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"She was the Courtney Love of her day"

Subtitling into Finnish the Popular Culture References in the TV Series
Gilmore Girls

Master's Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Tutkielma käsittelee viittauksia populaarikulttuuriin Yhdysvaltalaisessa TV-sarjassa *Gilmoren tytöt*. Sarjaa tehtiin seitsemän kautta vuosien 2000–2007 aikana ja materiaali on kerätty kunkin kauden viimeisestä jaksosta. Populaarikulttuuriviittauksilla tarkoitetaan tässä tutkimuksessa viittauksia elokuviin, musiikkiin, kirjallisuuteen ja sarjakuviin, televisiosarjoihin sekä julkisuuden henkilöihin.

Tutkielman tavoitteena on selvittää mitä käännösstrategioita on yleisimmin käytetty suomenkielisissä tekstityksissä. Lisäksi tutkielmassa keskitytään viittausten tehtäviin sekä dialogissa että suomenkielisissä tekstityksissä ja tarkastellaan vaikuttavatko käännösratkaisut viittausten tehtäviin tai niiden ymmärtämiseen kohdekulttuurissa.

Materiaali koostui 159 viittauksesta yllä mainittuihin populaarikulttuurin kategorioihin. Viittauksia tutkittiin Lawrence Venutin kotouttamisen (kääntäjä on näkymätön) ja vieraannuttamisen (kääntäjä on näkyvä) kautta, ja käännösratkaisut jaoteltiin Jan Pedersenin taksonomian mukaisesti seitsemään erilaiseen strategiaan. Lisäksi viittausten mahdollisia tehtäviä dialogissa tarkasteltiin Ritva Leppihalmeen teorian avulla.

Hypoteesina oli, että kääntäjä on näkyvä tekstityksissä ja siksi suomenkielisissä tekstityksissä on useimmiten käytetty vieraannuttavia strategioita. Hypoteesi osoittautui oikeaksi, sillä 69% viittauksista oli käännetty vieraannuttavasti. Tämä saattaa johtua sarjan nopeasta puhetyylistä, tekstityksiin liittyvistä rajoitteista, erisnimien suuresta määrästä ja amerikkalaisen kulttuuriin laajasta tunnettavuudesta Suomessa. Viittaukset esiintyivät erilaisissa tehtävissä alkuperäisessä dialogissa, mutta useimmiten niiden tarkoitus oli tuoda huumoria keskusteluihin. Vieraannuttavien käännösratkaisujen takia populaarikulttuuriviittausten alkuperäiset tehtävät välittyivät kohdekulttuuriin ainoastaan, jos viittausten alkuperä oli tuttu suomalaisille katsojille. Kotouttavien käännösratkaisujen myötä viittausten alkuperäiset tehtävät välittyivät kohdekulttuuriin, mikäli käännökset sisälsivät samankaltaisia assosiaatioita kuin alkuperäiset viittaukset.

1 INTRODUCTION

This study will explore the strategies employed when subtitling popular culture references from English to Finnish. The material consists of the drama series *Gilmore Girls* which is known for its fast-paced dialogue that can be a considerable challenge for the translator. Furthermore, when the fast dialogue is combined with several references to foreign culture, the series becomes an interesting topic for the study of subtitling strategies. The main characters', Lorelai's and Rory's, witty conversations with each other and with other characters in the series are full of references to American culture, music, films, celebrities, literature and comics. The series has inspired also other Finnish Master's thesis writers during the past years. For instance, Sari Mäyränpää (2010) studied the subtitles and their reception with average people and translators, Ainomaija Paakkinen (2010) concentrated on the verbally expressed humour in the series and Reshmi Kataja (2016) focused on the translation of cultural references in the subtitles. Kataja's (2016) study involved all the different categories of culture-bound references, whereas this study will concentrate specifically on popular culture references.

The different methods of audiovisual translation, such as subtitling and dubbing, play an important role in people's lives in many parts of the world. For example, in Finland subtitling has been the most important audiovisual translation strategy for decades, and over 80 % of the foreign programmes broadcasted by the Finnish Broadcasting Company, YLE, are subtitled (Vertanen 2007: 149). In addition to Finland, subtitling is the main mode of audiovisual translation also in other Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland) and in the Netherlands, whereas France, Germany, Spain and Italy prefer dubbing over subtitling (Tveit 2009: 85). Naturally the choice between subtitling and dubbing is not this straightforward. For instance, although the main mode of audiovisual translation in Finland is distinctly subtitling, the programmes that are intended for children are almost always dubbed in all countries (Pedersen 2011: 7).

People in Finland are so accustomed to subtitles that it is difficult to imagine watching TV series or films if dubbing was the main mode of audiovisual translation, which is the case in countries with larger population. When compared to subtitling, the costs in

dubbing are considerably higher. However, the population in the countries that use dubbing as the main mode of audiovisual translation (the abbreviation *AVT* is used in this thesis from now on) is also larger when compared to Finland. (Vertanen 2007: 150) Under these circumstances, Pedersen (2011: 8) states that the choice between the different AVT methods usually sums up to "money, medium, politics, genre and tradition".

Overall, several television programmes and films in Finland are imported from foreign countries and it can be argued that North American programmes play a central role in the Finnish television channels' daily offerings. According to the statistics from 2014, the proportion of North American programmes compared to all the programmes shown in the three big Finnish commercial television channels in 2012 was: MTV 3: 36%, Nelonen: 58% and Sub: 57% (Statistics Finland 2014: 116).

In Finland, people spend a great deal of time in front of the television. According to the survey made by the Finnish market research company, Finnpanel, people spend 172 minutes per day watching television in the year 2016 (Finnpanel 2017) and because subtitling is the main mode of AVT, also the amount of written text that people read on television screens is considerably high. Subtitling is an important part of people's lives and, therefore, requires academic research in the field.

Within the field of translation studies, AVT can be considered a rather new concept. Some studies were made in the 1950s and 1960s but the biggest steps in the academic research in the field of AVT were taken only close to the 20th century (Díaz Cintas 2009: 1). Since then the status of the field has been rapidly changing as many scholars have been interested in the different sides of AVT. For instance, Díaz Cintas (2009: 3) points out the following authors who have influenced the "educational, scholarly and professional circles" within the field. Two of the first scholars were Delabastita who concentrated on the semiotic nature of AVT and Lambert who studied the power of mass media (ibid.). The AVT field is a fruitful area of research as it is rather new and the scope of different aspects is broad. Pedersen (2011: 41) remarks that the different translation problems involved in the AVT have been the research subject with many scholars:

for instance, Schröter (2005) looked at the subtitling and dubbing of wordplay, Toury (1995) looked at conjoint phrases and metaphors, Hermans (1988) investigated proper names, and Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) looked at culture-bound problems in subtitling. (Pedersen 2011: 41)

This study will also concentrate on a type of translation problem that is one of the most important one the translators need to consider in all forms of translations from another culture. Hatim and Mason (1990: 223) argue that in the translation process the translators should have "not only bilingual ability but also bi-cultural vision", as the translator acts as an important mediator between the source text or culture and the target audience. The translator's knowledge of the source language as well as the source culture play an important role in the viewing experience. For example, the understanding of the plot can be inadequate or the humour in the story may be lost if the translator is not familiar with the references to the source culture.

In this thesis, I will concentrate on the different popular culture references and their Finnish translations in the subtitles. The references' functions in the original English dialogue are discussed and the possible similarities or differences of the functions in the Finnish subtitles are analysed. The translator plays a central role when deciding whether to keep the foreign cultural references of the source language in the subtitles or bring the translation closer to the target language and the target culture which is more well-known for the viewers. By making these choices, the translator affects, for instance, the viewers' understanding of the plot and the overall viewing experience.

The central aim of this thesis is to find out what kinds of translation strategies are most commonly used in the subtitles of the *Gilmore Girls* when translating the popular culture references into Finnish. Under the concept of *popular culture reference,* I have decided to include references to films, music, literature and comics, television programmes and celebrities. Furthermore, I will discuss the references' possible links to the visual context and analyse the functions of these references in the dialogue and study if the functions change as a result of the chosen translation strategies. For example, the cultural references can have an important humorous function in the original dialogue or they can have an essential role in the visual context. Therefore, the chosen translation strategies can have

an effect on the target culture viewers' understanding of the story if the same function does not convey in the translation. Correspondingly, if the popular culture references do not have an important function in the original dialogue, they can well be omitted in the target text to save space on the screen for other important parts of the dialogue. The most essential situations in each category are discussed with examples from the material in the analysis section.

I intend to find answers to the following research questions;

1. What is the most commonly used local translation strategy in the Finnish subtitles in each popular culture category?
2. Does the translation strategy have an effect on the functions of the references in the subtitles in comparison to their original functions in the dialogue?

My hypothesis is that the translator has maintained a close relation to the source text and culture in the subtitles. American popular culture is familiar to the Finnish viewers because, for instance, several television programmes in the Finnish television channels originate from the US and the series in question is targeted to young adults. Therefore, I assume that the translator is mostly visible in the subtitles of the *Gilmore Girls*. The translator is visible in the subtitles if the foreign elements are mostly kept in the target text, that is, if foreignization is the dominant global strategy (adapted from Venuti's study in 1995). The local translation strategies that make the translator visible are retention, specification and direct translation (adapted from Pedersen's survey in 2011) and if my hypothesis is correct, these local strategies are most commonly used in the Finnish subtitles when translating popular culture references.

This study will be conducted as follows: chapter 2 will discuss the concept of popular culture and the different categories of the references included in this study. Chapter 2 will also present the various functions that these references may have in the dialogue of the series. The global and local translation strategies will be discussed in chapter 3, as well as the constraints of subtitling, pictorial link and the different culture-bound problems included in this method of audiovisual translation. The analysis and the findings of the different popular culture references in *Gilmore Girls* and their translations in the subtitles

will be presented in chapter 4 as well as the discussion of the references' functions in the dialogue and in the subtitles. Chapter 5 will present the conclusions and suggest ideas for further study.

1.1 Material

Gilmore Girls, created by Amy Sherman-Palladino, is an American drama series that was aired in Finland 2002–2008 by YLE. In the United States, it was shown on the WB Television Network (nowadays the CW Television Network). The series concentrates on the main characters', Lorelai's and her daughter Rory's, lives in Stars Hollow, Connecticut. Lorelai is a single mother who had her daughter only at the age of sixteen and left her upper-class life and parents in the past. The main issues in the series are relationships, romance, education and ambitions. *Gilmore Girls* is also known for its fast-paced dialogue which can be a considerable challenge for the translator. Furthermore, when the fast dialogue is combined with several references to popular culture it makes this series an interesting topic for the study of subtitling strategies. Lorelai's and Rory's witty and fast-paced conversations with each other and with other characters in the series are full of references to music, films, celebrities, television programmes, literature and comics.

The research material consists of seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls* and the references to popular culture in the dialogue between the characters. In this study, I use the term *popular cultural reference* to cover both allusions and references to popular culture, although they can be considered also separately. Popular culture references were identified from the episodes with the help of the Finnish subtitles and by utilising the unofficial English transcripts[1] found online for each seven episodes. The utilised transcripts were collected by fans worldwide and, therefore, I have verified that the dialogue and the scripts match in each example. I have decided to choose the final episode

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[1] The transcripts are unofficial as they are created by the fans of the series and the authors are not evident. All the transcripts can be found from http://crazy-internet-people.com/site/gilmoregirls/scripts.html and the site is also listed under primary sources in the list of works cited.

of each seven seasons for a closer study in order to get as objective image of the translation strategies as possible. By including one episode from each season, I was able to include popular culture references from all the seven years the series was aired. Unfortunately, both the translator(s) and the translation company are unknown in the DVDs and I was unable to find any information of the possible company and the translator(s). Thus, it is possible that there are different translators with different approaches and conventions to the translation of popular cultural references throughout the seven seasons.

