

**Wordplay in *Donald Duck* comics and their Finnish
translations**

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	COMICS AND TRANSLATING THEM	4
2.1	Defining comics and their features	4
2.1.1	Definition of comics	4
2.1.2	Features of comics	7
2.1.3	Interaction of word and image	13
2.2	Aspects of translating comics	18
2.2.1	Translating the interplay of word and image	19
2.2.2	Norms of translation and target audience	24
2.3	Background on Donald Duck and Aku Ankka	29
3	TRANSLATING WORDPLAY	34
3.1	Defining wordplay	34
3.2	Translating humor and wordplay	39
3.2.1	Humor in translation	39
3.2.2	Translatability of wordplay	41
3.2.3	Strategies for translating wordplay	44
4	GENERAL THEORY OF VERBAL HUMOR.....	49
4.1	Scripts	50
4.2	Knowledge Resources	52
4.3	Application of GTVH to translation of wordplay	56
5	TRANSLATIONS OF WORDPLAY IN DONALD DUCK	59
5.1	Material and method	59
5.2	Analysis.....	62
5.2.1	General findings.....	62
5.2.2	Wordplay in the interface of word and image.....	69
5.2.3	Tendencies in different decades.....	74
5.3	Discussion	78
6	CONCLUSION	83
	REFERENCES.....	85
	PRIMARY SOURCES	85
	SECONDARY SOURCES	87
	APPENDIX A: FEATURES OF COMIC STRUCTURE	91
	APPENDIX B: FRAMES CORRESPONDING TO EXAMPLES IN CHAPTER 5.....	93

1 Introduction

Translating comics is easy. At least it often may seem deceptively so, since the language of comics rarely contains complex or poetic sentence structures, specialized terminology or highly abstract concepts. However, comic books and comic strips do have certain characteristics that make them much more demanding for the translator than one might think. Jukka Heiskanen (1990: 38-39), for example, argues that comics do deal with many of the aspects that usually are considered most difficult for a translator, such as dialogue, humor, and historical events. In addition, they have some particular difficulties, such as the limited space in the speech bubbles, or the iconic nature of the onomatopoeic elements, which more often resemble drawings than writings. However as Heiskanen (1990) points out, translating comics is not always considered to be particularly challenging and translators are often given insufficient time and resources to carry out their task.

Perhaps the most important and interesting of the features of comics is the way that the written text and the pictures are combined. In comics, the two semiotic systems of word and image interact to create the full reading experience and often a humorous effect. Heiskanen (1990: 40), among others, argues that it would be useful to improve translators' understanding of comics through a more systematic and analytical study of their specific features and elements, and most importantly of the interplay of word and image. Similarly, Ulla Kankaanpää (1990: 32) argues that a good translator of comics should have a personal interest in comics, follow them actively and have a good understanding of the particular elements of the comic language. The translator should naturally be able to analyze the smallest nuances of the source language, and be able to produce rich and living target language, as well as possess a lively imagination.

This study will aim to explore one aspect of translating comics, namely translating wordplay, especially the kind of wordplay that arises from the interaction of the words and images. Such cases present their own challenges for the translator who needs to take the images into account when translating the text. It is my position, as is also argued by Jeroen Vandaele (2002: 167), that a theoretical approach to humor is a helpful addition to the intuition of translators. An analytical examination of what creates the humorous effect should help to determine the meanings in the source text, and to evaluate the reproduced effects in the target text.

This study assumes that a translator of comics will attempt to preserve the level of humor of the source text also in the Target text. However, wordplay and all humor are very closely connected to the source language and source culture. Because of this, the translator will very rarely, if ever, be able to produce a close translation of the wordplay. Thus the translated wordplay will almost necessarily differ to some extent. My goal is to compare how wordplay is created and used in the source text and the target text and to analyze the differences between instances of wordplay in one and its translation in the other. As material for the empirical part of the study, I will be using examples of wordplay from *Donald Duck* comics, from the original English source texts and their Finnish translations.

To analyze the differences found between source text wordplay and its translation in a systematic manner, a model based on the General Theory of Verbal Humor will be used in comparing the source and target texts. The theory itself was developed by Salvatore Attardo (1994), and has been used for various purposes in humor studies. Attardo (2002) has only relatively recently suggested that it would be a useful tool also for analyzing translations of humor. This theory and its suggested application will be tested in this thesis to see if it could in fact be used as a tool by translators.

The study will also include a diachronic view, which is made possible by the fact that the source material includes *Donald Duck* stories translated during different periods from the early 1950s up to the late 1990s, covering a time span of nearly 50 years. The diachronic aspect is linked to e.g. Andrew Chesterman's (1997) discussion of norms of translation. The norms of translation can be expected to change over time, and it is expected here that the older translations would contain less wordplay than the newer ones. This study will explore whether evidence can be found to support this hypothesis.

Chapter 2 will first present definitions of comics and introduce the features that are considered characteristic of this media, as well as discuss how these aspects affect the translation of comics. Chapter 3 will then discuss issues pertaining to translating humor in general and wordplay in particular. Chapter 4 introduces the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) and its possible application to translation. Finally Chapter 5 will present the analysis of 12 *Donald Duck* stories according to the GTVH and discuss the results of this analysis.

2 Comics and translating them

In this section, I will first discuss the definition of comics and the unique features that comics have in section 2.1. Next in section 2.2, I discuss how the special features of comics affect their translation. Finally, section 2.3 offers some background information on *Donald Duck* comics, which will be used as material for the analysis presented in Chapter 5, and also some information on the translation practices of the Finnish publisher of the *Aku Ankka* magazine.

2.1 Defining comics and their features

In order to discuss comics and translating them, one needs first to define what exactly is meant by comics. Although most people are probably quite familiar with this genre, a definition is not necessarily simple. In this subsection, I will first introduce different ways of defining what comics are, precisely, and discuss some varying views that researchers have taken on this matter, in subsection 2.1.1.

Further in subsection 2.1.2, I will discuss features that are specific to comics as a genre, such as combining text, pictures and symbols; how different researchers see their importance etc. I will also demonstrate some of the aspects by quoting from an analysis of the pictorial and textual elements and their combination in one Donald Duck story (Hänninen and Kempainen 1994). Also some of the different ways in which comic artists utilize these features will be discussed.

Finally subsection 2.1.3 discusses how the words and images are combined in comics, and how this affects the experience of reading comics.

2.1.1 Definition of comics

One typical definition of comics is the one presented by Juha Herkman's (1998: 21). His definition of comics contains three central characteristics: a narrative told through a

series of pictures, recurring characters, and a combination of dialogue or other types of text with the pictures. However, he states that many comics do not follow all of these criteria, especially not the last two. It is possible to find many comics that do not contain text at all, while recurring characters, whose appearance is always the same, are a feature of only some comics, mostly those published in newspapers.

Thus according to Herkman (1998: 22), the most important determining characteristic of comics would be the narrative element, which excludes single-frame cartoons or so-called caricatures. Along similar lines, Klaus Kaindl (1999: 264) considers comics to be a series of at least two pictures telling a story. The pictures provide context for each other, and in Kaindl's opinion this is an important distinction between comics and single-frame cartoons. It is not entirely clear why such a strict division should need to be made between comics and the kind of cartoons or caricatures that consist of only one picture. Perhaps in some cases it might be possible to argue that the single frame alone already tells a story, without needing other pictures beside it.

Opposite to the view presented by Herkman and Kaindl, Robert C. Harvey (2001: 76), argues that single-frame cartoons, or as he calls them, gag cartoons, should also be included in the definition of comics. According to Harvey, the combination of text and picture should be considered a more central feature than the presence of two or more pictures. He states that this definition could be expanded to include wordless comics as an exception to the norm, since in his opinion such comics are not common, although they do exist. In my opinion, the combination of text and picture is what in fact makes comics distinct from other genres, and the need for excluding single-frame cartoons from the definition of comics does not appear clearly motivated. However, the material for this study comes from comic stories, mostly around ten pages in length, and thus single-frame cartoons are beyond the scope of the present study.

Many researchers agree that the most unique and interesting aspect of comics is the way they combine different semiotic systems, namely those of word and image. According to Herkman (1998: 26, see also Kaindl 1999: 264), this combination is a very efficient way of communicating to the reader. In Harvey's view (2001: 75), both the picture and the text are essential in comics, and their combination creates a meaning that could not be achieved by either without the other.

On the other hand, certain types of text may prove to be difficult to combine with pictures to tell the story. As an example, Marion Perret (2001: 123-125) discusses various attempts of rendering William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in the form of a comic book. According to Perret, making the monologues in *Hamlet* into a comic is rather difficult a task due to the philosophizing nature of the soliloquy. They include relatively little action that could be illustrated with pictures, and Perret argues that merely picturing the prince lost in his thoughts makes a rather boring visual representation. On the other hand, she sees that illustrations with interesting action would diminish the import of the mental action.

As a conclusion, Perret (2001: 136-142) finds the most successful strategy to be that of Tom Mandrake, who has represented the soliloquy in a series of speech or thought bubbles, which continue from one to the next, thus directing us through Hamlet's thoughts and reasoning. She argues that this approach makes the reader take an interactive and imaginative role when reading the comic, as the panel containing the soliloquy has several layers of interest, and keeps the reader analyzing the connection of the text, the visual representation of the thoughts in bubbles and the other images surrounding them.

The combination of word and image, and the relevance that their interplay has to a translator in particular, will be discussed further in subsection 2.2.1. Next, I will describe features that are typical of and in some cases unique to comics.

2.1.2 Features of comics

Many authors writing on the subject of comics appear to divide the signs comprising comics into roughly three categories: pictures, text and effects (e.g. Herkman 1998, Kaindl 1999). The definitions vary occasionally in some details.

For example, Kaindl's (1999: 273-274) three types are: linguistic, typographic and pictorial signs. In his classification, linguistic signs include narration, title, dialogue, onomatopoeia and inscriptions; typography refers to the shape, rhythm, size etc. of the lettering, and may also include pictograms; and finally pictorial signs are the pictures, speed lines, perspective etc. Kaindl also appears to consider reduction of pictorial elements into smaller entities very difficult.

Herkman's (1998: 26) classification is slightly different. For example, according to him the basic elements are images, words and effects. In this classification, the effect category includes pictograms and also typographical issues after a fashion, but typography is not discussed separately. Most of these basic elements can be seen combined in the two frames of Figure A.1 (Appendix A). The more detailed discussion of comic features that follows is mostly according to Herkman (1998), with reference to other studies, because Herkman offers ways of analyzing the pictorial elements, which Kaindl (1999), for example, does not.

To show the importance of pictures, Herkman (1998: 27-29) considers the image, the pictures, to be the dominating element in comics. According to him, the pictures give the reader an immediate sense of the locations and physical descriptions present in the comic story. The pictorial elements themselves contain many signs that Herkman argues can be analyzed by utilizing many concepts of photography and filmography, such as cropping, perspective, size and angle of the picture.

The author of the comic may express many different things through these visual factors. Cropping, which refers to what is in fact drawn inside the frame and what

is left out, determines what the author decides to show to the reader, and what is left for the reader's own imagination. In many ways, Herkman (1998: 27) considers this to be one of the most important aspects affecting the readers' experiences, how they fill in the gaps in the action that are left between two consecutive frames. For example, in Figure A.1 (Appendix A), the reader never sees the truck that the villain of the story drives, only Donald's worried face as he hears the sound of the truck. The action in the next frame then moves straight to the villain entering through the door.

Zooming can be an effective tool, as well. It may vary from a wide general shot of the view, as if from far away (see Figure A.2 in Appendix A), to a detailed close-up of some particular feature of the character or place (see Figure A.3 in Appendix A). As the element zoomed on changes, so does the impression and the emphasis created by the picture. The most common perspective in comics is that the reader sees things as if from the side. Changing the perspective can create varying effects to the story. As an example, Herkman (1998: 29) states that a bird's eye view, where the reader is looking down into the frame, gives a feeling of power or distances the reader from the action described. On the other hand, a perspective where the reader seems to be almost inside the picture, looking up, brings the reader into the middle of the action and also gives a sense of helplessness. In Figure A.2 (Appendix A), the wide, slightly elevated view of the interchange seems to emphasize its size and complexity, while in Figure A.3 (Appendix A) the close-up looking up to the gorilla's face probably makes it even more threatening.

Another interesting aspect of the pictorial elements is the level of realism, that is how truthful and realistic we perceive the comic to be. Herkman (1998: 32-33) divides comics in two types: realistic ones, which show human characters in a more or less real environment, and caricatures, which usually portray animal characters in fictional environments. The distinction between realistic and caricature comics is not

straightforward, however. Herkman (1998: 37) argues that the characters in a comic are always more or less simplified caricatures, and most comics mix realism and fantasy freely. On the other hand, Herkman argues that the contents of the comic have a large impact on the realism perceived by the reader, as the reader may come to consider a comic book or strip very realistic even though the characters are portrayed as caricaturist animal figures. Herkman (1998: 39) also reminds us that comics have often been criticized for the way they utilize, and uphold, cultural stereotypes. For example, the foreign appearance and dark skin of a character are often used to identify the villain of the comic story.

The second type of element is the linguistic element. According to Herkman (1998: 41-43), this includes dialogue, narration, so-called detail texts inside the pictures, and onomatopoeia, or sound effects, as Herkman names them. Narration is often shown in boxes in the corner of the frame or completely outside of it; dialogue on the other hand is usually inside speech bubbles. Examples of both can be seen in Figure A.1 (Appendix A). Detail texts are often in posters or signs in the pictures, e.g. the street sign in Figure A.4 (Appendix A). Although detail texts may on surface appear small and barely noticeable, Herkman (1998: 43) points out their importance, stating that they can be significant details creating the humorous effect of the comic, and can sometimes create a "metastory" (Herkman 1998: 43) of their own inside the larger story. For the benefit of a sharp-eyed reader, a joke appears in the street sign shown in Figure A.4 (Appendix A): all of the arrows pointing in different directions have the caption *Rooma*, all the roads lead to Rome.

Sound effects, or onomatopoeic expressions, attempt to represent visually the sounds connected to the events and emotional states expressed in the pictures. According to Herkman (1998: 43), not only is the written form of the onomatopoeic word important, but also the graphical look is significant for creating the illusion of

sound. In this way, onomatopoeic expressions seem to be somewhere between the textual element and the effects discussed below. Catherine Khordoc (2001) discusses many examples of how onomatopoeic elements can be used to create the illusion of sound, with reference to *Asterix* comics. Examples of sound effects in Figure A.1 (Appendix A) are *Chug! Chug!* (the sound of a truck) and *Crack!* (a pipe hitting the head of the villain). Of these, the second sound is even more emphasized by its graphical appearance to represent the loudness of the sound.

As stated above, there are also comics without any text. David Beronã (2001: 19-20) discusses examples of comics that tell their story through pictures only, not containing words at all. He states that the creators of such comics use a language of icons, which he indeed considers to be similar to (verbal) language, although not suitable for as large scale communication as written word. One classic example discussed by Beronã is Milt Gross's *He Done Her Wrong: The Great American Novel and Not a Word in it - No Music, Too*. In this comic, Gross has utilized e.g. pictures of a snake and a skunk in a speech bubble to express one character's opinion of another. An example of a strip with no text can be seen in Figure A.6 (Appendix A), from the comic *Mutts* by Patrick McDonnell (McDonnell 1996). According to Beronã (2001), such comics require more from the author, who needs to make sure that the story can be followed without written narrative, as well as from the reader, who has to pay closer attention to all the visual features of the comic.

The last, and perhaps the most unique, element of comics are the effects. Herkman divides them further into (1998: 44-46) speed lines, onomatopoeic sound effects, speech bubbles, typography of the text, and so-called symbols or pictograms, which appear in the pictures (see Figure A.1 in Appendix A for some examples). Of these, speed lines describe motion, its speed and direction and they may continue from one frame to the next, contributing to the continuity of the story. In Figure A.1

(Appendix A), speed lines show the motion of the pipe hitting the villain's head. Kaindl (1999: 273) considers that they belong to the pictorial elements, but perhaps Herkman's decision to place them in the effect category is reasonable, as they appear to have a specific function apart from describing the scene and characters in the way pictures do.

As was noted above, onomatopoeic elements are in part textual elements and in part effects. Herkman (1998: 51) states that in general effects blur the line between text and picture, creating their meaning somewhere between these two semiotic systems. For example, sound effects work both as text and pictures when the letters representing sound grow or diminish e.g. as a vehicle approaches or distances itself. This change in shape symbolizes not only the sound but also the motion.

Both the typography and the speech bubble communicate information on the tone and level of voice used by the character speaking. For example, a speech bubble with strong and sharp lines often symbolizes shouting while a bubble with thin or dotted lines symbolizes a whisper, while an angular bubble is often used for sounds from a radio or some other electronic device. Khordoc (2001: 156) considers the speech and thought bubbles in fact the most interesting feature of comics. According to her, they are the most authentic example of the combination of the semiotic systems of text and image, in the way that they at the same time separate the two from each other and create a link between them. Figure A.5 (Appendix A) shows an example of a thought bubble expressing emotion probably more efficiently than the word *mutiny* alone could ever do.

