understanding of the translation unnecessarily difficult for the intended target recipients or prevents it altogether” (Vermeer 1998: 43). Target text oriented views also admit that

there has to be a relationship between the source and the translation, but it does not have to be of certain kind, i.e. formal or semantic equivalence, but it can also be functional, communicative, pragmatic etc. According to Gideon Toury (1980: 47), it is not the question of whether there is equivalence or not, but rather what type and degree of equivalence there is. This depends on the text and the situation.

Toury, like Juliane House, talks about functional equivalence, which aims at preserving the function of the original rather than the forms or meanings. House (1997: 29, 66-71) makes a distinction between two types of translation, *overt* and *covert*, based on the kind of texts translated. She uses the notion *overt* translation of a translation which is source-culture-specific, tied to the source culture language community and culture, and has a second level function for the contemporary addressees as a 'window' into another culture. Overt translation maintains the features typical to the original, and thus enables observation of the source culture from the target culture via language. Overt translation is desirable for instance in works that are culturally highly esteemed.

Covert translation, on the other hand, produces translations that are not tied to the source language culture, but are target-culture-specific and maintain the function of the original text. Functional equivalence is attainable only in covert translation. Accordingly, in overt translation the translator is a mediator, and in covert translation he/she recreates the function of the original in the target culture (House 1997: 163). This is done with the help of a cultural filter (House 1997: 29, 74-75), with which changes along various pragmatic parameters are conducted. The change can involve for example the marking of social role relationship between author and reader in such a way that it follows the expected level of formality in the target culture.

Also Susan Bassnett (1995: 43, 134) stresses the importance of functional equivalence, and not that of contents. For instance, in translating idioms or metaphors, there is often need to make great linguistic changes in order to gain the same kind of expressive effect, the function, as in the original. A

corresponding metaphor has to be recreated with the means of the target language and culture. ‘Sameness’ in translation can be left behind, and the translator can concentrate on finding systems from the target culture which can fill in the functions of the source text. So called “skopos” theorists talk about textual equivalence, when the source and the target texts perform a communicational function of the same value in their own cultures (Reiss and Vermeer 1986: 83).

2.2 Skopos

In some cases the function of the translation is not the same as the function of the source text was in its culture. It does not always need to be the same. A simplified and modernised translation of a lengthy classical novel could be made in order to reach the interest of younger readers. Another target text oriented view on translation, Hans Vermeer’s skopos theory, develops the functional theory further. According to it, the most important thing to consider in translation is neither retaining the form or the function, nor doing the translation in a particular way, but to achieve the function that is aimed at in the translation process. This function can or can not be the same as the original text’s function. Consequently, skopos, the purpose or aim of the translation is determined by each case individually and is dependent on the intended recipient. This skopos is the primary thing to direct translational solutions, i.e. strategies used, which are not restricted to just one or few. A text can be translated in several different ways depending on the purpose and the recipients for whom it is translated. The text should be translated in a way that makes it fit the recipients’ picture of the world, with cultural sensitivity. (Reiss and Vermeer 1986: 58, Vermeer 1996: 6-7, Vermeer 1998: 45).

The translator, who is supposed to be an expert in both ST and TT cultures, is the one who gives the translation its purpose, skopos, but naturally he/she can not do it without agreeing upon it with the commissioner. The act of translation is “a goal-oriented procedure carried out in such a way as the translator deems optimal under the prevailing circumstances.” (Vermeer 1996: 13). All

potentially pertinent factors need to be taken into account, e.g. the skopos, time, the target culture recipients' conditions, such as conventions and habits, the translator's own cultural conditions, as well as the commissioner's cultural conditions etc.

Also the individual text, as well as its genre and text type, affects the translator's decisions and strategies. Different text types have different conventions and these need to be taken into account in the translation process (Reiss and Vermeer 1986: 107-108). Reiss and Vermeer make a division into linguistic and communicative translation, the use of which depends on the particular text and the translation's skopos. If the translation is to be a linguistic one, it relies on the conventions of the source text and has no cultural transfer, which would bring it into the target system. If it is to be communicative it relies on the conventions of the target text. I think this division into linguistic and communicative is analogous with House's 'overt' and 'covert' translation, overt translation being linguistic, with no cultural filter involved to make the translation fit in the target culture, and covert translation being communicative, integrating the text into the target system.

Text types can be divided into three categories, informative, expressive and operative. An informative text is a text which primarily carries meanings, an expressive one carries artistically organised meanings and an operative one carries persuasive structuring in addition to meanings. An example of an operative text would be a propagandistic text. In translating an informative text, the aim is usually to convey the contents, whereas in translating an expressive text it is both conveying the contents and using analogous artistry to the original by the means of the target language. Translating an operative text, has to be done by conveying the appeal effect, taking into account the target language and culture mentality (Reiss and Vermeer 1986: 114-120).

Even though skopos theory does not make requirements for any certain kind of equivalence or highlight the need of similarity between the ST and the TT, it does not exclude the notion of equivalence either. It reserves the term "...for those instances in which ST and TT fulfil the same communicative function."

(Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997: 51). Maybe the two, equivalence and skopos, could be combined and equivalence included into skopos theory. As the main interest of the theory is to make the translation such that it serves the purpose it is meant to serve in the target culture, different types of equivalence could be said to be needed in different cases, depending on what the purpose of the translation is each time. As skopos theory suggests that translation strategies for each case are determined by the aim of the translation, the skopos, the purpose could similarly be said to determine the type of equivalence needed between the ST and the TT. As equivalence is such a wide concept, and has already been divided into different categories and classes in several ways, old classifications could be used when talking about different kinds of equivalence needed to serve the skopos of each translation.

2.3 Translation and Culture

Culture seems to be of major importance when talking about translation. It affects the way in which translations are and can be done, and translations, on the other hand, also have an effect on the target culture, filling gaps in it. Toury (1995: 29) states that: "Translations are facts of cultures; on occasion facts of special status, sometimes even constituting identifiable (sub)systems of their own, but of the target culture in any event". Translations are texts in the target language and thus parts of the target culture and system, and therefore they can not be studied from the perspective of the source language and culture. Language and culture set constraints for translating and it is impossible to translate everything. The target audience, its language and culture have to be taken into account.

Translation can be seen as a transfer process from one semiotic entity (source system) into another semiotic entity (target system). Both the semiotic entities have their codes (languages), and the goal of the transfer process is to gain maximal correspondence of the two entities as well as acceptability within the target code. That is to say, a translation should be both adequate to the source

text and acceptable in the target language in a reasonable balance (Toury 1980).

Toury also introduces the idea of translational norms. Norms in general are defined as “...ways of behaving that are considered normal in a particular society.” (Collins 1995: 1122). Norms are social notions of correctness, something that are usual and collectively expected and slightly stronger than conventions. Norms vary in different cultures, even within cultures, and they change over time. Breaking them can bring sanctions or at least disapproval in the society.

Applied to translation, norms define the ideas a culture has about acceptable and desirable translation at a particular time and thus have an affect on translators and their choices, both consciously and subconsciously. They have a problem-solving function, as their existence enables communication in a situation where it otherwise would not be possible (Chesterman 1993: 7). The governing principles of the target language culture and the underlying network of relationships affect the way the translator translates into the target language. Therefore translations always need to be studied as parts of culture and its general value system. Prevailing norms also determine the type and extent of equivalence manifested by actual translations (Toury 1995: 61-62, 147).

Skopos theorists talk about similar issues that affect translation, but do not refer to them as translational norms. They talk about ‘reflections’, culture-specific conventions like tradition, attitudes, values, current external factors, relations and communal grounds etc.(Reiss and Vermeer 1986: 16-17). As mentioned earlier, they also discuss conventions of text types, but not so much those of culture. Vermeer (1998: 56) admits that translation strategies are affected by the norms and conventions of a culture and further comments that this is why translators still hold on to the “word” too tightly at the expense of the sense and aesthetics of a text. In the end, the most important thing is to use translation strategies that best help to achieve the purpose for which the translation is intended, “... irrespective of whether they are considered to be

the “standard” way to proceed in a particular translation context” (Shuttleworth 1998: 156).

The skopos theory has been criticised for not paying enough attention to culture-specific conventions and morals. “Since conventions determine what readers expect of a translation, the translator has the responsibility not to deceive the users of his translation by acting contrary to the conventions without telling them what he is doing, and why” (Nord 1991: 91). Nord calls this responsibility *loyalty*. She adds to the skopos theory a moral dimension, i.e. the translator’s responsibility to both the source text sender and to the target text recipient, and the need to inform them of the decisions he/she makes in the translation process when they do not coincide with the general expectations of translation which are in accordance with the cultural conventions (Nord 1991: 94-95).

Toury (1995: 56-58) classifies translational norms into preliminary, initial and operational norms. By preliminary norms he means consideration of the actual translation policy and directness of the translation, i.e. whether the source text can be a translated version or whether it has to be the original. These govern the choices of the text types and individual texts to be translated. By initial norms Toury means the position the translator takes, whether he subjects himself to the norms of the source culture or the target culture. In other words the translator chooses either source text or target text orientation. I believe this could be compared with the overt – covert distinction in House’s model, where in a similar way the first choice to be made is to orientate oneself either to the norms of the source culture (overt translation) or to the target culture (covert translation). Operational norms direct the translator’s actual decisions, textual choices and the strategies he/she uses, e.g. whether or not he/she uses additions, omissions, footnotes and what kind of changes are allowed in the translation.

Chesterman’s classification of translational norms differs somewhat from that of Toury. He makes a division into professional and expectancy norms (Chesterman 1993: 8-10). Professional norms are constituted by competent

professionals and govern the accepted methods and strategies used in the actual process of translating, whereas expectancy norms are established by the recipients of the translation and their ideas of good translation.

Professional norms can be divided into three groups: the accountability norm, the communication norm and the relation norm. The accountability norm is an ethical norm, which can be compared with Nord's ideas of loyalty. The translator needs to act in a way that he will not violate the rights of the original author, the commissioner or the recipients. The communication norm is a social norm that obligates the translator to act in such a way that he/she optimises the communication between the author and the recipient. The relation norm means that the translator needs to establish and maintain an appropriate relationship, i.e. the type and degree of equivalence appropriate in the situation, between the source and the translation. The translator decides on the nature of this relationship "...on the basis of his or her understanding of the intentions of the original writer and/or commissioner, the type and skopos of the text, and the nature of the prospective readership." (Chesterman 1993: 9).

2.4 Translation for the Theatre

Most of the theory written on translation is based on translation of literature. Although drama translation can also be seen as translation of literature since the translator both translates and produces a written text, drama translation is a field of its own with special features and requirements. Sometimes a play can be translated as part of the literary system, to be read by the recipients, but for instance in Finland most of translated drama exist only as play scripts. Because of this and the nature of theatre as a communal art form, drama translations must follow the constraints of the theatrical and sociocultural systems, which may differ from those of the literary system (Aaltonen 2000: 7,39, 94).

A drama script is more than just a written text. It contains a latent structure that determines the actors' movements and gestures, and its language is closely linked to all the kinesic, aural and visual elements that will be used in the

performance (Bassnett 1996: 146, Mateo 1995: 21). The translator needs to bear in mind the purpose for which the translation is done, i.e. not to be read but to be performed by actors and seen by an audience. This adds to the translator's work, as he/she has to mould the translation in such a way that the language is suitable for the target language actors and the world picture of the intended audience in a way that it is comprehensible to them. Bassnett (1995: 137) states that there are special structural elements in a text that is meant to be performed, and those elements make it *performable* regardless of the stage direction. It is the translator's job to define and translate these structures into the target language, which might sometimes require great linguistic and stylistic changes. When translating a drama text, its function as only a part of theatre discourse has to be borne in mind.

Even though drama translation is a field of its own, I think that most of the theory discussed in this paper, especially the skopos theory, can be applied to theatre translation as well, since they all emphasise the importance of target text and culture. I find the skopos theory the most applicable because of its central idea of the purpose or aim of the translation as the determining factor in translation. Also ideas of norms influencing translation can be applied to drama translation, taking into account the norms and conventions of the particular context, the theatre.

A theatre performance is much more than just spoken words, it has all its visual elements, costumes, lights, expressions, gestures, feelings, sounds, silences, implications hidden behind the words etc., which all have their informative value just as much, if not even more than the words in it. Therefore a translation is just the beginning, the basis for an actual performed play and has to be done considering all the other elements and making the words agree with them. In Finnish theatre translation, the translation itself is usually done by the translator alone, but he/she sometimes also works as part of the theatre team during the realisation process of the play, which can be very advantageous for both parties. The translators desire more of this kind of co-operation between the performing group and the translator, but it is usually precluded by financial and practical reasons (Jänis 1996: 359). In *Käännetyt illuusiot* Sirkku Aaltonen

(1998) has collected thoughts of Finnish theatre translators about their work and a similar survey has also been done by Marja Jänis (1996).

According to a Finnish drama translator, Juha Siltanen (1998: 96-99), the translator's job is to represent the author in the theatre team and remain faithful to the author in a way that he/she "listens" to the author alone, not to the producer's or actors' wishes. However, his/her power is restricted to being an expert in matters concerning the text. Siltanen discusses the requirement of equivalence to the rhythms behind the words, word orders and punctuation marks, i.e. retaining the special character of the original. On the other hand the translation is always also an interpretation, since the translator's material, the target language, is different from the language of the original, due to personal and cultural factors, the structure and history of the language, etc. Siltanen's idea of the role of the translator is contradictory to the skopos theory that lays more emphasis on the theatre's wishes than on faithfulness to the original text. After all, a drama text is always chosen for translation for a particular purpose that should guide the choices of the translator, in a similar way that it guides the choices of the producer.

Also Jänis's (1996) view contradicts to that of Siltanen. Jänis states that like Siltanen, the majority of translators she interviewed considered themselves to be morally obligated to be, first and foremost, servants of the playwright and assure that the playwright's main ideas are maintained in the translation. She compares this kind of way of thinking to faithful translation and suggests that "...source-language-oriented translation could be considered analogous to serving the playwright and target-language-oriented translation would mean serving the theatre" (Jänis 1996: 352). Those translators that considered themselves primarily as servants of the theatre and the audience, not the playwright, were usually highly esteemed by their fellow translators. The most highly ranked translators among their peers were the ones who considered themselves "artists" and were in favour of taking liberties, being experimental (Jänis 1996: 354-355). This strengthens the idea of target text orientedness having successful results in theatre translation.

2.4.1 The Oral and Aural Nature of Plays

The oral and aural nature of drama texts has an effect on both the actors' production and the audience's reception (Mateo 1995: 28). I.e. this special nature of drama texts makes certain requirements for the language of the translation as well. Whereas the language in a novel can be marked in many ways and still be read (usually silently) and understood by a reader, the language in a drama text has to be such that it can be performed, spoken aloud naturally and also quite easily understood by the receptor, since he/she can not go back and forth, like when reading a written text. However, one special characteristic of a drama text is that each character is partly given personality by his/her way of speech. This means that unfamiliar linguistic features should not be avoided too intensely, as they can be used as a tool for creating characters (Mateo 1995:29).

Concepts such as '*speakability*', '*playability*' and '*performability*' have been introduced and widely dealt with in the context of theatre texts, but all of them have remained somewhat vague with several different interpretations. Mateo (1995: 29) insists that rather than discussing *speakability* or familiarity of the structures, the most important thing to consider is the consistency of the characters' speech and actions, so that the audience does not receive contradictory messages that interfere with their immediate reception of the play. Also Aaltonen (2000: 43) states that a drama text does not necessarily need to be simple and easy to speak, but what is underlined in its language by many scholars is the significance of the rhythm of speech, which needs to be natural. Natural speech rhythms are continuously changing, which is one reason for the need of constant updating of drama texts. In his requirement for equivalence in translating the rhythms behind the words, Siltanen (see page 16) has not paid enough attention to the importance of naturalness of speech. Because the natural speech rhythms are in continuous change, structural equivalence in rhythm is insignificant, whereas functional equivalence is not, if the aim of the source and the target text is the same.

Many Finnish drama translators in addition to Siltanen (Juva 1998: 53, Ellonen 1998: 40-41, Parkkinen 1998: 67, Jänis 1996: 355) mention the importance of translating the rhythms and structures underlying the text, rather than just words. With the help of rhythm and structure, the characters' individual ways of speaking are conducted, telling about their status, personality, age, education etc. Therefore the rhythms underlying the source text need to be given special attention in the actual translation process, trying to grasp their functions and convey them into the target text. This adds some special challenges for a translator. According to Jänis (1999: 349-350), translators of drama claim to usually "see" the play and the scenes containing the dialogue in their minds while translating. They see the play as action and in its whole context, not just as a written text. Some translators prefer just "hearing" the dialogue without staging the play in their minds. Accordingly, these abilities to see the things behind the words and hear the dialogue in one's mind are required of a translator who wants to succeed in translating drama.