In this thesis, the term popular culture reference is used to references concerning films, music, literature and comics, television programmes and celebrities. Overall, the material consists of 159 popular culture references and their Finnish translations. The series contains several references to American culture in general and therefore in this study I have decided to concentrate only on references to popular culture and thereby limit and differentiate this thesis from other similar studies which take all the culture-bound references under consideration. For example, references to sports, holidays and food were left out but references to books, music and celebrities were included in the study. When watching the series, the different popular culture references are easily identified as they appear rather frequently and the Anglo-American culture is well-known in Finland.

In addition to the references to popular culture, their functions both in the dialogue and in the subtitles were taken into account. The references can contain different functions in the dialogue and these functions are introduced with examples in the section 2.2. Furthermore, the references' connection to the picture can also influence the chosen translation strategy. Therefore, the possible pictorial link is considered in each category if it affects the chosen translation strategy.

1.2 Method

This thesis focuses on to study what kinds of translation strategies the translator has preferred to use for the popular culture references in the Finnish subtitles in the chosen

seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls*. On the basis of the strategies the translator has chosen, I will discuss if these choices to translate the references make the translator visible or invisible in the subtitles. The translation strategies are discussed in two parts; the global strategies are presented in the section 3.3. and the local strategies in 3.4. with examples from the material. The global translation strategies, that is if the translator is visible or invisible to the target audience, were adapted from Lawrence Venuti (1995). The local translation strategies, that is how the references are translated in the Finnish subtitles, were categorized using Jan Pedersen's (2011) taxonomy as a basis. Namely, the strategies were divided in the following classification; *retention, specification, direct translation, generalisation, substitution, omission and official equivalent*. According to Pedersen (2011: 75) retention, specification and direct translation are source text oriented translation strategies, whereas target text oriented strategies include generalisation, substitution and omission. The last one of the strategies, official equivalent, can be considered neither of these two. The source text oriented strategies make the translator visible, whereas the target text oriented strategies familiarize the language and make the translator invisible.

Allusions to cultural references can be divided into two main categories; proper name allusions and key-phrase allusions (Leppihalme 1994: 18). In this study, I have decided to use this division to cover both allusions and references to popular culture because I will not handle them separately. As my material consisted of several names of celebrities, songs, films and characters, most of the references included a proper name and, therefore, the references were easily recognised from the dialogue. I collected the popular culture references from the seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls*' DVD versions with the help of their unofficial English transcripts that were found online. After I collected the material, I divided them into the following five categories and studied how they were translated in the Finnish subtitles:

1. References to Films
2. References to Music
3. References to Literature and Comics
4. References to Television Programmes
5. References to Celebrities

In each category, I first studied the translation strategies of the references from both global and local viewpoints, that is, the local translation strategies were further divided under two global translation categories; the source text oriented (foreignized) and the target text oriented (domesticated) strategies. Each above-mentioned popular culture category is analysed using this division in chapter 4 and the exact numbers are presented with tables in the sections. Secondly, I analysed the references' functions in the original scenes in general and studied if the functions remained the same in the Finnish subtitles or if the translation strategies affected the functions in the subtitles. Furthermore, the possible links to the picture were taken into consideration if they influenced the chosen translation strategy.

My hypothesis is that the translator is visible in the subtitles of the *Gilmore Girls* and, therefore, the source text oriented strategies (retention, specification and direct translation) are the most commonly used translation strategies in the Finnish subtitles. American popular culture can be thought to be well known in Finland because, for instance, there are several American television programmes aired in the Finnish television channels and, for the most part, everyone has access to internet. Additionally, *Gilmore Girls'* target audiences are young adults. As a consequence, I assume that the subtitler has decided to maintain a close relation to the English language and to the American culture as a whole.

The analysis of the different popular culture references, the tables of the used translation strategies and examples of the most commonly used strategies from *Gilmore Girls* can be found in section 4. The examples from the series include both the season and episode number and the time, marked with minutes and seconds, so one can find the used example when necessary. For instance, (GG S1, E21, 20'30) refers to the last episode of the first season of *Gilmore Girls* and to the popular culture reference appearing at 20 minutes 30 seconds from the beginning. The examples include the original English dialogue and its Finnish subtitle. Additionally, my own back translations are provided in the examples when necessary.

Furthermore, the connection between the chosen translation strategy and the reference's function in the original dialogue and in the subtitle is discussed and analysed in each category. The different functions are adapted from Ritva Leppihalme's (1997: 37–55) categorisation. For example, the reference can act as thematic or interpersonal indicator, it can have humorous connotations or support the character's development (ibid.). Moreover, the link to the picture is taken into account. In some cases, the picture acts as a support for the subtitle, and the popular culture references do not have to be translated as the viewer can see the matter in question already in the picture. However, it can be that the picture brings also a demand that something must be taken into the subtitles although otherwise the simplest solution would have been to leave it out.

1.3 *Gilmore Girls*

The TV series *Gilmore Girls* was created by Amy Sherman-Palladino. It was released in the US in the year 2000; the series run altogether for seven seasons (153 episodes) and ended in 2007. *Gilmore Girls* was released in 16 countries between the years 2000–2004 and in Finland it was aired in 2002–2008 by YLE (the Finnish Broadcasting Company). In the year 2016 the *Gilmore Girls'* story continued with a mini-series *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life* which included four episodes, "Winter", "Spring", "Summer" and "Fall", and was aired in Netflix. (IMDb 2017j)

Mixing drama and comedy, the series tells the story of rebellious Lorelai Gilmore and her daughter Rory who live in Stars Hollow, Connecticut. Lorelai had Rory at the age of sixteen and the storyline concentrates on their close relationship. In the first season, Rory is also a 16-year-old teenager, and probably partly because of the small age difference, the daughter and the mother seem like best friends. Their lives are mixed with romantic entanglements, Lorelai's parents and other colourful characters who also live in the small town. Lorelai's romantic relationships, and especially her relationship with the local diner owner Luke, are in a central role throughout all the seven seasons. Furthermore, Lorelai's complex relationship with her wealthy parents, Emily and Richard Gilmore, causes many conflicts. Along with Lorelai's relationships, the series deals also with her daughter,

Rory's, romantic attractions throughout the series. Rory is more considerate than her mother but still in many ways as independent as Lorelai. Rory's friendship with her long-time best friend, Lane, plays also a central role in the plot along with Rory's studies in the Chilton Academy and in Yale University. Other recurrent characters are Lorelai's best friend Sookie, Rory's friend Paris, and Rory's boyfriends Dean, Jess and Logan.

Gilmore Girls is known for its fast-paced dialogue. The creator, Amy Sherman-Palladino, has admitted that the dialogue in the series is exceptionally rapid; as the screenwriters usually use a minute on air for one-page-long dialogue, the time used in *Gilmore Girls* is usually between 20–25 seconds (Tannen 2003). The head writer for the last season and the series' executive producer David S. Rosenthal tells that a typical script in *Gilmore Girls* can be almost 15 pages longer than some other one-hour-long drama episode (BuddyTV 2006). Lauren Graham, the actor who plays Lorelai Gilmore, has also written a book in 2016 called "Talking as Fast as I Can: From Gilmore Girls to Gilmore Girls (and Everything in Between)" where she, among other things, reveals stories about life as fast-talking Lorelai (Adlibris 2017).

The lively conversations between the different characters include several references to popular culture in all the seven seasons. The dialogue is filled with references, for example, to music, literature and comics, films, television shows and celebrities. The references are also often included very subtly into the conversation – so that they do not seem scattered. For example, Rory is an eager reader and she has a book in her hands in many scenes, Lane is a music-fanatic and plays in a band and Lorelai and Rory spend many evenings watching movies. Thus, the dialogue between them also contains features of these topics.

To summarise, the dialogue plays a central role in *Gilmore Girls* and it has numerous references to popular culture. Under these circumstances, the translator faces several problems when translating the popular culture references into the Finnish subtitles. There are also several constraints that affect the translating process and these constraints are introduced briefly in the section 3.1.

2 POPULAR CULTURE REFERENCES

Culture includes concepts such as *high culture*, *folk culture* and *popular culture* and can refer to national cultures or regional cultures. Nevertheless, the boundaries between these different concepts have dimmed. For instance, whether something is national or regional culture has become more difficult to define. (Bennett 2005: 63) *Gilmore Girls* mixes both high and popular culture as the conversation topics of the characters vary from Shakespeare to 50 Cent. In this chapter the term popular culture is introduced and defined. Furthermore, the five different categories of popular culture references in *Gilmore Girls,* that are under discussion in this study, are introduced with examples from the material. Additionally, the section discusses the possible functions the references can have in the dialogue.

2.1 What is Popular Culture?

Cultural elements differentiate one society from another. Rosa Agost Canós has defined cultural elements to mean, for example:

> specific geographical locations, references to the history, art and culture of particular society or age (songs, literature, aesthetic concepts, etc.), well-known people and celebrities, mythology, gastronomy, institutions, currency, weights and measures, etc. (quoted in Lorenzo, Pedeira & Xoubanova 2003: 272)

The word popular refers to something that is generally accepted or widespread and therefore *popular culture* can be considered to be culture which is accepted and liked by many people. Like all cultural aspects, also popular culture originates from people and it is said to be culture that people make for themselves. (Storey 2005: 262) Although the word *popular* refers to something that is widely spread and favoured, it can also be seen to imply simplicity and inferiority to the more valued cultural aspects (Herkman 1998: 13).

Consequently, the term popular culture is generally used when referring to the opposite of the more valued culture and contains connotations to trivial and consumerist matters. John Storey (2005: 264) states that popular culture can also refer to culture which is "a commercial culture mass-produced for mass consumption". For instance, the works of William Shakespeare can be seen as good representatives of valuable and real 'high' culture whereas modern day Hollywood films typify popular culture. According to Storey (2005: 264), popular culture is consumed with passivity that does not require much brain-activity and its audience is a mass of consumers who do not discriminate and who just consume the formulaic and manipulative popular culture. Therefore, popular culture can be, to some extent, connected to mainstream mass culture.

In this thesis, the term *popular culture* refers to commercial and mass-produced culture that is made for mass audiences. I have decided to use the term *popular culture reference* in this study when analysing references to *film, music, literature and comics, television programmes* and *celebrities* in the series *Gilmore Girls* as these particular elements of popular culture appear frequently in the discussions between the characters. By limiting the material only to references connected to these five aspects of popular culture, I was able to differentiate this thesis from other studies that have taken all forms of cultural references under consideration.

2.2 Popular Culture Categories and Functions in the Dialogue

According to Ritva Leppihalme (1994: 18) allusions can roughly be categorised under two main headlines; proper-name allusions and key-phrase allusions that contain no proper name. As I have decided to limit my material to contain only references to films, music, literature and comics, television programmes and celebrities, most of my material consists of proper names but there are also occasionally key-phrase references, such as lines from films and songs. For instance, the following lines include an example of both a proper name and a key-phrase allusion. The first line is a direct quotation from a film *Fatal Attraction*.

(1)   RORY: I won't be ignored, **Dan**.
          LORELAI: I know. **I'm hiding my rabbit as we speak**.

<div align="right">(GG S6, E22, 7'55)</div>

In the film, a lady (Alex) gets obsessed with a man (Dan) and she ends up, for example, boiling his daughter's pet rabbit (IMDb 2017h). "Dan" is a proper name allusion to the character in the film and "I'm hiding my rabbit as we speak" is a key-phrase allusion to the plot of the film.

Cultural references exist in certain contexts and the references can have various functions. Leppihalme (1997: 31) states that the translator has to first identify the function of the allusion in order to choose the correct translation strategy that suits the situation. However, it is not always straightforward to recognise which function is in question as they are closely connected and it would be impossible to make a list of functions that would exclude one from another (ibid. 31). However, Ritva Leppihalme (1997: 37–55) has divided the functions of allusions according to the following, partly overlapping, division:

- Thematic importance
- Parody, irony and other humour
- Characterisation
- Indication of interpersonal relationships

In brief, thematic allusions imply some important aspects of the plot or the characters and these kinds of allusions can affect the interpretation of the story as a whole. Allusion can also function parodically, ironically or as a humorous part of the story, so that it distracts the reader (or viewer in this case) from the importance of the character or situation in the story. In characterisation allusions are used, for example, to make the characters seem more literate, well-educated or witty. As indicators of interpersonal relationships, allusions are used in the dialogue to show, for instance, the hierarchy or sociocultural superiority. (Leppihalme 1997: 37–55) As the functions are closely connected to each other, it is important to take into consideration the context where the allusion takes place (ibid. 31). In the following paragraphs, I will introduce the chosen popular culture

categories and the above-mentioned different functions they can include with the help of the examples from my research material.

