

Laura Chambers

”SÄ LÄTKÄMAILAA VOIT MYÖS KÄYTTÄÄ”

The British, the Finnish, and the universal
in the Finnish translation of the stage musical *Matilda*

ABSTRACT

Chambers, Laura: "Sä lätkämailaa voit myös käyttää" The British, The Finnish, and the universal in the Finnish translation of the stage musical *Matilda*

Bachelor's thesis

Tampere University

Bachelor's Program in Languages, English Language

June 2022

In this thesis, I have examined the construction of the cultural milieu in the Finnish translation of the British stage musical *Matilda*. The musical is an adaptation of Roald Dahl's children's novel and has been hugely popular in both London and in Tampere, as well as globally. The original musical is set in an implicitly British cultural milieu, and I have attempted to examine how this cultural milieu has been impacted by the translation. Although stage productions contain several factors other than linguistic that impact the cultural milieu of the story, such as costume, props, and other audio-visual elements of theatre, I have focused on the linguistic aspects of culture building. On the other hand, musical theatre translation is heavily impacted by factors not related to culture, such as performability, singability, and audience accessibility. I have taken these into account when analysing the translation, but the focus is on the language.

In addition to theatre translation, the theoretical background of this thesis includes perspectives on translating for children. As for the theoretical framework for examining the translation of culture, I have chosen foreignisation and domestication. Data-based research has enabled me to consider the process of translating culture as a negotiation between the foreign and the familiar, and the translation strategies as forming a continuum from foreign to domestic.

My analysis of *Matilda* comprises of culture-building linguistic material that I found in the full English and Finnish scripts of the musical. I have arranged these findings in six categories: Character Names and Places, Literary References, Everyday Life, Play on Spelling and Pronunciation, Foreign Languages, and School System. Each of these types of linguistic material have been dealt with using varying translation strategies resulting in foreignised Britishness, domesticated Finnishness, universalised culture, and reconstructed Britishness. The last of these being a key finding in translating culture – a pointed foreignness can be a desired goal and is achieved by reproducing the target audience's ideas about the foreign culture.

Keywords: musical theatre translation, stage translation, translating for children, foreignisation and domestication, translating culture, cultural milieu, *Matilda*, Roald Dahl

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Chambers, Laura: ”Sä lätkämailaa voit myös käyttää” The British, The Finnish, and the universal in the Finnish translation of the stage musical *Matilda*

Kandidaatin tutkielma

Tampereen yliopisto

Kielten kandidaattiohjelma, Englannin opintosuunta

kesäkuu 2022

Tässä tutkielmassa tarkastelen brittiläisen *Matilda* -musikaalin suomennoksen kulttuurimiljöötä. Musikaali perustuu Roald Dahlin lastenkirjaan ja on ollut hyvin suosittu niin Lontoossa, Tampereella, kuin maailmallakin. Alkuperäinen musikaali sijoittuu brittiläiseen kulttuurimiljööseen, joskin ajoittain hyvinkin epäsuorasti, ja olen pyrkinyt selvittämään, miten suomennos on vaikuttanut tähän kulttuurimiljööseen. Vaikka näyttämöteokset sisältävät useita ei-kielllisiä tekijöitä, kuten esiintymisasut, lavasteet ja muut audiovisuaaliset elementit, jotka vaikuttavat osaltaan kulttuurimiljöön luomiseen, olen keskittynyt tutkielmassani kulttuurin luomisen kielellisiin aspekteihin. Toisaalta musiikkiteatterin kääntämiseen vaikuttaa moni ilmiö, joka ei liity kulttuuriin, kuten esitettävyyden, laulettavuuden, sekä ymmärrettävyyden. Olen ottanut nämä huomioon suomennosta analysoidessani, mutta tutkielmani keskiössä ovat kielelliset keinot.

Teatterikääntämisen lisäksi tutkielmani teoreettinen lähtökohta sisältää näkökulmia lastenkirjallisuuden kääntämiseen. Kulttuurin kääntämisen kannalta sopivaksi viitekehikseksi valitsin vieraannuttamisen ja kotouttamisen. Aineistopohjainen tutkimus on auttanut minua hahmottamaan kulttuurin kääntämisen prosesseja vierauden ja tuttuuden kontrastin kautta, ja käännösstrategiat osana jatkumoa aina vieraannutetun ulkomaisuuden kokemuksesta kotoutettuun kotimaisuuteen asti.

Analyysini koostuu kulttuurimiljöötä rakentavasta kielellisestä materiaalista, jota keräsin englannin- ja suomenkielisistä *Matilda* -käsikirjoituksista. Jaoin keräämäni materiaalin kuuteen kategoriaan: Henkilönnimet ja paikat, kirjallisuusviittaukset, arkielämä, oikeinkirjoitus ja ääntäminen, vieraat kielet sekä koulujärjestelmä. Kukin näistä kielen kategorioista oli suomennettu käyttäen erilaisia käännösstrategioita, joista syntyi vieraannuttavaa brittiläisyyttä, kotouttavaa suomalaisuutta, universalisoivaa kulttuuria, sekä rekonstruoitua brittiläisyyttä. Näistä viimeisin onkin tutkielman keskeisimpiä löydöksiä kulttuurin kääntämisen kannalta – korostettu vieraannuttaminen voi hyvinkin olla käännöksen päämääränä, ja se saavutetaan toisintamalla kohdeyleisön käsityksiä vieraasta kulttuurista.

Avainsanat: musikaalikääntäminen, näyttämökääntäminen, lasten kirjallisuuden kääntäminen, vieraannuttaminen ja kotouttaminen, kulttuurin kääntäminen, kulttuurimiljöö, Matilda, Roald Dahl

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin OriginalityCheck -ohjelmalla.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 TRANSLATING FOR THE STAGE.....	2
2.1 THEATRE TEXT TRANSLATION	3
2.2 MUSICAL THEATRE TRANSLATION	4
3 TRANSLATING FOR CHILDREN	5
4 FOREIGNISATION AND DOMESTICATION	6
5 DATA AND METHODS	7
5.1 MATILDA THE MUSICAL	8
5.2 METHOD OF ANALYSIS	9
6 TRANSLATING THE CULTURAL MILIEU OF <i>MATILDA</i>.....	10
6.1 CHARACTER NAMES AND PLACES	10
6.2 LITERARY REFERENCES	11
6.3 PLAY ON SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION	13
6.4 EVERYDAY LIFE	16
6.5 FOREIGN LANGUAGES	17
6.6 SCHOOL SYSTEM.....	18
7 CONCLUSIONS.....	19
REFERENCES	22
PRIMARY SOURCES.....	22
SECONDARY SOURCES	22

1 INTRODUCTION

Heart-warming musicals for the whole family are a popular form of entertainment globally, and musical theatre productions are indeed some of the best ticket sellers in Finnish repertoire theatres (Teatterin tiedotuskeskus 2020). Finnish theatregoers are generally welcoming of foreign productions and accept translations with open arms (Aaltonen 2010). In years 2019–2020 half of all sold tickets in theatres subsidised by law in Finland entitled the ticket holder to watch a foreign production, with 21% of the total being from the USA and 10% of British origin (Teatterin tiedotuskeskus 2021, 104). Thus, over 30% of all visits to these 67 national or regional theatres in Finland were for a production that had been translated from English into Finnish (Suomen teatterit 2019). The culture's hospitable attitude towards translated works can mean that theatre texts are not necessarily expected to sound like local works and that a certain amount of modification of the language's or culture's own norms are tolerated in translations (Glynn 2020, 3). Some scholars have even suggested that spectators in Scandinavian countries accept theatre translations to "sound like translations" (Racz 2019, 300). On the other hand, being such a large portion of Finnish theatre scene, translations have created their own norms of representing foreign worlds within the Finnish context (Aaltonen 1996, 105). It is this covert foreignness of a translation and the ways in which theatre translations seek to bring the text closer to their new audience which is at the core of this thesis.

