Intercultural issues in the translation of parody; or, getting Alice to speak French and Afrikaans in Wonderland

by
Drieka van Staden

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Philosophy in Intercultural Communication at the University of Stellenbosch

Supervisor: Dr Kate Huddlestone
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Department of General Lingusitics

March 2011

Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

October 2010

i

Abstract

The classic Victorian tale by Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (*1865), has been enjoyed by adults and children alike in many countries and in many languages. In this book, Carroll parodies the accepted style of children's books of the Victorian Age by mocking the moralistic and realistic expectations. All the poems in the book are parodies of once familiar nursery rhymes, which often conveyed a moral lesson.

Translating *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a challenging task, as it poses culture-specific, text-specific and language-specific problems. Although the book has been translated into more than 70 languages, it seems to be more popular in some cultures than in others. At the same time, some cultures seem to be content with "older" translations, while others need "updated" versions. Cultural differences seem to play a role in these preferences.

The aim of this study is to examine the French and Afrikaans translations of a parodied poem (as found in chapter 2 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland)* from an intercultural perspective. In both cases, the translators seem to have found equivalents in their respective cultures that would be acceptable to their target readers.

Opsomming

Die klassieke Victoriaanse verhaal deur Lewis Carroll, *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland (1865)*, het plesier verskaf aan volwassenes en kinders in baie lande en in baie tale. In hierdie boek parodieer Carroll die aanvaarbare styl van kinderboeke van die Victoriaanse tydperk deur die spot te dryf met die moralistiese en realistiese verwagtinge. Al die gedigte in die boek is parodieë van eens bekende rympies, wat dikwels 'n morele les bevat het.

Die vertaling van *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland* is 'n uitdagende taak, aangesien dit bepaalde kultuur-, teks- en taalverwante probleme inhou. Hoewel die boek in meer as 70 tale vertaal is, blyk dit meer gewild te wees in sekere kulture as in ander. Terselfdertyd is sommige kulture skynbaar tevrede met "ouer" vertalings, terwyl ander meer "hersiene" weergawes verkies. Kultuurverskille speel oënskynlik 'n rol in hierdie voorkeure.

Die doel van hierdie studie is om die Franse en Afrikaanse vertalings van 'n geparodieerde gedig (soos dit voorkom in hoofstuk 2 van *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland*) te ondersoek vanuit 'n interkulturele perspektief. Klaarblyklik het die vertalers in beide gevalle ekwivalente in hulle onderskeie kulture gevind wat aanvaarbaar sou wees vir hulle teikenlesers.

Word of thanks

Herewith my sincere gratitude to:

My supervisor, Dr Kate Huddlestone, for her guidance **(thank you! ! ☺)**

Mr Johan Oosthuizen for his idea to work on *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.*

My friends and family for their encouragement, especially Anje Zondagh and Fernanda Jones.

Table of Contents

v

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865) is a classic Victorian tale by the English author Lewis Carroll (Latinised pseudonym of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, 1832-1898). It tells the story of a 7-year old girl who falls down a rabbit hole to "Wonderland" where she undergoes alterations from microscopic to telescopic proportions.

Alice has great difficulty adapting to all the awkward situations that she encounters and thinks that growing bigger and smaller is the root of her problem. In her conversation with the Caterpillar she says: "Being so many different sizes a day is very confusing." In fact, Alice's awkwardness stems from the fact that she is unable to control either her physical or social growth. She feels continuously out of touch with herself and her surroundings (Reichertz 1997:50).

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a satiric fantasy in which a child's perception of the adult world is exaggerated to the point of absurdity. The adult world (Wonderland) is at the same time curiously attractive and threatening (Reichertz 1997:51).

The book is also considered as one of the most typical examples of "literary nonsense". The nonsense genre was first invented in 1611 by John Hoskyns, but it dwindled until its revival in the nineteenth century. It involves word play, writing riddles with no answers and limericks that don't make any sense. This genre basically destructs the logical view of the world (Kwoka 2009).

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and its sequel, *Alice through the looking-glass* (1871), are parodies of traditional children's literature, as both books parody the accepted style of writing children's books at the time. Dean (1997:3) quotes Kelly as having said: "The Victorian reader expected a children's book to be realistic, to instruct the child in religion and morals, and consequently to prepare himself for a righteous adulthood." Furthermore, all the poems in the book are parodies of once familiar nursery rhymes. Much of the humour in these parodies is based on a mockery of social protocol in the Victorian Era (Dean 1997:1).

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a universal story which has never gone out of fashion since it was first published. It has been enjoyed by adults and children through the years in many countries and in many languages. In fact, the *Alice* books have been translated into more than 70 languages and are also available in Braille (Cohen 1995:135). These books even have the reputation of being the most frequently quoted texts after the Bible and Shakespeare.

1.2 The challenge for translators

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland can be described as an intellectual "tour de force" which poses many problems for translators. In the introduction of the Dover edition of the French translation, Cohen points out that Carroll himself said although he was strongly advised to try a translation of *Alice* into French, it would be difficult to find someone who would be capable of doing it (Cohen 1972: vi).

However, shortly after *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published by MacMillan in 1865, the author started to look into the possibility of having the books translated into French and German. Letters to his publisher reveal that he even did some market research to determine whether it would be well received abroad (Meek 2001:12).

2

At the time, Carroll's friends didn't think that the book could be successfully translated. Weaver (in Meek 2001:12) quotes a phrase from a letter that the author wrote to the publisher: "Friends here seem to think that the book is untranslatable into either French, or German, the puns and songs being the chief obstacles."

In trying to find suitable translators for the first French and German editions, letters to Carroll's publisher reveal that he preferred to have the book translated by "someone who had written something of the sort, so as to have some sort of sympathy with the style: if possible, someone who writes verses" (Weaver in Meek 2001: 12).