The most unique of the effects are the symbols. According to Herkman (1998: 46), they are conventionalized signs of the emotions and thoughts of the characters in the comic story. A typical, perhaps even stereotypical example would be a light bulb above the head of a character to signify an idea. Herkman also mentions a conventionalized usage of placing knives, bombs and all sorts of symbols in the speech

bubbles to represent cursing and foul language. Other typical examples are a black cloud to represent anger, or a saw and a log above a sleeping character, or a star to represent pain, as in Figure A.1 (Appendix A). Also question marks and exclamation marks can be used as symbols above the head of a character, as in Figure A.1 (Appendix A) above the head of Donald's puzzled nephew. (Cf. Beronä [2001] and the examples given above of Milt Gross's wordless comic language.)

The finished comic story, then, is a combination of all of these different elements, and this combination is what defines the genre. It is also important for the translator to take all of these elements into account, although the textual element might on the surface appear what a translator works with. Kaindl (1999: 275), for example, claims that during translation, any of these elements may be changed or left unchanged. He points to some cases where the pictures have been modified or changed completely in the translation. Sometimes this may be due to censorship, if something in the pictures has been considered unfit for a young audience, but there are also cases where the changes appear to have been made to better accommodate the target language.

When examining the material used in this study, I have found that very often the overall size and coloring of the pictures may change, but other changes of the pictorial elements are rare. On the other hand, the narration and dialogue changes almost without exception. Onomatopoeia and inscriptions or detail texts seem to be the only cases that have true variation, and this is probably often due to issues related to the printing process. Presumably the inscriptions would be domesticated most of the time, but this may be hindered by difficulties in changing the panels for printing. Thus I would consider many of these changes more relevant to the printing process than to the translation itself.

Finally, to demonstrate a way of analyzing comics based on this classification of elements, I will refer to Hänninen and Kemppinen's (1994: 96-97)

analysis of a one-page comic featuring Scrooge McDuck, drawn by Carl Barks. In this story, Scrooge finds the price of getting his sideburns trimmed at a barber shop to be too much, and eventually decides to trim them himself. This analysis shows that much can in fact be said about the pictorial elements of the comic story, as opposed to Kaindl's (1999: 273-274) claim that the parts of pictorial elements cannot be easily analyzed.

Hänninen and Kemppinen (1994: 96-97) point out, for example, how many elements (e.g. scissors, a pole outside a barber shop door) in the earlier frames are aligned in a manner that draws the reader's gaze down to the second-to-last frame, the culmination of the story, where Scrooge cuts his sideburns. Another issue addressed is the perspective: how Barks has used a series of widening perspectives to distance the reader, and perhaps to give an impression that time is passing and that Scrooge visits many more shops than are actually shown. They also point out certain features that are typical of Barks' comics in particular, for example a winged coin signifying money flying away. During the whole story, Scrooge has answered the barbers and their prices with the line *Liian paljon!* (presumably *Too much!* in the original). In the final frame, the picture gives a new meaning to precisely the same line, as Scrooge realizes he has unintentionally cut off nearly all of his sideburns.

This wordplay that arises from the new meaning that the image gives to the text used all through the comic is in fact an example of the kind of wordplay that this study will attempt to examine. Examples and findings of other instances will be discussed in section 5. Next I will further discuss the interplay of word and image.

2.1.3 Interaction of word and image

Most comics combine word and image in some way, although as was pointed out in subsection 2.1.2 above, not all comics necessarily use text, and some use very little of it. On the other hand, in some comics the text may be the most important element of the

story, while relatively little happens in the pictures. Herkman (1998: 58-61) describes the different ways that the two semiotic systems may be combined in comics. The discussion I present in this study has been simplified somewhat from Herkman's (1998), as it is not the main focus of this study, and it is possible to collapse some of the categories introduced by Herkman.

The two extremes are, as noted above, that the comic strip or story is either dominated by the images (see e.g. Beronä 2001 and Figure A.6 in Appendix A), or by the words (Figure A.7 in Appendix A). An image-dominant comic may be relatively uninteresting from the point of view of translation since very little dialogue, narration or onomatopoeia remains to be translated. On the other hand, since in word-dominant comic the pictures provide relatively little beyond a setting, a translator may approach it as they would other types of text without images. Often classifying comics into strictly one type may be difficult, however, particularly with longer stories since these usually utilize many different types.

The text and pictures often work in some form of cooperation. Sometimes both the image and the words may provide the reader with the same information, so that the text essentially describes what is seen in the picture, or they may complement each other by giving additional information, e.g. the textual element tells the time and place, or the pictorial element describes how a character in the story looks. This may sometimes cause complications for the translator, as they need to take into account that in the translation the same effect should be retained. On the other hand, it may also make the translator's task easier, since some things that can be inferred from the picture may not need to be stated in the text.

Finally, the words and images may be in contradiction with each other. One example of this could be a metastory, where the narration or detail texts, for example, may be creating a story of their own, separate from the story that is happening

in the pictures. The contradiction may also cause a paradox, as the pictures reveal the situation to be something quite different from what the text is describing. The effect of such a paradox may be humorous, but it may also be something very different. As an example, Frank Cioffi (2001) discusses comics where the image and text are somehow contradictory to each other, and cause a "disturbing" effect on the readers. One of the comics he discusses is Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, which tells of the experiences of Spiegelman's own family in World War II concentration camps, by picturing the characters as mice, cats and dogs. Cioffi (2001: 97) argues that in some comics, this effect of what he calls dissonance of the word and image is used consciously to create an emotional response in the reader.

To compare cooperation and contradiction, see Figure A.8, which shows two consecutive frames. In the first one, the text and image are in cooperation: the text tells essentially the same information of the dogs climbing over a fence as the image shows, with some additional information about seeking the scent. In the second frame there is an ironic contradiction between the word and image. The picture shows that the riders are hardly "pictures of grace and poise and insouciant daring", as described by the text.

It is quite evident that the image and text affect the interpretation of each other in genres that combine both semiotic systems. Considering also Gottlieb's (1997: 211) argument that humor may require both the image and word, it might be expected that much of the humor and wordplay in comics involves this semiotic combination. However, Pia Toivonen, who has studied the translations of *Donald Duck* into Finnish, argues that this is not the case. Instead, Toivonen (2001: 133) states that nearly all instances of wordplay she found in the original stories published in *Donald Duck Weekly* were cases of homonymy and intertextual (allusive) wordplay. The number of

instances of wordplay that arises from the combination of the picture and the text is surprisingly low according to Toivonen's (2001) results.

One interesting case of visual wordplay that Toivonen does discuss is a frame of a *Donald Duck* story, where Donald takes the nephews to practice their piano lessons while the boys would rather be swimming. Donald states that “*Today’s lesson should include a chorus from 'The Volga Boatmen', no less!*” referring to a famous Russian folksong. The drawing shows Donald dragging an inflatable boat towards the shore, and in Toivonen's opinion this is reminiscent of Ilja Repin’s famous painting, *The Volga Boatmen* (2001: 137). Thus the words and the image combine in allusive wordplay. This allusion, however, has been lost in the Finnish translation, where the song in question has been changed to *Pieni ankanpoikanen* (a little duckling). Perhaps this is appropriate as well, in the sense that the image involves the three ducklings.

Toivonen (2001: 165) argues that in general it is often difficult to say whether wordplay is dependent on the interplay of picture and text. In her opinion, in most cases understanding wordplay requires background knowledge, but the picture may not be necessary. Mere knowledge of the story plot itself would be sufficient. One of the examples she states to support her view is a frame with Minnie Mouse dressed up as an American football player and in Finnish wishing she had found a fitting pair of *piikkarit* (track shoes, colloquially also high-heeled shoes). According to Toivonen, the image of Minnie in her high heels is not required for the humorous effect, but instead the same effect could be achieved by the reader simply knowing that Minnie normally wears high heels. Toivonen (2001: 165) even thinks it is unnecessary and misleading to characterize wordplay as arising from the interplay of text and picture, especially considering that she found very few examples of such wordplay in her material.

On the other hand, Robert C. Harvey (2001) considers the interplay of the two semiotic systems very important for the humorous effect and in his (2001: 81-82)

opinion, the humor of comics arises from the instant of comprehension. In Harvey's (2001: 81) words, the "picture sidles into the reader's consciousness", but the reader does not fully understand it before reading the text. The picture, in turn, explains the text. The humorous effect of the comic is created in that instant, arising from the "surprise" as the reader understands the full meaning of both the picture and the text. Such a surprise element would not appear to be present in the kind of case that Toivonen (2001) describes, where the reader is merely aware of the background.

Other factors related to the combination of words and images affect the humor in comics. Like in a television comedy (see Gottlieb 1997: 213), many of the humorous effects in comics seem to arise from a "clash" between the visual and the verbal, when one of them gives an opposite meaning to what the other appears to portray. Cioffi (2001: 98-99) argues also for the importance of such a contrast, and the fact that the reader does not interpret the meaning of the picture and the text in the same instant. Instead, there is a gap between when the reader first interprets the picture and then understands the meaning of the text. In Cioffi's view, in many cases this gap may be relatively unimportant, since the text mainly serves to complement the information in the picture, but certain authors take advantage of it to create an effect of upsetting the set ideas. The contrast that Cioffi discusses involves a disturbing effect on the reader, but I would argue that the same may apply for a humorous effect which arises from the contrast of word and image.

My own interpretation would intuitively be more in accordance with Harvey (2001) and Cioffi (2001). It is the central idea of the present study that wordplay arising from the combination of text and picture does exist and is in fact characteristic of comics. In the analysis section (Chapter 5), I will discuss the cases of wordplay found in my material, and how the wordplay may relate to the interplay of pictures and text. It should be noted that this contrast in Toivonen's (2001) view and my own may arise

from a difference in what one means by something being **necessary** for the humorous effect.

In my opinion, the effect of the gap, the instant of realization, would not be as strong if the reader merely knew the background, without being shown it, and thus the image appears to be an essential part of the humorous effect. This distinction has been expressed very interestingly by Tolvanen (1996: 206-207), who compares considering comics as only text to reading only the script of a movie or a play: it may be interesting, but it does not replace the effect of seeing the actual movie or play.

The ways this interplay of two semiotic systems affects the translator's task will be discussed further in subsection 2.2.1 below.

2.2 *Aspects of translating comics*

This subsection will discuss issues that a translator needs to take into account when translating comics. There are certain practical issues, such as the limitation of space in speech bubbles and boxes reserved for narration etc. As Pia Toivonen (2001: 103-104) points out, occasionally the speech bubbles or space reserved for narration and detail texts can be modified slightly, but mostly the translator needs to be able to make the translation fit in the space given. This makes it necessary for the text to be as short and concise as possible. Shortening the text is not without complications, as the translator should not leave out any information essential to the smooth progress of the plot, and the shortness of space may cause the loss of certain nuances in the text. According to Toivonen (2001: 103), there are additional complications in Finnish, since Finnish words tend to be much longer than English ones, for example.

The space limitations restrict the translators' use of strategies like explicitation, and the specific features of comics may limit also other strategies available for a translator. For example, the use of certain editorial techniques, such as

footnotes or translator's comments may not fit well in comic books or strips. On a related theme, Veisbergs (1997: 171) points out that genres such as drama texts and advertisements do not allow editorial techniques easily because it interferes with their semiotic structure. The same could quite probably be said for comics, which also have a particular semiotic structure. It should perhaps be noted that footnotes occur quite frequently in *Asterix* translations, although they often seem to explain historical and cultural issues rather than offer translator's comments.

Some other features, according to *Peanuts* translator Juhani Tolvanen (1996: 206), include e.g. the fact that text in the speech bubbles is meant to represent speech, and the translator should translate it as such. Another complicated feature is onomatopoeia, which Tolvanen states (1996: 213) may sometimes require even more work than the dialogue. The effect that the interplay of word and image has on translation will be discussed further in section 2.2.1, while the target audience of comics and norms related to translating to children will be discussed in section 2.2.2. For more discussion on previous research on translating comics, see also Toivonen (2001: 99-102).

2.2.1 Translating the interplay of word and image

The interplay of two different semiotic systems is typical of comics, but not exclusive to them. Other genres where the semiotic systems of word and image combine are children's picture books (discussed by e.g. Oittinen 1990 and 2001) as well as movies and television programs (discussed by e.g. Gottlieb 1997). These two genres can be seen to involve at least some of the same features and issues that translators need to take into account.

The similarity between picture books and comics is also pointed out by Oittinen (2001: 109-110), in the sense that both are formed of a combination of series of

images and text. She calls picture books iconotexts, where words, images and effects are combined to form a language of their own, and two different semiotic systems interact. Comics form their own language in a similar way.

On the other hand, Gottlieb (1997: 210) discusses the importance of the polysemiotic nature of television programs. There are even more semiotic systems (or channels, as Gottlieb terms them) involved in television programs: picture, written text, speech and other sounds. Comics and television (comedy) programs are similar in the way that in both all of the semiotic systems need to be considered in translation, because the humorous effect may arise in the dialogue, in combination of the dialogue with the pictures or other written text (see Gottlieb 1997). On a more practical level, comics and television programs also set a limitation of space on the translation. In the case of television, time is an important factor, as well. In comics time is not limited, because the reader of a comic is free to take as much time as needed.

Translating comics may also share many features with translating picture books, and one might think of the process in Oittinen's terms of dialogue and semiosis. Oittinen (1990: 10) argues that everything humans do can be considered to be a dialogue. In iconotexts such as picture books and comics, words and pictures themselves live in a dialogue, where they have a relationship to other words and other pictures. Oittinen (1990: 10) considers also translating a process of dialogue, where the translator interacts with the original author, the illustrator and the intended reader. The reader also has an active part in interpreting the work being read, affected by his or her life, views and experiences. Thus dialogue arises when the reader "meets" and interacts with the text, interpreting the signs and creating something new (Oittinen 2001: 112). As Oittinen (1990: 11) points out, dialogue does not exist in the pictures and words by themselves, but rather a human reader, an interpreter, is always needed for the dialogue to be born.

Comics and their translations can also be viewed in terms of syntagm and paradigm, where the text forms its own syntagm, combination, out of the possible elements in the paradigm of the language in question. On the other hand, the pictures form their syntagm out of the paradigm of possible pictorial elements, and finally these two combine to form the syntagm of the finished comic. (See Herkman 1998: 74-75.) When the comic is then translated, often the syntagm of pictorial elements remains the same, but the paradigm of the target language is selected to form the syntagm of the text. In the end, as Oittinen (2001: 113) states referring to iconotexts, the "translation is a new syntagm of words and images".

In iconotexts, such as comics and picture books, the image should not be forgotten although the translator may seem to work most importantly with the text. The images can be seen as a part of the situation where translating takes place, as Oittinen (1990: 8) does in stating that translation always necessarily takes place in some situation. In the case of illustrated texts, the picture is always a part of the translation situation. In Oittinen's (1990: 9) opinion, a translator has to do more than just take the pictures into account; the translator also translates the pictures. To be able to do that, the translator needs to be able to read both the text and the images in order to make sense of the original, make the images and words all combine to create the whole effect (2001: 116). Oittinen (1990 and 2001) discusses some examples of the difficulties that may arise for a translator when attempting to combine the text and pictures.

Both Oittinen (1990) and Gottlieb (1997) discuss also how the combination of different sign systems may either help or hinder the translator's task. The images affect the way the reader interprets the words, and on the other hand the words affect what the reader sees in the images. A different text or different picture changes the meaning of the two combined. According to Oittinen (1990: 13), some of the ways the images affect the translator are giving practical information on what things

look like, and perhaps guiding the translator's choices in terms of translation strategies subconsciously. On the other hand, Gottlieb (1997: 220) discusses a case involving a standard rendition of the English language saying *child's play* into Danish *barnemad* ('child's food'), which would be perfectly acceptable in other contexts. But in this particular case Gottlieb does not consider the standard translation adequate in combination with the pictorial elements. It would appear that comics may involve a similar consideration that a given translation would work in some other media, but not in the comic book form because it fails to make the same effect as the original.

As it has been argued above that the combination of image and text is important for the humorous effect, this interplay of text and the picture is also important in the translation. Toivonen (2001: 107-109), although skeptical of how important the picture is for humor, admits that it has its effect and that difficulties arise when the source text has wordplay or connotations that do not exist in the target language. When dealing with some other media, it may be easier to compensate by replacing the wordplay with something completely different, but in the case of comics, the picture remains to show the original context.

The connection of the joke or wordplay to the source language and culture may sometimes be so strong that discarding such a strip completely can be seen as a better decision than attempting to translate it. This is the position taken by Olli Poroila (1984), for example, and he argues that if the gag is so tied to the source culture and source language that it will not be amusing to the target culture reader, the only result is a boring, not amusing strip in the target language. Poroila (1984: 26-27) demonstrates his point with some examples of comic strips where he feels the entire idea of the strip and the wordplay involved has been lost in translation. According to Poroila, many of these should have been left untranslated, because they do not deliver the meaning of the original and are mostly pointless. For example, one of the strips involves a robber who

orders his victim to wave while he makes his escape, and the victim comments on "crime waves". The Finnish translation refers to the equivalent, *rikosaalto*, but since in Finnish *aalto* has no polysemous meaning referring to waving with one's hand, it is unlikely that the translated version would appear particularly funny to any Finnish reader.

Also Tolvanen (1996: 208) mentions some cases where he has left *Peanuts* strips completely untranslated, because the joke has been so tied to aspects of American culture that are not familiar in Finland. Some of these include e.g. strips dealing with Thanksgiving, American football, and the concept of happy hour. He states that only strips where the visual element has allowed modification have been published with a completely different joke. As a rather inventive solution, Tolvanen (1996: 208) mentions strips where the characters are frying marshmallows over a fire. This habit was entirely unknown in Finland, and is probably still very uncommon, but the picture reminded Tolvanen of a piece of sausage. Thus he decided to translate the marshmallows as sausages, which Finns commonly fry over a camp fire.

