

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

“SGT. POMPOUS AND THE FANCY PANTS CLUB BAND”  
- Comparing and Contrasting the Translations of Verbal Humor in  
Screen Translations of *Shrek*

A Pro Gradu Thesis in English

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“SGT. POMPOUS AND THE FANCY PANTS CLUB BAND” – Comparing and  
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Vaikka populaarikulttuuri tarjoaa yhä enemmän komedioita, huumori on kuitenkin vasta viime aikoina alkanut kiinnostaa tutkijoita käännöstieteen alalla. Huumori ja sen käännösten arvostaminen on hyvin yksilöllistä sekä kulttuuri- ja kieliriippuvaista, minkä vuoksi sen kääntäminen on haasteellista. Animaatiot tarjoavat mahdollisuuden vertailla verbaalin huumorin kääntämistä kahdessa elokuvakäännöksessä, dubatussa ja tekstitettyssä. Animaatioiden kääntäjät joutuvat usein myös sovittamaan käännöksensä sopivaksi niin lapsille kuin aikuisillekin.

Tässä tutkielmassa esitetyt kysymykset ovat 1) minkälaista verbaalista huumoria *Shrek* elokuvista löytyy, 2) miten nämä kohdat on käännetty ja onko huumori säilynyt, ja 3) miten tekstitetty ja dubatut kohdat eroavat toisistaan. Ensin verbaalisti humoristiset kohdat kerättiin elokuvista ja ne kategorisoitiin neljään ryhmään: sanaleikit, laulut ja riimit, alluusiot, ja muut puhetilanteet. Laulut ja riimit usein muodostuivat jonkin sanaleikin ympärille, mutta niiden suuri määrä ja yhdistävät musikaaliset elementit olivat perusteena niiden erottamiseen omaksi joukokseen. Alluusioiksi laskettiin kaikki intertekstuaalisuudet ja ’oikeaan elämään’ tehdyt viittaukset. Muut puhetilanteet -kategoria pitää sisällään rekisterin, sarkasmin ja ironian, sekä muut humoristiset puheen muodot.

Seuraavaksi näiden kategorioiden käännökset analysoitiin vertailemalla niitä toisiinsa. Valtaosa sanaleikeistä oli käännetty joko suoraan tai kohdekielen vastaavalla sanaleikillä. Suurimmaksi ongelmaksi muodostuivat ’donkey/ass’ -vitsit, joilla ei kohdekielessä ole vastaavaa kaksoismerkitystä. Laulujen sanaleikeissä taas riimit olivat tärkeässä tehtävässä. Eroja käännösten välille aiheutti lähinnä dubbauksessa vaadittava äänimaailma. Ilmeni, että *Shrek 2*:ssa laulujen käännökset olivat samat tekstitettyssä ja dubatussa versioissa.

Alluusiot oli käännetty suoraan silloin kun niiden viittauskohde oli tuttu suomalaiselle yleisölle. Vain muutamaan tuntemattomaan alluusioon oli kehitetty suomalainen vastine, muulloin ainoastaan tarkoite oli käännetty. Ongelmallisia olivat alluusiot, jotka suomalainen kohdeyleisö tuntee vain niiden alkuperäisillä nimillään, jolloin niistä tehdyt sanaväännökset eivät käännettynä siirtyneet kohdekieleen alluusioina. Muut puhetilanteet -kategoriassa taas huumorin kannalta vain harva kohta jäi huumorin kääntämisessä puutteelliseksi.

Eroja käännösten välillä aiheutui lähinnä siitä, mitä kääntäjät kulloinkin olivat pitäneet olennaisena asiana viestin käännöksessä ja huumorin perusaineksena. Huumorin konteksti-sidonnaisuus estää tekemästä kääntäjille yksiselitteisiä ohjeita. Kuitenkin käännösten tutkiminen on tärkeää, sillä se vie eteenpäin käännöstutkimusta ja kehittää kääntäjiä. Lisäksi on hyvä, että käännösten laatua tarkastellaan aktiivisesti sen suuren tarjonnan vuoksi, jotta niiden taso pysyy korkeana.

Asiasanat: verbal humor, translation of verbal humor, screen translation, subtitling, dubbing

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

One needs to only observe the amount of comedy films and situational comedies the pop culture offers today to realize that humor – particularly verbal humor – has gained a steady foothold at least in western societies, and aroused a great deal of interest among scholars as well.

Due to the fact that the sense of and taste for humor is always somewhat subjective, not to mention culture- and language specific, it has presented problems for the translators. The popularity of comedies has also brought the quality of the translations into public attention. In addition to the pressure this creates, this interest has also been considered a good thing, for then there is the opportunity to improve and develop the art of translating humor further.

In Finland subtitling is the main screen translation method, mainly because it is the easiest and cheapest mode. However, dubbing is normally used in translating films and television series for children. This is understandable, since many children can not read yet, and those who can would probably not be able to keep up with the speed that the subtitling requires. In comparison, however, in many other countries dubbing is the only method used. The current trend, at least in Finland, is that one can choose between the dubbed and subtitled versions when it comes to children's films.

*Shrek* is an animated film, which has appealed to children as well as adults all over the world. It has a great deal of verbal and visual humor in it. This humor mainly manifests as a sarcastic approach to the traditional, well-known fairytales. Even though *Shrek* (allowed for children over the age of three) is light in its content, i.e. it does not contain erotic scenes or real violence, it still often alludes and parodies films that children could or should not have seen, such as the *Matrix* (children under the age of 15 are not allowed to see it) or the old television classics from the 1970s, thereby clearly indicating that adults are also *Shrek's* target audience. The language in *Shrek*, and, in particular its verbal humor, must therefore also be such that children can find amusing for different reasons than adults. Due to the humor in the films and

the fact that they are both dubbed and subtitled, *Shrek* and its sequel *Shrek 2* provide interesting material to study.

There are certain rules and expectations connected to screen translation. Subtitling, for instance, faces a certain degree of reduction in comparison to the original text, because it has only a small space reserved on the screen and a short time it can appear on the screen. In dubbing, on the other hand, one has to take into consideration the lip movements and the tone of the voice of the characters, as well as the time each line is given on the screen. In translating verbal humor subtitling could provide more advantages, because one can replace the original wordplay, for example, with something quite different or leave it untranslated altogether, which one cannot really do with dubbing, because it would create silence into the film soundtrack while the original characters keep on moving their lips.

All these above mentioned factors raise interesting questions. First of all, what kind of verbal humor is there in *Shrek* and *Shrek 2* that makes it appealing for both a child and an adult? How is the humorous effect translated, and what kinds of similarities or differences are there between the dubbed and subtitled versions? These are the questions that this present study will focus on.

The field of this study is translation studies, or screen translation to be more precise. However, it overlaps with many other fields of language study, since it considers also the effectiveness of the translation to the target audience, and the specific linguistic elements of two languages and intercultural issues, for instance. This interdisciplinary nature of translation studies is, in fact, very common to the whole field of translation (Bassnett 1995:11).

In the following chapters the different aspects of verbal humor and its categorization will be first discussed. Following this, some relevant theories concerning translation, particularly screen translation and its situation in Finland will be discussed. Also the translation for children will be commented upon, and the various theories that define the translation of verbal humor. After this theory section, the set-up of the present study will be specified.

The analysis will be conducted in two parts. In the first part the verbal humor of the films will be discussed with examples, and in the second part the translations in these humor categories will be compared with each other and to the original text. The present study will conclude with a discussion of the analysis that was done.

## 2. COMEDY – VERBAL HUMOR IN CINEMA

Comedy is an area where humor is, after the ending of the reign of silent film and Charles Chaplin, increasingly conveyed through language play. Redfern (1984:2), in fact, suggests that wordplay and punning are the marks of an advanced culture, thus implying that scientific intellect is closely connected to the development of the language and to the ability to manipulate it. However, he (ibid.) adds that wordplays and jokes have always had a marginal status in society, and that they have been looked down upon because they often have incorrect grammar and deal with 'obscene' issues, in other words they are often used as euphemisms to sex and sexuality.

Neale and Krutnik (1990:10) point out that comedy is an area that has a wide range of different forms and subcategories, such as sketches, stand-up and cartoons, which is why any single definition of comedy, or any other definition based on a single criterion, is bound to be limited and therefore insufficient. For example, for a long time the definition of comedy was based on the criterion of laughter (ibid.). However, many films produced these days evoke laughter and tears, and yet they are not defined as comedy. Therefore, additional criteria are that the film needs a happy ending and it should represent 'everyday life' and events with a mainly light and amusing tone. (Neale and Krutnik 1990:10-11.)

According to Neale and Krutnik (1990:44-47), there are three basic modes of comedy, all of which can, and probably will, exist in one film. The first mode of comedy is the action based on narration, which means that the action in itself is the source, and the humor does not depend on the plot. The second one is verbal comedy, where the narrative context makes the line funny, so the humor is based on the plot and the characters of the movie. The third mode consists of verbal jokes and wordplay. Neale and Krutnik (1990:43) add that all comic events share some basic characteristics, such as their fundamental reliance on surprise, and play with logic, expectations, conventions and meaning.

The present study sees the latter two modes as one, being that they both concern verbal humor and seem to be difficult to fully separate from another. In the following four sections the different aspects of verbal humor will be discussed further.

### 2.1. Verbal humor

According to Nash (1985:9-10), there is a surprisingly large amount of information one has to know and be aware of before they can understand even a simple joke. He (ibid.) lists three essential things that are characteristic of linguistic humor (and that one should recognize). Firstly, one should have some basic knowledge of the culture (institutions, attitudes, beliefs) the joke is situated in. Secondly, one should be able to recognize the humorous intention, which is always somehow signaled before or early on in the joke. And thirdly, a joke nearly always has a locus in language, some word or phrase that is indispensable to the joke, which one has to notice in order to understand its humor.

Neale and Krutnik (1990:87-88) have noticed that most examples of dialogue based on humor specifically involve deviations from the norms that govern conventional, everyday conversation, and they note that at a more general level, breaking the rules of politeness and decorum is fairly crucial to all kinds of comedy. Despite the fact that these elements 'stand out' in the conversation, Neale and Krutnik (1990:82) also point out that jokes and wordplay avoid pure nonsense, as "their illogicalities are always to some degree logical and their absurdity to some degree meaningful".

### 2.2. Parody, Irony, Sarcasm

Parody, as one mode of comedy, functions by drawing upon aesthetic conventions of some genre in order to make us laugh. For example, the genre of horror films usually builds up suspense and tension with music, which is a convention that in parody can be placed in an unusual or unexpected context or exaggerated. When parody is used within the context of comedy, laughter is consistently produced by gags and funny lines, which use the conventions of the genre involved as their raw material (Neale & Krutnik 1990:18-19). As stated above, the data the present study analyses, *Shrek*,

uses parody as one of its source for laughter. For example, the story line of the movie imitates that of most fairytales or quest stories and, in addition, includes unmistakable allusions to famous children's stories by including some characters, such as Pinocchio, Fairy Godmother and Puss in Boots, from them into its by-plot. On the other hand, Neal and Krutnik (1990:19) define satire as a mode of comedy that highlights social conventions and norms by attacking and mocking them, which is what *Shrek* also does in a way: most of the plot could be said to focus on the appearances of the characters. For example, beauty, a valued characteristic in our society, is played with and mocked in these films.

Since *Shrek* uses parody as one mode of its comedy, irony and sarcasm are the modes of linguistic humor which can therefore be expected from it. Irony is defined by for example Nash (1985:152-153) as something that is insincerely stated, but not meant, and through the manner in which it is stated, it is possible to encode a 'counter – proposition', the real meaning of the statement. Sarcasm he (ibid.) defines as having a sincere content, using a 'pro-code' (words seemingly equivalent in their content) and a 'counter-code' (understatement or overstatement), both of which express the speaker's unsympathetic attitude. For example, if the sentence *Tommy is lazy* is said *Tommy doesn't strain himself*, it would be sarcasm, because the content is basically the same, but the sentence *Tommy is renowned for his labors* would be irony, because the content of the sentence in comparison to the original is false (Nash 1985:152). However, Nash (1985:154) adds that in most cases, especially in spoken language, irony and sarcasm can be difficult to separate and identify purely as one or the other. Mateo (1995:174) even suggests that irony and sarcasm can spring from a syntactic order of a sentence, or a use of a certain word – much like wordplay or allusions (which will be discussed later), which makes them difficult to define.

In some cases it is not merely what is being said, but also *when* it is said that is humorous. Chiaro (1992:101) points out that there are unspoken rules and social norms about when it is not appropriate to make a joke, and therefore they will get no laughter in response. On the other hand, in films, especially in comedies, these kinds of situations are intentional. The fictional world of films makes it acceptable for an audience (but not for the characters) to laugh at inappropriate jokes and situations that they would not laugh at in real life. In addition, because the audience knows the

social norms, they can find the unconventional or unexpected response of the characters humorous.

In the present study these kinds of instances of irony and sarcasm, as well as the instances where a speech register or social norms are being violated in the dialogue of the film, will be placed under the same category.

### 2.3. Wordplay

The most basic definition of wordplay, or pun, is that it is the play of and play with language. Many scholars seem to use the term wordplay whenever they refer to any kind of verbal humor. However, when the ambiguity in a sentence can be isolated to one word, then you have a pun. Throughout the years, punning has not been esteemed very highly because it usually means the breakdown of the language by a distortion of words and their use in unusual places. Wordplay refers to the duplicity of the language itself, so it is possible that wordplay is not preferred in a sophisticated language use, because it cannot be controlled. (Redfern 1984:9-10.)

Wordplay is traditionally considered a deliberate communicative strategy, which is used with a specific or pragmatic effect in mind. Like Nash (1985), Delabastita (1997:5-7) also sees wordplay as nearly always culture and time-specific, but adds that, due to this, it is also reader-specific, since its interpretation might depend on the reader's age, gender and education, for instance. In other words, Delabastita (1997:12) points out that puns set in opposition not just isolated meanings, but also areas of knowledge and experience: one must comprehend the similarities and differences of the different meanings of one word and know how they are or can be used in various contexts. Alexieva (1997:138-140), in turn, even suggests that since wordplay is commonly based on a confrontation or clash between two or more meanings, or the domains of human experience and knowledge they are associated with, it can also function as a test of power or status between the speaker and the addressee, where they can determine their intellectual equality or the possible superiority over the other.

As Redfern (1984:23) points out, many wordplays are also situational in that they always need a context. He (ibid.) also suggests that they have a function in the discussion; they may, for example, distract the hearer, or make the hearer concentrate and focus more carefully on what is being said.

Since a great deal of verbal humor is based on some kind of wordplay, it is important to consider its different aspects more closely. Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 briefly discuss the different types of wordplay and how they can be formed.

### 2.3.1. The Linguistic Material for Wordplays

The variety of wordplays is a constant source of amazement. Still, according to Delabastita (1997:1-2) there is not really a workable descriptive model of wordplay today. He (ibid.) argues that in a way, it is a good thing that there are no systematic rules or conventions when it comes to wordplay, because those would lose wordplay's ironic edge.

However, there are some commonly agreed linguistic strategies with which wordplays can be formed:

<i>Homonymy</i>	Two words have identical sounds and spelling but different meanings. For example, a bank - of the river, or a bank – a building.
<i>Homophony</i>	The words have identical sounds but different spelling and meaning. For example, interjection <i>Hi!</i> and an adverb <i>high</i>
<i>Homographs</i>	The words have different sounds and meaning but identical spelling. For example, <i>writing on the wall</i> : In People's China the workers take the lead! <i>Added later</i> : In capitalist England, the sods also take the iron, copper, floorboards and fillings from your teeth. (The example from Thomas 1995)
<i>Paronymy</i>	There are slight differences in both spelling and sound. For example a church slogan: Come in for a <i>faith</i> lift.
<i>Polysemy</i>	One word with different meanings. For example, a horse can refer to a chess pawn, the gymnastic tool, or to the actual animal (Delabastita 1996:128.)

Furthermore, Delabastita (1996:128) divides these above mentioned strategies into two, based on whether they occur in the same portion of the text (vertical wordplay), or if they occur in the same sentence, one after another (horizontal wordplay).

Based on these basic formation strategies, the wordplays can also be categorized into larger groups, based on how these formation types are combined with each other.

### 2.3.2. Types of Wordplay

Delabastita (1994:233-234) suggests that there are roughly five types of wordplay. The first one is the implicit pun where wordplay relies on a single occurrence of an ambiguous word. The second type is the explicit pun where there is a repetition of a word with a shift of meaning. The third one involves a change of the word-class. The fourth involves disambiguating or moderating indecent puns, and the fifth is about phonetic wordplay that plays with the sounds of the words. (Delabastita 1994:233-234.) The following examples from *Friends* illustrate some of these different types of wordplay.