In later years, translators came across several other challenges in attempts to translate *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.* For example, Gardner (1960:7), the editor of *The Annotated Alice,* describes the Alice stories as "a very curious, complicated kind of nonsense". He says that readers will need to know a lot of things (not explicitly stated in the text) if they want to understand the whole text. Some of the jokes in the Alice books would only be understood by well-educated adults and others would only be understood by Alice Liddell and her sisters, for whom the story was (originally) meant (Gardner 1960:7).

De Roubaix (2010:10) points out that one of the principal problems that translators face is that the reader of the target text will not be able to understand all the references in the source text, because of the many differences between the two reader audiences.

In Pisarska (1989:6) Mandelbaum is quoted as having said: "Human beings ... are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society." In other words, while mother-tongue speakers will understand the subtleties of their language as it is related to their culture, non-native speakers might not have this implied knowledge. Therefore, even a good translation

might pose problems for the target reader, as the source language (and culture) is very different to the target language (and culture).

The dual nature of the *Alice* books - as stories for children as well as adults - complicates the translation of these texts. As Zandberg (2009: 1) points out, the reading process is of specific importance in translation for children. She quotes Frank who said the following about translating children's literature:

> Translators of books for children are reading for a specific audience. If there is indeed a specific kind of reading for translation that is undertaken by the translator in a more deliberate and thorough manner than by the intended reader, then emphasis on a process-oriented approach to translation that privileges the way translators read for children is to be expected. This suggests that translators are more focused on their target readers than on the author/narrator of the source text.
>
> (Frank 2007:15)

The translation of the *Alice* books, furthermore, poses culture-specific, text-specific and language-specific problems (De Roubaix 2010:12). As far as text specific and language specific problems are concerned, the characters' names and the word play in the story are two common challenges that translators have to deal with. For example, the names of the characters in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* cannot be easily translated because they are often personifications of figures from English nursery rhymes - like the Mad Hatter, the Cheshire Cat and the Queen of Hearts (Meek 2001: 13). The word play is also an essential part of the original text, which can be very difficult to translate. For example, Meek (2001:12) points out that not all languages are as rich in homophones as English. Therefore, the sentences "Mine is a long and sad tale!" (…) and "It is a long tail, certainly (…) but why do you call it sad?" cannot be easily translated. The chance of finding a homophone in any other language which indicates both a story and the prolongation of an animal's spine, is very slim (Meek 2001:12).

There are several instances of typical British cultural references in the book, which can be difficult to translate. These include topographical elements (e.g. "Wherever you go to on the English coast you find a number of bathing machines in the sea"), eating habits (e.g. "hot, buttered toast"), references to historical or cultural figures (William the Conquerer, Shakespeare), regional and social accents (the Gryphon's Cockney accent, Pat's Irish accent), and weights and measures (inches, feet; ounces, pounds) (Meek 2001:13).

Of specific relevance to the current study is the challenge posed by Carroll's use of parodies of well-known poems. The poems that form the source for the parodies that Carroll includes in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* would be known to inhabitants of Victorian England, as at the time such poems appeared in every anthology and were read over and over. However, readers of a translated version of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* are unlikely to be familiar with these poems.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The Victorian Era was a time when a high value was placed on correct etiquette. People were often judged on how they behaved, and a complicated system of rules governed their social behaviour. Carroll was well aware of this and based much of the humour in his books on social protocol. He made fun of the didactic Victorian attitude towards morals.

All the poems in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* are parodies of once familiar rhymes or poems. For example, the poem *How Doth the Little Crocodile* in chapter 2 is a parody of the moralistic poem *Against Idleness and Mischief* by Isaac Watts (Haughton 1998:302). In his parody, Carroll makes fun of the didactic Victorian attitude towards morals (in this case not being lazy). Translators of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* have had to find creative solutions when translating the original parodied poem and have had to come up with cultural equivalents that would be acceptable to the reader of the translated text. In

5

both the French and Afrikaans translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* "How Doth the Little Crocodile", in Chapter 2, has been changed into a parody of a culture-specific poem.

This study aims to investigate the translators' choice of poems to parody and the changes that were made to create the same parodied effect in the translated versions as in the original text. The concept of acknowledging different cultural needs in translating is the backbone of this study, i.e. how did the translators approach the original text, how did they select a culturally acceptable equivalent and how did they adapt or change this equivalent to replicate the effect created in the original text. The aim of this thesis is therefore to examine the French and Afrikaans translations of the parodied poem found in chapter 2 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* from an intercultural perspective.

1.4 Structuring of the thesis

The thesis will be structured as follows: in chapter two a discussion of translation theories as well as intercultural theories, with specific reference to translation from a cultural/intercultural perspective, is presented. This chapter provides the theoretical framework within which the study is conducted. In chapter three Isaac Watts' original highly moralistic poem *Against Idleness and Mischief* will be compared with Carroll's parody *How Doth the Little Crocodile.* In this comparison, attention will be given to the context in which the original was written. As background to the examination of *How Doth the Little Crocodile*, a discussion of parody will be presented.

In chapter four, both the French and the Afrikaans translation of *How Doth the Little Crocodile* will be examined. In the French translation, *Aventures d'Alice au pays de merveilles* (1869)[1] Henri Bué replaced *How Doth the Little Crocodile* with an adaptation of

---

[1] The first French translation done by Henri Bué in 1869 is the translation used in this study.