Plays are always written in and into a particular "socio-cultural context" (Aaltonen 2010) and the translation's "changing landscape of reception" is, therefore, a core issue to be considered (Racz 2019, 298). For a theatre production to have the intended impact on its audience, the translation needs to find the universal behind the cultural, whether the differences between the source and the target culture are political, historical, geographical, or ideological. However, culture is not always clear-cut and tangible, but often implicit, even feeling-based, and hard to detect. Therefore, I have chosen in this thesis to explore not only particular culture-specific items but attempt to identify anything that contributes to the cultural milieu of the production. As an example, tea and beans are not necessarily specific to Britain as food items but their presence in a theatre text contributes to the sense of Britishness as they are stereotypically very common in that society. Finnish stage translation scholar Sirkku Aaltonen's work on translating for the stage, particularly her research on Irish plays translated into Finnish (Aaltonen 1996), has influenced my approach in researching cultural milieu translation within the framework of a particular translated work. Her viewpoint on observing translated works as part of the target culture is an angle I entertain in this thesis. Nevertheless, my chosen work differs from Aaltonen's study in genre, as I have chosen to analyse a stage musical, not simply a play.

The production analysed for this thesis is the originally British musical *Matilda* and its Finnish translation with the same name, premiered in Tampereen Työväen Teatteri in 2021. My aim is to identify the kinds of strategies used in the translation of cultural elements, and more broadly, to analyse how the cultural milieu of the story is affected by these strategies. The theoretical background of the thesis consists of research into translation for children and theatre translation as *Matilda* is a production at the intersection of these two fields of translation. In terms of acculturation, or negotiation between source and target culture, I have chosen the framework of foreignisation and domestication as well as the idea of universalisation as a strategy and outcome of translation. My data consists of the entire English and Finnish scripts of the musical, and I have used a descriptive and comparative method in my analysis. I have categorised the linguistic material in which the cultural milieu can be detected taking influence from Klignberg's categories for acculturation (Asghari and Salmani 2016, 967).

Tampereen Työväen Teatteri is one of the biggest musical theatre stages in the country and *Matilda* was its most watched show in the season 2021–2022, with over 29 000 tickets sold (Tampereen Työväen Teatteri 2022). Although there is a longstanding history of Anglo-American musicals being adapted for the Finnish stage, research on their translations is limited to a few master's theses. As examples of these, Anna-Maija Ihander (2018) has conducted a study into musical translation practice in Finland using interviews and her own experience as a translator, and Marianne Kannisto (2019) has studied the functionality of song translations both in subtitling and for the stage. The multimodality and performability of theatre are not only relevant aspects to consider in translation practice but also aspects that add to the academic conversation on translation theory in a unique way. Performability, and in the case of musicals, singability, are crucial but not easily definable concepts. Bassnett, for an example, has strongly disagreed with the notion of performability being a meaningful concern in translation studies, but would leave it entirely in the hands of the performing industry (Xiaofei, Qinghua and Nan 2010, 364). Regardless of whose responsibility it is to ensure the performability of a translated script, Bassnett's point of view justifies a linguistically focused study on such a multimodal genre as musical theatre. Apart from a few mentions here and there, I will not focus on music, dance, or the staging of the production but my goal is to identify the cultural milieu built through the language of the show.

2 TRANSLATING FOR THE STAGE

Play translations can be split into two categories according to their purpose – drama translation is meant only for reading whereas the term 'theatre translation' is used for texts that are meant to be

performed (Racz 2019, 298). This distinction determines not only the aim but also the entire process of translation as questions of performability become a central criterion in theatre text translation. Though most questions of literary translation apply to performable theatre translation, certain elements of the nature of stage productions make theatre translation a separate branch of translation (Racz 2019, 298). Performability being at the forefront of a theatre translator's mind highlights the role of the translator as an interpreter of a written text into a three-dimensional live experience and in a way likens them with the director or the dramaturg. It is indeed interesting to note that musical theatre translators in Finland often operate in multiple capacities within the industry, apart from translation. These include professional such as musicians, song writers, dramaturgs, authors, directors and conductors (Ihander 2018, 7). Some knowledge of other practices within the field of theatre is certainly useful for a theatre translator.

2.1 Theatre text translation

Perhaps the single most important aspect of performable theatre text is its speakability. Whether characters on stage tend to use language variations closer to the written or the spoken tradition varies from culture to culture. Finnish theatre has traditionally used a variation closer to written language on stage, but this trend has shifted, and it is now more common to hear stage characters use forms of spoken language (Juva 1998, 49). Different characters often express their personalities with different speech rhythms, which can be more vital for the characterisation, and thus, for the translation, than the tone of the words used (Ellonen 1998, 41). As Racz (2019, 301) points out, the actors' ability to vocalise the words and phrases of the script is not the only matter to consider, but the spectator's ability to access what is being said is of equal importance. Since in a live performance the audience cannot ask for a line to be repeated or use other means to clarify the meanings of expressions, each utterance that is meant to be understood instantaneously in the original script should also be understood without delay in the translation (Racz 2019, 301). The implication is that even if the translator of a novel or poetry can expect the readers to grasp certain cultural, geographical, historical, or other features with the help of footnotes, or even to slow down and reread foreign linguistic patterns, in theatre text the required immediacy may mean simplifying such cultural dissimilarities.

The second aspect of theatre text that differentiates it from other literary texts is the non-verbal elements of the performance, sometimes called the 'gestic text' (Racz 2019, 303). This includes the movement of the performers as well as all other physical elements that "complement, enhance, underscore and even clarify [the play's] language" (Racz 2019, 303). This could be facial expressions or gestures like pointing, without which the text would not make sense. Equally, all the props and

other physical elements of the performance can impact the translation, depending on their similarity or difference compared to the original and their function in the performance. As an example, *Matilda* uses physical blocks shaped as the letters of the alphabet to enable the audience to ‘hear’ an entire song with an added layer of meaning when these letters are lit up at exactly the right moment. This gestic aspect of the performance means that the focus of the translation must be on the second layer meaning in which the alphabet is incorporated into the lyrics, rather than the content of the lyrics that the audience will hear first. Also choreographed movement or dancing – often present in musical theatre – can underscore the text and might impact the translation, though this is not always the case.

2.2 Musical theatre translation

As my material for this thesis is not just a play but a piece of musical theatre, some further notes on music and musical theatre translation are necessary. *Matilda* can be classified as a so-called ‘book musical’, which means that its musical numbers move the plot forwards, and the songs are an important part of the storytelling (Gänzl 2001, 91). Unlike jukebox musicals where the songs comprise separate show-numbers only loosely connected to the theme, book musicals use songs as a narrative device and need to be translated accordingly. This means that the message of the songs should remain as similar as possible to the original (Ihander 2018, 14). What makes this particularly challenging is the fact that the translation of songs is primarily governed neither by the qualities of the source language nor the linguistic aspects of the target language but by the music (Hakola 2007, 25). The rhythm, stress patterns, and possible rhyming must fit the predetermined number and length of the syllables written into the sheet music (Hakola 2007, 25). Because Finnish words are longer on average than English words, fitting the same amount of information can be a challenge and calls for creativity as well potentially having to choose some content to be left out of the lyrics. Certain sounds are also deemed more suitable for certain singing qualities (Ihander 2018, 18), which – similarly to rhyming – limits the possible words used for conveying any given message. If done well, all these singability aspects make the message of the songs easier to follow and to understand.