- Example (1) (Setting from *Friends*: Ross is filling up a crossword puzzle, Chandler is eagerly expecting a phone call and stares at the phone.)  
 Ro: Four letters. A circle or a hoop?  
 Ch: Ring, damn it. Ring!  
 Ro: Thanks.

In this example the word ‘ring’, as a homonym, changes its meaning and function as well as its word class. Chandler uses it as an imperative verb, and tries to ‘will’ the phone to ring. Ross, however, interprets it as the noun he is trying to find for his puzzle.

- Example (2) (Setting from *Friends*: Rachel hates it when something is brought close to her or anyone else’s eye. Her friends tease her and poke their eyes while they speak.)  
 Mo: Do you remember that great song “Me, Myself and I”? = Muistatko sen laulun “Sinun kanssasi tähtisilmä”?  
 Ro: Does anyone wanna get some lunch? All those in favor say I. = Tiedättekö, viime yönä en nukkunut silmällistäkään.  
 Ch: How much did I love the King and I. = Pidin kovasti elokuvasta “Silmä silmästä”.

This, in turn, is an example of phonetic wordplay. The speakers play with homophone pair eye – I. They do not speak in words about eyes, but clearly refer to them with gestures, which makes Rachel angry and the audience to laugh.

In comparison to Delabastita (1994), Redfern (1984) names several different and overlapping types that wordplay can be based on. For example, it can be a figurative

use of a word or a phrase, or a manipulation of clichés or it can be based on rhyming of the words. It can also be name-play, or a simple case of mishearing, which can be either willful, involuntary, or somebody failing to understand what is being said and answering aside. According to Redfern (1984:25), one of the oldest ways of creating verbal humor is twisting and updating a proverb to suit a new purpose, usually in an unexpected context, and to make something abstract concrete, or vice versa.

Example (3) (Setting from *Friends*: Joey is trying to decide who to take to his film's premiere, Monica or Ross. Monica really wants to go.)  
 Mon: Well, Ross didn't care enough to be here, so I think he's out.  
You snooze, you lose.  
 Chandler: He's not snoozing, he's teaching a class.  
 Mon: Well, then somebody's snoozing.

In this example from *Friends* the saying 'you snooze, you lose' is taken advantage of. Ross teaches paleontology at the NYU, and by exploiting a saying, Monica refers to the fact that they all find Ross's field of interest boring.

Nash (1985), too, describes a vast variety of ways in which humor can be formed linguistically. He adds (1985:170-172) that jokes are told, they are an act of performance, where the tone and timing, for example, are important. In a film, this latter point is particularly important and the visual content cannot be completely ignored when analyzing the linguistic humor in a scene, and therefore the context and the tone of the utterances are considered when interpreting and analyzing the humorous utterances in this study.

#### 2.4. Allusions

Allusions are probably the easiest category of verbal humor to define. However, difficulties appear when they are spotted in the text of a film – they can function as wordplay-elements, or ironic or sarcastic remarks by some character.

One of the scholars who has studied allusions and their translations is Leppihalme (1994), and her definition of the word is used in the present study. Leppihalme (1994:179) refers by 'allusion' to the use of proper names or to particular, well-known performed sentences in either their original or modified form in other texts to convey some implicit meaning or connotations. Many allusions are adapted from history, literature, cinema, television and music, for example, and they are rarely

familiar beyond the cultures of their origin (Spanakaki 2007). Because of the culture-bound knowledge that the allusions require, they often lose their humorous effect in translation (Leppihalme 1994:180).

Since none of the categorizations of verbal humor described in section 2.3.2 are simplistic and would not overlap in some ways, the wordplays in the focus of the present study will be interpreted as the ones that in some way play with the meaning of a word. Although overlapping will unavoidably occur within all the categories of verbal humor, an attempt will be made to divide the data of the present study into wordplays, allusions and other speech events (which include sarcasm, irony and cinematographic ways to create dialogue, for example). Songs and rhyming instances will be also their own category, since they are a large category. The descriptions of the different kinds of verbal humor discussed in this chapter of comedy will be used in the collection of the data and then later in their analysis.

In the following chapters the issue of screen translation will be discussed by beginning with some basic theories of translation and then moving on to the specifics of dubbing and subtitling. After this, the situation of screen translation in Finland will be discussed, which will then be followed by some theories of translating for children. Before moving on to the analysis of the material, the aspects of translating verbal humor will be considered in further detail.

### 3. SCREEN TRANSLATION

#### 3.1. Translation Studies

The western translation studies is little over two thousand years old (Vehmas-Lehto 1999:22). For the early translators it was possible to translate merely the ideas of some well-known works and to add freely their own viewpoints and opinions to their 'translation'. Up until the end of the nineteenth century translation theory mostly concerned biblical and religious translation techniques, and during this time it was preferred that the translations were as literal as possible. Since then, translation studies have developed gradually towards a more liberal direction. In the twentieth century translation has become one of the key issues because of globalization, realization, and appreciation of culture and language differences. (Bassnett 1995:19, 63.)

Throughout the years, there have been numerous different translation theories, and one could claim that they all deal with two basic questions; is translation at all possible, and if it is, how should one translate; literally, by respecting the form and choice of words in the original text, or semantically, by translating the meaning of the original (Vehmas-Lehto 1999:23). Due to this dilemma, a translator has been at one time considered as a mechanical machine, a creative artist at another (Bassnett 1995:22).

According to Bassnett (1995:19-20), the basic idea in translation is that the translator selects the elements that can be transferred to the target language, and rethinks and rewrites those that are impossible to translate. She (ibid.) adds that one has to remember that the translator is always both the receiver of the message as well as the one who sends the message forward in its new form. In the translation process the translator can also make the choice to 'domesticate' the source text, to create a more understandable version for the target audience by changing the original brands and names, for example, to the ones that are familiar to the target audience (e.g. Oittinen 2000:6).

The basis of the present study is that translation is possible, and that translators are presumed and expected to have some artistic liberties in their work, because of the peculiar field of humor and the form of the translation that is screen translation, which pose limitations as well as possibilities. The nature of screen translation, namely subtitling and dubbing, will be examined further in the following sections.

### 3.2. Screen Translation

The need for screen translation in Europe can be traced back to the first talking films in the 1930s. Silent films, which had short captions inserted to ease the understanding of the storyline, had had a universal appeal but the ‘talkies’ immediately presented problems, particularly in Europe (Luyken et al 1991:29-30). It is argued by Whitman-Linsen (1992:12) that the audiences were suddenly upset at hearing ‘their’ film stars speak a foreign language, as if they had not formerly been aware that they were “consuming imported goods”. At first the big studios in France, Germany, and Italy solved the language problem by shooting several versions of the same film in different languages. This multilingual filming method was never practiced in Hollywood, or in any other English-speaking country. Soon this method was found to be too expensive and ineffective. Therefore, two current main methods, subtitling and dubbing, evolved as alternatives. However, due to the advancing technology in filming, this method of re-shooting the films could become once again a screen translation option in the future. (Luyken et al 1991:29-30.)

As Luyken et al (1991) suggest, it seems that there are still fairly strong feelings about which method is better. The countries that have gotten used to one method do not wish to change it to another (subtitling to dubbing, for example). According to Zabalbeascoa (1996:237) it would appear that there is a variable degree of tolerance from one audience to another for the differences in synchronization, that is, how accurately the dubbing is made to correspond the original lip movements. Much depend on such factors as habits and available technology. Probably due to the emotions that the choice of screen translation rouses, it is only recently that dubbing and subtitling have been accepted as a serious subject of Translation Theory (Wehn 2001:70). This is also one of the reasons why it is interesting to compare the differences between the dubbed and subtitled versions in a country that in some

occasions uses both translation methods on the same film, like in Disney's family films or animations.

### 3.2.1. Dubbing

Dubbing originated in the USA and came to Europe in 1936. In the so-called subtitling countries (such as the Scandinavian countries, Finland and Greece), the subtitling norm tends to be modified in certain cases. For example, in almost every country the children's programs, cartoons, and films that have themes and humor more appealing to children, are re-voiced for target groups up to eight or ten years, because of the difficulties they might have in following the fast moving text on the screen. (Lyuken et al 1991:31-32.)

Usually only the dialogues are translated and dubbed while the other sound effects remain untouched. Therefore, the original tapes normally have two separate soundtracks (Zabalbeascoa, Izard and Santamaria 2001:106). Zabalbeascoa et al. (2001:107-108) state that, at least in Spain, the translator only initiates the whole process of dubbing by writing a translation of the script, after which all the other participants in the process (copy-editor, synchronizer, dubbing director, actors) use the translated text as a rough copy and reshape the text to their convenience. They (ibid.) continue that the translation is therefore considered a minor step, and the attention is focused on the constraints imposed by the length of the sentences and the movement of the lips. Zabalbeascoa et al. (ibid.) claim that the translators do their work alone and therefore they are accused of any mistake or problem the translation might cause in the dubbing process.

However, Fodor (1962, as quoted in Paquin 2003:329) disagrees and argues that the translators have to *see* what they are translating, if they translate for the screen. For example, they have to know if the mouth of the speaking character is open or closed at the end of the word or sentence, so that the translators can fit their translation to the lip movements (Fodor 1962, as quoted in Paquin 2003:329). In other words, the dubbing process is teamwork, where the translator should be involved the whole time and be the one who worries about the synchronization process as well, not only about the translation of the text (Carroll and Ivarsson 1998).

According to Fodor (1962, as quoted in Paquin 2003:328), the requirements for a ‘satisfactory synchronization’ include a faithful and artistic translation of the original dialogue, an approximately perfect unification of the replacing sounds with the visible lip movements, and harmonizing the style of the speech of the new version with the style of the acting. The goal is thereby to achieve synchrony in phonetics, dramatic expressions and in the content of the movie (Fodor 1962, as quoted in Paquin 2003:328). Sometimes some of these objectives have to be sacrificed to maintain the main idea, the objective and the genre of the film (Zabalbeascoa et al 2001:109). Battarbee (1986:145), for example, points out that speech similar to source text is difficult to achieve in dubbing, and sometimes the result may therefore sound monotonous and unnatural. So, Battarbee (ibid.) suggests that dubbing is done only to achieve ‘covert translation’, that is, a soundtrack convincing enough so that the target audiences are unaware that they are actually hearing or watching a translated text.

On the other hand, the technology today, called morphing, makes it possible to replace the images of the original actor with those of the dubbing actor’s lips whenever necessary, which makes the lip-sync perfect. However, it is still very costly and therefore not widely used, yet. (Wehn 2001:70.)

Dischrony, the mismatch of the voice and lip movements, is not disturbing in small degrees, but it is important to achieve it at least in the beginning of the film, when the audience is not yet focused on the plot, when they have not reached the “illusion of reality” in the film (Fodor 1962, as quoted in Paquin 2003:330-321).

Generally speaking, in cartoons it is not essential to achieve perfect lip-sync. However, it is fundamental to maintain isochrony, which means the adjustment of the translation of each utterance to the length of time the characters’ mouths are moving on the screen (Lorenzo, Pereira and Xoubanova 2003:271). Cartoons, however, differ from computer animation on certain levels. In computer animation the creators use effort to make the characters look ‘life-like’, particularly the lip movements, which the creators finalize by copying them from the actor who has given their voice to the character (“Making of –documentary” 2001). This aspect makes it more important to achieve good lip-sync in the dubbed version, even though

it is 'only' an animated film. This needs to be considered also in the analysis of the translations in this study.

### 3.2.2. Subtitling

Subtitling has been under a systematic investigation for a fairly short time. There is no unified theory that scholars agree on, since some problems concerning the translation in general, for instance, are difficult to work out. (Gambier and Gottlieb 2001:xvii.) However, there are some generally agreed rules, for example, concerning the physical elements of the subtitling, such as the location or the length the translations should appear on the screen, since the space for the subtitles is limited. According to Vertanen (2002:133-134), the text has to be large enough for the viewer to be able to read it. Luyken et al (1991:42-44) also point out that it should have an adequate reading time and not obscure the picture. The suggested 'safe-area' is two full lines extending to two-thirds of the width of the screen, and preferably only one line for small children. The maximum number of text characters per line is 40 (Luyken et al 1991:42-44.) In Finland two lines have to be on the screen 4 to 5 seconds (Vertanen 2002:133-134).

Subtitling, unlike dubbing, provides an overt translation, that is, one which is explicitly a translated document. The picture and the original soundtrack remain intact and they are directly accessible for the target-language viewers. (Battarbee 1986:144.) According to Battarbee (1986:146), subtitles are reminiscent of footnotes at the bottom of a printed page, both in terms of their physical location and because they constitute an explanatory comment to the material above them. Battarbee (ibid.) adds that neither dubbing nor subtitling, however, correspond to the conditions predominantly applying to written translation, in which the target and the source text are completely separate entities. In the case of subtitling one could say that it is the most difficult form of all translation:

“A person who reads a book in translation or sees a dubbed film must go to the original text to check what they suspect is a faulty translation...The subtitler is in a much more vulnerable position than the translator, since the original is available for all to see and hear” (Ivarsson 1992, as quoted in James 2001:151.)

There are constraints on subtitling which create particular kinds of difficulties for the translators. In addition to the physical constraints of the available space, the shift of the mode from speech to writing, the inevitable reduction of the source text, and the requirement of matching the visual image have to be taken into consideration (Hatim and Mason 1997:78-79.) Moreover, according to Vertanen (2002:132-133), the text should create an illusion to the viewer that they can understand the language spoken on the screen, and therefore the translator should be loyal to the source text and mediate its style and atmosphere, even though they sometimes have to make radical changes in order to fit the text into the screen. After all,

“Ultimately, the aim is to fashion subtitles which are attuned so thoroughly to their audiovisual environment that they appear to ‘melt’ into the total fabric of the program. By making the linguistic sign as unobtrusive as possible, the very best subtitling seeks to foster the illusion of unmediated comprehension on the part of the viewer. When an audience stops being aware of reading the subtitles, the subtitler has achieved a major goal. In effect, the material substance of the subtitles shrinks and vanishes before our very eyes, leaving only the message”. (McCormick 1997:5, as quoted in Mueller 2001:147)

It is expected that the screen translations have a limited life-span, they are not meant to be distributed over many years. Therefore, the criteria of a good subtitling should be primarily comprehensibility, accessibility and usability, instead of mere error analysis. (Gambier and Gottlieb 2001:xi-xii.)

### 3.2.3. Pros and Cons of Screen Translation

Subtitling is the cheapest and fastest mode of translation: one hour television program subtitling requires around 4 working days, whereas dubbing may take up to 12 working days (Lyuken et al 1991:90). However, while this style has clear economical values, it has its disadvantages as well. For instance, the dialogues are usually delivered at a faster speed than the subtitles on the screen can keep up with, and therefore a certain amount of reduction of the text is unavoidable (Delabastita 1989:203). Usually the main requirement for the subtitles is that they are fluent. Otherwise the reader’s attention is focused only on the peculiar language instead of its content (Vehmas-Lehto 1999:29). After all, as Vöge (1977:120) argues, the aim of screen translation is to make the spectators to forget that they are reading.

In addition to the cost-effectiveness, subtitling has certain advantages in comparison to dubbing. Subtitles can comment upon or explain unusual situations, puns and unfamiliar notions, unlike the dialogue in dubbing. Furthermore, subtitles can be omitted when fragments of the dialogue are incomprehensible, whereas dubbing would still be required in those situations. (Vöge 1977:121.)

Dubbing, on the other hand, can be used as a more effective way to censor some things, since they erase the original dialogue completely. Wehn (2001:66) mentions that, for example in the case of Germany, allusions to National Socialism and the Third Reich were often erased in the dubbing process during the Cold War, because they touched on taboo topics. Today this censoring can be seen mainly in children's programs in toning down some sexual, racist, or violent language.

Whitman-Linsen (1992:9-13) claims that dubbing lacks esteem and reward as a translating domain, and that the practice of dubbing is today repeatedly denounced as "corrupting artistic intent by perverting original purity and debasing quality". In her view (*ibid.*), the dubbers remain anonymous and their work is done mainly in (dark) studios, even though the translation result could have so much power to influence on the audience's opinions. For example, it can be responsible for the way one country is viewed by another, by the choice of words or dialect. As Luyken et al (1991:71) argue, dubbing is a highly complex craft and, unlike subtitling, it also involves a performance element.

It is claimed by some scholars that it is natural for children to prefer dubbing since it requires less cognitive effort than reading. In subtitling countries, however, the children watch adult programs too, so they become accustomed to subtitles at an early age (Karamitroglou 2001:190-192.) O'Connell (1996:152) claims that if subtitles are broadcast, they will be read regardless of whether they are needed or not. However, recent studies show that those already accustomed to subtitles do not require any conscious cognitive effort, but reading subtitles becomes an automatic process which older children do not find disturbing at all. In fact, according to some studies children have been found to be better lip-readers than adults, so they are more liable to spot bad lip-sync and be disappointed by a hastily dubbed production. (Karamitroglou 2001:190-192.)