Toivonen (2001: 109), on the other hand, considers Poroila's views very radical, and points out that although choosing not to print a strip in a case of a comic series formed of independent strips may be unproblematic, the translator of longer stories does not usually have this option, if one frame or some longer part of the comic should be difficult to translate. In the case of longer stories, the translator may employ compensation (see Chapter 3) to retain the overall level of humor in the story, even if in some particular instance the wordplay is lost. There may be other frames and other parts in the story which provide better possibilities for wordplay in the target language.

An example of an instance where the target language has provided possibilities for wordplay that do not exist in the source language is discussed by Poroila (1984: 27). It involves a translation of a *Hägar the Horrible* strip, where the

expression *Simon says...* has been replaced with the equivalent Finnish *Kapteeni käskee...* (literally 'the captain commands'). In a sense one might say that the Finnish translator has been lucky, considering that the speaker is a captain of a Viking ship, and there is an added level of wordplay, which is in fact not available in the original.

2.2.2 Norms of translation and target audience

Comics have mostly been considered a part of children's literature (see e.g. Herkman 1998: 10-11, Kaindl 271). This has naturally affected attitudes concerning comics, as well as many of the features of comics, such as the subject matter considered appropriate, the language etc. On a general level, the norms of translating, and publishing, comics follow Toury's classification of norms (see Chesterman 1997: 63).

As a preliminary norm, translation policy is significant for comic translation, since comics have not always been considered worthy material to be read or translated. Kaindl (1999: 272) states that comics were even considered to be a bad influence on children. Comics were accused of manipulating the children's ideas, promoting aggressive behavior and deteriorating their language use. This led to the publishers practicing censorship, to censor scenes with violence, verbal or visual, as well as suggesting stylistic improvements to translations (see also Tuliara 1993).

One relatively famous example (Tuliara 1993: 8) of censorship involving *Donald Duck* is the story *The Firebug* (Barks 1946b) by Carl Barks, in which Donald receives a bad hit on his head, which turns him into a pyromaniac. The original ending of the story, where Donald ends up in prison for his deeds, was removed by the publisher because it was not considered appropriate that the hero would end up in prison. Instead, another artist was asked to draw the last two frames, in which Donald wakes in his bed, and the story becomes merely a bad dream. In Finland, the story was not translated and published until 1993.

As regards operational norms, the decisions a translator makes, comics have some features specific to them: the interplay of the picture and text, the limitations of space on the page and inside the pictures, which have been discussed above in subsection 2.2.1.

The most changing and perhaps most interesting norms for a diachronic study are expectancy norms. As Chesterman (1997: 67) points out, they change continuously based on what readers have come to expect from parallel and previously translated texts. For example, in the story *Flip Decision* (Barks 1953), Donald's nephews wish to see a movie called *Gore in the Gully*. In the Finnish translation, dating from 1954, the movie title becomes *Permikauden puisto*, 'Park of the Permian Period' a rather different sounding name, and oddly resembling *Jurassic Park*, a movie which would not be released until many decades later.

One can only assume that any gory title would have been considered inappropriate in Finland in the 1950s. Aimo Sakari, who translated the first *Tintin* comics published in Finland in the early 1960s, states (1990: 35-36) that in those days, comics were considered to be exclusively for children, and views were very strict on what was morally appropriate reading for children. As an example, Sakari (1990: 35-36) mentions that all references to Captain Haddock enjoying whisky needed to be changed into something non-alcoholic, because it was not considered appropriate for a central and sympathetic character to be drinking alcohol. It may be hypothesized that the expectancy norms on suitable subject matter in comics have changed over time, as many stories previously banned have been published later (see Tuliara 1993).

The professional norms (Chesterman 1997: 67-70) affect comic book translation, as well. Concerning the accountability norm, one important feature of comic books is the prospective readership, which would often, but not necessarily, be children. Because children could not be expected to know much of the source culture of

translated comics, the norm of translating comics into Finnish appears to have been to domesticate them (see Tolvanen 1996), although Sakari (1990: 36) states that he did not want to domesticate the *Tintin* comic series into the Finnish culture too much, but rather to retain "local color" whenever possible. The names, however, were made to fit Finnish language better. In general, Tolvanen (1996: 204-206) states that up until the early 1950s the names of comic characters were translated without exception, but after that the names in adventure comics (such as *Rip Kirby*) have normally been left in the original form. Tolvanen also argues that translating the names is more common if the comic is clearly aimed at children.

As for the communication norm, it may well be that the norm for comics is not communicating some fixed message but more aesthetic purposes, communicating wordplay and the interplay of the picture and text, for example. Similarly the text type represented by comics sets its own relation norms. An appropriate translation perhaps needs to prioritize the similarity of style and of effect, especially since one very likely expectancy norm is that comics have some level of humor. Chesterman (1997: 70) mentions that also the accompanying channels affect translation. In the case of comics, the relationship of the picture and text is essential and has its own requirements when translating.

Norms are different not only in different times, but also in different countries. For example, expectancy norms regarding suitable subject matter in comics appear to have been different in Finland and in the countries of origin of *Tintin* (Belgium) and of *Donald Duck* (United States). This may be connected to Kaindl's (1999: 264) suggestion that attitudes on comics have been stricter in countries that have very little production of their own and rely mostly on translated material. This has been the case in Finland (see Kankaanpää 1990: 29-30).

As a slightly different example, Toivonen (2001: 310) has marked that translators translating *Donald Duck* into Finnish leave out nearly all of the emphasizing methods, which in her opinion is not good, making the translations seem quieter than the original. However, presumably this is done because the Finnish norm is different, and using multiple exclamation marks, emphasis etc. would appear excessive to the Finnish reader.

When the target audience is mainly children, whether it is read by the child or by an adult reading to the child, the translator needs to consider how much cultural knowledge the intended target language reader may possess, as is discussed by Cristina Sousa (2002). In Sousa's terms (2002: 17) used in Reception Theory, the implied reader of comics, the reader that the author intends his or her story to be read by, is a child. The real reader may be the same as the implied reader, or in fact an accidental reader, such as an adult reading the story aloud to a child. Sousa (2002: 17) also points out that a text cannot adapt itself to each reader, but instead the readers must adapt themselves to each text they read. However, children do not have the same capability as adults of adapting to the texts.

Further, Sousa (2002: 17-18) considers translation even more interesting, because it involves not only two texts but also two sets of readers (implied, real, intended and accidental). The translator needs to bear in mind two sets of readers, source text and target text readers, when making decisions about the translation. This may become further complicated by the fact that the implied and real readers of the source text and of the target text are not necessarily the same. For example, the readership of the Finnish *Aku Ankka* magazine includes a large number of adult readers, while the intended readers of the original *Donald Duck* stories are more likely to be children (see section 2.3 below).

It is crucial that the translator must assess the intended readers' level of cultural background knowledge, because that will affect the way that the readers interact with the text and interpret it. While this issue is relevant also to the author of children's literature, it becomes even more so for the translator, because the target language reader, especially a young one, can be expected to know relatively little of the source culture. Sousa (2002: 21) argues that insufficient understanding of the cultural background will lead to loss of enjoyment in the text, while the main point of reading fiction is probably the pleasure and satisfaction of a well-written work. Because of this, it is important to try to compensate for the inadequate background knowledge of the reader so that their enjoyment is not diminished (Sousa 2002:22). Similarly, it is possible to argue that the main point of reading comics is enjoying the humorous effect, the translator should aim to compensate for the elements that are too tightly connected to the source culture to appear amusing to the target language reader.

In conclusion, this section has discussed mainly general considerations, and relatively little specific strategies for the translator to choose from. In my opinion, most of the usual translation strategies apply to comics, as well, with the possible limitations discussed above with reference to the particular features of comics. It is also my belief that offering any type of normative advice is not useful, as the situations of translation are always different, and I agree with Oittinen's (1990) view of translation as dialogue, which means both freedom and responsibility to the translator. In a dialogue, the translator will need to listen to and respect the other voices in the interaction: the original author and original text, the illustrator and pictures, the reader. As Oittinen argues (1990: 20), the best way to respect the original is to create a target text that lives and interacts with the images.

2.3 Background on Donald Duck and Aku Ankka

Donald Duck has been a familiar character to Finnish people already for more than five decades. The first Finnish *Aku Ankka* magazine publishing Disney comics came out on December 5, 1951. Even before that, short Disney strips had appeared in *Aamulehti* and *Helsingin Sanomat* since the 1930s. In the beginning, the magazine came out once a month, then twice a month and starting from 1960 once a week (Toivonen 2001: 73).

Most sources (e.g. Toivonen 2001, Hyvärinen 2002) describe the magazine as a huge success from the very beginning, probably much due to the fact that no similar magazine existed at the time. According to Kankaanpää (1990: 28), the first comic magazine had been published in Finland in 1949, and the number increased so that by 1953 there were 10 comic magazines in Finland. Many of the other comics were so-called adventure comics, and *Aku Ankka* was the first one that seriously attracted girls as readers because of its funny stories.

According to Toivonen (2001: 73), based on interviews with the editor-in-chief, Markku Kivekäs, the magazine is nowadays calculated to have approximately one million readers, which is a very large number in relation to the population of Finland, and makes it much bigger than the corresponding publication in the country of origin, the United States (Hänninen and Kemppinen 1994: 24). Further evidence for the popularity of *Aku Ankka* in Finland is the way how many names of the characters have come to be used in everyday language (e.g. *hannuhanhi* for an unusually lucky person, from the Finnish name of Gladstone Gander), and how many lines and expressions still live in the collective memory (see Hyvärinen 2002).

The magazine has also a very interesting readership base. Although stereotypically comics are expected to be read by children (or by adults to children), in fact 75 % of the readers of *Aku Ankka* are older than 12, and 30 % older than 20, according to Toivonen (2001: 73). In comparison, Toivonen states that the main target

group of the Swedish equivalent, *Kalle Anka & Co.* is boys between 10 and 12 (2001: 71), and for the German equivalent *Micky Maus* the main readership is between 7 and 14 years old (2001: 72). Hyvärinen (2002: 37), on the other hand, states that the main Finnish readership of *Aku Ankka* is between 7 and 12 years old, but that also the parents of the children read the comics. Hyvärinen gives no figures, however, so it is possible that here the reference is rather to the target group than the largest number of readers.

It is to be expected that the readership of *Aku Ankka* would affect the translator's work quite a lot. In Sousa's terms, discussed above in 2.2.2, the intended readers of the original are quite probably children, whereas older readers would probably tend to be accidental readers. In Finland, however, the translator must take into account this large number of real adult readers.

In interviews, both Kivekäs (see Toivonen 2001: 121-122) and the magazine's managing editor, Jukka Heiskanen (see Hyvärinen 2002: 38), mention that the number of adult readers is taken into account when translating the stories. As the ones who actually pay for the subscription, they should find the language amusing. Thus the editors aim to make the stories enjoyable on two different levels. The comics in *Aku Ankka* should contain something to amuse the adults, which often means intertextual allusions, wordplays on names and things in the real world. But at the same time the stories should be understandable and amusing to the children, so the intertextual elements are added in ways that do not hinder the enjoyment even if the child does not catch them.

Kivekäs (2001: 121-122) states that he aims for language that he would want to read himself, and that rich language in the magazine improves the language skills of the children reading it. Many of the translations utilize a large vocabulary that not necessarily even the adult reader is always familiar with, and one of the most important rules is that repetition should be avoided and synonyms preferred. According

to Hyvärinen (2002: 38), the editors are also very specific about using the right terminology, considering that to honor the work of the people in the particular profession where the term belongs. Sometimes the *Aku Ankka* magazine has also been the first to introduce new words and concepts (Hyvärinen 2002: 38-39), since many things shown in the comics especially in the early years have not existed in Finland at the time, e.g. color TVs and virtual reality.

The material for the Finnish magazine nowadays comes from a Danish publisher, Egmont Publishing Service, and according to Toivonen (2001: 14), the publisher sends also a set of instructions concerning translation to all the publishers of Disney comics in different countries. These instructions are called *Translation – Guidelines for Translator*. Toivonen (2001: 14) states that she has been able to read only a part of the instructions, as the Danish publisher has a very strong habit of secrecy, and that the instruction manual is probably very secret information.

Toivonen (2001: 15) describes the rules or instructions given in this manual as follows. The translator should be very familiar with the characters and surroundings in the Disney comics, which can only be achieved through reading lots of the comics. According to the rules, the personalities of the characters should be taken into account when translating their speech (Uncle Scrooge and the nephews do not speak in the same manner). It is also advisable to avoid any bad words and too much slang. The translator should translate “freely”, not literally, and make the language “living” and “modern”. Wordplay should be seen as inspiration, and the translators are encouraged to replace it with wordplay in the target language. Similarly, the names of non-recurring characters and places should be translated in an “amusing” way. Because the speech bubbles should be filled nicely, the translators may add things if the bubble seems too empty or leave something out if it becomes too crowded.

It could be pointed out, as Toivonen (2001: 16-17) does, that these instructions almost appear to have been written by someone who either does not know much about translation theory, or assumes that the translators are not professionals who would know about translation strategies in general. For example, it would seem rather redundant to tell any professional translator that a translation should not be word-by-word or that wordplay should be translated in a suitable manner for the target language.

The editors do appear to follow many of the instructions, however. For example, Hyvärinen (2002: 38) states that the editors consider themselves responsible for what kinds of values and attitudes the language of the comics promotes, in addition to the subjects considered taboo by the Disney companies. They also take care that the speech of the characters is suitable to their ages and backgrounds, and so the older characters still keep alive some old Finnish words while the young nephews speak more like teenagers. Some characters, especially the "bad guys" of the stories, also speak in a slangy manner. It is quite understandable, as Toivonen (2001: 17-18) states that curse words should be avoided, considering that a large number of the readership is children. Also overusing slang should be avoided, so that the translation should be accessible to a wide readership. In the end it is the adults, the parents, who decide whether to buy the magazine or not, and so they should find it appropriate for their children to read.

Both Hyvärinen (2002: 37) and Toivonen (2001: 120-121) describe the process of translation as being run by three permanent staff editors of *Aku Ankka* magazine. Usually the texts are first translated by freelance translators or one of the editors, after which the editors revise them making changes they view as necessary. The finished translation is very rarely the work of just one translator. According to Toivonen (2001: 121), Kivekäs actually prefers to call it rewriting the story, because the translations are very loosely connected to the original. In this way, Hyvärinen (2002: 37) considers translating the Disney comics for *Aku Ankka* quite different from many

other translation jobs, because the translators are much freer to rewrite the stories, and are in fact encouraged to add jokes and adapt the stories better to the Finnish readers. This is considered important also because mostly the original author's mother tongue is something other than English, and thus the stories written in English often require improvements.

Toivonen (2001: 145-146) considers that one of the most striking features of the *Aku Ankka* translations is the amount of wordplay that has been added to the original. Most of the additions are based on intertextual wordplay, such as allusions to other texts, names etc. The translations in *Aku Ankka* have been much praised, and have received among other recognitions the "Kielihelmi", an award given by the Finnish department at the University of Helsinki (2002: 39). However, Toivonen (2001: 123) points out that the translations are also sometimes criticized on the basis that the dialogue does not sound like natural speech, or that the stories appear artificial in forcing too much wordplay into the comics. According to Hyvärinen (2002: 37), the editors of the magazine themselves are aware of the risk of exaggerating the use of wordplay. There may in fact be cases where the amount of wordplay may appear exhausting to some readers, such as the story *The Firebug* (Barks 1946b)/*Liekkimies* (Barks 1993) discussed below in Chapter 5. However, humor is quite an individual thing, and what appears excessive to one, may be considered all the more hilarious by another reader.

3 Translating wordplay

In this chapter, I will first of all discuss the definition and functions of wordplay in 3.1. Next, I will discuss issues related to translating humor in general and wordplay in particular in 3.2, which will include issues such as translating humorous texts, the translatability of wordplay and possible strategies for translating wordplay.

3.1 *Defining wordplay*

Humor and wordplay can be and have been studied from various points of view and using many different theoretical approaches and terminologies. Attardo (1994), for example, offers a lengthy survey of literature on humor starting from the time of Plato, as well as a survey of diverse theories of jokes and definitions and classifications of puns (or wordplay).

Many researchers writing on the subject of wordplay seem to use the terms "wordplay" and "pun" more or less interchangeably, while others, e.g. Leppihalme (1997: 142), appear to consider "pun" to refer to only a subclass of wordplay, namely that of homophonous or paronymical wordplay. The discussion in this paper will need to take into account all types of wordplay, especially considering the source and target languages in question. It has been suggested that "puns" are most common in languages like English, which have many monosyllabic words (see e.g. Delabastita 1996b: 131). In languages like Finnish, where words tend to be longer and to contain more markers of word class or syntactic function, wordplay is more often based on polysemy (Leppihalme 1997: 142). For this reason, I will be referring to the phenomenon in general as "wordplay".

For the purposes of this study, I will be following Dirk Delabastita's definition of wordplay:

"Wordplay is the general name for the various *textual* phenomena in which *structural features* of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a *communicatively significant confrontation* of two (or more) linguistic structures with *more or less similar forms* and *more or less different meanings*." (1996b: 128, emphasis original)

The first aspect of this definition is that linguistic structures resembling each other in form are contrasted to create humor out of their different meanings. Delabastita (1996b: 128) lists the different ways that linguistic structures can share a similar form: identical spelling and sound e.g. Finnish *kuusi* (homonymy), identical sound but different spelling e.g. English *right* vs. *rite* (homophony), identical spelling but different sound e.g. English *read* (present tense) vs. *read* (imperfect) (homography), or differ slightly in both e.g. English *friend* vs. *fiend* (paronymy). The two meanings can be present in the same utterance (vertical wordplay), or they can be revealed through repetition in context (horizontal wordplay).