2.4.2 Theatre and Culture

Melina Voipio (1998: 30-31), a Finnish drama translator, agrees that in drama translation it is more important to focus on *how* rather than *what* (the words) is said. She talks about a play as an important identification experience, which can be destroyed by the translator if he/she distances the text from its starting point and emotions. This is done by concentrating on translating the words only, when more important are the kind of world and emotional states that they convey.

Voipio's ideas (1998: 32) coincide with those of skopos theory, as she points out that the aim of drama translation is that it will be easy to perform, and thus it can be done in quite a free style, not translating word for word. It is important to adjust the text in the target culture in a way that a similar context can be found. In this way the dynamics of the characters can be retained, which is of major importance for the successfulness of the translation (Bassnett 1995: 140). "In the end it is practice, i.e. how the translation works in performance,

that determines whether the translation is successful or not.” (my translation of Voipio 1998: 34).

Juva (1998: 51) and Siltanen (1998: 101) mention that the language of the translation should be familiar to the audience, common language, that helps to create similar relationship between the translation and the audience as the original has had with its audience in its time. In addition to language skills, the translator needs to possess good knowledge of cultures and history, as the language has to fit in the period of time of the performance. A translation gets out of date even though the original does not. This is particularly the case with comedies, where the greatest changes in vocabulary take place, since comedy is so closely tied to everyday life and language (Ellonen 1998: 45). Bassnett (1995: 140) mentions that the theatre conventions of the time need to be taken into account, and texts moulded in ways that they meet the prevailing norms. This idea relates to Toury’s translational norms, although it stresses the norms of the theatrical system. Ideas of what a drama translation should be like change along with the changes in the theatre.

In her doctoral thesis, Sirkku Aaltonen discusses acculturation in Finnish drama translation, i.e. integration of a play into the target culture. Foreignness is not generally esteemed in Finnish theatre and thus “...the Foreign is acculturated or toned down with familiar techniques which make it possible to identify with an unfamiliar reality.” (Aaltonen 1996: 15). Aaltonen stresses the importance of a drama translation’s intelligibility to the new audience, and she, too, talks about system-specific norms and conventions, which govern the naturalisation process of the texts, making morals, manners, rituals, humour, religious beliefs etc. familiar to the audience. These norms and conventions belong to the theatrical polysystem which again is part of the wider cultural system (Aaltonen 1996: 18, 20).

Aaltonen (2000: 76) believes that the conventions of the literary discourse about translations are still in favour of source text orientedness and fidelity to the original, whereas theatrical conventions value ‘flexibility’ and ‘fertility’ in translation more. “(Theatre)Texts are rewritten for each production and each

audience, and it adds to their attraction if they can be used to serve new causes and masters who may be both historically and culturally far apart.” (Aaltonen 2000: 76).

Despite the emphasis on the translation and not the source text, the requirement of sameness can not be escaped in drama translation either. Aaltonen (2000: 76-77) points out that a drama translation has to meet the requirements of the copyright law and thus the criteria of sameness. The notions of fidelity to the ‘letter’ and ‘spirit’ of the source text have been introduced in discussions about drama translation. Fidelity to the letter means fidelity to the basic narration, characters and their interrelation, the geographical, cultural and sociological information providing the context and other narrational aspects. Sameness on this level does not integrate the drama text into the system of the target culture, and thus is not usually required in well-established theatrical systems, where the whole project begins from the needs of the theatre and target system. Fidelity to the ‘spirit’ is a much more vague concept and can be understood to include almost anything.

2.5 Translation Strategies

As mentioned above, the norms of the time and the community affect the way in which a translation is realised. Furthermore, when a text belongs to a particular context, such as the theatre, also the context’s prevailing norms have to be taken into account in the translation. This means that many things about the underlying circumstances can be detected in a translation by studying the strategies used in it: Translation strategies reflect the norms of the time, culture and context in question, and also show what the translator has considered the primary aim of her/his translation. Subsequently, also the skopos can be discovered by looking at the actual decisions the translator has made during the translation process.

Chesterman (1997) defines strategies as processes with which translators seek to conform to norms. This does not mean striving for equivalence but for a

translation that is optimal in the light of the prevailing translational norms. Taking the behavioural nature of strategies into account, they can be seen as forms of textual manipulation. They are operations a translator will perform when formulating the target text in a way that the desired relation between the source and the translation, or translation and other similar target texts can be achieved. Strategies can be directly observed in a translation by comparing it with the source text. (Chesterman 1997: 88-89).

Other features characteristic of strategies are that they are problem-centred and goal-oriented (Chesterman 1997: 89-91). This means that strategies offer solutions to translation problems – situations in which the source and the target languages do not work in a similar way – and that their use has goals of some kind. Chesterman refers to translational norms as these goals, but I think also other things such as *skopos* can be included into them. Certainly one of the goals of doing a translation in a particular way, i.e. using certain strategies, is to achieve the intended *skopos* and to achieve the kind of translation that serves the purpose it is meant to serve.

Translation strategies can be observed on a general or a specific level. At the more general level, the question is how a particular text should be translated. This means that the general strategy used is based on the initial decision of “how freely” to translate and what kind of relation between the texts to strive at. Behind the general strategy is thus the basic decision of either target or source text orientation. At the more specific level, the problem is how to translate a particular part of the text. This can be a word, a structure, an idea, a joke etc. Solutions to these problems are called “local strategies”.

2.5.1 General Translation Strategies and Drama

Aaltonen (2000) discusses general translation strategies in the context of the theatre. Many things affect the process of choosing and translating a particular foreign drama text. The starting point, however, is always the target system and its need to use the foreign text for its own purposes. The discourse of a source

text needs to be compatible with that of the receiving system to a certain extent, in order to be brought in line with the indigenous theatrical system and society (Aaltonen 2000: 47). Thus, it is the intended skopos of the translation, and the norms and requirements of the target system and theatre that are the basis for the general translation strategies used. But also commercial factors, and the international relations and attitudes towards the foreign culture affect the way in which the texts are chosen and translated.

Aaltonen (2000: 60) points out that drama translations indirectly indicate the extent to which the Foreign is esteemed in the target culture, and also how “strong” or “weak” the indigenous theatrical system is. These can be detected from the target system’s relation to *alterity*, the extent to which the translation will carry out the foreign features of the original. Aaltonen suggests that the stronger the system, the more the translators dare to change the original text to suit the demands of the target theatre. In a similar way, the more prestige is given to the original text and the culture, the less alterations are made to the translation and the more faithfully the original is followed.

According to Aaltonen (2000), general translation strategies can be divided into broad categories, according to their relation to alterity. In other words these categories are on a continuum at the one end of which there is “free” translation, and at the other end translation that is strictly tied to its source, with foreign characteristics. One way of categorising is on the basis of how much of the original text is translated, whether it is translated in its entirety, used as a raw material with parts of it translated, or only used as a source of inspiration for a new play. These three main modes of translation discussed by Aaltonen (2000) are referred to as *reverence*, *adaptation* and *imitation*.

The mode of translation is called reverence when the source text and culture are held in esteem and respected by the somehow inferior target system (Aaltonen 2000: 64). The play is either translated entirely, or at least some of its essential elements are transplanted into the target system. The source system possesses qualities that are desirable and lacking in the target system. Reverence is a way of increasing cultural capital of the target system by using

the materials of a superior culture. It is usually preferred by weaker theatrical systems, such as theatres at their early stages. “Reverence is demonstrated through a high regard for the ‘original’, and an effort may be made to avoid omissions and additions, and to repeat the narrative and actantial structures of the source text” (Aaltonen 2000:65).

Adaptation as a translation strategy means rewriting the text into the target language in a way that makes it fit into the target culture and fulfils its expectations of the genre in question. Foreign features are toned down by making alterations, additions and omissions to the text in order to integrate it into the target system. One type of adaptation is *acculturation* (Aaltonen 2000:55), which means aiming at a target text that would not be tied to any particular culture: culturally specific issues, such as manners, morals and humour are made more universal in the translation. Acculturation may also involve *naturalisation*, replacing foreign features with those of the target culture. As a foreign drama text has to be brought and fit into a new environment, culture and discourse, adaptation is a specifically applicable strategy for drama translation, and often seen more acceptable to drama than to other printed literature (Aaltonen 2000: 75). Generally, in drama texts flexibility is valued, and adaptation has always been the main strategy of translation in strong theatrical systems. Faithfulness to the original is more widely demanded of literature that has been written to be read, not performed.

Finally, the third mode of translation, imitation, as a subcategory of adaptation, only uses the original text or its theme as an inspiration for a totally new play. This strategy signals subversion to alterity, showing either rebellion or disregard towards it (Aaltonen 2000: 63). This means that the play is rewritten to serve the purposes of the target system either rebelling against the source text, its superior culture or the hierarchy it represents or with total disregard to the source culture. I think imitation, as a translation strategy, most visibly and dramatically uses the ideas the skopos theory represents, using a text totally for its own purposes. On the other hand, a play can hardly be called a translation if the only thing it has in common with the source text is a theme or idea around which a new play has been constructed. As mentioned above, adaptation works

on many levels including acculturation, naturalisation and imitation. I believe that all adaptation has the aim, the skopos of the play, as its starting point for translation and thus the strategy works well for the theatre.

Whereas Aaltonen discusses translation strategies on the general level and in the context of the theatre, Chesterman's (1997) classification model for strategies is based on classifying them on the more specific level of the actual choices made in individual problematic cases during the translation process. By studying strategies on the local level, we will be able to detect the general strategy. Chesterman (1997: 93) divides local translation strategies into three main groups: mainly syntactic/grammatical strategies, mainly semantic and mainly pragmatic strategies. Syntactic strategies involve syntactic changes, i.e. manipulate form; semantic strategies manipulate meanings; whereas pragmatic strategies usually involve bigger changes and also include syntactic and semantic changes. Pragmatic strategies mean those that "... primarily have to do with the selection of information in the TT, a selection that is governed by the translator's knowledge of the prospective readership of the translation" (Chesterman 1997: 107). The three main groups overlap to some extent and strategies of different groups often co-occur. The main groups are further divided into subcategories, such as literal translation, addition, paraphrasing etc. I have applied Chesterman's classification model in my analysis and included a modified version of the model in the beginning of chapter 4.

2.6 Translation and Wordplay

By looking at the local strategies we can make conclusions about the general strategy, norms and aims behind the translation. As wordplay is so characteristic of Wilde's play, I will concentrate on looking at the strategies used in their translation in my own analysis.

Translating a text with lots of play on language is very challenging, as wordplay is bound to the language and culture in question, and can not usually be translated literally without losing its effect. Understanding wordplay

requires some cultural background knowledge and can therefore even be missed altogether by an inexperienced translator. Although finding an equivalent for wordplay in the target language is often impossible, wordplay is not untranslatable but there are many ways in which to deal with it. The key word is consistency in translation strategy.

Wordplay consists of many subcategories, such as puns, allusive wordplay and imagery, and sometimes the concept is restricted to refer to just one particular type of wordplay. In this study, however, I refer to wordplay in its wider sense, meaning all kinds of ways language can be played with to evoke an amusing effect. Thus wordplay can also be said to include names that are used as a characterisation tool, twisted sayings, proverbs, epigrams etc. Wordplay functions within a text in a variety of ways, such as "...adding to the thematic coherence of the text, producing humour, forcing the reader/listener into greater attention, adding persuasive force to the statement, deceiving our socially conditioned reflex against sexual and other taboo themes, and so forth"(Delabastita 1996: 129-130). Wordplay can be exploited in the areas of pronunciation, written form, morphology, syntax and lexicon.

In this study, I will analyse all the wordplay I have detected in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The play is full of puns, and allusive wordplay is also used frequently. Wordplay with the name of the leading character is the basis of the whole play. In what follows, I will introduce these three types of wordplay briefly.

Puns: Punning is amusing use of words that have more than one meaning or words whose pronunciation is similar or close to that of some other word. Puns can be further specified according to the type of similarity of the words. *Hymonymy* refers to identical sounds and spelling, *homophony* to identical sounds but different spelling, *homography* to different sounds but identical spelling and *paronymy* to slight differences in both sound and spelling (Delabastita 1996 :128).

Allusive wordplay: Allusions are indirect references to something or someone, and allusive wordplay thus indirect references which have been altered somehow to make a funny effect. Leppihalme (1996 :200) talks about *frames*, a combination of words that are somehow tied together in the minds of a group of language users. These frames include idioms, sayings, catchphrases, indirect references to various sources, etc. and can be modified linguistically in order to play on words. This is usually done by reducing or expanding the frame or by lexical substitution, i.e. a keyword in the frame is substituted by another word (Leppihalme 1996: 201). This substitute word can, for example, be an *antonym* (a semantic opposite), a homophone or a paronym. Consequently, punning is one way of creating allusive wordplay. In *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Wilde creates lots of epigrams and paradoxes by modifying familiar linguistic frames, such as sayings or idioms.

Because of the nature of frames, allusive wordplay is strictly tied to its source culture. The source culture may be a wide concept, such as Western European culture, or more specific, such as a small subgroup of language users who are the only ones familiar with the frame. Subsequently, a lot is demanded of a translator. She/he needs to be familiar with the source culture in order to notice and understand allusive wordplay, and also a competent producer of text in the target language, as well as a member of target culture, to be able to create similar allusions by means of the target culture frames. Leppihalme (1996:209) talks about *cultural bumps*, referring to allusive wordplay missed in the target text because of culture-specific reasons.

Names as wordplay: As mentioned above, also names can be thought of as wordplay when they carry a meaning in them, such as the name Ernest in Wilde's play. Authors often use names as a way of reflecting the actions, attitudes and morals of the characters (Manini 1996: 164). The use of semantically loaded names naturally creates challenge for the translator. She/he has to decide whether to leave the name in the original form and lose the wordplay, or try to translate it and possibly lose the atmosphere of the original culture.

2.6.1 Strategies in Translating Wordplay

Even though translating wordplay is challenging, there are many ways in which to deal with it. If similar wordplay is impossible to produce in the target language, the translator may translate it as wordplay which is different in formal or semantic structure or pragmatic function, i.e. using syntactic, semantic or pragmatic strategies. She/he may translate it as non-wordplay, leave it out altogether, replace it by adding another wordplay in a place there was none in the source text, using explanatory footnotes and comments etc. (Delabastita 1996: 134). Creativity and flexibility are the keywords in translating wordplay. One thing to consider is naturally the differences of the language systems in using wordplay. For example, the use of allusions and punning is less common in Finnish than in English due to linguistic and cultural differences (Leppihalme 1996:212).

What is important, is that the whole translation is consistent in its general strategy, wordplay being no exception (Qvale 1995: 221). Lack of strategy will lead to an inconsistent translation. The general strategy, assuming that there is one, can be detected by looking at the way the wordplay has been translated. For instance, the treatment of semantically loaded literary names can show the translator's general strategy, as Manini (1996:171) suggests. If all the names (meaningful and non-meaningful) have been left in their original form, this shows regard to the source culture and emphasis on 'otherness', and thus shows reverence as the basic mode of translation. On the other hand, the translator may choose to translate only the names that have a more or less equivalent form in the target language. Then again she/he can translate all names, integrating the text into the target culture, and showing adaptation as the general mode.

Weissbrod (1996:231) discusses the norms of the target culture and system as the determining factor for the willingness and the ways to cope with wordplay. Norms may even allow the translator to overlook wordplay if there are more important goals to strive for, such as maintaining the style, or creating maximum fluency. The other factors influencing the translation strategy of

wordplay and that of the whole text are the skopos and receiver expectations. For example, when a text is translated to be performed and metatextual comments are not an option, the translator is more likely to translate the meaningful names of the characters (Manini 1996:173).

The meaningful name *Ernest*, as well as other plentiful wordplay in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, sets a challenge for the translators' creativity. The plot and the background of Wilde's play are introduced in the following chapter.

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

“In matters of grave importance, style, not sincerity is the vital thing.”

– Oscar Wilde –

The Importance of Being Earnest, subtitled *A Trivial Comedy for Serious People*, is Wilde's most successful play, a farcical comedy which centers around the themes of marriage, duplicity, deceit, coincidence and obsession with the name Ernest. The play is full of paradoxes and epigrams, “short saying(s) or poem(s) which express-- an idea in a very clever and amusing way” (Collins & Cobuild 1995). The characters speak in the same way Wilde himself did, constantly playing with language. Although extremely funny, the epigrams also serve a deeper function by showing social observation and being directed at a wide range of topics such as religion, class, education, the role of men, property, food and feminism. The play can be called an entertaining and witty attack on the morals and manners of the aristocracy of the time (Nicholls 1980:144-151).