### 3.3. Screen Translation in Finland

Subtitling countries in Europe are mainly the small countries, such as Scandinavian countries or Greece, where the majority of foreign films are imported. In these countries, subtitling is the most inexpensive way. In dubbing countries, like France and Germany, there are a large population and fewer foreign films in comparison, so dubbing is a relatively cheap way of translating. (Lyuken 1991:32).

Subtitling has been the norm of screen translation in Finland for over forty years. In Finland, people watch television several hours a day, and so they read a substantial amount of text from the screen as well. This is why the screen translation should and has to face high standards. (Vertanen 2002:131.) Bassnett (1995:20) in fact points out that the quality of translations is very high in Finland. This is probably because translation has been taught in Finland from 1966 and on academic level since 1981 (Gummerus and Paro 2001:139).

Dubbing, on the other hand, is a rare method of screen translation in Finland. However, there are two major exceptions on Finnish television and cinema: children's programs, and the use of voice-over commentary in some documentary programs. In documentaries on some channels (TV1 and TV2) the sequences where the presenter is visible on the screen are normally subtitled, but those sequences where only the commentator's voice is heard are often dubbed by a single reader. In the 1980s, a single reader provided the Finnish version, which was often superimposed in programs for children over a quietened original soundtrack, like in Nils Holgersson. (Battarbee 1986:147.) Currently, however, most of the children's programs are translated with actual dubbing.

Since in Finland the animated films are both dubbed and translated, it could mean that there is an underlying consideration of a dual audience of children and adults who wish to see the same movie. The language proficiency of English is fairly high in Finland, so the subtitled version of a film may be done in consideration of the adults who can not only read the text, but can also understand the original language - and therefore appreciate the original verbal comedy, for instance, on a different level

than children and those who prefer the dubbed version. This factor has to be taken into consideration in the present study of the dubbed and the translated versions of *Shrek*.

All in all, there are differing opinions on which is a better translation method, dubbing or subtitling. Both methods of translation have their advantages as well as shortcomings. Mostly based on cost-effectiveness, so to speak, Europe (at least) is divided between these two methods. Finland is a subtitling country, but also one of the few countries that does dubbing as well in films and programs meant for children. This double translation offers good and objective material, as well as credibility, for any study or research done on the differences between subtitling and dubbing, since the studied language remains the same – unlike in many previous studies that will be discussed later.

When comparing a subtitled and dubbed version with each other, there are naturally some constraints and rules that these methods as well as the translation theory in general have that have to be taken into consideration. In addition, the film *Shrek* is mainly targeted at children, which brings up one more viewpoint to the study. The consideration of children as an audience of the translated text will be discussed next.

#### 3.4. Translating for Children

Oittinen (2000:xiii) points out that one fifth of the population in Finland, out of a total of 5 million, is under the age of 14, so, relatively speaking, the audience of children's literature and films is large. However, Oittinen (2000:65) adds that scholars disagree whether or not children's literature is a separate category from adult literature, since it, on the one hand, has different functions than most adult fiction, such as educational or amusing purposes, but, on the other hand, it has similar forms to various adult genres, that is, it can be a novel or a long feature film, comedy or drama.

So, if an adult finds something interesting in a so-called children's book, for example, is it not then an adult book, too? More often than not, children's literature has a dual audience: children and adults, who appreciate the text on different levels.

For example, if a child reads *Alice in Wonderland* and there is a poem that actually parodies some famous poem, they will probably pay attention to the nonsense and crazy comedy of it, perhaps recognizing it as a variation of some song they know from school (Oittinen 2000:62- 64). A grown-up, in contrast, would read it with a more logical frame in mind, and probably recognize its humor in the intended allusions (ibid.). Therefore, the story has to appeal to the adult as well – maybe even first and foremost, since they are the ones who decide what their children can read or watch, which Oittinen (1993:324-325) calls an ‘issue of authority’ that the translator must face. Therefore in this study, as in all children’s literature, both the child and the adult perspective as the target audience of the translations need to be considered. For example, if some things are toned down in the translation, the reason for it might be the consideration that the translator shows for the parents and what they might want their child to hear.

One further problem might arise when translating a film for a dual audience. As Vandaele (2002:150) points out, the appreciation of humor and its translation varies individually, and one might add that it is also to an extent age-specific (compare the elementary school –humor with sarcasm, for example). Spanakaki (2007) suggests that some enjoy spotting an allusion, and resent it if they are ‘looked down’ on by giving too clarifying a translation. This combination presents an interesting dilemma for the translator - what kind of an audience is the primary one and what kind of translation would most of the viewers understand and enjoy without feeling patronized.

Still, the basic translation theories presented earlier apply to the translation for children as well. However, since children do not have the same background knowledge as adults, there are a few special issues that the translator should consider. For example, the style and vocabulary as well as the physical senses the translators are translating for, are the issues that Oittinen (2000:11, 61) argues should be considered in the translation process. By translating for physical senses she (2000:32-33) means that words entail emotions, and therefore the text should live, roll and taste good on the reader’s tongue. This ‘experienciveness’ of texts is therefore important in everything a child hears or reads by themselves (Oittinen 2000:19).

Furthermore, the child's background knowledge and understanding are to some extent dependent on the knowledge of intercultural differences. Alexieva (1997:142) points out that those intercultural differences depend on our own surroundings and the understanding might depend on whether one has first-hand experience of the matter or if the experience has been mediated by television, which in turn has an effect to the child's understanding of the jokes. For example, a child living in the middle of the continent might not fully understand the concept and details of living by the sea. These culture- and age-specific issues the translators also have to consider in their work.

The reader usually reads translations in the same way as they read any other book. When a child reads a story, they are not really interested in whether they are reading a translation or not (Oittinen 2000:34), which is probably the case when they watch a movie as well. However, Oittinen (2000:68) points out that children, like adults, are capable of approving and disapproving of what they see, read, and hear and therefore they should be taken seriously as a target audience. In Oittinen's (1993:326) opinion, respecting the child as a target audience means ultimately respecting the original text as well.

The majority of the literature and research concerning translating for children is based on the translation of literature. Not much research has been conducted on television and film translation for children. In particular, there is a lack of studies that would compare dubbing and subtitling from this point of view. Naturally, dubbing is the preferred translation method when the audience is mostly under the school age, but what can be reasons for dubbing a film that is expected to have a vast audience of all ages? Are the two versions different in effect? This is one of the aspects taken into consideration in the material analysis of this study. Next, the various aspects of translating verbal humor will be discussed.

### 3.5. Translating Verbal Humor

It is commonly acknowledged in the field of translation studies that humor, and wordplay in particular, are a challenging area for the translators. Difficulties seem to arise when the humor is based on, for example, synonyms, phonemes or culture

specific knowledge and traditions. From the latter two, Lung (1998:101-102) gives an example: an American way to refer to sexual ‘advancing’ with baseball terms, for instance, is not familiar to the Chinese culture, and therefore it creates a problem for the translator when a situation is described with sports terms, with an allusive way to create humor.

Spanakaki (2007) in fact discusses three basic types of humor that in turn have an influence on their translatability.<sup>1</sup> These types are universal humor (some common subject for everyone, such as love), cultural humor (allusions, for example) and linguistic humor (wordplays), and the closer the textual instance is to the linguistic humor, the more difficult it is to translate, whereas universal humor is the easiest kind to translate (Spanakaki 2007). In other words, the type of the original text influences on the translation type as well. These translation types, or methods, will be discussed further later.

Delabastita (1994:223) argues that the root cause for difficulties in the translation of verbal humor “lies in the fact that the semantic and pragmatic effects of source-text wordplay find their origin in particular structural characteristics of the source language for which the target language more often than not fails to produce a counterpart”. Redfern (1984:169) claims that this is a sign that even languages have an area of privacy, a feature that no other language can touch or imitate.

The following example of verbal humor is taken from the sitcom *Friends*, and it illustrates the difficulties that translators face with wordplays. It has repetition with a shift of meaning that is based on mishearing and name-play. It can also be seen as something abstract made concrete, that is, from the general reference to the police force to a specific music band.

Example (4) (Setting: Phoebe has tried to get close to Sting’s wife in order to get tickets to Sting’s next concert. Sting’s wife has just found this out.)  
 Sting’s wife: Any minute now the police will be here. =Täällä on pian poliisi  
 Ph: The Police?! Here? A reunion? = the Police?! Täälläkö? Yhteisellä keikalla?

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<sup>1</sup> For a wider, more detailed classification of humor based on the way they “lend themselves to translation” see Zabalbeascoa (1996)

In the example, ‘the police’ is interpreted differently by two people; Sting’s wife refers to the officers of the law, whereas Phoebe thinks she is referring to her husband’s ex-band, named *the Police*, therefore the word changes its meaning during its repetition. This is a good example also of the fact that you need to have some background knowledge to fully appreciate the reference, which the translator has in a way taken into account in his work, since he has translated ‘the police’ only once, but not twice – which makes it comprehensible, but odd to a Finnish reader, since it is not clear in the translation, how Phoebe could jump to her conclusion so readily.

### 3.5.1. Linguistic Methods for Translating Verbal Humor

There are various ways in which scholars have defined and categorized the translations of humor, all depending on the depth and focus of their studies and analysis. In general, the categories describe the stages in between the two extremes: successful translation and omission. The following description is adapted and compiled from various sources that have the same basic idea of the translation types, but also have a slightly different point of view in humor (allusions, wordplay, irony, idioms) and intensity in their descriptions, that is they might have subdivided some categories further or have their focus on either the effect the translation has on its audience or the linguistic accuracy.

There are basically at least seven different methods on how humor can be translated. The first method is that the humor of the source text (ST) can be rendered as such to the target text (TT), which means that the original humorous segment has a corresponding version in the target language. For example, most proverbs have an equivalent version in other languages, and therefore they might be manipulated the same way. Another example would be some standardized translations, like the ones done on the Bible or Shakespeare, which can be taken advantage of in the translation. With the second method only the sense or the literal meaning of the original humorous instance is translated, and therefore the humorous effect is missed. The third method is to use other means to create the same effect with the original. For example, irony or alliteration could be used to replace a pun, as is often done in Finland according to Leppihalme (1997:3). Fourth, the humorous segment is omitted in the translation, it is completely ignored. These instances might be replaced by

‘filler’ words, such as interjections. On the other hand, the fifth method is used when humor is added to a place where it does not exist in the original text, possibly to compensate for some previous omission. The sixth method is that the humor of the ST is copied as such, and it is therefore a loan rather than a translation. This differs from the first method in the sense that the humor in the target text is somewhat unfamiliar to its audience. And the seventh method includes the editorial notes that explain the humorous segment to the target audience. These ‘notes’ can be either external or internal (Leppihalme 1994:183-184), that is there are some extra explanatory words added to the text itself (external), or there is a stylistic deviation from the normal text that would hint to an allusive meaning, for example (internal). Naturally, more than one method can be used within the same segment of text, since there might be several different types of humor functioning on different levels as well. (Delabastita 1993, as quoted in Spanakaki 2007; Leppihalme 1994:182-188; Mateo 1995:175-177; Delabastita 1996:131-134; Gottlieb 1997:210; Leppihalme 1997:3; Veisbergs 1997:164-171.)

The above mentioned categories apply mostly to wordplay, allusions and the idiomatic use of the language. However, when analyzing the humor in translations of irony or sarcasm, for example, one has to take into consideration also the element of ambiguity and the tone of the text. As Mateo (1995:172) states, irony is not something that has specific recognizable linguistic features, it needs to be *interpreted* based on the context. In translating ironic humor Mateo (1995:174) feels that it is important to do whatever possible in order to adapt the effect of the original to the target text, and never resort to explaining the joke or the irony of the situation (fourth or seventh category above), which would destroy the humor of the situation.

Furthermore, André Lefevere (1975, as quoted in Eronen 2000:25-27) has named seven different strategies that translators have used when translating nursery rhymes. 1) The sounds of the original text are the same, meaning that the translation is successful with onomatopoeic words, names and etymologically related words that sound the same in both languages. 2) The sense of the original is translated, but the target text fails to follow the structure of the original. 3) The metre of the original is translated, and thereby some words may have to be ‘mutilated’ into an ungrammatical form to fit the line. 4) The poem is transferred into prose or 5) the

rhyming poetry is transferred into blank verse version. 6) The rhyme element is translated, but there is no attention to the other elements or the meaning. Finally, 7) the translation is an interpretation or some kind of imitation of the original. (Lefevre 1975, as quoted in Eronen 2000:25-27.) Although many of these strategies coincide with the categories of humor translation stated above, they are important to mention separately, since they discuss the structure of poetic translation that is relevant in the analysis of the songs, for example, in this study.

Moreover, the definition of equivalence by Zabalbeascoa (1996) is also a relevant 'touchstone' when analyzing the translations. The term 'equivalence' consists of three different priorities concerning the quality of the overall translation, of which the translator chooses to apply one. The basic 'equivalence' means that the priority of the translation is to be as close to the original as possible. Another term is 'non-equivalence' which means that the priority to a certain degree is not to be like the original, for example to deliberately make a serious political text sound like a parody in the target language. The third one is 'equivalence not regarded', which aims to be an acceptable text by avoiding the sexist language or the original, for instance. (Zabalbeascoa 1996:239-240.)

Newmark (1993:9) sums up these methods and points of view by stating that whenever there are choices to be made concerning translation, the translator should always try to use slightly more rather than slightly less humor in the translation

### 3.5.2. Other Considerations in Translating Verbal Humor

In addition to the linguistic problems the translator faces, the technical difficulties are also such that the translators often have to go out of their way to tackle humor in a manner which they themselves, their patrons or employees and their prospective audiences will think is appropriate (Delabastita 1997:11-12). Furthermore, Zabalbeascoa (1996:236) points out that the translator must consider the possible functions of humor in the source text, for example, if the text is meant to be entertainment, social criticism, pedagogical or moral device, and also the possible mental states and attitudes expressed by it. Delabastita (1997:11-12) states that with humor the translators have to make choices concerning the loss of the text, for

instance, and they need to prioritize things much more than in an ‘ordinary’ translation, that is, consider what is the most important thing to convey to the target audience. More often than not there is a time pressure and therefore the translators will choose the first more or less acceptable solution that crosses their mind. As a result, the translator can also function as a sensor and use the ‘untranslatability’ of a pun as a pretext, for example, for toning down the sexual content of the passage. (Delabastita 1996:135.) Paradoxically, Delabastita (ibid.) thinks that the only way to be faithful to the original text (i.e. to its verbal playfulness) is to be unfaithful to it (i.e. to its vocabulary and grammar).

Even though Newmark (1993:9) suggests that translation of comedy fails as a translation if it does not raise a laugh from its audience, Bassnett (1995:29) says that any translation can be judged only by taking into account the whole process and the function of the translation in its own context. Also Delabastita (1994:226-227) feels that the whole text, not the isolated pun, should be regarded as the unit of translation because one can never be sure when the pun is intended and when it is not. However, the genre of comedy should allow the translator to assume that the humor is intentional and the wordplays are not ‘isolated’ pieces of conversation, and therefore they can be taken into a closer observation.

These afore mentioned theories and opinions of various scholars offer explanations when analyzing what is humorous and why, and what the translations are based on. In the present study the humorous effect is the focus, but the context as well as the audience is also taken into consideration when analyzing the translations. The descriptions in section ‘linguistic methods for translating verbal humor’ will be used as guidelines when determining how the translations differ from each other and in respect to the original.

### 3.6. Previous Studies on Screen Translation and their Relevance to this Study

There are various studies done previously that focus on AV-translation and its different aspects of language or culture. There are, for example, failure and error-based studies (e.g. Lung 1998), or culture-specific elements studies (e.g. Leppihalme 1994 or Zabalbeascoa 1996). In addition, there have been studies analyzing the

original film and its dubbed *or* subtitled versions, or both of them but between different language pairs (e.g. Schröter 2003 with German dubbing and Swedish subtitling). All these offer some insights into and ideas to this analysis, but cannot be used as a pure reference to link this study's results into because their focus is mainly on either subtitling or dubbing material, not on the similarities and differences of those two.

Thus far, to my knowledge, only one study has been made that corresponds to an extent to this current study: *Subtitling and Dubbing: Restrictions and Priorities* (Coelh 2007). In this relatively short analysis the Portuguese dubbed and the subtitled versions of the *Chicken Run* were compared to each other. The style of speech and the form of the language and grammar were studied on a general level. The basic conclusion of that study was that the language is more grammatical in subtitles, and freer, more colloquial and dialectal in the dubbed version. This study seems to be of little help, since no replicable method of analysis was used and its focus was on a general overview of the differences, whereas the present study takes a closer look at a more specific area.