6

a fable written by La Fontaine. Bué's adaptation will be compared to the original French poem, *Le Corbeau et le Renard,* taking into account the context in which the original was written. The same will be done with André P. Brinks' Afrikaans translation *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland* (1965), in which he used an adaptation of C. Louis Leipoldt's poem, "Lenteliedjie". Finally, chapter five provides a conclusion to the thesis.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter provides a brief theoretical background to the discipline of translation and, specifically, to translation from an intercultural perspective. In the first section, different approaches to translation will be briefly discussed. This section is followed by a discussion of different translation theories, which in turn is followed by a discussion of various intercultural theories. The last section focuses on translation from an intercultural perspective.

2.1. Translation

Newmark (1995:7) describes translation as "a craft consisting of the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language." According to Newmark (1995:7) there is necessarily some kind of loss of meaning in translation. In fact, the word "translation" can be misleading, as the translator's language can only be approximate.

Pisarska (1989) points out that the term "translation" has two primary meanings: one refers to the end product of the activity of transferring the content and message of a text from the original language to another language, while the other refers to the translation process itself.

The first meaning of the word "translation" seems to be easy to characterise. Most critics would agree that a successful translation should be faithful and accurate and that it should do justice to the original and to the author's style. Volumes have been written about what "faithful, accurate, and doing justice to the original" really mean. Pisarska (1989:4) states that "In the 49 centuries that translation has been practiced, the criteria

8

have varied depending on many facts, like time, area, literary traditions, beliefs, fashion and personal preferences of both the translators and their audiences."

Pisarska (1989:5) continues to say that, in contrast to the above, relatively little material can be found concerning the translation process: "We do not know how it happens that the message encoded in one language is transformed in the mind of the translator into another language which sometimes lacks equivalent devices and corresponding cultural concepts".

Translation (whether it refers to the translation process or to the end product) is an essential element in making great world literature accessible to different language groups and to different cultures. Ting-Toomey (1999:93) states that "language is the key to the heart of a culture". Without translation, many works would never have reached "the hearts" of other cultures.

2.2. Translation theory

In Newmark (1995:18) Goethe is quoted as having said that translation is impossible, essential and important. According to Newmark, translation theory is neither a theory nor a science and it is "concerned with choices and decisions, not with the mechanics of either the source language (SL) or the target language (TL)" (Newmark 1995:19).

Different types of translation require different approaches and decisions. Children's books are often very culture-specific and demand creative solutions in dealing with cultural issues. Although translators may use specific translation theories, or a combination of theories, a translation's success invariably depends on how it is received by the target culture. As the present study deals with the translation of an element of what is generally seen as a work of children's literature, it is important to determine what theories of translation say about the process of translation, especially the translation of children's literature.

Van Coillie and Verschueren (2006:vi) identify four developments which have played a role in the study of children's literature in translation, namely: (i) the polysystem theory of Itamar Even-Zohar, (ii) Gideon Toury's concept of 'norms' in translation, (iii) Lawrence Venuti's concept of the 'invisibility' of the translator and his concepts 'domestication' and 'foreignisation' in translation; and (iv) a theory that focuses on the concept of the child.

The concept of the 'polysystem', developed by Even-Zohar in the 1970s, was one of the first efforts to grant children's literature a rightful place in the literary system (De Roubaix 2010:15). De Roubaix (2010:15) points out that the polysystem theory soon became an accessible model to explain the relations between different cultural systems, as well as the different sub-systems of any specific cultural system. According to this theory, a literary work is no longer studied in seclusion, but as part of a specific literary system and in relation with a specific socio-cultural environment (Zandberg 2009:20). Even-Zohar (1990:51) describes translation as follows:

> Translation is no longer a phenomenon whose nature and borders are given once and for all, but an activity dependent on the relations within a certain cultural system.

Toury (1995:205), who argues for the development of a systematic, descriptive branch of translation studies, also emphasizes the role that culture should play in the translation process and states that all "translation acts" should be regarded as "having cultural significance". As such, Toury sees translation as an act governed by norms which themselves determine the extent of equivalence that a translation may attain (De Roubaix 2010:15).

According to Van Collie and Verschueren (2006:vi), the third theory that played an important role in establishing children's literature as an independent research domain, is Venuti's concept of the 'invisibility' of the translator. Venuti started using the terms

"domestication" and "foreignisation" in translation theory in the 1990s. According to Venuti these terms go hand in hand with the issue of the 'invisibility' of the translator. The translator is an invisible agent between cultures, who can either emphasise 'domestication' or 'foreignisation'.

According to De Roubaix (2010:48) Venuti describes "foreignisation" as "an ethno deviant pressure [on dominant cultural values] to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text", sending the reader into the foreign world. In this approach the translator is clearly visible as an agent of the translation, through the emphasis of the foreign nature of the translated text. "Domestication" refers to the opposite approach where the linguistic and cultural differences of the source text are played down, and the text is aligned with the cultural values of the language in which it is translated. In this case the translator's aim is to be as invisible as possible. As such the "invisible" translator has often been called a "mediator" between cultures.

Even–Zohar's polysystem theory, Toury's research on translation theory, and Venuti's concept of the 'invisible' translator, clearly indicate that cultural aspects play a very important role in the translation process. However, cultural aspects often cause problems for translators. According to De Roubaix (2010:16) Nord refers to four categories of problems in translation that are due to differences between the source text and the target text, as well as the source culture and the target culture, namely: (i) pragmatic problems, (ii) intercultural translation problems, (iii) "inter-lingual" translation problems, and (iv) text-specific translation problems.

This study will only focus on the second category, namely 'intercultural' translation problems, and the translator's role as mediator between two languages or two cultures. In Martin (2001:3) the French feminist critic Hélène Cixous is quoted as having said: "I believe that in order to read – to translate – well, we have to undertake the journey

ourselves. We have to go to the country of the text and bring back the earth of which the language is made."

Of course the invisible translator is not only a mediator between cultures, but a professional who plays different roles during the translation process. Martin (2001:2) distinguishes three alternating and co-existing roles namely: (i) translator-reader, (ii) translator-professional and (iii) translator-artist.