Finding the balance between form and meaning is clearly visible in the translation of the songs in *Matilda* – many individual lines have changed in meaning while the function of each song still manages to remain faithful to the original. Because the focus of this thesis is on the cultural milieu of the translation, I have chosen to leave many changes made in the songs outside my analysis, as it is most likely that musicality and singability, not cultural reasons, have been the cause for such changes. Nevertheless, some of these changes have had an impact on the felt cultural milieu as a side-effect. These instances I have included in my analysis. As an example, let us consider the translation of the

line *a dwarf called Zeek, a carnival freak* in the song *The Smell of Rebellion* that is translated into *yks kääpiö Ben, sirkusmaahinen* (a dwarf called Ben, a circus gnome [translation by me]). The number of syllables stays the same and a new rhyme has been created but the non-anglophone name *Zeek* has been changed into a very typical English name *Ben* and the universal word *freak* has been substituted with a traditional Finnish fairytale character *maahinen* with strong target culture connotations. The changes in this line do not impact the message of the song but they do affect the felt cultural milieu.

3 TRANSLATING FOR CHILDREN

As well as being a musical, *Matilda* is also children's literature. Children's literature should not necessarily be seen as a genre as such as it contains a wide range of literary forms. It can, however, be defined as a body of literatures that are "considered appropriate for children by those who produce them (authors, publishers, etc.), by figures active in the literary market (e.g. reviewers), and by educational institutions (schools, libraries)" (O'Sullivan 2012, 451–452). Texts addressed to children belong both to the literary and to the socio-educational system with a clear socialising purpose (O'Sullivan 2012, 452). According to O'Sullivan (2012, 452) this is a key factor when considering translation for children because the educational and socialising functions are bound to influence the translation approaches in ways that are perhaps less pronounced in translation for adults. It is important to ask whether seeing children's literature primarily as pragmatic and educational rather than purely artistic allows for bolder adaptations in translation for children. The pressure to conform to target culture can be higher if the goal of translation is geared towards "social, cultural, and educational norms, values and ideas of a dominant culture" (Sullivan 2012, 452), which children's literature often is.

This tension on the art–education axis is illustrated by the image of translating for children being a "balancing act" (O'Sullivan 2012, 453) of educating children on foreign cultures, while simultaneously making sure the translation is not too foreign for their level of knowledge of the world. The phenomenon is called cultural context adaptation by Cecilia Alvstad (2010). She describes cultural context adaptation as a "term for modifications that aim to adjust a text to the prospective readers' frames of reference" (Alvstad 2010, 1), but also agrees that knowing when and how much to adapt text requires good judgement. Too many foreign elements make the text unengaging, but too much adaptation can both underestimate and hinder children's ability to learn about other cultures. When works originally created for children are translated for children in another culture, the target audience has more textual features and context to process than the original audience as the foreignness adds a layer to the original work (Asghari and Salmani 2016, 965). The audience's ability to process

relevant information is decreased by the added layer of foreignness, which can explain simplifications made in the translation in areas that are not otherwise culturally specific. An example of a choice that could be explained by this need to reduce unfamiliarity in *Matilda* is the translation of *newt* into *sisilisko* ('lizard'). Technically a newt would be 'vesilisko' in Finnish, but regardless of what the translator's reason for simplifying the species may have been, a more familiar animal lessens the cognitive load of the target audience. Lastly, it is relevant to understand that children's literature has been a "translated phenomenon from its origin" (Alvstad 2019, 159–160) and matters relating to translation have been at the core of children's literature from the very beginning.

4 FOREIGNISATION AND DOMESTICATION

One of the perspectives that can be used to examine the translation of culture is called foreignisation and domestication. The terms foreignisation and domestication were first brought to the field of translation studies by Lawrence Venuti in 1995 and the concept has been largely debated ever since (Wang 2014, 2424). Wang (2014) describes foreignisation as a source-oriented way of translating, while domestication is oriented towards the target culture. This orientation is detectable in the strategies chosen by the translator, particularly when dealing with culture-specific elements. Source-oriented translation creates a sense of foreignness by leaving foreign elements of the original text intact. These kinds of foreignisation strategies mean "depart[ing] from target conventions" (Wang 2014, 2424) by retaining expressions and forms that are unusual or even exotic in the target culture. By comparison, target-oriented translation, or domestication, seeks to align itself with the target culture by changing the source text so that the norms, expressions, objects, or ideologies better fit the target culture. Depending on the type of text and the relative proximity between the cultures, foreignisation and domestication strategies can result in texts with very different impact on the target culture readers.

Although these two orientations seem to represent opposite goals within the translation practice, it is important to note that foreignisation and domestication are to be seen as "two ends of a continuum" (Minier 2004, 156) rather than as mutually exclusive schools of thought. According to Minier (2004, 156), foreignisation and domestication are almost always both present in the same translation. Paloposki and Oittinen (2000, 386) go as far as to suggest that foreignising might be an illusion and simply a "dimension of domestication". This view is shared by Aaltonen (1996, 103) who uses the term acculturation to describe the "integration between one discourse and another", which is essentially the negotiation of foreignising and domesticating strategies. She calls this process a blurring of the "borderline between the familiar and the unfamiliar" (Aaltonen 1996, 103) and argues

that even if foreignisation were to be the goal of a translation, some level of acculturation (domestication) is always part of the translation process (Aaltonen 1996, 108). The space between the foreign and the familiar is often realised through universalisation strategies where a source culture element is not substituted with a target culture element but with a more universal item. Taken further, the idea of the “universalization of culture” (Espasa 2012, 321) in stage translation studies refers to the stripping back of cultural forms of expression in order to reveal the universal meaning behind its cultural representation, and thus, making it accessible outside of the original culture. How different cultural factors are acculturated, or which source elements are foreignised, domesticated or universalised and how, depends on what level of knowledge the target readers are assumed to have on the source culture (Aaltonen 1996, 103).

Even with a view where foreignisation and domestication are simply different aspects of the same acculturation process, there seems to be a growing consensus among modern translation scholars that foreignisation is the preferred route, even in genres that have traditionally allowed for a lot of domestication. While previous generations sought to domesticate children’s literature with a heavy hand, the modern view is that domestication “denatures and pedagogizes children’s literature” (Paloposki and Oittinen 2000, 380). In a similar vein, modern Finnish theatre scene appears to discourage resetting contemporary plays to Finnish locations, for an example (Aaltonen 1996, 108). These observations are very relevant from the point of view of my data, as the musical *Matilda* is both children’s literature and a theatre production. On the other hand, stage translation theorists discuss the idea of translated works being products of the target culture rather than simply original works in a foreign environment (Espasa 2012, 321). Seeing *Matilda* as part of the modern Finnish children’s theatre canon allows us to consider the acculturation strategies used as both a continuation and an expansion of the Finnish tradition, instead of the British. Not only have Finnish audiences become familiar with many features of British culture but translated theatre productions themselves partake in the creation of a Finnish way of representing Britishness. As Aaltonen (1996, 113) claims that the Irish culture of the plays she researched is reconstructed to conform with the Finnish audience’s idea of Irishness, we can also see the cultural milieu of *Matilda* as a combination of foreignised Britishness, domesticated Finnishness, universalised culture, and reconstructed Britishness as seen through the Finnish theatrical lenses.