Gilmore Girls contains several references to films, especially in Lorelai's lines. The dialogue in the series frequently includes both lines from various movies and references to the names of the films and the characters. The following line shows an example of a film reference when Lorelai wonders if she was on an actual date with Luke and compares herself to other women dreaming about men like Aragorn played by Viggo Mortensen in *The Lord of the Rings*.

> (2)   LORELAI: But maybe he didn't mean it as a date thing. Maybe he just needed to get out of the house, and since I'm currently one of the women sitting home, thinking, "If I could only find a man like **Aragorn**," he picked me.
>
> (GG S4, E22, 10'04)

In this context, the reference can be thought to function as a humorous element. Lorelai compares herself to women dreaming about famous movie stars and possibly tries to understate the fact that Luke might be interested in her romantically. Additionally, the reference can also convey thematic importance as the love story between Lorelai and Luke has been implied in the first seasons but nothing romantic has actually yet happened between them in the series.

Many of the characters in the series have their own characteristic also in their dialogue. Rory's friend Lane is often depicted as a music fanatic in the episodes which comes apparent also in her lines. Additionally, music references are common also in other characters' conversations with each other. In the following example, Lane and her band are planning to go on a tour and use the food delivery van for travelling between their gigs.

> (3)   LANE: Okay, okay! I know. It's not perfect. It's not **the Festival Express**, but it could be really great. What do you say?
>
> (GG S5, E22, 36'04)

"The Festival Express" in Lane's line refers to a 1970 tour of Canada by several musical artists and, additionally, a film based on the tour (with the same title) was also released in the year 2003. The tour was unique in that the musicians all travelled by train, fostering an atmosphere of musical creativity and closeness between the performers. (IMDb 2017m) The recurrent references to music in Lane's lines function as a type of characterisation. It becomes clear that Lane feels passionate about music and knows a great deal about the subject.

Correspondingly, in Rory's lines, the references to literature are common and the fans of the series have even created reading lists of all the books mentioned throughout the seven seasons in the series. Rory is also often depicted either reading or carrying a book in the scenes and her dialogue often includes references to literature or comic book characters. In the next example Rory gives a valedictorian speech at her high school's graduation event and wants to thank her mother, Lorelai, for all the help she has given to Rory in the past years.

> (4)   RORY: My mother never gave me any idea that I couldn't do whatever I wanted to do or be whomever I wanted to be. She filled our house with love and fun and books and music, unflagging in her efforts to give me role models from **Jane Austen to Eudora Welty to Patti Smith**.
> (GG S3, E22, 31'55)

Throughout the series, Rory is depicted as a smart, independent and much like her mother, Lorelai. The function of this reference to literature in her speech is used in characterisation to underline Rory's interest towards literature. Additionally, the reference's function is to highlight her success in her studies as she is the valedictorian of her class and this way support the character's development from a teenager to a young adult.

References to other television programmes are also frequent throughout the seven seasons of the series. The references vary from the titles of the programmes to numerous characters appearing in the shows. In the forthcoming example, Lorelai's friend and co-worker Sookie explains how depressed she has been the past days that she has not even been able to watch her favourite television show.

> (5) SOOKIE: Okay, I've gotta tell you, even with the champagne and the Herb Albert, I've been depressed for days. I couldn't watch **the Dating Game** anymore.
>
> (GG S3, E22, 26'53)

As a person Sookie is usually pictured to be bubbly, positive and humorous, often wearing pigtails and to be prone to accidents. Therefore, in this scene, the reference to the television programme *the Dating Game* is meant to create humorous connotations and irony to the dialogue as Sookie's character is not normally considered as a person with melancholy and gloom.

The dialogue between the characters in *Gilmore Girls* includes references to various celebrities in many kinds of different situations. The referred celebrities vary from 1980s movie stars to reality TV show stars from the 21st century. In the next example, one of the residents in Stars Hollow, Taylor Doose, includes two celebrities in his line:

> (6) TAYLOR: Most of them are small infractions, but it's the little things, the details, that distinguish **the Barbra Streisands** from **the Roslyn Kinds**.
>
> (GG S4, E22, 21'14)

Barbra Streisand is a famous actress and singer and Roslyn Kind is her half-sister. Roslyn is also an actress, but not as famous as Barbra. (IMDb 2017b) In the scene, Lorelai and Sookie have just opened the Drangonfly Inn and have invited the people in Stars Hollow to test the hotel rooms and give feedback about their stay. Taylor owns the "Doose's Market" in the town and, additionally, often hosts the meetings as the town leader. He declares immediately that he already has several complaints about the inn written down. The character of Taylor is depicted as a politically powerful person who seems to consider himself to be the most important person in the town and wants to control everything that happens in their town. Therefore, the function of the references to the celebrities in this scene is to indicate the interpersonal relationships of the characters. Taylor's power and importance (although he has imagined this superiority himself) over other residents in Stars Hollow comes through in the references to the two celebrities in his dialogue.

As a consequence, the categories of the popular culture references vary from celebrity stars to television programmes and, additionally, the references have varying and partly overlapping functions in the dialogue. Both of these aspects have central roles in the translation process. The following chapter 3 introduces subtitling as a method of AVT, culture-bound problems in subtitling and both the global and local translation strategies that are under consideration in this study.

3 TRANSLATION STRATEGIES IN SUBTITLING

Films, books and television series contain cultural references that the viewers or readers do not always even notice. However, when these cultural products are translated, the receivers of the target text may encounter names, places or other culture-related elements that they are not familiar with. In all translations, the translator must take into account the cultural differences between the two audiences. Although American culture is familiar to the modern day Finnish audience and people nowadays have an access to the foreign mass media and popular culture, it does not mean that culture-bound problems would not occur anymore. In this chapter I will present the problems the cultural references may cause to the translator and introduce the global and local translation strategies for such problems. Global strategies include Lawrence Venuti's (1995) theory on translator's (in)visibility and local strategies are adapted from Jan Pedersen's (2011) study on rendering extralinguistic cultural references in subtitles.

The subtitler's style of rendering cultural references has a significant effect on the viewing experience. If the subtitler decides to be loyal to the source language, many aspects of the characters, jokes or occurrences in the plot may be left unclear for the Finnish audience if the source culture is not familiar enough. However, similar effects may arise if the subtitler has concentrated only on the target language's habits and culture and deleted all the foreign elements.

Rendering cultural references is not an uncomplicated task but it is a problem that exists to some extent in every piece of work. For instance, in *Gilmore Girls* the different culture-bound references can be considered to be a recurrent and significant feature that has demanded time and problem solving strategies from the translator.

3.1 AV Translation and Subtitling as a Method of AV Translation

The two dominant methods of translating in audiovisual translation are subtitling and dubbing. In Finland, both methods are used but dubbing appears mainly in children's

programmes where it serves better the needs of the target audience. Overall, the world can be divided into four sections as far as AVT is concerned; *source-language countries, dubbing countries, voice-over countries and subtitling countries*. The source-language countries have English as a native language and films or television programmes from other than English-speaking countries are rare. People are used to hearing mainly just their own language and, therefore, the imported films or programmes are not in favour of the masses and often seen as elitist. Dubbing, as a method of translating all foreign films and programmes, is favoured in countries where people speak mainly German, Italian, Spanish or French. In these countries, the population is bigger and, therefore, the countries can afford dubbing which is a more expensive method than subtitling. When compared to dubbing, voice-over is a notably cheaper option and it is used in countries such as Russia and Poland. Dubbing is expensive because it requires the contribution of several voice actors whereas in voice-over one narrator can speak the entire dialogue. Subtitling, the most familiar method for Finnish people, is favoured in smaller countries where the literacy rate is high. (Gottlieb 1998: 244)

3.1.1 Constraints in Subtitling

The translator faces several constraints in all the above-mentioned methods of AVT. Especially subtitling includes constraints that the translators need to consider in the process if they want to retain the readability and create a good viewing experience for the audience when converting the spoken dialogue into written words. For instance, the translator must think about the target audience and their reading speed and special needs, not forgetting the picture or the source text's style and tone. Witty and funny dialogue, like the conversations in *Gilmore Girls*, must come over to the viewers who do not understand a single word from the source language. All this should be done acknowledging the restrictions of the limited space and exact time limits in subtitling. The following paragraphs discuss the different constraints included in this method of audiovisual translation.

Spatial constraints are restrictions on the use of space on the screen. Naturally, space is one of the most visible constraints that the subtitler confronts constantly. In subtitles, the

spoken dialogue is condensed to the extreme. (Pedersen 2011: 18–19) In *Gilmore Girls* this is especially problematic because the series is known for its fast-paced dialogue; the translator has to take into account the plot, the pictorial link and the reading speed but also the different speakers should usually be clearly separated. As far as popular culture references are concerned, there is not usually space to explain the used references to the viewers and the understanding of their meaning is left to the audience (Pedersen 2011: 21).

In general, subtitles consist of maximum of two lines and the number of characters is commonly less than 40 (de Linde and Kay 1999: 6). In Finland, the leading television channels YLE, MTV3 and Nelonen have the average of approximately 33 characters per one subtitle line (Vertanen 2007: 151). Jan Pedersen (2007: 43) points out that the word "character" in subtitling refers to any visible result which is made by pressing a key on the translator's keyboard. Therefore, a character does not refer solely to letters but also, for example, to blank spaces and punctuation marks. Furthermore, the translator should observe the choice of letters because much can be done by using letters that are more space-saving than others. Italics and capital letters take more space than the regular text and, additionally, letters such as "m" and "w" are broader than letters like "l" or "I" and therefore the number of characters in a single line varies (Pedersen 2007: 43).

Every subtitle must be a coherent, understandable and distinct unity. One subtitle line can include 30–40 characters and, additionally, the translator has to determine how to place the words on screen. Legibility is important and, therefore, the subtitler must remember certain rules in the process. The presentation of the subtitles, that is how the lines and words appear on screen, is in a significant role when readability is concerned. Usually the upper line is shorter than the lower line and it is, for instance, more difficult to follow the speech if the speaker's mouth is behind the subtitles and that is why there should not be full two-line-subtitles in close-ups (Vertanen 2007: 154). According to Vertanen (ibid.) the subtitler should also avoid the use of hyphen, for example, by altering the word order or at least consider carefully how to hyphenate the word if it cannot be avoided. Overall, readability is an important factor in subtitles.

As spatial constraints deal with space, *the temporal constraints* include restrictions to time. The reading speed of the target audience varies and the events on the screen must be synchronized with the text on the appearing subtitles (de Linde and Kay 1999: 6). Synchronicity with the rhythm of the speech is an important factor, and the emphasised parts of the speech must be understood correctly also in the written form. Furthermore, the subtitle must be visible long enough so that people have time to read it, but not too long so that it does not become distracting. Reading speed is linked with the complexity of the subtitled text but also with "the type of visual information on screen at any given moment" (de Linde and Kay 1999: 6). In other words, if the sentence structure is complex and the subtitle includes, for instance, special terms, the reading takes more time. Similarly, if the viewer must pay his or her attention to the picture during the scene, the subtitle must be visible longer as the viewer cannot focus on both the subtitles and the picture at the same time. Therefore, it is important for the translator to find the balance between the reading speed, timing and the text.