The translator-reader's task is to establish relations with the work. During this process, he/she will get information on the author and on the book and will establish relations with the author if possible. The translator will keep in mind that "the vision being formed is not necessarily the whole truth but a private view with a certain purpose" (Martin 2001:2). Knowledge of a book's background, including its place in history, helps to avoid making mistakes.

The translator-reader creates the imaginary reader. He has an idea of the target language community's competence as well as his own. Martin (2001:2) points out that both are "somewhat intuitive concepts."

The second role is that of the translator-professional. Most translation theories and translation norms fall within the professional's domain, as the translator-professional has to make choices and decisions which can be influenced by adhering to a specific translation theory and/or norms. Translation norms include the following: accuracy, reliability, loyalty and equivalence (Martin 2001:3). Although these norms can seem overwhelming, they could actually assist the translator-professional in eliminating alternatives.

The third norm mentioned in the previous paragraph, namely loyalty, is a key aspect of the invisible translator's role as mediator between two cultures. He should be loyal to the

source text author, to the source culture, to the source text itself, to the receiving community and the target culture, to the quality of the target language, to the translator's self. As Martin (2001:3) says: "Keeping all the strands together to produce a satisfying piece of work is the translator's right and duty."

The translator-artist in the final phase regards the translation from an artistic point of view. This phase may involve reading aloud to make sure that the rhythm is in line with the content, or it can involve rewriting whole passages to capture the essence more successfully. According to Martin (2001:3), during this phase the translator-artist also considers the reader and his/her pleasure when reading the translated text.

The translator is an individual who makes decisions and choices based on own intuition and on translation theories and norms. He is also part of a distinctive culture, translating for a distinctive culture. In other words, he translates the source text to communicate with readers of the target text.

Certain aspects of translation theory can help one understand how the translators of the Afrikaans and French versions of the original *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* would approach the translation of parodies of (previously) well-known poems. For example, taking into account Even-Zohar's theory, the children's book to be translated will be regarded as part of a specific literary system within a specific socio-cultural environment. The translator will most probably look for solutions that will be appropriate in the socio-cultural environment of the target reader. In other words, he will find equivalents that are well-known to the children of the target culture. This is in line with what Frank (2007:15) says about translating children's books, namely that "translators are more focused on the target readers than on the author/narrator of the source text."

If the translator-professional, as described earlier, approaches his translation in such a manner, Venuti's invisible translator becomes a mediator between cultures, taking into account the target culture, without losing sight of the source culture.

In the next section, the concepts 'culture' and 'intercultural communication' will be briefly discussed, as well as the influence of these concepts on the individual translator and on societies.

2.3. Intercultural theory

In examining the concept 'intercultural theory', it is important to define 'culture' first. According to Keesing (in Gudykunst 2003:8) "Culture, conceived as a system of competence shared in its broad design and deeper principles, and varying between individuals in its specificities, is then not all of what an individual knows and thinks and feels about his/her world. It is his/her theory of what his/her fellows know, believe, and mean, his or her theory of the code being followed, the game being played, in the society into which he/she was born."

Sperber (1996:27) emphasizes the influence of different (cultural) environments; according to him "Generation after generation, humans are born with essentially the same mental potential. They realise this potential in very diverse ways. This is due to the different environments and in particular to the different cultural environments into which they are born."

According to these statements, an individual's psychology and thought processes are made more specific by his/her perception of his/her cultural heritage and environment. Cultures however, are not static, they adapt to new environments.

The Cultural Identity Theory is one theory which aims to define culture within a changing environment. In this theory, "cultural identification" is seen as a process which occurs in a constantly changing socio-economic, political environment. This process is also affected by contact with other cultures (Guirdham 1999:61).

The Cultural Identity Theory defines culture as a historically transmitted system of symbols, meanings and norms. Symbols and meanings define what groups of people say, do, think and feel. It is not the people, but the communication that links them together. This interpretation is radically different from theories in which cultural status is determined mainly by birth rather than by subscribing to a system of symbols and meanings (Guirdham 1999:60).

Symbols and norms change over time, but there is enough consistency to make it possible to define the boundaries between systems and distinguish members of one cultural system from members of another. This is why each individual has a range of cultures to which he or she belongs (Guirdham 1999:61).

Throughout life, cultural identities are emergent, not created or completed. They are negotiated, co-created, reinforced and challenged through communication (Guirdham 1999:61). As social roles and practices change, identities change. Changing values are believed to influence thinking processes that are taken for granted. Hofstede even calls culture "software of the mind" (Guirdham 1999:76).

Sperber (1996) states in his introduction that ideas can be transmitted and that they may even propagate so effectively that "they may end up durably invading whole populations." Culture, according to Sperber, is made up of such contagious ideas. At the same time, it is made up of all the productions (writings, artworks etc.) which, in a shared environment, permit the propagation of ideas.

15

The idea of cultural contagion is very old. According to Sperber (1996:2) the first serious attempt at describing this phenomenon was probably by the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde in *Les lois de l'imitation (*1890). He insisted that culture should be explained as "the cumulative effect of countless processes of inter-individual transmission through imitation." (Sperber 1996:2).

According to Sperber (1996:101) "the task of explaining the contents and evolution of a given culture can be seen as finding out which representations are most successful at replicating, under what conditions, and why." He continues to state (i) that representations don't generally replicate during the transmission process, but that they rather transform and (ii) that their transforming is due to a constructive cognitive process.

In modern times, printing allows massive replications of books. However, Sperber (1996:103) states that the cultural importance of a public production is to be measured "not by the *number* of copies in the environment, but by their *impact* on people's minds." He (1996:118) describes the culture of a given population as "a distribution of mental representations and public productions." Bits of culture literally compete for mental and public space and time.

