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Localisation and Foreignization
in the English and Finnish Translations of *Nemi*

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tutkin norjalaissarjakuvaa ja sen kahta käännöstä: englanninnosta ja suomennosta. Halusin selvittää, missä määrin norjalaissarjakuvan suomenkielinen ja englanninkielinen käännös pyrkii lokalisoidaan tekstissä esiintyviä, kulttuurisia referenssejä. Olettamukseni oli, että englanninnos lokalisoi enemmän, sillä brittiläisten lukijoiden voidaan historiallisista syistä olettaa olevan herkempiä ulkomaisille referensseille käännöksessään.

Analyysissä hyödynsin Jan Pedersenin AV-kääntämistä varten luotua ekstralingvistisen kulttuurireferenssin (extralinguistic cultural reference, ECR) käsitettä sekä Jean-Pau Vinayn ja Jean Darbelnetin käännösstrategioiden jakoa. Näistä minulle tärkeimmät käännöstekniikat, joihin pyrin kiinnittämään analyysissäni huomiota, olivat lainaaminen (borrowing) sekä muokkaaminen (adaptation). Materiaalinani käytin *Nemin* norjalaisalbumia *Monstermaskinen*, josta arvoisin 57 strippiä analyysia varten. Näistä löysin 49 erilaista ECR:ää, joista kaikille löysin niiden englanninnokset ja 44:lle niiden suomennokset.

Lopputuloksenani huomasin, että vaikka englanninnos on kyllä innokkaampi lokalisointia käyttäjä, se myös lainasi referenssejä hyvin paljon. Tämä johtunee pitkälti materiaalissa olleista referensseistä, joiden alkuperä on anglo-amerikkalaisessa maailmassa jo ennestään. Molemmat käyttivät lokalisointia, mutta eri käännösstrategioin. Mielenkiintoista oli myös kustantamoiden tapa editoida pois kuvista tarinan kannalta tarpeettomat norjankieliset tekstit.

KEYWORDS: comics translation, translation strategies, localisation and foreignization, extralinguistic cultural references

1 INTRODUCTION

Humans have evolved no special adaptation for reading comics. Comics on the other hand have been gradually designed, culturally to appeal to evolved – gradually and naturally designed – cognitive preferences and designed so well that they appeal across cultures, to Japanese and French, to Fijians and Americans. (Boyd 2010: 98.)

Since their arrival, comics have appealed across cultures as Brian Boyd states in the citation above. Nevertheless, different cultural areas usually have their own comics, just as they tend to have their own jokes. The website Europe's Not Dead has listed a wide variety of European comics and their central character from a number of countries, which illustrates well just how different comics can be: there are private detectives (the Spanish *Mortadelo y Filemón*), a badly behaving schoolboy (*Dennis and Gnasher*, originally titled *Dennis the Menace* [NB! different from the US comic of the same name]), a Gothic young woman (the Norwegian *Nemi*), a small eyeglass-wearing bald man (the Finnish *Fingerpori*), an art historian, adventurer, writer, television producer and collector of unusual objects (the Italian *Martin mystère*), a goat (the Polish *Koziolatek Matolek* [*Matolek the Billy-Goat*]), as well as two birds (the Greek *Flying Starts*). (Europe's Not Dead 2020.) Although unique in each country, some have managed to enter the foreign markets in translation. Especially American comics spread early all over Europe, but European comics have also spread across borders: not only have they managed to get readers in other European countries but also in the UK and the USA. Many European comics have been successful abroad: the Spanish comic *Mortadelo y Filemón* is published in twelve countries, while the Norwegian *Nemi* has found a niche in both the UK and Ireland. There are also some comics that have become international property across continents. These include, for example, the Belgian *Tintin* and the French *Asterix*. Some comics are, however, seen to be so culture-specific that they have been considered untranslatable. A good case in point is the Finnish *Fingerpori* whose jokes are based on linguistic puns in Finnish.

Like literary and audio-visual texts, the movement of comics across linguistic and cultural borders in translation depend on a number of factors. It is easier for large language

cultures to attract publishers in smaller ones, but seldom the other way around. It is more difficult for Polish or Lithuanian comics to interest publishers in, say, countries with English, Spanish, or French as their language. English, Spanish or French comics do not, however, have a similar problem in Poland or Lithuania. Another factor is the universality of the stories or a shared common ground of cultural details. A billy-goat as the central character is less likely to gain readers than a young Goth with problems and anxieties similar to those of young adults in most modern societies. Other factors include the age and/or gender of the targeted readers (for example, *Nemi* appeals to young adults, the Finnish *Moomin* comics especially to children, and *Tex Willer* to boys and men). Finally, the comics market in any particular country also plays a role with regards to the quality, price, format, esteem, etc. of comics.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the travel of the Norwegian *Nemi* from a small language area to an equally small language area of the neighbouring country of Finland, but also to a large, rather self-sufficient linguistic and cultural market of the United Kingdom. In both markets, the young adult readers share enough common ground with the protagonist: in both language areas, the readers of *Nemi* are likely to be more interested in entertainment as well as in witty and clever observations concerning modern life and the world in general. The areas differ mainly in three respects: openness to translations, comics sales, and quality of comics. Finland – as well as other Nordic countries – have always been open to foreign texts: literature, music, films, television programmes (audio-visual material is subtitled, and the original foreign-language can be heard). The UK, and especially England, differs greatly from Finland in this. Secondly, the comics sales are organised differently in the two countries: in Finland comics are available in even the smallest kiosks and stores all over the country, whereas in England this is not the case. Instead, they tend to have specialised comic book shops. Thirdly, in Finland comics are published and targeted at different age groups and some are seen as being of high quality. In England, this is seldom the case: comics are seen as something for children and teenagers, with little literary value.

I have formulated my thesis hypothesis accordingly. I expect *Nemi* to be localised in both countries in order for its contents to be compatible with the life and world of the target

readers, but to different extents in the two translations. First, localisation is possible because the setting may not be essential to the story which allows for modifications. Secondly, foreignness in general would cause friction in the natural flow of the story and attract too much attention. Lastly, something as peripheral as Norwegian extralinguistic references would exceed the readers' threshold of tolerance. For example, names may become stumbling blocks if they are too foreign, in which case the reader may not be able to remember and recognise a particular character. The loci of foreignness may also be of importance: they might appear in speech balloons, captions, titles (including names), or in the linguistic paratext. I will discuss these in more detail below in Section 1.1.

The Norwegian *Nemi* is full of linguistic references to extralinguistic phenomena from popular culture in all forms of media. The reader often finds quotes from authors, musicians and movies, and familiarity with the sources may be relevant to understanding the story. As I pointed out above, I expect that *Nemi*'s Finnish readers are more accustomed to foreignness than its English readers (see the discussion of the Finnish comics market in Section 1.2); however, "Norwegian foreign" may be an exception as all foreign is not equally attractive. I would expect that the comics readers in the UK are less tolerant of foreign because of their cultural heritage of being self-sufficient at all literary and visual genres, and this will be emphasised if the "foreign" is not familiar. A great deal depends on the loci of the foreign, but on the readers and the market, above all. *Nemi*'s Facebook page claims that the background images and magazines the characters are reading (linguistic paratext) often remain clearly in Norwegian in the comic's English translation. Despite this, my assumptive hypothesis is that any strangeness that exceeds the threshold of tolerance – especially if it is not a relevant part of the story – and thus disrupts the reading experience will be removed, but this will be done more frequently and by using different translational techniques in the English translation than in the Finnish translation.

The basis of my material is the Norwegian compilation album *Nemi – Monstermaskinen* (Myhre 2010) and its 247 strips. I found the English translation for 163 of those strips, spread over four different English compilation albums (*Nemi I*, *Nemi II*, *Nemi III* and *Nemi IV*). For the present study, I chose every third strip of the 163 strips, resulting in 57

strips from which to identify extralinguistic cultural references (references to the setting of the story). Of these, I could find the Finnish translation for 53, spread over nine Finnish softcover albums published between 2005 and 2007.

In the original Norwegian material of 57 strips I identified 49 different extralinguistic cultural references, or ECRs. As the counterparts of some strips could not be located, the number of ECRs in English was 49 and in Finnish 44. In the analysis section of this study I give examples of the ECRs I found, and as giving full source references would clutter the essentials, I have used the following code. All Norwegian examples come from one source, *Monstermaskinen*, which I have abbreviated to “MM”. The English translation comes from one of the four English compilation albums and these I refer according to their original numbering: I, II, III and IV. After both the Norwegian and the English text I have given the page number for the strip and its translation. The Finnish softcover albums, however, do not have page numbers. As the Finnish publisher has retroactively added a numbering for each of the albums, I will use that numbering as my reference as listed below:

N5 = *Nemi*, spring 2005

N6 = *Nemi*, summer 2005

N7 = *Nemi*, autumn 2005

N8 = *Nemi*, winter 2006

N9 = *Nemi*, spring 2006, “Kevättä hampaissa”

N10 = *Nemi*, summer 2006, “Kesän kasvoja”

N11 = *Nemi*, autumn 2006, “Outoja lintuja”

N12 = *Nemi*, winter 2007, “Kivilinnojen katveessa”

N14 = *Nemi*, autumn 2007, “Lahjat jakoon”.

I identified the extralinguistic cultural references (ECRs) following the praxis in Jan Pedersen’s (2007) study of audio-visual texts and categorised them into four groups. However, while Pedersen (*ibid.*: 109) divides his ECRs into twelve main categories, my analysis benefitted from dividing the references into six categories: personal names, other proper names, government, entertainment, currency and other units, and finally those that do not fit these categories. A clear majority of the ECRs in my material were personal

names or references to entertainment: over half of the ECRs in both English (52 %) and Finnish (51 %) belonged to these two categories. Pedersen's categorisation will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

I am referring to the overall strategy of bringing the comics linguistically closer to its new readership *localisation*. In this I follow the Italian comics scholar Federico Zanettin (2008: 201), who has applied the definition by Localization Industry Standards Association (or, LISA) who define localisation as “taking a product and making it linguistically, technically, and culturally appropriate to the target locale where it will be used and sold” (citing Esselink 2003: 67). As Zanettin (*ibid.*: 203) sees it, ‘product’ emphasises the commercial aspect of localisation, while ‘locale’ underlies the physical localisation of end users. Localisation begins with an analysis of the market and the users’ needs, continues with the internationalisation process and ends with the product being localised. An internationalisation stage at the source end a localisation stage at the target end can often be clearly distinguished in the process leading to the production of translated comics. According to Zanettin (*ibid.*: 206), from this follows that the publication of a foreign comic can also be seen as an instance of localisation in that it involves not only linguistic translation but also the adaptation of the visual and cultural information as well as technical constraints.

In order to identify the cline in the Finnish and English translations of *Nemi* between localisation in the new surrounding for the target readers or keeping the stories clearly foreign, I have made use of the translation techniques originally designed by Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet in 1958, and more recently updated in the translation of their original French work *Stylistique compare du français et de l'anglais: Méthode de traduction* into English as *Comparative Stylistics of French and English* in 1995. Although modified later, Vinay and Darbelnet's original classification serves well as the linguistic approach to the study of the translations of *Nemi*. The degree of localisation is firstly determined to follow either direct translation procedures (where the translation is as close to the source text as possible, even at the cost of the translation's fluency) or the oblique (free) ones, transplanting the text in its new surroundings. Although Vinay and Darbelnet included in their study all three levels of style – that is, lexis, distribution

(morphology and syntax) and message – my concern will be entirely on the lexical procedures.

In what follows, I will include discussions on the terminology applied in the analyses of comics in various studies and accounts, a brief history of comics, and then I narrow the scope to the comics industry and the markets in Finland and in England, the two destinations of the *Nemi* translations in the present study.