The main characters of the play are John Worthing, who is known as Ernest in the city and Jack in the country, Algernon Moncrieff, lady Bracknell, her daughter Gwendolen Fairfax, Jack's ward Cecily Cardew, and her governess

Miss Prism. In act I Algernon discovers Ernest's real identity and that he has a young ward in the country. Jack has invented a younger brother "Ernest" as an excuse to escape to London. This parallels to Algernon's use of "Banbury", an imaginary friend in the country, whose illnesses give him an excuse to leave London. Algernon's aunt Lady Bracknell and Gwendolen come for tea, and "Ernest" succeeds in his proposal to Gwendolen, who could only marry a man named Ernest. However, Lady Bracknell opposes to the marriage when she finds out that Ernest is a foundling.

In act II Algernon visits Jack's country house and meets Cecily. He proposes to her under a false identity, posing as Jack's brother Ernest. Cecily has always had a dream to marry someone named Ernest and accepts the proposal. Jack and Gwendolen arrive, and this causes a lot of confusion. Gwendolen and Cecily are under the impression that they are engaged to Mr Ernest Worthing, and because of the importance of being earnest both Jack and Algernon want to be rechristened as Ernests. In the last act Lady Bracknell arrives at the country house and identifies Miss Prism as her previous employee, who twenty-eight years ago had misplaced her sister's baby boy. It turns out that the lost baby is in fact Jack, whose real name actually is Ernest and that he does have a brother, Algernon.

According to Raby(1994:139-142), the primary inspiration for Wilde to write the play was his financial situation. He first introduced the play in a letter to George Alexander in the summer of 1894, to whom he offered it for production in exchange for 150 pounds in advance. Wilde also got a proposal from an American producer Frohman for an arrangement for the American rights of a new play which would suite his certain actors. In return Wilde would be rewarded with large sums of money. Thus Wilde wrote the play with Frohman's wishes in mind and refused Alexander's request for the American rights.

Wilde was known for his perfectionism and refined and polished his play through different versions, although in a hurry because of his lack of money. The first working title of the play was *The Guardian*. Later in the year Wilde

introduced the four-act version to Alexander, who persuaded him to readopt the three-act version which had been the original format. Wilde himself seems to have been conscious of the speciality of the play claiming it to be the best he had written. Raby (1994:143-145) further comments that everything in the play points to it being constructed in a haste, Wilde using material conveniently at hand - names of the people and places he knew, incidents he had heard or read about. He even made use of other near-contemporary plays, particularly Lestocq and Robson's *The Foundling*.

The notion of name is central for the whole plot and Wilde seems to have been particularly thorough choosing the right names for the characters. All the names seem to reflect the character in a way or have a connotation of some kind. Raby (1994:143) points out that all the key names had shifted through Wilde's revision of the play except for Miss Prism. Even the central character Mr. Ernest (John) Worthing had first been named Bertram/George Ashton, even though the plot of the final play is tightly bound around the name. Wilde has used names which have reference to his circle of homosexual friends (e.g. Bracknell), other friends (e.g. Cardew) and occasionally used a name as a private act of revenge to the people he disliked (e.g. Lane, his publisher, which became the name of a manservant).

Mackie (1998) concentrates on the origins of the name Banbury, which has evoked lots of speculation since 1960. There have been suggestions that Wilde has taken the name of a sickly relation Henry Shirley Banbury, been inspired by the recent success of an unpublished farce and its character called Banbury, or derived the name from a place name as he often did. However, Mackie points out that "Wilde knew the importance of building upon material that was familiar to the audience, which, like Wilde, relied constantly on the newspapers." (Mackie 1998:329) He has discovered that the name Banbury appeared incidentally several times within a week on the *Morning Post's* announcement pages in late July 1894, which was productive time for the play.

Wilde was also a master of giving certain tones to the names and thus to the characters. For instance the names of the two young girls in the play are finely

differentiated. Cecily Cardew has the sound of innocence and lightness, whereas Gwendolen Fairfax carries a certain weight and urbanity.(Raby 1994:145). The name of the governess, Prism, gives the impression of a prim and precise person.

The play's opening was at the St James's Theatre on February 14th 1895 and has since been reproduced in Britain and elsewhere many times. It has been performed also in Finland, in two different translated versions by Seere Salminen in 1957 and Kersti Juva in 1995. There have been nineteen productions and 474 performances of the play in Finland (Aaltonen 1996: 28). The play is popular even today, when it is more than ever seen as inseparable of its author's own experience. The stagings have gone for the autobiographical elements with hidden references to homosexuality (Stokes 1994). (See Wilde's biography in the appendix.)

4. STRATEGIES USED IN TRANSLATING WILDE'S WORDPLAY

"Experience is the name everyone gives to his mistakes."

– Oscar Wilde –

As local translation strategies of wordplay should be a good indicator of the general strategy of translation, I will look at, and compare the ways in which wordplay of *The Importance of Being Earnest* has been translated by Salminen in 1957 and Juva in 1995. As wordplay, I include all kinds of play with language, the purpose of which is to amuse or to be witty. Therefore I have gathered examples of different kinds of wordplay, such as puns, allusive wordplay and wordplay based on imagery, going through the source text and the target language scripts. I have included all the wordplay I could find in the play, 43 extracts. I have also taken into account such wordplay that exists only in either of the target texts. I will analyse the translation strategies used in these

examples, and after that try to find the general strategies behind the translations as well as similarities and differences between them, based on my findings.

4.1 The Model for Analysis

As the model for analysing strategies in translating wordplay I have applied Chesterman's (1997) model of local translations strategies. I have modified and simplified the model, which originally has a very detailed classification for strategies on three levels: pragmatic, syntactic and semantic. The strategies on pragmatic level are wider entities, whereas syntactic and semantic strategies are more detailed. I have grouped together some syntactic and semantic strategies introduced by Chesterman, since there is no interest in an extremely detailed categorisation of them. Syntactic strategies are not as relevant for my study, because here it is not so much of interest to look at changes in detail at the structural level – changes in phrase, clause or sentence structure, changes of word class, unit shifts etc. – but the interest is in the message and the translation's aim, and in the way these have been changed in the translation process. According to Chesterman (1997:107), it is particularly the pragmatic strategies that are often the result of the translator's general strategy of translating the text as a whole. I concentrate on them in this study.

Pragmatic strategies often incorporate syntactic and semantic strategies as well, and thus they can not be excluded in this research either. They are of interest as they are used as means to realise pragmatic strategies, and thus reflect the general strategy to some extent as well. Some semantic strategies are of special interest here, because one of the most common wordplays used in Wilde's play is punning, which involves double meanings.

Translation strategies are classified according to the kind of changes made to the ST in the TT on the pragmatic, syntactic or semantic level. In my model, I have categorised the strategies introduced by Chesterman (1997) into the groups described below, taking into account the particular object of study, wordplay. Chesterman's original model has thirty different categories, which I

have cut down to ten. The names of the categories are Chesterman's, except for *minimum change* and *other syntactic strategies*. The explanations are also Chesterman's for the most part, but I have also added my own ideas, considering the categories' suitability for analysing wordplay.

Pragmatic Strategy 1: **Cultural Filtering** (Pr1)

This strategy includes all kinds of domestication of the text into the target culture, translating the source and especially its culture-specific items in a way that they fit into the world picture of the target culture and conform to its norms. Wordplay is a culture and language-specific feature, where humour often rises from things that are bound to the culture and the language in question. What is considered amusing is also affected by the norms of the culture of the time. This pragmatic strategy could also be called adaptation, acculturation or naturalisation (see Aaltonen 1996). Cultural filtering is a term used by Juliane House (1997).

Pragmatic Strategy 2: **Explicitness Change** (Pr2)

This strategy involves changes in the explicitness of the message and can be divided into two according to the direction towards which the changes are made. In case wordplay would not be grasped in the target culture as it is, it may be made more or less explicit depending on what the translator believes the target text recipients need to be able to understand.

- A. **Explicitation:** The translator makes the message more explicit, adding components explicitly in the TT which are only implicit in the ST, i.e. gives explanations. This is a very common strategy.
- B. **Implication:** The translator leaves the message more implicit than the original. This is done when the translator expects the readers to be able to infer the information left out.

Pragmatic Strategy 3: **Information Change** (Pr3)

This strategy means either adding or omitting information in the message.

- A. **Addition:** Adding new (non-inferable) information, which is considered relevant to the target culture recipients for their understanding of the text or making the text serve its purpose better. Whereas cultural filtering brings a text into another cultural system – filters its culture bound features – this strategy adds ingredients to the text which enable the target text reception. Wordplay is sometimes explained with additional information.
- B. **Omission:** Omitting information that is considered irrelevant for the recipients. This information can not be inferred. When the translator can not find any other solution to translating wordplay, she/he omits it altogether. If in translating puns, the other meaning is conveyed to the TT and the text translated literally, I categorise this under omission, since the other meaning and thus the whole wordplay is omitted. Therefore omission may include total omission of text or omission of single meanings.

Pragmatic Strategy 4: Interpersonal Change (Pr4)

This strategy involves changes in the level of formality. The strategy is of importance, since wordplay is culture-bound, and culture includes ideas of appropriate interaction.

Pragmatic strategy 5: Minimum Change (Pr5)

This is my own addition to Chesterman's model. The strategy of minimum change aims at a translation where changes made to the ST would be as small as possible. This is usually realised by literal translation and in case of wordplay usually results in its omission.

Syntactic Strategy 1: Literal Translation (Sy1)

This strategy aims at a translation which is maximally close to the ST, but still grammatical in the TL. In translating wordplay this often means maintenance of form but omission of wordplay.

Syntactic Strategy 2: **Other Syntactic Changes (Sy2)**

This strategy includes all other syntactic strategies than literal translation, such as loanwords, changes in grammar (word class, unit shifts, phrase, clause or sentence structure changes) and scheme changes (changes made when translating alliteration, repetition, parallelism etc.). I categorise these under the same class, because their detailed examination is not important for my study.

Semantic Strategy 1: **Paraphrasing (Se1)**

The result of this strategy is a TT that is 'free'. The meanings of the individual words are disregarded, in favour of the pragmatic sense of some higher unit. Filtering of wordplay into the target text is often realised with this strategy.

Semantic Strategy 2: **Abstraction Change (Se2)**

This strategy refers to change from an abstract meaning to concrete and vice versa. Sometimes changing the abstraction of a pun or other wordplay will result in a functional TT.

Semantic Strategy 3: **Trope Change (Se3)**

This strategy refers to the kind of changes the translator makes when translating rhetorical tropes, i.e. figurative expressions, e.g. metaphors. This strategy can also be easily applied in the translation of puns.

A. **ST trope X → TT trope X**

For example, a ST pun is retained as a pun in TT. The TT trope can be (i) semantically identical, (ii) semantically related or (iii) not semantically related but still the same type of trope as the ST trope.

B. **ST trope X → TT trope Y**

The figurativeness is retained but the trope changes, e.g. a ST pun is translated as a metaphor in TT.

C. **ST trope X → TT trope –**

The trope is dropped in the translation.

D. ST trope - → TT trope X

There is no trope in the ST but one is created in the TT.

4.2 Puns

Puns are the most frequent type of wordplay in Wilde's play and therefore their translation strategies are looked at carefully and given a lot of space in this study.

4.2.1 The Name Ernest

The notion of the name Ernest becomes one of the leading themes in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and the whole plot is constructed around it. The name being such an essential ingredient for the original play and adding to its humour and contradictions, it is interesting to see what kind of strategies the translators have decided to use when translating it. The word *Ernest* works as a pun based on homophony in the original. On one hand it is a person's name, and on the other it is the adjective *earnest*, meaning 'honest' or 'serious in intention'. There is no obvious equivalent for the pun in Finnish. Salminen (1957) has decided not to translate the name at all but leave it in its original form (Sy2: loanword), whereas Juva (1995) has used the Finnish name *Uno*, that can be used as a pun. In this way she has retained the wordplay, but at the expense of the connotations. *Uno* refers to the adjective *uuno* 'stupid' or 'simple' and also brings to mind a Finnish movie character *Uuno Turhapuro*, who is the symbol of a lazy, unreliable, disorderly, but still irresistible Finnish man. *Ernest*, on the other hand, is upper class and well-mannered.

Both translators have used semantic strategies which involve changes in trope (Se3). Salminen's trope change is of type C, where the pun is dropped in the translation altogether. On the pragmatic level the use of a loanword means minimum change (Pr5), which results in the omission of information, the other meaning (Pr3). Juva, on the other hand, uses an A(ii)-type trope change. The

pun is retained, but it is not semantically identical to the pun in the ST. The ST and TT puns are related though, because both work as a proper noun and an adjective that describes character. On the pragmatic level, Juva's strategy is that of cultural filtering (Pr1). She domesticates the English pun by finding a Finnish name that can be similarly used as a pun and create humour.

The effects of the translators' choices can be seen in the title itself. As the original has a double meaning of how it is important that you are honest and that your name is Ernest, Salminen's *Sulhaseni Ernest* has no double meaning, and Juva's *Kuinka tärkeää on olla Uno* has a different double meaning from the original. In the following examples I refer to Salminen's translation as TT1 and to Juva's as TT2.

Example 1.

ST: "You have always told me it was Ernest. I have introduced you to everyone as Ernest. You answer to the name of Ernest. You look as if your name was Ernest. You are the most earnest-looking person I ever saw in my life. It is perfectly absurd your saying that your name isn't Ernest. It's on your cards. Here is one of them. (*Taking it from case.*) 'Mr. Ernest Worthing, B. 4, The Albany.' I'll keep this as a proof that your name is Ernest if ever you attempt to deny it to me, or to Gwendolen, or to anyone else." p.98

TT1: "Mutta minulle sinä sanoit, että se on Ernest ja Ernestinä kaikki ystävienkin sinut tuntevat. Ja aivan Ernestin näköinenkin sinä olet. Älä siis väitä vastaan. (ottaa kortin taskustaan) Tässä on sinun käyntikorttisi ja siihen on painettu 'Ernest Worthing'. Pidän tämän todistuksena, jos vielä yrität minulle tai Gwendolenille tai muille väittää, ettet ole Ernest." p.7

TT2: "Minulle sinä olet aina sanonut että nimesi on Uno. Minä olen esitellyt sinut kaikille Unona. Sinä tottelet nimeä Uno. Näytät Unolta. En ole eläissäni nähnyt uunomman näköistä ihmistä. On täysin mieletöntä väittää että nimesi ei ole Uno. Nimi on käyntikorteissasi. Tässä on yksi. (Ottaa rasiasta) "Herra Uno Worthing, B 4 Albany." Minä säilytän tämän todistuskappaleena siitä, että nimesi on Uno, siltä varalta että yrität väittää toista minulle tai Gwendolenille tai kenelle hyvänsä." p.11

In this example the double meaning of the word *Ernest* is a vital thing in producing the amusing effect and also making a characterisation in the ST. Translating "You look as if your name was Ernest. You are the most earnest-looking person I ever saw in my life" as "Ja aivan Ernestin näköinenkin sinä olet" loses the wittiness and characterisation. "Näytät Unolta. En ole eläissäni nähnyt uunomman näköistä ihmistä" maintains the amusing effect but changes the characterisation drastically. As the original plays with the fact that Ernest's

name suggests him being an honest person when in fact he is deceitful, Juva's translation misses the point. The same effect for the name as a characterisation tool and thus leading the plot of the whole play, can be seen in the following three examples.

Example 2.

ST: "*Gwendolen*: ...and my ideal has always been to love some one of the name of Ernest. There is something in that name that inspires absolute confidence.

Jack: ...I don't much care about the name of Ernest....I don't think the name suits me at all.

Gwendolen: It suits you perfectly. It is a divine name. It has a music of its own. It produces vibrations.

Gwendolen: ...The only really safe name is Ernest." p.103-104

TT1: "*Gwendolen*: ... Ja minun haaveeni on aina ollut, että saisin rakastaa miestä, jonka nimi on Ernest. Siinä nimessä on jotain niin vakavaa, niin suurta turvallisuutta herättävää.

Jack: ...tunnustan, etten itse pidä lainkaan Ernest-nimestä – se ei minusta sovi minulle.

Gwendolen: Oi, mutta sehän sopii! Se on ihana nimi. Se on kuin musiikkia. Ernest – siinä on hellää värinää –

Gwendolen: ...Ei, Ernest on ainoa oikea nimi minun rakastetulleni." p.14

TT2: "*Gwendolen*: ...Ja minun ihanteenani on aina ollut rakastaa Uno. Nimessä on jotain joka herättää täydellistä luottamusta.