Translations which have become part of a culture's heritage also compete for mental and public space and time. This could explain why the translator-professional, as described earlier on, has to make certain choices. For example, he has to find an original and captivating way of translating the source text, as his readers have a great choice of available reading material. They might lose interest if the translation doesn't captivate them. Having said this, it becomes obvious that translated works could become outdated and that they may no longer be acceptable to the initial target culture.

In examining the translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, it seems as if some cultures tend to hold onto a specific translation, while in other cultures no translation has succeeded in capturing the imagination. For example, the first French translation, by Henri Bué (1869), is still held in high esteem, although some critics feel that it has become outdated.

In contrast, Meek (2001:12) points out that, while the first German translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published in 1869 and over 30 different German translations have been published since then (not counting abridged versions and translations into other media), the book has not achieved the same recognition as it has among French readers. Meek (2001:21) states that, in spite of all the efforts towards different translations, "most Germans today know *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* mainly thanks to Walt Disney. Compared to its reception in England and in other countries, Lewis Carroll's book simply wasn't a success in Germany." She says that the poor quality of many of the translations (in the course of 130 years) is partially responsible.

With regards to the Afrikaans translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, De Roubaix (2010: 168) comes to the conclusion that Brink's 1965 translation is a suitable ("geskikte") translation, but that it is no longer a translation appropriate for ("gepas vir") modern day target language readers.

Compared to the first French and German translations (1869) of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* the Afrikaans translation (1965) is relatively new[2]. However, according to De Roubaix (2010:12) the fact that it is already older than thirty years creates potential problems. De Roubaix (2010:12) points out that the only other adaptations of *Alice's*

---

[2] A new edition of this translation was released in 2010 by Human & Rousseau. This edition contains new illustrations by Marjorie van Heerden, however the translation remains the same as the 1965 edition.

Adventures in Wonderland in Afrikaans are *Alice in Kammaland* by Liesel Drury (1984) and *Alice in Wonderland* for young children by Van Graan (2009).

Although it is clear that a "good" translation is essential in capturing the interest of readers of all ages, the question arises whether culture itself doesn't also have an influence on the way in which a particular "cultural representation" (to use Sperber's terminology) is accepted and nurtured in a specific culture. Hofstede's dimensional model for the analysis of cultures, which could shed light on this question, will be discussed in the next section.

2.3.1 Hofstede's dimensional model for the analysis of cultures

In the late 1960s and 1970s, Geert Hofstede undertook the most exhaustive cross-cultural study to date, using data from 80 000 IBM employees in 66 countries across seven occupations (Guirdham 1999:52).

Hofstede established four dimensions of culture, namely: Individualism-Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance and Masculinity-Femininity (Gudykunst 2003:18). Hofstede and his colleagues later identified a fifth work-related dimension, namely Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation.

Hofstede's first dimension, Individualism, has received consistent attention from researchers. Gudykunst (2003:9) states that Individualism is the major dimension of cultural variability used to explain differences and similarities in communication across cultures. According to Gudykunst (2003:9) Hofstede and Bond make the following distinction between individualistic and collective cultures. In individualistic cultures, "people are supposed to look after themselves and their immediate families only"; in contrast, in collective cultures, "people belong to ingroups who are supposed to look after them in exchange for loyalty."

Hofstede's second dimension, Uncertainty Avoidance, deals with the degree to which members of a culture try to avoid uncertainty (Gudykunst 2003:18). Hofstede states that members of high uncertainty avoidance cultures have a lower tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, which expresses itself in higher levels of anxiety and energy release, as well as a greater need for formal rules and absolute truth (Gudykunst 2003:18).

The third dimension, Power Distance, refers to "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations accept that power is distributed unequally." (Gudykunst 2003:19).

The fourth dimension, Masculinity-Femininity, focuses on gender issues at the cultural and individual level. Masculinity, associated with societies in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success, while women are supposed to be more modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life (Ting-Toomey 1999:72).

A fifth dimension was added later, namely Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation. Values associated with Long-Term Operation are thrift and perseverance, while values associated with Short Term Orientation include respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations and protecting one's "face". Ting-Toomey (1999:75) comes to the conclusion that this dimension, also known as "Confucian dynamism", is "reflective of the collectivism and large power distance dimensions."

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that Hofstede's analysis of culture was not intended to be rigid categorisations of behaviour or people. However, differences in these dimensions could have an influence on the translator-professional and on the norms that he applies. He could make intuitive choices based on perception(s) of his culture, even though he might be unaware of any "translation theories" or "intercultural communication theories."

19

Differences in cultural dimensions (as categorised by Hofstede) could also have an influence on whether a translated text is accepted by the target audience and on the duration of this acceptance. For example, in a culture with a high uncertainty avoidance index, it is likely that a translator will try to be "more loyal" to the target culture/language than the source culture/language, as he knows that members of the specific culture try to avoid uncertainty. At the same time, it could mean that a successful translation of a work will be accepted as *the* translation and that there will not be a great need in future for new translations.

Unfortunately, it is not at this stage possible to compare Hofstede's dimensions for the two cultures concerned in this study (Afrikaans and French culture), as the study that was done in South Africa includes more than one language group. Statistics regarding 'Long-term Orientation' are also not available for the two culture groups that are under investigation in this study.

Hofstede's work, although much admired and widely applied, has been criticised primarily for two reasons. The first is that it omits important values (like those associated with the fifth dimension, Long-term versus Short-term Orientation, which was only added later) and that it is non-dynamic (Guirdham 1999:59). In Guirdham (1999:59) Tayeb is quoted to have stated that "a country's culture is too vibrant and complex an entity to be simplified and described only in terms of these dimensions."