1.1 What Are Comics?

In the term *comics* we see how slippery it can be to define: a wide range of terms is used to refer to this art for both intralingually and interlingually. Zanettin (2004: 1) illustrates this with the range of words in English that are currently used to refer even to the different points of view to the genre. ‘Comic strips’, ‘cartoons’, ‘vignettes’, ‘graphic novels’ or ‘the funnies’ may refer to the format and/or to the medium of transmission (that is, the book form, periodical, illustrations, moving pictures, etc.). While these terms are used intralingually, interlingually the words ‘comics’, ‘fumetti’, ‘bande dessinée’, ‘manga’, ‘tebeos’, ‘banda desenhada’ and so on point to the different aspect of comics. As Zanettin (*ibid.*, referring to Sabin 1993¹ for further information) explains it, the English word ‘comics’ has its roots in the comical and humorous strips which began to be published almost a century ago in American newspapers. The Italian ‘fumetti’, on the other hand, refers to the speech balloons (as well as perhaps to the projected “lightness” of the subjects) which were introduced by Italian publishers of American comics in the 1930s (*ibid.*, referring to Laura 1997²). ‘Bande dessinée’ refers to the modality of production and consumption, to the sequential reading of scrolls and drawings. ‘Manga’ is used in the West to refer to Japanese comics, while in Japan the word can also refer to animated pictures known as ‘anime’. Each lingua or culture has its preferred publishing format such as the comic book in the USA, the album in France, the tokabon in Japan, etc. (*ibid.*, citing

¹ Sabin, Roger (1993). *Adult Comics*. London & New York: Routledge.

² Laura, Ernesto G. (1997). *Gli anni de L’AVVENTUROSO*. Firenze: Nerbini.

Rota 2004³). The two core characteristics of comics are that they are usually printed paper objects and that there are two or more panels. They are not a medium in the same sense as print, TV, radio, etc. are media. Rather, they use print as a medium and could better be defined as a type of media discourse which cuts across the traditional borders of media types. (Ibid.: 4.)

I admit that the terms comics and cartoons can be used interchangeably, as shown in the following definition given by the Merriam-Webster online dictionary (2020) to *cartoon* (definition A):

1. a drawing, as in a newspaper, caricaturing or symbolizing, often satirically, some event, situation, or person of topical interest
2. a full-size preliminary sketch of a design or picture to be copied in a fresco, tapestry, etc.
 - a) a humorous drawing, often with a caption
 - b) comic strip
3. animated cartoon

However, as the second definition for *cartoon* (definition B) is primarily taken to refer to a drawing, especially in a newspaper or a magazine, that tells a joke or makes an amusing political criticism, I prefer the term *comics* as they come in strips and – when combined – can construct longer stories than an individual cartoon.

In the present study, the term *comics* will, however, be defined as a sequence of images; a kind of (oral) storytelling or a narrative which also has similarities with film. The description originates from Boyd (2010: 89), who has described the distinction between oral storytelling and the beginnings of visual sequential narratives with a number of characteristics for each of them. According to Boyd (ibid.: 89), the most important limitations of oral storytelling is that it is restricted to a single channel (language) and that it disappears once the story has been told. A visual text can tell a story in a non-serial and durable form. When it is combined with print and writing, it also appeals to many sensorial channels. Boyd's definition can be complemented with Zanettin's (2008: 13) addition, according to which comics differ from other forms of visual communication such as photography and painting in that they are formed by the juxtaposition of at least

³ Rota, Valerio (2004). *La marca dello straniero. Fumetti tradotti e alterità*. Mottolo: Lilliput.

two panels (or frames), with or without words, in a sequence. The gap between images creates the story and the readers are expected to fill that in on the basis of their expectations and world knowledge. You can see this happening in the comment given to the following Nemi strip on the comic's official Facebook page that publishes Nemi strips in both Norwegian and in English (Nemi.no 2020):



Figure 1. Is something wrong? (Nemi.no 2020)

One reader has commented this strip: “getting mad when people telling me i look mad, because how could i possible know my own feelings and they surely did know better just from looking at me... that makes me mad...” This shows that the reader has related to the story through their own experiences. The white gaps break up the story into individual moments, but the reader fills in the missing information: the woman who asks the question is getting concerned, but will not take no for an answer which makes Ophelia (the blond-haired woman) adjust her expression to the irritation she feels, which then leads to Nemi repeating the original question.

The above strip (Figure 1.) also shows some of the constituents of a comic strip, although different scholars tend to label them somewhat differently. For example, the Italian scholar Nadine Celotti (2008: 38) identifies four different loci of verbal messages in comic strips. According to her, the balloons are the most important place where spoken language appears in the strips. The text can also appear outside the balloon as shown in the first panel in the strip above (Figure 1.): in *Nemi*, the loci of spoken language are commonly divided between balloons and the background. Overlapping balloons indicate

the speed of conversation (see the third panel of Figure 1.), whereas cloudlike balloons suggest an inner monologue (ibid.: 38). This is illustrated in the third panel of Figure 2. As emphasised in *Comic Book Glossary* (2020), the inner monologue or thoughts are something that other characters do not see nor hear.



Figure 2. Example of inner monologue (*Comic Book Glossary* 2020).

In Figure 2., Garfield is thinking of something related to what he has just seen: a tempting roll, set out by a coyote in order to catch Garfield just when he is snatching it. The coyote is, however, clearly visible in the bushes behind the roll and this – along with the sign – gives rise to Garfield’s thought of the coyotes not being very clever around here. Moreover, there is no-one else in the picture.

Figure 3. illustrates the use of *captions*, a term which Celotti (2008: 38) defines as text that marks changes in time and space but that can also include commentaries connected with the pictures. In this strip the caption text comments on the relationship between Nemi and an unnamed man in business attire standing next to her: both clearly regard the other as weird.



Figure 3. Everybody is somebody else’s weird (Nemi.no 2020).

In a recently published *Tex Willer* (the Italian Western comic), a panel depicts an evening on an eerie farm. The caption, “Muutaman minuutin päässä joitain tunteja myöhemmin...” (literally, “A few minutes away, some hours later...”) indicates a change both in time and in space. (*Tex Willer* 2020: 22.) Captions are usually at the top or bottom of the panel, as illustrated in Figure 4.:

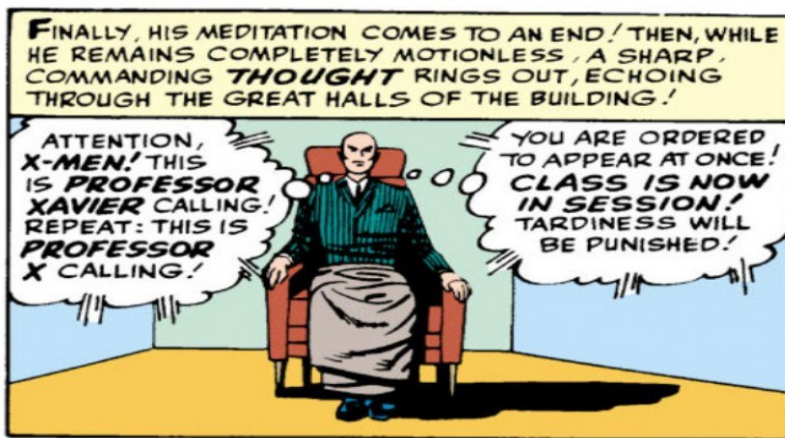


Figure 4. Location of captions (Greer 2015).

According to Celotti (2008: 39), linguistic paratext opens up many possibilities for the translator. They can localise the text, leave it as it is in its foreign form, or even delete it, depending on how important they are to the story. These paratexts are situated outside the balloon but inside the drawing and they include inscriptions, road signs, newspapers, onomatopoeia, etc, sometimes even dialogues. They can have both visual and verbal functions, and they may form an integral part of the story. There are also other paratexts

which can tell us about the social, cultural or geographic context; some paratexts can make jokes or puns. Figure 5. is an example of open text which invites a multiplicity of readings. Nemi is sitting among a number of objects relating to famous speculative fiction movies in popular culture (such as Gizmo from *Gremlins*, R2-D2 from *Star Wars*, and the DeLorean from *Back to the Future*). There is also a pile of books in front of Nemi, with titles such as *The Princess Bride*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Sandman* and *Frankenstein*. The panel itself is not self-contained and needs to be seen in the context of the entire story.



Figure 5. Nemi and paratext references (Nemi.no 2020).

The last loci of text in comics according to Celotti (2008: 38) are titles which are among the first signs to attract the readers' attention. Their translation as well as the original forms vary from time to time and from one market to another; for example, the history of Finnish comics shows the changing preferences from localisation to the retention of foreign titles. Klaus Kaindl (2010: 38) identifies titles as one of the challenges in comics translation and has found a clear trend in the treatment of title in European translation tradition: in the first half of the 20th century they were localised, and now they are usually kept in their original form.

Kaindl's categorisation of functional linguistic categories in comics overlaps with Celotti's loci of verbal text to some extent, but Kaindl's approach is different as his

starting point is the functions. According to him (Kaindl 2010: 38), *dialogue boxes* (cf. Celotti's *balloons*) construct the temporal dimension and through typographical means they create the characters' language on social, emotional and psychological levels. The following image (Figure 6.) illustrates the typographical means employed in *Nemi* to express a strong emotional response:



Figure 6. Typographical means of expressing emotion (Nemi.no 2020).

Both the font size and the bolding indicate a raised voice and irritation verging on anger. The visual means (such as giving the speech balloon jagged edges and having a somewhat random assortment of symbols interrupting the text in a place that could conveniently be replaced by expletives) complement this by suggesting the use of swearing.

Kaindl (2010: 38) further distinguishes the functions of narrations, inscriptions and onomatopoeia. *Narrations* create the context both temporally and spatially between the panels and thus control the understanding of the panels. Traditions concerning time between the panels, Kaindl found, vary with a short time in the German tradition to the longer ones in American traditions. *Inscriptions* (cf. Celotti's *linguistic paratext*) are inserted in the image and they can refer to the temporal, local or atmospheric frame of the plot and sometimes serve to verbally communicate entire plot sequences. Finally, *onomatopoeia* is used to visualise the acoustic dimension and include, for example, conventionalised animal sounds and interjections. There is also a non-conventionalised imitation of forms, that is, sound imitations and descriptions such as "SWISHSHHHH" to describe the swishing sound made by a whip (Tex Willer 2020: 29).

Apart from Celotti's loci of verbal text and Kaindl's linguistic functions of the text, a comics researcher must bear in mind that comics are a multimodal text, a combination of text and picture. As Kaindl (2010: 39) expresses it, the verbal and the visual can affirm, supplement, or contradict one another in terms of their readings, or they can focus the reader on a certain aspect of the story. For example, verbal puns can be supported by non-verbal signs, the puns can depend on them, or the linguistic sign can only support the non-verbal sign. In this case the pun can be understood without the picture, or the visual verbal relation can be of little importance. The typographical design can serve several functions: sounds and intonations can express emotions, commands and human psychology depending on what font is used, what the proportions of the letters are, how the shapes are designed, how the letters run and slope, which direction the letters are read, and what colours are used for the letters. (Kaindl 2010: 39.)

Apart from Celotti's and Kaidl's analyses of the constituent parts of comics, a few more terms sometimes appear when discussing comics. A *camera angle* refers to the angle that the author uses to depict the character. It can be at the eye level (noticing the character's expression) or from a distance (which gives the impression of eavesdropping). The space between the panels (already discussed above) is known as the *gutter*. Indeed, what is left out is as important as what is included, and the gutter involves the reader because they must guess what happens between the panels. The third important element from various lists of constituents would be the *punch line*: this offers the reader a moment of comic relief. Depending on the context, a punch line can comment life, tell a story or seek a good laugh. The punch line is usually the final line of a joke in the final panel (Philpot Education 2020).

The final issue in this section is the publication format of comics. The formats have developed gradually from a simple comic script to a *comic magazine* (sometimes also termed *comic book*). It is easy to understand why comics started appearing in public as comic strips as these carried an insignificant economic risk, for example, for newspapers. Newspapers were also a good ground for testing their popularity. As strips they do not take much space in the paper, as they usually consist of a series of three or four panels that tell a story with one or more characters. (Zanettin 2008: 1.)