Although all of the examples above are single words, ambiguous elements that are required to produce wordplay can be found at all levels of language. Such features can be phonological (homophones etc.), morphological (derived and compound words the parts of which have lost their literal meaning), lexical (polysemous words and idioms), and syntactic (ambiguous phrases or sentences), as Delabastita (1996b: 130-131) reminds us.

The second aspect according to Delabastita (1996b: 129-130) is that ambiguity alone is not enough to create the humorous effect of wordplay. Rather, he states that it is important to remember that wordplay is a feature of **texts**. While the possibilities for wordplay exist in language already, they require the context, either verbal or situational, to be activated. Verbal contexts are related to the human knowledge and expectations of grammatical and coherent texts, as well as conventionalized phrases. This concept of verbal contexts can be linked with Attardo's

(1994: 169) discussion of local logic, which all kinds of jokes have. Such playful local logic often violates the expectations readers have of grammatical sentences and possible situations, but the audience is ready to accept this for the duration of the joke. Attardo (1994: 169) argues that in the case of wordplay, the local logic is more or less: "since the two sound the same they must mean sort of the same thing". Situational contexts on the other hand would include for example the pictorial element of comics, which gives an additional meaning to the text.

The third aspect that Delabastita's (1996b: 132) definition takes up is the communicative significance factor. This is related to the contextual aspect in the sense that we should differentiate between accidental ambiguities in the text and those used intentionally for wordplay and the effects it creates. Delabastita (1996b: 132) admits that it is often very difficult to determine the intention of the author. In the end, the recognition and appreciation of wordplay depends on the readers' reading habits, as well as the genre conventions of the text. Similarly Leppihalme (1997: 141) considers it often difficult to distinguish between cases of intentional and unintentional wordplay. Sometimes a slip or spelling error, or the text finding its way to a certain context may give rise to a pun that would not exist in other contexts (see also Vandaele 2002).

In relation to readers' ability to recognize and appreciate wordplay or other humorous effects, Attardo (1994: 196) discusses the "humor competence" of a native speaker, elaborating on Chomsky's notion of grammatical competence. This humor competence is responsible for the fact that a reader, at least when reading in his or her native tongue, is able to recognize the perlocutionary goal of the text, the effect that the author has intended it to have, and thus distinguish whether a text is in fact humorous or not.

Delabastita's (1996b) definition of wordplay dealt with it as a clash between two different meanings. Many researchers, e.g. Bistra Alexieva (1997), argue

that it should rather be considered to be a clash of the two different domains where these meanings belong in the human mind. According to Alexieva (1997: 138), the remoteness and the way these two domains are connected influence the humorous effect. The idea of domains is similar to Attardo's (1994) scripts (see discussion below). As sources of information on the structuring of domains of knowledge, Alexieva (1997: 143) refers to idioms, proverbs and the like.

Similarly, Veisbergs (1997) considers wordplay to be a question of scripts, like Alexieva's (1997) domains. Veisbergs (1997: 157) discusses one way of creating wordplay, semantic or structural modifications of idioms. According to him, this type accounts for a large number of cases of wordplay, if not quite the majority. As opposed to structural modifications, where words are inserted, omitted or substituted in the idiom to change its meaning, an idiom can be modified by a semantic transformation, where the idiom remains the same, and only the context serves to create a new semantic interpretation. Veisbergs (1997: 158) argues that when the idiom is changed in this way, its conventional interpretation stays in the mind of the reader, hence adding to the effect of a clash of two scripts.

According to Davis (1997: 24), wordplay is not just one (or more) words invoking the meaning of another word, but also explicitly refers to the whole system of language itself, to some relation inside the system of the language where two things are at the same time somehow similar and different. Using an example of a situation where humor arises from the homophony of the words *genes* and *jeans*, she argues that the audience will not understand the full meaning of the wordplay unless they become aware of the two different systems, that of *genes* and reproduction, and designer *jeans*, which are associated with sexiness.

This necessity of understanding the two systems (or domains, see Alexieva 1997, or scripts, see Attardo 1994), Davis (1997: 25) sees as proof that

wordplay makes reference to the way that language itself is a system where a network of relationships, phonetic, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, exists. She further argues that no word or other element can have any meaning alone, but is always tied to the other elements in the system (whole language or one text) and marked by them. Wordplay, then, is play on the relationships that the word has to all the other words in the same system.

Also Attardo (1994: 168) discusses wordplay as a consciously metalinguistic phenomenon. This means that the speakers are deliberately taking advantage of certain characteristics of language (namely the existence of homonyms, and polysemous words etc.) to create a humorous effect.

The humorous effect appears to be the most important reason for taking advantage of the possibilities language offers for creating wordplay. Veisbergs (1997: 159) and Delabastita (1996b: 130), among others, state that the function or goal of wordplay is to create a humorous effect and draw the audience's attention to something in the text. In addition to these two goals, Delabastita (1996b: 130) adds that wordplay gives the possibility to address potentially taboo issues.

According to Alexieva (1997: 139-140), humans seem to have a strong wish to create a humorous effect when communicating with others, and this is the motivation behind wordplay. At the same time, they like to test their own and their audience's skills of making analogies. The audience being able to catch the intended meaning, to make the analogy, and to share in the humorous effect may cause a stronger feeling of solidarity between the speaker (author) and the audience. On the other hand, if the audience fails to grasp the meaning, the speaker may get some feeling of power and superiority.

This implies that wordplay has additional goals besides creating humor. The goals include the various social functions that humor may have, including

facilitating interaction in a group, creating bonds inside a group and excluding the outsiders, and allowing the speaker not to commit to the words uttered in order to save face (Attardo 1994: 322-330). The author of a humorous text has similar goals, getting the reader somehow involved in interaction with the text, or in a game of recognizing the allusions (Leppihalme 1996: 202). Readers may have varying reactions to wordplay, but in Leppihalme's view the author probably creates the wordplay so that at least some of the readers will appreciate and enjoy it.

From the translator's point of view, this suggests that wordplay should not be taken lightly. It can be presumed that the author has some communicative goal in mind when using wordplay. This goal and the effect the wordplay creates should be preserved in the translation. Section 3.2 will further discuss issues relating to translation of humor in general and wordplay in particular.

3.2 *Translating humor and wordplay*

In this section I will first discuss some general issues relating to translating humor in general, and then translating, and indeed translatability, of wordplay. Finally I will take up some discussion and suggestions on the strategies available to a translator faced with translating wordplay.

3.2.1 Humor in translation

Humor is often mentioned as one of the characteristics of texts that are most difficult for a translator to translate (see Heiskanen 1990, for example). Jeroen Vandaele (2002), for example, discusses how difficult it is to even define what humor actually is. For the purposes of translating humor, one can consider humor the same as humorous effect, and translating humor then becomes the same as "achieving the 'same humorous effect'" (Vandaele 2002: 151). For a survey of and discussion on various theories of humor, see Attardo (1994).

Translating humor is difficult partly because being able to appreciate humor does not mean that one is able to create that same effect (Vandaele 2002: 150). Creating funny texts would appear to be very much a question of natural talent that cannot be learned. On the other hand, a sense of humor is an individual thing since not everyone finds the same things amusing. According to Vandaele (2002: 150), a strong reaction, either positive or negative, towards humor in the text may make analyzing the humorous effect difficult for the translator. What Vandaele apparently means is that if the translator is very amused by a joke or considers it a failure, he or she may have more difficulties in determining the elements of the humorous effect. Such an analysis is important in deciding which features and effects should be present in the target text.

Vandaele (2002: 154) argues that eventually the translator aiming to achieve the same humorous effect in the target text will need to address two questions. The first is what caused the humorous effect; and the second what effects does the humor in turn cause. As an answer to the first question, Vandaele (2002: 154) considers a humorous effect to be the "physiological arousal" that a person attributes to a particular cause. Particular causes may carry with them different connotations, e.g. wordplay would be considered "witty", physical slapstick comedy "simplistic". As an answer to the second question, humor may be used as a rhetorical device to arouse "goodwill" or similar feelings in the audience, or it may cause disgust if it is recognized but not considered funny by the audience. Humor as a rhetorical device may also cause negative feelings, such as making the reader angry about something at the same time as being amused, as is the case with satire.

There are several factors that a translator needs to consider when choosing the appropriate strategy for translating humor in each instance. According to Vandaele (2002: 165), it may not always be possible to understand the intentions of the sender (the author of the source text), or the reader or translator may have a different agenda

that affects the understanding. Another issue is that the original context may not be available in the target language or there may be new unexpected contexts. Finally the function or skopos of the text may not be uniquely humorous, but rather a combination of various different functions, which affects the translator's choice of features that need to be preserved.

3.2.2 Translatability of wordplay

One aspect of wordplay and translation that many researchers have approached is whether wordplay is translatable at all, since it depends so strongly on the structure of the source language for meaning and effect. Alexieva (1997: 139) considers wordplay to be universal in all languages in the sense that all languages seem to have words with different meaning but identical (or nearly identical) written or spoken form. This is caused by the asymmetry between language and the surrounding world, the latter of which exhibits many more objects and phenomena than a language can have words for.

However, as Delabastita (1996b: 131) points out, languages differ in their structures, and thus different languages may well have different ways of creating wordplay (cf. section 3.1 above). Some forms of wordplay may also be used in one language more than they are in another. Veisbergs (1997: 162) states that modifying idioms to create wordplay by having the contexts give them new meanings seems to be a universal tendency among languages. However, Leppihalme (1996: 212) points out that these modified idioms, "allusive wordplay" as Leppihalme terms it, appear much less common in Finnish than in English.

Even if one would agree that wordplay as such is a universal feature of language, a specific instance of wordplay may not be translatable into another language. The difficulty of translating puns, according to Alexieva (1997: 141), is caused by the asymmetry between world and language manifesting itself in different ways in different

languages. For example, a word which has a set of multiple meanings in one language may have a corresponding word in another with only one meaning or with a different set of multiple meanings. The phonological and graphemic structures which are important for wordplay are also different in different languages.

But Alexieva (1997: 141-142) argues that the differences go even deeper than this. Speakers of different languages and members of different cultures view the world, construct domains for knowledge and experience and connect these domains to each other differently. The domains depend very much on the speakers' perceptions and the frequency and nature of their contact and familiarity with objects and phenomena belonging to some particular domain.

Also Davis (1997: 26) argues that wordplay, while making reference to the structure of language, is tied to one specific relation in one specific language. Because all languages have their own "manner of meaning", which makes the relationships in one language different from all other languages, the same wordplay will not work directly in another language. In Davis' (1997: 27) view, wordplay causes problems to translators because at the same time it is in the idiom of the language and about the idiom. She refers to this as the "signature" of language.

However, Davis (1997: 32) does not consider wordplay to be purely translatable or untranslatable. In her terms, a word would be entirely untranslatable or translatable only if it had a meaning that existed completely outside of the system of the language, with no relationships to any of the other words that exist in that language. Because the word has connections to the other words and concepts, it will always be in some way translatable, and yet at the same time some part of it, or its relationships, will be untranslatable. Davis (1997: 38) argues that because every sign can be taken from its original context and put into a new context, every sign, including wordplay, is available

for translation, although its meaning in the new context (target text) will necessarily be different from the original context (source text).

In many cases, it appears that the view on translatability depends in fact on what one means by "translating" the wordplay. Delabastita (1996b: 135) states that even replacing source language wordplay by target language wordplay will usually require changes in the structure or meaning. Sometimes the surrounding context also requires modification in order for the wordplay to work. According to Delabastita (1996b: 135), this leads to the paradox where the translator is able to be faithful to the source text in terms of its wordplay only through being unfaithful to the grammatical and lexical aspects.

As a relatively positive view on translating wordplay, Henrik Gottlieb (1997: 217) argues that although structurally suitable words in the source language will quite probably differ in the target language, there are often alternate ways to render the wordplay using other ambiguous words. Attardo (2002: 191-193), on the other hand, argues that connotations of words in different languages are different. Because it is possible that they are different precisely for the words that the Logical Mechanism of the wordplay is based on, it is not possible to guarantee a **humorous** translation in each and every case.

Delabastita (1996b: 135-136) points out certain cases where translating wordplay would appear to have better chances of succeeding than in others. For example, wordplay relying on phonological aspects is often most successful if the languages are related, and similarly any type of wordplay will have a higher chance of success when translated if the languages in question share a common base of loan words. Polysemous words, on the other hand, may sometimes be translated relatively easily even between languages that are not related, because polysemy seems to be a universal feature of languages.

On the other hand, Embleton (1991) discusses some findings from studying wordplay and other humorous effects in the translation of names in *Asterix* comics. Her results show that these "easy" cases may not be as straightforward as they seem. Embleton (1991: 200-202) states that since Finnish is not an Indo-European language, and thus does not share the cognate vocabulary with French, the original language of *Asterix* comics, translating the wordplay in names into Finnish becomes even more interesting and challenging. She points out that if one expects translation of wordplay to be easier when the languages are related both linguistically and culturally, Finnish translations from French should be less successful than, say Italian or even Swedish translations. In practice this appears not to be the case with the names in *Asterix*. Embleton goes as far as to consider the Finnish translations often to be among the most successful of all the languages she studied.

3.2.3 Strategies for translating wordplay

Most researchers writing on translating wordplay agree that it is important for the translator to attempt to preserve the level of humorous effect in the translation. For example, Veisbergs (1997: 172) argues that wordplay usually serves a more important purpose than just embellishment of the text. This, in his opinion, may lead to it being more important to preserve the wordplay effect than to use idiomatic target language when thinking of the skopos of translation. Also Gottlieb (1997: 215), discussing the translation of a television comedy, considers it important to preserve the level of funniness, because the wordplay is, in his words, "a crucial factor, a motor that propels us from one sequence to the other." A similar consideration is often appropriate in the context of comics, because translating comics and television programs share many features. In comics as well as in television comedy, wordplay and other humorous effects have an important part in contributing to the enjoyment of the audience.

If one accepts the view that the translator should aim to preserve wordplay in the target text, there are still many different strategies to choose from. Following Delabastita (1996b: 134), these strategies include: translating the source text wordplay with wordplay in the target text, which may be more or less different; translating it in a way that loses some aspect of the wordplay; replacing it with some other device aimed at creating similar effect (e.g. rhyme, irony); or omitting it.

As a way for compensating for wordplay that has been lost in the translation, the translator may also choose to translate something that did not involve wordplay in the source text in a way that does in the target text, or to add completely new material with wordplay.

Leppihalme (1997: 149) offers a similar list of strategies that the translator may choose from when faced with translating wordplay. She also emphasizes that when choosing the best strategy, the translator should consider the importance of the various factors, e.g. the function of the wordplay, as well as the expectations of the audience, and the norms and conventions of the target language. According to Gottlieb (1997: 216), although other devices can cause a similar humorous effect on the audience as wordplay does, it is still in his opinion best to translate wordplay in a source text with wordplay in the target text, since this matches the style best.

Inserting explanatory information in the form of footnotes or other comments is mentioned by both Veisbergs (1997) and Delabastita (1996b), but it is uncertain whether this is a usable strategy for comics. Omitting either the whole passage or the wordplay element of the passage is also a possible strategy. Veisbergs (1997: 171) considers it to be even a good choice, if the wordplay serves a minor purpose or if too much punning would lead to an artificial effect. The possible reasons for omission can also be compared with Poroila's (1984) opinion on leaving certain comics untranslated, as discussed in subsection 2.2.1 on translating comics.

Omission is one reason for the loss of wordplay in translation, and Gottlieb (1997: 216) discusses some other possible reasons for loss of wordplay in context of the comedy he has studied. The reasons may be language specific, meaning that there are elements in the source text that do not have corresponding linguistic elements in the target language; media specific, meaning that the time and space limitations of subtitling affect the translation; or due to the human translator, through insufficient talent, interest, experience or time. Also of importance may be the translation norms of the target culture, although Gottlieb does not consider them important in this particular case. Many of these reasons are applicable to comics as well, but unlike Gottlieb, I consider the norms also an important issue (see discussion on norms in section 2.2.2).

Whatever the reasons for losing wordplay and humorous effects in translation, if the translator is attempting to retain the level of humor in the text, some kind of compensation is needed. Compensation is particularly needed in text types like comics. This is argued by Keith Harvey (1995: 66), who offers a detailed description of how compensation may work. Harvey's (1995: 66) definition of compensation is that it involves adding material to the target text to produce a similar effect to the source text when something has been lost in translation. Compensation should be done in a way that suits the target language or target text in particular.

Loss does not have to mean that a part of the text has been completely lost, but rather that some aspect that was present in the source text is not there in the target text, e.g. a double meaning, a connotation. Harvey (1995: 68-69) notes that compensation does not require specific correspondences that can be shown to match in the source text and target text, but rather a "balance of tone throughout the text" (1995: 68). This would mean that the target text is as a whole equally humorous as the source text. Compensation ties into the concept of translation unit, which Harvey points out to

often be larger than a word, a clause or a sentence, stretching as far as the text as a whole.