Even though there is not a study to be found within the interests of this study that could be replicated and tested, there are aspects in them that can be modified and adapted selectively into this analysis, namely the ways in which they have categorized humor and different translation methods, which were discussed earlier in the 'translation of verbal humor' -section. These methods, as well as Zabalbeascoa's (1996) equivalence-definition, also discussed earlier, will be taken advantage of when analyzing the translations within the humor categories in the present study.

In the following chapters the research questions will be discussed in more detail as well as the data of the present study.

#### 4. AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The basic issues that this study is interested in are the verbal humor in the films *Shrek* and *Shrek 2* and its translation from the spoken form into written (subtitles) and from spoken via written into spoken form (dubbing). The main research questions in this present study are 1) What kind of verbal humor characterizes *Shrek* films, 2) how this *humor* (the effect) is translated in the two modes of screen translation, and 3) how these translations differ (if at all) linguistically, semantically and pragmatically. The aim is to discuss these issues in a descriptive way, with examples, and not to search or focus on the possible errors the translators have made.

The first of these questions in this study aims to clarify the characteristics and the various forms of the verbal humor studied and to see if and how the consideration of the dual audience can be seen in the original film. The second question focuses on the quality of the translations, on whether the translations of humor can be interpreted as successful or not. With the third question the aim is to find out how these translations and their effects in humor differ from one another. The latter question is quite interesting to consider, since the data are collected in a country where there are quite strong opinions against dubbing and subtitling is favored and often considered succeeding better in translating the nuances of the original.

It has been claimed by many scholars that translation studies has long rejected audiovisual-translation as well as the translation of humor as it is seen as 'low' and unimportant. However, it seems that these subjects have rapidly become growing fields of study, not only among scholars, but also among the average viewers. This deduction is easily made based on the large number of websites and discussion-forums dedicated to the 'translation errors', for example. Ironically, these translation errors have themselves also become one source of humor. Both of these areas of study, screen translation and humor, are still relatively new, and therefore there are no specific rules or commonly agreed theories, yet, which is why it is important to keep the subject under discussion and keep the attention on the products of translation, not only concerning the language, but also the culture as well as the images that are transferred. Since the number of films targeted at children is constantly growing, it is important that their translations are investigated.

## 5. SET-UP OF THE PRESENT STUDY

### 5.1. The Data

The data of this study were collected from two DVDs, *Shrek* (2001) and *Shrek 2* (2004). Both films are one hour and thirty minutes long. It is important to note that according to Schröter's study (2003), there is usually a greater number of subtitles in the DVD version than in the televised version, for example, because in television the subtitles are designed and timed for the 'slower' average viewer and therefore they have more omissions, whereas the goal of the DVD subtitles is usually to include most of the dialogue. The data were collected manually from the DVDs, for there was no access to the scripts of the films, and therefore some linguistic errors are possible concerning the Finnish dubbing which had no separate subtitling available, unlike the other versions.

The data were collected in two phases. First, the original English version with Finnish subtitles was viewed and all the segments that, based on the issues discussed in the theory section, seemed to be verbally amusing or intended as such were written down. In the second phase the Finnish dubbed version was viewed with the English subtitles for the hearing impaired (intralingual subtitles). With the help of the English subtitles the corresponding segments were sought from the dubbed version. There were a few cases where it seemed that there was a humorous phrase in Finnish, but not in the original version. They were included into the material, but not specifically sought after as thoroughly as from the original. These are discussed in more detail in the analysis.

Since the aim of the present analysis is to find out the types of verbal humor and their corresponding translations, how they compare to each other, it seemed logical to begin with the original English version and *its* humorous intent rather than seeking the humorous pieces from the dubbed one first.

These films were selected as the source for the material for several reasons. Firstly, they have a rich content of linguistic and allusive humor, which is proven by their worldwide popularity. Secondly, *Shrek 1* and *2* were among the first computer

animated films ever, and also among the first animations that combine, as stated before, both the adult and child sense of humor, which offers an interesting point of view to the analysis of their translations. Additionally, the creators had taken into consideration the actors giving their voices in the creation of the humor, characters and story-line, which inevitably creates culture-specific humor. Finally, even though Finland is a subtitling country, all children's films, especially animated, are also dubbed. Therefore these films offer a great opportunity to compare and contrast the two different translations in one language – most previous studies have compared the original film with two, or more, translated languages - and at the same time to consider the dual audience receiving these translations.

The *Shrek 1* subtitles and dubbing are translated by Mari Metsävainio. The lyrics are translated by Mari Metsävainio and Lasse Juhani Paasikko together. *Shrek 2*, on the other hand, has more translators. The subtitles are by Marko Hartama and dubbing by Annamari Metsävainio. The lyrics in *Shrek 2* are translated by Metsävainio and Ulla Renko.

## 5.2. Methods of Analysis

According to Hansen (2005), quantitative research methods in translation studies are based on hypotheses that are observed from calculable and measurable categories, whereas qualitative methods rely on experiences and phenomena that need to be interpreted and explained. The latter method, qualitative, will be used in this study because, as was discussed earlier, verbal humor, particularly in films, is difficult to define clearly. Humor is more a matter of interpretation. The field of this study is translation studies; more specifically screen translation which is also called audiovisual translation.

Since the material was collected in two phases, the findings of the study are discussed in two phases as well. Firstly, there is a rough definition and categorization of the material into larger groups which depend on what kind of verbal humor will be found. There are no specific percentages or numbers on how many examples there are in each category, or precise categorization, since the results will be (highly) subjective – like humor always is – and furthermore, many categories overlap. For

example, songs could naturally be included under the category of ‘rhyme’, but since they contain many wordplay-elements as well, such as polysemy or homonyms, they could be placed under ‘wordplay’, too. Secondly, these categories will be analyzed further and discussed based on their translations, the translation types, and the differences between the dubbed and subtitled versions.

The division of the study into two phases is logical, since it seems that after analyzing the types of humor first, it is easier to identify the types that may be problematic for the translator or require more imagination from them. In the second phase there is also an opportunity to take a closer look at some of these instances and to compare the two translations with each other in the light of their ‘effectiveness’ in humor, and how it corresponds to the original intention. It will also be discussed how wide the field of humor is and how these particular films have created and taken advantage of the ways in which humor can be realized, since of course humor has to be somewhat ‘fresh’ to function and arouse interest as well as laughter in the audience.

Oittinen (2000:10) points out that the translators of books can (and should) explain their translation process and choices in a preface or afterwords, because the reader and the original author have the right to know of the possible changes the translation has in comparison to the original. This is something that the translators of audiovisual texts, dubbers or subtitlers, cannot really do. This makes it in some ways easy and in some ways hard to question and study the choices of the film translators, since one can never really know why they have made certain decisions and what have they been thinking of when translating, unless some questionnaires are incorporated to the study. So, all one can do is make hypotheses and draw conclusions based on the results, the translations, for according to Hansen (2005), a person who experiences or perceives the phenomena can also give the most precise description of it. However, I can only assume and recall from my own past what is amusing for a *child*. Therefore this point of view is not the main focus of this study.

Since the style of the films and their storylines are important factors in understanding the humor of the data, these factors will be discussed briefly in the following two chapters.

#### 5.4. William Steig and *Shrek*

*Shrek* is based upon a children's book by William Steig. The book was first published in 1990 and later in 2001 Dreamworks Entertainment turned it into a computer animated film with the help of the original author (Hedbald 2000). The sequel *Shrek 2* was released in 2004. They both have had international success.

The author of *Shrek*, William Steig (1907 – 2003), was first a cartoonist for the *New Yorker*. His tongue-in-cheek style and gallows humor made his cartoons popular among adults, and later on he brought the same kind of humor to his books for children. In his life, Steig wrote over 30 children's books and there are close to 2 million copies sold worldwide. (Hedbald 2000.) Steig's sarcastic humor and the way he creates parody can be seen also in the films *Shrek* and *Shrek 2*, and the success that he has had with his cartoons and children's books, is evidence that this is the kind of humor that both adults and children can enjoy.

#### 5.5. The Storylines of the Films

Shrek is a big, green ogre who likes to live all by himself on his swamp. One day this swamp becomes overcrowded with fairytale creatures that Lord Farquaad, a short and mean man, hates and has therefore deported to the swamp. Shrek decides to have a talk with the lord in order to get his home back. A talking Donkey comes with Shrek to be his guide and 'assistant' on this journey.

Lord Farquaad wishes to become a king, and for that to happen, he must marry a princess. He promises Shrek that if he rescues and brings him Princess Fiona, who is locked in a tower and guarded by a dragon, then Shrek would get his swamp back. Shrek agrees, and saves Fiona in a non-fairytale-like manner, that is, by not slaying the dragon and not waking up the princess with a kiss, which Fiona was expecting from her 'knight in shiny armor'. On their way back to Lord Farquaad they fall in love, which they, however, refuse to acknowledge.

Fiona has been cursed to transform into an ogre every night and only a true love's kiss could break the spell, which is why she is eager to get married as fast as possible

to anyone, even the lord. However, in the end true love triumphs, and Fiona marries Shrek and they can live happily ever after, as ogres.

In *Shrek 2*, Fiona, Shrek and Donkey travel to the kingdom of Far Far Away to meet Fiona's parents, the King and Queen. The parents are not happy to find out that their daughter has married an ogre and lives herself like one, too, instead of having married Prince Charming, like she was supposed to. The marriage with Prince Charming, who is a handsome, but vain and self-centered man, was pre-arranged by his mother, the Fairy Godmother. Now they all try to 'correct' the story and get rid of Shrek.

Fiona's father hires Puss in Boots to kill Shrek, but this attempt fails and Puss in Boots ends up helping Shrek to get Fiona back. Shrek believes that Fiona wants a 'happily-ever-after' with a real prince, so he drinks magic potion that turns him into a handsome prince, Fiona into a beautiful princess, and the Donkey into a white stallion. However, only a kiss before the next midnight would make the illusion true. Despite Fairy Godmother's and Prince Charming's interventions, they manage to reunite in time. Fiona turns out to be happy the way they were, so they let the spell break, turn back into ogres, and live happily ever after.

The characters, as well as the story line, define and shape the language in the films, and they are, therefore, the main source of the humor in the film. Shrek, for example, is sarcastic and seemingly rude, whereas Donkey is a more benevolent character, who does not always understand sarcasm or hints, which creates amusing situations. In addition, the distinctive features of some characters, such as Lord Farquaad's shortness, or the fairytale-caricatures, such as Pinocchio or Prince Charming, offer many opportunities for jokes. Therefore the films are interesting to study from a linguistic point of view, that is, to investigate how these elements of humor translate into another language and whether there are differences in the translations between the modes of screen translation.

In *Shrek*, the verbal humor is not based on only wordplays and jokes, but there occurs occasionally irony and sarcasm, allusions, old English, spells, rhymes and songs, which in particular according to Neale and Krutnik (1990:48) imply a control

of language, since the language is deliberately manipulated and highlighted for the purposes of humor. All these elements break or step out of the conventional conversation, most of the time making a humorous effect, and are therefore interesting material for the present study.

In the next chapters the data will be first discussed from the point of view of humor. Four major groups emerged from the original English material, each having some subdivisions, and these will be discussed with examples. Then the translations of the discussed elements will be analyzed and compared with each other. In addition, there is also a section that discusses the humorous occurrences in the translations which lacked in the original.

## 6. PART ONE OF THE ANALYSIS: THE CATEGORIES OF HUMOR

The data will be divided into four categories on the basis of the type of verbal humor they contain. Naturally, all the categories have further subtypes, but dividing the material into such specifics would be out of the scope of this study, since the present focus lies more heavily on the translation differences and similarities within these categories rather than the specific categorization of the humorous instances. Therefore four categories is a sufficient division, and it resembles the division made by Spanakaki (2007). The difference is that the songs and rhymes have been divided into a separate group in the present study because there were so many of them. In addition, ‘verbal irony’ by Spanakaki (2007) is understood more widely in this study; it includes also such elements as sarcasm, tone and timing of the utterances, and this category is named ‘other speech events’. Since these before mentioned elements are not dependent on only one or two words, like in the other categories, but rather on the whole speech event, it is justifiable to create a category of their own for them.

### 6.1. Songs and Rhyme

As in many films, music is an important and frequent factor in *Shrek*. In addition to the background music, there are also occasions when a character either cites or sings a line from a well-known song, or ‘bursts’ into singing. In these cases, the purpose of the singing is much like in the musicals: it at the same time breaks the illusion of the story (since the sudden extempore singing about one’s own life does not happen in real life), and carries the plot further by explaining some issue in the movie (such as the cleanliness in DuLoc) or by telling about some character (e.g. what Robin Hood and his Merry Men do in the forest).

In this study, all the songs that are cited by a character in the film and have also been reacted to somehow in the translation were included in the data, for it was assumed that they indicate that they matter in terms of the plot or the effect of humor. Since the background music is normally ignored in the screen translation, it is also reasonable to leave it out from the present study, even though it, too, offers interesting points to look at in terms of humor, such as its lyrics, tone, timing or the allusions it creates.

In these films, there are old classic songs (like the theme from “Rawhide”, a television series from the 1960s, or the “Holding out for a Hero” by Bonnie Tyler). They suit the context they are situated in, and occasionally the lyrics are manipulated or changed a little from their original form, and are thus in their context humorous. However, for the adult audience these intertextualities and allusions are clearly the source of humor, but for the child audience they undoubtedly are as such lost. On the other hand, it seems that singing as well as rhyming is common and popular in children’s literature and other media (television, films, plays, story-tapes), so the amusement might be derived from the phonetics, rhythm and content of the songs, for example, rather than their allusions to other films or situations.

There are a few made-up songs in these films, sung by the characters. They are noteworthy because the lyrics often play with rhyme and words, more than normal song lyrics would. In addition, the pace of the utterances is faster than normal speech, and therefore they seem to require more attention from the audience – and so it seems that the instances of wordplay are there for only a selected group to notice or react to. Placing the wordplays into a song may provide a little ‘safer’ way to play with innuendoes and euphemisms for sex, since the smaller children probably will not recognize them from the text, but will once again enjoy the musical aspect of the situation.

Example (5) (Setting: Robin Hood and his Merry Men are trying to save Fiona from Shrek, and they explain their intentions by singing.)  
 “I like an honest fight and a saucy little maid.  
 - What he’s basically saying is he likes to get...Paid.”

This example is a line from a song that is created specifically for this film and this character. Robin Hood is portrayed as a womanizing Frenchman (judging by his accent). In the same way as the legend, he helps the damsels in distress and the poor, but in this song it is hinted that his motives may be a little questionable, or that not everyone needs help; after all, Fiona is a modern woman. The line in question plays with words and rhyme. Since it is a song, it is expected that the couplet rhymes, but there is also a sexual implication in the context, and at least for most adults the phrase “likes to get - -“ would end with ‘laid’. There is a pause right before the last

word, giving the illusion that the word in question is somehow censured with a similar sounding one.

In this category there are also included instances where suddenly there is a rhyme in the speech, which often is a line from a children's song or book (and could therefore be under allusions as well).

Example (6) (Setting: Lord Farquaad has stolen a magic talking mirror that can help him create a kingdom of his own.)  
 Lord: Mirror, mirror on the wall,  
 is this not the most perfect kingdom of them all?

In this example the line is from the classic fairytale Snow White. Even though the mirror appears to be the same as in Snow White (allusion), it speaks 'normally' and not in rhyming stanzas as in the original fairytale. Therefore the lord's utterance rhymes unnecessarily. However it is understandable as it creates an amusing reference to the other story: who made the questions in it and how the mirror answered or behaved.

The rhyming can also be used to create wordplay:

Example (7) (Setting: Three maids have found Shrek after he has drunk magic potion which made him handsome. Only a kiss from his true love would make the transformation permanent)  
 - I'll be your true love!  
 - I'll be your true love!  
 - I'll be true... enough!

This is an example of how the various categories of humor can overlap, and it is a matter of opinion how the instance is defined. It is possible to see this as a case of repetition where *almost* the same sentence is uttered three times and the expectancy is broken in the last utterance, which semantically turns out not to be the same as the previous ones. In the first two sentences the meaning of 'true' is 'genuine', 'the one' or 'the only', whereas in the last sentence it means 'faithful'. So, the wordplay categorization of this instance would be justified.

On the other hand, the words play also with phonetics, since the words 'love' and 'enough' have much in common when pronounced. In this case it is therefore reasonable to place it under 'rhyme' due to the repetition of the sentence structure and the fact that the phonetically close equivalent words are situated at the end of the sentences thus creating a rhyming stanza.