Comic strips began appearing in American newspapers and magazines in the late 1800s and their history is closely linked with the emergence of mass media, the new means of mass production and an increase in the readership of printed media. They first appeared in Sunday pull-out supplements in large-print newspapers which were expected to have only humorous content. They were “the Sunday funnies”, a title which was later turned into the term comics. (Zanettin 2008: 1.)

Nemi, the material of the present study, also started as a comic strip in Norway where the artist Lise Myhre first published her strips in *Galne Verden*, the Norwegian version of *The Far Side* which was a famous comics magazine by the American cartoonist Gary Larson. In 1997 Myhre was given her own page on the magazine and this developed into *Nemi*. *Nemi* first appeared as a guest cartoon in the Norwegian newspaper Dagbladet in 1999 and gained a regular place the following year. *Nemi* came to Finland in 2003 when it was published in the tabloid Ilta-Sanomat, where it still continues to appear weekly. Additionally, it is also published once a week in the free city newspaper *Metro*. *Nemi* also appears as comic strips in the big newspapers in Sweden and Denmark as well as its home country of Norway. (*Nemi saapastelee Suomeen* 2003.) In England and Ireland *Nemi* strips were printed daily in the *Metro* newspaper until 2016 (*Nemi – ThorNews* 2020).

If comic strips attract readers and draw attention to themselves in, for example, reviews, they can take the next step towards a collection in a magazine, which carries an economic risk for the publisher. The first collection of comic strips was published in a magazine format as a comic book in the United States in the early 1930s. The first comic book was the *Funnies on Parade* which featured a collection of comic strips that had been published earlier in a magazine format. In 1935, *New Fun Comics* became the first comic book to contain all new art and stories. (Scholastic 2020.)

Comic books, or magazines, use a series of pictures and usually also words to tell stories. They may feature a single long story or several shorter stories about a single set of characters. Comic books are typically published on a regular basis (such as once a month, every two months, or once a year). For example, *Nemi* typically consists of short stories

that fit in a single strip. Occasionally these strips may get independent sequels, and sometimes there are stories of nine panels on one page. *Nemi* can also have strips without the titular character or her established friends: in a recent *Nemi* album (Myhre 2020) there was a one-page story showing a wolf with her cubs wondering how humans can have such a different view of beauty as they watched an arrogant-looking woman in a fur collar.

It should also be noted that the terminology concerning the publication formats of comic strips is somewhat different in the US and in Europe, in addition to the variations between individual countries within these areas. The American term comic book would in Europe be referred to as a comic magazine. In the large European markets, weekly comic magazines have become the most important market for comic art, and first they were often published as supplements to newspapers. Only later did they develop into independent magazines. In European terminology, a *comic magazine* means a stapled product, which can consist of works by one or more authors and have one story or a story can be divided into several parts. Magazines usually have advertisements. A *comic book*, on the other hand, is like a book and does not have advertisements. An *album* is glued (as opposed to stapled) and usually has a long story, published as a book. If an album has works by multiple authors, it is called an *anthology*. (Zanettin 2008:3.) According to Finnish terminology, however, *Nemi*'s Finnish publication format of glued softcovers are called albums, published three to four times a year.

A *graphic novel* is similar to an album, but it has no restrictions concerning the number of pages or chapters. Graphic novels have become more and more popular in the United States over the last decade and a half. The term itself was coined by Will Eisner, a famous American cartoonist who moved from short stories towards graphic novels in the 1970s, who wanted to combine two words which both carry a positive meaning. (Couch 2000.)

Nemi belongs to a humorous genre of comics, but it also has a sharper edge verging on political and social satire. In this it follows Zanettin's (2008: 6) categorisation of comics into roughly three main supergenres. Comedy evolves usually around funny animals (e.g. Disney characters), children (e.g. *Peanuts*, *Calvin and Hobbes*) and pets (*Garfield*). There are, however, humorous comics of the comedy genre targeted at adults which range from

a political and social satire to gag and slapstick humour. The supergenre of the epic involves crime and detective fiction, horror, science fiction, romance, war, sports, adventures in exotic and historical settings, erotica and serious graphic novel. Finally, there is the supergenre of tragedy: this is the most recent development, originating from Japan and the US. In addition to these, there are also educational comic that can teach history, religion, politics, proper behaviour and adherence to moral rules, and they can be used, for instance, as source material when teaching foreign languages. Zanettin emphasises in particular the importance of educational comics in countries where illiteracy rates are high. (Zanettin 2008: 6–7.)

1.2 A Brief History of Comics and Their Translations in Comics Markets

Roots for comics as an art form can be seen to stretch from pre-historic times to our contemporary comics websites. For example, Zanettin (2008: 1) sees pre-historic cave paintings, carved Roman columns, painted glass windows of Medieval churches, and 21st century websites as a continuum of sequential art. He points out, however, that the history of comics is usually said to have started in the 19th century United States. This negates many European examples from before that: for example, European broadsheets of the 16th century could be seen as early versions of comic books as they used both text and illustrations to make their point, or the satirical magazines of the 1780s where we can find the first recorded examples of “dialogue balloons” (Petty 2006).

The first comics character in the 19th century USA was the Yellow Kid, in the single-panel humour cartoon *Hogan’s Alley* which described the mischief and tricks of young adolescents. It was drawn by Richard F. Outcault and published for the first time in 1895 or 1896 in the *New York World*. It remained popular throughout the first few decades of the 20th century. (Petty 2006.) Zanettin (2008: 1) describes *Hogan’s Alley* and the Yellow Kid as the first cartoon to be printed in full colour and to contain dialogues within balloons in the pictures. It was also economically viable and showed that comics could be sold profitably. The Sunday funnies can be thanked for creating preparing the ground for future comics industry by creating a readership. Accordingly, Zanettin continues, the

Sunday funnies were followed by daily strips in black and white. The strips were later collected and published together as a comic book. The first comic book was *Funnies on Parade* from 1933, which was mainly a collection of newspaper strip reprints (Petty 2006.) Although this took place in the United States, comics rapidly travelled around the world through translations, and they also merged with other national traditions.

According to Petty (2006), the comic book industry in the US received a much-needed boost with the publication of action comics in 1938. The first comic to present all-new material was *Superman: The Man of Steel*. *Superman* was an immediate success which transformed the entire comic book industry. Petty sees the great wave of immigration as the reason for *Superman*'s instant popularity in the late 1930s: people were coming to America all over the world to pursue the American dream. Superman, as the last survivor of the planet Krypton, was the ultimate immigrant. It was quite common for children to be separated from their parents during this time, either in the home country or once they got to the US: this feeling of both uncertainty and adventure is what the authors of *Superman*, both sons of European immigrants, drew into their strange vision from another planet. (Petty 2006.)

European comics had also their own root back in the 19th century and, depending on the definition of comics, appeared even earlier than their American counterparts. The most famous European “proto-comic” came from Switzerland and Germany when the Swiss Rudolph Töpfer (1799–1846) published the first series of illustrated comedies in 1837 and the German Wilhelm Busch (1832–1908) published the illustrated stories *Max und Moritz* (written in verse) in 1865. The latter also inspired the American comic strip *Katzenjammer Kids* (Zanettin 2008: 1–2.) It is noticeable that both authors illustrated stories rather than started from the illustrations, letting them tell the story.

The readership and the quality of the production process have largely decided on the status of comics. There are great differences in the attitudes towards comics and in the actual artwork between England and Finland, the two markets involved in the present study. Especially when the American Golden Age began to draw to a close in the 1950s, both strips and books began to deteriorate in quality. The quality was pulled down further

by the arrival of the censorship as comics were seen to have a bad influence on the youth. (Zanettin 2008: 2–3.)

European comic books and magazines did not only contain translations of American comics, but also stories by native authors. They partly continued with the American adventure themes and genres, but they also introduced new ones. France, Belgium and Italy were especially the countries where comics reached the widest readership as well as cultural recognition. Their themes extended well beyond the imagery of children and adolescents. Original comics, French in particular, were translated into other European languages, thus rivalling the influx of American comics. In the 1960 and 1970s a new type of comic was introduced, targeting educated adults rather than the popular readership. (Zanettin 2008: 3.)

Overall, European attitudes towards comics as well as their status as a respectable art form differs from those in most parts of the world. Although there are significant comic traditions especially in the US and in Japan, in Europe the form has become culturally respectable in a very different way. While there are many comic traditions in Europe, the comics market is still unified here: European comics share properties such as cultural status and underlying economics. Of all European countries, the UK is an exception. In Europe the artwork has as a rule been of very good quality, while – until very recently – this has been almost unheard of in both the UK and the US. (Sabin 1998: 14–15.)

Of European comics both *Tintin* (since the 1930s) and *Asterix* (since the 1950s) have enjoyed great success and popularity in the UK and the US, while translations of the American Disney comics have been famous and popular in Europe. *Lucky Luke* (from France), *Blake and Mortimer* (from Belgium), and *Smurfs* (from the Netherlands) have also had a significant readership in different parts of Europe. Europeans tend to read comics throughout their lives and the fans are of all age groups. This is clear in annual comics festivals, such as Angoulême International Comics Festival in France, Chanjartoon International Comics Festival in Greece, Tampere Kuplii in Finland, and so on where people of various backgrounds come together. In the UK and the US, however, there is a clear cut-off point in interest before adulthood. (Sabin 1998: 1–17.) This might

be changing, as shown by large comics festivals devoted to comic art such as Thought Bubble in Leeds (Thought Bubble 2019).

The history of British cartooning has not attracted much attention for reasons which have been very obvious. The quality has not been good, and the readership has mostly consisted of children and adolescents. Keith Worcester (2012) traces the history of British cartooning and thereby comics to the satirical print artists like William Hogarth (1697–1764) and George Cruikshank (1792–1878) as well as to some illustrated magazines such as *Punch*, the *Illustrated London News*, and *Pictorial Times*. As the first comic strip character he names Ally Sloper who appeared in the magazine *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday* drawn by the artist Ally Sloper and launched in 1884. The comic strip enjoyed great popularity and was followed by franchising which included mugs, watches and postcards. Other comic magazines of the same period included *Illustrated Chips*, *Comic Cuts*, *Boy's Comic Journal*, *Scraps* and *Tit-Bits*, which established the direction for British comics until the early 20th century.

According to Worcester (2012), upmarket newspapers foregrounded satirical imagery of respected editorial cartoonists, whereas most of the comic art appeared in humorous or adventure-oriented weekly or monthly magazines. These were targeted at children which then influenced their comparatively low status. The comics genre was seen as consisting of gag cartoons, comic strips and one- or two-page illustrated stories in cheaply printed comics magazines. Although a typical comic strip was short and witty, there were also war comics that were an important addition to the industry. While the American comics industry was completely changed by the appearance of the superhero and crime genres, the British comics industry would still think of titles like *The Beano* (1937 to present) and *The Dandy* (1937–2012) as a typical comics magazine. Publishers started increasingly investing in younger readers, as Worcester expresses it, and by the turn of the 20th century the readership of comics was entirely made up of children, teenagers and young adults. The papers and magazines included titles such as *Funny Wonder*, *Puck Junior*, and *Chuckles* (the last one aimed at young children) targeting young male readers. Gradually a range of illustrated periodicals, such as *Girl's Crystal* and *Schoolgirl's Weekly*, were

directed at girls. This, in turn, paved the way for the more recent girls' comics such as *Bunty* (1958–2001) and *Jackie* (1964–1993). (Worcester 2012.)

According to Worcester (2012), comics like *The Beano* differ greatly from its American counterparts. Thematically, British comics can describe a world of social inequalities and class tensions with poverty as the constant backdrop. They also allow transgressions against adults. Typically organised around one-page graphic stories that feature recurring stock characters, *The Beano* and others like it prefer fantastic plot resolutions over fantasy settings, with school children getting the edge over authority figures. However, comics aimed at girls tend to be less rebellious in tone. (Worcester 2012.)