Jack: Minä itse en, jos saan puhua suoraan, erityisemmin välitä nimestä Uno... Minusta se ei sovi minulle alkuunkaan.

Gwendolen: Se sopii täydellisesti. Se on jumalainen nimi. Se soi ihanasti. Se saa aikaan väreitä.

Gwendolen: ...Nimistä ainoa varma on Uno." p.21-23

Example 3.

ST: "Ernest has a strong upright nature. He is the very soul of truth and honour. Disloyalty would be as impossible to him as deception." p.130

TT1: "Ernest on rehellinen ja vilpitön mies. Uskottomuus olisi hänelle yhtä mahdotonta kuin pettäminenkin."p.42

TT2: "Uno on suoraselkäinen luonne. Hän on kunniallisuuden perikuva. Epälojaalisuus on hänelle yhtä vierasta kuin petos." p.91

Example 4.

ST: “*Jack*(/*Ernest*)(slowly and hesitatingly): Gwendolen – Cecily – it is very painful for me to be forced to speak the truth. It is the first time of my life that I have ever been reduced to such a painful position, and I am really quite inexperienced in doing anything of the kind.” p.134-135

TT1: “*Jack*: Gwendolen, Cecily – on hyvin tuskallista, kun on pakotettu puhumaan totta. Ensi kertaa elämässäni olen joutunut tällaiseen tilanteeseen, joten minulla ei ole minkäänlaista kokemusta.” p.47

TT2: “*Jack* (Hitaasti ja epäroiden): Gwendolen – Cecily – minun on pakko kertoa totuus ja se on hyvin tuskallista. Ensimmäistä kertaa elämässäni olen tässä vaikeassa tilanteessa ja tunnen itseni kovin kokemattomaksi.” p.99

The pun Ernest–earnest sums up the whole plot in the end of the play. Jack, who has let people to believe that his name is Ernest and has thus been dishonest, finds out his true identity and real name, which is Ernest after all. Subsequently he has been honest all along without knowing that.

Example 5.

ST: “*Jack* (*Ernest*): I have always told you Gwendolen, my name was Ernest, didn’t I? Well, it is Ernest after all. I mean it naturally is Ernest.

Jack: Gwendolen, it is a terrible thing for a man to find out suddenly that all his life he has been speaking nothing but the truth.

Lady Bracknell: My nephew, you seem to be displaying signs of triviality.

Jack: On the contrary Aunt Augusta, I’ve now realised for the first time in my life the vital Importance of Being Earnest.” p.150

TT1: “*Jack*: Gwendolen, enkö aina ole sanonut sinulle, että nimeni on Ernest? Se on kuin onkin Ernest – kaikesta huolimatta. Tarkoitin – tietenkin se on Ernest.

Jack: Gwendolen, on järkyttävää, kun mies huomaa äkkiä, että onkin koko ikänsä puhunut totta.

Lady Bracknell: Sisarenpoikani, sinulla näkyy olevan taipumuksia arkipäiväiseen tunteiluun.

Jack: Se lienee sallittua, Augusta-täti, kun se tapahtuu vilpittömästi ja vakavasti - kuten Ernestille sopiikin.” p.67

TT2: “*Jack*: Gwendolen, minä olen aina sanonut, että nimeni on Uno, enkö ole? Se on Uno.

Jack: Gwendolen, miehelle on kauhea kokemus saada äkkiä tietää että hän on koko elämänsä puhunut pelkkää totta.

Lady Bracknell: Hyvä sisarenpoika, sinä taidat olla aika nokkela nuori mies.

Jack: Päinvastoin, Augusta-täti, olen vasta nyt vihdoin käsittänyt kuinka tärkeää on olla uuno.” p.132-133

The humorous idea of honesty vs. being Ernest does not work in either of the translations, but I think Juva succeeds better with her ending with the Finnish pun. She changes Lady Bracknell's line to fit together with Jack's last line, so that the line "*taidat olla aika nokkela nuorimies*" and the pun in "*...kuinka tärkeää on olla uuno*" create a similar humorous effect to that of the original. I believe though, that there are Finnish male names that could have worked as puns in the translation better than Uno, and been closer to the theme of honesty. Such names as Aito ('genuine', 'pure', 'sincere', 'true') or Rehti ('upright', 'fair', 'honest') would have worked better for the plot. I assume the skopos in both translations was to maintain the strength of the plot, as well as the play's wittiness and humour as far as possible, since the play is a farcical comedy and gained its popularity merely based on those. Naturally the aim has been to make the translated theatre version as popular as possible.

4.2.2 Other Puns

Wilde uses a lot of punning to add to the humour and wittiness of the play. Most of the puns are based on *hymonymy*, both the sounds and the spelling of the punning words being identical. The most common strategy in translating the puns is semantic trope change (Se3), which can be a result of many different strategies on the pragmatic level. As punning and wordplay in general are tied to the language and culture in question, they are sometimes very difficult to retain. A suitable pun for the target text can not always be found in Finnish, but it is also possible to use other types of wordplay instead, or leave the wordplay out and compensate it by adding wordplay somewhere it does not exist in the source. Creativity is the main requirement for the translator. In the following, the puns in the *The Importance of Being Earnest* are presented in a logical order for the progress of matters.

The following example illustrates how difficult a language-bound pun is to retain in the translation.

Example 6.

ST: "Until yesterday I had no idea that there were any families or persons whose origin was a *Terminus*." p.141

TT1: "Eiliseen saakka minulla ei ollut aavistustakaan, että voi olla perheitä tai henkilöitä, joiden alkuperä on jonkin radan pääteasema." p.56

TT2: "Eiliseen asti olen ollut täysin tietämätön siitä, että on ylipäätään olemassa perheitä, joiden suku juontaa juurensa rautatieasemalta." p.113

The word *Terminus* is a pun meaning both 'terminal station' and written in capital initial letter also a God, 'rajajumala' in Finnish. This pun is probably left unnoticed even by most of the target audience, and is not important for the plot in any way, merely just an addition to the wit of the language of the play. The wordplay is impossible to retain in Finnish and both the Finnish translators have translated the word as the obvious *rautatieasema* or *pääteasema*, which fits in the plot. The line is funny even without the pun, and consequently its omission does not effect the play's successfulness in any way. The strategy used is omission (Pr3B) realised by semantic trope change (Se3C), where the trope, in this case the pun, has been dropped altogether.

Whereas in some cases the other meaning of the pun can be left untranslated without causing any noticeable harm to the text, in other cases the pun has more importance for the general style of the play. In the following example the pun is obvious to the receivers and therefore its importance is greater than that of the pun in the previous example.

Example 7.

ST: "*Jack*: Well, that is no *business* of yours.

Algernon: If it was my *business*, I wouldn't talk about it. (*begins to eat muffins*.) It is very vulgar to talk about one's *business*. Only people like stockbrokers do that, and then merely at dinner parties." p.136

TT1: "*Jack*: Se ei kuulu sinuun.

Algernon: Jos se kuuluisikin minuun, en viitsisi puhua siitä. (*alkaa syödä voileipiä teepöydältä*) Ei ole hienoa puhua omista asioistaan. Toisten asiat ovat paljon hauskeempia." p.49

TT2: "*Jack*: Se ei ole sinun *asiasi*."

Algernon: Jos se olisi minun asiani minä en puhuisi siitä. On rahvaanomaista puhua asioistaan. Vain sellaiset ihmiset kuin pörssimeklarit tekevät sitä ja hekin vain päivälliskutsuilla.” p.102

Algernon’s remark would be funny even without the double meaning of the word *business*, but the existence of it makes it very clever as well. The last sentence is closely tied to the pun. As there is no similar term in Finnish to describe ‘asia’, ‘työ’, ‘kauppa’ and ‘liiketoimi’ all in one word, the pun is dropped in both the translations, the strategy being omission (Pr3B) realised by trope change C (Se3C). As the line is funny also without the wordplay, the translations do not lose so much in the process, although there is some degree of loss in the cleverness.

In TT1 Salminen has chosen to leave out the last sentence and replace it by a sentence of her own (Pr3A,B). This is probably done because the remark about stockbrokers would seem really detached from the context in the translation. It has no significance whatsoever without the pun that makes it funny in the original. I think Juva in TT2 has stuck to the original text too tightly, aiming at a translation with minimum changes to the original (Pr5), translating also the last sentence literally (Sy1). It does not seem to be connected to the context in any way. However, with a small change Juva’s translation could be made more functional and clever. The word *asioistaan* in Algernon’s second sentence could be added an ‘n’ thus making it *ansioistaan*, meaning ‘profit’, and thus make use of another way of punning, *paronymy* (see Delabastita 1996:128). The extract would be as follows, the last sentence not loose anymore, but needed for the Finnish wordplay to work:

“Jack: Se ei ole sinun asiasi.

Algernon: Jos se olisi minun asiani minä en puhuisi siitä. On rahvaanomaista puhua ansioistaan. Vain sellaiset ihmiset kuin pörssimeklarit tekevät sitä ja hekin vain päivälliskutsuilla.”

Dropping of the pun seems often to be the only solution for the translator when a similar pun does not exist in the target language and no suitable way of compensation can be come up with.

Example 8.

ST: "As far as the piano is concerned, sentiment is my *forte*." p.94

TT1: -

TT2: "Pianonsoiton alalla tunteet ovat *vahva puoleni*." p.3

Here the pun *forte*, meaning 'strong point' and a piano term, seems to be impossible for both translators to maintain in Finnish. In TT1 the translation strategy is information change and omission of the whole sentence as irrelevant (Pr3B). Although the entire sentence has not been omitted in TT2, the pun is still omitted (Pr3B) and again by trope change: the pun is dropped and the word *forte* has lost its double meaning (Se3C).

Omission of the pun (Pr3B) and using only one of the two meanings of the word is a common strategy when a similar pun does not exist in the target language. Sometimes the translators have made different choices in the meanings to convey. This can be seen in the following two examples with the puns *accompany* and *lose*. Some of the funniness is inevitably lost whichever the choice.

Example 9.

ST: "Gwendolen, you will *accompany* me." p.103

TT1: "Gwendolen, *seuraa* minua." p.13

TT2: "Gwendolen *säestää* minua." p.20

Example 10.

ST: "*Jack*: I have *lost* both my parents.

Lady Bracknell: Both? ... That seems like carelessness." p.107

TT1: "*Jack*: Olen *kadottanut* molemmat vanhempani.

Lady Bracknell: Molemmat? Sepä huolimattonta." p.17

TT2: "*Jack*: Olen *menettänyt* molemmat vanhempani.

Lady Bracknell: Molemmat? Se kuulostaa jo hieman huolimattomalta." p.28

In some choices which the translators have made between the meanings, the time of the translation and its norms can be detected. The effect of the time can be seen in the following extract, in which the term *make love* can be understood in two ways. In modern language, it is most commonly understood

as referring to having sex, but it also has the meaning ‘to flirt’. This meaning has been more common earlier than nowadays. Because of this difference in time, the term is translated as *hakkailla* in TT1 and as *olla sillä tavalla* in TT2. This also reflects the norms of the times. It was not as acceptable to talk about sex openly back in the 1950’s as it is today.

Example 11.

ST: “The only way to behave to a woman is to *make love* to her, if she is pretty, and to some one else, if she is plain.” p.110

TT1: ”Sieviä *hakkaillaan*, rumia ei katsotakaan. Se on ainoa oikea tapa.” p.20

TT2: “Naisen kanssa ei kannata *olla* millään muulla tavalla kuin *sillä tavalla* mikäli hän on kaunis ja jonkun muun kanssa jos hän on ruma.”

The strategy here is the same as in the previous examples, omission of the pun (Pr3B), but ,in addition to that, Salminen has used paraphrasing (Se1), cutting the long sentence shorter and thus making it less heavy than a literal translation would have been. The strategies of both translations can also be said to involve cultural filtering (Pr1), because the choices partly involve the norms of the Finnish society of the time of the translation.

In the following extract the translators have chosen a slightly different form for the translated pun in Finnish. However, this choice makes a difference for the successfulness of the wordplay in the Finnish of today.

Example 12.

ST: “Indeed, no woman should ever be quite accurate about her age. It looks so *calculating...*” p.144

TT1: “Aivan oikein, naisen ei koskaan pitäisi olla aivan täsmällinen ikänsä suhteen. Se näyttää niin *laskelmalliselta...*” p.59-60

TT2: “Totta puhuen naisen ei koskaan pidä olla täysin täsmällinen mitä ikään tulee. Se vaikuttaa *laskelmoivalta...*” p.118

The word *laskelmallinen* does not refer to a personality trait as the word *laskelmoiva* does. This is why Juva’s translation succeeds better in conveying the double meaning. The word *laskelmoiva* has reference both to the mathematical aspect and characterisation. Juva’s strategy is that of adapting the wordplay into Finnish (Pr1) by using semantic trope change (Se4A(i)).

Although Salminen's translation would not work today, it might have had the exactly same affect on the audience of the time that Juva's translation has today. The words and their meanings change over time, and *laskelmallinen* might have been used in the same sense before as *laskelmoiva* is used today. In that case, Salminen's translation has brought the wordplay into the culture of the 1950's. Thus the strategy is the same in TT1 as in TT2.

In some cases the same pun works in both English and Finnish and can be translated literally without losing the double meaning. This is not very common though, since the languages are not related. But there are always words that have been borrowed from English into Finnish or have a common origin, like the pun '*profile*' in example 13.

Example 13.

ST: "Lady Bracknell (glares at JACK for a few moments. Then bends, with a practised smile, to CECILY): Kindly turn round, sweet child. (CECILY turns completely round.) No the side view is what I want. (CECILY presents her profile.) Yes, quite as I expected. There are distinct social possibilities in your *profile*. The two weak points in our age are its want of principle and its want of *profile*." p.143

TT1: "Lady Bracknell: (tuijottaa hetken Jackiin, siten kääntyy hymyille Cecilyn puoleen) Ole hyvä ja käänny, suloinen lapsi. (CECILY kääntyy ympäri) Ei, haluan nähdä profiilisi. (CECILY näyttää hänelle sivukuvansa) Aivan, kuten odotinkin. Sinun *profilissasi* on selviä seurapiirillisiä mahdollisuuksia." p.57

TT2: "Lady Bracknell: (Mulkoilee hetken JACKia. Kumartuu sitten tottuneesti hymyillen CECILYN puoleen) Käänny ympäri, lapsi. (CECILY kääntyy täyden kierroksen) Ei, minä halusin sivukuvan. (CECILY näyttää profiilinsa) Aivan kuten odotin. *Profiili* tarjoaa huomattavia sosiaalisia mahdollisuuksia. Aikamme kaksi suura heikkoutta ovat periaatteiden puute ja *profiilin* puute." p.115

Translating the pun literally does not result in loss of the wordplay, as the loanword *profiili* has the same double meaning ('side view', 'account of life and character') in Finnish. Subsequently, the pun is retained by using trope change A(i), a semantically identical pun in Finnish. On the pragmatic level, the strategy is cultural filtering (Pr1), fitting the wordplay into Finnish.

Puns that work in both Finnish and English do not always have a common origin, but the words may, for instance, function on both concrete and abstract levels in a similar way.

Example 14.

ST: "It would leave no room for developments, and I intend to *develop* in many directions." p.101

TT1: "Toivottavasti en, sillä silloin ei olisi enää mahdollista parantaa ja minä tahdon kehittyä vielä moneen suuntaan." p.11

TT2: "Silloin ei jäisi sijaa kehittymiselle ja minun aikomukseni on kehittyä moneen suuntaan." p.17

In the example above, Algernon has just complimented on Gwendolen's appearance, followed by Jack praising her to be quite perfect. Here the phrase '*develop in many directions*' may be interpreted in two ways: on the abstract level it means development more generally and getting even better-looking, on the concrete it might be understood to imply her getting fatter in time. The English word 'develop' and the Finnish one 'kehittyä' work here in a similar way including both possible interpretations of Gwendolen's line. In TT1, the word *development* has been translated as *parannus*, which might diminish the understanding of the wordplay to some extent. However, the word *develop* has been translated as *kehittyä* in the second clause, where the actual wordplay exists. In TT2 *kehitys* and *kehittyä* are the words used. As the wordplay can be grasped in the target texts as likely as in the source, the strategy in both translations is cultural filtering (Pr1) achieved with minimum changes (Pr5), realised by literal translation (Sy1) on the syntactic and trope change (Se3A(i)) on the semantic level.