Guirdham (1999:59) points out that "cultures are more fruitfully differentiated on the basis of deep culture which means underlying values, worldviews and ways of social organisation, than on the basis of surface cultural differences such as dress or food."

Values and systems of interaction can change over time, both for individuals and for a society (or culture) as a whole. At the same time, the boundaries of cultures are ill-

defined. In the next section the concepts 'translation' and 'intercultural communication', and their function in crossing cultural boundaries, will be discussed.

2.4 Translation and Intercultural communication

Translating between cultures is, as already discussed, a complex phenomenon. Hardwick (2000:21) comments as follows in this regard:

> The very phrase 'translating cultures' is multi-layered. It suggests, at one level, that translating words also involves translating or transplanting into the recent culture the cultural framework within which an ancient text is embedded. Furthermore, different cultures (and sub-cultures such as those represented by the artist, the politician etc.) may create and enact their own translation norms, so in that sense translation is an activity which enables movement across boundaries.

Not only are the boundaries of cultures not clearly defined, sub-cultures, like 'youth culture', also change over time. Children in the Victorian Era grew up with totally different values to modern day youth. Apart from that, the youth sub-culture is also very different from one country (or from one culture) to another.

These cultural and sub-cultural differences become even more apparent in the translation of children's books. For example, Meek (2001:14) points out several questions which had to be addressed by each of the 30 or more translators of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into German, namely: "How can you translate a book which is so totally unlike anything produced by German authors for children? How do you deal with its dream-like quality, its perverted logic, its incomprehensibility? Is it acceptable for German children?" She comments that "Each German translation of *Alice in Wonderland* can be read as an answer to these questions; an answer provided by the individual translator and influenced by predominant concepts of childhood and attitudes towards what constituted children's literature in Germany at the time of each particular translation" (Meek 2001:14).

To make *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* accessible to young readers, many German translators looked at the genre which resembled it most, the fairytale. According to one critic they created a Wonderland "in which the seven dwarfs would also feel at home." (Meek 2001:15).

According to Meek (2001:15) many German translators tried to turn *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into "a comprehensible book", one in which "language as meaningful communication is no longer questioned or undermined." She (2001:15) also refers to the principal character in one of these translations as "the culturally adapted Alice (a well-behaved, somewhat boring English-learning German schoolgirl)."

From these examples, it becomes clear that cultural differences play a significant role in translation. As culture is not static and translators are individuals who make choices according to their own knowledge, experience and intuition and other external influences (like translation norms and cultural preferences of the present time), the end product of the translation process (the translated text) will not necessarily over time remain accessible or acceptable to the new readership. For example, the same text (translated into different languages) will be accepted as "cultural heritage" by one culture, temporarily accepted by another culture, and regarded as totally unaccepted by yet another culture.

The translator-reader as described earlier on should take into account different intercultural theories, like the Hofstede model. For example, if he knows whether a culture is collective or individualistic, or whether a culture has a high/low uncertainty index, he will be able to make informed translation choices which will affect the "shelf-life" of the translation.

In the French (1867) and Afrikaans (1965) translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* both translators chose appropriate equivalents for the parodied poem in

chapter 2. However, it seems as if the French translation is still very popular, while the Afrikaans translation, according to De Roubaix (2010), should be reworked.

The next chapter deals with parody in general and also specifically in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. It is followed, in chapter four, by a discussion of the translated versions (into French and Afrikaans) of the parody *How Doth the Little Crocodile*.

Chapter 3: Parody

As pointed out in Chapter 1, all the poems in *Alice in Wonderland* are parodies of poems familiar to the Victorian audience of the time; hence the translation of these parodies poses a particular challenge for translators. Before one can examine the translation of one such parody of a poem, however, it is important to clarify the concept of 'parody' itself, as well as Carroll's particular use of parody in *Alice in Wonderland*.

3.1. A literary science approach to parody

The word *parody* has its etymological root in the Greek word *parodia* which means "counter-song" (Hutcheon 1985:32). In contemporary usage, the word *parody* refers to a work aimed at mocking, commenting on or poking fun at an original work, author or subject, through humorous or satiric imitation. Hutcheon (1985:32) quotes the following definition of *parody* from the *Oxford English Dictionary:*

> A composition in prose or verse in which the characteristic turns of thought and phrase in an author or class of authors are imitated in such a way as to make them appear ridiculous, especially by applying them to ludicrously inappropriate subjects; an imitation of a work more or less closely modelled on the original, but so turned as to produce a ridiculous effect.

The *Collins Cobuild Student's Dictionary* defines *parody* in more concise terms as "an amusing imitation of the style of an author or of a familiar situation." (Sinclair et al. 1992:404).

24

According to Dentith (2000:10) the earliest use of the Greek word *parodia* is in Aristotle's *Poetics*, where he used it to refer to the earlier writer Hegemon. *Parodia* in this sense was "a narrative poem of moderate length, written in the metre and vocabulary of epic poems, but treating a light, satirical or mock-heroic subject." In short, the *parodia* was a mock-heroic poem.

Greek and subsequent Roman writers also used the term to refer to a more general practice of quotation, which was not necessarily humorous and in which writers and speakers referred to previous texts. According to Householder this is a more frequent use of the term (Dentith 2000:10).

The literary theorist Linda Hutcheon (1985:6) points out that parody is not only used to mock or belittle the original text: "In fact, what is remarkable in modern parody is its range of intent – from the ironic and playful to the scornful and ridiculing. Parody therefore, is a form of imitation, but imitation characterised by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the parodied text."

