

Allusions and Cultural References: Translator Solutions in the Finnish Translation of Terry Pratchett's 'Reaper Man'

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Abstract

A premise normally held is that as translators become more experienced they change the way that they tackle certain challenges, perhaps as a result of their efficiency, improvement in knowledge or through adoption of certain norms. This article looks at one translator's approach to the problems of literary allusions and cultural references. I examine the categories into which allusions and cultural references can be placed with regard both to their type (e.g. Baker 1992, Leppihalme 1994, Nord 1997, Yarosh 2013) and (apparent) function in the source text (Leppihalme 1994) as well as the types of solutions used by the translator (Newmark 1988). Selected examples from a single translation by an individual translator are analysed in order to establish the feasibility of using such categorisations in further work. With some minor adaptation, the categories proposed appear to offer a sound framework for later research that will seek to establish whether or not the translator's approach changes over time.

Keywords: allusions, cultural references, translation strategies, translator experience

1 Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to test the theories and categories to be used in further research in which the focus will lie on change in the translation of **allusions** and **cultural references**. In this article, I look at several categorisation methods that can be used to analyse cultural references, their purpose, and the solutions employed to translate them. The data analysed are from a single book and its translation by a translator who has worked on a large number of books forming part of a single series. The aim of this article is to examine whether these categorisations may be a useful tool for shedding light on change in translator strategies over time. It may be that both experience and familiarity with the author affect the translator's abilities in both recognising passages containing allusions and cultural references and in finding appropriate translation solutions for them. As Alice Martin (2001) put it:

Few translators would dare claim to have such a thing as a translation theory; they would more readily admit to **having a set of norms**, i.e. principles learnt from communication with colleagues, employers and readers, **as well as generalizations and solutions worked out by trial and error from practical problems and applicable to a wide range of situations**. (emphasis mine)

To categorise allusions and cultural references, I employ a method based on that of Leppihalme (1994) and Ruokonen (2010). For analysing the purposes for which the allusions and cultural references are used, I have also adopted the categorising system created for this by Leppihalme in the same volume. I further use Peter Newmark's (1988: 81–93) list of translation procedures to categorise the solutions employed by the

translator as, in addition to being one of the first such systems, it offers many categories and should allow changes in the solutions employed to be seen more clearly. The paper will conclude with an assessment of the usefulness of these systems for the present research.

The data analysed are from Terry Pratchett's *Reaper Man* (first published in 1991) and its Finnish translation by Marja Sinkkonen, *Viikatemies* (1996). The English examples are taken from the 1992 Corgi paperback edition, and the translated ones from the 2000 paperback edition published by Karisto. All page references are to these paperback editions.

2 Allusions and cultural references

The definition of the term 'allusion' is well known to be problematic, and this is equally true for the various terms used for cultural references. I do not wish here to review the various definitions and claims advanced over the years in any exhaustive fashion.¹ Instead, I shall offer a brief overview of a few such definitions and explain some of the difficulties of each.

2.1 Allusions

The term 'allusion' is sometimes used to refer solely to literary allusions. This was the original, and more restricted, usage, which is still common; nonetheless, "definers and users are willing to accept considerable latitude for the term" (Leppihalme 1994: 6). Amongst the varying definitions, one can find the following:

- "A reference, usually brief, often casual, occasionally indirect, to a person, event, or condition presumably familiar but sometimes obscure or unknown to the reader" (Shaw 1976 [1972])
- "a brief reference, explicit or indirect, to a person, place or event, or to another literary work or passage" (Abrams 1984 [1981])
- "Allusion is more or less closely related to such terms as reference, quotation or citation, borrowing ... and the more complex intertextuality" (Leppihalme 1994: 6)
- "allusion is an implicit reference resembling an external referent that belongs to assumed shared knowledge" (Ruokonen 2010: 33)

It is clear that these definitions include an extremely wide range of elements. Shaw includes "condition" (which seems to be rather open to interpretation) in the list of things which can be alluded to, and claims that references can be "casual" as well as speculating on their identifiability – "presumably familiar". In an unusual inversion, Abrams places references to non-literary works before literary ones. Leppihalme comments on the difficulties of strict definition and the overlap with other terms. Ruokonen provides the clearest definition in some senses. Regarding its meaning, the reference should be implicit, and, concerning reception, the referent is assumed to be known to at least some of the readers. However, her use of only "external referent" to describe what is being alluded to means that this is also perhaps the widest definition.