5 DATA AND METHODS

While *Matilda* and its Finnish translation could be studied from several interesting research angles such as singability concerns (present in all musical translations), nonsense language, neologisms, and

a variety of non-standard language use, I have focused in this thesis on the translation choices that convey the cultural milieu of the musical. I am specifically interested in exploring the ways in which the translation retains the Britishness of the milieu, and on the other hand, brings the milieu closer to the Finnish target culture. The sense of Britishness is present both through original culture-specific elements and references that have been left in the translation, and in a few instances as added British culture that is not found in the original or as linguistic material left in the original English language. Similarly, the sense of Finnishness is present in the cultural substitutions but also in added Finnish cultural elements in places where there was no cultural element in the original. Additionally, I aim to determine how and what kinds of cultural elements have been universalised so that they are neither specifically British, nor Finnish. As *Matilda* uses an abundance of other languages, namely Italian, Latin (and/or pseudo-Latin), French and Russian, as well as spelling and pronunciation mistakes of English, as a narrative device, I have included these instances in my data. The presence of other European languages as well as play on spelling and pronunciation of English are a major part of British culture which is why I consider these linguistic elements as part of the cultural milieu of *Matilda*.

5.1 Matilda the Musical

Matilda the Musical is an adaptation of Roald Dahl's children's novel *Matilda* from 1988. The data used for this thesis consists of the 2018 revised English script and the 2020 Finnish translation produced and performed by Tampereen Työväen Teatteri. The original dialogue is written by Dennis Kelly and the song lyrics by Tim Minchin, which is mirrored by a dual translation team of Reita Lounatvuori, who translated the dialogue, and Hanna Kaila, whose handiwork are the Finnish songs. Both scripts include 24 songs, dialogue, and a few stage directions as well as a list of character names and a list of musical numbers. I have analysed the songs and the dialogue, as well as character names (only those uttered in the script) but have not included stage directions or song titles in the analysis as they will not be audible or visible for the live audience watching the performance.

Matilda is a story of a little girl with a brilliant mind and whose imagination, cleverness, sense of justice, and above all, love for books, is anything but appreciated by her small-minded parents and absolutely loathed by her evil headmistress, Miss Trunchbull. Matilda's cleverness is, however, noticed by her teacher Miss Honey who gets to experience her brilliant imagination that verges on the supernatural. Together with her teacher and peers in school, Matilda fights against Trunchbull's sadistic regime, with language, imagination, and courage to speak up being their greatest weapons.

Matilda is an anthem for children, for books and stories, and for smart little girls who overturn the status quo.

The story of the original musical is set in England, but that fact is not overly emphasised. The universe of *Matilda* is an exaggerated one, where everything from personal qualities to life circumstances and language is beyond what would be considered normal in the real world. It is, however, not set in a fantasy world, but perhaps in an extended reality commonly found in children's literature. This is reflected linguistically in the creative use of language, especially in humorous slurs and insults, created by compounding, and words being used out of their normal context.

5.2 Method of analysis

I started this thesis project by reading the entire script with the English and the Finnish versions side by side. On the first reading I collected all the instances of culture-specific references and cultural milieu building language I found in the songs of the musical. The second time I read only the dialogue and on the third reading the entire script including stage directions. After having collected as many instances as possible that contributed to the cultural milieu of the story, I divided them into groups of different types of linguistic material. This typology was created based on the source material, but it was inspired by Klingberg's (1986) categorisation for cultural context adaptation that includes literary references, foreign languages, mythology, historical background, food, flora and fauna, proper names, weights and measures, among a few others (quoted in Asghari and Salmani 2016, 967). I then analysed how the linguistic material in each of these categories has been dealt with, aiming to discover how the cultural milieu of the Finnish translation differs from the original story. Each type of cultural material has required a slightly different set of translation strategies, which I endeavor to explain without a definitive list of strategies. However, I take inspiration from Klingberg's list of forms of cultural adaptation that include substitution of equivalence, substitution of rough equivalence, and simplification, to name a few (quoted in Asghari and Salmani 2016, 967). I have also seen the live performance of *Matilda* twice in English and once in Finnish. I saw the Finnish performance after having categorised all the cultural material from the script, which enabled me to spot some differences in the live performance compared to the script as well as choices that had been made by the performers or directors where the translator had written alternative options. As the British environment is not a central theme or a key device in the story, there are not that many cultural references that would be completely unintelligible to a Finnish audience, even children, if not changed somehow. It is, nevertheless, interesting to research the implicit Britishness present in the story and the changes made even when it was not necessary. Apart from the libretto (dialogue and songs in this case), a theatre

production's cultural milieu is of course also built with costume, props, and other audiovisual elements on stage. For an example, the children wear school uniforms in the show, which is an undeniable foreignisation strategy, as Finnish school children do not wear a uniform. I have taken these elements into account when evaluating the overall cultural milieu of the show, but I do not go into detail with them in this thesis.

6 TRANSLATING THE CULTURAL MILIEU OF *MATILDA*

I have analysed the cultural milieu of *Matilda* in six categories, each of which have been dealt with using several different translation strategies. The categories are Character Names and Places, Literary References, Everyday Life, Play on Spelling and Pronunciation, Foreign Languages, and School System.

6.1 Character Names and Places

Perhaps the most striking feature of cultural milieu building in the Finnish *Matilda* is the fact that all the names of the characters are left in their original English form. This is an interesting choice as names are commonly translated in children's literature to make them easier to understand, and indeed to pronounce (Paloposki and Oittinen 2000, 378). Despite recognising this pattern of translating names in children's literature, Paloposki and Oittinen (2000, 384) also point out that our "tolerance of foreign names" has grown due to watching British and American television. This tolerance does not necessarily require great cultural knowledge on the part of the reader, which supports the idea that even children might be expected to tolerate English names in modern productions, even if they do not know the literal meanings or possible connotations of the names. The fact that *Matilda* is not only performed for child audiences, but is also performed by children, shows that English names are not seen as too foreign for Finnish children to use and understand. It does, however, also show a foreignising strategy that clearly sets the story abroad from the point of view of a Finnish audience.

There are twelve character names that are mentioned in the musical at least once. *Matilda*, *Michael*, *Bruce*, *Lavender*, *Amanda* and *Alice* are children and called by their first names, whereas *Miss Honey*, *Mrs. Wormwood* and *Mrs. Phelps* are, in traditional British manner, called by their title and surname. The titles have been translated into *neiti* and *rouva*. Using such titles is very rare in the everyday Finnish context but perhaps more common in children's literature. This is an example of Britishness being reconstructed through Finnish theatre tradition, as the English practice of children calling adults by their title and surname has made its way into Finnish literature and is accepted in that context even though it is not part of the culture otherwise. *Miss Agatha Trunchbull*, the main antagonist in the story

is, however, mainly called just *Trunchbull* without the title. Additionally, there are two adult characters who are called by their first names, perhaps to emphasise their non-Britishness: the part-Italian salsa dancer *Rudolpho*, and *Sergei* who is the leader of the Russian mafia. Both of these also remain unchanged in the translation, as does Matilda's father *Harry Wormwood*, who is for some reason often referred to by his full name.

The children of *Matilda* have regular English names, and the eponymous protagonist's name is not uncommon even outside the anglosphere, including Finland. The main adult characters, however, have names that are less arbitrary and clearly chosen to represent their characters. Sweet and gentle Miss Honey is in contrast with the spineless, worm-like personalities of Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood. The full impact of these character names requires some knowledge of English and is therefore not necessarily accessible to all members of the audience. Trunchbull, on the other hand, could be argued to sound equally violent and unpleasant to a Finnish speaker as it does to an English speaker, even without knowledge of English.