At the same time, some of the UK's most popular comics were focusing on war, space exploration, and sport. One of the most historically significant British comics was *Eagle*, which appeared between 1950–1969, it was created by a Southport clergyman and a former Royal Air Force chaplain as a “wholesome British alternative” to American comics. Its most popular strip was *Dan Dare: Pilot of the Future*, but it also included sport, crime, and Western comic strips. The success of *Dan Dare* inspired several other stories, such as *Rocket* which advertised itself as “the first space-age weekly”. Comics that depicted British soldiers in action included *Ace Malloy* and *War Picture Library*. Unlike their American counterparts, British superheroes were dads, uncles and grandfathers. (Worcester 2012.)

The Finnish comics industry did not really begin till the 20th century. The 1920s were a Golden Age of Finnish comics, especially with the publication of *Pekka Puupää* (Pekka Woodhead) by Jalmari Finne in 1925. This comic became a significant enough milestone in Finnish comics history, and to date, the annual comics award is called the Puupää Award, with the trophy shaped like the main character's distinctive hat. During the 1930s, the influence of American comics and American entertainment industry at large began to be visible also in Finnish comics, and there was a shift from everyday humour towards adventure narratives, and the text was moved from captions into the pictures and speech bubbles. (Jokinen 2011: 19–21.)

As comics were seen as for children, people (mainly various children's advocacy groups and pedagogic societies) began to raise questions on their supposed negative effects: there were concerns how comics affected children's literacy and how they could encourage immoral or even violent behaviour. This discussion was global, taking place in various countries in the mid-1900s, and the arguments against comics were similar everywhere. (Kauranen 2011: 35–36.) In the United States it resulted in the introduction of the Comics Code in 1954, a set of rules for comics creators restricting the imagery, themes and language they could use. In Finland, however, no such Code or legislative bans ever became reality though they were suggested. (Ibid: 48.) The discussion, sometimes dubbed "the comics panic", eventually died out when various attempts at creating a set of criteria for appropriate content bore no fruit (Ibid: 51).

During the late 1960s and early 1970s a remarkable cultural shift took place in Finnish comics. There was an increase in the number of overall publications, boosted by a booming underground movement, as well as in the number of Finnish comics published in newspapers. The Finnish Comics Society was founded, and they are publishing *Sarjainfo*, a comics magazine which focuses on the comics industry, its past and present and publishes news, reviews as well as interviews with both Finnish and foreign comics authors. The first issue of the journal was published in 1972 and since 1979, they have been involved in organising an annual comics festival. (Jokinen 2011: 26–28.) In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the number of both Finnish and foreign publications rose significantly because of the advancement in commercial printing technique. This led to more influence coming from abroad, and artists were also free to print and sell their work independently outside syndicates. During this time the first publishing houses specialising in comics were founded in Finland, and more Finnish comics were published abroad. This is also the first time comics were reviewed in newspapers, alongside the more traditional art forms. (Jokinen 2011: 29–30.)

Translated comics came to Finland in 1949 when a magazine publishing only foreign comics started appearing (Jokinen 2011: 21–23). These strips included Buffalo Bill, a stereotypically masculine man who would fight a pack of wolves using one of the wolves as a bludgeoning tool (Lucchesi 2012). The other two magazines that started around the

same time were *Sarjakuvalehti* and *Seikkailusta seikkailuun*. At first, all were published for a couple of years only and then revived later. *Sarjakuvalehti* first included serials but changed later to full-length stories. The heroes in the magazine were Flash Gordon (a sci-fi hero from 1930's, called "The King of the Impossible" for his courageous deeds), Mandrake (Mandrake the Magician), Mustanaamio (Phantom), and Ratsupoliisi King (King of the Royal Mounted, originally from America 1935). Apart from Phantom which became 'a black-masked man' in Finnish, the others kept the character names and the setting. The other magazine, *Seikkailusta seikkailuun*, contained among others *Kalle Kekseliäs* ('clever Kalle', originally probably *The Yellow Kid*) and *Merirosvojen saalis* ('The Pirates' Treasure') (Asikainen 2020.) Other titles included Rudolph Töpffer's Monsieur Cryptogame, who became Herra Koipeliini ('Mr Longlegs') with his siblings Hurja and Herra Lihakas ('The wild one' and 'Mr Muscle') and Kalle Kehveli (Snuffy Smith) from the American comics Barney Google and Snuffy Smith, originally called Take Barney Google, F'rinstance). (Ronkainen 2018: 9.)

As the above titles show, the translation praxis of magazine titles and main characters varied between localisation and direct translation (or foreignization). In 1952, the still ongoing magazine with the localised title *Aku Ankka* (*Donald Duck*) started its continuing popularity in Finland, and the following year came *Tex* (later, *Tex Willer*). Willer was soon followed by *Korkeajännityssarja* (later, *Korkeajännitys*; originally the *Commando* series), which deals with war themes, especially World War II, from the British point of view. *Pecos Bill*, an Italo-Western style Texan hero enjoyed its golden age in Finland in the 1950s and retained a stable readership for over ten years. Between 195 and 1959 a total of 24 new comics magazines began to be published in Finland, and by 1966 there were 33 different comics magazines on the market. However, the introduction of the television quickly brought the numbers down, although in the mid-1970s the number peaked at 55 magazines. (Asikainen 2020.) Of the magazines mentioned above, *Aku Ankka*, *Korkeajännitys* and *Tex Willer* are still in print and sold in stores. *Tex Willer*, for instance, has remained fairly unchanged over the years: it includes derogatory language that no-one would publish these days (Kangassalo 2018), while *Aku Ankka* has adapted to include modern objects and phrases.

In Finnish comics translation, localisation took place partly through character names and partly through place names, and these appeared in titles. However, many kept their original titles and settings. The locale is also created through character names so some of these were also kept in the Finnish translations.

The sales as a measure of the popularity of comics depends largely on the demand but also on the supply. There are great differences in the availability of comics between the two markets of Finland and England, which are the focus of the present study of translation as a way of targeting a readership.

The comics sellers have been having difficulties in most countries, and the sales have tended to drop in recent years. According to Barnett (2019), a large number of comic book shop closures have been reported both in the UK and the US, in addition to the unreported closures. Barnett remarks that the days when the latest issue of Spider-Man or Batman could just be found from the newsagent's shelves were long gone, and not all young people even know where they could buy comics if they wanted to. The reason why comics shops are closing down can be found in diminishing sales and high running costs. It is also very difficult to predict what will sell, and comics are not returnable unlike the collected editions, which are available in bookshops or on Amazon. With titles as numerous as 600 to 1,000, it is difficult to guess what will sell, and retailers rely on pre-orders. Being unable to return comics leads to less risk-taking on unknown names and taking a risk on new work by unknown creators can end up being very costly. (Barnett 2019.)

Also, the sales of comics are nowhere near the numbers of the 1960s and 1970s, and they are only a fraction of what they were. Many UK comics are full of American reprints, and most titles in newsagents are merchandise-related publications with mostly feature-based content and not really comics at all. The following picture is of the "comics" section in the supermarket Morrison's in the town of Aldershot in Hampshire about 50 kilometres from London and a population of around 36,000 people. As can be seen in the picture below (Figure 7.), there are no comics magazines as we understand them, but instead magazines with features and enclosed merchandise. There are no *Donald Ducks* there,

nor are there copies of *The Beano* this time. Apart from *The Beano*, comics need to be bought from special comics shops, but these too are becoming rarer with the prevalence of online shopping.



Figure 7. Comics section at Morrison's in Aldershot, Hampshire. (Picture: Omar Dadouch, 2019)

In Finland, the comics shelves are dominated by *Aku Ankka* (*Donald Duck*) and manga as can be seen in the image below (Figure 8.).



Figure 8. Finnish comics shelf. (Kvaak.fi 2020)

In recent years, publishers have actively promoted subscription sales which used to be a small part of their income revenue. For example, the number of *The Beano* subscribers used to be minimal, whereas the Audit Bureau of Circulation, or ABC, data suggests that in recent years the high percentage of readers subscribing to the magazine is key to its

new success. By 2019, sales of the title were once more an average of over 45,000 copies per issue after a near disastrous fall-off some years ago. (Freeman 2020.)

In Finland, comics and graphic novels are much more easily available than in England, and supermarket comics sections offer more than merely *Aku Ankka* (not at all sold in English supermarkets) although the translated Donald Duck pocketbooks dominate all comics shelves. Still, there are always copies of, for example, *Tex Willer*, *Lucky Luke*, *Korkeajännitys* and *Moomins* magazines and albums as well as several issues of manga. The selection also indicates that the magazines are designed for a more varied target audience than the traditional children and/or teenagers. Bookstores, then, carry many high-quality, hardcover compilation albums printed in colour, which positions Finland with the rest of Europe, apart from the United Kingdom, as Sabin (1998: 14) notes. “These comics are not intended to be read and thrown away after one sitting, but to be kept on bookshelves and returned to.” (ibid. 15.)

Despite the visible display and availability of comics in supermarket and newspaper kiosks, the comics market has suffered from falling sales figures in Finland as well. The fall started in 2013 when the sales had dropped 19.7 per cent from the previous year. In 2017, the sales fell 16.5 per cent less than the year before. The best-selling comics book was *Aku Ankka* no 449,5 which sold over 37.000 copies, while ten years earlier, the best-selling *Aku Ankka* comic book sold over 107.000 copies (STT 2018). Nevertheless, *Aku Ankka* is by far the best-selling comics book in Finland. According to the official statistics of the sales of comics from 2017, among the top 20 best-selling translated titles, there was only one not part of the Disney empire, namely *Asterix 37: Kilpa-ajo halki Italian* (‘A race-drive through Italy’). As mentioned, the first place was held by *Aku Ankka* pocketbook no. 449.5 which sold all in all 37.325 copies, while the 20th and last one sold 10.899 copies. At the same time, the best-selling Finnish comics magazine *Fingerpori 10* sold 10.800 copies and *Fingerpori 1*, which was the twentieth on the list sold 1.600 copies. There were nine authors involved in creating the top 20 Finnish comics. (Kustantajat 2017.) The sales figures show that Finland still remains largely dependent on foreign comics and their translations.

Translated comics have exercised influence on almost all national comics traditions all over the world, and their translation has made it possible for Finns to read Italian comics, the English to read Japanese manga, the Americans to read French comics, and all three to read Norwegian comics magazine *Nemi*. Comics were neglected for long as a worthy research topic, because of prejudices about its poor quality. It was also for long seen as humorous light entertainment for the masses and therefore not suitable for academic study. The situation has changed dramatically in recent years, and the final section of Introduction discusses some recent trends in the study of comics.

Nemi, whose translations form the material of the present study, has been exported in translation from its home country Norway to both Finland and England. It is an exceptional comics magazine in that although it comes from a very small and peripheral language culture it has still managed to find its place in many foreign comics markets. It has been translated into more than ten languages and published in magazines in, for example, Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, England, USA, Denmark, Finland and Sweden. (Nemi – ThorNews 2020).

2 EXTRALINGUISTIC CULTURAL REFERENCES AND THEIR LOCI IN COMICS

Keeping company to Pedersen's ECRs are a wide range of paradigms that have been developed for the study of translation of cultural concepts, most notably by researchers/translation teachers such as Peter Newmark (cultural categories), Birgit Nedergaard-Larsen (Extralinguistic Cultural References), Pekka Kujamäki (References for Realia), and Rosell Steurer (Culture-Specific Characteristics) (listed in Tallberg-Nygård 2017: 66–71). Of the above scholars, Pedersen developed his methodological framework for audio-visual translation, and as both subtitling and comics are restricted by spatial limits (lines of subtitles allowed vs. speech bubbles and/or the size of the panel), both also benefit from their visual constituent. Both can be seen as semiological systems, and text and image in them have such a strong connection that it influences the choice of translation technique as well. Because of these similarities, Pedersen's categorisation of ECRs was adopted for the present study.