¹ I also will not discuss the term 'intertextuality' here as I feel that its definition is often near-identical to that of allusion (see, e.g., Hatim and Mason 1997: 17–18 and Malmkjær 1991: 469).

Here, I wish to retain the more specifically **intertextual** meaning of allusion: literary references in literary texts that evoke proper names and key phrases originally occurring in other literary texts. This was the approach favoured by Leppihalme (1994: 21), and it is also relevant to my study to distinguish allusion from cultural references (see the following section). Having defined allusion as solely literary, we can now turn our attention to the second term important for this research, cultural references.

2.2 Cultural references

Many terms have been proposed for issues related to cultural differences, and a brief sample is included below to give an idea of the range of terms already set forward. In this paper, I have chosen to use the term 'cultural reference' to embrace all the forms given that, at least for my purposes, many of the terms seem to have one or more limitations.

- Cultural words (Newmark 1988: 94-6)
- Culture-specific items (Baker 1992: 21)
- Culturemes (Nord 1997: 34)
- Culturally-specific elements (Yarosh 2013: 55)

Newmark's 'cultural word' sounds at first as if it is limited to a single lexeme, and, although he himself expands its meaning beyond this, he nonetheless claims to focus most upon "cultural words in the narrow sense" (1988: 95). Baker's and Yarosh's terms are also a little problematic as they use the words 'item' and 'element', which may suggest to the reader a concrete, or at least a discrete entity, although this may not always be the case. Nord's definition of 'cultureme', in contrast, employs the word 'phenomenon', which allows a broader understanding:

A cultureme is a social phenomenon of a culture X that is regarded as relevant by members of this culture and, when compared with a corresponding social phenomenon in a culture Y, is found to be specific to culture X. (Nord 1997: 34)

In this paper, I employ 'cultural reference' as a superordinate term to cover both common and proper noun references (separating these two from one another as they may require different strategies from the translator) as well as those situational/behavioural events whose significance may not be directly indicated by the language employed to describe them. As Newmark (1988: 95) puts it, 'many cultural customs are described in ordinary language.' I next look more closely at how allusions and cultural references can be classified.

3 Categorisations used in this paper

As the discussion above indicates, there is still a great deal of variation among the definitions put forward by various scholars. Furthermore, it is notoriously difficult to create watertight allusive and cultural categories and perhaps even more tricky to allocate the functions and solutions to their categories, too. Nonetheless, such classifications may well yield points of interest if applied rigorously and systematically.

3.1 Classifications for literary allusions and cultural references

Here, I lay out the categorisation for literary allusions and cultural references that I shall be testing for suitability for later research. The categories I settled upon owe a great deal to Leppihalme (1994: 14–24) and Ruokonen (2010: 30–34).

- Category 1: Literary allusions (intertextual)
 - A. Proper-name allusions
 - B. Key-phrase allusions
- Category 2: Cultural references
 - A. Proper nouns
 - B. Common nouns
 - C. Culturally-embedded references

Following Leppihalme (1994: 14–24), I have adopted **Proper-Name Allusions** and **Key-Phrase Allusions** as sub-categories of literary allusions as these may require different solutions. They also may differ in terms of how easy they are to identify in the first place as proper names are clearly visible, being ‘marked’ by capitalisation. The issue of ‘markedness’ as discussed at length by Ruokonen (2010: 66–78) is of considerable importance when dealing with Key-Phrase Allusions not containing a proper name, since whilst some such allusions may stand out clearly from the text due to, for example, archaic style, others may do so far less. It is hence possible that neither my sources nor my own close reading have picked up all instances where a Key-Phrase Allusion has been employed. Markedness also plays a role in the strategy employed by the translator as deliberately choosing a strategy clearly first requires recognition of the presence of an allusion.