Whether these character names alone set the Finnish *Matilda* in England, however, remains ambiguous as the name of the country is mentioned only once in the original script and omitted from the translation. It is Trunchbull's line in the song *The Hammer* where she boasts of being an *English hammer-throwing champion 1969*. This has been translated: *voittaa maamme moukarinheiton mestaruus vuonna -66* which changes England to a universal 'our country'. No town, village or region is mentioned and even the school that is the main scene for the story, remains anonymous. Matilda's father's car shop is translated from *Wormwood Motors* to *Wormwoodin Ajoneuvot* ('Wormwood Vehicles'), where the family name remains consistently in English, but the title as a whole is domesticated by substituting it with a Finnish equivalent car shop name.

Overall, the character names and places of the Finnish *Matilda* seem to place the story in a British landscape without explicitly mentioning the name of the country. Some foreign linguistic forms such as the use of titles and surnames continue the Finnish tradition of expressing Britishness in children's literature and theatre.

6.2 Literary References

I found 25 individual literary references in *Matilda*, many of which are mentioned in the story as clusters of books Matilda has recently read. I detected four different strategies in dealing with these references: use of canonised earlier translations, direct transfer, substitution by a better-known but different British item, and universalisation. The largest two groups – Earlier Translations (nine

instances), and Direct Transfer (seven instances) – are similar strategies because the translators have simply used names in the form they are commonly known in, in Finland. The literary references directly transferred from English were six author names: *Charles Dickens*, *Mary Shelley*, *Jane Austen*, *James Joyce*, *William Shakespeare*, and two book titles: *Moby Dick* and *Oliver Twist*. The literary references that had a canonised, earlier Finnish translation, were all book titles. *Roomeo ja Juulia* is the traditional pronunciation for the star-crossed lovers, while Nicholas Nickelby’s full English title ‘The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickelby’ was added to the Finnish title as *Nicholas Nickelbyn elämä ja seikkailut*, even though the English script shortens it to *Nicholas Nickelby*. *Jane Eyre* also has a descriptive translation *Kotiopettajattaren romaani* (‘The Governess’ Novel’ [my translation]), but all the other Finnish book titles were pretty much word-for-word translations, such as *Rikos ja rangaistus* for *Crime and Punishment*. *Tolstoy* was modified to *Tolstoi* in keeping with the traditional Finnish transliteration of the Russian name.

If the unchanged character names helped retain the milieu of *Matilda* in Britain, then keeping these literary references in their original British – or Russian – form, certainly emphasises that choice. Though some literary references have been substituted, six out of nine instances were substituted with another British item, in keeping with the foreignising strategy. Perhaps less known *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* has become *Humiseva Harju* (‘Wuthering Heights’), which is also the book *Matilda* reads out loud in the Finnish version, where the original *Matilda* was reading the opening line of ‘A Tale of Two Cities’ by *Charles Dickens*. Similarly, *Stig of the Dump* has become *Robinson Crusoe* and amusingly the novelist *Ian McEwan* has been changed into *Roald Dahl* himself. A few of these name changes are possibly influenced by the constraints of the songs but keeping it British has clearly been the strategy, nevertheless. It is this change from a perhaps more obscure British literary reference to a supposedly more familiar British item that exposes the false dichotomy that places foreignising and domesticating in opposition. It seems that familiarity and recognisability are the goal in the translation of these literary references and that they are to tick both boxes: the foreign and the familiar. *Minier* (2004, 158) points out that when reading translated children’s literature, it is indeed often “the foreign-as-familiar that one encounters as opposed to the purely foreign or purely domestic”. These British literary references are and have been part of Finnish knowledge of Britain for a long time. Thus, they are arguably no longer foreign in the strongest sense of the word. And yet, it is in this familiarity that we are reminded of the foreign that is British culture.

Additionally, I found three instances of universalisation of literary references. *Matilda*’s first line of song begins with the words *Jack and Jill went up the hill*, which is a line from a traditional English nursery rhyme. Since the nursery rhyme is not commonly known in Finland and there is no Finnish

version of the pair (that I am aware of), it makes sense that the cultural reference has been omitted and substituted with a universal fairytale character, *prinsessa* ('princess'). Similarly, the reference to the British science fiction television program Doctor Who, though hugely popular around the world, would most likely not be understood by Finnish children, and the mention of the time machine *Tardis* has been omitted and replaced by *musta aukko* ('black hole'). The joke of the *Tardis* being *considerably roomier inside* still works and even the space travel theme is captured by this universalisation strategy. Finally, Mr. Wormwood's mockery 'ulliseez' [sic] of the landmark modernist novel *Ulysses* by James Joyce is simply translated as *kirjoja* ('books'), even though the author's name itself was left unchanged earlier in the script.

The literary references in *Matilda* seem to favour familiarity and recognisability while seeking to remain in the British environment. While continuing the foreignising used with character names, the conventional Finnish filter is used in bringing the Britishness closer to the target audience in cases where recognisability might otherwise be compromised. Recognisability of the literary references is important as they play a significant role in the characterisation of Matilda as an extremely intelligent child, as well as act as a source of humor for the adult audience.

6.3 Play on Spelling and Pronunciation

Mistakes, jokes and general creative play on spelling and pronunciation are a relatively large part of the *Matilda*-style. As the phonology and orthography of any given language enables a specific culture of humour and theatrical impact, I think it reasonable to include such linguistic aspects of the script as part of the cultural milieu. There were three instances of content related to spelling and pronunciation that were directly transferred from their original English form. These three instances use the direct transfer as a translation strategy to quite different effects regarding foreignising and domesticating. One of the big ensemble numbers at the beginning of the musical, *School Song*, makes use of the theme of spelling by incorporating the names of each letter in the English alphabet into the lyrics so that only light spots and the choreography enable the audience to follow the alphabet being spelt out. The translation of this song has understandably quite different lyrics to the original as the names of the letters are pronounced very differently in the two languages and the words that have matching sounds to these letters are naturally also going to be very different. Example (1) and (2) show the general way the alphabet is incorporated into the lyrics in both languages.

- (1) AND SO YOU THINK YOU'RE
ABLE [A] TO SURVIVE THIS MESS BY
BEING [B] A PRINCE OR A PRINCESS, YOU WILL SOON
SEE [C] THERE'S NO ESCAPING TRAGEDY [D]

- (2) ON EKA KOULU-
AAMU [A], PÄRJÄÄ ET, JOS OOT NOIN
BEIBIMÄINEN [B], HEITTÄÄ TOIVON VOIT NYT SIK-
SEEN [C] OIKEESTI PELÄTÄ KANDEE [D]

(It is the first school
morning, you won't make it if you're such a
baby, you should throw your hope
away and be afraid [my translation])

As the theme of the song requires a kind of domestication of the sound system, the alphabet itself has been unchanged and remains in the English form, ending with a Z and, thus, omitting of the letters Å, Ä and Ö from the Finnish alphabet. This foreignising is possibly partly to do with the length of the song, but it does, nevertheless, contribute to the feeling of being in a British school, rather than a Finnish one. Still, another scene where Trunchbull orders the children to spell out words, transports the audience back to a Finnish classroom. Where the English schoolchild Nigel misspells the word 'cat' by saying *C-A..F! Cat.*, the Finnish Nigel spells it *K-I-S-S..Ö! Kissa*, using the Finnish letter Ö previously omitted from the alphabet. In the same scene, even an almost unpronounceable made-up word *amchellakamanialsepticolistimosis* has been changed for a completely new nonsense word that is still very difficult to pronounce but uses sounds closer to the Finnish sound system. This word *tsadekatos-pestesippo-aggre-piinkun-broru* then allows the Finnish Trunchbull to claim that Lavender has missed out a 'double K' – a common spelling mistake for Finnish schoolchildren – where the English Lavender is missing a *silent Z* – a concept that does not exist in the Finnish language.