It is inevitable that much information must be left out from subtitles. On average, the viewers can see each television subtitle line approximately three seconds and two lines about five to six seconds, but the time varies in each company (de Linde and Kay 1999: 7). As the time and space are restricted not everything can be stated in the subtitles – elements that are less important for the plot and/or can be understood from the previous subtitles can be omitted. The obvious things or places that the viewer can see in the picture do not have to be translated and, thus, there is more space for the essentials. Correspondingly, the translator must also remember the importance of the picture. The subtitle should convey only the essentials when the visual elements tell all the crucial points of the scene and this way leave the audience enough time to follow the images on the screen. (Georkapoulou 2009: 23)

Typical phrases that are left out from the subtitles are somehow leading to the actual question or statement and do not have an effect on the eventual understanding of the plot or events. Examples of these kind of utterances are "In my opinion…", "I think that…". Furthermore, the names of the characters can often be omitted if the people who are speaking are already familiar to the viewers. It is typical to a formal American

conversation that names are often repeated, but in Finland addressing people is usually more informal and, thus, valuable space in subtitles is saved for other things. However, the subtitler must remember to add the names when the persons appear in the picture for the first time. (Vertanen 2007: 152) Additionally, the dialogue often includes false starts, internationally known words and constructions that do not need translations (Georkapoulou 2009: 27).

3.1.2 Pictorial Link

The picture can illustrate several important elements of the scene and hence not everything has to be in written form. The original dialogue can often include figurative words that the viewer can simultaneously see in the picture. For instance, the subtitler can easily remove adjectives that describe people or places that are also visible in the picture at the same time. The viewer will often recognise the location of the current event based on the previous events and, therefore, it is many times needless to repeat the names of these places. Furthermore, the subtitler needs to take into consideration the fact that if the name of the place is important and, therefore, must be stated in the subtitles, the subtitle lines that include foreign place names often require more time to read. (Vertanen 2007: 152)

The interaction between the visual context and what is included in the subtitles plays an important role in the translation process. Jorge Díaz Cintas and Aline Ramael (2007: 49) state that both extra-diegetic and diegetic information provide essential information for the viewers. Extra-diegetic visual manipulation includes, for instance, camera movement and editing whereas diegetic information includes aspects such as the characters' gestures and looks (ibid.). In addition to these, the setting, props and costumes play an essential role in the understanding of the film or series (ibid.).

In subtitling, the information that is available visually can be either a challenge or a support for the translator. Christopher John Taylor (2013: 99–100) states that the multimodality of subtitling brings the demand that "this interaction between verbal elements, traditionally the object of translation studies, and the visual, acoustic, kinetic

and other semiotic modes, is what should occupy audiovisual translators". Although, like in other texts also in subtitling the words play a central role in the translation process, it is the combination and interaction between the sounds, the visual information and the words that must be considered carefully (ibid.).

Consequently, the synchrony between the visual image and the written text is a relevant matter in subtitling because they communicate with each other as stated above. As Díaz Cintas and Ramael (2007: 51) argue "subtitles should […] never anticipate, or be ahead of visual narration on screen". Díaz Cintas and Ramael (2007: 50) introduce Lucien Marleau's idea that the relation between the picture and the subtitle can have two functions in the subtitles:

> In some cases the verbal mode further defines information that is also given visually, which he calls […] anchoring. In other instances, for which he uses the term […] redundancy, words and images communicate more or less the same information. (Díaz Cintas & Ramael 2007: 50)

For example, when the subtitles refer to people who appear also on the screen, the easiest and space-saving solution for the translator is to refer to them using only pronouns instead of proper names as the persons are familiar to the viewers.

These viewpoints can be applied also with the popular culture references that form the material for this study. The following picture shows an example of anchoring. Sookie's husband Jackson is choosing music for the evening and he is holding the *Creedence Clearwater Revival* CD in his hand. If the characters would additionally be listening to the CD, also the acoustic mode would be present in the example. However, in this scene the music is not heard.
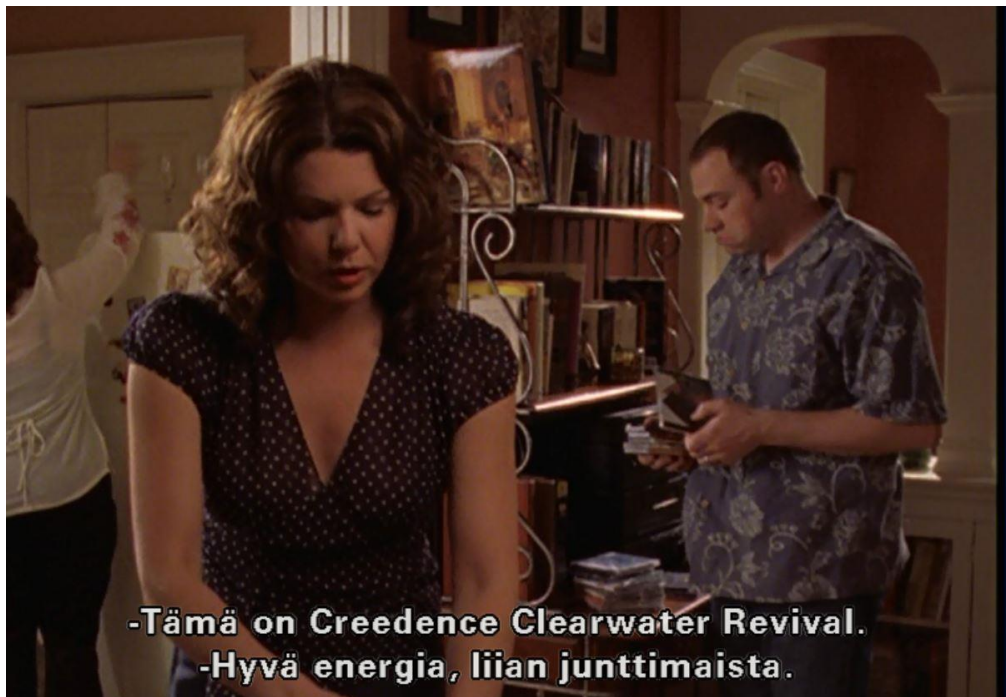
Picture 1. Greedence Clearwater Revival (GG S3, E22, 10'02)

The viewers can read the reference to the band in the subtitles and, additionally, see Jackson with the pile of CDs in his hand. Thus, the verbal and the visual mode support each other and the verbal information gives the viewers more information that they cannot conclude solely from the picture.

3.2 Culture-Bound Problems in Subtitling

Culture-bound problems in all translation can include references, for example, to people, places, customs, food, phrases and rhymes that are less familiar to the target culture, and it may be that they are unfamiliar even if the receivers know the language in question (Pedersen 2007: 91). They are especially problematic in audiovisual translation, such as in subtitling, where time, space and picture set many kinds of different constraints to the translation as presented previously in section 3.1.

Cultural references include many kinds of associations that may be lost if the reference is replaced, for instance, with something general. The translator needs to be familiar with not only the language in question but also with several kinds of references to the source culture. Cultural references can be either transcultural, meaning that the reference is shared both in source and target culture, or culture-specific when one has to be familiar with the source culture in order to understand it (Leppihalme 1994: 71). References that do not belong to the target culture may fail to function in it and they can convey an unclear message to the viewers (Leppihalme 1997: 4).

In her study, Ritva Leppihalme (1997) has concentrated on the translation of source text allusions, interviewed translators and studied the responses of the readers. She points out that although Anglo-American culture is well-known in Finland, Finnish people have access to international mass media and many people understand English in Finland, culture-specific translation problems do exist (Leppihalme 1997: 4–5). The translator must be observant when going through the source text because phrasal allusions are not that easily noticed. For example, slogans from advertisements can be difficult to spot if the source culture is not familiar enough to the translator. References to source culture can occur also in the form of popular beliefs, assumptions, stories, catch-phrases, clichés and proverbs. (Leppihalme 1994: 74–76)

References to names, from both real life and fiction, are common in many films and television series. For instance, in *Gilmore Girls* references to actors, singers or other celebrities appear regularly. Leppihalme (1994: 71) also states that references to leaders, writers, painters, real places and events are frequent in her corpus and references to literary characters originate commonly from texts that are studied at schools or universities in countries where English is spoken. Furthermore, traditional and frequently appearing culture-bound references are allusions to children's classics, for instance the stories of the Grimm's Brothers, or more modern characters, such as heroes of comic strips (Leppihalme 1994: 72).

The references can have different, partly overlapping, functions in the plot as presented in section 2.2 and when translating these references, it may be difficult to convey the

original meaning to the target language as well. Leppihalme (1994: 234) points out that it is common that the words are translated but the connotative meaning is not taken into consideration. Thus, it is problematic to convey the same function that the reference had in the source text also to the target text. For example, the source text's humorous allusion to a film, person or a television programme can lose its function when translated directly to the target language if the reference is not well-known also in the target culture. The following example illustrates this.

(7) ST[2]:   LORELAI:
            Look, if you need to work as a low-paid intern for a magazine or a stringer for some small-town newspaper or **Tom Brokaw's** toupee comber-outer before you make real money, then that's what you'll do.
    SUB[3]: Jos joudut alipalkatuksi harjoittelijaksi lehteen tai osa-aikaiseksi jonkin pikkukaupungin lehteen tai **Tom Brokaw'n** tupeen kampaajaksi ennen kuin tienaat kunnolla, sitten teet niin
    BT[4]:   If you have to work as an underpaid intern for a paper or work part-time for some small-town newspaper or Tom Brokaw's toupee's barber before you make real money, then that's what you'll do

                                                             (GG S3, E22, 19'03)

Tom Brokaw is an American television journalist and best known as the anchor of NBC Nightly News (IMDb 2017n). Lorelai refers to him in order to show humorously that all jobs that are even remotely connected to journalism will be useful for Rory. The translator has decided to leave the name untranslated in the Finnish subtitles without any specifications. If the Finnish viewers are not familiar with Brokaw's name, the reference's humorous function is lost in the subtitles.

My hypothesis in this study is that the retention of foreign elements in the subtitles is one of the most commonly existing strategies, as shown in the earlier example 7. According to Leppihalme (1997: 102–103), the reasons why the translator has decided to make only minimal changes to the original text can be, for example, one of the following;

---

[2] ST= the original dialogue in *Gilmore Girls*
[3] SUB= the Finnish subtitles
[4] BT= my own back translation

1. the translator thought that the allusion is familiar to the target text readers
2. the translator did not find any other ways to translate the allusion and decided to accept that some could miss its meaning
3. the translator did not notice the allusion in the source text
4. the translator wanted to follow the original author's decisions
5. the translator considers the allusions to be such an important part of the text that they must be retained in the translation

As the translator of the DVD version of *Gilmore Girls* is unknown in this study, it is impossible to say which reason(s) may have affected the translator's decisions in this specific instance. All in all, culture-bound references are common problems for translators, especially in audiovisual translation. Each reference exists in a specific context which also plays an important part in the choice of the most suitable translation strategy. The source and target text oriented global translation strategies, that is foreignization and domestication, are discussed in the following section.

3.3 Foreignization and Domestication

Translator's visibility and invisibility are Lawrence Venuti's (1995) concepts related to the fluency of the translation, that is, if the text seems like a translation or if it appears to be more like the original text for the target text readers. Venuti (1995: 1–2) states that when a translated text reads fluently and the foreign elements are rare, the translator becomes invisible and the message of the text becomes more visible for the target audience.

Venuti names a few central features that make the translated text fluent. Firstly, the language of the translation naturally has an important role in this matter. When the used language is modern and standard the text becomes more understandable, and thus also more fluent, than if there are archaic and specialized words or language that belongs to some dialect. According to him, a fluent translation does not involve foreign words or

Anglicisms and the syntax is brought closer to the target language. All in all, for the translation to be fluent it should be familiarized and understandable for the target audience. It has to give an impression that the translated text is in fact not a translation. (Venuti 1995: 4–5) When the text is familiarized, that is when it is brought closer to the target language and culture, it is always addressed to a certain audience, still taking into account the central message of the source text (ibid.).

Translating involves a choice between keeping the foreign elements from the source language in the target text (foreignization) and staying loyal to the target text by deleting the foreign elements (domestication). As far as literature translations in Finland are concerned, foreign names and elements are often left in their foreign forms in the translations (Oittinen 1997: 52). According to Venuti (1995: 6–8), the trend towards domestication is strong in Anglo-American translating because the target language (English) has such a dominant position when compared to the various source languages. Conversely, the use of domestication strategy when translating from a dominant language to a language with a minority status, may help to protect the existence of the minority languages (Hatim & Mason 1999: 145–146).