## 6.2. Wordplay

There are many instances in the data where there is a double meaning given to the word ‘ass’, one of them being ‘donkey’ and the other one ‘bottom’. This is an example of a homonymy-wordplay. According to the creators (Making of – documentary 2001), this was done deliberately and the puns carefully counted for and situated throughout the films. Interestingly, there were not nearly as many donkey-jokes in the second film as there were in the first.

- Example (8) (Setting: Shrek and Donkey are saving Fiona from the dragon-guarded castle. Shrek has found Fiona, but the dragon has taken Donkey.)
- Wait where are you going? The exit’s right over there.
  - Well, I have to save my ass.

In this example Fiona has not met Donkey yet, and does not know that Shrek has come with somebody, so Shrek’s response sounds to her like he is trying to save only himself and not her. Naturally, the audience sees the situation from both viewpoints and the amusement might come from the potential misunderstanding from Fiona’s side.

The physical appearances of the other characters also offer opportunities for wordplay. For example, like Napoleon, lord Farquaad is a very short man and thirsty for power. His shortness often implies that his penis is also small, and that men often try to compensate the size of their penis by material things, such as the lord Farquaad’s castle in this film. In the following example the innuendoes are about lord Farquaad’s shortness, which Fiona is unaware of.

- Example (9) (Setting: Fiona asks Shrek and Donkey what his future fiancé is like)
- S: Men of Farquaad’s stature are in *short* supply.
  - D: I don’t know. There are those who think *little* of him.
  - F: You’re just jealous you can never measure up to a great ruler like Lord Farquaad.
  - S: But I’ll let you do the *measuring* when you see him tomorrow

The wordplay in this example is in the idioms (to be in short supply, to think little of somebody and measuring up to something or somebody) and in the different ways shortness can be implied (stressing the words ‘short’ and ‘little’ in the idioms). The first two utterances are seemingly a polite and flattering description of Farquaad, but

in the spoken version there is a clear stress on the words, which implies that something else is intended.

In the latter two sentences a word belonging to an idiom is first used in its original, real meaning, i.e. the idiom 'to measure up' meaning 'being as good as something else'. In the response the idiom is backgrounded and the original meaning of 'measuring' is implied instead.

A typical way to create verbal humor is also to take a proverb or a saying and change it slightly, defamiliarize it, and thereby create a humorous effect.

Example (10) Oh, stop being such a drama-king!

Normally someone who is acting a little hysterical over nothing is called a 'drama-queen', no matter what their sex is. In this example the speaker is Queen and the one she is speaking to is King, who is very angry. So, with this change of words in the idiomatic expression the utterance refers humorously to the 'profession' of the speakers as well as to the original meaning of the idiom, to reacting too seriously to something.

In this category there are also the (intentional) misunderstandings of meaning or what a pronoun or a name refers to.

Example (11) (Setting: Shrek and Donkey have found the castle where Fiona is locked up. It is dragon-guarded.)  
 - So, where's this fire breathing pain in the neck anyway?  
 - Inside, waiting for us to rescue her.

Shrek is not happy about the rescue mission that he has to do. In this example Donkey is wondering where the dragon is, but Shrek deliberately misunderstands the descriptive reference being about Fiona, who he consider to be a 'pain in the neck'.

There are also many instances where paronymy and other ways of creating wordplay and allusions are combined to create a humorous effect. Often these allusions are in written form somewhere on the screen, and therefore not easy to translate into subtitles or dubbing. These examples are separated into the chapter of their own, allusions.

### 6.3. Allusions

There is a vast amount of allusions and intertextuality in these films, and in many occasions they are combined with wordplay or song.

Particularly in *Shrek 2* there are many allusions to real world places, brand names and famous people. However, many cases are mostly visual, such as the store signs that have been altered (Burger Prince – Burger King, Baskin Robin Hood – Baskin Robins ice cream). These examples in particular require certain cultural knowledge from the viewer.

Example (12) (Setting: Donkey claims that he and Shrek are lost in the woods because they have passed the same bush over and over again.)  
The bush shaped like Shirley Bassey!

Shirley Bassey is a Welsh singer, who became famous in the 60s and 70s by performing theme songs to *James Bond* films (Wikipedia). Donkey is describing the bush with this allusion, either referring that it has similar pose to Bassey, or that the head of the human-shaped bush is like afro hairstyle a certain singer used to have.

In addition to the allusions to the real world, there are also instances that allude to other fairytales or movies.

Example (13) (setting: Shrek has asked from the fairytale creatures why they are on his swamp.)  
- Lord Farquaad. He huffed und he puffed und he signed an eviction notice. (The three pigs)

Example (14) I hate Mondays (Puss in Boots)

The first utterance is by one of the three pigs which have throughout the films a German accent that manifests mostly in their use of the German ‘und’ (‘and’). In this utterance the pig is explaining what had happened to all the fairytale creatures and, naturally, he uses a part of the phrase that was often repeated in the story of the three pigs. In the original story the last line would go “and he blew the house down”, and in a way this utterance resembles that: instead of breaking down the house, Lord Farquaad evicted the creatures from their homes, using a much more modern method, bureaucracy.

Puss in Boots utters the next sentence as he is sitting in a bar, feeling miserable. This is an allusion to the famous cartoon cat, Garfield. This allusion is amusing mostly due to the fact that it was said by another cat that is also having a bad day when nothing is going right.

As mentioned before, many fairytale creatures are also characters in the films. The ways that some of them have been characterized or described in the dialogue of the films have also been included to this category because they create an allusion to the original character in a humorous way.

Example (15) A gender-confused wolf (the Wolf from the Little Red Riding Hood)  
The possessed toy (Pinocchio)

In the film the Wolf is always dressed in the grandmother's dress and bonnet. However, he also has a really low, masculine voice and in the beginning of the *Shrek 2* he is found reading 'Pork Illustrated', a magazine that refers to the *Sports Illustrated* magazine that is filled with women in bikinis. This allusion has taken one instance from the original fairytale and, based on it, created a new, humorous, identity for the character.

The second characterization is made of Pinocchio, after he claims that he is a real boy and his nose grows. In the films Pinocchio is a wooden toy, so many of the characters are taken from the middle of their 'original story' and their identities are built on the situation they were in.

#### 6.4. Other Speech Events

This category is labeled as 'other speech events' because it mostly consists of the ways in which something is said in different contexts. In the instances of this category the language use and its performance have created the humorous effect, not necessarily single words, as in the other categories. Following this logic, sarcasm and irony, for example, are a variation from the everyday speech, often also a variation from the register that is being used at the moment. Therefore, also the instances that create a break in the register or a switch from one register to another are included to this category, as well as the instances where someone tries to imitate the speech of

the other (usually in order to make fun of the other speaker, or trying to sound as sophisticated as them.). The category is wide, as will be seen in the following examples.

- Example (16) (Setting: Fiona and Shrek return from their honeymoon and find Donkey living in their house.)  
 - I was taking care of your love-nest for you.  
 - Oh, you mean like sorting the mail and watering the plants? (Looks at a messy pile of mail and a brown, dead, plant)

In this example Shrek's utterance is an ironic remark (the content of the utterance is untrue, see section 2.2) to Donkey, who obviously has not done anything useful in the house while they were gone, even though he so sincerely claims he has. In this case the visual context makes the utterance humorous.

- Example (17) (setting: Shrek has just saved Princess Fiona from a dragon-guarded castle. Fiona speaks with old English.)  
 -But, thy deed is great and thine heart is pure. I'm eternally in your debt. The battle is won. You may remove your helmet, good sir Knight.  
 -No.  
 -Why not?  
 -I have helmet hair.  
 -Please. I wouldst look upon the face of my rescuer.  
 -Oh no you wouldn'tst.

In this example Fiona speaks like she thinks that a lady should speak to her Knight in Shiny armor, like in fairytales. She has not yet seen Shrek's face and Shrek is avoiding this to happen. Apparently he thinks that in order for Fiona to understand, he has to speak old English as well, which turns out to be ungrammatical. On the other hand, disregarding grammaticalness might also be intentional, thereby indicating that the style is somewhat out-dated and ridiculous, and that the situation is not from a fairytale.

The timing of some utterances and their appropriateness in the situation are relevant factors in humor. When these instances are not playing with words per se, they are included to this category.

- Example (18) (setting: Shrek's first words to Fiona's parents when they first meet. Fiona looks like an ogre.)  
 Well, it's easy to see where Fiona gets her good looks from...

This is an example of inappropriateness. One interpretation would be that Shrek refers to the beauty that Fiona had as a human, and the utterance is meant to be a compliment to the parents. Another way to interpret the situation is that the parents were not expecting their daughter to return with an ogre, let alone as an ogre, so the situation is awkward and Shrek tries to break the tension by telling a joke. As it turns out, nobody finds it funny, but rather insulting, and the silence that follows is even worse than it was before. For the audience, however, this uncomfortable situation is amusing.

Donkey is not the brightest character in the films, so many humorous instances rise from the fact that Donkey fails to understand what is said, even after an explanation. In these cases the sarcastic remark, for example, would turn on the speaker and make them and the situation that follows the source of humor.

Example (19) (Setting: Shrek and Fiona have returned from their honeymoon and want some privacy, but Donkey fails to understand the 'hints')

S: We need a little time, you know, to be together.  
 ...  
 S: Just with each other.  
 ...  
 S: Alone.  
 D: Say no more, say no more. You don't have to worry about a thing.  
 I will always be here to make sure *no one* bothers you!

In this example Donkey does not seem to understand the context, but instead interprets that the 'together', 'with each other' and 'alone' words include all three of them, and that they would not want any visitors from the outside. Shrek's not so subtle hints do not work, and later in the conversation he has to point out directly that it is Donkey who is bothering him.

It seems that the verbal humor in both films is a complex mixture of puns that are relatively easy to understand (e.g. the 'Donkey -jokes' or the songs), as well as those that require more knowledge of the ways of the world and more cognitive thinking (allusions and euphemisms) – which is an ideal combination for a dual audience. In each category there seems to be both 'difficult' and 'easy' examples, which shows that both audiences have been considered to an extent in the original dialogue of the films. In some instances it could be said that the humor is found for different reasons: what is amusing for a child (e.g. songs), might be amusing for the adult as a parody

or a wordplay that the child might not recognize. For the translator the challenges would seem to arise from the culture bound humor and linguistic puns (homonyms, rhyme). In the following chapter the choices that the translators have made concerning these varying features of verbal humor will be observed more closely.

## 7. PART TWO OF THE ANALYSIS: ANALYZING THE TRANSLATIONS

According to the categories established above, the translations of the examples are analyzed and discussed in terms of their humorous effect (the successfulness of the translation) and in comparison to each other. In addition, the consideration of a dual audience will be discussed in the analyses, though mostly only in the examples that require the consideration of this diversity of the audiences, that is, when euphemisms and sexual innuendoes are being used, for example.

### 7.1. Translation of Wordplays in Songs and Rhyme

The translation of the songs and rhyming require special attention from the translator. If the songs are not merely background music but they convey something about the situation or a character, they need to be recognized in the translations. The ideal translation would include not only the rhyming aspect of the instance, but also the same content and possibly the same kind of play with the meaning and the words. In addition, in dubbing it is important to fit the words to the characters mouth movements, at least in timing.

Examples (20), (21) and (22) of the songs include specific rhyming couplets and their respective translations. In each case there is some amusing element that is important for the humorous effect in the original version.

Example (20) (*Shrek 1*) (setting: Shrek and Donkey arrive for the first time in DuLoc, the town of Lord Farquaad, and the first thing they see is the information booth that is a kind of a music box.)

<p>“Welcome to DuLoc, such a perfect town/ Here we have some rules. Let us lay them down/ Don’t make waves, stay in line and we’ll get along fine/ DuLoc is a perfect place/ <u>Please keep off of the grass. Shine your shoes, wipe your...face/ DuLoc is, DuLoc is, DuLoc is a perfect place!”</u></p>
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#### SUBTITLES

#### DUBBING

<p>”Tervetuloa DuLociin Kaupunki tää verraton/ Säännöt nyt me kerrotaan Näin heti ekana/ Älä huido, joukkoon käy Niin surua ei meillä näy/ DuLoc on paikka verraton/ <u>Nurmelle ei käy heppa, pyyhi kengät sekä ...nassu/ DuLoc on, DuLoc on/ DuLoc on paikka verraton!”</u></p>	<p>”Tämä on Duloc! Paikka armas tää. Muista säännöt nää, että mielees jää. Ethän häiriköi lain, käymme yhdessä ain, DuLoc paikka armahain. <u>Tärkein värssymme tää: pyyhi myös ala – suu. DuLoc on, DuLoc on DuLoc paikka armahain!”</u></p>
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In the original version the clear expectancy, based on the rhyme, phrase structure and visual clues, is that the final word of the couplet would be ‘ass’ instead of ‘face’ which does not rhyme at all with ‘grass’. As discussed in the earlier chapter

concerning the humor in the songs, there is also a pause before this ‘censured’ word, hinting that the intention was to say something quite different.

It seems that the subtitled version is an attempt to convey all the aspects of the original. It contains the idea of not walking on the grass as well as wiping the shoes and the face. In addition, the rhyming is created in a similar way to the original, and the expectancy with the subtitles is the same, although the tone of the word is less strong in Finnish than in English (FI ‘peppa’ EN ‘bottom’). This translation might therefore be more amusing and acceptable humor to a child, for example. However, for an adult the word ‘peppa’ seems a little naïve.

In the dubbing there is an attempt to preserve only the rhyming and wordplay-aspect of the original. In this version there is somewhat clearer a hint to what is not said. Unlike in the other versions, there is something ‘extra’ in the sentence: the word ‘ala’ is indicated to be a false start to a word (since it is cut in the middle) and it is then corrected with the real word ‘suu’, which is something that does not appear in the other versions. This false start would most likely be seen as a reference to ‘alapää’ (‘bottom’), and be thereby humorous. Even though the humor in this translation is not as clever as in the subtitled version, the dubbed version functions better as a song, since the words and their phonetic appearance fit the music better than the once from the subtitled version. The dubbed translation seems to be suitable for both audiences.

Example (21) (*Shrek 1*) (setting: Shrek, Donkey and Fiona are walking through a forest when suddenly Robin Hood and his Merry Men stop them.)

<p>”Ta dadah dah, whoo. I steal from the rich and give to the needy – He takes a wee percentage - But I’m not greedy. I rescue pretty damsels. Man, I’m good. –What a guy, Monsieur Hood. – <u>I like an honest fight and a saucy little maid.</u> – What he’s basically saying is he likes to <u>get...Paid.</u> – So when an ogre in the bush grabs a lady by the tush – That’s bad – That’s bad. – When a beauty’s with a beast it makes me awfully mad. – He’s mad, he’s really really mad. – I’ll take my blade and ram it through your heart. Keep your eyes on me boys, ’cause I’m about to start...”</p>
--

SUBTITLES

DUBBING

<p>”Rikkailta vien, köyhille tuon/ - Ottaa osan – Lopusta luovun/ neitoja autan olen aika epeli/ - Mikä mies – Hood on nimesi/ <u>En neidolle koskaan ’ei’ mä sano/ - Parasta kaikista on...- Tilillepano/ Hirviö on puskassa Tarttuu pepusta, kurjaa, kurjaa/ On kaunotar ja hirviö Raivoni on hurjaa / hän on hurja, hurja / lyön veitsen läpi aortan / katsokaa tarkkaan sillä kaiken aloitan...”</u></p>	<p>”Ken puutteessa on mä hälle ain annan – vain koron pienen pitää – Mä vastuun kannan. Mä naiset pelastan, oon ihmemies –Mikä mies, mösjöö Hood. –<u>On mieleen mulle taisto ja neito terhakkain, tämä lause tulkitkaa, että heitä siis hain.</u> On tuo jätti rumilus, mieles neidon takamus – Ei saa – Kera hirviön neito se miehen raivoon saa,se miehen raivoon saa. Siksi näin itselläin tahdon sinut rusentaa, pojat katsoa saa, nyt miekka laulaa saa...”</p>
--	---

The underlined part of the original was mentioned before (example 5) and was discussed in terms of its humor in section 6.1. Much like the previous example, this sentence also plays with one word and its rhyming allusion to something to be censured (paid – laid), but in contrast to example (20) in example (21) the word ‘paid’ rhymes with its couplet ‘maid’.

In the original the intended word ‘laid’ is changed by switching the first letter of the word to another. In the subtitles the word is referred through a ‘clarified’ polysemy, i.e. the other, not vulgar, meaning of the Finnish word ‘pano’ (‘sexual intercourse’/ ‘to deposit’) is clarified by adding the reference to a bank account to it.

In this example the dubbed version has captured basically all the aspects of the original, as it includes the references to fighting and women, and a kind of a sexual reference as well, although it is much more vague and toned down than in the original and subtitled versions, basically saying that Hood has ‘picked up’ some women in his lifetime. In dubbing this translation can be a good choice if children are seen as target audience, whereas the subtitled version suits better for adults, due to its use of an actual wordplay.