She states that the majority of theorists only take into account the "counter-song" aspect of parody. However, a closer look at the root offers more solutions. While the second part of the word, derived from *odos*, has only one meaning, namely "song", the prefix *para* has two meanings, namely "counter" (or "against") and "beside". Hutcheon (1985:32) points out that the first meaning of *para* is usually the starting point for what she calls the definition's "customary pragmatic component of ridicule: one text is set against another with the intent of mocking it or making it ludicrous."

The second meaning of *para*, "beside", also suggests agreement instead of contrast. According to Hutcheon (1985:32) this second, generally neglected meaning of the prefix broadens the understanding of parody. This meaning makes it clear that there is nothing in *parodia* that makes it necessary to include the concept of 'ridicule'.

Even though parody could have the effect of destroying the text that is being parodied, it has "the paradoxical effect of preserving the very text that it seeks to destroy" (Dentith 2000:36). Texts that are being parodied are usually very popular. Hutcheon (1985:30) quotes Sir Theodore Martin as having said "Let no one parody a poet unless he loves him."

In the respective translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* the parodied poems in chapter 2 are examples of beloved poets being parodied. In the French *Alice* a fable of the well-known La Fontaine is parodied, while in the Afrikaans *Alice* a poem of the well-known early Afrikaans poet C. Louis Leipoldt is parodied.

The critical distance that is implied between the text that is being parodied and the new work, is usually indicated by irony. This irony can be constructive as well as destructive. It can be either playful or belittling (Hutcheon 1985:32).

The *Collins Cobuild Student's Dictionary* defines the irony of a situation as "an aspect of it which is strange or amusing, because it is the opposite of what you expect." (Sinclair et al. 1992:300). Hutcheon (1985:32) points out that pleasure from reading the irony in parody cannot be attributed to the humour in particular, but to the reader's level of engagement.

De Roubaix (2010:16) has described Brink's translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Afrikaans as a translation that is no longer appropriate for modern day target language readers. By implication, then, it is claimed that modern day readers will not have the same level of engagement in the translation (and the poems or parodies) as the readers who read the text when it was translated in 1965. While the parody of the then-popular poem may have been effective at the time, a modern audience may not be able to gain the same pleasure from the parody today.

26

If the reader is not able to identify intended reference, he/she will naturalise it by interpreting it in the context of the work as a whole. The identification of a text as "parody" depends on decoding (recognition and interpretation) and encoding. Parody involves communication between encoder and decoder (Hutcheon 1985:34).

Readers therefore become co-creators of a parodied text. The communication act of parody cannot be completed unless the reader succeeds in precise decoding of the text. In order to do this, they must be familiar with the text or the conventions that are being parodied. Hutcheon (1985:108) points out that this emphasis on the importance of the reader's ability to interpret the text has been reinforced by postmodernist views of parody as performance, as requiring more participation from the decoder.

Hutcheon (1985:33 also describes parody as "a sophisticated genre in the demands it makes on its practitioners and interpreters". The act of interpreting parody involves more than just textual comparison. Hutcheon (1985:34) points out that "the entire enunciative context is involved in the production and reception of the kind of parody that uses irony as the major means of accentuating parodic contrast."

Parody, like irony, operates on two levels: a primary level (the surface or foreground) and a secondary level (an implied or background level). According to Hutcheon (1985:34), parody, unlike irony, derives its meaning in both cases from the context in which it is found. She (1985:98) quotes Todorov who stated that "we are in the realm of the paradigmatic (not syntagmatic) context of the knowledge shared by the two locutors and also by the society to which they belong".

Hutcheon (1985:98) points out that a reader who doesn't "get" the parody is one "whose predicted expectations are somehow faulty." In encoding a text, a producer has to assume that his reader shares a linguistic and cultural set of codes and that he/she is familiar with the text being parodied. Hutcheon (1985:98) illustrates this point by referring to Perri's

27

rewriting of Searle's illocutionary rules of reference in which the first rule is that the author and his audience should "share the same language and cultural tradition".

In the case of translated parody, or even parody in the original text, it is possible that, over time, although still sharing the same language, the readers will no longer share the same cultural set of codes. They might therefore not be able to decode the parody correctly.

Poirier (in Hutcheon 1985:96) states that parody requires much skill from the parodist and that he or she should be "encyclopaedic, learned, obsessively cultured … burdened with the wastes of time, with cultural shards and rubbish." At the same time, the reader should share some of the parodist's skill and sophistication, as the reader has to decode the text through his or her generic competence. It is therefore possible that, even though a reader "shares the same language and cultural tradition as the parodist" (Hutcheon 1985:98) or as the translator who translated the parody into the target text, he might still lack the skill and sophistication to decode the text.

Many literary theorists have tried to define parody. For example, Samuel Johnson gave a broad definition of parody as "a kind of writing, in which the words of an author or his thoughts are taken, and by a slight change adapted to some purpose" (in Hutcheon 1985:36). Although this definition holds for plagiarism as well, it has the merit of not limiting the ideas associated with parody. Susan Stewart (in Hutcheon 1985:36) defines parody in a way that shares this advantage, claiming that parody consists of "substituting elements within a dimension of a given text in such a way that the resulting text stands in an inverse or incongruous relation to the borrowed text."

Another literary critic, Simon Dentith (2000:9), defines parody as "any cultural practice which provides a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice." Dentith explains that he includes the word "polemical" in the definition to

emphasise that parody can be written in an "attacking" way, but says that it is "relatively" polemical because the intensity of the attack can vary greatly. Dentith (2000:9) agrees with Hutcheon when he says that "Many parodies draw on the authority of precursor texts to attack, satirise, or just *playfully* to refer to elements of the contemporary world".

The Russian formalists emphasised the historical role of parody. They regarded parody as "a prototype of the pivotal stage in that gradual process of development of literary forms" (Hutcheon 1985:35). According to them, a new form is developed out of the old form, without destroying it, but in which the function is changed (Hutcheon 1985:36).