Depending on the context, the translator chooses the best alternative between the domesticating and foreignizing translation strategies. Kokkola (2007: 206–207) points out that these two strategies do not exclude one another but rather can be seen as possibilities for the translator. In other words, the translator is not expected to make a choice between these strategies in the beginning of the translating process because both of them can be present throughout the work (ibid.).

As far as the references to popular culture are concerned, the context of the events in the scene play a central role in the translation process. As it comes evident in the material of this thesis, these kinds of translation problems should be handled individually. The references' possible links to the picture and their functions in the plot influence the choice of the best strategy in each case. The global translation strategies, domestication and foreignization, can be further divided into local translation strategies. Therefore, the following section introduces the local strategies adapted in this research.

3.4 Translation Strategies for Solving Culture-Bound Problems

When the source text contains a translation problem, such as references to cultural elements, the translator has to make a decision to solve this problem. There are various strategies to translate the culture-bound references to the target text audience and the names of the categories vary with each theory. In this study, I have chosen to follow the strategies that Jan Pedersen (2011) used in his study of rendering extralinguistic cultural references in subtitles as his categorisation suits best to my research material. In his study, Pedersen (2011: 73–74) has chosen to divide the strategies into seven different categories; *retention* (following Leppihalme's study in 1994), *omission, official equivalent, direct translation* (following Nedergaard-Larsen's study), *substitution, generalisation* and *specification* (all three from Gottlieb's study). The strategies can further be divided under two main headings; the source text oriented strategies which make the translator visible and the target text oriented strategies which create the effect that the translator is invisible. The figure 1 illustrates this division.
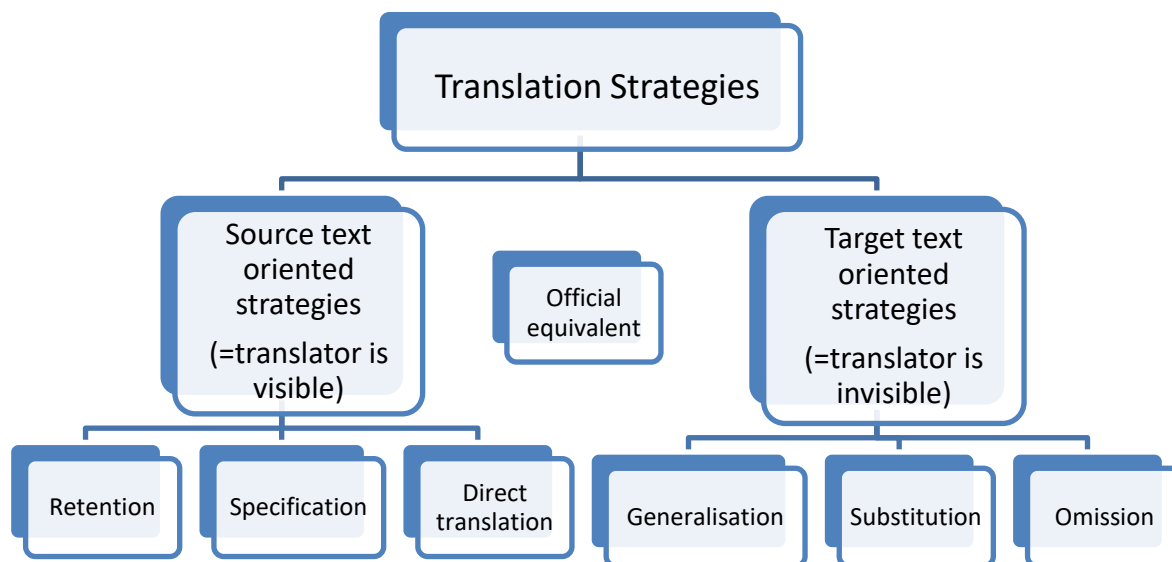

Figure 1. Division of the different translation strategies (adapted from Pedersen 2011)

As it can be seen in the figure, the translator can be considered to be visible when either retention, specification or direct translation is used as a strategy when solving the problems in translations. When the translator has chosen to use generalisation, substitution or omission, s/he is more invisible to the target culture as the translation does not include any foreign elements. The last strategy, official equivalent, is not connected to either one of these two boxes as it is often more as an administrative decision than a source or target oriented translation strategy as such (Pedersen 2011: 76).

In the following subsections, I will introduce each translation strategy with examples from my material and I will use the abbreviations ST (source text) when referring to the dialogue, SL (source language) when referring to English language and SC (source culture) when talking about American culture. Correspondingly, when talking about the Finnish subtitles I will use TT (target text), TL (target language) when I refer to Finnish language and TC (target culture) when Finnish culture is in question.

3.4.1 Retention

When using retention, the translator has decided to retain the ST elements in the TT unchanged. As Pedersen (2007: 130) remarks, retention is the most ST devoted translation strategy because a piece of the SC is directly moved to the TC. When using retention, the translator brings the foreign cultural elements to the target audience without any special guidance or explanation. It is an undemanding solution for the translator but it may cause problems for the TC viewer if s/he is not familiar with the cultural concept in question. (ibid.)

Although the understanding of the plot may be more difficult for the viewer when the foreign elements are brought to the TT, retention is the most commonly used strategy for translating cultural references. When the cultural reference is decided to retain in the translation without explanations, it is usually somehow marked off, for instance by using quotation marks or italics. Some minor changes may also be done to meet the conventions of the TL, for instance the spelling can be changed or an article can be taken away. (Pedersen 2007: 130–131)

In the following example 8, the reference to the musician is not explained in any way and the foreign name is retained in subtitles as such.

(8)   ST: LANE:
               And may it be more successful than **Peter Frampton's.**
        SUB: Toivottavasti paremman kuin **Peter Frampton**.
        BT: Hopefully better than Peter Frampton

                                     (GG S1, E21, 9'06)

Rock guitarist Peter Frampton was a big hit in the 1970s, but his return in the 1980s was not as successful as his earlier career (All music 2017). In the scene Lane and Rory are discussing whether Rory should go in to the shop where her ex-boyfriend Dean works and try to start over with him. Lane hopes to get the old Rory back as she has been so depressed for the past weeks and hopes that her "comeback" is more successful than Frampton's. The use of retention as a translation strategy is a ST oriented strategy. In other words, it makes the translator visible to the viewers as the foreign elements are kept in the subtitle as such.

3.4.2 Specification

Another ST oriented translation strategy is specification which means that the cultural reference is left in its original form in the translation but the translator has added information which further explains the reference to the TC audience (Pedersen 2011: 79). According to Pedersen (ibid.) the specification of cultural reference can be done either by using completion or addition.

Completion can be used when, for instance, adding information to names. The subtitler can clarify the acronyms or abbreviations in the ST by spelling them out and completing them for the TT readers or viewers. Similarly, if the ST uses only the last names of the characters, the first name can be added to the TT and this way specify the reference. (Pedersen 2007: 132)

Whereas completion is used mainly when completing names or acronyms, addition adds information to the reference. Additions are usually an important part of the cultural references' connotations. The ST can, for instance, include foreign names of athletes and politicians that are not familiar to the TT audience. Therefore, the subtitler can add the profession to the name and make the message clearer. Similarly, the translator can specify the proper names of the television programmes to make the message easier for the viewers. (Pedersen 2011: 80)

(9)   ST: LORELAI:
              There was no waking you up. You were completely out of it. We're talking **Farrah** on **"Letterman"**
      SUB: Et herännyt. Olit kuin tajuton. Kuin **Farrah Letterman-showssa**
      BT: You did not wake up. You were like unconscious. Like Farrah in the Letterman-show

                                                                    (GG S4, E22, 8'27)

In the example 9 the translator has used two strategies in one line. The reference to the actor Farrah Fawcett has been retained in the subtitles without any additions but the specification "show" is added to the reference of the *Late Night with David Letterman* talk show. Although the specification "show" is added to the subtitles to make the reference clearer for the target audience, the strategy makes the translator visible to the viewers as the feeling of foreignness is retained.

3.4.3 Direct Translation

Direct translation is often used when translating, for instance, the names of companies and official institutions but the strategy is not common when translating proper names. In this strategy, the TT audience is not guided in any way because nothing is added or left out but the reference is translated directly, word by word, to the TL. (Pedersen 2011: 83) Pedersen (ibid. 162) states that when direct translation is used the results usually sound natural in both the source language and in the target language. Direct translations can also be used as a combination with some other translation strategy, such as with retention and omission (ibid. 163). To summarise, only the language in question changes when this strategy is used (ibid. 76).

(10) ST: LORELAI:
                You have **crossed over into the dark side Luke**.
        SUB: Olet **siirtynyt pimeälle puolelle**.
        BT: You have crossed over to the dark side.

(GG S1, E21, 15'50)

In the 10th example, Luke has just broken through the back door to Lorelai's house as he keeps inventing things to renovate in her house. Lorelai knows that these are only excuses to avoid spending time with his girlfriend, Rachel, although Luke insists otherwise. Lorelai comments his actions with a well-known reference from the film *Star Wars*. The reference is translated directly, word by word, without any alterations and only Luke's name is omitted in the Finnish subtitles as he is visible in the screen and it is obvious that the comment is meant to him as there are no other people in the room with them. Additionally, the reference suits the situation well as the main character in both this scene in *Gilmore Girls* and in *Star Wars* is called Luke. Although there are no foreign words in the subtitles, the strategy makes the translator visible as the reference's cultural connotations are retained in the TT.

3.4.4 Generalisation

When a specific cultural reference is replaced by something general in the TT, the translator uses the strategy of generalisation (Pedersen 2011: 85). Generalisation is commonly used, for instance, when the translator does not want to name specific brands and persons that might be unfamiliar to the TT-audience. In the following example, Sookie refers to a dancer Deney Terrio who, among other things, hosted a show called *Dance Fewer* (IMDb 2017f).

(11) ST: SOOKIE:
                Tell it to **Deney Terrio** here. I should've been a dancer.
        SUB: Sano se tuolle **tanssitaiturille**, olisi pitänyt ryhtyä tanssijaksi
        BT: Tell it to the dancing whiz, I should have become a dancer.

(GG S3, E22, 6'58)

The translator has chosen to replace the name "Deney Terrio" with a general reference to his occupation with the word "tanssitaituri" [dancing whiz] in the Finnish subtitles. This way the meaning of the reference is not lost although his name is not mentioned in the subtitles. If his name had been retained in the subtitles as such, the context of the dialogue would have explained the reference. However, the solution to replace the proper name with a general reference to Terrio's occupation helps the viewers to understand it more efficiently.

3.4.5 Substitution

Substitution is a target text oriented strategy, that is, the references are domesticated by either replacing them with a reference from the TC or with a reference that is better known in the TC. The references can also be substituted with something else than culturally related references if they fit the situation. (Pedersen 2011: 89–90) In the following example, the reference to the American TV show host is substituted with the correspondent person from the Finnish culture.

(12) ST: SOOKIE:
               Hey, **Bob Vila**, take a seat.
       SUB: Istu, **Remontti-Reiska**
       BT: Sit down, Renovation-Roger

(GG S3, E22, 23'26)

Bob Vila is an American home improvement TV show host and known from many shows already since the 1980s (IMDb 2017c). Remontti-Reiska [Renovation-Roger], the nick name for Jorma Piisinen, can be thought to be the Finnish version of Bob Vila as Piisinen also has had several home-improvement TV shows since the 1990s. Thus, the translator has decided to domesticate the reference by bringing it closer to the target culture and make the translator more invisible by substituting the American name with a Finnish equivalent.

3.4.6 Omission

Omission is used as a translation strategy when the reference is completely omitted from the TT. Leppihalme (1994: 93) states that there are two reasons why the translator decides to use this strategy. Firstly, it can be that s/he has tested all the other translation strategies and then decided that the best way is to omit the whole reference. Secondly, it can also be that the translator simply wants to save time. Omitting the whole reference is surely the quickest way to solve the translation problem. (ibid.) For example, DVDs are often subtitled with a fast timetable and, therefore, omission is often the most effective and time-saving strategy for the translator. Pedersen (2011: 96) also points out that omitting the cultural reference from the TT can be considered as the most target-oriented translation strategy of them all because all forms of the foreign item are deleted from the TT. All in all, omission as a translation strategy can be used when the reference has no important bearing on the story (ibid. 96).