Overall it seems like the subtitled version is translated rather into a form of a poem and rhyming couplets, and not into a song like in the dubbing, where there are ‘filler’ words, for instance, to fit the length of the utterance better. Semantic content, however, appears to be the same, and what could be seen as the most important, the play with words has been achieved in both versions to an extent.

Example (22) (*Shrek 2*) (setting: Fiona meets her Fairy Godmother for the first time)  
SUBTITLES & DUBBING

With just a... Wave of my magic wand, your troubles will soon be gone. With a flick of the wrist and just a flash, you'll land a prince with a ton of cash.	Hiukan vain.../ Mä-kun-vain heilautan sauvallain, ei huolia sulla lain/ Sillä ilmestymään näin sulle saan Mä prinssin komean, varakkaan/
A high-priced dress made by mice no less, some crystal glass pumps and no more stress, your worries will vanish your soul will cleanse. Confide in your very own furniture friends, we'll help you set a	Pian hiiret jo ompelee/ Ja kristallikenkäs häikäisee/ Huolesi haihtuu, sä muutut niin/ Kun luotat vain tavara-avustajiin/ ja ohjeisiin sut muotoileviin/ Pian oot

<p>new fashion trend. -I'll make you fancy, I'll make you great -The kind of a girls a prince would date! -They'll write your name on the bathroom wall...'for a happy ever after, give Fiona a call' -A sporty carriage to ride in style, sexy manboy chauffeur Kyle.</p> <p>A) <u>Banish your blemishes, tooth decay, cellulite thighs will fade away. And oh, what the hey! Have a bishon frisé.</u> <u>Nip and tuck, here and there, to land that prince with the perfect hair.</u></p> <p>Lipstick liners, shadows, blush, to get that prince with the sexy tush.</p> <p>B) <u>Lucky day, hunk buffet. You and your prince take a roll in the hay. You can spoon on the moon with the prince to the tune.</u></p> <p>C) <u>Don't be drab, you'll be fab. Your prince will have rock-hard abs.</u></p> <p>D) <u>Cheese soufflé, Valentine's Day. Have some chicken fricassee!</u> Nip and tuck here and there to land that prince with the perfect hair..."</p>	<p>kaunis, epäile en – Sä tyttö prinssin haaveiden/  Hän seinään nimesi kirjoittaa/ "Näin ikuisen onnen Fionalla saa"/  saat vaunun upean, tyylikkään, kuskin herkkukönsikkään/  <u>Kauneusvirheet me poistamme, kapean uuman loihdimme/ ja päähän tupee, syliin bishon-frisee!/  <u>Liitat pois napsaisen ja prinssin saat takatukkaisen/</u>  Naaman uudeks korjailen, saat prinssin näppäräpeppuisen/ <u>Vaivaa ei hurlumhei, sinä ja hän sekä jippiijajei/ <u>Kiihkeisiin suudelmiin, prinssis vie taivasiin/</u>  <u>Hämärään säteillään lemmen tempu hempeillään/</u>  <u>Sydän lyö, juhannusyö, kanaviilokkia syö!/ Liitat pois napsaisen, ja prinssin saat takatukkaisen</u></u></u></p>
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This song is sung by the Fairy Godmother to Fiona, and it resembles the scene from Cinderella where her Fairy Godmother comes to change her for the royal ball. There are also references to the Beauty and the Beast ('furniture friends'), and some television series (e.g. *Nip/Tuck* – 'muodon vuoksi', *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* – 'sillä silmällä'). This example serves as an example of all of the songs in *Shrek 2*: they all had the same translation to the word in dubbing and subtitling – unlike in *Shrek*.

The content seems to be basically the same in both versions. The song describes how Fiona could be changed, also physically by cosmetic surgery, and that all this is done so that she would find a man, a handsome prince. This, however, is not a very romantic song. There are many cases of innuendoes to sexual intercourse ("they'll write your name on the bathroom wall...'for a happy ever after, give Fiona a call'"), and partly the song seems to merely bring up words that rhyme, and the actual content is not so relevant. This absurdity of the lyrics could be a means to characterize the

Fairy Godmother. In the translation this seems to have been taken into consideration. All of the words have not been translated with their equivalent Finnish terms, but innuendoes and humorous effects are found in it. However, only a few instances are here discussed in detail, and these are the ones that seem to have the least equivalence with the original, that is, their content is not the same as in the original.

One peculiar translation is in part A, when the Godmother mentions the hair. In the first utterance it is not mentioned in the original, but in the translation Fiona suddenly gets a toupee on her head, which is usually meant for balding men. In the second sentence the prince has the perfect hair in the original, whereas in the Finnish version the hair is a mullet, a now outdated fashion style from the 1980s. However, even though the content is not similar, the rhyming is successful and the humorous effect seems to transfer quite well from the translation, and the added imagery of the hair works well, perhaps because it is a little unusual or unexpected in a story.

In part B there are many sexual innuendoes which are translated with the nonsense words ‘hurlumhei’ and ‘jippiajei’ and later toned down to kissing. This seems justified considering that children are the target audience. However, in this case the tone of the original seems to be changed, since in the translation the heavy innuendoes have been softened, which is good for the child audience, but somewhat disappointing for the adults.

On the other hand, this toning down in part B seems to be corrected a little in part C of the translation where the description of the prince (‘rock-hard abs’) is replaced with a reference to sex (FI ‘lemmentempu hempeillään’ EN ‘to make sweet love’).

Part D, in particular, shows how some words seem to be situated to the song merely because they rhyme. Cheese soufflé and chicken fricassee do not seem to make much sense in the song. Although, later in the story the Fairy Godmother blames the King for ruining her diet, which would explain some of this obsession with food and body figure in the song. Interestingly, the translation manages to convey the eating of chicken of some kind as well as the idea of love and Valentine’s Day (FI ‘sydän lyö’ EN ‘heart beats’). It also seems to transfer the American celebration of the Valentine’s Day to the Finnish Midsummer’s night, which is justifiable, since

according to the myths girls can then find out their true love by various magical ways.

Obviously there is less work needed when the dubbing and subtitling are done by the same translator, and in such a case there is necessarily no point in trying to figure out twice the translations of the same wordplay and rhyme. Interestingly, though, in *Shrek 1* the translations between dubbed and subtitled versions differ from each other, despite the fact that they are done by the same translator, whereas in *Shrek 2* the translations are the same but translators not.

One could claim that something is missed in the subtitled translation of this song, especially in the parts B and C where the translation is less literal, since the original is there to be heard at the same time. In these cases, choosing to translate the subtitled version separately could have offered an opportunity to gain a closer equivalence to the original, because subtitles do not require such precision with the musical elements as the dubbed one does, and thereby there would also be a more amusing translation for the adults.

Example (23) (*Shrek 2*) (setting: Shrek has upset Fiona, and he is trying to please her. It is raining, so Shrek and Donkey are staying in a barn for the night.)

"The sun will come out tomorrow, bet your bottom..." I'm coming Elizabeth!	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
"Aurinko paistaa huomenna...Tunnet sen takapuolella..." Täältä tullaan Elma!	"On aurinko ain kuin vertaus, enpähan mä vaan kastu...!" Esteri, minä tulen!

After drinking magic potion the Donkey is trying to cheer up Shrek by singing a line from "Tomorrow" (from the musical *Annie*, from the 1970s). The actual line ends with "...bet your *bottom dollar* that tomorrow there will be sun" ("Lyrics" 2007). Donkey, ironically, ends the song with 'bottom' and cries out right before he faints "I'm coming Elisabeth", which in turn is a reference to a sitcom *Sanford and Son* from the 1970s, where the phrase was used by a father (crying out his dead wife's name) who faked a heart attack whenever his son threatened to leave ("Sanford and Son" 2007). Since the references are fairly old, they clearly are the source of humor mainly for the adults. As before, for children the humor is most likely once again drawn from the musical aspect and actual words, like 'bottom'.

If one analyses the line ‘bet your bottom’ further, there can also be found a donkey-joke from it. According to the creators, all donkey-jokes are carefully planned, so it is safe to assume that whenever there is ‘bottom’ as the core of the wordplay, it is somehow also connected to ‘ass’ and ‘donkey’. Hence, the phrase could refer also to ‘you (can) bet your *ass*’; a colloquial phrase meaning that something is ‘certain’, or possibly that one can trust what Donkey is saying. If this is the case, this aspect is lost in the translations.

In the translations this particular song line has been translated according to the humorous aspect of the original, that is, the line ends with ‘bottom’. In subtitles the translation is fairly equivalent with the original – it even has rhyming, indication of a song, which lacks in the original. In the dubbed version, on the other hand, the focus is in the fact that the line is not clear or finished, and the context in which it is uttered: it is raining heavily. For an adult taste the subtitled version seems more amusing, whereas the dubbed version more suitable for children, because “enpäähän mä vaan kastu” (“so long as I don’t get wet”) sounds like something a child would say.

The reference to Elisabeth has been replaced in both translations with old-fashioned Finnish women’s names, Elma and Esteri. It seems to have been important for the translators to maintain at least the first letter of the original name in the translations, but there the similarities end: neither of these names has a clear Finnish allusion.

Example (24) (*Shrek 2*)

-I’ll be your true love! -I’ll be your true love! -I’ll be true... enough!	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
-Minä olen rakkaasi. -Minäpä. -Minä myös... välillä.	-Mä oon sun valittusi -Mä oon sun valittusi -Mäkin oon valittu... usein.

This example was discussed earlier in the chapter 6.1 (example 7) in terms of its humor and why it was categorized as rhyme. Assuming that rhyming and phonetics play a crucial part in transmitting humor to the audience, it is interesting how differently the two translations have reacted to this utterance.

The subtitles have maintained only the basic idea of the original, which is that the third maid is not faithful, or rather that she is indecisive and wants to love only occasionally, whereas the original suggests that the maid would love but not faithfully.

The dubbed version, in turn, has the same repetition as the original, and ‘valittusi’ (‘your chosen one’) sounds more fairytale-like in Finnish than ‘rakkaasi’ (‘your beloved one’). In addition, the choice of this word creates the desired wordplay in the Finnish version, the last utterance indicating that the maid has been ‘chosen’ often, and therefore, even though the rhyming element is missing, this translation succeeds better in terms of humor than the subtitled version, especially for the adult audience, since it is closer to the original. However, the translation would seem to be vague enough to be amusing for a child audience as well.

One interesting translation was also the “I Need a Hero” song. This song was originally by Bonnie Tyler, and it does not have a Finnish version. It is sung in the film by the Fairy Godmother, so it is fairly central to the visual aspect of the film and needs to be translated, even though it in a way corresponds more to a background song, for it does not offer any additional information about the characters or the situation, like the other songs included into the material of this study. Like the other songs in *Shrek 2*, this one was also translated in the same way in the subtitles and dubbing. Because it did not include any playing with the words or allusions, this particular song was not taken under closer observation.

## 7.2. Translation of Wordplay

There are many donkey-related jokes in the films, as was shown above. Often these jokes play with the double meaning of the word ‘ass’ and the idiomatic combinations around it. Since in Finnish there is no such word that would refer to the both of the meanings of the original, these instances cause problems for the translators, and often they have to translate only the main idea behind the utterances. The following three examples (25), (26) and (27) show this problem.

Example (25) (*Shrek 1*)

- Wait where are you going? The exit's right over there. - Well, I have to save <u>my ass</u> .
--

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- Minne menet? Uloskäynti on tuolla. - Minun täytyy pelastaa <u>aasini</u> .	- Hei minne sinä menet? Ulko-ovi on tuolla. - No, pitäähän <u>luuska</u> pelastaa.
---	---

In the subtitles only the sense of the original source text word is translated and the wordplay deleted. Also, the dubbed version has retained the sense, but by choosing the word 'luuska' ('a nag') it has humorous connotations for both audiences: the word is a degrading noun that is in Finnish often used as an adjective when insulting a woman, so in this translation it could be interpreted to refer to Donkey or Fiona.

Example (25) (*Shrek 1*) (Setting: Shrek hugs Donkey)

Don't get all slobbery. No one likes a kiss ass
---

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

Älä viitsi liehakoida ja mielistellä	Pientä rajaa paapomisen kanssa, älä ny oo aasi.
--------------------------------------	---

Example (26) (*Shrek 2*) (Setting: Donkey drinks magic potion that should transform him handsome)

- Do I look any different? - You still look like an ass to me.
---

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- Näyttääkö siltä? - Olet yhä täysi aasi.	- Näkyyks jottai? - Sinä ole yhä yks aasi.
--	---

In example (25) 'ass' means 'people-pleaser', and in (26) 'idiot'. Interestingly, all the translations refer to an idiot, which is the only connotation that the Finnish word 'aasi' has. In the translations of example (25) only the sense of the sentence is explained, and the wordplay missed, although the word 'donkey' is added to the dubbed version. In example (26) the wordplay is more successful, since the double-meaning of the Finnish word 'aasi' ('donkey / idiot') is taken advantage of.

In some donkey-jokes the wordplay is not done with the double meaning discussed in the previous examples. In those cases the translator has better chances to create a target text wordplay, as the following example shows.

Example (27) (*Shrek 1*) (Setting: Magic dust makes Donkey fly for a few seconds)

You might have seen a housefly, maybe even a super fly, but I bet you ain't never seen a donkey fly!

SUBTITLES

DUBBING

Olet nähnyt kärpästen ja vitsien lentävän, mutta et varmasti ole nähnyt aasin lentävän!

Nyt mä olen puhuva ilmavaiva. Ootte kai nähny hevoskärpäsen ja banaanikärpäsen, mut mä oonki maailman ainoo aasikärpänen!

In this example the original word 'fly' is ambiguous, since it could be a verb or a noun. In the subtitles the meaning 'to fly' is interpreted as the core of the wordplay, and the equivalent idioms have been taken from Finnish ('flies and jokes fly'). In turn, in the dubbing the noun is the core, and different kinds of flies are described (a horsefly, banana fly and 'donkey fly'). In addition, the in the dubbed version there is an additional joke. 'Puhuva ilmavaiva' in the context can be interpreted so that Donkey is a talking and flying problem, or with the literal meaning 'talking flatulence'.

Example (28) (*Shrek 1*)

D: Donkeys don't have layers. We wear our fear right out there on our sleeves.

S: Wait a second, Donkeys don't have sleeves...

SUBTITLES

DUBBING

- Aaseilla ei ole kerroksia. Me näytämme pelkomme

- Aaseilla ei ole näyttöä.

- Aaseil ei oo kerroksii, vaan pelko ui heti liiveihin.

- Mitä höpäjät. ei Aaseilla ole liivejä.

In this example the idiom 'to wear one's heart in a sleeve' is altered with another sentiment, fear. The original idiom means vulnerability and a tendency to show one's feelings; in this case Donkey means that he is easily scared. With a sarcastic intent, Shrek takes the words literally.

A Finnish saying that has the concept of 'fear' and 'clothing' ('a vest') is used in the dubbed version. This in turn makes it easy to translate the response in the same way as the original is formed. The subtitled version translates the idiom literally, but still manages to recover the wordplay in the response. Therefore, both translations succeed in creating the humorous effect, and, like the previous example (27), both translations suit for both audiences.

The following is a further example of completely different translations concerning wordplay. Once again the translations are done by the same translator.

Example (29) (*Shrek 1*)

- |  |
|--|
| - Men of Farquaad's stature are in <i>short</i> supply.<br>- I don't know. There are those who think <i>little</i> of him. |
|--|

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| - Farquaadin kaltaisten miesten määrä on pieni.<br>- Joidenkin mielipiteet hänestä ovat pikkumaisia. | - Farquaadin kaltaisia miehiä vaivaa <i>lyhytnäköisyys</i> .<br>- Voipi olla, mut senkaltaiset sopii <i>pätkätöihin</i> . |
|--|---|

In the subtitles the utterances convey the double meanings ('the amount of something' and 'smallness') of the sentences well. Interestingly, in the dubbed version the new utterances have been created around compound nouns that have the words 'small' or 'short' in them. However, the sentences seem to be made only the wordplay in mind, not the context or the story-line, since they do not really describe lord Farquaad or their opinions about him. On the other hand, the performance-element is also an important factor in this joke, that is, the stressing of the words and the tone of voice may be the reason why the dubbed version sounds more amusing, for both audiences.

In the following two examples (30) and (31) there is an intentional misunderstanding of what is referred to and the meaning of a certain word or words.