Similarly, I have broken down cultural references consisting of nouns into the sub-categories **Proper Nouns** and **Common Nouns**. Here, I assume noun cultural references as a whole to evoke non-fictional, real-world elements (or slight variations on them, frequently for humorous effect); therefore, they may perhaps serve to characterise or bring realism to a scene. Some such references may become dated more rapidly than literary allusions.

Finally, I have added a third sub-category that I have termed **Culturally-Embedded References**. This is intended to contain those references that are suggested by a description embedded in the text rather than by an individual noun or group of nouns, and this category thus bears some similarity to Nord’s *cultureme* (1997: 34). An example would be someone remaining seated to shake hands as opposed to standing up in English culture (indicating that the person is female). The reasons for distinguishing culturally-embedded references from the previous categories are the probable greater difficulty involved in initially identifying them and the subsequent problems faced when attempting to replicate them (or their function) in the target text – they do not revolve around individual words and cannot be easily excised from the text.

3.2 Categorising the functions

Ritva Leppihalme (1994: 28-50) has analysed the functions of allusions and created a division into four main types:

- For indicating **Themes**
- For creating **Humour**
- For developing **Characterisation**
- For demonstrating **Interpersonal Relationships**

In this paper, I test whether these may also be usefully applied to the use of cultural references. Leppihalme speaks of **Thematic** allusions as bringing:

a suggestion of universality, a heightening of emotion, a desire to imply that there is something about a situation or character in the new context that is more important than the reader would otherwise assume, and which may be of thematic importance for the interpretation of the text as a whole. (Leppihalme 1994: 35)

A **Humorous** allusion is usually ‘of little or no importance on the macro-level – it affords only a moment’s amusement’ (Leppihalme 1994: 40). In the context of **Interpersonal Relationships**, allusions can sometimes be ‘a form of a bid for power or dominance between characters’ (ibid.: 46). They can also be an instance of the author ‘inviting the reader to be a part of an in-group of educated persons chuckling over the comic lack of education or sophistication of others’ (ibid.: 48–49). With regard to the research at hand, the titles and definitions of the three categories above appear potentially useful, and I use them much as Leppihalme has defined them. **Characterisation**, however, I feel needs to be extended beyond individuals to include characterisation of places and atmospheres, as does Ruokonen (2010: 209).

There is obviously a degree of overlap between the categories, as admitted by their creator (Leppihalme 1994: 28), and care will need to be used when categorising, as one aim is to enable examination of whether the functions of allusions and cultural references have any influence on how they are translated. It may be that greater effort is expended by the translator in retaining or reworking those references with a greater importance within the work – perhaps thematic references or characterising references for important characters and places.

3.3 Categorising the translation solutions

Having categorised the references and their functions, it is now time to establish a classification for analysing the strategies employed as solutions. However, before turning to that issue, it should perhaps be pointed out that it is clearly not possible to read the mind of the translator and understand either whether all the allusions and cultural elements of the original were identified or specifically why certain options were selected or rejected. Nevertheless, describing the solutions is useful because it enables us to examine how the translator has coped with the challenge, and in later research, when applied to the translation of another book in the same series, such descriptions will also allow us to see possible changes in the use of the various solutions.

There are many different classification systems; examples include those of Nord (1990: 13), Leppihalme (1994: 94–95), Gambier (2001: 232–233) and Ruokonen (2012: 142–157), all of whom have their own proposed taxonomies. Given this range of possibilities, it is not possible to here compare their merits and demerits, and the question becomes one of simply finding a useful starting point. One of the oldest and most influential lists of strategies is Newmark's (1988: 81–93, 103), and for this reason, I have here employed his classification. I have edited his descriptions and examples, retaining only necessary elements of his explanatory text, but the text remains his as written. The abbreviation SL stands for 'source language' and TL for 'target language'.