It is not always straightforward to define exactly what counts as compensation. Harvey (1995: 77) wishes to exclude cases that result from differences in the two different language systems and have some sort of conventional replacement item. On the other hand, wordplay and onomatopoeic items should be included. Thus it seems understandable that Harvey considers compensation often necessary in comics, since both onomatopoeia and wordplay are frequent in comics. Taking into account that comics are usually intended to be amusing to the reader, it also appears understandable that the translator would attempt to retain the overall humorous feeling, even if it is not possible to create it by precisely the same means as in the source text. Thus understanding the concept of compensation and the ways it works may be quite helpful for a translator.

When choosing the best strategy for approaching wordplay, the translator will need to consider many factors. Leppihalme (1996: 215 and 1997: 145) states that the translators always need to consider the function of the particular instance of wordplay. Strategies should then be chosen to maintain the same function, even if the same form cannot be preserved. Another important factor discussed by Leppihalme (1996: 203 and 1997: 145) is that wordplay is connected to the culture. The culture determines e.g. what issues are open for humor, and what basis of common background knowledge exists between the author and the reader. It may be difficult to transfer the wordplay into another language, but also among the readers of the source language community some readers will be more able to recognize wordplay than others, depending on their previous reading, age and experience. The reader, and the translator, must have familiarity with the culture and be a skilled reader.

Further considerations should also be given to the conventions and translation norms in the target culture. Delabastita (1996b: 135), for example, points out that when making decisions on how and to what extent to retain the wordplay, the translator needs to take into account the target audience's anticipated reaction. Exaggerating the instances of wordplay may lead to an opposite reaction than what was intended. The translator should consider accepted practices such as the tendency of Finnish writers to use less allusive wordplay than English ones, pointed out by Leppihalme (1996: 213), because this affects greatly the expectations of Finnish readers and therefore also the translation norms on wordplay.

As a conclusion, I do not wish to suggest any strategies for the translators to prefer over others, but rather I agree with Veisbergs (1997: 172), who refrains from giving any prescriptive advice because he views each instance of wordplay as unique both in language and context. My purpose is rather to examine the strategies that have been used by translators at different times. In the next section I will move on to introduce a theory that Salvatore Attardo (1994, 2002) has suggested as a basis for a possible method for comparing jokes and wordplay in two languages.

4 General Theory of Verbal Humor

In his article, Salvatore Attardo (2002) offers a possible theory that could be used for evaluating translation of humor. This theory, called the General Theory of Verbal Humor, or GTVH as it will be referred to from here on, is an attempt to describe how jokes and wordplay are generated by bringing together two scripts (cf. discussion on domains [Alexieva 1997], systems [Davis 1997] and scripts [Veisbergs 1997] in Chapter 3) utilizing six so-called Knowledge Resources, which contain the information necessary for generating a joke. The notion of script will be discussed below in 4.1, and the six Knowledge Resources will be introduced in 4.2. For a more detailed discussion of script theories and the GTVH, see Attardo (1994). Section 4.3 will discuss how the GTVH can be applied to translation.

According to Kim Binsted and Graeme Ritchie (2001: 281), the GTVH is the most widely cited attempt at a generalized theory of humor. It has been used by authors dealing with various types of issues, ranging from jokes to longer humorous narratives (e.g. Attardo 1998) to computational generation of humor. Attardo (1998: 233) argues that it is possible to use the GTVH for any variety of media, including different semiotic systems such as one encounters in movies, television, comics etc. Perhaps most interestingly for the current study, the GTVH has been used previously also in the analysis of comics by John C. Paolillo, who considers (1998: 268) it easily extendable also to visual humor such as comics.

As a general theory, the GTVH aims at removing the need to create new devices to use as a measure for studying each different subcategory of humor. The fundamental idea behind Attardo (1994) is that the theory could be used to analyze everything from individual puns to longer jokes, and Attardo (1998) extends it to longer humorous texts. Some of the criticism mentioned by Binsted and Ritchie (2001: 280-

281) is that such a theory can become too general and vague in trying to account for all possible cases and that the GTVH still lacks formal definitions for many of the central concepts.

This particular theory was selected for the purposes of this study as a metric device that can be used to measure the difference in the meaning or pragmatic force of the original and the translation. As Attardo (2002: 174-175) argues, two utterances in two different languages (or indeed in the same language) can never be identical, but merely similar to some extent. Attardo (2002) suggests that the GTVH is a suitable metric for translating humor, because it already includes a way of measuring similarities between texts, whether they are in the same language or in different ones.

Attardo (2002: 175) points out, however, that the GTVH is strictly a *linguistic* theory for measuring the similarity and difference between texts, and does not claim that the theory is able to explain the mechanics of producing or interpreting wordplay, or its significance in the culture. Recognizing these limitations, I will follow Delabastita's (1996b: 131) opinion that while a linguistic approach to wordplay will never be able to explain everything, an analysis of the linguistic structure is a good and necessary starting point for studying translation of wordplay, since wordplay is so strongly connected to the linguistic supply of possible devices.

4.1 *Scripts*

A central idea in the GTVH is a script. This concept is very similar to Alexieva's (1997) notion of domains and Davis' (1997) concept of systems, see also section 3.1.

According to Attardo (1994: 198-200), scripts are cognitive structures that humans have for organizing information, their knowledge of the world. These scripts contain information on e.g. how things are normally done, what are the circumstances and conditions for some activity, etc. As an example, the script for "doctor" would contain

information on what doctors normally do (examine patients, diagnose diseases and prescribe treatment), how one becomes a doctor (through studying at a medical school), where doctors normally do what they do (hospital, doctor's office), etc. Scripts may also be complex, and contain other scripts. For example, Attardo (1994: 200) states that the script for WAR¹ contains other scripts like ARMY, WEAPON etc.

All this information contained in the scripts is necessary in order to understand utterances. As an example, Attardo (1994: 201-202) discusses how the script for BEER needs to include the information that beer comes packaged in bottles or cans that can be placed one on top of the other, or else an utterance such as "John stacked the beer in the fridge" would be impossible. Scripts are also connected to each other, forming a semantic network of hyponyms and hyperonyms, synonyms and antonyms etc.

Attardo (1994: 203-205) argues that in order to create a humorous effect, the text needs to bring together two scripts that are at the same time overlapping and opposite. Overlapping means that there have to be some parts or some details of the text that fit both scripts equally well. For example, in the case of wordplay, a word or a phrase could be interpreted in two different ways and is thus compatible with the two scripts of the two meanings, causing the scripts to overlap. Oppositeness on the other hand means that the scripts are opposed so that one of them is actual, the other non-actual; one is normal, the other abnormal; one possible and the other impossible. These three oppositions are considered to be basic oppositions to which all other script oppositions can be reduced, but which are commonly expressed as other, more concrete oppositions. Some of the most common oppositions are GOOD and BAD, LIFE and DEATH, OBSCENE and NON-OBSCENE. However, no exhaustive list of possible scripts exists, and it is difficult to imagine that such a list could ever be compiled. Because of this, an

¹ I adopt here the habit of Attardo (1994), among others, of representing scripts with SMALL CAPS.

analysis of the scripts in question will quite necessarily rely on the intuitive interpretation of the person doing the analysis.

Neither overlapping nor oppositeness is enough by itself to create humor, Attardo (1994: 204) argues. The humorous effect requires the scripts to be both overlapping and opposite, and if one of the conditions is not fulfilled, the effect is something else. Overlapping scripts which are not opposed are a feature of metaphors, allegories and similar devices, while opposed scripts that do not overlap cause an effect of conflict and possibly tragedy.

As an example to clarify the concepts, I shall discuss here one example of wordplay from *Donald Duck*. In the story *Donald Duck and the Boys*, the three nephews are attempting to catch a circus performer, Bassofoglio, the Human Bat. One of the boys states: "*The way to catch bats is to drive 'em batty!*" This appears to be in fact a three-way play on the word *bat*. The first instance of *bat* can be seen to refer both to the animal *bat* and the name of the circus performer. The next repetition, *batty*, while it could still be read as an adjective referring to the animal, reinforcing the script BAT, brings in also another meaning of 'crazy', and thus evokes the script INSANITY. The two scripts are overlapping, since this word could support either reading. They could also be considered opposing, for example the script BAT includes the information that bats are animals, while INSANITY probably includes the information that only humans can be described as insane. The opposition could perhaps be reduced to NORMAL (animals) vs. ABNORMAL (insanity).

4.2 Knowledge Resources

Attardo (1994: 222-223) states that according to the GTVH, all jokes and wordplay are generated using six Knowledge Resources, one of which is the Script Opposition discussed above. The other five Knowledge Resources are Language, Narrative

Strategy, Target, Situation and Logical Mechanism. Although Attardo (1994) presents these as a fact, at least in some contexts it is possible to find some redundancy, and the Knowledge Resources can be modified, as is discussed by Paolillo (1998: 269). As already stated, Script Opposition is essentially the notion of overlapping and opposed scripts discussed above, but the other Knowledge Resources will be introduced below following Attardo (1994: 223-226). To exemplify each of the other five Knowledge Resources, I will again use the instance of wordplay mentioned above in 3.1, *The way to catch bats is to drive 'em batty!*

Language refers to the way that the joke is in fact verbalized, the wording and the ordering of its elements. For most jokes, the actual wording can be expressed in various ways without changing the meaning or effect of the joke much. According to Attardo (1994: 223), wordplay is an exception to this in the sense that in order to work, it requires the specific wording that gives rise to the possibility of two meanings or two scripts. The Language Knowledge Resource also determines in which order the information is revealed so that the punch line of the joke comes last. For the *bat* wordplay, the Language Knowledge Resource is responsible for the exact wording. The wordplay element limits the number of possible paraphrases, but the effect would be more or less the same if it were formulated e.g. *If we want to catch a bat, we have to drive it batty!*

Narrative Strategy is quite closely related to Language, and Attardo (1994: 224) states it simply means that all jokes have to have some kind of a form: a narrative, a dialogue, riddle etc. The Narrative Strategy of our bat joke is an aside in conversation. Again, without changing the meaning or effect much, it could be formulated e.g. *How do you catch bats? Drive them batty!* In that case the Narrative Strategy would be question and answer. In the case of comics, the Narrative Strategy can be seen to include not only the verbal, but also the visual element. This is discussed by Paolillo

(1998: 269), who argues that the most common Narrative Strategy in comics is a visual representation of a real-life situation.

Target refers to the group or individual that is being made fun of. Often the Targets are ethnic or other groups or individuals who have certain stereotypes attached to them, for example blondes are often associated with the stereotype of stupidity. Attardo (1994: 224) points out that this Knowledge Resource may also be empty, if the joke is not targeted at any specific group or individual. The Target of the bat wordplay is not entirely clear, unless one considers it to be the circus performer, Bassofoglio, chased by the three boys. Elaborating on this, one might perhaps note that the name gives the impression of an Italian character, and speculate on the stereotypes connected to Italians in the United States, the country of origin of the comic.

The next Knowledge Resource, Situation, refers to what the joke is in fact about, as each joke must have some situation where it is happening. The situation contains the participants and the objects present in the joke, the activity being described etc. Attardo (1994: 225) calls them the "props" of the joke. Some jokes may rely heavily on the situation, whereas in others it can be ignored. Paolillo (1998: 269) also points out that analyzing the Situation may be redundant, as it will usually correspond to one of the scripts of the Script Opposition. The Situation of the bat wordplay could be described as follows: *Donald Duck's* three nephews have received a task from their uncle to collect a bill owed by a circus performer called Bassofoglio. However, he refuses to pay up, and the boys need to devise a plan to catch him.

A more abstract concept than the previous Knowledge Resources, Logical Mechanism refers to the way that the two scripts are brought together. Attardo (1994: 225-226) states that they may be simply juxtaposed with each other, or a more complex error of reasoning, such as false analogy, may be involved. Like with the case of scripts discussed above, an exhaustive list of Logical Mechanisms does not exist. Paolillo

(1998) discusses in some detail the Logical Mechanisms found in his corpus of Gary Larson's comics. The following is a slightly modified listing, where some of Paolillo's categories have been combined.

1. Differential-potency mapping: elements of one script are mapped onto another with less or more agentive potency (e.g. an inanimate object has less agentive potency than a human being).
2. Similar-potency mappings: elements of one script are substituted with another with the same agentive potency (e.g. different animals, different inanimate objects).
3. Consequence or implied consequence: the consequence of some event is shown, leaving the actual event to be imagined by the reader, or an event is shown that is bound to have certain consequences, but these are left for the reader's imagination.
4. Juxtaposition: two scripts are shown simultaneously.
5. Sequence: two scripts are shown one after the other (e.g. in two consecutive frames).
6. Mediating script: a third script is used to bring the two scripts of the Script Opposition into opposition.
7. Obvious error: a character in the situation fails to recognize something blatantly obvious.
8. Exaggeration: an element of a script is exaggerated for humorous effect.
9. Roles: the roles of the characters are a) exchanged from what would be normal for the script in question, b) mirrored: similar roles in two scripts are made mirror images of one another, c) recursive: similar roles in two scripts are filled so that the patient of one script becomes the agent of the other.
10. Negation: a script is negated.

Attardo (2002: 180-181) provides a listing with more Logical Mechanisms, stating them to be all that have been identified so far. One of Attardo's (2002) additions is cratylism, which includes homonymy, polysemy and paronymy. Paolillo (1998: 271) also argues that some of the Logical Mechanisms may co-occur. For example, in the case of the bat wordplay, it would appear to be a case of cratylism, juxtaposing the two scripts through

the ambiguous word, and at the same time a question of differential-potency mapping of human characteristics onto an animal.

So according to Attardo's (1994: 226-227) GTVH, a joke could be represented as a combination of these six factors. They are arranged hierarchically as follows, in ascending order: Language, Narrative Strategy, Target, Situation, Logical Mechanism, Script Opposition. This hierarchy means that the elements lower in the hierarchy are more concrete, and will be determined in part by the higher, more abstract elements. Thus the Script Opposition in question, e.g. FAST vs. SLOW, limits the possible choices of Target etc. Similarly, the Logical Mechanism of homonymy would set certain restrictions on the Language.

This hierarchical organization of the Knowledge Resources is also what Attardo (1994: 228) suggests can be used to measure similarity between jokes. He predicts that jokes (or in the case of this study, instances of wordplay) are perceived to be the more similar the more Knowledge Resources they have in common, and on the other hand the more different the higher up in the hierarchy they differ.

4.3 *Application of GTVH to translation of wordplay*

Because the GTVH as such provides a way for measuring the difference between two jokes or two instances of wordplay in the same language, Attardo (2002: 185) argues that it can easily be expanded to include jokes or wordplay in two different languages. Attardo's (2002: 183) "mini-theory of joke translation" is that if possible, all the six Knowledge resources should be preserved, but if this is impossible (as Attardo himself notes that it may be in practice), the translation should differ on the lowest level possible as far as pragmatic considerations go.

This means that the translator should first change the Language (paraphrase the joke). If that is not enough, change the Narrative Strategy (e.g. if the

translation involves a strategy that is unknown in the target culture). Next change the Target (a group or institution more familiar to the target culture) and then the Situation (a situation more familiar in the target culture) of the joke, then the Logical Mechanism (e.g. juxtaposition instead of analogy) and finally, if all else fails, the Script Opposition.

It appears self-evident that when one is dealing with translation from one language to another, the Language Knowledge Resource will by default be changed. Attardo (2002: 191) does discuss in theory the possibility of "absolute translation", where the denotative meaning as well as all connotations would be identical, but it is highly unlikely that such translations can be found in practice. On the other hand, translating the Narrative Strategy should usually be straightforward, since there is rarely any need to change it. There is no particular reason why a joke would appear funnier in question-answer format, for example, than as a monologue. Even in a case where the source language has some format of jokes that appears to be unique to it, or at least unavailable in the target language, such as the English language "knock-knock jokes", it is still relatively simple for the translator to tell the joke in some other format.

The Target of a joke may often need replacing, because different cultures have the habit of making different groups the target of jokes and assigning different stereotypical characteristics to different ethnic or social groups. Paolillo (1998: 266-267) discusses related difficulties, stating that the translation may lack certain bits of important information or possibly cultural knowledge, without which the joke becomes "nonsensical" for readers of the translation, while the readers of the source text would possess knowledge that allows them to resolve the joke. However, according to Attardo (2002: 187), translation can be done relatively easily by finding a corresponding target group in the target culture that shares similar characteristics to the ones perceived for the Target of the joke in the source culture.

The Situation Knowledge Resource of the joke needs to be changed if the situation is something that does not exist in the target culture, or it is considered a taboo subject and is as such unavailable for humor. As an example one could think of translating a joke about skiing into a language spoken in a tropical country.

Attardo (2002: 188) argues that the Logical Mechanism should normally be easily translatable, as it is a question of non-verbal, logical and deductive processes that are independent of language. The one exception would be the Logical Mechanism behind wordplay, which necessarily is dependent on the linguistic fact of same sound/writing etc. Even in this case it might be possible to preserve the Logical Mechanism of wordplay by changing the Language, and possibly the Situation, to fit the target language. However, for comics this may be more complicated, as the situation is usually clearly presented in the pictures accompanying the text.

According to Attardo (2002: 188), based his on research, two jokes that differ in Script Opposition will in fact be considered different jokes altogether. Due to this, Attardo argues that as long as the scripts are available in the target language, they should not be changed by the translator, and the only reason to change them is if the Script Opposition is unavailable either because it does not exist in the target language (see the skiing joke above), or because it is considered taboo.