The 13th example is from a scene where Lorelai is startled awake by a loud noise. The picture or the sounds do not link together with the reference, and a quick research into the character of *Mr. Mirkle* shows that it is difficult to know what is the reference's meaning.

> (13) ST: LORELAI:
>   Dear **God Almighty Mr. Mirkle**!
>   SUB: **Voi taivas, apua!**
>   BT: Oh my god, help!
>
> (GG S1, E21, 00'08)

Thus, the translator has solved the problem by omitting it altogether in the Finnish subtitles. The translator is made invisible as all the foreign elements that could confuse the TC viewers are removed in the subtitles.

3.4.7 Official Equivalent

When the reference has an official equivalent in the TC, it is naturally used also in the translations. Examples of these kinds of references include, for instance, the conversion of measurements (kilometres/miles, kilograms/pounds, Celsius/Fahrenheit). An official

decision has been made about which conversion is used in each country and the translator usually chooses the solution that is already made for the TC. (Pedersen 2011: 97–100) The material included in this thesis does not contain references to monetary system or measurements, which is why examples of the use of official equivalence are scarce. Nevertheless, some popular culture references can also have an official translation that is issued by another quarter. For instance, Disney has issued decrees on how to translate names of their characters (ibid.).

(14) ST: GYPSY:
               You wanna kill the little romping **Bambies**?
       SUB: Haluatko tappaa pienet telmivät **Bambit**?
       BT: Do you want to kill the little romping Bambies?
                                                    (GG S3, E22, 13'13)

In the 14th example, a town meeting is being held and one of the discussed topics is the problematic deer population in Stars Hollow. One of the residents, Gypsy, refers to the animals as "Bambies" which is a reference to the Disney film with the same title and translated also in Finnish as "Bambi".

4 TRANSLATION STRATEGIES FOR POPULAR CULTURE REFERENCES IN *GILMORE GIRLS*

The primary aim of this thesis is to find out which local translation strategies are most commonly used in the Finnish subtitles of *Gilmore Girls* when translating the popular culture references. Additionally, I will discuss the possible functions of these references in the original dialogue and study if the functions change or fail to convey to the target culture viewers as a result of the translation process. Furthermore, I will take into consideration the possible links to the visual context if they have influenced the chosen translation strategy. I intend to find answers to the following research questions; what is the most commonly used local translation strategy in the Finnish subtitles in each popular culture category and does the translation strategy influence the functions of the references in the subtitles in comparison to their original functions in the dialogue?

The following sections introduce each popular culture category that I have included into the study, that is, references to films, music, literature and comics, television programmes and celebrities. Each category is discussed with examples from the episodes and the last section of the analysis presents the summary of the used translation strategies in the research material. My hypothesis is that the translator has maintained a close relation to the source text and culture in the subtitles, and thus, the translator is visible in the subtitles of the *Gilmore Girls*. In other words, I assume that retention, specification and direct translation are the most commonly used local translation strategies in the Finnish subtitles.

The material consisted altogether of 159 references to films, music, literature and comics, television programmes and celebrities. The references included both proper name allusions and key-phrase allusions, although proper names formed the clear majority of the references. I collected the references to popular culture from each of the seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls* with the help of the Finnish subtitles and by utilising the unofficial English transcripts found online. Because the clear majority of the references included a proper name, the references were easily recognised from the dialogue with the help of the transcripts.

To begin, I categorised all the 159 references under the five popular culture categories. Secondly, I analysed the popular culture references in the subtitles using Pedersen's classification for different translation strategies which was introduced in the section 3.3. I found examples of each translation strategy (retention, specification, direct translation, generalisation, substitution, omission and official equivalent) in the Finnish subtitles of the seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls* and the results are presented with tables in the following sections. The prevalent global translation strategies in each category, that is domestication and foreignization, are analysed based on the used local translation strategies. Furthermore, the references' functions in the original dialogue and in the Finnish subtitles are discussed using the categorisation adapted from Ritva Leppihalme's (1997) study as presented in the section 2.2. Additionally, the link to the possible visual context is considered when it affects the local translation strategy used in the Finnish subtitles.

4.1 References to Films

All the seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls* included references to films, their titles or characters appearing in the films. Altogether there were 25 film references in the research material and 20 of these references included a proper name.

The film references included different overlapping functions in the original dialogue between the characters and it is impossible to limit the functions to cover only some aspects. However, the film references seemed to function especially as means to include humour to the dialogue as many of the references' functions contained a humorous aspect. This is also typical for the series like *Gilmore Girls* as it is a mixture of drama and comedy.

For example, the references to films in the dialogue were used to add humour and irony to the situation when the topic of the conversation was otherwise more serious. In the following example 15, Lorelai goes to get Rory from the police station.

> (15) LORELAI: She can get along with anyone, it's just, it was her first time in
> a cell, so I didn't want her to be attacked, you know, like in **Caged Heat**?
> Or was it **Switchblade Sisters**? Anyway. I mean, my daughter never gets
> into trouble.
>
> (GG S5, E22, 00'40)

Rory has just spent the night at the police station as she and her boyfriend, Logan, ended up stealing a yacht after series of events. Lorelai is seemingly worried. However, in the same way as always, she talks immensely and tries to lighten up and bring humour to the situation by referring to the films *Caged Heat* and *Switchblade Sisters* which include themes like violence in prison.

The translation strategies in the Finnish subtitles were divided rather evenly between the TT oriented (56 %) and ST oriented (40 %) strategies. The statistics for all film references in the research material are indicated in the following table:

Table 1. Translation strategies for the references to films

ST oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Retention	9
Specification	1
Direct translation	4
Total	**14**

TT oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Generalisation	6
Substitution	1
Omission	3
Total	**10**

Other strategies	Number in the subtitles
Official equivalent	1

The prevalent local translation strategy was retention as the translator had decided to leave the film reference unchanged to the subtitles 9 times, which comprised 36 % of all the instances. The references to films included many proper names and usually they were

marked off with italics in the Finnish subtitles. Although some of the referred films had an established Finnish translation, the subtitler had still decided to use the original English title. In the following example, Luke is surprised to find his nephew Jess back in Stars Hollow as he had tried to reach Jess several times without an answer.

(16) ST: LUKE:
You know, I, uh, I called you six times. Now I didn't expect you to call me back so we could sit on the phone in bed and watch **Sleepless in Seattle** together.
SUB: Yritin soittaa kuusi kertaa. En odottanutkaan sinun soittavan takaisin, jotta makaisimme luurin kanssa sängyssä katsoen yhdessä *Sleepless in Seattlea*.
BT: I tried to call you six times. I didn't expect you to call back so we could lay on bed with the phone watching *Sleepless in Seattle* together.

(GG S2, E22, 32'26)

Although the film is widely known in the Finnish target culture as *Uneton Seattlessa*, the translator had not used the Finnish title but decided to retain all the foreignness of the reference with its original English title and this way make the translator visible to the TC viewers.

The second most used translation strategy was generalisation which is a TT oriented strategy and it comprised 24 % of the translation strategies in the Finnish subtitles. The film references were in these cases replaced with a general reference to the film in question without leaving any foreign elements in the subtitles. For instance, in the following example Michel, Lorelai's receptionist at the inn, states his opinion about the ongoing bike race in Stars Hollow.

(17) ST: MICHEL:
The memory of those bikers poking each other in the buttocks **Eternal Sunshine'd** out of my mind.
SUB: Että toistensa pakaroita tökkivät pyöräilijät **pyyhittäisiin pois muististani.**
BT: That the bikers poking each other's buttocks would be wiped out of my mind.

(GG S5, E22, 20'26)

The reference that Michel uses is to the film *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* where the main characters' minds are erased from all the memories concerning their problematic relationship (IMDb 2017g). Michel cannot stand the sight of the bikers and would rather have all the memories deleted from his mind. In the Finnish subtitles, the translator has decided to omit the name of the film and only refer to the film's plot in the sentence and that way still convey the wanted associations. Thus, the film reference is domesticated in the subtitles and the translator is invisible to the viewers.

As most of the references to films were retained in the Finnish subtitles without any additions or explanations, their original functions in the dialogue convey to the viewers only if the origins of the references are familiar to the TC. If the referred films or characters in them are not well-known in the TC, the intended irony or thematic clue is lost in the translation.

Similarly, the domesticated translation solutions have also an effect on the references' functions in the TT. When the film references are replaced with something general, the intended jokes are usually lost if the used general words are not as effective as the original references. However, if the translator has chosen to substitute the original reference with a reference that is more familiar in the TC but has similar connotations than the original reference, the function remains the same in the TT. For instance, in the next example the function of the reference that Madeline uses in the ST is to humorously comment on the hairstyles of the students at Rory's school.

> (18) ST: MADELINE:
>   The hairstyles alone proved **the Farrelly brothers** are not making this stuff up.
>   SUB: Kampaukset olivat kuin suoraan *Sekaisin Marista.*
>   BT: The hairstyles were like straight from *There's Something About Mary.*
>
> (GG S2, E22, 11'08)

The translator has chosen to substitute the reference to the American screenwriters, the Farrelly brothers, with a reference to one of their film's Finnish title *Sekaisin Marista* and this way guide the audience with a possibly more recognisable reference for the Finnish

viewers. The reference to the film title contains humorous associations that are similar to the original reference and the function remains the same also in the Finnish subtitles despite the domestication.

4.2 References to Music

There were altogether 40 references to music in the analysed seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls* and only five of the references did not include a proper name.

In the same way as the film references, also the music references generally functioned as means to bring humour to the dialogue. However, the references' functions included also several important thematic and characteristic implications. These functions of the music references seemed to be emphasised especially with the character of Lane and all the people connected to her. The next example from the fifth season shows how the character of highly religious Mrs. Kim, Lane's mother, develops when the years pass.

> (19) MRS. KIM: Oh, please. **Prince** made fifty-seven million take-home last year. He didn't swear, and he mentioned God. Catch up. Okay, last problem. Transportation.
>
> (GG S5, E22, 35'06)

Mrs. Kim had been resisting Lane's musical career hopes for years. Lane had to, for instance, move out of her childhood home when Mrs. Kim asked her to choose between her and music. In the 19th example, Lane has lost all her hope with their band and tells her mother that she is thinking about moving back in and ending the band. For her surprise, Mrs. Kim convinces her not to give up and arranges a tour for Lane's band. However, she hopes that they change their band's style to be more religious as the concert venues are arranged in churches. The reference to the musician *Prince* in Mrs. Kim's speech is rather surprising for Lane and her band but it shows that her character should be noted in a new light from now on.

The local translation strategies for music references were not divided as evenly as the references to films. However, like film references, retention was again the most commonly used strategy as it was used 28 times out of 40 instances. Altogether, the ST oriented strategies comprised 82 % of all the choices the translator had used in the Finnish subtitles which means that the translator was mostly visible when the dialogue contained references to music in the research material. The overall division between the different translation strategies for music references in the Finnish subtitles is presented in the following table 2:

Table 2. Translation strategies for the references to music

ST oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles		TT oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Retention	28		Generalisation	4
Specification	3		Substitution	0
Direct translation	2		Omission	3
Total	**33**		**Total**	**7**

Overall, the majority of music references consisted of the names of bands or songs. By transferring the names directly to the TT, the translator offers no guidance to the viewers and the understanding of the reference's meaning is left entirely to the TT audience. The following example shows a frequently appearing illustration of the use of retention for music references in the research material.