Example (30) (*Shrek 1*)

- |  |
|--|
| - So, where's this fire breathing pain in the neck anyway?<br>- Inside, waiting for us to rescue her |
|--|

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| - Missä se tultasyöksevä otus on?<br>- Hän odottaa pelastajiensa tuloa. | - No, missäs se tultahönkivä kiusanhenki ny luuhaa?<br>- Sisällä. Hän vartoo meitä pelastamaan. |
|---|---|

Example (31) (*Shrek 2*) (Setting: Prince Charming is posing as Shrek in a human's form. King recognizes him.)

- |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| - Charming?<br>- Eh, do you think so? |
|---------------------------------------|

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Uljas?<br>- Tykkääksä appi? | - Uljas?<br>- Olenko tosiaan? |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|

Punning based on the ambiguous reference of a word seems fairly simple to translate, as the example (30) shows (the humor was discussed in example 11). Both translations are direct translations that none the less preserve the wordplay. In example (31) the King speaks to Prince Charming referring to *him* by asking about his identity. Prince Charming does not want to be revealed, so he swarms the

question by defining the name as a complement. This name-play is successfully translated, because the prince is named with an adjective also in Finnish. The subtitled translation in example (31) would seem more amusing to the adult audience that can find connotations from the use of ‘appi’ (‘father-in-law’) to their own lives or to some other films and television series that exaggerate the family relationships.

The following example plays with a change of an ordinary noun to a name that has religious connotations, and exclamations.

Example (32) (*Shrek 2*) (Setting: Shrek and Donkey find out that Fairy Godmother is Prince Charming’s mother)

PC: Thank you, mother. D: Mother?! S: ...Mary...A talking horse!	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
- Kiitos, äiti. - Äiti?! -...Maaria! Puhuva hevonen!	- Kiitos, äiti. - Äiti?! -...Päivi! Puhuva hevonen!

Shrek tries to cover up Donkey’s exclamation by making it a religious shout (‘Mother Mary!’) that would shift the attention from the fact that they were eavesdropping to that the horse can talk. In the subtitles this transformation has been translated directly, but in dubbing the religious exclamation is avoided by making the wordplay about phonetics: Shrek’s utterance would indicate that no one shouted ‘äiti’ (‘mother’), but the exclamation was the name ‘Päivi’ that sounds similar. In other respects the utterance functions the same way as the original. In dubbing this solution seems justifiable because in that version the voice actors can emphasize the similarities of the two words ‘äiti’ and ‘Päivi’, and furthermore, the child audience would probably understand this better, and find it therefore more amusing.

Example (33) (*Shrek 1*) (Setting: Shrek tells Donkey to find the stairs that would lead to the tallest tower in the castle, where Fiona is.)

Oh, I’ll find those stairs. I’ll whip their butt, too. Those stairs won’t know which way they’re going. I’m gonna take drastic steps. Kick it to the curb. Don’t mess with me. I’m the stair master. I’ve mastered the stairs. I wish I had a step right here, I’d step all over it.	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Löydän ne portaat ja annan niille köniin/ ne eivät tiedä, mihin päin kääntyä. Aion käyttää rajuja otteita. <u>Porramestarille</u> ei ryyppyillä. Minä olen <u>portaiden mestari</u> . <u>Kävelen pitkin askelmia</u> .	Kun mä löydän ne portaat, niin pistän kyllä mutkat suoriksi. Justnii, ne ei tiedä minne ne on menossa. Mä <u>steppaan</u> ne tainnoksiin, <u>portaat rullalle</u> . <u>Rappureiskalle</u> ei ryyppyillä. <u>Rappaan niitä rappusia</u> ja kun mä rappaan nii mä steppaan, nii mä rappaan rappujen rahat pois.

In this example Donkey gets excited and has a monologue as he is trying to find the staircase. He comes up various sayings and idioms that are about steps or stairs. ‘To take drastic steps’ can be interpreted literally or metaphorically ‘to do something dramatic or extreme’. ‘Kick it to the curb’ has also literally ‘feet’ and ‘horse’ related meanings, but usually the phrase is used as ‘to fire somebody’ or ‘to break up with somebody’ (see e.g. “Urban Dictionary” 2007). The next two phrases play also with each other, how the meaning can change with the word order. The ‘stair master’ can refer to a gymnastics device, or being a master in stairs (managing to ‘conquer’ the steps, or being the best at ‘fighting’ the stairs). In the last utterance “I’d step all over it” an idiom concerning stepping is again taken advantage of.

In Finnish there are also two words to refer to staircase, namely ‘rappuset’ and ‘portaat’. It is interesting that the latter one is used in the subtitles and the first one in the dubbing. Donkey’s speech is quite fast, so understandably there is some reduction of the text in the subtitles. The sense of the original sentences has been translated, quite literally, but also wordplay has been preserved in the ‘stair master’ case, in both translations. In the subtitles the wordplay is achieved with a word that is a combination of ‘pormestari’ (‘mayor’) and ‘portaat’ (‘stairs’). In the subtitles the word ‘rappu’ (‘a step’) is used to replace the first part of the Finnish word ‘remonttireiska’ (‘a handyman’), which also alludes to a Finnish television show, where a man called ‘Remontti Reiska’ gives instructions to viewers on how to renovate their homes. This theme of a renovation or a building is also continued in the dubbing translation by using the word ‘rappaan’, which can mean either ‘to plaster’ or be a dialect word for going up and down the stairs many times. In addition to these wordplays found from the dubbed version, alliteration with the letter /r/ has also been used, which combined with the muttering tone of Donkey also creates an amusing effect. This latter factor makes the sequence amusing for the child audience, but otherwise it would seem that only the adult audience can appreciate the humor in this sequence.

Example (34) (*Shrek 2*)

Oh, stop being such a drama-king!	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Ollanpa sitä nyt niin kuningasjätkää.	Voi, älä nyt ole niin dramaattinen.

The humor in this example was discussed earlier (example 10). In its translation into dubbing the wordplay element has been left out and only the basic meaning of the utterance is translated, whereas in subtitles there is an effort to include the ‘king’ into the phrase. The result is that the utterance in Finnish suggests that the King has a desire to rule and decide everything for others. The humor is achieved however, mainly from the combination of the words ‘king’ and ‘dude’, which could be amusing for the adults and the children.

Example (35) (*Shrek 2*) (Setting: Small talk in a factory)

Working hard, or hardly working?	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Urakka joutuu, vai mitä?	Työtä pusketaan ku silmäpuoli sonni?

In this example (35) there is an old wordplay of an adverbial formation that has practically become an idiom in English. Despite the fact that this phrase or a modification of it occurs often in the English language, it does not have a wordplay-equivalent in Finnish. Therefore, the translations have been created according to the context, according to small-talk in a workplace. In dubbing the small-talk is created by a metaphorical and innovative utterance that in its oddness succeeds in creating a humorous effect, and is also suitable for both audiences.

The last example in this category is a curse-like interjection that is fairly unique in these data. Therefore it is interesting to consider these translations for the dual audience.

Example (36) (*Shrek 1*) (Setting: The Gingerbread man insults lord Farquaad and spits in his face.)

Eat me!	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Haista home!	Maista!

The humor of the utterance is in that the speaker is an edible Gingerbread man, who has been dipped into milk as a torture. This interjection is an insult and resembles the ‘bite me’-cussing. In the subtitles a milder interjection has been chosen, with a vague connotation to food (‘mould’), whereas in the dubbed version a similar wordplay-interjection is used as in the original: instead of the original Finnish insult ‘Haista!’ there is a suggestion to taste something (‘Maista!’), and this insult was created with only a change of the first letter. Therefore the dubbed translation seems like a better translation of the original, and additionally also more suitable for the younger

audience. For the adult audience this dubbed version seems also more amusing, since it has the wordplay-element in it, whereas in the subtitles only a normal insult is used.

### 7.3. Translation of Allusions

As discussed in section 2.4, allusions are culture-bound and therefore often hard to translate. The following, however, is an example of an allusion to a well-known children's story.

Example (37) (*Shrek 1*)

Lord Farquaad. He <u>huffed and he puffed</u> and he signed an eviction notice.	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Lordi Farquaad <u>henkäisi ja hönkäisi</u> ja määräsi meille häädön	Lordi Farquaad. Hän <u>puhkui ja puhisi</u> ja...ojensi häätökäskyn.

The allusion and its humor of this example were discussed earlier (example 13). Structurally the both translations seem to be equivalent to the original. However, in the subtitled version this alluding part of the phrase is translated with words that refer to heavy breathing and it ends with verbal command (“määräsi meille häädön”), whereas in the dubbed version the words refer to blowing, as does the original, and then to an action, giving an eviction (“ojensi häätökäskyn”). The dubbed version seems to bring out better the comic contrast between the allusion and the action that actually happened. The humorous effect, however, is probably the same for both audiences.

Example (38) (*Shrek 2*) (setting: Shrek is wondering what to do with Puss in Boots. Donkey gives a suggestion.)

I say take the sword and neuter him. Give him the <u>Bob Barker</u> treatment	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Otetaan miekka ja kuohitaan saman tien. Pallit pois.	Miten ois kirurginen operaatio? Miekalla nipsis napsis

Bob Barker is a US game show the "Price Is Right" host, who has actively spoken against animal overpopulation (Turnquist 2004). In this example the name is completely left out from the translations, and only the basic meaning of the allusion has been translated. The subtitled version is much more graphic in describing what should be done, it leaves very little to the imagination, whereas in the dubbed version the real meaning of the allusion is subtly hinted, but if one does not know the original

intent, this utterance is left rather vague and it could mean anything, for example cutting off the cat's tail. For children, the latter translation is more suitable.

Translation is understandably difficult, since Barker is not familiar to the Finnish audience, and there is no 'equivalent' person here, who would speak on behalf of neutering pets. In translating allusions to persons with a 'domestic equivalent' one has to be careful not to transfer them as insults, as Shai (2004) describes; the Hebrew translation of the Bob Barker referred to a male singer that has a high-pitched voice, thus implying that this singer was neutered, but this translation was soon taken off of the distribution, because the singer sued. From this point of view it is justifiable that the Finnish translations translated only the basic idea of the allusion.

Example (39) (*Shrek 2*)

The bush shaped like <u>Shirley Bassey!</u>	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Ja tuossa on se <u>anitahirvospensas</u>	Ja tos on se <u>Hirvosen Anitan</u> muotonen pensas.

The allusion of this example was also discussed earlier (example 12). The singer is fairly unknown for the Finnish audience, so both translators have chosen to replace the allusion with a Finnish singer that is known for her big red hair. The only difference between the translations is that the subtitles suggest that the bush is or is named after the singer, whereas the dubbing explains that they are speaking of the shape of the bush. Either way, the translation can be seen as successful, since it has an allusion that is amusing for the Finnish audience, at least for the adult audience that knows the singer in question.

Example (40) (*Shrek 2*) (setting: Fairy Godmother is upset because his son, Prince Charming, could not find Fiona and rescue her, since she was already rescued by Shrek.)

And what does he find? <u>A gender-confused wolf</u> telling him that his princess is already married!	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
ja mitä löysi?/ <u>Sukupuoli-identiteettinsä hukanneen suden</u> , joka sanoi prinsessan/ olevan naimisissa.	Ja miten käy? Joku <u>hämmmentynyt neitisi</u> kertoo, että hänen prinsessansa on jo naimisissa!

The translations differ in some respects in this example. The subtitles translate the sense of the original being that the Wolf has *lost* his sexual identity, not that he is confused about it. In the dubbed version the confusion has been translated, but it is not clear what the Wolf is confused *about*. However, the concept of cross-dressing is

vaguely insinuated by ‘neitisusi’ (‘miss/ she Wolf’). Because the latter translation is shorter and more insulting in its nature, and therefore a good punch-line, it seems like a more effective translation of humor, particularly for children, since the translation does not specifically speak of transvestites or confusion about one’s sex, both of which are rather heavy issues for children to be concerned about.

Example (41) (*Shrek 2*) (setting: Fiona’s parents have sent her invitation to the royal ball. This invitation is delivered by a marching band, dressed accordingly, and a very snobby announcer. Shrek is not impressed.)

How do you explain <u>Sergeant Pompous and the Fancy Pants Club Band</u> ?
--

SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Entä <u>kersantti Puppeli ja keikarikerhon bändi</u> ?	No mikäs toi <u>kersantti Pönäkän sukkaousukonsertti</u> on?

The allusion in this example (41) is to the *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* album by the Beatles. The allusion is not direct, but rather used sarcastically by changing the wording slightly. The intent of this utterance is to indicate that the announcer was rude and arrogant, and that it was too much for Shrek that the message was delivered with music in the background, which is something that is sarcastically expected of the rich and famous people.

In neither of the versions is the original allusion preserved. The translations are fairly direct word-for-word translations, preserving the meaning of the utterance. In the subtitled version the insult seems to be that the announcer and his ‘band’ are acting and dressed up like gay men. In comparison, the dubbed version seems to refer to the pompousness of the announcer as well as his figure, and also making reference to the way the band is dressed – which is in pants that look like tights. Both translations seem to succeed in their humorous effect for both audiences, even though the allusion is not translated.

#### 7.4. Translation of Other Speech Events

The translations in this category would seem to be easier to create than in the others, since mostly people interpret the context, the situations, sarcasm, politeness and other things included to this category for the reasons stated before much the same way, at least analyzing from the western point of view. However, translating

instances that are based on syntax, for example, or particular word connotations may need more imagination.

Example (42) (*Shrek 2*) (Setting: Shrek and Fiona are walking on a long red carpet in front of the castle towards the King and Queen, Fiona's parents, as they meet for the first time since the wedding.)

Q - I think that's our little girl  
 K - That's not little! That's a really big problem! Wasn't she supposed to kiss Prince Charming and break the spell?  
 Q - Well, he's no Prince Charming, but they do look...  
  
*S - Happy now? We came, we saw them, now let's go before they light the torches.*  
*F - They're my parents.*  
*S - Hello? They locked you in a tower.*  
*F - That was for my own...*  
  
 K - Good! Here's our chance. Let's go back inside and pretend we're not home.  
 Q - Harold, we have to be...  
  
*S - Quick! While they're not looking we can make a run for it!*  
*F - Shrek! Stop it! Everything's gonna be...*  
  
 K - A disaster! There's no way...  
  
*F - You can do this.*  
*S - I really...*  
  
 K - Really  
 Q - Really  
 F - Don't  
 K - Want  
 S - To  
 Q - Be  
 (all) - Here!

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- Kai pikkutyttömmö.	- Siinä on kai pikkutyttömmö.
- Ei pikkuinen. Vaan iso ongelma./ Eikö prinssin suukon pitänyt murtaa taika?	- Tuoko muka pikkuinen? Pikemmin valtaisa ongelma. Hänen piti suudella Prinssi Uljasta ja murtaa taika.
- Uljas tuo ei ole, mutta aika...	- Noniin. No, eihän tuo ole prinssi Uljas, mutta heistä kyllä näkyy...
<i>A) - Tyytyväinen? Tultiin ja nähtiin ne./ Häivytään ennen kuin käyvät kimppuun.</i>	<i>- Hyvä olo nyt? Me tultiin ja nähtiin. Eiköhän mennä ennen kuin sytyttävät roviot.</i>
<i>- He ovat vanhempani.</i>	<i>- He ovat vanhempani.</i>
<i>- Panivat torniin.</i>	<i>- Haloo?! Ne lukitsi sinut torniin.</i>
<i>- Sehän oli vain...</i>	<i>- Hei, sehän oli vain...</i>
B)- Hyvä. Nyt mennään. Esitetään, että ei olla kotona.	- Hyvä. Tilaisuutemme koitti. Mennään sisään ja ollaan niinku ei oltais kotona.
- Nyt tarvitaan...	- Harold! Tämä on ohi...
<i>C) - Vauhtia! Häivytään, kun ne eivät katso.</i>	<i>- Pian! Kun ne eivät katso, niin pingotaan pakoon.</i>
<i>- Rauhoitu. Tästä tulee...</i>	<i>- Shrek! Lopeta! Tästä tulee vielä...</i>
D) - Katastrofi! Ei...	- Katastrofi! En voi uskoa, että...

<p>E) - <i>se ole vaikeaa.</i>  - <i>Mutta todella...</i>  - <i>Todella</i>  - <i>en..tahdo..olla..täällä.</i></p>	<p>- <i>Sinä pystyt tähän.</i>  - <i>Mutta en oikeesti</i>  - <i>Oikeesti</i>  - <i>Todellakin</i>  - <i>Nyt</i>  - <i>Tahdo</i>  - <i>Olla</i>  - <i>Täällä!</i></p>
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This is an example of a cinematographic way to unite two different dialogues into one that would function as a dialogue of its own. Although most of the humor in this example comes from the syntax of the sentences, and it could therefore be placed under wordplay, it is categorized under this category because this instance is a speech event that is manipulated.