The following extract is another example where the same pun (concrete vs. abstract meaning) works in both the source and the target language. The word *blessing* is used here in its abstract as well as its concrete meaning, and they are also included in the Finnish word *siunaus*. Although the pun has been translated literally (Sy1), with minimum changes to the TT (Pr5), the strategy can be categorised also as cultural filtering (Pr1), since the wordplay works in the target texts as well as in the source text. Again the semantic means by which this is realised is trope change A(i). The pun is retained in the target text and it is semantically identical to the original pun.

Example 15.

ST: “*Chasuble*: What seems to us bitter trials are often blessings in disguise.
Miss Prism: This (christening) seems to me a blessing of an extremely obvious kind.” p.121

TT1: “*Chasuble*: Raskaat koettelemukset ovat usein siunaukseksi.
Miss Prims: Tämä näyttää minusta aivan ilmeiseltä siunaukselta.” p.33

TT2: “*Chasuble*: Katkerakin koettelemus on usein pohjimmiltaan siunaus.
Miss Prism: Tämä on siunaus jo päältäpäinkin.” p.58

Another example in Wilde’s play of a pun that works both in English and in Finnish is the adjective *short-sighted* in the following example:

Example 16.

ST: “Cecily, mamma, whose views on education are remarkably strict, has brought me up to be extremely short-sighted; it is part of her system; so do you mind my looking at you through my glasses?” p.129

TT1: “Äidilläni on hyvin ankarat kasvatuseriaatteet ja hän on kasvattanut minut äärimmäisen lyhytnäköiseksi. Rakas Cecily, saanko katsella teitä lorjnettini lävitse?” p.41

TT2: “Äiti, joka on varsin ankara kasvattaja, on tehnyt minusta lyhytnäköisen; se on osa hänen ohjelmaansa; ethän siis pane pahaksesi jos katson sinua silmälasieni läpi?” p.90

In both translations the pun has been translated as *lyhytnäköinen*, which in addition to referring to a person with bad eyesight, also means ‘thoughtless’. Neither translator has chosen to use the adjective *likinäköinen*, which is a more common term when talking of eyesight, but has no double meaning. In this way, the pun is retained and it works as well in the Finnish context as in the original. Thus the strategy used in both translations is that of cultural filtering (Pr1). It has been realised by A(i)-type trope change, i.e. retaining the pun in the original as a semantically identical pun in the translation (Se3A(i)). On the syntactic level, the strategy is literal translation (Sy1), especially in TT2, where Juva has aimed at a translation as close to the original as possible (Pr5).

In the extract of example 16, TT1 also involves interpersonal change (Pr4), as in the plot Gwendolen and Cecily have just agreed to call each other by the first names and they still call each other *te* in TT1. Nowadays the formal addressing *te* would seem odd after such an agreement, but since formal addressing was much more common in the 1950’s, Salminen has decided not to

use the pronoun *sinä* in this context. This can be due to the norms of the time when politeness and formal addressing were a requirement more than an exception as they are today. As there is no such division of English pronouns on the basis of formal and informal addressing, it can be concluded that when two people agree to call each other by their first names, this implies the same thing as agreeing calling each other *sinä* in Finnish. Using informal address in TT2 also strengthens the effect of turns in the plot, as later in the text Gwedolen and Cecily's arising hostility towards each other makes them use informal address again.

In the following example only TT2 has retained the wordplay, although the same pun works in both Finnish and English.

Example 17.

ST: "The manuscript unfortunately was *abandoned*. I use the word in the sense of lost or mislaid." p.115

TT1: "Käsikirjoitus – miten sanoisin – *katosi, hävisi, hukkuu* - ..." p.25

TT2: "Sen kohtaloksi tuli *hylkääminen*. Käytän sanaa konkreettisesti merkityksessä." p.45

Here Miss Prism is talking about a manuscript she had written years ago. When Cecily asks what had happened to it, the answer "*The manuscript unfortunately was abandoned*" would first give the audience the idea that it was not accepted by the publisher. Only the following sentence "*I use the word in the sense of lost or mislaid*" clears up this misunderstanding. The Finnish word *hylätä* works as a similar pun, but is not probably as obvious as the English one. Juva has retained it though, and succeeded quite well by changing the second sentence slightly to suite the Finnish wordplay better. As literal translation would have made the line sound awkward, she has used paraphrasing (Se1) in the second sentence. In that way the wordplay is easier to grasp. On the whole, the strategy is cultural filtering (Pr1), making the wordplay work in Finnish, and has been realised by retaining the pun, which is semantically identical to the English one (Se3A(i)).

TT1, on the other hand, has lost the humour of this line altogether by choosing not to translate the pun (Pr3B). She has used paraphrasing instead (Se3), making sure that the meaning is conveyed. Maybe Salminen has not come up with an idea of how to deal with the second sentence and make sure the wordplay would be grasped by the audience. Or the translator may have thought it more important to maintain the contents of the plot than the wordplay. It is true that the meanings are easier to understand from the ST than from TT2.

Sometimes the translators have also found an opportunity to compensate for the humour and wittiness lost in the translation, and add wordplay into the target text where there is none in the source. In the following example Salminen has translated the ST quite literally, whereas Juva has noticed an opportunity to create a pun, using the word *asema*, meaning both ‘station’ and ‘position’, which fits into the context perfectly. The strategy is that of cultural filtering (Pr1), using the target language and its capacity for creating humour creatively. Cultural filtering is realised by trope change D (Se3D), creating a pun when there is none in the original. Juva has used repetition of the pun as a strengthening tool.

Example 18.

ST: “As for the particular locality in which the hand-bag was found, a cloak-room at a railway station might serve to conceal a social indiscretion – has probably, indeed, been used for that purpose before now – but it could hardly be regarded as an assured basis for a recognised position in good society.” p.108

TT1: “- Mitä taas tulee siihen paikkaan mistä matkalaukku löydettiin, aseman tavarasäilytykseen, niin tiedetään sellaista paikkaa ennenkin käytetyn seurapiirillisten skandaalien salaamistarkoituksiin. Mutta tuskimpa sitä voidaan paremmissa piireissä hyväksyä säädylliseksi syntymäpaikaksi.” p.18

TT2: “Mitä tulee tämän käsilaukun löytöpaikkaan, en voi olla huomauttamatta että *asema* ei korvaa *asemaa*, ja vaikka *aseman* suojissa sosiaalinen sopimattomuus saattaa jäädä paljastumatta – ja *asemaa* käsittääkseni joskus käytetään tähän tarkoitukseen – rautatie tarjoaa tuskin kenenkään silmissä vakaan perustan arvostetulle *asemalle* seurapiireissä.” p.30

The same strategy of cultural filtering realised by trope change D – adding a pun where there is none in the source – is used in TT2 in the following example. In TT1, the ST is translated literally with only some changes on the level of form, whereas Juva in TT2 has come up with an idea to use the pun

muuttaa, meaning ‘to move’ or ‘to alter’ in the context. In this way she compensates for the wordplay that has been lost in the translation.

Example 19.

ST: “*Lady Bracknell*: What number in Belgrave square?

Jack: 149.

Lady Bracknell (shaking her head): The unfashionable side. I thought there was something. However, that could easily be altered.

Jack: Do you mean the fashion or the side?” p.107

TT1: “ --- *Lady Bracknell*: ... - No, se voidaan helposti korjata.

Jack: Muotiko vai katu?” p.17

TT2: ” --- *Lady Bracknell*: ...Mutta se seikka voidaan korjata.

Jack: Kumpi? Muutanko minä vai muutetaanko muoti?” p.28

Juva has made use of the same Finnish pun *muuttaa* in creating wordplay in another context of the play as well.

Example 20.

ST: “That is why I want you to reform me. You might make that your mission, if you don’t mind, cousin Cecily.” p.118

TT1: “Toivoisin että sinä parantaisit minut. Ota se käännytystehtäväksesi, rakas serkku.” p.28

TT2: “Jotta minun ei tarvitse *muuttua maaksi* eikä *muuttaa maasta*, *muuttakaa te minut muuksi*, Cecily-serkku. Te voisitte ottaa sen lähetystehtäväksenne, jos teille sopii.” p.51

Instead of translating literally like Salminen in TT1, Juva has made up wordplay that makes the line clever and funny to the Finnish audience. This cultural filtering (Pr1) is realised by scheme change (Sy2), using alliteration with the letter *m*, and D-type trope change, where wordplay is created somewhere it does not appear in the ST. Juva has actually succeeded in adding two puns into this line, the other being *muuttua* and the other *maa*, meaning ‘clod’ the first time and ‘country’ the second time it appears. The whole line is totally acculturated: it contains Finnish puns, alliteration and the idiom *muuttua maaksi*.

Also Salminen has made an attempt to make up for the lost wordplay. In the following extract she has used *paronymy* as the basis of punning. Whereas TT2 has been translated with minimum changes (Pr5, Sy1), Salminen has used the strategy of cultural filtering (Pr1), making use of the possibilities of Finnish to create humour. She has used the word *törkeä*, ‘obscene’, in place of the word *tärkeä*, ‘important’, as a slip of the tongue in Algernon’s line. The pun is very successful in the context. The strategy used on the semantic level to realise cultural filtering is that of trope change (Se3D).

Example 21.

ST: “I must see him at once on a most important christening – I mean on most important business.” p.128

TT1: “Minun on mentävä tapaamaan häntä heti paikalla. On kysymyksessä *törkeä*...tarkoitan *tärkeä* toimitus.” p.40

TT2: “Minun täytyy tavata hänet nyt heti erittäin tärkeässä kasteessa – tarkoitan erittäin tärkeässä asiassa.” p.87

Translating a pun literally, even though the translation will not result in an identical pun in the target language, works in some cases, and the humorous effect can be maintained. However, literal translation is not really necessary in cases like this, and the translator can find as good or even better solutions using her/his creativity, as in the following example.

Example 22.

ST: “*Jack*: Well, yes I must admit I smoke.

Lady Bracknell: I’m glad to hear it. A man should always have an *occupation* of some kind. There are too many idle men in London as it is.” p.106

TT1: “*Jack*: Niin, tuota – kyllä minä tupakoin.

Lady Bracknell: Se on hyvä se. Miehen käsillä pitääkin olla jotain askartelua, muuten ne eksyvät vääriin paikkoihin.” p.16

TT2: “*Jack*: Täytyy tunnustaa että poltan.

Lady Bracknell: Se on hyvä. Miehellä pitää olla jotain tekemistä. Lontoossa on joutilaita miehiä jo vallan riittävästi.” p.26

In example 22, TT2 has held on to minimum changes (Pr5) and literal translation (Sy1), translating the pun *occupation* as *tekeminen*. This works quite well, although it does not really work as a pun and refer to having a profession as the source language word does. As the word *tekeminen* in TT2

works on two levels in Finnish, on one hand referring to smoking and on the other to doing something other than just being lazy, the strategy can be categorised as cultural filtering (Pr1). In TT1 the last sentence has been translated freely, using the strategy of paraphrasing (Se1). Salminen has found here an opportunity to create a witty line, somewhat similar in effect to that of the ST. This strategy is also cultural filtering (Pr1) although the pun itself is not retained. The phrase *eksyä väärään paikkaan* evokes a certain response of amusement in the Finnish audience. In this case I believe both translators have succeeded equally well by aiming at a culturally natural translation, despite the obvious differences of the syntactic and semantic strategies behind the pragmatic one.

Sometimes all that finding a suitable pun in the target language requires is some thought, creativity and imagination. For instance in example 23, it makes a great difference for the humour of the play that Juva in TT2 has retained the pun *agricultural depression* and come up with the idea to use the verb *lamaantua* in place of *bore*, 'ikävystyä'. With this small but significant decision the double meaning of the pun is kept and fitted into the Finnish culture.

Example 23.

ST: "*Gwendolen*: The country always bores me to death.

Cecily: Ah! This is what the newspapers call *agricultural depression*, is it not? I believe the aristocracy are suffering very much from it just at present. It is almost an epidemic amongst them, I have been told." p.132

TT1: "*Gwendolen*: Täällähän ikävystyy kuoliaaksi.

Cecily: Olen varma, ettei kukaan maalla asuva herrasmies haluaisi ottaa teidän kuolemaansa tunnolleen..."p.45

TT2: "*Gwendolen*: Minä itse *lamaannun* maalla täysin.

Cecily: Se on kai sitä *maaseudun lamaa* josta lehdissä alinomaa kirjoitetaan. Olen käsittänyt että aateli kärsii siitä kovasti nykyään." p.95

The strategy of translation in TT2 is thus cultural filtering (Pr1) intertwined with semantic trope change (Se3A(ii)), the pun is retained, and the Finnish one being semantically related to the original. In TT1, on the other hand, the translator has lost the wordplay completely (Pr3B). Instead, she has used information change (Pr3), totally changing the meaning of *Cecily's* line. By

doing this, she has added some cleverness into Cecily's comment, which would have been left quite blank if translated literally, excluding the pun.

There is not always enough time for the translator to be creative with wordplay or it may be otherwise extremely difficult to handle. In such cases leaving the pun to mean just one of its double meanings may turn out strange in the TT. This is the case in the following example.

Example 24.

ST: "*Lady Bracknell*: What did he die of?

Algernon: Bunbury? Oh, he was quite *exploded*.

Lady Bracknell: Exploded! Was he the victim of a revolutionary outrage? I was not aware that Mr. Bunbury was interested in social legislation. If so, he is well punished for his *morbidity*.

Algernon: My dear Aunt Augusta, I mean he was found out! The doctors found out that Bunbury could not live, that is what I mean – so Bunbury died." p.141

TT1: "*Lady Bracknell*: Ja mihin hän kuoli?

Algernon: Mihin? Hän vain räjähti ilmaan.

Lady Bracknell: Räjähti? Oliko hän siis jonkin vallankumouksellisen mellakan uhri? En tiennytkään, että ystävälläsi Banburyllä oli tekemistä yhteiskunnallisten uudistusten kanssa. Siinä tapauksessa hänen *sairaalloiset* harrastuksensa saivat ansaitsemansa lopun.

Algernon: Augusta-täti, tarkoitan, että hänet paljastettiin. Lääkärit totesivat, ettei hän voi elää – ja silloin hän kuoli." p.55

TT2: "*Lady Bracknell*: Mihin hän kuoli?

Algernon: Hän haihtui savuna ilmaan.

Lady Bracknell: Joutuiko hän vallankumouksellisen kiihkoilun uhriksi? En tiennyt että Bunbury oli kiinnostunut yhteiskunnallisista kysymyksistä. Minä *en pidä sitä aivan terveenä. Mutta Bunburyhan ei ollut terve.*

Algernon: Augusta-täti kulta, tarkoitan että hän paljastui. Toisin sanoen lääkäriille paljastui että hänellä oli vain hyvin vähän elinaikaa. Ja niin hän otti ja kuoli." p.112

There is no pun in Finnish that could work in the same way as the pun *to be exploded* does in this example. The Finnish meanings that it refers to here are 'räjähtää' and 'paljastua'. Neither of the translators have laid significance on the pun, but both have translated it to mean the former. Thus the strategy in both is omission of the pun (Pr3B) realised by trope change, where the pun is dropped (Se3C). It may be that the pun has been missed altogether, but it would seem odd, since in that case Algernon's last line which explains the pun, would seem loose from the context.

In TT2 a kind of a paraphrase (Se1), *haihtua savuna ilmaan*, has been chosen as a translation for the pun. This phrase could be understood in two ways and thus used as a pun by changing Algernon's last line to fit together with it. As it is not relevant for the plot how Mr. Bunbury has died, the translation could for example be as follows to make the text more logical:

“Lady Bracknell: Mihin hän kuoli?

Algernon: Hän haihtui savuna ilmaan.

Lady Bracknell: Joutuiko hän vallankumouksellisen kiihkoilun uhriksi? En tiennyt että Bunbury oli kiinnostunut yhteiskunnallisista kysymyksistä. Minä en pidä sitä aivan terveenä. Mutta Bunburyhan ei ollut terve.

Algernon: Augusta-täti kulta, tarkoitan että hän katosi. Hän lähti etelän lämpöön hoitamaan huonoja keuhkojaan, mutta sen koommin hänestä ei ole kuulunut sanaakaan.”

In the same extract, there is another pun, which has been made meaningful for the Finnish audience in both translations, using the strategy of cultural filtering (Pr1). The pun is the word *morbidity*, which here refers to Bunbury's constant illnesses and also to his possible interest in social legislation which Lady Bracknell finds senseless. In TT1 the same pun, *sairaalloinen* in Finnish, is retained (Se3A(i)), whereas in TT2 Juva has used another semantically related word, *terve*, similarly as wordplay (Se3A(ii)). She has also made the text more explicit, adding the sentence “*Mutta Bunburyhan ei ollut terve*” to make sure the audience would understand the joke (Pr2A).