Pedersen (2007: 91) defines Extralinguistic Cultural References as "references to places, people, institutions, customs, food etc. that you may not know even if you know the language". One could also call them realia but ECR as a term, Pedersen argues, is less ambiguous and vague when interpretations are concerned; it has no preformed opinions related to it, and it is fairly self-explanatory with regards to its meaning. Realia, on the other hand, would not include fictional references whose translation can be as challenging as that of non-fictional references. (Ibid.: 92.)

While 'extralinguistic' in ECR refers to objects (signified) outside language, not everything outside language is covered by the term. It should also be noted that the word 'extralinguistic' does not equate to 'non-verbal': by necessity, extralinguistic references are made verbally. (Pedersen 2007: 94–96) The term 'cultural' is also a complex concept, but the discussion about that is regarded as lying beyond the scope of the present study. Reference is here seen to include both nouns and other word classes as referents. In short, ECRs are the point where language and culture meet (Ibid.: 98). The test of whether or not something is an ECR is ultimately a negative answer to the following question: "is this linguistic expression in itself transparent enough to enable someone to access its

referent without cultural knowledge?” (Ibid.: 96) According to Pedersen (ibid.: 97–98), two other criteria that need to be taken into account include transculturality (how familiar ECR is to both the source culture and the target culture audiences) and extratextuality (whether an ECR exist independently outside the text). Pedersen includes in his term only monocultural ECR’s, that is, those which are only known by the source culture audience and external ECRs, which do exist outside the text. This praxis has been followed in the present study as well.

Different degrees of ECRs exist as well. An ECR can be a composite noun phrase where one can understand the individual words and their meaning and still not understanding what the phrase means (for example, 'finishing school'). In other words, they are ”only accessible through encyclopaedic knowledge of a certain culture”. The understanding of some other phrases, proper names for instance, can be entirely bound by cultural knowledge and, therefore, ECRs. (Pedersen 2007: 93–96.)

Pedersen (2007: 108) groups ECRs into twelve domains as follows as his material was quite extensive. He was able to categorise the ECR’s in it into 1. Weights and measures, 2. Proper names, which he further divided into i. Personal names ii. Geographical names iii. Institutional names and iv. Brand names, 3. Professional titles, 4. Food and beverages, 5. Literature, 6. Government, 7. Entertainment, 8. Education, 9. Sports, 10. Currency, 11. Technical material and, finally a mixed category of 12. Other. This suggests the difficulty of categorisation of referents that we need names for in our lives and also linguistic/cultural knowledge required of translators. Still this knowledge is not sufficient to make a good translation as the quality of a translation is decided on factors such as the threshold of tolerance that the viewers/readers have of foreignness or their expectations concerning the way particular foreign texts should be translated.

Pedersen’s categorisation of ECR’s is too detailed for the study of the two translations of *Nemi*, and only the domains of personal names names, other proper names, entertainment, government and a joint category of weights, measures and currency are included while the remaining ECRs are analysed under the heading “Other”.

3 RESEARCH INTO COMICS AND THEIR TRANSLATION

Until recently, research into comics has been regarded as an unacceptable topic for serious academic study. The situation has been very similar with the entire field of cultural studies and, especially, with popular culture studies. One significant reason for the rejection of comics has been their low status as a genre, which has, admittedly, had been justified in many countries such as the UK and the entire USA. Comics have often been of poor quality, created by mediocre artists and targeted at readers not usually regarded as significant (adolescents, children). Their esteem has been linked with their label “funnies”. For example, in the UK comics have traditionally been culturally despised as “either lowest-common-denominator trash, or as literature for children, or both” (Sabin 1998: 21). As described above, British comic tradition has justified the low status: titles have been aimed at children (from 8 to 12 years old); they have been printed on cheap, poor quality paper, and designed to be thrown out after one read. The storylines have been mediocre, the industry has been based on work-for-hire and fee-per-page principles almost until the present day. It needs to be remembered though that elsewhere in Europe, the situation has been very different. (Ibid: 21.)

Overall, however, the attitudes have changed, and comics as well as their translation are now enjoying their due share of attention in the academic world. The approaches in research are many and studies are carried out both intraculturally and interculturally.

3.1 Recent Studies of Comics as Part of Popular Culture

Looking at the most recent contributions to the general study of comics shows a variety of publication channels the researchers have now at their disposal. There are monographs, article compilations and special issues of journals devoted to the subject. For example, British publications include the journal *Studies in Comics*, which started publishing in 2010 with the aim of theorising the comics genre. Another example is a series *Palgrave Studies in Comics and Graphic Novels*, edited by the well-known British scholar Roger Sabin, which advertises itself as the channel for studies covering all aspects of comic

strips, comic books, and graphic novels as well as an avenue for presenting new thinking about politics, history, aesthetics, production, distribution, and reception and also the digital realm. Books in this series can appear in one of two forms: traditional monographs of 60,000 to 90,000 words and shorter works (*Palgrave Pivots*) of 20,000 to 50,000 words. *Palgrave Pivots* include new takes on theory, concise histories and even provocative texts.

An edited compilation titled *Routledge Research in Cultural and Media Studies – Representing Multiculturalism in Comics and Graphic Novels* (2014), edited by Carolene Ayaka and Ian Hague, has its emphasis on multiculturalism and its representation as challenges for the medium of comics. The contributions focus on issues of ethnicity and other cultural forms covering a large geographical area such as Israel, Romania, North America, South Africa, Germany, and Spain. The overall aim is to map out ways in which comics would be able to represent multiculturalism through a focus on the formal elements of the medium, and the discussion topics include education, countercultures, monstrosity, the quotidian, the notion of the ‘other,’ anthropomorphism, and colonialism. Past and forthcoming titles from Palgrave (*Palgrave Studies in Comics and Graphic Novels* 2020) illustrate the many angles from which modern studies can approach both comics and graphic novels: feminism (*UK Feminist Cartoons and Comics*, in 2020), traumatic events (*Documenting Trauma in Comics*, in 2020), politics (*The Phantom Comics and the New Left*, in 2020), fatherhood (*The Graphic Lives of Fathers*, in 2020), and the American West (*Lone Heroes and the Myth of the American West in Comic Books, 1945-1962*, in 2018). As these and other titles in the series show, research into comics has become a fertile field in popular culture studies, interested in a range of foci. For example, *Kid Comic Strips* (2016) looks at the humour that artists and editors believed would appeal to readers in four different countries. The author, Ian Gordon, explains how similar humour played out in comic strips across different cultures and humour styles. The book shows a good deal of similarities between American and Australian humour, while also establishing some distinct differences. In examining the French translation of *Perry Winkle*, the book addresses questions of language and culture. By shifting the focus to a later period and looking at the American and British comics magazines, both entitled

Dennis the Menace, wanting to study differences in culture and traditions as well as how the importance of the type of reader, imagined by the artist, became visible.

3.2 Comics in Translation

Last years have shown how the study of comics translations has finally taken off. Now there are both journals and edited volumes available in the field of translation studies. The pioneering study has been seen to be Federico Zanettin's collected series of essays in *Comics in Translation* published in 2008. A more recent contribution to the academic studies of comics is the special issue of the British journal *New Readings* with six articles edited by Tilmann Altenberg and Ruth Owen in 2015 (Reyns-Chikuma, Chris & Julie Tarif 2016: 1). Other important journals include *Target: the International Journal of Translation Studies* which started publishing in 1989, and *The Translator* which started in 1995. Both are based in Europe.

The translation of comics is a challenging research topic as Altenberg and Owen (2015) point out. They emphasise that the process can involve rewriting text with no redrawing, rewriting text with partial redrawing, rewriting text with complete redrawing, or retaining the text with complete redrawing. (Altenberg & Owen 2015.) And as this would not offer already a number of procedures applied in the translation, Reyns-Chikuma together with Chris and Julie Tarif (2016: 3) are hoping to start an interdisciplinary dialogue between literary translation studies and audio-visual translation studies on one hand, and between translation studies and comics studies on the other hand. It is Altenberg and Owen's (ibid.) belief that translation and translation studies can benefit from comics studies in the sense that the latter can open new perspectives about translation (for instance, emphasizing new types of constraints). This might later help translators in their work. It is also noticeable that in the 2000s the number of university courses offered on comics or that included comics has risen at great speed in the world. This has been the case especially in North America, but courses on translation of comics are also been given in France where they are taught in English departments.

Nemi has also already attracted a number of scholars who have approached it mainly from the point of view of cultural studies, but there are also those who have chosen their methodological framework from linguistic studies, media studies, pedagogy and library science. Very few have so far applied a translation studies point of view to *Nemi*. The names of articles and/or books and papers available online give some idea of the approaches. Googling the studies with 'Research into Nemi comics' (done on 13 March 2020) gave titles such as 'Metal Cultures in Three Nordic Comics', 'Graphic Resurgence: The return of the early Gothic comic strip in trans-medial discourse', 'From the Land of the Midnight Sun – Nordic History and Cultural Memory in Comics', "'Jeg skjønner meg ikke på damer, jeg'" – En undersøkelse av hvordan mannlige og kvinnelige aktører skaper mening i tegneseriene *Nemi* og *Pondus*', "'By the Cake of the Dark Lord!": Metal Cultures in three Nordic Comics/Metal kulturer i tre Nordiske tegneserier', 'Finnish Gothic subculture: Gothic subculture is "(...) to enjoy the beauty of the moonlight instead of the beauty of the sun"', and 'Berkeley, Blindern & Bourdieu: a cross cultural study of students ICT use, seen in the light of Bourdieu's concept of habitus', which clearly belong to the sphere of cultural studies. Pedagogical perspective has formed the foundation of 'Comics in the Classroom: How Comics can Aid in a Pupil's Reading Experience', a linguistic approach is found in 'The Norwegian nominal system: a neo-saussurean perspective', media studies in 'Media innovation in the magazine industry: How can Egmont innovate to reach young adults?' and library science in 'An Investigation into the Opinions of Public Library Staff on how and where a Graphic, Comic, and Cartoon Collection Should be Shelved'.

'Humour in Comic Strips: A pragmatic analysis of "Nemi"' by Marco Hemerique Pereira (2010) aimed to study humour through the use of humour in *Nemi* comic strips. He had his focus on humour and the unsaid, politeness and impoliteness, specifically how the character *Nemi* uses politeness. The material was very small, only 10 strips. He concludes that *Nemi* has succeeded quite well in creating humorous texts and sceneries. Although there were some strips that were not "funny", even these strips were still to lighten the mood of the reader because of the funny graphics and facial expressions of the characters. In this he thus used a semiotic approach of combining the verbal and the visual signs. According to Pereira, some of the strips used politeness, while others did not, but most of

them included satire, irony, parody, and caricature as their mechanisms in depicting humorous events. (Pereira 2010.) Pereira's approach had ingredients from many disciplines, such as cultural studies and sociolinguistics. Another semiotic study using *Nemi* is 'A typological threesome: Subtitling, interpretation and voice-over' by Erik Skuggevik. It is a semiotic study of translation types, which was published in *Perspectives in Audiovisual Translation*, edited by Bogucki, Lukasz and Krzysztof Kredens, and published by Peter Lang in 2010.

3.3 Methodological basis for the present study

Establishing the basis for the present study of translation are Frederico Zanettin's (2004) suggestions for the research of comics, his (2008) approach to translation as localisation, Klaus Kaindl's and Nadine Celotti's categorisations of loci in translation of comics (discussed already in Section 1.1) and, finally, Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet's classic taxonomy of linguistic changes in translation. Vinay & Darbelnet's identification of translation procedures forms the methodological framework for my study.