> (20) ST: LORELAI:
> We're the Chilton equivalent of **50 Cent's** posse. Where are the boys?
> SUB: Olemme kuin **50 Centin** jengi
> BT: We are like 50 Cent's gang.
>
> (GG S3, E22, 23'00)

Lorelai, her parents, Luke, Sookie and Jackson are at Chilton attending Rory's graduation event and Lorelai compares them to the well-known rapper *50 Cent* and his "posse". Rory

is the valedictorian and Lorelai's comment highlights Rory's important and appreciated position at the graduation. *50 Cent*, like rappers in general, is also known for bringing a big group with him wherever he goes and, thus, Lorelai's line refers to their group at the graduation. The translator has used retention in the Finnish subtitles and, thus, decided to keep the foreign elements and make the translator visible in the subtitles. There is nothing that gives clues to the TC and, therefore, the reference's interpretation is left for the viewer. The TL viewers' knowledge of American rappers either gives the needed background to support the reference or leaves the subtitle without the intended connotations if the musical style and the rapper in question is unknown in the TC.

As foreignization was clearly the most commonly used global translation strategy in music references, the references' original functions transferred to the TC only if the bands, singers or songs were familiar to the Finnish viewers or if the context guided the target audience. The research material contained many internationally well-known artists but additionally also more genre-specific musicians that have not gained wide popularity in Europe. Therefore, the references' functions in the subtitles are dependent on the TC viewers' musical knowledge.

In the following example from the seventh season's final episode, Rory is saying goodbye to Lane who has been her best friend since childhood. Rory is now leaving Stars Hollow after graduating from Yale because she got a new job as a reporter and, therefore, they will not see each other for a while. Lane, on the other hand, is now already married and a mother for twins. Therefore, the contrast to their life situation in the first seasons is enormous.

(21) ST: RORY:
             We've come a long way, baby.
     SUB: **Olemme kulkeneet pitkän matkan, kulta.**
     BT: We have come a long way, honey.

(GG S7, E22, 21'21)

Rory's comment "We've come a long way, baby" is a direct reference to Loretta Lynn's album with the same name (Loretta Lynn 2017). Although the reference to Lynn's album is probably left unnoticed in the Finnish TC as there is no guidance to it in the picture or

in the overall dialogue and because she is not a well-known artist in Finland, the reference's original function to emphasise the two characters' development from their teenage years to adults becomes clear also in the direct translation.

4.3 References to Literature and Comics

The references to literature and comics constituted 14 % of all the popular culture references in the research material, that is, there were 23 instances of literature and comic references in the seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls*. The references included, for example, titles and characters of children's fairy tales, other books and comics. Altogether 20 of the instances included a proper name.

The contexts where the literature references are most commonly used seem to focus on Rory and on the discussions that happen with her. The references have overlapping functions, that is, they convey humour, they are used as characterisation and thematic use and they indicate interpersonal relationships. In the next example, Paris is trying to persuade Rory to run as her vice-presidential candidate in the school's student council election at Chilton.

> (22) PARIS: Because people think you're nice. You're quiet, you say excuse me, **you look like little birds help you get dressed in the morning**. People don't fear you.
>
> (GG S2, E22, 12'55)

The relationship between Rory and Paris has been rivalrous from the beginning, though their friendship deepens as they get to know each other better. They both are top of their class and keep challenging each other. Paris regards Rory as a threat because Rory is as smart as she is. Additionally, Rory is considered to be a nice and approachable person, unlike Paris who is at times brutally honest. In the example 22 Paris compares Rory to *Cinderella*. The reference in the dialogue functions humorously as an indicator of their relationship because Paris admits that Rory's popularity, nice personality and empathy is something that is missing from herself.

The translation strategies for the references to literature and comics centre around ST oriented strategies, thus, foreignization is the prevalent global strategy in this category. Retention was the most commonly used local strategy as 52 % of the references were retained in the subtitles as such. Generalisation and official equivalent were the second most used strategies with 4 instances each. Table 3 shows the division in this category:

Table 3. Translation strategies for the references to literature and comics

ST oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Retention	12
Specification	0
Direct translation	1
Total	13

TT oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Generalisation	4
Substitution	0
Omission	2
Total	6

Other strategies	Number in the subtitles
Official equivalent	4

In this category, the division between foreignization and domestication was not as clear, partly because some of the used references to children's books and comics were internationally well-known and had an official Finnish equivalent. However, the references that are not considered to be well-known in the Finnish TC, were still commonly retained in the TT without any additions. In the forthcoming example the reference to the children's book is retained in its original form in the Finnish subtitles. The translator has only added italics to mark off the reference. In the example Paris continues to persuade Rory to run with her in the school election.

(23) ST: PARIS:
See, that is exactly what I need from you, **Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm** for the new millennium. Hey, wear some braids tomorrow with bows. I mean, hell, let's sell it, sister!

SUB: Juuri siihen tarvitsen sinua. Uuden vuosituhannen ***Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm***. Laita huomenna palmikot ja hiuskoristeet. Hitto, myydään tämä juttu!

BT: That is exactly why I need you. *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* of the new millennium. Wear braids and hair accessories tomorrow. Damn, let's sell this thing!

(GG S2, E22, 13'15)

Paris compares Rory to *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* which is a children's novel written by Kate Douglas Wiggin (Kate Douglas Wiggin Library 2017). The translator has decided to retain the novel's title in its original form also in the Finnish subtitles and this way retain the foreignness in the dialogue although the book's title is not widely known in the Finnish TC.

Generalisation strategy together with official equivalent occurred in the Finnish subtitles second most often. In the next example, the pictorial link influences the chosen translation strategy. Lorelai's ex-boyfriend, Jason, has unexpectedly arrived to the inn to meet Lorelai. Jason decides to wait until Lorelai has time for him.

(24) ST: JASON:
            Go, work. I'm fine. I'm comfortable. I have food, Sookie brought me wine, and I've moved on to **"Gnomes of the West"**.

      SUB: Mene vain. Olen okei. On ruokaa, Sookie toi viiniä ja olen siirtynyt seuraavaan **kirjaan.**

      BT: Go ahead. I'm fine. I have food, Sookie brought me wine and I've moved on to the next book.

(GG S4, E22, 29'02)

Jason is holding the book "Gnomes of the West" in his hands and it shows also in the picture (see picture 2). The name of the book does not have a relevant part in the plot or in the scene. Thus, the translator has decided to replace the proper name with a general word "kirja" [book] in the Finnish subtitles and this way solve the possible translation problem.

Picture 2. Gnomes of the West (GG S4, E22, 29'02)

The functions that the references to literature and comics have in the Finnish subtitles seem to follow the same pattern as the previously analysed categories. The intended functions of the original references come over to the Finnish subtitles if the retained references are familiar in the TC or if the translator has succeeded to domesticate the reference by replacing it with similar associations as in the original dialogue. The following example 25 illustrates an instance where the original reference's humorous associations do not convey to the TT the same way as in the ST.

> (25) ST: LORELAI:
>   You're pulling a **Mr. Freeze** on me.
>   SUB: Olet **jäätävä** minua kohtaan.
>   BT: You're acting frosty to me.
>
> <div align="right">(GG S2, E22, 7'49)</div>

Lorelai and Luke are having an argument and Lorelai compares Luke to the American comic book villain and Batman's enemy, Mr. Freeze, who is known for freezing his

enemies (Batman Wikia 2017). The translator has decided to convey the reference's meaning by referring generally to the villain's superpowers. However, the reference to the popular culture character and the humorous connotations are left untranslated in the TT.

4.4 References to Television Programmes

The references to television programmes constituted the smallest category in the research material with 15 instances. All the 15 references included a proper name. In this category, the references were, for example, connected to the names of the programmes and to the characters appearing in them.

The functions that the references to television programmes have in the original dialogue vary with each example. However, most of the examples bring irony to the dialogue and introduce the characteristics of the main characters in a humorous way. In the 26th example, Rory and her boyfriend, Logan, are compared to the main characters of an American comedy series.

(26)   COLIN: Yes. **Maxwell Smart** finally found his **99**.

(GG S5, E22, 2'01)

Colin is Logan's friend and he has come to the local police station to pick him up after Logan and Rory have spent the night in there. The situation is not new to Colin as Logan has been part of these kinds of occurrences before as well. Lorelai is worried about Rory but Colin, on the contrary, jokes about the situation and refers to Logan as "Maxwell Smart" who is the main character, a secret agent, in the series *Get Smart* (IMDb 2017i). "Agent 99" is his faithful assistant and competent partner (ibid.). The references to the comedy series' characters create irony in the situation the same way as the referred series satirises all secret agent films and television programmes. Although they are currently in the local police station, Rory and Logan are far from dangerous criminals.

In this category, the ST oriented translation strategies composed 67 % of all the local strategies used in the Finnish subtitles in the research material. Retention was the most commonly used strategy as 53 % of the references were retained in the subtitles without additions. The rest 47 % was divided almost evenly among the other five strategies. The whole division of the used strategies is depicted in the table 4:

Table 4. Translation strategies for the references to television programmes

ST oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Retention	8
Specification	1
Direct translation	1
Total	**10**

TT oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Generalisation	1
Substitution	2
Omission	2
Total	**5**

As it can be concluded from the table, most of the names of the referred television series were retained in the Finnish subtitles without additions or substitutions. In the next example, Lorelai is still nervously waiting for Rory at the local police station because of Rory's and her boyfriend Logan's sudden and unconventional idea to steal a yacht the previous night.

(27) ST: LORELAI:
I was just wondering. Is Rory in the system now? Because I just remember when **Sipowicz's** son accidentally got arrested because he looked like a drug dealer. **Sipowicz** was freaked out that the son was going to wind up in the system.

SUB: Mietin vain, onko Rory nyt rekisterissä. Muistin juuri, miten **Sipowiczin** poika vahingossa pidätettiin, koska hän näytti huumediileriltä, **Sipowicz** sai hepulin, koska poika päätyisi rekisteriin.

BT: I was just wondering, is Rory in the register now? I just remembered how Sipowicz's son accidentally got arrested because he looked like a drug dealer. Sipowicz was freaked out because the son wound end up in the register.

(GG S5, E22, 1'00)

In the dialogue, Lorelai's compares the occurrences to the fictional character Andy Sipowicz's similar situation in the police series *NYPD Blue* (IMDb 2017l). The series was aired in Finland as well in the 1990s. Therefore, the character may be familiar for the Finnish TC viewers as well, although the reference is not explained in any way and it appears rather unexpectedly in the dialogue.

The domesticated TT oriented translation strategies formed 33 % of the strategies used in the Finnish subtitles in this category. The translator had succeeded to be invisible by either substituting, generalising or omitting the references that were unfamiliar from the point of view of a Finnish viewer and, thus, help the viewers to follow the dialogue without the foreign elements. For instance, the next example shows how the translator has decided to solve the translation problem including a reference to a character in a television show.

(28) ST: LORELAI:
          Kimmy saw this guy at the mall who was a total **Chachi**, and he bought us a slurpee, and we totally lost track of time.
      SUB: Kimmy tapasi ostarilla erään **isottelijan**, joka osti meille juotavaa ja kadotimme ajantajun.
      BT: Kimmy met this one bragger at the mall, he bought us a drink and we totally lost track of time.

(GG S6, E22, 7'44)

Lorelai is talking on the phone with Rory. Rory scolds her mother for not answering to her numerous phone calls – like a mother scolds her teenage child. Lorelai answers to this by acting like a teenager would act in a situation like this. In her speech, Lorelai refers to "Chachi" who is a character in a sitcom series *Happy Days* (IMDb 2017k). The translator has decided to generalise the popular culture reference with a Finnish word "isottelija" [bragger] and this way generalise the reference as the connection to *Happy Days* does not play an important role in the scene.

The functions of the references to other television programmes in the original dialogue vary and all the possible varieties are presented in the research material. When the translator has used the domesticated translation strategy, the reference's original function conveys to the TC if the translator has chosen a substitutive term with similar

connotations than in the ST. Additionally, when the foreignized translation strategies are used, the original functions of the references convey when the references are familiar to the TC viewers. This is presented in the following example.

(29) ST: LORELAI:
You don't now, but after you've had dinner at **Captain Stubing's** table and **Isaac** has served you a couple of mojitos.