First it seems that the couples are having the exact same conversation; in both cases the husband is the one who wants to leave the place, but the wives are willing to try to meet each other. But as the dialogue continues the differences start to appear. These differences in turn have been combined to create a humorous effect. Translations depend much on the syntax of the sentences and on the choice of words due to their connotations. In each case there are two sentences that are combined into one, and each time the translator has to consider whether to translate starting with the combined sentence or with the original two sentences, and then move on to the combination.

In dubbing, an attempt has been made to translate utterance A as literally as possible, that is, that the new sentence would refer to both Shrek and Fiona, “*they* look happy now”, whereas in the subtitles it refers to only Shrek, “*he* looks happy now”. Both translations succeed to combine the two sentences, even though the latter part of the dubbed utterance does not sound very good Finnish but rather a direct translation loan from English.

Utterance B “that was for my own good” has been translated the same way in both versions, but, in turn, utterance C differently. The original sentence in utterance C is probably “we have to be *polite*”. The combined sentence “we have to be quick” is subtitled as “we need to hurry”. This translated sentence is comprehensible, but as separate pieces of dialogue the fluency of the sentences is not so good, since the first part is vaguer than the original: it is not clear in the translation what “we need”.

In the dubbing, on the other hand, utterance C has been translated as “this will be over soon” which functions as a full sentence as well as pieces of a dialogue, unlike the subtitled version. Therefore, the translation is closer to the original. However, the expected endings of the beginning of the sentence “Tämä on ohi...” are more limited: in the original the expectation is to be polite, but in the Finnish version the only ending to the sentence is “Pian” (“to be over soon”).

Utterance D is also translated in the same way in both versions, but the following utterance E has only vaguely similar translations. “There’s no way you can do this” is in the subtitles translated as “it is not difficult” and in the dubbing “I cannot believe that you can do this”. The meaning is basically the same in both translations, but if these translated sentences are separated into two pieces of dialogue, once again the subtitled version seems to suffer in the connotations concerning the beginning of the sentence, that is, the fragment “not difficult” requires only “it is” as its beginning, whereas in the dubbing the utterance “I cannot believe that” could end in various ways, and the humor arises from the resulting combination of the negative and positive sentences.

The example (42) does not contain much to discuss in terms of the dual audience, since there are no implications or sexual references, for example, in it. However, one might wonder about the consideration of the child audience in the original, since the pace of the scene exchanges is quite fast, and it can be difficult for a child to follow the dialogue. For the adults the pace of the dialogue might be one source of amusement.

Insults have also been included in this category. In the following example (43) Fiona sees Shrek’s face for the first time, and this happens right after the dialogue in the previous example. The humor is in the sudden change of tone in the register; Fiona no longer speaks like in the old fairytales and calls her rescuer an ogre and the brave stallion (Donkey) a pet.

Example (43) (*Shrek I*)

- You're an ogre. - Oh, you're expecting Prince Charming? -...not some ogre and his pet
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## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- Olet hirviö. - Satuprinssiäkö odotit? -...hirviö ja hänen lemmikkinsä.	- Olet jätti - Ah, odotitkos prinssi Rohkeeta? -...eikä joku mörkö ja poni.
--	---

In the subtitles the insult is translated literally, but in the dubbing as ‘mörkö ja poni’ (‘a bogey-man and a pony’), which seems to actually function better as an insult than the literal translation, or even the original, since it describes both Shrek and Donkey with demeaning words, at least compared to the earlier praise. This contradiction between the praise and insult seems to be bigger in the dubbed translation, and therefore the translation is more humorous, for both audiences.

Example (44) (*Shrek I*)

- But, thy deed is great and thine heart is pure. I'm eternally in your debt. The battle is won. You may remove your helmet, good sir Knight. - No. - Why not? - I have helmet hair. - Please. I wouldst look upon the face of my rescuer. - Oh, no you wouldn't.
--

## SUBTITLES

## DUBBING

- Mutta tekosi on uljas ja syömmesi puhdas/ olen sinulle ikuisesti kiitollinen./ Taistelu on voitettu. Riisu kypäräsi, jalo ritari. - En - Miksi? - Hiukseni ovat likaiset. - Ole niin hyvä. Tahdon nähdä pelastajani kasvot. - Et tahtoisi.	- Oli tekosi uljas, sydämesi puhdas. Olen kiitollinen ikuisesti. Taisto on käyty, voit riisua kypäräsi, arvon ritari. - En. - Miksi et? - On...hilsettä. - Pyydän. Soisin silmiäni näkevän sankari urhon. - Empä kuule usko
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In this previously discussed example (example 17) the old English has been occasionally translated into old Finnish, and therefore some of the words have a poetic echo (‘syömmesi’, ‘soisin silmiäni näkevän’). However, it seems that rather than seeking old Finnish into the translations, they have been translated into formal language, which also works in creating a different register for Fiona. However, the last utterance, its humorous form in the original, is lost in the translation.

## 7.5. Compensations - Target Text Humor

As was discussed in section 3.4, one strategy to translate humor is to compensate verbal humor lost earlier by creating one to a place where there is none in the

original text. In the present study these instances were collected and included into a category of their own. In most cases, the translations, at least the dubbed ones, play with alliteration of the words, with the way they sound in a sentence, but there are also instances where the humor is created with the meaning of the words.

Example (45) (setting: Shrek's opinion about burping in public)

Its' just a compliment. Better out than in I always say.

(*Shrek 1*) SUBTITLES

DUBBING

Mitä? Se on vain kohteliasta. Parempi ulkona kuin sisällä.

Mitä? Se on kohteliaisuus. Ei pidä ilmoja pidätellä...

(*Shrek 2*) SUBTITLES

DUBBING

Turha on ilmoja piellä minä sanon

Ei pidä ilmoja pidätellä, niinku meillä päin sanotaan

The phrase 'better out than in' was said in both films in the same context. In the original there is not really any wordplay, even though it is meant to be humorous, since Shrek chuckles every time he says it. In the first subtitles the utterance is translated verbatim from the original, but all the following translations have chosen to translate it with a Finnish wordplay, i.e. the word 'ilmoja' can refer to either 'weather' or 'bodily gases'. Furthermore, one can say in Finnish 'on ilmoja pidellyt' when commenting on the weather, and obviously this idiom has been resignified to mean that one cannot hold air in their hands nor in their stomach. For children this idiom might also resemble some classic wordplay jokes in Finnish ("Pidetäänkö teillä mattoja lattialla? –Joo. – Meillä ne pysyy pitämättäkin") where the punch-line is also about the context bound meaning of the word 'pitää' ('to keep').

Another idiom was made use of in the next example:

Example (46) (*Shrek 1*) (Setting: Shrek compares ogres to onions and Donkey tries to suggest something else.)

– Ogres are like onions. End of story.

SUBTITLES

DUBBING

- Hirviöt ovat kuin sipuleita! Sillä sipuli.

- Jätit on ku sipulit! Sillä sipuli!

In the original text there is no wordplay, but one is clearly created to the translations. The context has offered an opportunity to use a Finnish idiom concerning onions, an equivalent expression to "the end of story" of the source text in indicating that the discussion is over, which creates a humorous effect for the Finnish audience.

Example (47) (*Shrek 2*) (Setting: Donkey has bought a goldfish and named it Shrek. Donkey doesn't seem to realize that it is dead.)

That Shrek is a rascally devil	
Subtitles	Dubbing
Shrek on aika velikulta.	Toi Shrek on aika rasvasilli

The utterance of the original is amusing in its visual context when it refers to a dead fish that does not move at all, but there is no wordplay in the text itself. The translation in the subtitles could be interpreted as an allusion to the famous sentence from *the Unknown Soldier* by Väinö Linna. In the dubbed version the translation is a wordplay that has by changing letters from a word 'rasavilli' ('a wild child') to 'rasvasilli' ('a greasy herring') created a reference to speed and fish, which both are ironically false statements in the context, and thereby equivalent to the original intent. For an adult both of these translations can be amusing, if they recognize the allusion in the subtitles, but for a child only the dubbed version succeeds in creating a humorous effect.

There were a few instances where nothing was said in the original, but in the dubbing this blank space was taken advantage of by a comment on a sign on a street that would not have been otherwise translated. This was possible because the characters' mouths were not showing at the same time.

Example (48) (*Shrek 2*) (Setting: Donkey makes a question as they arrive to Far Far Away)

- Mistä tää kaukainen maa on saanu nimensä?
---

This utterance is said as Fiona, Shrek and Donkey see the 'Far Far Away' sign, which resembles greatly the Hollywood-sign. The utterance is amusing due to its context. They travelled from far and it took a long time, and Donkey made everyone crazy by asking "are we there yet". Therefore, for Donkey to ask now how the city got its name is humorous.

Another instance where the context makes the utterance humorous in the dubbed translation is the following:

Example (49) (*Shrek 2*)

A game of Parcheesi	
SUBTITLES	DUBBING
Pelattaisko Ludoa?	Pelataanks pasianssii?

The reference of the original text is to a board game that is played with more than two people. In the subtitles there is an equivalent game in Finland, but in the dubbing the game is 'solitaire', a card game that is played alone. Therefore it sounds humorous for Donkey to suggest that they would all play it together. Because of the phonetics and lip-movements the translation is understandable, however.

Similar examples were found from both films, and it seems that alliteration was made use of, particularly in dubbing, which seems like a good choice considering the child audience, since alliteration is often used in children's literature and seems to be more appealing for them.

There were similarities and differences between the translated versions. Some differences can be explained with the constrictions that the modes of translation have, but most instances are due to the translators' choices and their vision on what is humorous.

## 8. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Translation and humor are attracting more and more interest in the field of study. Humor is a complex cultural phenomenon, and it also varies individually. Therefore, its translation is also challenging, particularly in screen translation, since there is always the visual context to consider.

The two modes of screen translation, subtitling and dubbing, have varying advantages in comparison to each other. With subtitles the translator can explain the happenings if the language of the original is vague, for example, and dubbing offers opportunities for a more colloquial language use and it can help to create different personalities for the characters with the use of dialect.

However, there are certain limitations and constraints within both modes of screen translation as well. The pace of the speech, for example, causes reduction of text in the subtitles, and the requirement for lip-sync, on the other hand, affects to the dubbing.

These restrictions are not the only reasons for differences between the modes when translating humor. There are also variations between the choices the translators make while transferring verbal humor and its effect to the target language.

Animations offer excellent material to study the two screen translation modes within one language, the differences, advantages and disadvantages, since they are translated with subtitles and dubbing. Furthermore, the animations are targeted for a wide audience, for children and adults, and they also contain a great deal of verbal humor, which also adds an interesting point of view to the study, and which can be seen as the cause of some translation choices.

The issues this present study was interested in were the types of verbal humor in the *Shrek* films, the screen translations of this humor, and the differences and similarities that these translations of humor had.

First, the collected data were divided into four major categories based on the characteristics of the humorous utterances. Humor was found in various different forms, but since almost all categories overlapped to some degree, the division into only four seemed justifiable, and for the purposes of this study this loose division functioned fairly well. The categories are wordplay, allusions, other speech events, and song and rhyme. In the last category the wordplay was most often the source of humor, but since the instances also included poetic rhyming element, the songs and rhymes were separated into a category of their own. The ‘other speech events’ in this present study was an “umbrella term” used to refer to sarcasm, irony and other tones of speech as well.

This categorization of humor was a ‘prerequisite’ for the second part of the study, since it justified what was considered humorous in this study and based on what the further arguments were made. The first part of the analysis gives structure to the second part, and the categorization of the data helps to see what kind of humor is used over all, and how the type of humor influences the translations.

In the second part of the study the translations were discussed and compared with each other, which was relatively simple to do with the help of the study questions. Somewhat problematic, however, was analyzing the successfulness of the translations of humor for the dual audience of children and adults. A more thorough analysis could have been done with questionnaires or interviewing the target audience. However, this would have been out of the scope of this study.

In the wordplay category many instances were translated literally, but they still managed to preserve the humorous effect. There were slight differences within the use of vocabulary between the dubbing and subtitling. The ‘Donkey-jokes’, which were numerous, turned out to be the most difficult ones to translate. Only a few translations were successful. The translations differed from each other mainly in the puns that played with phonetics and sounds.

The songs and rhyming posed difficult challenges for the translators. The majority of the songs were not ‘normal’, that is, they had wordplay-elements and lyrics connected to the surroundings and the storyline. Particularly in dubbing there was

also the sound-world to consider, whereas in the subtitles it was enough to make the lines to rhyme in the end. In *Shrek 2* translations the subtitled ones were often the same as their dubbed counterparts. However, there were also instances where a piece of a song was subtitled, but in the dubbing that same song was transferred – not translated - in its original form in English for the Finnish voice-actors. All the songs from the first *Shrek* had varying translations in subtitling and dubbing, even though they had the same translator. Most of the translations in this category can be described with two of Lefevere's strategies (see section 3.4.1): either the metre of the original is translated, or the translation is an interpretation or an imitation of the original.

Allusions were translated literally when the allusion was known to the Finnish audience, such as the phrases from the other fairytales. However, translating became almost impossible when the allusion was known only in its original form, like the name of an album by the Beatles. Only the basic meaning and the tone that the utterance was said in of the original were translated then, and the allusion was lost. In the unfamiliar cases for the Finnish audience the translation was often either literal or only the meaning was translated, although a few equivalent Finnish allusions were found as well, like in the case of the brand names.

Sarcasm and irony were fairly simple to translate literally and maintain the effect the same as in the original. The old form of English, unusual syntax and vocabulary were occasionally translated with an equivalent Finnish old-fashioned style and vocabulary, but in many occasions it was ignored. In this category the cinematographic dialogue (combining two dialogues into one) posed interesting challenges and differences in the translations. Since the tone is important to all the elements included into this category of speech events, it can be also assumed that in the dubbing it was important to transfer the tone of *voice*, whereas the translation of tone in the subtitles was based more on the choice of words.

An additional category was created for those instances where the target text produced a humorous effect, but none existed in the original. Most often these instances were a play with alliteration, particularly in the dubbing. In many cases they were also included to the original wordplay and its translation. A few examples were also

found where the context offered a possibility for a Finnish idiom that in turn could be interpreted in various ways, and therefore in their ambiguity they were amusing.

The consideration of the dual audience was one of the interesting issues that emerged from the data, because on certain instances (such as on issues concerning sex) it was clearer to see than in others, and as expected, the majority of these instances were found from the dubbed version. Interesting were also the instances where there were differences (that were not based on the constraints of the translation mode) in *Shrek* and similarities in *Shrek 2*, because the first *Shrek* had the same translator for its dubbing and subtitling, in the sequel there were more translators, but the variations between the translations were smaller than in the first film. This might indicate that translating both films has offered an opportunity to try out different solutions in the translations. On the other hand, the translations of the second *Shrek* seem to be mostly done in teamwork, which also has its advantages, since it might be excessive work to ponder the translation of a difficult pun twice when there is a solution already figured out. Although, there might be something missing in terms of humor when the translations are the same in the dubbing and subtitles, since the subtitling would offer more opportunities to be creative in songs, for example, since one does not have to be concerned about the sound-world.

All in all, very few instances of verbal humor were left completely untranslated, and it seems to be the absolute last strategy of the translators, much like the previous studies also show. Furthermore, one could claim that those few omissions were compensated elsewhere in the films.

Although no similar study has been done before, there are some phenomena and results that seem to be in common with the close related studies. For example, as Coelh (2007) had noticed, the language is more colloquial and freer in the dubbed versions, but even though the subtitles were more grammatical there was much dialectal speech as well in the data of this study. However, unlike in many other studies (e.g. Schröter 2003), there were no real translation ‘errors’ found from the data of this study, i.e. that something would have been translated falsely, which, in turn, speaks for the quality of the translations in Finland – at least the translations done within the film industry.

Verbal humor in films is always situational, context bound, and its translation depends on the translator's view on what is the core of the humor and its equivalence in target text, as well as on the audience. Very few find jokes amusing if they have heard them many times before, so the humor and its translation need to be fresh. Therefore, there can be no one way of translating certain things, nor specific instructions on humor translation, despite the fact that regulations might make the translation process easier.

Many animations similar to *Shrek* have been released after its breakthrough in the world market. A further study could be done by comparing the humor and its translations in different animations. Also an interesting issue to study further is the *child* audience; how they see the films and the translations, what they find amusing in the films, and how much they understand of the adult humor in dual audience targeted films. This has not been a very popular field of study so far, but the increasing amount of translated audiovisual material for children would call for this kind of research to be done. In this study there were occasions when the child audience was taken into consideration, since some strong sexual references and insults were toned down in the dubbing.

Aside from own personal interest to the field of translation, the aim of this present study was not to create new translation models for translators, but rather to draw attention to the field of humor translation and the audiovisual translation for children, in particular, and the differences there can be found between these screen translation methods. Hopefully this study can serve as a steppingstone for further research in this field.

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