The starting point for the present study is Zanettin (2004: 2–3) view that comics form a semiotic system that involves both the verbal and visual component. This leads him to distinguish between two kinds of approaches to the translation of comics, that is, the linguistic- and semiotic-oriented approaches. Earlier studies tended to focus on the translation of puns, proper names, onomatopoeia, citations, allusions and other linguistic features, whereas none of these were specific to comics but also quite common in other genres as well. In linguistic-oriented approaches the focus is on the verbal component while more semiotic-oriented approaches need to consider the relationship between symbolic (written text) and iconic (pictures) components. The studies resemble those of film subtitles or synchronisation challenges in dubbing as both have space and time constraints. Zanettin (*ibid.*: 3) emphasises that the visual and verbal elements do not need to be seen as constraints, as they can also complement one another, and their interplay may contribute to the creation of meaning and developing narratives. One must also remember that visual components may undergo changes in translations as well. Font type and size, layout and format may be changed, colours may be changed and so may titles,

inscriptions and perspectives. In all these, the researcher may make use of strategies generally employed in studying verbal procedures, including replacement, deletion, addition etc. Although the present study adopts the linguistic approach in that it focuses on written text, it occasionally includes the visual component as well.

Most important for the present study is Zanettin's (2008) view of comics translation as localisation, bearing in mind that not all comics have been localised in translation (see Section 1.3). Zanettin (2008: 202–203) emphasises that there are significant similarities between software localisation and comics translation, especially in the process leading to a completed translation in a foreign language. He points out that a large number of comics consists of reprints and republications, and like original comics, also translated comics are frequently updated and re-localised. Contemporary production of comics usually includes 1) an internationalisation stage in which the product is modified at the source end in preparation for one or more foreign version(s) and 2) a localisation phase in which the product is adapted to local norms, as concerns target readership culture and comics reading habits. As an example, Zanettin gives Disney comics which already from the beginning of the 1930s were published in translation almost simultaneously in European countries. Today, most Disney comics are produced by European and South American corporate and licensed publishers and studios. Authors (script writers and artists) are Italian, French, Brazilian, Dutch, Spanish as well as American and British. Currently the three most active groups in comics production are Disney Italia, Egmont in Denmark and an international "studio" in Barcelona. The comics created in these countries are produced for the international market. Scripts are usually written in the author's native language, then the dialogues and captions are translated first English (Disney's *lingua franca*), and only after that they are translated for publication in different languages and countries. The story may be created by an Italian author (also known as the penciller), who takes the script and draws the comic. A penciller draws the comic in pencil, which then gets inked and coloured later on. Another Italian may act as an inker, that is, they ink over the pencils that the penciller drew. The inker can also be known as the finisher – especially when they have added additional detail to the art, which the penciller has not provided. Finally, an American living in Denmark may provide the story and the script, which will then be translated for the readers in Italy, Germany, Finland, Brazil, Norway, Sweden and the

US. The publisher itself, Egmont, is Danish. Sometimes the internationalised version is accompanied by a set of guidelines concerning the translation. The texts are first translated by freelance translators and then revised by in-house editors who are responsible for implementing the guidelines according to the values and attitudes promoted by the company. Dialogues are often freely rewritten, using the translation provided by the script. (Botto 2004.)

Another comic where Zanettin has studied localisation (or, in fact, updating) is *Tex Willer* which has also been published in translation in Finland since 1973. The first stories were published in Italy in 1949 first in weekly strip format booklets and then in monthly paperback format since 1959. Later *Tex Willer* was changed into instalments of a series which continue to this day. Many changes have been made between the first and the last publications, and these have affected both the texts and the drawings of some panels. Crude language (e.g. interjections) have been made milder and the hero's illegal or immoral behaviour has disappeared. Images have been retouched to remove realistic representations of violence, to cover women's naked legs and shoulders, and tone down scenes where women played too active a role. (Zanettin 2008: 205-206). This naturally shows in the translations as well.

The above cases of Disney comics and *Tex Willer* represent two different processes: the first concerns translation and the second updating. Both have similarities with software localisation, as Zanettin points out (2008: 205), and his study of Italian translations of comics have revealed patterns of localisation choices. Similar to Zanettin's line of thinking, my aim in the present study is to examine the ways that the Finnish and English translations of *Nemi* have dealt with extralinguistic cultural references (ECRs), in other words, the extent to which they have been localised or not at all. My study adopts a linguistic approach to translation, and for this I have modified Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet's categorisation of linguistic changes in translation. They introduced their taxonomy of changes originally in their pioneering work *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais: Méthode de traduction*, published in 1958, which was further revised in the English translation, *Comparative Stylistics of French and English*, published in 1995. I will also be using the article 'Translation Techniques Revisited: A Dynamic and

Functionalist Approach' by Lucía Molina and Amparo Hurtado Albir published in the journal *Meta* in 2002.

3.4 Localisation Taxonomy in Linguistic Approach to Translation

Key research that gave the first classification of translation techniques with clear methodological purpose was Vinay and Darbelnet's pioneering work *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais* (2000 [1958/1995]). The term they used was 'procédés techniques de la traduction.' and they defined seven basic procedures operating on three levels of style: lexis, distribution (morphology and syntax) and message. The procedures were categorised as two opposites: a direct (or literal) translation techniques and its opposite, oblique techniques. Literal translation occurs when there is an exact structural, lexical, even morphological equivalence between two languages, which is possible only when the two languages are very close to each other. (Vinay & Darbelnet 2000: 84.)

The first direct translation technique **borrowings** (l'emprunt) which apply when words are taken directly from another language and then incorporated directly into other languages. This is often used in titles such as the Finnish *Tex Willer*, *Lucky Luke* and even *Nemi* show. Vinay & Darbelnet (2000: 85) add that some borrowings have become such an established part of the target language that most people would not even recognise them as borrowings. A problem in this context might be the so-called "false friends" where two expressions appear similar, but, in fact, refer to different concepts (ibid.: 85).

A **calque** (le calque) is a special kind of borrowing: a language borrows a word or a phrase and then translates it literally. This is then either a lexical calque that brings in new vocabulary while respecting the syntactical structure of the target language, such as 'Compliments of the season' from French into English, or a structural calque that bring in a new construction, such as 'science-fiction' from English into French. As with some borrowings, some calques become a fixed part of the target language to the point they are not seen as calques at all; in fact, they may appear less foreign than borrowings. (Vinay & Darbelnet 2000: 85–86.) The translation of *Tex Willer* abounds with calques such as

‘puoliverinen’ (*Tex Willer* 2020: 35.) for the English ‘half-blooded’ and ‘tiipii’ for the English ‘teepee’. The last example might most conveniently be placed between a borrowing and a calque.

The third direct translation method is **literal translation** (la traduction littérale), a word-for-word translation of the source text that follow the target language's grammar. This procedure is most common in cases where the source language and the target language belong to the same language family and may even share a similar culture. (Vinay & Darbelnet 2000: 86.) An example of this would be the Finnish ‘pitkässä juoksussa’, a phrase which is a literal translation of the English ‘in the long run’ and is now integrated into Finnish practically seamlessly.

Oblique translation technique is used when localisation is required of the translation. occurs when word for word translation is impossible. The most common localisation choices consist of transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation as labelled by Vinay & Darbelnet 2000: 87.)

Transposition (la transposition) concerns grammatical structures and refers to translation techniques in which there is a shift of word class such as verb for noun, noun for preposition and so on. (Vinay & Darbelnet 2000: 88.) Transpositions can be optional or obligatory such as in translating the Finnish sentence ‘minä uin joka päivä’ into English. The options are to replace it with ‘I swim every day’ (habitual present tense), ‘I swam every day’ (past tense) or ‘I will swim every day’ (future tense). From English into Finnish, the sense would be determined by the expression. Such linguistic changes are not of interest for the present study.

Modulation (la modulation) changes the point of view and like transposition, modulation can be fixed or free (cf. obligatory or optional). The difference between the two is that of degree: when a free modulation is used often enough, cited in dictionaries, and/or ”felt to offer the only solution” it becomes a fixed modulation. (Vinay & Darbelnet 1958/1995: 89.) This is a shift in incognitive categories such as 1) abstract for concrete, 2) cause for

effect, 3) means for result, 4) a part for the whole, 5) geographical change, and so on (ibid.: 89).

Equivalence (l'equivalence) is usually used for onomatopoeic expressions: this applies to the how sounds tend to be represented in different languages. Equivalent expressions are often also applied to proverbs and idioms when the translation is being localised. (Vinay & Darbelnet 2000: 90.)

Finally, there is **adaptation** (l'adaptation), which refers to a technique of changing the cultural environment and using a different situation (Vinay & Darbelnet 2000: 90). National sports provide examples of cases which might need adaptation when a text needs to be localised (cricket in England, cross-country skiing or ice-fishing in Finland, etc).

These seven basic procedures can be complemented by other procedures, which, except for the procedures of compensation and inversion, are all classified as opposing pairs. The techniques outlined by Vinay and Darbelnet are illustrated by the following list with examples from English and French (cited in Molina & Albir 2002: 501):

Borrowing

Bulldozer (E) ⇒ Bulldozer (F)

Calque

Fin de semaine (F) ⇒ Week-end (E)

Literal translation

L'encre est sur la table (F) ⇒ The ink is on the table (E)

Transposition

Défense de fumer (F) ⇒ No smoking (E)

Crossed transposition

He limped across the street (E) ⇒ Il a traversé la rue en boitant (F)

Modulation

Encre de Chien (F) ⇒ Indian Ink (E)

Equivalence

Comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles (F) ⇒ Like a bull in a china shop (E)

Adaptation

Cyclisme (F) ⇒ Cricket (E) ⇒ Baseball (U.S)

Compensation

I was seeking thee, Flathead (E) ⇒ En vérité, c'est bien toi que je cherche, O Tête-Plate (F)

Dissolution Tir à l'arc (F) ⇒ Archery (E)

Concentration Archery (E) ⇒ Tir à l'arc (F)

Amplification He talked himself out of a job (E) ⇒ Il a perdu sa chance pour avoir trop parlé (F)

Economy

Nous ne pourrons plus vendre si nous sommes trop exigeants (F) ⇒ We'll price ourselves out of the market (E)

Reinforcement

Shall I phone for a cab? (E) ⇒ Voulez-vous que je téléphone pour faire venir une voiture? (F)

Condensation

Entrée de la garde (F) ⇒ To the station (E)

Explicitation

is patient (E) ⇒ Son patient / Son patiente (F) Implication Go out/ Come out (E) ⇒ Sortez (F)

Generalization

Guichet, fenêtre, devanture (F) ⇒ Window (E)

Particularization

Window (E) ⇒ Guichet, fenêtre, devanture (F)

Articularization

In all this immense variety of conditions,... (E) ⇒ Et cependant, malgré la diversité des conditions,... (F)

Juxtaposition

Et cependant, malgré la diversité des conditions,... (F) ⇒ In all this immense variety of conditions,... (E)

Grammaticalization

A man in a blue suit (E) ⇒ Un homme vêtu de blue (F)

Lexicalization

Un homme vêtu de blue (F) ⇒ A man in a blue suit (E)

Inversion

Pack separately [...] for convenient inspection (E) ⇒ Pour faciliter la visite de la douane mettre à part [...] (F)

The above list best serves a thorough linguistic analysis of a verbal text, perhaps a piece of literature, but for the purpose of analysing comics translation it is far too detailed. As the main aim is to determine if there exists a difference in the need for localising the comics magazine *Nemi*, far fewer techniques are needed. It will often be the case as well that some translations could be classified as borderline cases between two techniques.

The most important translation techniques for the present study will be borrowing which retains the foreignness of the setting and the different types of oblique translation (here referred to as localisation). In addition, although Vinay and Darbelnet included in their study all three levels of style, my concern will be entirely on the lexical procedures because as I see it, the semantic approach is most fruitful for this study. I will also occasionally refer to the illustrations, which bring in the semiological orientation.

4 TRANSLATION OF ECRS IN *NEMI* INTO ENGLISH AND FINNISH

I formulated my assumptive hypothesis at the beginning of the present study as this: I expect *Nemi* to be localised when translated into Finnish and English to be compatible with the life and world of the target readers but to a different extent in each country. This was deduced from the overall response to translations and through them to foreignness usually encountered in the two countries. In general, the threshold of tolerance of the foreign in cultural products tends to be greater in Finland, whereas England, because of its geographical dominance is to such a great extent self-sufficient that foreignness in cultural products tends to be frowned upon.