Another example of the direct transfer is the pronunciation error of a child that wants to be a *barrelina*, which unlike the alphabet, is pronounced more or less the same in the two languages, and the mistake is one that could be made by a child in either language. On the other hand, direct transfer has also been used in a situation where the English form does not have any corresponding meaning in Finnish, but the joke is simply left to be either understood in English or not understood at all. Harry Wormwood mocks famous British authors in his song *TV* and ends it with *Moby Dick? Easy, grandma...* which is translated into *Moby Dick? Ihan rauhassa mummeli siellä...* This innuendo is a cliché in the English language and by leaving it untranslated the audience is brought closer to the foreign, British culture. Other times the play on spelling and pronunciation has been left in English, but the word has been changed to something easier to understand for a Finnish person. Mrs. Wormwood calls Miss Honey by the wrong name twice in a row, confusing *Honey* for another edible bread-spread *Chutney*, and then simply calls her by a close-enough name *Miss Hussey*. The Finnish translation keeps at least one of the wrong names in English but instead of the confusion taking place

within the semantic field of food as with ‘honey’ and ‘chutney’, the Finnish Mrs. Wormwood plays with rhyme and calls her *neiti Money* and *neiti Fani*. ‘Fani’ rhymes with ‘honey’ and ‘money’ but it is ambiguous whether it refers to the English word ‘funny’ or to the Finnish word for a ‘fan’. In the live performance I watched on 18th Mar 2022 in Tampereen Työväen Teatteri, the actress called Miss Honey *neiti Kani* (‘Miss Rabbit’), which continues the rhyming strategy but discontinues the naming in English. Similar to how some of the literary references were substituted with another English item, the use of English language in play on spelling and pronunciation foreignises the text but simultaneously brings it slightly closer to the target audience than leaving the original English words would have done.

Most of the play on spelling and pronunciation in *Matilda* is, however, translated using a substitution strategy. Like in the *School Song*, the idea or the type of word play is captured but the translator has used creativity in making a similar but different wordplay in Finnish. Harry Wormwood gives an intermission speech which he ends with the following line:

- (1) Under no circumstances do we condone such activities and we do so utterly without reservoirs.
- (2) Me emme ollenkaan suvaitse semmoista toimintaa. Että tämmönen loppukanootti.

The Finnish can be translated as ‘We do not tolerate such activity. So that’s my final canoe.’ The word *loppukanootti* is an erroneous way of saying *loppukaneetti*, which refers to final or closing remarks. *Kanootti* means a canoe and, therefore, sounds similarly silly and humorous as the original *reservoirs* that should have been ‘reservations’. In a similar manner, the original line *IT IS 2 L 8 4 U “E” R E-VOLTING!* (Read: It is too late for you we are (r)e-volting) from the song *Revolting Children* has creatively been substituted with a common Finnish adolescent abbreviation for ‘could not care less’ (‘ei vois vähempää kiinnostaa’) in *Sulle E-V-V-K vaan me kapinoidaan!* (‘Could not care less’ to you, we are revolting! [my translation]). Even the Finnish teenage insult *K-V-G*, abbreviated from the phrase ‘kato vittu googlesta’ (fucking google it [my translation]) has made its way into the *Revolting Children* -song in a section where the original English version has no abbreviated or abusive language in it. These kinds of substitutions where the translator has had more freedom to add target culture expressions into the text is very much a domesticating strategy as it reminds the audience of Finnish youth culture.

The strategies used for translating the play on spelling and pronunciation in *Matilda* is a negotiation between foreignising and domesticating. The British cultural milieu is faded in these instances as it has been more important to convey the textual impact than the culture behind the specific jokes. Leaving English language in misnaming another character and in the innuendo reminds the audience

of the original language of the text while adding Finnish slang abbreviations unapologetically draws on target culture. Interestingly, language-related culture has not, or cannot be universalised as language as a system is always tied to a culture. Therefore, the translations of play on spelling and pronunciation in *Matilda* did not use universalisation strategies but had to always choose between the foreign or the domestic.

6.4 Everyday Life

When determining which elements contribute to the cultural milieu of a production, everyday items such as food, flora, and fauna come to mind as a large factor in making the musical clearly set in a particular culture. Not so in *Matilda* as there is a relatively small number of such everyday items in the entire script. In this respect, the story is set in a very much universalised Western cultural sphere and there are only a few instances where everyday items bare a cultural connotation relating to the source or the target culture. Being a British show, the mention of tea is hardly a surprise, but the fact that Trunchbull's *tea tray* becomes simply *tarjotin* ('tray') in Finnish shows a slight distancing from the very British-sounding concept by universalisation. In another instance the mention of tea is left in the translation and the combination of tea and tinned beans in examples (5) and (6) certainly conjures up a British stereotype, and thus has a foreignising effect, even though the food items themselves are not foreign to Finns.

(3) She'd written everything down: every tea bag, every electricity bill, every tin of beans.

(4) Laskuun oli merkattu kaikki: jokainen teepussi, jokainen sähkölasku, jokainen papupurkki.

This kind of foreignising effect of otherwise universal items finds its opposite in a strategy where a universal item is translated into something that has very domestic connotations in the target culture. In the song *Revoltin' Children* the word *hockey stick* has been translated into *lätkämaila*, which literally means 'ice hockey stick', but because the word 'lätkä' is Finnish slang for the beloved national sport, the word itself immediately brings the text closer to Finnish culture. In a similar manner, translating the insult *You fithbog!* as *Senkin ulkohuussi!* ('You outhouse!' [translation by me]) using the very Finnish concept of a kind of outhouse with no running water, brings the text closer to home by domestication.

An example of a translation choice that instead of foreignising or domesticating simply represents the globalisation of culture by using an English language phrase in a situation where it could realistically be found in the Finnish context. When the original *Matilda* reads out the label on her mother's hair dye bottle: *Platinum Blonde Hair Dye – Extra Strong*, the Finnish *Matilda* reads: *Hiusväri*

platinanvaalea – extra strong with the modifying phrase after the dash left in English. There is no reason why the words ‘extra strong’ could not have been translated into Finnish, but the English is also fitting as it is very common for products sold in Finland to have English phrases on them. Therefore, this choice speaks of merged cultural and language spheres, where it is no longer clear whether a bottle of shampoo places the story in a translated English-speaking world or in a Finnish-speaking world where English is occasionally used.

All in all, the few everyday items found in *Matilda* have been translated case by case with no clear pattern to be found. When the Britishness is recognisable it has been left, when an opportunity to add some Finnishness has arisen, the opportunity has been taken. It is hard to conclude anything about these examples as there are so few of them.