In conclusion, Attardo (2002: 189-190) does consider all jokes to be translatable in their perlocutionary effect. It is always possible to replace one joke with a completely different one in the hope that it will create the same effect of amusing the audience. In a sense replacing one Script Opposition with another can be seen as an instance of compensation, discussed above in Chapter 3. In the next section, I will attempt to put this theory into practice, and use it to measure the difference between instances of wordplay in English *Donald Duck* comics and their Finnish translations.

5 Translations of wordplay in Donald Duck

This section will present an analysis of the instances of wordplay that were found in *Donald Duck* comic stories and their Finnish translations. In section 5.1, I introduce the material and how Attardo's (1994 and 2002) GTVH will be applied to the examples of wordplay, while section 5.2 contains the analysis of these examples. Finally, section 5.3 will discuss the findings and their possible implications.

5.1 *Material and method*

The source material from which the instances of wordplay being analyzed were taken consists of 12 English *Donald Duck* stories and their Finnish translations. *Donald Duck* is considered a particularly appropriate source for material for the diachronic perspective, since translations of the stories are available from many decades, from the 1950s up to present day. Section 2.3 presented some further information on the history and translation practices of *Donald Duck* and other Disney comics in Finland (for further information, refer to e.g. Toivonen [2001]).

The material consists of 12 Disney comic stories, on the average eight to ten pages long. All of the stories are by the same author, Carl Barks, so as not to introduce further variables in the form of varying authors. Four of the Finnish translations date from the 1950s, four from the 1970s and four from the 1990s, and have been published variously in the *Aku Ankka* magazine, in *Aku Ankan Parhaat* album series or *Aku Ankan Juhlasarjat* books.

The translators of the stories, especially of the older material, are rarely named, or may be named collectively as *Aku Ankan toimitus*, 'editors of the *Aku Ankka* magazine' (see section 2.3 for discussion on the translation practices of the magazine). In the collections containing the stories translated in 1958 (Kivekäs et al. 2000) and

1959 (Kivekäs et al. 2001), translations are credited to Sirkka Ruotsalainen and Leena Drufva, but this is not explicitly listed for the two stories analyzed in this study (Barks 1958b and 1959). In the 1990s the translators are named as Veksi Lehtinen (Barks 1991), Markku Saarinen (Barks 1992), Markku Kivekäs (Barks 1993) and Jukka Heiskanen (Barks 1996).

Besides the author and date of translation, no particular criterion beyond easy availability of both source and target text was used in selecting the specific stories. The stories were selected first, and the wordplay in them analyzed only afterward, so no story was selected particularly because of a large number of instances of wordplay. The results will show that the amount of wordplay varies greatly in different stories, both in the source and target texts. It should be noted that although some numerical values relating to the frequency of wordplay are presented, this study does not aim at quantitative analysis. Thus the results should not be viewed as any attempt to state how common wordplay is in comics in general or *Donald Duck* stories in particular, but rather as examples of the kind of wordplay that a translator may encounter.

For the analysis, all instances of wordplay were first collected from the English stories. As Attardo (1998: 256) argues that intuition should be rejected in choosing which parts of the text should be taken into account, passages that might create a humorous effect were analyzed without taking any stand on how funny the joke appeared intuitively.

The instances of wordplay were selected by a close reading of the original English stories, analyzing the joke or humorous effect of frames or sequences of frames according to the GTVH. If the Logical Mechanism of the joke was dependent on cratylism (see section 4.2 above), the humorous effect was counted as an example of wordplay. Similar reading was then done with the Finnish translations to see if the same frame or sequence had a humorous effect.

All possible differences were analyzed using Attardo's (1994) six Knowledge Resources to see which of them the translator had changed. A complete loss of wordplay and humorous effect was considered a total difference, as in that case the most important factor of Script Opposition is entirely absent. On the other hand, instances of wordplay in the Finnish target text that were not present in the English source text were also counted and analyzed. These cases can be considered compensation, although in many cases it is difficult to point to some specific instance of lost wordplay that has been compensated for (generalized compensation, Harvey 1995).

Some analyses are presented below following a notation used by Attardo (1998) and Paolillo (1998), among others. In Attardo (1998: 242), this notation is presented as follows:²

- SO Script Opposition: the source of the incongruity.
- LM Logical Mechanism: the resolution of the incongruity, if any.
- SI Situation: the setting of the joke.
- TA Target: the butt of the joke.
- NS Narrative Strategy: the kind of communication the joke is.
- LA Language: the signifier of the semiotic.

Paolillo (1998) uses only some of the Knowledge Resources (SO, LM and TA) in his presentation of examples, and also for the purposes of this study, the notation has been simplified somewhat. Similarly as was pointed out by Paolillo (1998: 269, see also chapter 4 of this study), some redundancy could be found in the analysis of Situation and Script Opposition. As the Situation does appear to coincide with one of the scripts in the Script Opposition, I have chosen to follow Paolillo (1998) in leaving it out.

However, unlike Paolillo who considered NS and LA relatively uninteresting in the *Far Side* comics in his corpus, I see these Knowledge Resources as

² Note that in Attardo's (1998: 242) explanation of the notation, NS has been placed before TA, but in the theory TA is always listed as being higher in the hierarchy than NS. Since all of the actual examples used by Attardo (1998) follow the order with NS below TA, it seems likely that the opposite order was an error in printing.

important for my purposes. As has been argued above in Chapter 4, Language is a particularly important feature in the case of wordplay, while some interesting points may be raised by analysing the visual element of Narrative Strategy in comics. On the other hand, none of the analyses of Target provided interesting or important results in the material used for this study, and thus TA has been left out.

Thus the presentation of my examples will be as follows:

SO	e.g. DUCK vs. COIN
LM	e.g. cratylism (polysemy) & differential-potency mapping
NS	e.g. line in dialogue
LA	e.g. <i>I hope we come down tails!</i>

As Paolillo (1998: 271) points out, some of the LMs may co-occur. For example, although wordplay by definition depends on cratylism, it is often possible to see many of the LMs listed working at the same time. In such cases, both LMs are mentioned in the presentation of the analysis, as in the above example both cratylism and differential-potency mapping work as LMs.

5.2 Analysis

In subsection 5.2.1, I will discuss some general observations about the wordplay that was found in the material. Then subsection 5.2.2 discusses examples of wordplay relating to the combination of word and image, and their translations. Finally in subsection 5.2.3, I will attempt to present some tendencies in each of the decades that the translations date from, i.e. in the 1950s, the 1970s and the 1990s. The comic frames corresponding to the examples discussed below are shown in Appendix B.

5.2.1 General findings

In total, 56 instances of wordplay were counted in the English language source texts using the method described in section 5.1. The number of instances varied greatly, the lowest number being one (in two stories) and the highest eight instances (in three

stories). The total number of instances of wordplay in the Finnish target texts was 55, nearly equal to the corresponding number in the source texts. However, when comparing the translations made in different decades, the difference becomes rather obvious.

The Finnish translations made in the 1950s have a total of 13 instances of wordplay, much lower than the total of 24 in the original English stories. Nearly half of the wordplay appears to have been lost in the translations dating from the 1950s. The translations made in the 1970s have 18 instances of wordplay, which is nearly the same as the total of 21 in the originals. In this decade, only fifteen percent of the wordplay has been lost. Finally, in the translations made in the 1990s, there are 24 instances of wordplay, which is in fact much more than the total of 11 in the original stories. Thus by the 1990s, it appears that the translators have started adding wordplay. The results and tendencies relating to each decade will be discussed in more detail below in 5.2.3.

As can be seen from the numbers above, there is less wordplay in the Finnish translations made before the 1990s. Comparing the total numbers does not give a complete picture, however. The 55 instances of wordplay in the Finnish translations include both the cases where the original source text wordplay has been retained in the translation, as well as the cases where wordplay occurs in the translation in a place where the source text has no wordplay. Out of the 56 instances of wordplay in the source texts, 31 were retained in translation and 25 were lost, i.e. there was no humorous effect in the corresponding frame or sequence. On the other hand, the Finnish target texts had 24 instances of wordplay that were counted as compensation, i.e. there was no wordplay in the corresponding frame or sequence of the source text.

Again, the results differ in the different decades. In the 1950s, 15 cases of wordplay out of 24 in the source texts were lost in translation, while only four cases of compensation were found. In the 1970s, seven cases out of 21 were lost, and four cases

of compensation were counted. Finally, the 1990s show quite a considerable difference, as only three cases out of 11 were lost, and altogether 16 cases of compensation were found.

Regardless of the decade, in most cases wordplay appears to have been lost when the English word or phrase has an ambiguous meaning that is not present in the Finnish equivalent. As an example, Example 1, a frame from the story *Foxy Relations* (Barks 1948), contains a play on the word *tear*, which cannot be retained in Finnish as such, as there is no word in Finnish with both the meanings 'run' and 'rip' (see Figure B.1 in Appendix B).

Example 1

SO RIP vs. RUN

LM homonymy

NS dialog

LA *Unca' Donald has ripped the fence off a fox farm, and hundreds of foxes are tearing for the woods!*

This serves also as an example of horizontal wordplay, as the alternate meaning of *tearing* is triggered by the presence of the word *rip* earlier in the same sentence.

A similar case can be seen in Example 2 from the story *Jam Robbers* (Barks 1947a), where the play is on the word *safe* (see Figure B.2 in Appendix B). Again, Finnish has no corresponding homonymous expression, and so the wordplay is lost.

Example 2

SO SAFE (OBJECT) vs. SAFE (CONCEPT)

LM homonymy

NS dialog

LA *I see that this jam isn't safe here any more! Maybe I better put it in the safe, too!*

Wordplay involving the onomatopoeic sound effects is another feature which has been difficult to retain in translation. This is quite expected, as onomatopoeia in general is one of the most difficult things for a translator. Example 3 shows a case of wordplay involving the use of onomatopoeia that has been lost in the Finnish translation as no equivalent polysemous expression is available. The frame in question (see Figure B.3 in

Appendix B) occurs in the story *Donald Duck and the Boys* (Barks 1946a), where Donald gives his task of bill collecting to the nephews, who then come to collect a bill from Donald himself.

Example 3

SO COUGH vs. GIVE
 LM homonymy
 NS onomatopoeia + dialogue
 LA *Cough! Cough! - Are you going to cough up this \$2.49?*

In cases where Finnish has an equivalent word or phrase with the same connotations, the wordplay has usually been retained. Examples 4 and 5 showing such a case come from the story *Smoke Writer in the Sky* (Barks 1956), where Donald attempts to increase Uncle Scrooge's popularity by some advertisements written on the sky with smoke. The source text (Example 4) has a wordplay on the expression *smoke out*, meaning 'force someone to leave', but in the context of this story, also the meaning 'create smoke' is possible (see Figure B.4 in Appendix B).

Example 4

SO SMOKE vs. CHASE
 LM polysemy
 NS dialogue
 LA *Can't you kids do something to stop Donald before he gets me smoked out of town?*

In this case, Finnish does have an equivalent expression, *savustaa*, which allows the same two interpretations, and thus it is possible to retain the wordplay (Example 5, see Figure B.5 in Appendix B) in the translation *Aku Ankka savulentäjänä* (Barks 1958b).

Example 5

SO SMOKE vs. CHASE
 LM polysemy
 NS dialogue
 LA *Pyydä Akua lopettamaan! Hän savustaa minut ulos kaupungista!*

Onomatopoeic wordplay can sometimes be retained as well, as can be seen in Examples 6 and 7, from the story *Madball Pitcher* (Barks 1960), where Gyro practises his skills as a pitcher (see Figure B.6 in Appendix B). Both English and Finnish use the polysemous word *rusty* (Finnish *ruosteessa*), both of which can mean concretely 'rusty', as in metal,

or 'bad', 'out of shape', as in the case of a human (differential-potency mapping, see section 4.2). The ambiguity relies on the use of an onomatopoeic expression indicating the sound that a rusty metal object, e.g. a hinge, would make.

Example 6

SO METAL OBJECT vs. HUMAN
 LM polysemy & differential-potency mapping
 NS onomatopoeic expression + dialogue
 LA *My arm is a mite rusty! - SQUEEEK*

In the Finnish translation *Pelle Peloton: Kaikkien aikojen syöttäjä* (Barks 1977a), the onomatopoeic expression is quite expectedly different. In Finnish the LM involves also a chiasmus stating that both the skills and the arm are rusty, but the overall effect is similar (Example 7, see Figure B.7 in Appendix B).

Example 7

SO METAL OBJECT vs. HUMAN
 LM polysemy & differential-potency mapping
 NS onomatopoeic expression + dialogue
 LA *Taitoni ovat vähän ruosteessa - ja ilmeisesti myös niveleni. - NIRSK*

On the other hand, in some cases it was noted that the Finnish translation did not have wordplay even when a suitable expression would have been available in Finnish. Such a case occurs in the detail texts (Example 8, see Figure B.8 in Appendix B), where the wordplay involves a sign *Duck Flying Service* (Barks 1956).

Example 8

SO DUCK vs. PLANE
 LM polysemous intermediate script & differential-potency mapping
 NS detail text (sign)
 LA *Duck Flying Service*

In Example 8, the SO juxtaposing DUCK and PLANE relies on the use of FLY to mean that a duck either flies as birds do, or flies an airplane. This would have been possible also in Finnish, but the translation (Barks 1958b) *Aku Ankka Savumainoslentäjä* ('Donald Duck Smoke advertisement pilot') does not appear to trigger the same SO.

Although Finnish does not necessarily have exactly the same words with the same polysemous or homonymous meanings, it may still be possible to retain the

wordplay element by changing one of the Knowledge Resources. An example where the translator has replaced an instance of wordplay in the source text with another wordplay in the target text comes from a frame in the story *Flip Decision* (Barks 1953) where Donald, annoyed by the boys' teasing him about the mishaps caused by flipism, chases them yelling: "*One more crack about flipism, and I'll flip you!*" (Example 9, see Figure B.9 in Appendix B). Here the wordplay brings together flipping a coin and threatening the boys with violence.

Example 9

SO	FLIPPING A COIN vs. VIOLENCE
LM	cratylism (polysemy)
NS	dialog
LA	<i>One more crack about flipism, and I'll flip you!</i>

The Finnish translation *Aku Ankka: Kruuna vai klaava* (Barks 1954) uses the word *höyhentää* (literally 'pluck'), which is a commonly used colloquial expression for violence. At the same time, the three ducklings could literally have their feathers plucked (Example 10, see Figure B.10 in Appendix B).

Example 10

SO	PLUCKING A DUCK vs. VIOLENCE
LM	cratylism (polysemy)
NS	dialogue
LA	<i>Jos kerrankin vielä sanotte sen sanan, höyhennän teidät!</i>

The wordplay here is intuitively quite different, as is predicted by the GTVH for cases where the SO is different. However, the wordplay effect has been retained through a use of a different SO and hence also different LA.

Examples 11 and 12, from the same story (Barks 1953), show a frame where the ducks are hit by a truck as they are driving the wrong way on a one way street after flipping a coin to decide on the direction. The humorous effect of the English version (Example 11, see Figure B.11 in Appendix B) is based on the LM of polysemy, as both ducks and coins have tails.

Example 11

SO DUCK vs. COIN
 LM cratylism (polysemy) & differential-potency mapping
 NS dialogue
 LA *I hope we come down tails!*

The Finnish words *kruuna* and *klaava*, corresponding to 'heads' and 'tails' when referring to a coin, do not have alternate meanings relating to anatomy. Thus a similar wordplay is not available. The translation retains the SO, however, by changing the LM partly (Example 12, see Figure B.12 in Appendix B). In the Finnish text (Barks 1954), one of the boys wonders whether they will land heads or tails, thus creating the same comparison of duck and coin, even though through different means.

Example 12

SO DUCK vs. COIN
 LM juxtaposition & differential-potency mapping
 NS dialogue
 LA *Tuleekohan meistä kruuna vai klaava?*

In both Examples 11 and 12, the SO is still the same, as is part of the LM, the differential-potency mapping of an inanimate object onto an animate being. Part of the LM is different, however: in Example 12 the joke is based on a more straightforward juxtaposition of the two scripts than in Example 11.

The type of wordplay may also vary in other ways. There are instances of both thematic wordplay, which strengthens the theme of the story (e.g. Examples 11 and 12 above), and intertextual wordplay, which alludes to other texts, could be found. The following Examples 13 and 14, from the story *The Code of Duckburg* (Barks 1958a), show a case where allusive intertextual wordplay in the source text has been replaced by a thematic reference in the target text. In Example 13 (see Figure B.13 in Appendix B), Donald is frightened by the reindeer that the boys have brought home and hidden in a closet. Donald's line is a modification of the frame *kingdom come*.

Example 13

SO	CHRISTMAS vs. HEAVEN
LM	cratylism (paronymy)
NS	dialog
LA	<i>I'll go borrow Mr. Jones's gun and blow the monster to Christmas come!</i>

The Finnish translation *Poroporvarit* (Barks 1992) uses a different strategy, one that does not in fact have wordplay in it. Instead the translation picks up the theme of Christmas and reindeers associated with Santa Claus, by having Donald exclaim that he is going to blow the creature to *Korvatunturi*, which Finnish children consider to be the home of Santa Claus (Example 14, see Figure B.14 in Appendix B).