The degree of localisation or the lack of it depends on the function of a Norwegian ECR in the story. A particular ECR may be important for the development of the story or have no significance for it all. It may help to follow the story and make it read as if it was happening (or possible) in the domestic environment as well, or the story may ignore the setting and let the foreign emphasise cosmopolitanism. Some ECRs may refer to internationally known referents. It may be important for the readers to understand the ECRs to appreciate the punchline, Foreignness might also cause friction in the reading experience and attract too much attention, especially if has unwanted associations to periphery. This might cause a problem with a translation which comes from a largely unknown place like Norway. Foreignness of names may be problematic if readers find them too complicated and cannot, for example, remember and recognise a particular character. The loci of foreignness may also be of importance: they might appear in speech balloons, captions, titles (including names) or the linguistic paratext. Some of the pictures may be redrawn to delete an unwanted ECR.

I assumed that Finnish readers of *Nemi* would be more accustomed to foreignness than the English ones, but whether this applies to “Norwegian foreign” might make an exception. Not all foreign is equally attractive.

In the original Norwegian material (57 strips), I identified 49 different extralinguistic cultural references (ECRs). The number of the English counterparts was 49 and the Finnish ones 44 ECRs.

I identified the Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECRs) following their definition in Jan Pedersen's study of audio-visual texts and categorised them into four groups. I divided the references into six categories of references to people (personal names), to other proper names, government, entertainment, currency and other units of measurement, and the rest I combined in the miscellaneous category of "Other". A clear majority of the ECRs were character names or references to entertainment as over half of the ECRs in both English (52 %) and Finnish (51 %) belonged to these two categories.

I named the overall strategy of bringing the comics linguistically closer to its new readership 'localisation' following the Italian scholar Frederico Zanettin (2008: 201). According to him, internationalisation stage at the source end and a localisation stage at the target end can often be clearly distinguished in the process leading to the production of translated comics. From this follows, according to Zanettin (ibid.), that the publication of a foreign comic involves not only linguistic translation but also the adaptation of visual/cultural information as well as consider the necessary technical constraints.

In order to identify the cline in the Finnish and English translations of *Nemi* between localisation in the new surroundings for the target readers or keeping the stories clearly foreign, I have made use of the translation techniques originally outlined by Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (2000). In what follows I will first present the overall findings of the analysis of the two translations of *Nemi* and then move on to a detailed discussion about them with examples. Please see Chapter 1 for the source abbreviations.

4.1 Differences Between the English and Finnish Translations

In the overall findings from the analysis there were two different types. The first one concerned the loci of the ECRs which turned out to be placed in panels: in speech bubbles,

cloud-shaped thought bubbles, the panel background (occasionally the spoken text is placed there) and in paratexts such as signs, posters, t-shirts, and so on. There were no captions. Another, and more significant findings showed that borrowing was the most commonly used translation technique in the two translations. It was used even more often in the English translation than in the Finnish one. This suggests a strong presence of foreignness in the translations, which would contradict my hypothesis concerning the English translation, but confirm my expectations of the Finnish one. Surprisingly, however, the next most popular translation technique was adaptation, which lies at the other extreme of the cline of the translation techniques, that is, it localises the ECR for the readers. There were few literal translations at the foreignization end of the scale but they were equalled out by further small categories of localisation techniques.

The English translator (freelance & in-house editor) applied foreignization techniques to 29 ECRs, whereas the corresponding Finnish number was slightly less, 24 cases. Localisation was used more rarely, in the English translation 15 times and in the Finnish one 12 times. It needs to be noted that the total number of ECRs was only under 50 cases, but, still, there is no reason to expect that the findings would be different if the number of ECRs had been higher. The most common translation procedure in both languages was borrowing, that is, a word from the original Norwegian comics was transferred as such to the translations. Literal translations were significantly fewer, but still surprising as that transplants the foreignness of the source language into the translation using the means of the receiving translation. In oblique translation procedures (localisation), the most common technique was adaptation, that is, replacing a Norwegian ECR with an English or a Finnish one. There were 13 instances in English and 7 in Finnish in which this procedure had been employed. The category “Other” included, for example, cropping the image, deletion of the text as well as replacement of the ECR by, say, explicitation.

Another trend suggested by the overall view of the use of the translation techniques is also significant. The nearly equal use of localisation and retention of foreignness is in line with the two translation techniques applied to imported comics, but in *Nemi*, they have been used in the same translation. In the history of imported comics one has been to localise the text, which was very much in use in some early Finnish comics translations,

and generated titles such as *Aku Ankka (Donald Duck)*, *Mustanaamio (Phantom)*, *Kalle Kekseliäs* (possibly *The Yellow Kid*) and *Merirosvojen saalis* (the French *Bob et Bobette*). The other line was retaining the foreignness of the texts and Finnish readership were offered titles like *Buffalo Bill*, *Lucky Luke* and *Tex Willer* (please refer to Section 1.2 for more information). The English comics market does not have a noticeable tradition in translated comics apart from *Tintin* and *Asterix*. Therefore, I expected that a peripheral linguistic and cultural area like Norway would need to be toned down in the translations as they were not linked up with any other genre (film, literature) either. I expected Norwegian comics to be a ‘foreign foreign’, and not a ‘familiar foreign’ and therefore in need of localisation. It seems that both markets preferred to retain as much of the original setting and atmosphere as possible.

Table 1. Overview of procedures employed in the English translation of *Nemi*.

	BORROWING	CALQUE	LITERAL TRANSLATION	TRANSPOSITION	MODULATION	EQUIVALENCE	ADAPTATION	OTHER	TOTAL
PERSONAL NAMES	12	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	13
OTHER PROPER NAMES	3	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	8
GOVERNMENT	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
ENTERTAINMENT	9	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	12
CURRENCY AND OTHER UNITS	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	6
OTHER	-	1	1	-	-	1	2	3	8
TOTAL	25	1	3	0	0	3	13	4	

Table 2. Overview of procedures employed in the Finnish translation of *Nemi*.

	BORROWING	CALQUE	LITERAL TRANSLATION	TRANSPOSITION	MODULATION	EQUIVALENCE	ADAPTATION	OTHER	TOTAL
PERSONAL NAMES	8	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	11
OTHER PROPER NAMES	2	-	-	1	-	-	2	3	8
GOVERNMENT	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
ENTERTAINMENT	8	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	11
CURRENCY AND OTHER UNITS	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	6
OTHER	-	-	2	2	-	1	-	3	8
TOTAL	19	0	4	3	1	2	9	9	

The findings will be discussed in detail down below to find a possible explanation to the unexpected results, and through that, a potential need for rewriting the assumptive hypothesis.

4.2 Retained Foreignness

The research question assumed that the Finnish translation would retain foreignness more often than the English one, but the findings suggested that borrowing the foreign ECR was the most common technique in both translations. In some cases, the translations used the technique of borrowing (retention of foreignness) completely differently from my expectations, as can be seen in the following example. The example is from a speech bubble in which Nemi comments to her friend about a third party. The names are fictional.

- (1) NO: Rita har fått en ny labrador etter at Rex døde. (MM: 55)
 EN: Rita got a new labrador after Rex died. (III: 101)
 FI: Riitta hankki uuden lappiksen sen jälkeen, kun Rex kuoli. (N9)
 [Riitta acquired a new labbis after Rex died.]

Both the fictional character Rita and her dog Rex have remained the same in the English translation (borrowing), perhaps because they could have well been English names. This can be seen as an example of how deeply Anglophone culture has seeped into other linguist environments and become international words/names. *Nemi* has either originally been adapted to the Anglophone youth culture in Norway or this could have been done at a later stage – although this seems unlikely – which would show in the international names of the friend and her dog instead of using traditional Norwegian names for them. It is, however, unexpected that the Finnish translation chooses to localise the woman's name replacing the Norwegian name with a Finnish one. It is still, however, phonetically and graphologically close to the original.

Syntactically the Finnish translator has also used modulation, which is classified as a localisation technique, when she has changed the point of view from the Norwegian one. In the original text, 'Rita has received a new labrador', whereas in the Finnish one, she

has actively acquired one, thus changing the agency. It seems more likely that Riitta needed to buy a dog rather than just getting one for free. This change is, however, interesting only as a curiosity and does not really have any impact on the story.

The names of non-fictional characters, mostly the names of musicians, have been borrowed as they are from the Norwegian text. This can be illustrated by the following examples.

- (2) NO: Jeg klarer nesten ikke å vente med å se Ted Nugent sin ser ut! (MM: 39)
 EN: I know. I'm just waiting to see what Ted Nugent looks like! (III: 84)
 FI: En malta odottaa että näen miltä Ted Nugent näyttää! (N7)
 [I can't wait to see what Ted Nugent looks like!]

Ted Nugent is an American musician, and therefore he forms a link to our knowledge of the world. He is not of Nemi's generation and probably fairly unknown to the readerships of *Nemi* in all three countries in Europe. My analysis suggests a trend of borrowing the names of non-fictional people, usually celebrities' or otherwise well-known individuals' as such to the target text. This might be as the names refer to people, who do not actually need to be known to the readership. Their function in the story might be only symbolic. The following example includes references to more contemporary musicians, and their names have, again, borrowed to the translations.

- (3) NO: Men da ryker vel ærlig talt alle skivene mine utenom October Project og Tori Amos. (MM: 9)
 EN: But there goes all my records, apart from October Project and Tori Amos... (III: 77)
 FI: Totta puhuen, silloin levyhyllystäni jäävät jäljelle vain October Project ja Tori Amos. (N8)
 [Truth be told, then the only things left in my record shelf are October Project and Tori Amos.]

As far as my findings show, at least the names of bands and artists have been borrowed to both translations.

Borrowing has also been used in the following case, which is an example of the challenge the analysis of translation techniques can present to the researcher. When all the languages use the same ECR, should it be classified as a borrowing, an adaptation or an international concept. The latter suggests the need for Pedersen's concept of transculturality, that is, how well known the ECR is in both cultures (see Chapter 2).

- (4) NO: Du kan ta mobilen ned til 30 meters dyp. (MM: 96)
 EN: You can take it down to 30 meters. (III: 133)
 FI: Voit hukuttaa sen 30 m syvyyteen! (N11)
 [You can drown in 30 meters deep!]

The metrical system has been in use in Britain since 1965, but the British still prefer their Imperial system. In this sense borrowing of meters (notice the American spelling) would sound foreign to the English readers of *Nemi*. For some reason the Finnish translator has used the abbreviation of metre although the speech bubble includes spoken text and has enough space to spell the word out.

Another translation technique, which would signal the foreign origin of the text, is literal translation. This technique had been used a couple of times in the translations, as shown in the following example, which is from a paratext (the front of a t-shirt).

- (5) NO: Boxers □ Truse □ Ikkeno' ■ (MM: 36)
 EN: Boxers □ Briefs □ Commando ■ (III: 87)
 FI: Bokserit □ Tangat □ Ilman ■ (N6)
 [Boxers □ Briefs □ Without ■]

In this strip *Nemi* is using public transport (not visible which one but just standing there with a friend) and commenting on how people's choice of clothing can tell so much about them. She adds that sometimes the clothes, in fact, tell too much. With this she refers to

a male passenger who is wearing the t-shirt with the list of types of underwear and a space next to each for ticking your preference. The types of underwear form the punchline of the strip.

The Finnish translation has used literal translation (“Ilman”, ‘without’) for the text and so has the English one. There is only a stylistic difference between the English (colloquialism) and Finnish (standard language) translations. The above example is another example of the difficulty of determining which translation technique has been applied. In example 5, only the ECR “Boxers” has been borrowed as such, but it is an internationally recognised word. “Truse”, “Briefs” and “Tangat” could be classified as equivalents although the Finnish ECR is already a borrowing which has become integrated into the language. Also, the last ECR (“Ikkeno”, “Commando” and “Ilman”) could be termed equivalents of the Norwegian original. Still, they are also literal translations as well.