6.5 Foreign Languages

The way foreign languages are used in a text and indeed what are done with them in a translation can have a significant impact on the cultural milieu of a text. The foreign languages used in *Matilda* are all European languages and the intentionally stereotypical use of these languages carry very similar connotations in both British and Finnish cultures. The prestige of the Latin or Latin-sounding phrases in the school environment that “invoke a foreign/highbrow atmosphere” (Minier 2004, 158), the passion and hot-headedness of the Italian salsa dancer, the sensuality of the French language, and the unfortunately common criminal associations of the Russian language have not needed major amendment when transferring from a British environment to a Finnish one. For instance, all the words and phrases imitating Latin have been left in the translation as they were in the original. Matilda’s school’s charming slogan *Bambinatum est maggitum*, translated by Roald Dahl as *Children are maggots*, retains the same Latin-sounding form in the Finnish translation and is translated as *Lapset ovat matoja* (‘children are worms’). Though Latin is arguably more present in the British cultural context than it is in the Finnish and could, thus, be seen as a foreignising strategy, I see this as more of a form of universalising. As Latin is the historical lingua franca of Europe its very presence places the reader in a general European sphere rather than in a specifically British or Finnish sphere. Likewise, both Italian and Russian have a longstanding historical and cultural presence throughout the continent and leaving the languages intact does not necessarily shift the cultural milieu in either direction.

What could be seen as a domesticating strategy in the translation of the latter two languages is the transliteration of the Russian, which presumably follows the English tradition in the original and the

Finnish in the translated work, as well as the slightly differing spelling of the Italian. As I do not know these languages, I cannot comment on what exactly has changed but it seems that the transliteration and the spelling differences are accounted for by the characters' or actors' native languages. Mr. Wormwood dismissing his Russian customers with a purposeful mock-Russian *Dosvidoodah* is spelt *Dasviduudaa* in the Finnish version. This mispronunciation of the Russian farewell 'До свидания' (do svidaniya) matches the respective main language of the performance, which is a form of domestication. On the other hand, there is a long stretch of what I assume to be actual Russian in the final scene of the musical, spoken by the leader of the Russian mafia and Matilda. This conversation is transliterated and translated in the script for the purposes of the actors, but the translation is not accessible for live audience. Assuming that most of the audience in both countries is non-Russian-speaking, the impact of this scene is to impress with the young protagonist's cleverness, leaving the contents of the conversation out of focus.

Where Latin, Italian and Russian have been left intact in the translation, it is interesting to note that the few isolated French words in the original have all been switched into Finnish in the translation. This is a clear domestication strategy, not only because of the Finnish language but also specifically because it is French that is omitted. French being a compulsory subject in British schools, it is typical for Brits to throw in a few French words here and there, whereas these same words would be a lot less likely to pop up in a Finnish conversation. For instance, the French word *derrière* is substituted with the Finnish *pyllyä* ('butt') and the multilingual sentence in example (7) including English, Italian and French, has been translated using only Finnish and Italian.

(5) I should be dancing the tarantella qui mon fella italiano

(6) Mun pitäis tanssii nyt tarantella kanssa herran italiano

Multilingualism can be seen as an integral part of storytelling rather than simply a reference to a particular culture (Nyytäjä 1998, 26). The use of different languages manages to convey a host of associations that need no explanation, or like in the case of the Russian conversation, no interpretation either. Leaving most of the foreign languages untouched serves the function of building a universal European milieu, while removing the French distances the milieu ever so slightly from its British context.

6.6 School System

The school Matilda goes to is perhaps the most British element of the whole show. The school uniform and the ancient looking school gates are such a large part of the visual experience of the musical, that

it is impossible to ignore the British feel they portray. As mentioned earlier, school uniforms are not worn by Finnish school children and, therefore, they belong to the stereotypically British environment presented in both in the original and the translated work. Finnish schools also rarely have gates and certainly not huge, curved, rusty and ornamented ones, which add to the reconstructed Britishness of the milieu. There were also a few textual indications of the institution being left in its original context rather than being adapted to the Finnish system. The context of the story at the very beginning of the musical is that of Matilda starting school very soon. At the same time Matilda's mother comments on her daughter behaving in a way that is *not normal for a five-year-old*. In Finland children go to school when they are seven so this counts as a foreignising strategy. On the other hand, when one of the other children is said to have got a C in his report, this is translated in a universalising manner by replacing British grading system with the word *ala-arvoinen* ('below standard'), which is not specific school terminology in Finland but is understood as meaning a low mark. And when Miss Honey suggests moving Matilda to *top form*, referring to a higher year group in the British system, is this similarly universalised as *ylemmälle luokalle* ('higher grade').

Although the school is visually a strong marker of stereotypical culture that Finns would easily recognise as British, the language itself uses a foreignising strategy sparingly in the area of the school system.

7 CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis I have explored the cultural milieu of the Finnish translation of the stage musical *Matilda*. I have defined cultural milieu as all the linguistic aspects of the script that contribute to the construction of a particular cultural sphere. I have sought to find these explicit and implicit cultural-milieu-building elements in six types of linguistic material, labelled as Character Names and Places, Literary References, Everyday Life, Play on Spelling and Pronunciation, Foreign Languages, and School System. I found that the cultural milieu was constructed in the translation using different translation strategies in each of these categories. My aim was to identify the kinds of strategies used to retain the sense of Britishness, to bring the milieu closer to Finnish culture, and to universalise the cultural elements. In short, I was interested in finding out how the cultural milieu has changed as a result of these translation strategies. The theoretical framework chosen for this purpose was that of foreignisation and domestication, first coined by Lawrence Venuti, and I have used children's literature and theatre translation theory as the background for researching this genre. As an additional research angle, I have adopted Sirkku Aaltonen's viewpoint on theatre translation being a product of the target culture, which has further clarified my way of analysing the material.

The findings can be concluded as being a negotiation between cultural spheres, which confirms the idea presented in the theory section, that foreignisation and domestication are indeed part of the same acculturation process. Choosing to leave character names and places largely in their original English form is in line with the modern Finnish practice of keeping translated plays set in the foreign location. This custom is continued in *Matilda* even while risking the loss of name meanings and connotations for the child audience. A similar risk that potentially excludes some of the audience is taken with a couple of jokes and expressions, and they remind the audience of the original language of the production. This kind of strong foreignisation allows for an interpretation where Finnish audiences are expected to know English language and British culture and to accept a translation that ‘leaks’ its source culture from time to time. From the perspective of translating for children, the educational aspect is present in these foreignising moments, as children will learn foreign languages and cultures through insertions of fully foreign material.

Moving on the scale from fully foreign towards slightly more familiar in *Matilda* includes all the instances in which the British cultural references clearly point to Britain but equally seek to be recognisable to the audience. The literary references are a good example of this as, excluding the few Russian literary references, they were all either left in their original British form, or changed into another British item. This reconstruction of the British references is an indication of the traditional Finnish representation of Britishness overtaking the original author’s self-representation. In a similar vein, everyday items, such as tea and tinned beans, that recognisably stereotype the British, are kept in the translation. This strengthens the impact of the foreign as familiar. Furthermore, using the British linguistic pattern of calling adults by their title and surname but translating the titles into Finnish, places an emphasis on the foreign in a way that is still very comprehensible in Finnish.

The linguistic features that started to fade the British cultural milieu in *Matilda* have used a universalisation strategy, which was found mainly in the categories of Literary References, Foreign Languages and School System. Some literary references, particularly ones in the songs, were universalised for reasons most likely pertaining to music, but their impact on the cultural milieu overall was that of moving away from the British. Choosing to retain the foreign languages that have similar stereotypical usage in British and Finnish culture was also a universalising strategy as it recognizes the universal European socio-cultural context. On the contrary, French that has different connotations in the two cultures, was omitted from the translation and, thus, universalised in a different way. The terms used in schooling could be argued to be technically untranslatable as different educational concepts do not exist in the same way in the respective cultures. Therefore,

universalisation is an obvious choice. Less obvious is the choice to leave out the mention of *England* from the translation, but it communicates a lack of commitment to a particular geographical location.