Wilde's puns are not always easy to notice and some of them may be missed by most of the audience and even the translator. The next example is an extract where Lady Bracknell is interviewing Jack about his past, parents and family and finds out he is a foundling, found in a cloak-room of a railway station at the Brighton line.

Example 25.

ST: “The line is immaterial.” p.108

TT1: “Linja on sivuasias.” p.18

TT2: “Linjalla ei ole merkitystä.” p.30

Here the obvious meaning of *the line* is the line at the railway station. But the word can also be used to refer to “...all the generations of a family, especially

when you are considering the social status - - that the various members inherit”(Collins 1995: 970). This meaning fits the context perfectly and therefore I believe Wilde has used the word *line* here as a pun, creating a paradox with Lady Bracknell’s line: As she states that the railway line is immaterial, she simultaneously also says that family and inheritance do not matter. This naturally is quite the opposite to what she really thinks.

In both TT1 and TT2, the text has been translated with minimum changes (Pr5) and the wordplay has been omitted (Pr3B), possibly not noticed or just thought too difficult to convey. The strategies used on syntactic and semantic levels are literal translation (Sy1) and trope change C (Se3C), i.e. dropping the pun. Maybe the pun has not been considered so important, since the paradox is probably not noticed by most of the recipients of the ST either.

Another example of a pun easily missed is the following:

Example 26.

ST: “To be born or at any rate bread, in a hand-bag, *whether it had handles or not*, seems to me to display a contempt for the ordinary decencies of family life...” p.108

TT1: “Syntyä matkalaukussa – *olipa se musta tai muun värinen* –se tuntuu minusta säädyllisen perhe-elämän halveksimiselta...”p.18

TT2: “Se että joku syntyy tai kasvaa käsilaukussa, *oli siinä kädensijat tai ei*, osoittaa minusta säällisen ja säntillisen perhe-elämän halveksuntaa...” p.30

The phrase *whether it had handles or not* may have a reference to *having a handle to one’s name*, i.e. having a title. This interpretation would suit the context, which is the same as in the previous example: Lady Bracknell thinking about Jack’s origin. The pun emphasises Lady Bracknell’s character as one who always lays emphasis on superficial things, such as social status. One can not be sure whether the word *handles* is meant to work as a clever pun here, but in case it is, it is not probably understood by most of the recipients.

Juva in TT2 has translated the sentence quite literally (Pr5), (Sy1). Her translation does not have a suggestion of any kind. The pun is dropped (Se3C), (Pr3B). Salminen, on the other hand, has made an interesting choice to use the

phrase *olipa se musta tai muun värinen* and talking of colours in stead of handles. Today this translation might work on the same level as the original wordplay, since *black* is not a neutral word, but has connotations to racial issues and lower social class. But this was not the case in the 50's, and therefore Salminen's information change (Pr3) also results in dropping of the pun (Se3C) and omission of the wordplay (Pr3B).

In the following example, the pun has been lost in the older translation and retained in the more recent one.

Example 27.

ST: "But I don't like German. It isn't at all a becoming language. I know perfectly well that I look quite plain after my German lesson." p.114

TT1: "Mutta minä en pidä saksasta. Se on ikävä ja haukotuttava kieli. Saksan tunnin jälkeen olen aina harmaa ja ruma." p.24

TT2: "Mutta minä en pidä saksankielestä. Se on kieli joka ei pue ketään. Minä olen aina kaikkea muuta kuin kaunis saksantunnin jälkeen." p.43

In the source text, the word *becoming* has the double meaning of *appropriate*, 'sopiva' and *looking good on someone*, 'pukeva'. Salminen has paraphrased the sentence, changed the meaning altogether (Se1) and dropped the wordplay (Se3C) (Pr3B), whereas Juva has chosen to use the meaning 'pukeva' and managed to retain the wordplay, although not as obvious as in the source text (Se3A(i)). I think Juva has succeeded quite well, as her translation of the pun works on the abstract – concrete level. The sentence "*Se on kieli joka ei pue ketään*" contains the abstract meaning of the word and implies that German is not a very suitable language for anyone. The concrete meaning of the phrase is conveyed in the other sentence: "*Minä olen aina kaikkea muuta kuin kaunis saksantunnin jälkeen*". The pun is not as "strong" as in the ST, but it works in Finnish. Generally speaking, the strategy is that of cultural filtering: the wordplay has been brought into another language and culture.

Another way of translating the extract could have been the following, where the aspect of appropriateness would have been more clear:

“Mutta minä en pidä saksankielestä. Se on täysin sopimaton kieli, eikä sovi kenellekkään. Minä olen aina kaikkea muuta kuin kaunis saksantunnin jälkeen.”

In the following example both translators have changed the type of punning used in the wordplay: In the original text the pun is based on *hymonymy*, whereas in translations it is based on *paronymy*. By using this strategy (Se3A(ii)), the translators have succeeded to bring the wordplay into the target language and culture (Pr1), even though it may not be as clever as in the original.

Example 28.

ST: “I see no reason why our dear Cecily should not be even still more attractive at the age you mention than she is at present. There will be a large accumulation of *property*.” p.145

TT1: “En näe mitään syytä, miksei herttainen Cecily olisi nykyistäkin viehättävämpi teidän mainitsemassanne iässä. Puhumattakaan siitä, että hänen muut *ominai- ja omaisuutensa* ovat vain kasvaneet.” p.60

TT2: “En näe mitään syytä, miksi kallis Cecily ei olisi mainitsemassanne iässä vieläkin viehättävämpi kuin nyt. *Niin ominaisuudet kuin omaisuus* ovat vain karttuneet.” p.119

Sometimes the two-level meanings are attached to a wider entity. In the following example, the double meanings are associated with dental care, and thus the whole extract works on two overlapping levels.

Example 29.

ST: “*Algernon*: ...Come, old boy, *you had much better have the thing out at once*.”

Jack: My dear Algy, you talk exactly as if you were a dentist. It is very vulgar to talk like a dentist when one isn't a dentist. It produces a *false impression*.

Algernon: Well, that is exactly what dentists always do.” p.98

TT1: “*Algernon*: Kas niin, hyväveli, sylkäise se ulos suustasi.

Jack: Sinä puhut kuin hammaslääkäri ja on irvokasta puhua kuin hammaslääkäri kun ei kerran ole hammaslääkäri. Se johtaa harhateille.

Algernon: Eikö hammaslääkäri sitten johda.” p.7-8

TT2: “*Algernon*: Ulos vain, ei se koske.

Jack: Algy-hyvä, puhut kuin hammaslääkäri. On rahvaanomaista puhua kuin hammaslääkäri jos ei ole hammaslääkäri. Se luo kuvan joka ei vastaa todellisuutta.

Algernon: Aivan kuten hammaslääkärit tekevät.” p.111

Here the humour lies in the overlapping of double meanings. Grasping the wordplay is made easy, since it is actually explained to the recipients. That

creates part of the humour of the extract. When Algernon encourages Jack to open up, he speaks as a dentist could when pulling out a tooth. The pun *false impression*, in addition to its obvious meaning, ‘harhakäsitys’, can also be associated with false teeth.

This is an especially difficult extract to translate, since the wordplay is made obvious in the ST, and thus it should not be dropped. Secondly, the challenge lies in finding or creating matching wordplay in Finnish and make it fit with the explanations given to the wordplay in the text. The translations of the first line are both quite apt. Both “*sylkäise se ulos suustasi*” and “*Ulos vain, ei se koske.*” can be interpreted to mean telling the truth and pulling out a tooth. The strategy is cultural filtering (Pr1) realised with paraphrasing (Se1). The other pun, *false impression*, seems to have been more difficult. Both translators have dropped the wordplay (Se3C) (Pr3B). Unlike Salminen, Juva has succeeded in maintaining a connection between the pun and the explanation following it.

4.3 Allusive Wordplay

In addition to puns, Wilde uses a lot of allusive wordplay, modifying particularly old sayings and proverbs and also other linguistic “frames” in a way that makes them humorous. These are a challenge for a translator, since similar sayings and other frames do not always exist in the target language, and even if they do, the wordplay might not function as well as it does in the source text.

The following is an example of allusive wordplay in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Wilde has used an epigram: he has reversed the saying “*Two is company, three is a crowd*” to quite the opposite of the familiar and expected. There is a similar saying in Finnish: “*Kaksin aina kaunihimpi*”, which Juva has quite cleverly used as a basis for conveying the wordplay to the Finnish audience.

Example 30.

ST: "...in married life three is company and two is none." p.100

TT1: "...avioliitossa kaksi ei ole mitään ja vasta kolmannen ilmestyminen antaa sille väriä ja eloa." p.10

TT2: "...naimisissa on kolmin aina kaunihimpi, kaks ei ihan piisaa." p.16

Juva has paraphrased the proverb (Se1) and used cultural filtering (Pr1) by finding a Finnish saying, a frame that corresponds to the English one and evokes a similar degree of familiarity in a Finnish audience that the English does in an English audience. She has reversed the Finnish saying to mean the opposite of the original, just as Wilde has done. Salminen's strategy is explicitness change (Pr2A) realised by paraphrasing (Se1): She has made the saying more explicit by simply explaining it rather than trying to convey it and the wordplay into Finnish.

A similar kind of epigram can be seen in the following example. Wilde has twisted the frame, the conventional expression that the receivers would have expected, into its opposite. The conventional phrase "*Marriages are made in heaven*" has become "*Divorces are made in heaven*". With this epigram Wilde ridicules the morals and values of the society of the time.

Example 31.

ST: "Divorces are made in Heaven –" p.96

TT1: "Avioerot päätetään taivaassa –" p.5

TT2: "Avioliitot puretaan taivaassa –" p.7

Both translators have translated this allusive wordplay quite directly, only choosing another verb in place of *made*. The strategy in both cases can be categorised as minimum change (Pr5), realised by paraphrasing (Se1). Allusive wordplay of the same degree as in the original could have been created for example by using the Finnish expression *taivaan lahja*, the translation thus being: *Avioero on taivaan lahja*.

One typical feature of Wilde's allusive wordplay is the creation of paradoxes by twisting conventional linguistic frames. His paradoxes can thus be seen as a specific type of epigram, the meaning of which is to awaken an association of two contradictory ideas in one statement, and challenge or ridicule conventions, or present new ways of looking at them.

Example 32.

ST: "The truth is rarely pure and never simple." p.99

TT1: "Totuus on harvoin puhdas eikä koskaan yksinkertainen." p.9

TT2: "Totuus on harvoin puhdas eikä koskaan yksinkertainen." p.13

In the example above, the familiar frame, the expression "*the truth pure and simple*" has been turned into a paradox and brought into new light by questioning its contents. There is no exactly analogous expression in Finnish, but particularly the adjective 'puhdas' in the same sense as 'pure' is commonly used in association with 'totuus' ('the truth'). Both the translators have translated the paradox literally (Sy1) with minimum change (Pr5), with the result that the paradox is more lame than in the original.

The following extract is another example of Wilde's paradoxes. Here the familiar idiom is "*washing one's dirty linen in public*", which means that you disapprove of someone discussing or arguing about unpleasant or private things in front of others.

Example 33.

ST: "The amount of women in London who flirt with their own husbands is perfectly scandalous. It looks so bad. *It is simply washing one's clean linen in public.*" p.100

TT1: "Kun flirttaa oman miehensä kanssa *on se sama kun pesisi likaisia vaatteitaan julkisesti* -" p.9

TT2: "Niiden naisten määrä Lontoossa jotka hakkailevat omaa miestään on täysin säädytön. Se ei näytä hyvältä. *Kuin pesisi puhdasta pyykkiä julkisesti.*" p.15

Wilde has made the familiar frame into a paradox, i.e. to imply disapproval of showing marital happiness and mutual appreciation of fondness in public. There is a similar linguistic frame to the English one in Finnish: "*pestä*

likapyykkinsä julkisuudessa". This is not, however, as commonly used as the English one and could very likely be a loan from English. This is probably one reason why the translations are not very successful in conveying the wit and humour of the paradox. In TT2 the translation, although literal (Sy1), is filtered into the Finnish culture (Pr1), using the familiar frame. In TT1 the translator has used a surprising strategy of replacing the originally reversed word with its antonym and thus reversing the proverb back to its conventional form. Salminen has changed the adjective that is crucial for the creation of the original paradox. She has missed the point and omitted the allusive wordplay (Pr3B). Even the Finnish frame has been excluded altogether with choosing the word *vaatteet* in stead of *pyykki*. All this results in a target text that is neither witty nor funny.

The following is an example of making a paradox by taking advantage of both the figurative and the literal interpretation of a phrase:

Example 34.

ST: "*Cecily*: This is no time for wearing the shallow mask of manners. When I see a spade I call it a spade.

Gwendolen (satirically): I am glad to say I have never seen a spade. It is obvious that our social spheres have been widely different." p.131

TT1: "*Cecily*: Tällaisena hetkenä ei naisen enää tarvitse pitää seuranaamiota kasvoillaan. Valakkaa on sanottava valakaksi.

Gwendolen: (ivallisesti) En edes tiedä, mikä valakka on. On aivan ilmeistä, että olemme liikkuneet hyvin erilaisissa piireissä." p.44

TT2: "Tällaisessa tilanteessa totuuden puhuminen ei ole vain ihmisen moraalinen velvollisuus. Minä kutsun lapiota lapioksi kun sellaisen näen.

Gwendolen: Minä voin ilokseni kertoa että en ole koskaan nähnyt lapiota. Me liikumme nähtävästi aivan eri piireissä." p.93-94

The phrase "*to call a spade a spade*" means speaking frankly and directly, often about unpleasant subjects. *Gwendolen* succeeds in her verbal duel with *Cecily* by interpreting the phrase literally and taking the interpretation to her advantage. There is no similar saying in Finnish, which makes the translation difficult.

Neither of the translators has come up with a very clever way to compensate the wordplay and succeed in finding a Finnish frame around which to build

wordplay. Juva has kept to the original, translating the wordplay literally (Sy1) with minimum changes (Pr5). She has used explicitation (Pr2A) in the first sentence, possibly to make the translation of the following phrase make a little more sense. The phrase “*kutsun lapiota lapioksi kun sellaisen näen*” only has a concrete meaning and thus does not work as wordplay. In fact, it is quite a strange remark in the context and might cause puzzlement in the audience. Since Juva’s translation does not work on the abstract level of being a figurative phrase, the translation strategy also involves changes in abstraction (Se2).

Salminen’s translation is a bit better, for she has disregarded the meaning of the word *spade* and replaced it with a Finnish word ‘valakka’, that stands for ‘gelding’. By doing this and also changing Gwendolen’s next line, the whole phrase “*valakkaa on sanottava valakaksi*” does not seem detached from the context. It sounds like a real Finnish saying, maybe because the word *valakka* is old-fashioned. However it does not work similarly as a basis for paradox as the original phrase does, since it is not a familiar frame, but a new, invented one. Then again, the frame might have been more familiar in Salminen’s time. The translation of the wordplay is a result of paraphrasing (Se1), and at least an attempt to bring it to the target culture (Pr1).

Wilde has often created his paradoxes with very small changes to the familiar frame, so that the frame stays easily recognisable. This is the case in the following example.

Example 35.

ST: “Literary criticism is not your forte, my dear fellow. Don’t try it. You should leave that to people who haven’t been at a University. They do it so well in the daily papers.” p.99

TT1: “Kirjallisuuden arvosteleminen ei ole sinun vahvoja puoliasi. Jätä se kouluja käymättömille.” p.9

TT2: “Kirjallisuuskritiikki ei ole sinun vahva puolesi, hyvä mies. Älä edes yritä. Jätä se ihmisille jotka eivät ole opiskelleet yliopistossa. Heiltä se sujuu mainiosti päivälehtien palstoilla.” p.13

Here the familiar frame is “*to leave something to people who have been at a University.*” It has been made into a paradox by adding negation. This makes the whole remark funny. In TT1, a corresponding Finnish frame, “*jättää jokin kouluja käyneille*”, has been used in a similar way to create a paradox (Pr1). For some reason the last line has been left out, thus making the wordplay more implicit (Pr2B). In TT2, the translation is literal (Sy1) (Pr5) and the allusive wordplay is omitted (Pr3B). On the other hand, the line is still funny, and thus the skopos – the humorous effect – is maintained.

In addition to the pun, example 1 (discussed above on page 37) also contains allusive wordplay which has been realised by using part of the allusion as a pun: the word *cards* in the clause “*It (the name Jack) is on your cards.*”

Example 1.