- **Transference** [T]he process of transferring a SL word to a TL text as a translation procedure. It ... includes transliteration. (e.g. *decor, ambiance, Schadenfreude*)
- **Synonymy** [A] near TL equivalent to an SL word in a context where a precise equivalent may or may not exist. (e.g. *conte piquant*, 'racy story'; 'awkward' or 'fussy', *difficile*)
- **Through translation** The literal translation of common collocations, names of organisations, the components of compounds (e.g. 'superman', *Übermensch*) and phrases (*compliments de la saison*, 'compliments of the season'). [Also] known as *calque* or loan translation.
- **Naturalisation** This procedure ... adapts the SL word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology (word-forms) of the TL (e.g. *thatchérisme, Performanz*)
- **Neutralisation**² (functional or descriptive equivalent) This common procedure, applied to cultural words, requires the use of a culture-free word, sometimes with a new specific term; it therefore neutralises or generalises the SL word; and sometimes adds a particular thus: *baccalauréat* – 'French secondary school leaving exam'; *Sejm* – 'Polish parliament'.
- **Notes, additions, glosses** Additional information in the translation... (1) Within the text, (2) Notes at bottom of page, (3) Notes at end of chapter, (4) Notes or glossary at end of book.
- **Cultural equivalent** This is an approximate translation where a SL cultural word is translated by a TL cultural word (e.g. *charcuterie* – 'delicatessen'; *notaire* – 'solicitor')
- **Compensation** This is said to occur when loss of meaning, sound-effect, metaphor or pragmatic effect in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part.
- **Deletion** (of redundant stretches of language in non-authoritative texts, especially metaphors and intensifiers) (Newmark 1988: 81–93, 103)

The nine solutions listed cover a broad range while also specifying a considerable variety of strategies, thus allowing the methods used to tackle allusions and cultural references to be examined. For now, the categorisation system above is a sufficient tool for analysis.

4 Analysis of the data

Terry Pratchett has been writing his satirical Discworld fantasy series for more than 30 years, from the first title in 1983 to his most recent in 2013. It has proven to be very popular, with the 40 separate works selling over 80 million copies worldwide (Random House website 2014). The Discworld series has also been successful outside of the UK, having been translated into 37 languages (*ibid.*). The volume of sales and number of translations provide the motivation to look into the translations, and the size of the series ensures that there is considerable data.

In Finland, four translators have been involved in work on the series, though two of these, Leena Peltonen and Margit Salmenoja, have translated only one and two books,

² Listed as such on page 103, though discussed separately as functional and descriptive equivalence on pages 83–4.

respectively. The remaining two are Marja Sinkkonen, who translated seven books in the series between 1996 and 2001, and Mika Kivimäki, who has been translating the series since then, covering a total of 28 titles. In this section, I shall utilise the categorisations outlined in Section 3 above to test whether they provide a useful way to examine the translations by Marja Sinkkonen of some allusions and references in Pratchett's *Reaper Man*.

In addition to my own close reading, I have used two main sources to identify useful examples in my data, both of which are websites which have their content crowdsourced by fans: *The Annotated Pratchett File*, and *Annotations – Discworld and Terry Pratchett Wiki*. These two Internet sources tend to focus on allusions and cultural references; thus, my own close reading of the text is intended both to identify allusions and references that may not be included in the Internet sources and also to include Culturally-Embedded References.

I subjected the first 70 pages of the source text, a quarter of the book's total, to a close reading and noted all the instances that I could find of allusions and cultural references, as I felt that this would give me a reasonable range to examine. I then used the Internet sources mentioned above to locate any other examples in the same page range that I may have missed, giving me, ultimately, 63 items in total. Due to the space limitations of this paper, however, I have selected just five example phrases or sentences containing references for analysis. These five I chose deliberately as containing, to my mind, a representative of each of the five categories of allusions and cultural references adopted in Section 3 above, though two of the sentences actually contain two references, thus a total of seven are analysed.