The above examples show that borrowing as well as literal translation have not been applied to the translations of *Nemi* in a way that would retain the foreignness in the English and Finnish texts. All the non-fictional ECRs were, in fact, internationally known (Anglo-American) concepts, and the names of people referred to the American music scene. Often the two languages of translation had already equivalent concepts for the Norwegian one, which made the categorisation somewhat difficult (and also the findings ambiguous).

The most important borrowing, however, is the title of the comic itself, *Nemi*, which has kept in the title the Norwegian name of the main character. Its foreignness has not been found disturbing for the English or Finnish readership or the market for the magazines and albums. The strips in a free newspaper in England as well as in Finland have shown, presumably, that there would be a market for the magazines and albums, which are now available, for example, in all supermarkets and kiosks in Finland and in special comics shops and through online retailers such as Amazon for the English readers.

4.3 Localisation of ECRs

One of the most commonly used localisation techniques in both translations was adaptation. It was used 13 times in the English and 7 times in the Finnish translation. In adaptation, the cultural environment is changed and a counterpart for the foreign ECR is identified there. How this was employed in the translations is illustrated in the following example:

- (6) NO: Dagbla' (MM: 14)
 EN: The Moon (III: 74)
 FI: Päivis (N7)
 [The Daily]

This panel shows the front page of a tabloid newspaper, in which Nemi imagines seeing the article about her case if she were to murder her blind date after finding out about his taste in music. The reference in Norwegian is to the non-fictional newspaper *Dagbladet*, the largest Norwegian tabloid in which *Nemi* started as a guest cartoon in 1999 (Nemi saapastelee Suomeen 2003). Stylistically the reference to the tabloid is colloquial. The English translation moves the ECR to England by referring to *The Sun*, a right-wing populist tabloid known for its hyperbolic headlines (Douglas 2004), and uses thus the cultural equivalent of the Norwegian tabloid, but in a humorous way by using the moon instead of the sun. The Finnish translator has applied the same humorous way of referring to two Finnish tabloids, *Iltalehti* ('Evening Paper') and *Ilta-Sanomat* ('Evening News'), which are both known as *Iltis*, here referred to as "Päivis" ('The Daily'). The following example illustrates a slightly different Finnish equivalent, which changes also the setting of the ECR:

- (7) NO: Fant sjekkeheftet hans på Karl Johan. (MM: 39)
 EN: I found his chequebook on Oxford Street. (III: 84)
 FI: Löysin hänen sekkivihkonsa Prismasta. (N7)
 [I found his chequebook in Prisma.]

This panel has Nemi lining up for the autograph of the American musician Ted Nugent. The original Norwegian text refers to Nemi having found his chequebook on “Karl Johan”, a colloquial way of referring to Oslo’s main street, Karl Johans gate (Store norske leksikon 2019). The English translation has also chosen a famous London street, specifically known for its shops. Again, this choice clearly acts as a localisation device for the English readership. The Finnish translation is also using adaptation but goes one step further. The street name has been replaced by the name of a widely spread Finnish supermarket chain, Prisma. This is in line with the common Finnish praxis of having both domestic and foreign celebrities in need of publicity performing or otherwise appearing in large supermarkets, which can thus attract customers there.

Currencies are always adapted to the environment of the target readership. The reader can thus follow the story and estimate the sums of money in each case. In the panel illustrated in example 8, the character speaking is tries to appear very well-off by recounting all the things and sums she has spent money on during the past week.

(8) NO: Denne uka jeg brukt 1500 kroner på dåps gave til naboenta, 2500 på denne kjolen og 5000 på en gartner som skal hjelpe meg med hagen.
(MM: 65)

EN: This week I’ve spent 100 quid on a christening present for my neighbour, 200 pounds on this dress, and 450 pounds on a landscape architect to help me with the garden. (III: 99)

FI: Tällä viikolla olen käyttänyt 200 euroa kummilapsen lahjaan, 350 tähän mekkoon ja 700 puutarhuriin, joten ei ole varaa lähteä illalla ulos. (N6)
[This week I’ve spent 200 Euro on a present for my godchild, 350 on this dress and 700 on a gardener so I can’t afford to go out tonight.]

Another effective localising translation technique is the use of an equivalent. This is often applied to onomatopoeia, puns or proverbs. The use of this strategy is illustrated in the following example:

(9) NO: Knuse knuse knuse knuse knus... (MM: 22)

EN: Smash smash smash smash (III: 138)

FI: Kräsh kräsh kräsh kräsh kräsh (N11)

[Crash crash crash crash crash]

In this panel, Nemi accidentally breaks one of her friend's plates and places a sad stuffed animal next to the pieces. The sound of the breaking glass is given in the paratext within the panel. English and Finnish translators have chosen equivalent sounds to describe it.

Occasionally the translations differ as to the technique used in them. This was already the case in example 7, in which the Finnish translation had adapted the Norwegian ECR by changing both the ECR and through that also the setting. The following example illustrates a case which would agree better with the assumptive hypothesis according to which the tolerance of the foreign would be lower in the English translation

(10) NO: Se min kjole, den er svart som natten. All jeg eier... --- Det var et nøff-nøff her, et nøff-nøff der! Her et nøff, der et nøff, over alt en nøff-nøff! (MM: 98)

EN: Postman Pat, Postman Pat, Postman Pat and his black and white cat...

--- London bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down! (III: 137)

FI: Katso pukuani, musta kuin yö. Kaikki mitä omistan... --- Oli nöf-nöf siellä ja nöf-nöf täällä! Täällä nöf, siellä nöf, joka puolella nöf-nöf! (N11)

[Look at my dress, black as night. All I own... --- There was oink-oink there and oink-oink here! Here oink, there oink, everywhere oink-oink!]

In this strip, Nemi is exercising her right to sing wherever she wants, in this case right next to a deer hunter for the express purpose of scaring the deer away and to safety. She sings snippets of two songs: the Norwegian version of the German folk song "Grün, grün,

grün sind alle meine kleider” (literally, “Green green green are all my clothes”) and the Norwegian version of the children’s song “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”.

While the first song does not have an established English translation, the second one does. The first song has been replaced with a well-known theme song to the British children’s TV series *Postman Pat*, while the second the traditional English nursery rhyme ‘London Bridge’. Both could be classified as adaptations. The Finnish version, on the other hand, has used the established translations of the latter song, while the first has been adapted to Nemi’s gothic style and is a literal translation of the Norwegian one.

In the following example (number 11) Nemi gives a long explanation in a speech bubble to a store attendant about a pink shirt, and it includes three ECRs and three different translation strategies used between the two translations.

(11) NO: Den sier “Je ger en ikke røyker som leser Det Nye. Jeg kjøper akrylnegler på H&M og har stygge plast-ting på hyllene mine hjemme, som var kjempedyre fordi de er et design som heter ‘Jåddå’.. fra Sverige.” (MM: 20)

EN: It says: “I’m a non-smoker who reads Heat magazine. I buy fake nails at Boots and have ugly plastic things on my shelves at home, which were incredibly expensive because they are designed by ‘Jåddå’.. from Sweden. (III: 70)

FI: Se sanoo “Olen tupakoimaton trendihai ja ostan tekokynteni H&M:stä ja kaikki on muovia – kodissani hyllyt notkuvat hirmuliskoista tehtyä krääsää koska se on designia. Ikeasta.” (N5)

[It says “I’m a non-smoking trend shark and I buy my fake nails at H&M and everything is plastic – in my home the shelves bend under all the trash made from dinosaurs because it’s design. From Ikea.”]

In the original, the first is a reference to a one of the oldest Norwegian women’s magazines *Det Nye*. For this, the English translation has used the strategy of adaptation, which refers to a British magazine *Heat*, which, while it does not classify itself as a

women's magazine, is nonetheless targeted at women with a multitude of articles on fashion, beauty, and celebrity gossip (Heat 2020). The Finnish translation has replaced the name of the magazine with a colloquial general description of a typical young reader of magazines such as those described in the Norwegian and English versions. Interested in fashion, celebrity gossip and beauty, but also reading the magazines for tips on the latest trends. She has described the type of readers as "trendihai" (literally, "trend shark"), someone who is always watchful for the latest trends.

The second ECR is a reference to the Swedish fast fashion retailer H&M. Although the company is global and has an established presence in the British fashion market, the English translation again goes for adaptation and replaces H&M with Boots, which describes itself as a "pharmacy-led health and beauty retailer" (Boots UK 2019), and is a entirely different type of shop. Again, the English translation has discarded a globally well-known but non-British option and replaced it with something that firmly cements the text to Britain. The Finnish translation keeps the original H&M reference: as a Swedish company it is well known in Finland and has the kind of connotations Nemi herself is referring to in her monologue.

The third ECR is a fictional brand name "Jåddå", which the original Norwegian text explains is a special brand design that comes from Sweden. The English translation chooses to borrow this clearly foreign word, but also explains the designs are very expensive and also adds the Swedish origin. The Finnish replaces it with a reference to Ikea which is also of Swedish origin. It has the reference to the products ("kräasää", 'trash') which makes the price somewhat unclear: Ikea is known for selling reasonably priced products, but designer goods are always pricier.

Other translation techniques include, for example, the deletion of the text from paratext as shown by the following two examples:

- (12) NO: [illegible Norwegian text in white on Nemi's black shirt] (MM: 108)
 EN: [the text has been blacked out] (III: 127)
 FI: [the text has been black out] (N11)

(13) NO: Prøverom (MM: 5)

EN: [the text has been cropped out of the panel] (III: 72)

FI: [the text has been cropped out of the panel] (N7)

The material contained many examples where the Finnish and English publishing companies had chosen to edit out Norwegian text which was not essential to the story. In the first strip (example 12), the text on Nemi's shirt had been blacked out. In Example 13, both the translations had cropped out the Norwegian "prøverom" from the second panel of the strip altogether. The images convey the location of a fitting room well enough on their own.

In the following example, some of the original paratextual information was deleted:

(14) NO: Det er ikke tillatt å røyke inne i disse lokalene f.o.m. 01.06.04 (MM: 59)

EN: Smoking is not permitted on these premises (III: 103)

FI: Näissä tiloissa vallitsee ehdoton tupakointikielto! (N9)

[There is an absolute ban on smoking on these premises!]

In this strip Nemi is in a bar with two signs on its wall: the first one quoted above forbidding smoking indoors; the second one says that customers are served until 11 pm and that the indoors bar closes at 3 am. The first sign retained the Norwegian date: the first of June 2004 was when Norway's national ban on smoking indoors in public places came into effect (Herbjørnsrud 2004). Both translations have rewritten the picture and omitted the ban date.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Seeking answers to my research question of how the extralinguistic cultural references, or ECRs, have been localised in *Nemi's* English and Finnish translations. While I expected both to do some localisation, I expected the English translation to use localising translation techniques more often because the threshold of tolerance for foreign elements in cultural products tends to be lower in English-speaking countries. The most important translation techniques to look at were borrowing (which retains the foreignness of the setting) and the different types of oblique translation (which localise the text for the readership).

For my material I used the Norwegian compilation album *Monstermaskinen*, which formed the basis for my material gathering. In the end, I had 57 strips as my material from which I identified 49 ECRs. I could find all their English translations and 44 of their Finnish translations.

I was surprised to find that both the English and Finnish translations used the translation technique of borrowing the most, as this runs contrary to my expectations of English leaning towards localising techniques. The ratio may, however, be twisted slightly due to the high number of international (Anglo-American) ECRs in the original text. Localisation was also used often, but the translations tended to differ in their methods of doing so. The translations also used a lot of editing to delete or black-out Norwegian paratext in the images when they were not essential to the story of the strip.

While there were only 49 ECRs in my study, I find it unlikely that the ratio of borrowing and adaptation would be considerably different with a larger sample size. However, this might be something to test in a further study. One could also do a similar study but from a different perspective: one could start from the translation, identify the localisation there and then examine the Norwegian text. Additionally, I find that a detailed semiotic study that takes the visual component well into account would be useful. It might also be interesting to see how readers of different translations have noticed the localisations and foreignisations in their respective versions of the material.

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