SUB: Kun olet syönyt illallista **kapteeni Stubingin** pöydässä ja **Isaac** on tarjoillut pari Mojitos-cocktailia

BT: When you've had dinner at captain Stubing's table and Isaac has served you a couple of Mojitos-cocktails.

(GG S3, E22, 1'46)

Lorelai is teasing Luke about his plans to take her girlfriend to a cruise to Alaska. Luke does not admit that he has any romantic plans concerning the cruise but Lorelai is convinced that Luke could well be thinking about proposing his girlfriend. Lorelai refers to the TV series *The Love Boat* and to its characters "Captain Stubing" and the bartender "Isaac" in her dialogue when she keeps humorously teasing Luke about the planned cruise. The retained references to the characters of the series in the Finnish subtitles manage to convey the intended function also to the TC. *The Love Boat* was a popular series also in Finland and the retained references bring humour to the dialogue also in the Finnish subtitles.

4.5 References to Celebrities

In the fifth section of the analysis, I will discuss the references to celebrity stars who appeared in the dialogue between the characters in the seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls*. Singers, actors, TV show hosts, reality TV stars and other American celebrities were a regular part of the characters' discussions with each other in the series. Therefore, the celebrity references formed the largest category with 56 instances in the research material and every one of the references included a proper name.

The references to celebrities appear frequently in the characters' discussions in different contexts. They are used to show thematic importance, bring out new sides of the characters and often to create humour and irony in to the situation. Furthermore, the characters' interpersonal relationships are often related to the used popular culture references. For example, the relationship between Rory and Paris is complex from the beginning but it evolves step by step. In the 30th example, Paris continues to persuade Rory to join her in the school election.

> (30)   PARIS: So, I have been wracking my brains for weeks trying to figure out exactly who should be my vice-presidential candidate, you know? Who would be yin to my yang, **Joel to my Ethan**, **Damon to my Affleck**, and then suddenly, it hits me, the perfect person.
>
> (GG S2, E22, 12'22)

The example shows that although Paris has been intimidated by Rory and, occasionally, there might have been big conflicts between the two girls, their interpersonal relationship is evolving to a right direction. Paris' suggestion implies that she considers Rory to be like her other half – just like the referred celebrities are to each other. "Joel" and "Ethan" refers to the popular American filmmakers, the Coen brothers (IMDb 2017d), whereas the comment "Damon to my Affleck" is a reference to the filmmakers and actors Matt Damon and Ben Affleck who are friends but who also have written and starred many films together.

The majority of the references to celebrities were translated using the ST oriented strategies, that is, foreignization was the prevalent global strategy. Retention was the most commonly used translation strategy with 39 instances in the material. The TT oriented strategies contained 17 instances, which means 30 % of the examples were domesticated in the Finnish subtitles. The following table shows the whole division how the different strategies were used when subtitling celebrity references:

Table 5. Translation strategies for the references to celebrities

ST oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles		TT oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Retention	39		Generalisation	9
Specification	0		Substitution	1
Direct translation	0		Omission	7
Total	**39**		**Total**	**17**

As it can be seen in the table, retention was the most commonly used local translation strategy as 70 % of all the references were left unchanged in the subtitles without any explanations or additions to guide the TC. For instance, in the example 31 Madeline and Louise, who are Rory's class mates at Chilton, talk about a movie they had seen on TV the other day.

(31) ST: MADELINE:
She was the **Courtney Love** of her day.
SUB: Hän oli aikansa **Courtney Love**.
BT: She was the Courtney Love of her time

(GG S1, E21, 12'46)

The actor, who played the lead role in the movie they had seen, has had a drug addiction and Madeline compares her ironically to Courtney Love, a musician who had a rocky past and, additionally, suffered from a drug addiction for several years (IMDb 2017e). In this case, the translator has decided to leave the name to the Finnish subtitles as it is also in the original dialogue. Therefore, the used foreignization strategy makes the translator visible in the Finnish subtitles and leaves the understanding of the reference's meaning solely to the TC viewers.

Generalisation was the most commonly used strategy out of the TT oriented solutions to translate celebrity references. Usually the generalised word in the Finnish subtitle included a connection to the celebrity's occupation or to some other aspect that had made them famous. The next example shows an instance where the translator had domesticated the celebrity reference to the subtitles.

(32) ST: LORELAI:
> Mm. Twenty to life. Time off for a well-placed **Tom Sizemore** Whizzinator joke.

      SUB: 20:stä vuodesta elinkautiseen, mutta hyvin kerrottuna **nistivitsi** lyhentää aikaa.

      BT: From 20 years to lifetime, but a well-told junkie joke cuts down the time.

<div align="right">(GG S5, E22, 13'08)</div>

Tom Sizemore is an American actor who has also become famous for his several problems with narcotics and, in addition to this, for unsuccessfully trying to evade drug tests (IMDb 2017o). The translator had used a general term "nistivitsi" [junkie joke] instead of the celebrity's name. Thus, all the foreign elements that might confuse the Finnish TC are removed from the TT but the intended meaning is achieved with the domesticated general words.

Overall, the functions of the original references to celebrities vary in the dialogue between the characters and the references' intended meanings convey via the subtitles to the TC if the persons are familiar to the TC viewers or if the context or the link to the picture supports the message. The next example shows how the understanding of the intended irony is left to the TC viewers.

(33) ST: LORELAI:
> And you really think he's okay with it? I mean, his whole family looks at you and sees **Anna Nicole Smith**, and they tell you that to your face, but he thinks you're swell and wants to pay for the honeymoon.

      SUB: Ja luulet sen olevan isälle ihan ok? Koko sen perhe näkee sinussa **Anna Nicole Smithin** ja sanoo sen suoraan. Mutta isä pitää sinusta ja maksaa häämatkanne.

      BT: And you think the father is ok with it? His whole family sees Anna Nicole Smith in you and they will tell you that to your face. But the father likes you and will pay for your honeymoon.

<div align="right">(GG S5, E22, 26'08)</div>

Lorelai and Rory are having an argument about Rory's relationship to Logan, who is from a very wealthy family. Lorelai argues that Logan's family will think that Rory is with Logan only for his money – like the actor and model, Anna Nicole Smith, whose marriage

was speculated to be based on her elderly husband's wealth (IMDb 2017a). The translator's decision to leave the celebrity's name in its original form to the Finnish subtitles leaves the viewers without any guidance. The intended irony from the original reference conveys to the TC viewers if the celebrity's colourful past is familiar to the Finnish viewers. In this example, also the context of the dialogue leads the viewers to understand the irony, although the viewers would not know her name or past.

All the references in this category included the name of the celebrity. However, the link to the visual information did not have an important role in the translation process as the referred persons did not usually appear on screen. Namely, there was only one instance in the research material's episodes where the referred celebrity appeared also in the picture. Picture 3 shows the example where Christiane Amanpour, the international correspondent and anchor at CNN, plays herself in *Gilmore Girls* and stays overnight at Lorelai's inn (CNN 2017). Rory is a big fan of hers and Lorelai brings Rory to visit her long-term role model.

Picture 3. Christiane Amanpour (GG S7, E22, 1'55)

The visual context, that is Christiane Amanpour herself, supports the translation strategy and the subtitle gives the viewers additional information about the picture if the TC viewers do not recognise her otherwise. Therefore, the pictorial link guides the viewers although the foreign elements are retained in the TT.

4.6 Summary of the Used Translation Strategies

Altogether there were 159 references to the preceding categories of popular culture in the research material. Table 6 demonstrates how the translations of the popular culture references in the Finnish subtitles were divided between the different strategies.

The source text oriented strategies that foreignized the subtitles formed the clear majority (69 %) in the research material. The domesticated, target text oriented strategies comprised 28 % of all the results and other strategies, that is official equivalent in this study, formed the remaining 3 % of the results.

Table 6. Translation strategies for the popular culture references in *Gilmore Girls*

ST oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Retention	96
Specification	5
Direct translation	8
Total	109

TT oriented strategies	Number in the subtitles
Generalisation	24
Substitution	4
Omission	17
Total	45

Other strategies	Number in the subtitles
Official equivalent	5

Retention was the most commonly used local translation strategy in all five categories and altogether 60 % of all the references were retained in their original foreign form in the Finnish subtitles. As can be seen in the table 6, foreignization was the dominant global translation strategy and, therefore, the translator was mostly visible in the subtitles in every category of the studied popular culture references. The preceding five sections also discussed the possible effects of the pictorial links to the translation choices. However, the link to the visual context did not have an important role in the translation of popular culture references because most of the scenes did not have a pictorial link, for instance, to the discussed films or characters.

5 CONCLUSIONS

My aim in this study was to find out which local translation strategies are most commonly used in the Finnish subtitles of the *Gilmore Girls* when translating the popular culture references to films, music, literature and comics, television programmes and celebrities. Additionally, I analysed the functions of these references in the original dialogue and studied if the functions changed or failed to convey to the target culture viewers because of the translation process. I intended to find answers to the following research questions: (1) What is the most commonly used local translation strategy in the Finnish subtitles in each popular culture category and (2) does the translation strategy influence the function of the reference in the subtitles in comparison to its original function in the dialogue?

I divided the popular culture references to the five separate categories. The references to celebrities was the biggest category with 56 examples in the research material. Music references formed the second largest category with 40 instances. Third and fourth largest categories were references to films (25 examples) and literature + comics (23 examples). References to television programmes was the smallest category with 15 instances. Altogether there were 159 references to popular culture in the seven episodes of *Gilmore Girls*.

The translation strategies were analysed using Lawrence Venuti's (1995) theory on domestication and foreignization (global strategies) and Jan Pedersen's (2011) taxonomy of translating references to culture (local strategies). Following Pedersen's taxonomy, I categorised the translation strategies of the popular culture references in the Finnish subtitles according to the following classification; retention, specification, direct translation, generalisation, substitution, omission and official equivalent. All the strategies were present in the research material. The functions of the popular culture references in the dialogue and in the subtitles were analysed using Ritva Leppihalme's (1997: 37–55) division, that is, the references can convey humour, they are used as characterisation and thematic use and they indicate interpersonal relationships.

My hypothesis was that the translator is visible in the subtitles of the *Gilmore Girls* and, therefore, the foreignized source text oriented strategies (retention, specification and direct translation) are the most commonly used translation strategies in the Finnish subtitles. Based on the results, this hypothesis was proven to be correct as 69 % of the strategies were source text oriented. The reasons why the translator had decided to retain most of the references in their foreign forms in the Finnish subtitles are impossible to know for sure. However, the vivid and fast-paced dialogue in the series combined with the restrictions of AVT already create many challenges to the translator. Therefore, the prevalent use of retention as a translation strategy might be explained by temporal and spatial restrictions of subtitling as well as the familiarity of American popular culture in the Finnish TC. Most of the references also included a proper name, such as a name of a celebrity person. Thus, the recurrent use of actual persons' names in the references also partly explains why they were not translated in the Finnish subtitles. Additionally, these results follow the outcomes of the earlier studies made about the subject. For example, Kataja's thesis (2016) resulted in similar conclusions although her study concentrated on all cultural references in *Gilmore Girls*.

All in all, the references' functions in the original English dialogue varied. All the variables of the functions existed in the research material and the functions also overlapped in the examples in each category. One of the most commonly existing function was humour as the references were often used as means to lighten up the dialogue with irony or bring humour to a serious situation. As a consequence to the prevalent foreignizing strategy in the Finnish subtitles, the references' intended functions from the original dialogue conveyed to the target culture viewers only if the used popular culture references were familiar also in the Finnish target culture. If the popular culture references were domesticated in the subtitles, their original functions remained in the translations if the domesticated references included associations that were similar to the original references.

In conclusion, the results of the study show that foreignization, and especially retention, is the prevalent translation strategy for all popular culture categories throughout the seven seasons of the series. The ST oriented translation strategies can also have an effect on the

understanding of the references' meanings as the translator offers mostly no guidance to the viewers. However, the study did not include viewer interviews or test groups and, thus, it is impossible to state precise conclusions of the conveyance of the references' intended functions. Therefore, further research on the series could contain a reception study on how many of the retained references in the Finnish subtitles were understood among the TC viewers the same way as they were originally intended to.

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