Below are the seven examples of allusions and cultural references from the texts *Reaper Man* (RM) and *Viikatemies* (V) with the relevant page numbers. The source-text examples are categorised according to their reference type and function, the target-text examples according to the strategy used to translate them. I provide commentaries on each, examining how the translation has been done and how well the examples fit the classification systems used.

Example 1

Source Text Element (RM: 5)	Reference Type	Function
It [the Morris dance] is danced innocently by <u>raggedy-bearded young mathematicians</u> to an <u>inexpert accordion rendering</u> ...	Culturally-Embedded Reference	Thematic / Humorous
... of <u>'Mrs Widgery's Lodger'</u>	Key-Phrase Allusion	Humorous
Target Text Element (V: 5)	Strategy	
Sitä tanssivat <u>nuoret risupartaiset matemaatikot</u> viattomasti ja <u>epävireisen harmonikkaesityksen tahtiin</u>	Synonymy	
-	Deletion	

Example 1 consists of a single sentence containing two reference types, one Culturally-Embedded Reference and one Key-Phrase Allusion. The Morris dance is a recurring theme in the book, developed to bring the notion of life and death and man's relationship to it to the story – in this sense it is a Thematic Culturally-Embedded Reference. What is more problematic here for the translator is the context in which the reader encounters it: the reference to the musicians and the quality of the playing may be intended to evoke the ST reader's memories of such performances – the skills of a number of young students (from what is often depicted as an 'out-group') failing to equal their eagerness and enthusiasm. Making such connections is highly unlikely to be possible for Finnish TT readers. The function here is humorous, and the translator has opted for synonymy. Although the actual experience of a Morris dance in England may be lacking, much of the humour is perhaps still retained.

The second part of the first example is a form of Key-Phrase Allusion – although an unusual one – and it is mainly intended to be amusing. The allusion purports to be real – it suggests to the reader that there is, indeed, a Morris tune by this name.³ What is happening here, though, is that a fictional name is being used that strongly recalls Morris tune names. The name 'Mrs Widgery' sounds amusing to an English-speaker's ear, and the idea of her having a lodger brings a whiff of the carnal to the tune's name. In this case, the name has been deleted.

The type of reference and solution appear to be identifiable for the description of the Morris dancers and music; however, there is a problem in that this Culturally-Embedded Reference appears to have two functions, thus leading to difficulties in deciding whether one is dominant, and if so, which. Having the category of Culturally-Embedded Reference nonetheless allows attention to be paid to what is, for this book, a rather important Thematic element. Two of the categorisation systems also work well with the dance name 'Mrs Widgery's Lodger', but the third, Reference Type, is slightly problematic in that it is not a true Key-Phrase Allusion (being fictional and not appearing in any other work). For now, I intend to treat it as one, but this may need to be revisited in future if other similar references occur.

Example 2

Source Text Element (RM: 54)	Reference Type	Function
<u>High Energy Magic</u> research building	Proper Noun Cultural Reference	Humorous
Target Text Element (V: 57)	Strategy	
<u>Suurenergiataikuuden</u> tutkimusrakennus	Through Translation	

Example 2 illustrates the use of a Proper Noun Cultural Reference, although slightly modified to generate humour. The reference is most likely to the High Energy Physics building at Chicago University since the context involves a university building and the

³ At the time of *Reaper Man*'s publication, there was no tune or dance of that name; however, one has since been written as a direct result of reading the book in question (Terry Pratchett Books Forum 2007), and a ceilidh band of that name has also formed (Webfeet: Dancing on the Web 1997).

research inside it is supposed to be ground-breaking and at the forefront of knowledge. The translator has essentially followed Newmark's strategy of through translation rather than use the cultural equivalent. The real-world Finnish equivalent for 'high energy physics' would be 'hiukkasfysiikka', but this is not reflected in the fairly literal translation 'suurenergia'. Here, again, the categorisation system appears to allow the reference type, function and strategy used to be assigned relatively unambiguously.