Example 14

SO	ANIMAL vs. IMAGINARY CREATURE
LM	intermediate script (SANTA CLAUS) & differential-potency mapping
NS	dialogue
LA	<i>Lainaan Tulpulta torrakon ja posautan otuksen Korvatunturille.</i>

There are many instances where the author of the original or the translator appears to take advantage of expressions that can be related to the anatomy of a duck, e.g. the fact that ducks have bills (Finnish *nokka*): *bill collector* (Barks 1946a), *bill folder* (Barks 1958a) and *nokat umpeen* (Barks 1991), literally 'shut your bills', in Finnish a colloquial expression for 'shut your mouth'. Also Examples 10 and 11 above deal with a case where the anatomy of a duck is important for the joke, and in a way the image is also important in reminding us that the characters are in fact ducks. The next subsection will discuss in more detail wordplay that arises from the combination of word and image.

5.2.2 Wordplay in the interface of word and image

As was suggested by Paolillo (1998, see section 4.2 above), the visual part of the comic does appear an important part of the Narrative Strategy of wordplay in comics. Of all the examples of wordplay, 23 instances in the source texts and 19 in the target texts arise from the combination of the word and image in a way that would not happen with

the text alone. Quite often the visual element gives an alternate, often more concrete, interpretation of the more figurative textual element.

One example of this would be a frame (Example 15, see Figure B.15 in Appendix B) in the Finnish translation *Liekkimies* (Barks 1993), where Donald becomes a pyromaniac after receiving a blow to the head. In the frame, boys enter the room where they have locked Donald to prevent him from doing more harm, only to find the room filled with smoke and Donald gone. The boys are puzzled, exclaiming: "*Haihtuiko hän savuna ilmaan?*" ('Did he vanish like smoke in the air?').

Example 15

SO SMOKE vs. VANISH
 LM cratylism (polysemous phrase)
 NS dialogue + image
 LA *Haihtuiko hän savuna ilmaan?*

This frame contains no wordplay in the English source text, so this is also an example of compensation in the Finnish text. It may of course be argued, as Toivonen (2001) has, that the visual element is not absolutely necessary for this wordplay, and that a verbal description of the situation (the room is filled with smoke) would be enough. However, in my opinion the effect would not be comparable. The textual information would not produce the same instant of realization (see section 2.1).

To further illustrate this point, I will take two frames from the story *Jam Robbers* (Barks 1947a), both of which contain essentially the same wordplay, but differ in the way they use the visual element. In this story, Donald buys a safe to protect some shares he suddenly discovers to be valuable. To the dismay of the nephews, Donald decides also to lock away a jar of jam to keep it out of the boys' reach. In both cases (Examples 16 and 17, see Figures B.16 and B.17 in Appendix B), the wordplay is on the same expression, *jam session*, which is usually associated with (jazz) musicians practising freely. In the context of this story, it is also given another meaning, the boys' habit of eating jam.

Example 16

SO FOOD vs. MUSIC
 LM cratylism (polysemy)
 NS dialogue (and context)
 LA *No! We'll have our jam sessions, or else!*

Example 17

SO FOOD vs. MUSIC
 LM cratylism (polysemy)
 NS dialogue + image
 LA *Best jam session we ever had!*

Although the LA component is different, this is essentially the same case of wordplay, as predicted by the GTVH, since the SO and LM are both identical. The main difference between the two examples is in the NS Knowledge Resource. Example 16 relies on the readers' knowledge of the context to resolve the ambiguous meaning of *jam sessions* as the visual element consists of the boys marching to their room, while Example 17 presents the meaning in the visual form by showing the boys eating the jam. As a reader, my intuitive interpretation is that the reaction to the frame in Figure B.17, corresponding to Example 17, is more amused than to the frame in Figure B.16, Example 16.

In the Finnish translation *Kriisiosakkeet* (Barks 1952), both instances of wordplay have been lost, presumably since Finnish has no equivalent polysemous expression containing the word *hillo* ('jam'). This can also be used to illustrate one of the restrictions that the combination of two semiotic systems sets on translation. In a medium consisting of text alone, the translator might have been able to change a larger portion of the text, possibly having Donald hide something else from the boys, thus allowing for replacement with some other kind of wordplay. However, as has been noted above, in comics the situation is always clearly present in the pictures. It is very difficult, if not impossible to modify the pictures to present a different situation.

There are some cases where the wordplay can be retained using the same visual elements, when Finnish offers an equivalent expression. One such case can be

seen in Examples 18 and 19, from the story *Madball Pitcher* (Barks 1960), where Gyro is considering rather questionable means of helping his team to win a baseball game. Gyro states that he cannot say his thoughts out loud, and at the same time the plan is presented as pictures in a thought bubble above his head (see Figure B.18 in Appendix B). Thus *out loud* becomes polysemous, it can mean either speech as we understand it in normal life, or speech as represented by text in comics.

Example 18

SO THOUGHT vs. PICTURE
 LM intermediate script (sound) + cratyism (polysemy)
 NS dialogue + image
 LA *None that I would mention out loud!*

The Finnish translation *Pelle Peloton: Kaikkien aikojen syöttäjä* (Barks 1977a) has an equivalent Finnish phrase and brings the same two scripts into opposition by taking advantage of the same features in the frame (Example 19, see Figure B.19 in Appendix B).

Example 19

SO THOUGHT vs. PICTURE
 LM intermediate script (sound) + cratyism (polysemy)
 NS dialogue + image
 LA *Ei sellaisia, joita voisi lausua ääneen.*

This is in a sense a metajoke on the form of comics themselves, the way they use text as a representation of speech and (in some cases) pictures as representation of thoughts.

As was discussed above in connection with Examples 16 and 17, the visual element of comics often prevents the translator from modifying a context to produce wordplay. However, sometimes it may be possible for the translator to create a new instance of wordplay by taking advantage of some other feature in the images than the one utilized in the source text. Such a case can be seen in a frame (Example 20, see Figure B.20 in Appendix B) from *Flip Decision* (Barks 1953). Professor Batty, who is trying to convince Donald to buy his book detailing the philosophy of flipism, states: "*At every crossroad of life, let flipism chart your course!*" The wordplay here arises

from the fact that the image shows Professor Batty with his arms crossed, fingers pointing in opposite directions, and the picture thus gives a literal interpretation to the figurative crossroad.

Example 20

- SO CROSSROAD vs. CROSSED
 LM cratylism (paronymy)
 NS dialogue + image
 LA *At every crossroad of life, let flipism chart your course!*

The Finnish translation *Aku Ankka: Kruuna vai klaava*, appears quite different at first sight, as it in no way refers to a crossroad or to crossing the arms (Example 21, see Figure B.21 in Appendix B). The picture has not changed, but in fact the translation takes advantage of another detail in the image, the fact that the Professor is pointing (*näyttää*) with his fingers.

Example 21

- SO POINT (FIGURATIVE) vs. POINT (CONCRETE)
 LM cratylism (polysemy)
 NS dialogue + image
 LA *Aina kun elämässä täytyy tehdä tärkeä ratkaisu, höpsismi näyttää oikean tien!*

In the case of Examples 18 and 19, I mentioned that they appear to be a metatextual jokes or references to the structure of a comic as a text. A similar situation may be found in the sequence of a frame and a narration box in *The Rabbit's Foot* (Barks 1943). The frame shows a clock hitting Donald on the head, shattering to little pieces, and the narration following it states *Time out* (Example 22, see Figure B.22 in Appendix B). The narration box itself can be seen as some kind of 'time out' between two consecutive frames, and since the clock has been broken, 'time' is 'out' also in a quite concrete sense, while the unconscious Donald is also taking a 'time out'.

Example 22

- SO TIME vs. COMIC STRUCTURE
 LM cratylism (polysemy)
 NS narration + image
 LA *Time out*

The Finnish translation *Oikukas onnenkalu* (Barks 1991) depends even more on the metatextual reference to the comic structure (Example 23, see Figure B.23 in Appendix B). Although the equivalent expression *aikalisä* would have been possible in Finnish as well, the translator has chosen a different strategy and replaced the narration with *väliverho* (literally 'curtain'). In a sense, the narration box between the two consecutive frames is like a curtain between two acts of a play at the theater. This play on the word curtain does not take advantage of the picture at all, but relies on the reader's understanding of the comic structure.

Example 23
 SO THEATER vs. COMIC STRUCTURE
 LM cratylism (polysemy)
 NS dialogue + image
 LA *Väliverho*

Examples 15 to 23 above appear to show that the image is in fact important for the humorous effect in comics, although it is possible to argue that it is not strictly necessary. As is seen in the case of Examples 16 and 17, it is possible to create the same wordplay without an accompanying pictorial element, but the effect may be less humorous without the image.

5.2.3 Tendencies in different decades

As was already stated in subsection 5.2.1 above, the amount of wordplay differs greatly among the different decades. This section will attempt to describe the tendencies in different decades, and the possible reasons behind the differences.

In the 1950s, 15 instances of the 24 instances of wordplay in the source texts have been lost, and only in four cases was it possible to find compensating wordplay. Further, nearly all of the cases of compensation come from the same story, *Aku Ankka: Kruuna vai klaava* (Barks 1954). This translation together with *Kriisosakkeet* (Barks 1952) contain 10 out of the 13 instances of wordplay in the

translation from this decade (see Examples 2, 9 and 10, 11 and 12 in subsection 5.2.1, Examples 20 and 21 in subsection 5.2.2 above). As the number of stories is small, it is difficult to make any conclusive statements on whether the two stories with several instances of wordplay, or the others with hardly any, are more representative of the era.

It may be noted that the two translations containing most of the wordplay come from the early 1950s, while the two with very little wordplay represent the latter part (1958 and 1959). It is quite possible that the stories have been translated by different translators, and this has affected the amount of wordplay. This cannot be stated as certain, however, as the translations are mostly credited to the editors of the magazine, and no individual translators are usually named.

Example 8 above in subsection 5.2.1 discussed a case where wordplay would have been possible in the Finnish translation, but in fact there was none. There are also other such cases in the translations dating back to the 1950s. For example, there are two instances in the story *Red Apple Sap* (Barks 1957) with wordplay on the literal and figurative meanings of the expression *you reap what you sow*. Finnish has an equivalent phrase *sitä niittää mitä kylvää*, but this has not been used at all in the translation *Omenapuu* (Barks 1959).

Based on these observations, it seems that wordplay was not considered very important in the translations made in the 1950s. The translators have not attempted to retain the wordplay when it has been possible, and compensation has been infrequent.

In the 1970s, the translations show considerably more wordplay. Out of the 21 instances in the source texts, seven have been lost. Compensation appears still relatively infrequent, as only four cases were found. In the set of translations from the 1970s, the distribution is more even, and seems to follow the amount of wordplay in the original. Most of the stories have only a few instances less than the original (see Examples 3, 6 and 7 in subsection 5.2.1, Examples 18 and 19 in subsection 5.2.2

above). In this set, the only exceptional story is *Aku Ankka: Uhkarohkea kameramies* (Barks 1977b), in which there are only two instances of wordplay, as opposed to four in the translation.

Thus the number of examples of compensation has remained exactly the same in this decade as in the previous set (four both in the 1950s and in the 1970s), but the amount of wordplay lost has diminished. There are still cases where the possibility of wordplay has not been used in the Finnish text. It may be also noted that all of the instances of wordplay involving onomatopoeia come from the stories translated in the 1970s. All of such wordplay has been retained in the target text, with the exception of Example 3 in subsection 5.2.1.

Based on these translations, it seems that in the 1970s the translators have considered it more important to retain wordplay, but there does not appear much tendency to add wordplay has been lost in translation, except in the one case (Barks 1977b) mentioned above.

In the 1990s, the translations become quite different. Out of the 11 instances in the source texts, only 3 have been lost in the target texts, and 16 cases were counted as compensation. It is quite noticeable that the amount of wordplay in the English source texts is much lower than in the source texts forming the previous two sets. This may at least in part be due to the fact that one of the stories with only one instance of wordplay, *The Rabbit's Foot* (Barks 1943, translated in 1991), represents the early years of Barks' career, and it seems that he used less wordplay in his stories during that time (cf. Barks 1944 with only two instances). The translation *Oikukas onnenkalu* (Barks 1991) contains more wordplay than the original.

The most exceptional of all is the translation *Liekkimies* (Barks 1993). The target text abounds in wordplay, containing 14 instances as opposed to four in the source text. This translation alone has more wordplay than all of the translations dating

from the 1950s. It is possible that this translation is an unusual example, but it seems to be representative of the tendency evidenced by the other stories in this set. Example 24 (see Figure B.24 in Appendix B) illustrates the style of this translation (literally 'I am a fire-souled firebearer - and I have a great mission!' accompanied with a picture of Donald waving two torches).

Example 24

SO TORCHBEARER vs. LEADER

LM cratylism (polysemy)

NS dialogue + image

LA *Olen tulisieläinen tulenkantaja - ja suoritan suurta tehtävää!*

While also the source text contains some wordplay on the meanings of words related to fire and burning, the difference is very pronounced.

This translation (Barks 1993) is not the only one adding wordplay to the source text. Other cases may be found, such as the title of Barks (1992), which in Finnish is *Poroporvarit* ('petty', 'conservative', could be read also as 'reindeer bourgeois'), quite appropriate for a story featuring a reindeer. One more case can be seen in Example 25 from the translation *Kukkia ja mehiläisiä* (Barks 1996), in which the nephews thwart Donald's plan to grow a flower garden. The wordplay involves a flower *kissankello* ('harebell'), which is described as *kilkattava*, 'tinkling', thus juxtaposing the literal meaning of *kello*, 'bell'.

Example 25

SO FLOWER vs. BELL

LM cratylism (polysemy) & differential-potency mapping

NS dialogue

LA *Kilkattavat kissankellot!*

These examples suggest that in the 1990s the translators consider wordplay increasingly more important, taking advantage of places where it is possible, compensating for cases that have been lost and adding wordplay to the original stories.

5.3 Discussion

The GTVH appears indeed well suited for analyzing comics, as was suggested by both Attardo (1998) himself and by Paolillo (1998). I considered it necessary to follow Paolillo's (1998) lead in adding the visual element as part of the Narrative Strategy in comics, but beyond that not many modifications were required in the analysis stage. In many ways, the GTVH appears to be a useful tool that could be used also by a translator faced with the task of translating humor in comics. It offers a way of analyzing the components of the humorous effect in question, and may help the translator determine which elements can be retained and which need to be changed.

For the presentation of the results, I have made certain modifications to the notation used for the GTVH analysis. This was mainly because some of the Knowledge Resources were considered to be redundant or relatively uninteresting in terms of the examples in question. The Situation Knowledge Resource was dispensed with, since the Situation appears to correspond to one of the scripts in the Script Opposition in any case. On the other hand, it is not easy for the translator of comics to modify the Situation, as it is usually clearly visible in the visual element of the comic story, either in the frame in question or the surrounding ones. In the material used, the Target Knowledge Resource did not yield any interesting results, as in most cases the Target seemed to be either empty or referring to one of the characters of the story.

That the GTVH removes the need to create new measures for different types of humor was seen as a strength (Binsted and Ritchie 2001). The model can be adapted to the analysis of wordplay, which was the main object of this study. In the analysis, it became evident that modifying the Language is indeed made more difficult if the translator wishes to keep the Script Opposition. In most cases the difference occurs in either only the Language of the source and target text, or in the Script Opposition, if no suitably ambiguous word was available to retain the original scripts.

Another feature of wordplay may be the empty Target. It is possible that wordplay is often not targeted at any individual or group, but this is merely a suggestion based on this very limited number of examples and would certainly require more investigation.

Although Attardo (1998: 256) rejects the use of intuition in analyzing humor, it is very difficult to see how this would be possible. Humor appears to be by default a very individual and intuitive thing. Thus, even if all potentially humorous passages are analyzed regardless of one's intuitive interpretation of their funniness, many other factors still require intuitive analysis. Since no exhaustive listing of possible Script Oppositions exists, one has no other option than to rely on intuition in determining the Script Opposition in question. I have no doubt that some other reader might view the scripts in my analysis to be something slightly different from what I have labeled them.

The results of the analysis, discussed above in section 5.2, appear to show that wordplay is indeed an important feature in *Donald Duck* comics by Carl Barks. Although as noted in the section above some of the stories contained very little wordplay, in most there were several instances of wordplay. This study is not an attempt to estimate how commonplace wordplay is in comics by Carl Barks in particular or in comics in general, however. As was noted above in section 5.1, the amount of wordplay varied widely in different stories, in both source and target texts. Since some of the stories yielded only one instance and one translation alone yielded a considerable part of the total number, it might have been reasonable to discard these stories from the analysis, but I considered it more important that the stories were selected randomly.

Neither should these results be considered any indication of how "funny" the comics are or are not. Wordplay adds to the humorous effect of the stories as a whole, sometimes by strengthening the theme of the story (e.g. Examples 4 and 5 in subsection 5.2.1, Examples 12 and 13 in subsection 5.2.1), sometimes through

intertextual wordplay (e.g. Example 15 in subsection 5.2.1). Still, wordplay is only one feature, and comics contain many other types of jokes, both verbal and visual. Stories that contained very little wordplay relied on situational comedy, for example.

It also appears that wordplay linked to the interplay of the semiotic systems of comics is a feature of this medium, even if it is not as dominant as one might expect. This conclusion differs from Toivonen's (2001) argument that the image is not important for wordplay in comics. In my opinion, the examples presented in subsection 5.2.2 show cases that would be considerably less amusing to the reader without the contribution of the image. To return once more to Examples 16 and 17, which have the same play on the expression *jam session*, it is my opinion that Example 17, which incorporates the visual image of the boys eating jam, presents the double meaning in a more striking way.