ST: “You have always told me it was Ernest. I have introduced you to everyone as Ernest. You answer to the name of Ernest. You look as if your name was Ernest. You are the most earnest-looking person I ever saw in my life. It is perfectly absurd your saying that your name isn’t Ernest. *It’s on your cards.* Here is one of them. (*Taking it from case.*) ‘Mr. Ernest Worthing, B. 4, The Albany.’ I’ll keep this as a proof that your name is Ernest if ever you attempt to deny it to me, or to Gwendolen, or to anyone else.” p.98

TT1: “Mutta minulle sinä sanoit, että se on Ernest ja Ernestinä kaikki ystävänikin sinut tuntevat. Ja aivan Ernestin näköinenkin sinä olet. Älä siis väitä vastaan. (ottaa kortin taskustaan) Tässä on sinun käyntikorttisi ja siihen on painettu “Ernest Worthing”. Pidän tämän todistuksena, jos vielä yrität minulle tai Gwendolenille tai muille väittää, ettet ole Ernest.” p.7

TT2: “Minulle sinä olet aina sanonut että nimesi on Uno. Minä olen esitellyt sinut kaikille Unona. Sinä tottelet nimeä Uno. Näytät Unolta. En ole eläissäni nähnyt uunomman näköistä ihmistä. On täysin mieletöntä väittää että nimesi ei ole Uno. *Nimi on käyntikorteissasi.* Tässä on yksi. (Ottaa rasiasta) “Herra Uno Worthing, B 4 Albany.” Minä säilytän tämän todistuskappaleena siitä, että nimesi on Uno, siltä varalta että yrität väittää toista minulle tai Gwendolenille tai kenelle hyvänsä.” p.11

This phrase is a familiar expression and hearing it brings an English speaking person to think about fate; a similar expression in Finnish could be something like “*se on kirjoitettu tähtiin*”. But the following happenings in the play, Algernon pulling out Jack’s visiting card and stating that there is one of them, make the audience realise the double meaning and see the humour in the wordplay. Translating this is naturally challenging, since there is no similar

expression in Finnish that could be used similarly. Therefore it is no wonder that both translators have left the wordplay out and translated *cards* as 'käyntikortit', thus omitting the pun (Se3D) and the allusive wordplay (Pr3B). The wordplay is not crucial, but it adds to the wittiness and humour of the play.

4.3.1 Marginal Allusive Wordplay

Some of the frames used in the creation of humour by Wilde are not prototypical allusive frames, but they are combinations of words and meanings that are normally used in a certain way within a culture. Whereas prototypical allusions are clear references to pre-formed linguistic frames, e.g. sayings or poems, there are also allusions in which the frames are more vague. Since there is no strict categorisation of allusions, I will call this kind of allusions marginal allusions and include wordplay based on them here.

The following is an example of marginal allusive wordplay, the aim of which is to create a paradox. It is again the linguistic frame that has been modified in a funny way to make the meanings contradictory to conventions. In this case the frame is just a link between a couple of words and their meanings and not a saying or other wider linguistic entity.

Example 36.

ST: "The old-fashioned respect for the young is fast dying out." p.111

TT1: "----"

TT2: "Vanhan hyvän ajan kunnioitus nuoria kohtaan on uhkaavasti hupenemassa." p.38

Here the expected line would most likely have been "*respect for the old*", but Wilde has reversed it. The whole sentence has been left out by Salminen (Pr3B), but translated with paraphrasing by Juva (Se1). I think Juva's translation conveys the same paradox and thus can be categorised as cultural filtering (Pr1).

The following two examples present similar kind of wordplay: contradiction of the conventional by turning the meaning of the word to its opposite with a small change in the form. The wordplay is realised by adding negation to the expected and conventional form of the word in the context.

Example 37.

(Lady Bracknell talking of her husband)

ST: "I do not propose to undeceive him. Indeed, I have never undeceived him on any question. I would consider it wrong." p.140

TT1: "En aio avata hänen silmiään. En ole koskaan paljastanut hänelle totuutta missään asiassa. Se olisi minusta väärin." p.54

TT2: "Aikomukseni ei ole riistää häneltä tätä käsitystä. Totta puhuen en ole koskaan riistänyt häneltä mitään käsitystä. Minusta se olisi väärin." p.111

There is no one equivalent word for *undeceive* in Finnish. Salminen has used paraphrasing (Se1). Here the second sentence of TT1 implies that lady Bracknell does not only hide the truth from her husband in matters he has a false assumption of, but also in all other matters as well. Juva, on the other hand, has found quite an effective expression, *riistää käsitys*, which at the same time conveys the meaning of the ST and the fact that Lady Bracknell considers undeceiving a similar kind of wrong as deceiving. I categorise Juva's strategy as cultural filtering (Pr1).

Example 38.

ST: "Now produce your explanation, and pray make it improbable." p.99

TT1: "Ja koeta nyt keksiä uskottava selitys." p.8

TT2: "Ja nyt sinä puolestasi annat selityksen ja katsokin että se on epäuskottava." p.12

Here the wordplay lies again on reversing the expected expression with adding a negation to the word *probable*. Salminen has translated the sentence dropping the wordplay altogether, producing the Finnish conventional expression instead (Pr3B). Juva's translation is literal (Sy1), but conveys the wordplay (Pr1).

4.4 Imagery

As mentioned before, I do not delimit the concept of wordplay very strictly but include into its definition all kinds of humorous and witty effects realised by playing with language. For Wilde, one way of creating wordplay is to use funny and witty imagery. The following is an example of such in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

Example 39.

ST: "Ignorance is like a delicate exotic fruit; touch it and the bloom is gone."
p.106

TT1: "Viattomuus on kuin hauras kukka – koske siihen ja sen tuoksu on mennyttä." p.16

TT2: "Tietämättömyys on kuin herkkä ja eksoottinen hedelmä, jos siihen koskee kun se vasta kukkii, se kuolee." p.26

I think Salminen has managed to bring the simile into the Finnish culture and keep it apt. Her strategy is cultural filtering realised by retaining the semantic trope (Se3A(i)), not semantically identical but adapted to fit into the target culture. For example, '*exotic fruit*' has been changed into '*flower*', since Finns rarely see exotic fruits blooming. Also 'ignorance' has been translated as '*viattomuus*', which better fits the simile in the minds of the Finns as the literal translation '*tietämättömyys*' would. Juva, on the other hand, has used the strategy of minimum change (Pr5) with paraphrasing (Se1), which is not as apt in my opinion.

Wilde's character Reverend Chasuble likes to speak eloquently, but sometimes his attempts cause embarrassment and confusion in his listeners and amusement in the audience, since they are not quite comprehended by his listeners, as in the following:

Example 40.

ST: "Were I fortunate enough to be Miss Prism's student, I would hang upon her lips, (MISS PRISM glares.) I spoke metaphorically. – My metaphor was drawn from bees." p.116

TT1: "Jos minä olisin neiti Primsin oppilas, niin suorastaan riippuisin hänen huulissaan – Öhöm, niin minä puhun kuvaannollisesti. Ajattelin kukkia ja mehiläisiä." p.26

TT2: "Jos minulla olisi onni olla neiti Prismin oppilas, minä imisin kaiken mitä hänen huuliltaan lähtee. (Neiti Prism tuijottaa silmät pyöreinä) Tarkoitin kuvaannollisesti. Kuvani oli peräisin mehiläisten maailmasta." p.46

In TT1 the metaphor is translated quite literally (Sy1) (Pr5), whereas in TT2 it has been brought into a form that seems familiar to the Finnish audience (Pr1), i.e. bees drinking honey from flowers. Again, the trope has been maintained semantically related (Se3A(ii)). Of course some of the humour of this line lies in the innuendo of the last sentence.

Example 41.

ST: "*Chasuble*: But is a man not equally attractive when married?

Miss Prism: No married man is ever attractive except to his wife.

Chasuble: And often, I've been told, not even to her.

Miss Prism: That depends on the intellectual sympathies of the woman. Maturity can always be depended on. *Ripeness can be trusted. Young women are green.* (DR CHASUBLE starts.) I spoke horticulturally. My metaphor was drawn from fruits." p.119

TT1: "*Kirkkoherra*: Mutta eikö naimisissa oleva mies ole yhtä houkutteleva?

Prims: Kyllä, mutta hänellä on vaimo.

Kirkkoherra: Joka puolestaan ei ymmärrä miehen arvoa – niin on minulle kerrottu.

Prims: Se riippuu vaimon älyllisistä ominaisuuksista. Kehittyneeseen naiseen voi aina luottaa. Kypsynyt nainen takaa varmuuden avioliitossakin. Nuoret naiset ovat kovia vihreitä, raakoja. KIRKKOHERRA säpsähtää) Niin, minä puhun kuvaannollisesti. Otan vertauskuvani kasvikunnasta." p.30

TT2: "*Chasuble*: Eikö mies ole yhtä haluttava ukkomiehenä?

Neiti Prism: Ukkomies ei koskaan ole haluttava muiden kuin vaimonsa silmissä.

Chasuble: Eikä kuulemma usein hänenkään.

Neiti Prism: Se riippuu siitä mikä naista kiinnostaa. Varttuneeseen voi luottaa. Kypsä nainen katsoo mitä miehen päässä liikkuu. Nuoren naisen kiinnostus on alemmalla tasolla. (Pastori CHASUBLE hätkähtää) Tarkoitin kuvaannollisesti." p.54

Example 41 includes another one of unsuccessful metaphors by Wilde's characters. The metaphor also contains a pun, the word 'green', having the connotation of *inexperienced*. Salminen has stuck to the original too tightly in TT1, although there has been some attempt in the addition of the words 'kova' and 'raaka', which both can be associated as well with fruits as with people. The pragmatic strategy used is that of explicitness change and information

change: In addition to the additions mentioned above (Pr3A), the metaphor has been made more explicit by adding the word ‘*nainen*’ in it (Pr2A).

Juva has realised that a literal translation would not produce a very clever metaphor in Finnish, and consequently she has made the metaphor more catching by changing the semantics of Miss Prism’s last line. She has created a new metaphor, which is not semantically related to the original (Se3A(iii)), but works well in the target culture. Here the metaphor is more daring, referring to sexual matters, which is typical in Finland in the 1990’s. In this way, Juva has made the wordplay effective in the world of the target culture using cultural filtering (Pr1).

4.5 Other Wordplay

In addition to puns, allusive and metaphoric wordplay, Wilde has used some other means to play on language as well. In the next example, wordplay is based on meanings and creation of a new word.

Example 42.

ST: “You are too much alone, dear Dr Chasuble. You should get married. A misanthrophe I can understand – a womantrophe, never!” p.119

TT1: “Olette aivan liian paljon yksin, rakas kirkkoherra. Teidän pitäisi mennä naimisiin. Miehen ei ole hyvä olla yksin, sanoo raamattukin.” p.29

TT2: “Te vietätte liikaa aikaa yksinänne, hyvä pastori. Teidän pitäisi mennä naimisiin. Misanthropian vielä ymmärrän – mutta naistropiaa en mitenkään!” p.53

The word *womantrophe* is created following the structure of the word *misanthrophe*, and the humour lies in the creation of a new word and meaning, which are derived from the old ones. In TT1, the translator has used paraphrasing (Se1) when translating the wordplay. She has translated freely to be able to convey the meaning of the sentence. Salminen has chosen a familiar biblical frame as the translation. It serves its purpose in conveying the meaning, but not in creating humour (Pr3B). As the biblical sentence is an allusion, Salminen could have created allusive wordplay by altering it in an amusing way. In TT2, Juva has maintained the wordplay by translating literally

(Sy1), but leaving the word *misanthropie* in its loan word form *misanthropia*, not translating it as ‘ihmisviha’. The word *naistropia* is formed in a similar way as in the source text. In this way, the wordplay functions in Finnish and for the Finnish audience as well, and the strategy can be categorised as cultural filtering (Pr1).

Wordplay based on creating new words and meanings from the old ones can be seen in the following example as well:

Example 43.

ST: “The sprinkling, and, indeed, the immersion of adults is a perfectly canonical practise.” p.121

TT2: “Minä en missään tapauksessa ole mikään kiihkeä pedobaptisti. Aikuisten pirkottaminen ja upottaminenkin oli täysin tavallinen tapa alkukirkossa.” p.58

This is an example where the translator has made an effort to compensate the lost wordplay in the translation. When wordplay is impossible to maintain in a target text, it can be added somewhere else where the translator can see an opportunity for that. In this way the general level of humour could be better maintained. Juva has created wordplay with the means of the target language (Pr1) by adding a phrase of her own into the text (Pr3A) and inventing a new word *pedobaptisti*. The first part ‘pedo-’ comes from the word ‘pedofiili’ and thus means something that prefers children. The new word *pedopabtisti* fits splendidly into the context where Jack wants to be rechristened, and is bound to cause amusement in the audience.

5. DISCUSSION

“Consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative.”

– Oscar Wilde –

I have calculated the local strategies used in the two translations into the following table. The first figure shows the number of times the strategy in

question appears in the analysed material, and the second figure (in brackets) shows the strategy's percentage of the total number of strategies used. It is important to present these both, since several strategies are often used together as a solution to one translation problem, and thus the total number of strategies used is not the same in the two translations.

Table 1.

Strategy	Salminen	Juva
Pr1 (Cultural Filtering)	14 (16,1 %)	26 (25 %)
Pr2A (Explicitation)	2 (2,3 %)	2 (1,9 %)
Pr2B (Implication)	1 (1,1 %)	-
Pr3A (Addition)	4 (4,6 %)	1 (1 %)
Pr3B (Omission)	19 (21,8 %)	12 (11,7 %)
Pr4 (Interpersonal Change)	1 (1,1 %)	-
Pr5 (Minimum Change)	8 (9,2 %)	12 (11,7 %)
Sy1 (Literal Translation)	6 (6,9 %)	13 (12,6 %)
Sy2 (Other Syntactic Strategies)	-	1 (1 %)
Se1 (Paraphrasing)	10 (11,5 %)	8 (7,8 %)
Se2 (Abstraction Change)	-	1 (1 %)
Se3A (ST Trope X → TT Trope X)	8 (9,2 %)	13 (12,6 %)
Se3B (ST Trope X → TT Trope Y)	-	-
Se3C (ST Trope X → TT Trope -)	12 (13,8 %)	10 (9,7 %)
Se3D (ST Trope → TT Trope X)	2 (2,3 %)	4 (3,9 %)
Total	87 (100 %)	103 (100 %)

As can be seen in the table, the total number of strategies used is greater in Juva's translation. Largely this results from the fact that she has used more compensatory wordplay in her translation than Salminen. In case of compensatory wordplay, I have only taken into account the strategies used in the translation that has created new wordplay and not included the same extract in the other translation. This is because the aim of my analysis was to look at the strategies used in translating wordplay in particular, and calculating strategies in both translations in cases like these would have distorted the

figures. Juva has also used several strategies at the same time somewhat more often than Salminen.

The greatest differences between the translations can be seen in the use of pragmatic strategies, which are most relevant for reasoning the general strategy. Juva's most common pragmatic strategy is cultural filtering, whereas Salminen has most often omitted wordplay. This is particularly omission of the wordplay in sentences, not the whole text. Total omission of text occurs only twice. Since punning is not as common in Finnish as it is in English, omission of wordplay has in fact the same function as cultural filtering: it makes the language of the play more familiar to the audience. The only loss is in the extent of humour. Salminen has also used cultural filtering quite often, like Juva has omitted wordplay.

Quite surprisingly, Juva has also used minimum change very often. She has not once used total omission of text. She has tried to stick to the original as much as it has been possible, considering the type of text translated. This shows that cultural filtering and minimum change do not necessarily exclude one another. Juva has successfully translated a lot of wordplay using these both strategies at the same time. This shows the similarity between the Finnish and the British culture on a general level, i.e. they both belong to the western culture with common features and knowledge. Therefore big changes are not always required to make the text culturally apt in translations.

Naturally minimum change does not always function in adapting the text into Finnish and in these cases literal translation diminishes fluency. Therefore it is quite surprising that both translators have used minimum change so frequently. Juva, who at times has made very creative translations for wordplay, or created new puns, has translated word for word in other cases where more flexibility would have been required. This strengthens Vermeer's (1998: 56) idea that translators still hold on to the original text too tightly, thus affecting the smoothness and suitability of the text in its target culture. This seems to be the case also with some theatre texts, although Aaltonen (2000: 76) suggests that fidelity to the original is more a convention of other literary translation than

theatre. In many particularly challenging cases where corresponding wordplay could not be created, Juva has used minimum change, whereas Salminen has paraphrased and made the sentence more natural in the target language.