Example 3

Source Text Element (RM: 15)	Reference Type	Function
that would have made <u>Edgar Allan Poe</u> ...	Proper-Name Allusion	Characterisation
...give it all up and start again as a stand-up comedian on the <u>scampi-in-a-casket circuit</u>	Common Noun Cultural Reference	Humorous
Target Text Element (V: 16)	Strategy	
joka olisi saanut <u>Edgar Allan Poen</u> heittämään kaiken sikseen ja...	Transference	
...aloittamaan uransa alusta standup-koomikkona <u>kolmannen luokan kuppiloissa</u>	Neutralisation	

Example 3 includes a Proper-Name Allusion (Edgar Allan Poe) followed by a Common Noun Cultural Reference that, like the previous example, has been slightly modified to create a humorous wordplay. The cultural reference, I believe, refers to the practice in the UK of comedians touring the seaside resorts, performing on piers and waterfronts to people on holiday, whilst the wordplay highlights the fact that in such places, a common dish would be scampi in a basket, to be eaten, like fish and chips, out in the open as a light meal by the sea.

The association with comedians in the twilight of their career is further reinforced by with the Characterising Proper-Name Allusion to Edgar Allan Poe. The point being that even someone as strongly associated with Gothic horror as Poe would, under the circumstances explained in the surrounding text, have restarted his career as a desperately cheerful light entertainer for children in the sunshine by the seaside. The function here is clearly humorous. The translation strategy retains something of the downmarket flavour of the work environment but without the clear contrast of atmosphere – after all, low-end pubs are often dark and dirty, as well as being by definition indoor spaces. The humour has been retained, though the cultural equivalent lacks the specificity of the ST.

The other element here is the wordplay in which 'basket' has been represented as 'casket'. The latter is frequently used to refer to a container for a corpse and therefore extends the Gothic theme into the seaside reference. Further, it can easily be seen as a swipe at the quality of the food served in such waterfront kiosks. This element has been lost entirely.

The references here seem to fit well into the categories, and the functions appear to be clear. The solutions also found their place in the classification without too much trouble. The system therefore appears to work well for these instances.

Example 4

Source Text Element (RM: 5)	Reference Type	Function
their <u>Volvo</u> once ran over a sheep	Proper Noun Cultural Reference	Characterising
Target Text Element (V: 5)	Strategy	
he ajoivat <u>Volvolla</u> an lampaan yli	Transference	

Example 4 demonstrates the use of a Proper Noun Cultural Reference used for Characterising purposes. The context is one in which a family is said to have little connection with the ‘cycles of nature’ other than that ‘their Volvo once ran over a sheep’. It is notable the ST does not use the formulation ‘**they** once ran over a sheep’. I would suggest that giving agency to the car makes the incident a little less gruesome and also makes it possible to refer to the car by its make.

I believe that there is no accident in the vehicle being a Volvo: England is a very class-conscious nation and certain vehicles are associated with certain classes. The Volvo is strongly associated with the middle and upper middle class, and is usually imagined as a vehicle for the ‘school run’ to the private school, with other middle class markers such as green Wellington boots and a golden retriever in the boot (Urban Dictionary s.v. ‘Volvo driver’; Birch 2006). These families are seen as typically residing in dormitory towns in the rural areas around English cities but working solely in the cities, thus being ‘urban humans’ as the text refers to them. It is their relationship with the countryside being mocked here – the idea that Volvo owners like to see the countryside from the windows of their house and car, but not all of them actually want to get out **into** it. Readers in Finland are perhaps less likely to make such associations. The translator has transferred the name, and it seems that some of the characterising of the kind of family referred to here has been lost as a result.

The categories here seem to work extremely well: the data for the type of reference, function of the reference and strategy type all seem to be easy to assign to the definitions. If this kind of data is found in large quantities, it will be easy to process using the classification system developed.