The other extreme on the scale of foreign to domestic is domestication, which was used sparingly in *Matilda*. Naturally, spelling and pronunciation require heavy domestication as the language itself is completely different. In situations where the action of a word play is more important than the literal meaning of the joke, Finnish language and culture have been liberally utilised for effect. Outside of the category of Play of Spelling and Pronunciation, full domestication was used in isolated word choices where the translator has seen an opportunity to add Finnish humour or comedic words without compromising the meaning of the line.

The data-based categorisation used in this thesis worked relatively well from the point of view of organising the research process. Perhaps in terms of the findings, the categories did not play as significant a role as I had anticipated which led to conclusions to be drawn based on individual translation choices more than on groupings. The theoretical framework of foreignisation and domestication was suitable for my research question when used flexibly without trying to fit every translation strategy within the polar axel. It enabled me to think of the elements that form a culture but following it slavishly would not have given me an accurate description of the data. Finally, I would like to remark that while the objective of this thesis has been to scrutinize the cultural elements, the intention of a stage translation is to convey the universally understandable message of the story, not the culture. Therefore, the cultural milieu is only a tool by which a translation can appeal to its audience, and research and exploration in this area can be useful for future musical theatre translators in Finland. The description of how this tool has been used in such a recent and large-scale production as *Matilda* can also give us an insight into Finnish theatre translation customs in the 2020s. Future research could focus more on musicality and performability as understood from the translation's point of view and collecting data from musicals with different subject matter would increase the level of knowledge of cultural milieu building in Finnish translations of musical theatre.

REFERENCES

Primary sources

- Kelly, Dennis, and Tim Minchin. *Matilda the Musical*. Navel Enterprises Pty Ltd., Songs of Kobalt Music services Australia Pty Ltd, 2010. Revised in 2018.
Translated into Finnish by Hanna Kaila and Reita Lounatvuori as *Matilda musikaali* (Tampereen Työväen Teatteri, 2020).

Secondary sources

- Aaltonen, Sirkku. 1996. "Rewriting Representations of the Foreign: the Ireland of Finnish Realist Drama." *TTR*, 9, no. 2: 103–122. <https://doi.org/10.7202/037260ar>.
- Aaltonen, Sirkku. 2010. "Drama Translation." In *Handbook of Translation Studies*, edited by Yves Gambier and Luc van Doorslaer, 94–104. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Alvstad, Cecilia. 2010. "Children's Literature and Translation." In *Handbook of Translation Studies: Volume 1*, edited by Luc van Doorslaer, and Yves Gambier, 22–27. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Alvstad, Cecilia. 2019. "Children's Literature." In *Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation*, edited by Kelly Washbourne, and Ben Van Wyke, 159–180. London: Routledge.
- Asghari, Mehdi, and Bahloul Salmani. 2016. "Cultural-context adaptation in translation of children's short stories from English to Persian." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 6, no. 5 (May): 965–971. *Gale Literature Resource Center*, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A461970560/LitRC?u=tampere&sid=bookmark-LitRC&xid=2955f63f.
- Ellonen, Annikki 1998. "Niin että jos vain ajattelenkin sinua". In *Käännetty illuusiot. Näytelmäkääntäminen suomalaisessa teatterissa*, edited by Sirkku Aaltonen, 40–48. Tampere: Tampere University Press.
- Espasa, Eva. 2012. "Stage Translation." In *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies*, edited by Carmen Millán, and Francesca Bartrina, 317–331. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Glynn, Dominic. 2020. "Theater Translation Research Methodologies." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19, no. 1 (January). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920937146>.
- Gänzl, Kurt. 2001. *Musicals. The Complete Illustrated Story of the World's Most Popular Live Entertainment*. 2nd edition. London: Carlton Books Limited.
- Hakola, Marika. "Tekstien tanssi – Intertekstuaalisuuden kääntäminen Michael Kunzen musikaalilibretossa Tanz der Vampire." Master's Thesis, University of Tampere, 2007. <https://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:uta-1-17485>.
- Ihander, Anna-Maija. "Mä kerran uskoin haaveeseen - Miten musikaaleja suomennetaan." Master's Thesis, Tampere University of Applied Sciences, 2018. <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:amk-2018052610440>.
- Juva, Kersti. 1998. "Puhekieli ja kirjakieli." In *Käännetty illuusiot. Näytelmäkääntäminen suomalaisessa teatterissa*, edited by Sirkku Aaltonen, 49–53. Tampere: Tampere University Press.

- Kannisto, Marianne. "Do on alku käännöksen: Musikaalilaulujen funktionaalinen kääntäminen ja tekstittäminen *The Sound of Music* -musikaalissa." Master's Thesis. University of Tampere, 2019. <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:tuni-201905021587>.
- Klingberg, Gote. 1986. *Children's Fiction in the Hands of the Translator*. Malmö: Liber/Gleerup.
- Minier, Márta. 2004. "Beyond Foreignisation and Domestication." *The AnaChronisT*, vol. 10, (January): 153–174. <https://doi.org/10.53720/BKRB3384>.
- Nyytäjä, Outi 1998. "Kääntymätön pää." In *Käännetyt illuusiot. Näytelmäkääntäminen suomalaisessa teatterissa*, edited by Sirkku Aaltonen, 21–28. Tampere: Tampere University Press.
- O'Sullivan, Emer. 2012. "Children's literature and translation studies." In *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies*, edited by Carmen Millán, and Francesca Bartrina. 451–463. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Paloposki, Outi, and Riitta Oittinen. 2000. "The Domesticated Foreign." In *Translation in Context: Selected Papers from the EST Congress, Granada 1998*, edited by Yves Gambier, Natividad Gallardo San Salvador, and Andrew Chesterman. 373–390. Benjamins Translation Library. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co. <https://benjamins.com/catalog/btl.39.41pal>.
- Racz, Gragary J. 2019. "Theatre." In *Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation*, edited by Kelly Washbourne, and Ben van Wyke, 298–312. London: Routledge.
- Suomen teatterit. 2019. "The Associations of Finnish Theatres." <https://www.suomenteatterit.fi/eng/>.
- Tampereen Työväen Teatteri. 2022. "TTT:ssä 120-juhlavuonna noin 100 000 kävijää: Juha-Matti Koskelalle Veikko Sinisalo -palkinto." <https://ttt-teatteri.fi/tttssa-120-juhlavuonna-noin-100-000-kavijaa-juha-matti-koskelalle-veikko-sinisalo-palkinto/>.
- Teatterin tiedotuskeskus. 2020. "Valtavirta ja kirittäjänsä." <https://www.tinfo.fi/fi/Valtavirta-ja-kirittajansa>
- Teatterin tiedotuskeskus. 2021. *Esittävän taiteen tilastot – teatterin, tanssin ja sirkuksen vuosi 2020*. Helsinki: Nord Print. https://www.tinfo.fi/documents/esittavantaiteentilastot_2020_web.pdf.
- Wang, Fade. 2014. "An approach to domestication and foreignization from the angle of cultural factors translation." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 4, no. 11 (November): 2423–2427. *Gale Literature Resource Center*. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A394184511/LitRC?u=tampere&sid=bookmark-LitRC&xid=f169adff>.
- Xiaofei, Ren, Feng Qinghua, and Wang Nan. "A Translator on the Target Stage Ying Ruocheng's Theatre Translation." *Babel* (Frankfurt) 56, no. 4. (2010): 363–378.