As suggested by Toury (1995) and Chesterman (1993), norms affect translation strategies. This can be detected in Juva's and Salminen's strategies as well. Even though conventions of the theatre value creativity and flexibility, general translational norms also still direct the translator towards faithfulness to the original. In places, the translators seem to be too tightly tied to the source text. It is known that Juva has not specialised in theatre translation but is best known as an esteemed translator of novels. As even today very few translators get their living entirely with drama translation, I assume that Salminen was probably not specialised entirely in it either. Therefore the norms of literary translation might have affected their translations, and resulted in the frequency of minimum change. Different expectations from different directions may have caused the duplex solutions, cultural filtering on one hand, and minimum change on the other. Using Chesterman's (1993) concepts, the familiar professional norms guiding translation processes may have been different from the expectancy norms of the theatre, and the translators unsure of the relation norm appropriate in the context, i.e. what type and degree of equivalence to strive for.

I think that Manini's (1996) idea of concluding the general translation strategy from the strategies in translating wordplay works well in my material. On the basis of the local strategies used in translating Wilde's wordplay, a general strategy can be detected in both Salminen's and Juva's translations. Since the most commonly used strategies in both translations are omission and cultural filtering, only with slightly different emphasis, their general strategy, according to Aaltonen's (2000) categorisation, is the same: adaptation. Neither translation is just an imitation of the original (imitation) nor an exact copy of it with retained foreign features (reverence), but a translation that has brought the text in most part into the Finnish culture. Features that have seemed impossible to translate have been omitted and, when possible, corresponding Finnish expressions have been used, and thus the text has been integrated to the target

system. As Aaltonen suggests, adaptation is the most applicable strategy in drama translation.

Neither of the translations is totally adapted, as they have also retained much of the original with literal translation. This strengthens Aaltonen's (2000) view of the general strategies as a continuum. I also think that both translations lack consistency at times, as their general strategy is adaptation but at times clearly awkward direct translations or loans have been used. This reduces the quality of the translations, and strengthens Jänis's (1996) findings that the majority of drama translators still strive for fidelity too much on the cost of fluency. The more the translator sticks to his/her general strategy in all his/her decisions, i.e. the more consistent he/she is, the better the translation works for its purpose. Neither of the translations is entirely consistent in its strategy, even though the main course is adaptation.

The forty-year distance between the translations, as well as the cultural rapprochement of the Finnish and the British culture, can be detected in the strategies. In many cases where Salminen has used omission or some other strategy making the text acceptable to Finns, Juva has gained the same result by making as little alterations as possible. This shows how the rapprochement of the western countries during the forty years has also made cultures more universal. According to Aaltonen's (2000) division of adaptation into subcategories of acculturation and naturalisation, Salminen's general strategy seems to be more towards naturalisation, bringing culture-specific issues into the target culture, and Juva's towards acculturation, where culture-specific issues are made more universal. Both these general tendencies have worked best in their own times.

One interesting exception to Salminen's general strategy of adaptation and naturalisation is the maintenance of the name Ernest in the translation. This has not been a very successful choice, since the play loses much of its funniness as a result. Only people who know English well enough are able to see the wordplay of the original, but only if they happen to think about the play's English origins. This is naturally not good enough. A play translated into

Finnish must function in Finnish. This target language orientation is particularly important in drama, since the receivers must be able to understand everything on one hearing.

Additionally, at the time Salminen's translation was made, people's knowledge of English was poor compared with today. Today, humour based on understanding English could be created, if that was the aim of the play, and its target receivers were fairly young and educated people. In Salminen's translation this could not have been the case. I agree with Manini (1996:173) in that translation of meaningful names is expected of translated drama, even more likely than of other kind of translated literature. It is an interesting question why Salminen has decided to leave the name in its original English form.

One possible explanation for Salminen's maintenance of the main character's name, as well as for the frequency of literal translation in both translations, can be found in Aaltonen's (2000) model. The answer is reverence, the prestige given to the original text and culture, in this case probably the well-known author and his most successful play. Since Wilde is known for his verbal mastery, the translators have not perhaps dared to change the text so drastically as it could have been changed if the author was less familiar or less esteemed. As the name Ernest is the central theme of the original play, Salminen has possibly thought that it can not be changed. Ironically, because of this, there is no central theme recreated in the translation. This is an example of the lack of the general strategy's consistency resulting in poor translation results.

According to Aaltonen (2000), high regard for the original is typical for theatre systems in their early stages, and therefore it is more surprising that also Juva has in places stuck to the source text so tightly.

However, despite the inconsistencies, both translators' initial orientation is towards the target text and the target culture. For the most part the translations have omitted things that have been thought impossible to convey to the target recipients, made compensation to omission, and when possible, filtered the text

into the Finnish culture with required alterations. This means that both translations are mostly covert ones, strengthening the acceptability of the target text in its target culture. The kind of equivalence between the source and the target texts is in both cases functional for the most part. Humour plays a central role in the original play, and both Salminen and Juva have tried to maintain humorous features even though that has required changes to the text.

The results of this study verify Reiss and Vermeer's (1986) ideas of the importance of the translation's purpose for the chosen strategies. Both Finnish translations of Wilde's play have been translated to be spoken, to attract audience, to arouse amusement, to fit the language, the recipient's picture of the world and the time. These aims have naturally guided translational solutions.

Creation of humour and wit is the *skopos* of Wilde's original play. The translations have got the same *skopos* – they are supposed to make people laugh and enjoy themselves. Only the recipients are different in all versions: Britons of the 1890's, Finns of the 1950's and Finns of the 1990's. Each time and culture has its ideas of what is humorous and what can be ridiculed, and each version of the play has used the conventions of its time to create humour. Both Salminen and Juva have considered the limits of good taste against the time of translation. Theatre texts and especially comedies need to be up-to-date. In this way the *skopos* of humour has directed the general strategy used. As humour is language and culture-bound, puns and other humour have had to be adapted into Finnish. I think Juva has succeeded better in this task and used her creativity more; she has created more compensatory wordplay and omitted wordplay less often than Salminen.

Another aim, *skopos* of the original play is to ridicule the society and morals of the Britain of the 1890's, to make people realise the distortions of the time and the culture. This aim is not retained in the translations, since the Finns of the 1950's or 1990's have little connection to the British society of the 1890's. The play is translated as merely a comedy and not an insight to the Britain of the 1890's. Issues that are comments on the British society in the source text are

not presented as such in the translations. The skopos of attacking the society and morals has not been adapted to aim at the Finnish society either. In both translations the main purpose is to create amusement, not social awareness. This shows that the skopos of the translation is not, and does not have to be the same as the original's.

One purpose common to all the versions of the play is performability, since they all have been produced for performance. The language used in both translations is common language, the importance of which on theatre translation is highlighted by many translators of drama, e.g. Juva herself (in Aaltonen 1996). The requirement of common language is probably one of the reasons for the new Finnish version of the play in the 1990's. In forty years, language and its use changes. Juva's version is written in the language of today, whereas Salminen's language is more old-fashioned. They are both written for the audiences of their time. At places literal translation reduces the fluency of language, and this implies that the translators have not been entirely capable of breaking away from the idea of faithfulness as one aim of their translation.

As drama translation is an expressive text, the aim of which is also to convey analogous artistry to the original, one requirement of the context of the theatre for translation is preservation of the rhythms underlying the source text. This is something I am not able to evaluate in Juva's and Salminen's translations, but it seems to me that Wilde's play is very fast in tempo and the same feature can be detected when studying translations of verbal play. The quick tempo adds to the humour, and especially Juva's additions, creation of Finnish puns or alliteration where similar-sounding words are repeated, indicate a quick tempo.

Although the skopos has obviously had influence on both translations, it could have been considered even more and kept as a guideline throughout the translation processes. This would have loosened the wish to translate word for word at times. I think a translator must consciously keep the skopos in mind all the time, since it determines the general strategy, and this would help to keep it consistent.

Both skopos and norms have an effect on translation strategies. Which one is more important, is a many-sided question. On one hand, norms can not be forgotten in translation, since people have certain expectations for the translated texts, and if they are disregarded altogether, the translation may have an unfavourable reception. On the other hand, norms should not guide translators too tightly on the cost of the fulfilment of the translation's aim.

In a way the skopos theory itself includes the idea of cultural norms as well, as it suggests that such translation strategies should be used that best help to achieve the intended purpose of the translation. Depending on the case and the recipients, this may require a translation that conforms to the norms of the culture. I think it is just a question of what is understood as norms. Chesterman's (1993) concept of relation norms that case-specifically determine the appropriate type of equivalence to strive for would suit the ideas of skopos theory. However, as the skopos theorists suggest, norms often affect translations in a way that they prevent the realisation of the intended purpose. This can be seen in the inconsistency of Juva and Salminen's general translation strategies from time to time. What is expected of translation in general, i.e. that it is the same text in another language, without any changes, sometimes overrides the purpose of the translation in question, resulting in literal translation. This weakens the quality of the translations.

On the basis of my study, I believe that the skopos theory applies particularly well for drama translation. I agree with the skopos theorists that the aim of the translation should be the first thing to guide the chosen strategies. Of course the translator can never be totally independent of the governing principles of the target culture, but as long as the aim is kept as the priority, the translation should be consistent in strategy and good in quality.

6. CONCLUSION

“Now produce your explanation, and pray make it improbable.”

– Oscar Wilde –

The aim of this study was to detect the general strategies behind the two Finnish translations of Oscar Wilde’s play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, find reasons for the strategies used, and compare the translations with each other. The general strategies were deduced from the local strategies used in translating wordplay, i.e. the actual translation solutions the translators had made. Chesterman’s (1997) model for local translation strategies was applied, as well as Aaltonen’s (2000) categorisation of general translation strategies.

There were slight differences in the use of local strategies between the translations: Salminen (1957) used omission of wordplay most often, whereas Juva (1995) most frequently filtered the wordplay into the target culture, making it work for the target audience. Juva’s strategies were more creative and retained the humour better. The general strategy behind both translations was the same, however: Both were adaptations, where the original text was translated in a way that source-culture-specific issues were toned down for the most part, and the translation was made understandable for the recipients it was meant for. Only the means for achieving this were somewhat different.

My results strengthen Aaltonen’s (2000) proposition that adaptation is the most applicable general translation strategy for drama. Theatre is very culture-bound, and the texts have to be easily understandable for the audience, since the audience can not stop or go back if they do not understand something straight away. The time difference between the translations can be seen in the fact that Salminen’s adaptation is mostly acculturation and Juva’s naturalisation. This means that whereas Salminen has brought culture-bound issues into the Finnish context, Juva has made them more universal, and both

tendencies function well in their time. This shows the rapprochement of the western cultures during these forty years.

Neither of the translators was completely consistent in her general strategy, however. In some places where flexibility would have caused better results, both of them translated unnecessarily faithfully. This is a common phenomenon in translation, and partly explained by the emphasis given to translational norms that control the acceptable and expected way of translating.

According to the skopos theorists, who emphasise the purpose and aim of translation as the primary guiding principle for the strategies used, norms need not be considered too much in translation. I think this applies well at least in drama translation, where the dramatisation, context, time, target audience, and even the restrictions of staging etc. affect the translation. Norms can naturally be defined in many ways, but I understand them here as the silent rules of translation. If Salminen and Juva had forgotten the norms and kept the skopos in mind all the time, both Finnish translators would have succeeded better in maintaining their general strategy and thus consistency of the whole translation.

As suggested by the skopos theory, many of the reasons for the strategies used could also be found from the purpose of the translations. These included creation of amusement in the recipients of their time, performability and thus common language, as well as maintenance of analogous artistry to the original, as they both are expressive text types, drama scripts.

I think it is important to look at the reasons behind the strategies, as I have done in this study, because knowing them helps us to understand the motives that direct translation. These motives are not always very conscious and sometimes norms direct us even without noticing. Therefore it is important to make translators see and consider the reasons behind their strategies more closely. This helps translators to stick first and foremost to the skopos of the translation. I believe that the skopos theory is the most applicable translation theory, since the starting point in it is always the target text, consideration of

the reason and purpose for which it is translated. That purpose determines the way in which the translation is realised in each case. The skopos theory does not exclude literal translation either, since sometimes the purpose for which a text is translated may require literal translation.

A problem in my study was the model for strategy classification that did not apply equally well for all kinds of wordplay. It was best suitable for puns, and not so applicable for analysing allusive wordplay. A better and perhaps still more simplified model for analysis could be generated to achieve more clarity.

Another important question still remains: how have the translations functioned in practise, as performances? They might have been modified in parts to fit the mouths of the actors better, or for some other reason. Information on these changes would be interesting, as the performed version of the translation is the actual target text that the recipient will hear and the translation can not really be evaluated without knowing the final version. Therefore a study where a performance could be recorded and the research done based on this, would be significant.

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APPENDIX

THE LIFE OF OSCAR WILDE

*”One has to be serious about something,
if one wants to have any amusement in life.”*

– Oscar Wilde –

As well as being a gifted novelist, conversationalist, author of several witty plays, poems and children’s stories, Oscar Wilde is probably best known for his colourful personality and lifestyle, which in the end cost him his luxurious life, reputation and career and forced him to die bankrupt and alone. Wilde’s life and work have inspired several biographers even in the recent years, for example Coackley 1994, Knox 1994, Nicholls 1980.

Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills Wilde was born on 16 October 1854 in Dublin as a second son of Sir William Wilde and Jane “Speranza” Francesca Elgee. His parents were far from a typical Irish family, his father an intelligent surgeon, writer and antiquary, but also a womanizer, and his mother a revolutionary and a poet, from whom Oscar Wilde is said to have inherited his vanity and love for aestheticism. Oscar had an exceptional childhood as he spent most of his time in the company of adults. His mother had a popular salon in Dublin, which attracted many celebrities including the literary field (Coackley 1994: 48-75). Jane Wilde was an eager conversationalist and never lost her composure defending her views. Oscar developed the same interest and skill in conversation.

Oscar Wilde was a gifted student and excelled particularly in classical subjects. He won prizes and studied at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1871-74 until he got a scholarship at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he studied in 1874-1879. At Oxford Wilde became popular among his peers and known for his talent as

well as for his flamboyant appearance and personality, which sometimes aroused amusement. He was “an elitist with a touch of the showman, who appeared to rise above all criticism” (Nicholls 1980:10). At Oxford he won the principal prize for poetry, the Newdigate Prize, for his poem “Ravenna”.

Wilde wrote articles and critiques for several newspapers, published his first collection of poetry in 1881 and made a lecture tour in the United States. His mastery of language was soon noticed widely and his witty epigrams were quoted constantly. According to Nicholls (1980:43-47), none of Wilde’s contemporaries could compete with him in wit and humour. He had an ability to ridicule conventional standards by revising clichés and proverbs with a change of a word or two. He was a master of satire and constantly grasped on topics which in his opinion reflected the shallowness or ills of the society.

In 1884 Wilde was married to Constance Lloyd and his two sons were born in the following years. He worked as an editor of *Woman’s World* in 1887-89. Wilde’s intense literary activity began in the late 1880’s and early 1890’s with the publication of *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*, several articles, and essays and his first and only novel *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, which was condemned by the British press as immoral because of its references to homosexuality.

Wilde wrote his first play, *Salome*, in 1891 and found the theatre an ideal setting for the kind of texts he wished to write, full of verbal play, satire, aphoristic dialogue and interesting characters (Nicholls 1980:74). His next play, *Lady Windermere’s Fan* was a success and his next two plays, *A Woman of no Importance* and *An Ideal Husband* were also well received by the public, but were not highly respected by the critiques. Wilde’s plays continued his criticism of the hypocritical nature of the English high society and politics. Wilde’s last play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, was praised both by the audience and the press as a comic masterpiece and was the most successful of his contributions to the theatre.

A couple of years into his marriage, Wilde had made a realization of his sexual identity and led a double life with homosexual acquaintances. He was familiar with young Lord Alfred Bruce Douglas, known as “Bosie”, whose father the Marquess of Queensberry was furious about the relationship and harassed Wilde to the extent that Wilde brought a suite against him. This was a mistake on Wilde’s part, since the charges were soon turned against him. Wilde had to go through two embarrassing trials dealing with his relationship with Bosie and other men. He was found guilty of “indecent acts” and sentenced to two years of hard labour in 1895.

The humiliation and imprisoning destroyed Wilde’s career and his plays were withdrawn from theatres. He was not entitled to see his sons and the whole world seemed to have abandoned him. Also his health started to crack. He wrote *De Profundis*, a lengthy letter to Bosie and his last work of prose, during his time in prison. He was released in 1897, exiled to France and died in Paris on 30 November in 1900 at the age of forty-six.