Example 5

Source Text Element (RM: 15)	Reference Type	Function
Albert draped the towel over the angular shoulders. "Another nice day," he said, conversationally.	Culturally-Embedded Reference	Interpersonal Relationship
Target Text Element (V: 16)	Strategy	
Albert laskosti pyyhkeen kulmikkaille harteille. "Kaunis päivä taas tänään", hän availi keskustelua.	Synonymy	

The category of Culturally-Embedded Reference that I wish to introduce alongside noun cultural references appears again in Example 5. The scene from which the text is taken contains just two characters, Death and Albert, and in the books containing these characters, Death essentially has the role of an English gentleman of the early 20th century, and Albert the role of his valet. In this scene, Death and Albert are interacting in a distinctive way reminiscent of the customer and barber in a typical English barber shop of that period. Albert is waiting for his master with 'towel and dusters' – the former being the warm towel often placed around the neck of the customer, while the dusters are included for humour given that Death is actually a bald skeleton. The other element that is distinctive here is the conversational gambit offered by Albert, 'Another nice day'. Typical of the small talk offered by service personnel, and together with the towel, this is surely intended to trigger the image of a barber's shop for British readers, and possibly other English-speakers, too. The function of this scene is to set out the relationship between the two characters for the reader – this is the first time that they are encountered in this book, although they have appeared before in the series as a whole.

The strategy employed has been to follow the original as closely as possible without reference to the English context, although the use of 'availi keskustelua' for 'conversationally' does not quite bring the studied casualness to the interaction which the English contains. What are the options in this case for the translator? There are perhaps very few: almost any attempt to make the reference to the English barber's shop more obvious, perhaps with the use of notes or additions, would likely spoil the scene (it is building towards a startling climax), and using cultural equivalents would move the reference towards a Finnish context with the result that the characters themselves would seem out of place. Here, the solution loses an (English) element of the relationship between the characters, but preserves much of the function, in that one character is clearly the master and the other the servant.

The new category Culturally-Embedded References is here able to show its usefulness again. The example is a very good representative of the category. We are now able to identify the reference within the rest of the text without a need for specific nouns to help label it.

5 Conclusion

In this article, I set out to test three methods of classification that would enable a systematic examination of the translation of allusions and cultural references. The aim was to determine how well suited these methods were for this purpose. Overall, the categorisation systems worked well, although a few amendments might be necessary before embarking on a larger study.

Naturally, as noted in Section 3.3 above, certainty regarding whether the translator noticed any given reference and why he or she translated it in a given way is difficult to achieve. It may also be that the translator and researcher do not see the function of a particular reference in the same way. These factors naturally complicate matters, but careful analysis may still generate interesting and useful results. It is possible to look at what has been done and see if there is any general pattern.

It seems that Common and Proper Noun References conform the most readily to the categorisation system used here, although this is not surprising considering that Newmark's translation strategies were first created for such cultural references. Therefore, should the majority of the data found be of this type, it will be a significant factor in favour of retaining the current system. Proper Name Allusions and the other types of reference all appear to fit well enough. At this point, the principal difficulty seems to concern the functions assigned to the references: Firstly, can we be sure that the function assigned is actually that which the original author felt he or she was using it for? If not, this renders substantially weaker any conclusions that may be drawn involving translator habits for individual functions. Secondly, the thorny issue of multiple functions raises its head. How does one proceed when there seem to be two (or more?) functions? How can we determine whether one is dominant and one subordinate?

Nonetheless, Culturally-Embedded References as a category seems to have proved its worth. In two of the examples (1 and 5), none of the actual words in the ST refer directly to cultural objects of any kind, which would make the scene impossible to classify using the usual concept of cultural references consisting of discrete words. Now, it is possible to identify and analyse such references and seek to understand what their role was in the ST, and examine how the translator responded to the challenge.

This research is ultimately intended to throw some light on how some translators change, or do not change, their approach to allusions and cultural references as they increase in experience. This initial analysis of the different types of examples above suggests that existing classifications can, with some modifications, be used to describe such phenomena in both the source and target texts. The analysis also offers some ideas about the ways in which the classification system may be improved for future comparative work.

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