However, as I pointed out in subsection 2.1.3, this difference in Toivonen's (2001) conclusions and my own may be due to a difference in defining what is meant by the image being necessary. It can certainly be argued that it is possible for the reader to grasp the intended wordplay from the context, but the humorous effect would in my opinion be less than when readers actually see the opposition of meanings (cf. Vandaele 2002 on intended and unachieved humor). The "gap" in interpreting the image and text (Harvey 2001, Cioffi 2001) which was discussed above in subsection 2.1.3 seems to play a part in the humorous effect. It is difficult to argue anything conclusively, though, since what one person considers amusing may not be so to another.

On the other hand, from the translator's point of view it may not even be relevant whether the image is strictly necessary for wordplay or not. For the translator, it is probably more important to remember that the image is involved in the creation of the humorous effect. As was stated above in subsection 2.2.2, the images can both help

and hinder the translator's task. On the one hand, the images certainly limit the modifications the translator can make, and the target text may not work if the translator has not taken into account the effect of the images. But on the other hand, if the translator is skilled at reading the picture as well as the text, possibilities to create innovative wordplay from the images may present themselves.

The results also support the hypothesis that the norms of translating comics and translating wordplay in comics have changed over time (see section 2.2.2 on norms). It seems likely that in the 1950s wordplay was not considered important in *Donald Duck* comics, since half of the instances of wordplay have been lost and compensation appears infrequent. Loss occurs also when a suitable phrase would have been available in Finnish. In this decade comics were aimed exclusively at children, and it is possible that children were not expected to grasp the multiple meanings necessary for wordplay.

Translating wordplay in comics has naturally been affected by norms of translating comics in general. For instance, in connection with Examples 16 and 17 (*jam session*) I noted that the Finnish word *hillo* does not have similar polysemous meanings. In fact, the word does have a slang meaning of 'money', and taking advantage of this meaning could have been possible as money is something commonly kept in safes. However, it seems very likely that in the 1950s a slangy expression would not have been considered suitable in a story meant for children.

In the 1970s wordplay seems to become a more important feature as more and more wordplay is retained in translation. It appears that by this decade the norms have already changed. Possibly by the 1970s the adult readers are already taken into consideration or opinions on whether children can be expected to understand wordplay may have changed. Compensation still appears rather infrequent, and only in one story

does the target text in fact have more wordplay than the original. This may suggest that the translation norm still included the idea that wordplay should not be exaggerated.

Finally, the 1990s appear to present clearly the translation practices described by Toivonen (2001) and Hyvärinen (2002, see also section 2.3 above). Adding wordplay in the target text when there is no wordplay in the source text also seems to be an increasingly common trend. In general wordplay may be seen as more important now than in the 1950s or the 1970s, as a large number of the readers are adults.

When looking at the translation of the story *Liekkimies* (Barks 1993), it is possible to see the danger suggested by both Toivonen (2001) and Hyvärinen (2002) that the use of wordplay is becoming excessive in *Donald Duck* translations. Since the number of translations used in this study is very small, it is difficult to say exactly how representative this one story is. On the other hand, even if it is exceptional, it still appears to be part of a growing tendency.

Whether adding wordplay in such large amounts is a good or a bad thing is an entirely different question. For some readers it may indeed give a feeling of exaggerated and artificial language, but on the other hand other readers may appreciate the cumulative effect of wordplay. Recurring instances of thematically related wordplay create strands (Attardo 1998: 236), and each instance strengthens the effect of the others. It can only be said once again that appreciation of humor is an individual and intuitive thing, but more generally it appears that the expectation norms of Finnish readers are changing. When reading comics, the Finnish audience has quite probably come to expect more wordplay than they were did in the earlier decades.

6 Conclusion

This study set out to examine the use of wordplay in comics, and examine what happens to wordplay in translation. For this purpose, I analyzed examples of wordplay that were collected from 12 *Donald Duck* comic stories by Carl Barks, and compared the source texts to their Finnish translations. Wordplay was found to be a fairly frequent source of humor in comics, although it is by no means the only important feature. Some stories included in the material utilized relatively little wordplay in the source text, relying more on other types of humor, but in general wordplay appeared to be an important part of the comic stories.

Wordplay arising from the combination of the visual and verbal elements was also expected to be important. The examples discussed above appear to demonstrate that such wordplay exists, and that it presents difficulties to the translator who is tied to the context of the images when translating the words. The absolute necessity of the image for the humorous effect may be questioned, but the involvement of the image is more or less unavoidable. Thus the image is an important factor that the translator needs to take into account.

It has been noted in the discussion, however, that the results presented in this study should not be considered in any way a representation of how common wordplay, or wordplay tied to the image, is in comics. The material consists only of stories by one author and suggest only that comics exist which make use of wordplay for humorous effect. Due to the small number of stories analyzed, the results should not be considered to be decisive even on this one author's use of wordplay. More systematic study on a larger set of material from various authors would be necessary, as such studies may help the translator's understanding of wordplay in comics.

The General Theory of Verbal Humor was used to analyze the examples of wordplay to see which elements of the joke differed in the translation. It was found to be a common tendency that the changes were limited to the Language, if a suitable phrase preserving the Script Opposition was available in Finnish, or that the change occurred in the highest level, the Script Opposition, if no such phrase could be found. The GTVH was found to be useful in analyzing wordplay in comics, and might turn out to be a helpful tool for translators. It would be interesting and useful to test the possibilities offered by the GTVH on a larger set of material, on different types of humorous texts and on different types of jokes.

This study also set out to examine translations made in different decades to study the effect of changing norms of translation, with the hypothesis that wordplay would be less frequent in early translations. The material included stories translated in three decades, 1950s, 1970s and 1990s, and each decade was analyzed for general tendencies. Some evidence was found to support the assumption that wordplay has become an increasingly common and important feature in translation of comics. This was suggested by considerable loss of wordplay in the early decades, and by frequent compensation and addition of wordplay found in the newer material. Finally, it should be noted that the selection of material used in this study was quite small, and thus a wider study involving stories by different authors would be needed for any conclusive evidence.

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APPENDIX A: Features of comic structure

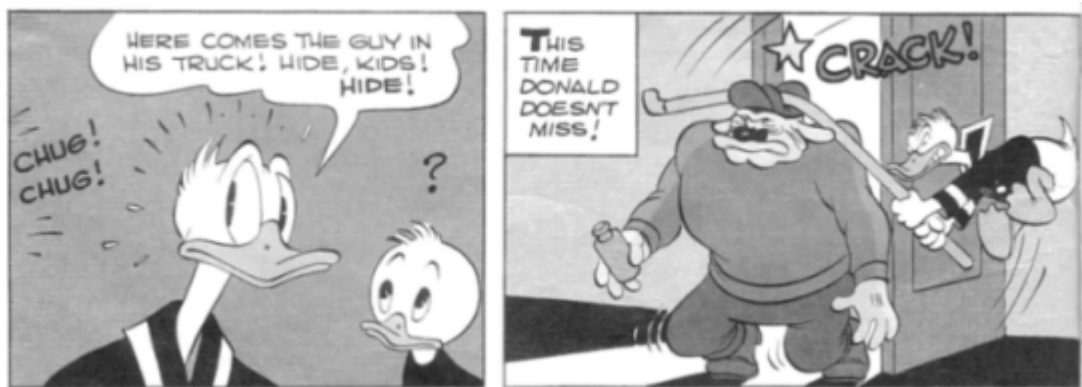


Figure A.1 Basic elements: picture, dialogue, narration, onomatopoeia, effects (Barks 1947a)



Figure A.2 General view (Barks 1953)



Figure A.3 Close-up view (Barks 1943)



Figure A.4 Detail text (Barks 1954)

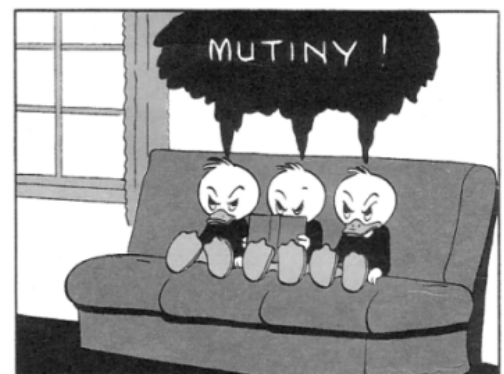


Figure A.5 Thought bubble (Barks 1947b)

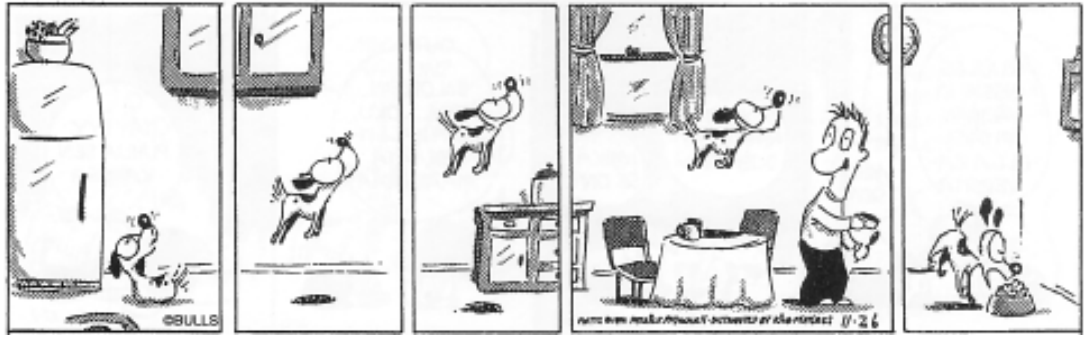


Figure A.6 Image-dominant comic strip (McDonnell 1996)



Figure A.7 Word-dominant comic strip (McDonnell 1996)

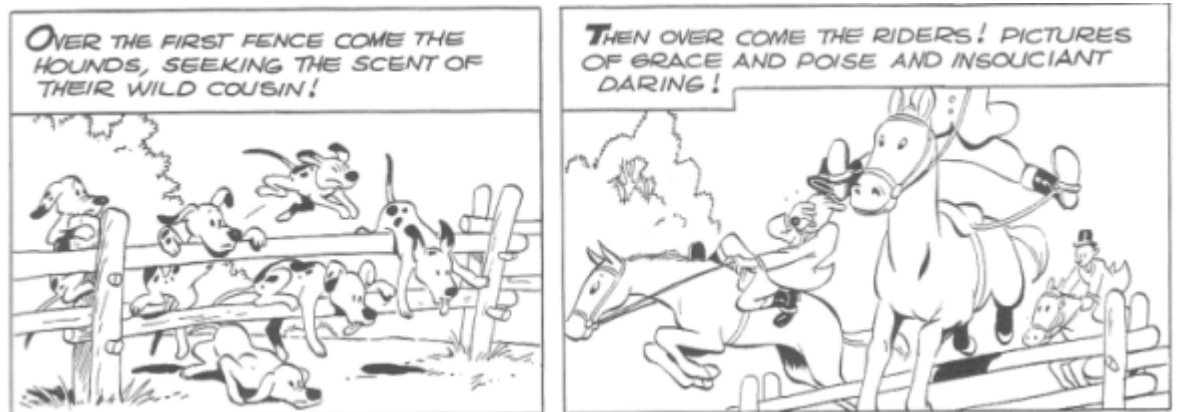


Figure A.8 Cooperation and contradiction of word and image (Barks 1948)

APPENDIX B: Frames corresponding to examples in Chapter 5



Figure B.1 Example 1 (Barks 1948)

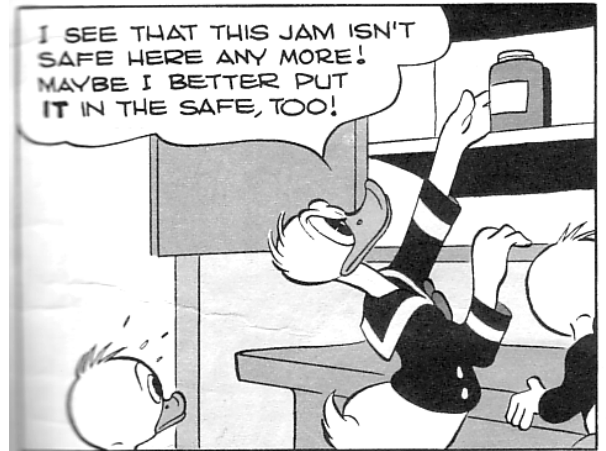


Figure B.2 Example 2 (Barks 1947a)



Figure B.3 Example 3 (Barks 1946a)



Figure B.4 Example 4 (Barks 1956)



Figure B.5 Example 5 (Barks 1958b)



Figure B.6 Example 6 (Barks 1960)



Figure B.7 Example 7 (Barks 1977a)

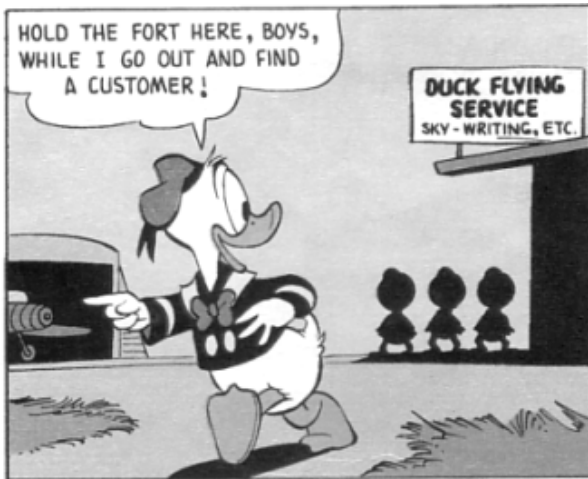


Figure B.8 Example 8 (Barks 1956)

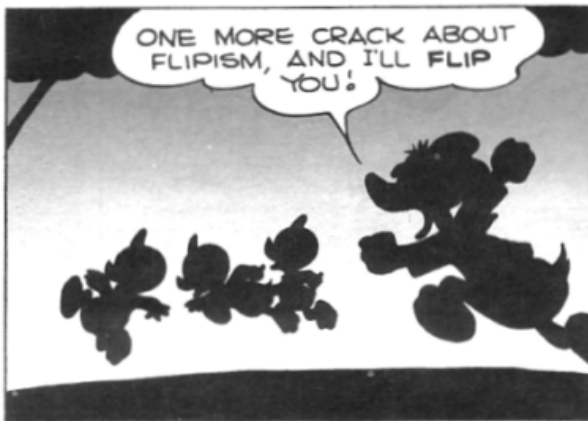


Figure B.9 Example 9 (Barks 1953)



Figure B.10 Example 10 (Barks 1954)

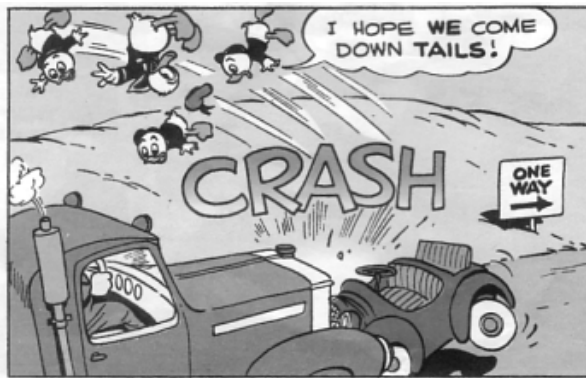


Figure B.11 Example 11 (Barks 1953)



Figure B.12 Example 12 (Barks 1954)



Figure B.13 Example 13 (Barks 1958a)



Figure B.14 Example 14 (Barks 1992)



Figure B.14 Example 15 (Barks 1993)

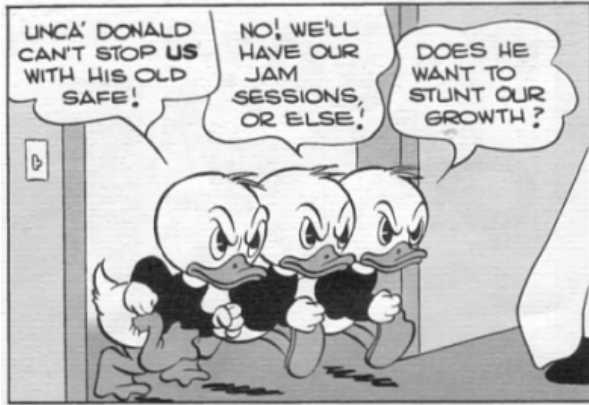


Figure B.16 Example 16 (Barks 1947a)



Figure B.17 Example 17 (Barks 1947a)



Figure B.18 Example 18 (Barks 1960)



Figure B.19 Example 19 (Barks 1977a)

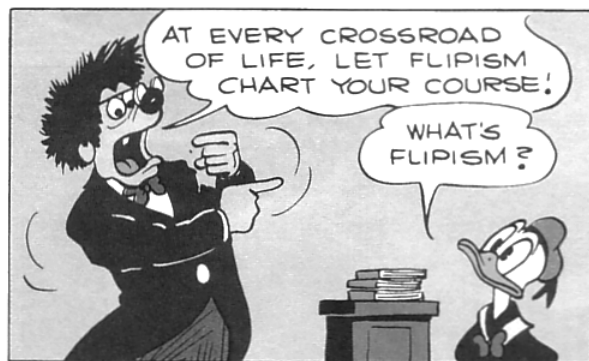


Figure B.20 Example 20 (Barks 1953)



Figure B.21 Example 21 (Barks 1954)



Figure B.22 Example 22 (Barks 1943)



Figure B.23 Example 23 (Barks 1991)



Figure B.24 Example 24 (Barks 1993)



Figure B.25 Example 25 (Barks 1996)