Hutcheon (1985:36) quotes Northrop Frye as having said that parody is "often a sign that certain vogues in handling conventions are getting worn out". According to Hutcheon (1985:110) this questioning of the contemporary in parody, is a way to establish continuity which may have ideological implications. She agrees that parody can play a role in change. However, she finds the Russian formalists' view of literary evolution as an improvement difficult to accept. Therefore, she (1985:36) prefers her own definition of "parody as imitation with critical difference" because it doesn't support the implication of "improvement" of the formalists' theory.

Parody does not only exist in literature, but in all the art forms, including music and cinema. The *Penguin Dictionary of Music*'s definition of parody in music makes it clear that the term has a wider application in music as well. According to this definition, parody is:

> A work, or part of it, which makes an exaggerated or distorted use of an identifiable model, with humorous intent. But the term is also misleadingly employed to denote a composer's straightforward (non-humorous) imitation or adaptation of his own or someone else's work, e.g. especially the *parody mass* (or, Lat. *missa parodia*) of the 16th -17th centuries, based on a pre-existing motet.

> (Jacobs 1991: 292)

Hutcheon (1985:96) states that many traditional realistic novelists seem to have started and ended their careers by writing ironic parody. She gives the example of Jane Austen's major works that started with *Northanger Abbey* and Gustave Flaubert whose work ended with *Bouvard et Pécuchet.* This phenomenon implies that the artist should, at some point in his/her career, come to terms with formal literary conventions and with the past. Parody could therefore be seen as an act of emancipation, of making oneself free from unpleasant social or political restrictions.

Dentith (2000:64) says of Jane Austen: "Indeed, her biographer John Halperin describes her as coming to literary flower in the 1790's principally as a parodist." Her novel *Northanger Abbey,* for example, originated from "the desire to ridicule tales of romance and terror … and to contrast with these, life as it really is" (Harvey in Dentith 2000:64).

Hutcheon (1985: 44) claims that "the predecessor of much recent feminist parodic satire is to be found in Jane Austen's fiction"; For example, in *Love and Friendship*, "Austen parodies the popular romance fiction of her day and, through it, satirizes the traditional view of woman's role as the lover of men."

The novel *Don Quixote* is a classic example of parody in a novel. The author, Cervantes, says in the Prologue that the novel is "an attack upon the books of chivalry." Dentith (2000:58) explains that the Early Modern period in Spain, perhaps even across Europe, witnessed acute struggles over the values and ideology of the aristo-military caste. Two prime examples, namely *Amadis of Gaul* and *Palmerin of England* are both parodied in *Don Quixote.*

Dentith (2000:59) adds that later centuries (with different social and cultural battles being fought) will see other imitations. He gives the examples of Gothic writing, bourgeois romance and the language of advertising. In all these contexts, the polemical function of parodic imitation is obvious.

According to Dentith (2000:22) "parody has flourished at particular historical moments." He adds that it is therefore worth asking whether particular historical circumstances cause parody to flourish and whether it will wither away in other situations. Dentith (2000:22) gives the example of the flourishing of parody in places like medieval monasteries and in Universities and asks: "Is parody more likely to be produced in closed social situations such as these?" On the other hand, he points out that the prevalence of parody in the relatively democratic situation of ancient Athens, or the turbulent societies of Early Modern Europe could suggest that parody flourishes better in "open" social formations.

According to Dentith (2000:22), finding out whether parody is more likely to be produced in open or closed social situations is important as it sheds light on the cultural politics of parody. In trying to answer these questions, he comes to the conclusion that there are particular social and historical situations in which parody is more likely to flourish than in others; or social and historical situations in which it could at least become the medium of important cultural statements.

Hutcheon (1985:19) claims that "All these historians of parody agree that parody prospers in periods of cultural sophistication that enable parodists to rely on the competence of the reader (viewer, listener) of the parody". In the Victorian era, for example, the readers of the parodies in *Alice in Wonderland* were familiar with their sources, as these poems appeared in every anthology and were read over and over.

Since there are many examples of parodic works which come from both "closed" and "open" social situations, Dentith (2000:28) says that we cannot conclude that there is no relation between literary modes and social situations, but that "the nature of that relationship needs to be specified."

According to Dentith parody plays very different roles in different situations. It could, for example, reinforce community norms in a monastery or private boarding school or it could be interpreted as an act of piety in both while it could also serve to discredit the conversations of authority in the Early Modern world of Shakespeare or Rabelais.

Dentith (2000:29) points out that, if it is possible to draw a distinction between "open" and "closed" societies or social situations, it should also be possible to distinguish between societies characterised by what he calls "cultural self-confidence" and "cultural belatedness." He poses the question whether parody is likely to flourish in societies like early Modern Europe, or in our "postmodern" world. In early Modern Europe, the time known as the "Renaissance", European cultures were filled with a sense of having inherited classical writing. In our own times, there is a consciousness of the past, but the value of that inheritance is deeply questioned (Dentith 2000:29). This remark can be linked to Sperber's (1996:118) idea that bits of culture literally compete for mental and public space and time. What was valuable in the past, might not be valuable now.

While "imitiation" is widespread in writing in the 16th and 17th century, the contemporary world sees a more polemical relation to the past, which is expressed in "writing back." In other words, tests of the past are challenged and parodied by including class, race and gender which they are seen to exclude.

Dentith's (2000:30 description of societies as "open/closed" societies or "belated/self-confident" refers to societies as a whole, without paying attention to possible social divisions in these societies. However, such internal divisions are important in establishing the likelihood of parody being produced in any social society. Dentith (2000:30) points out that strongly stratified societies, for example, where separate classes live in social isolation, are likely to produce mutual characterisations with elements of parody. Writing as a manner of speech is strongly marked by class. For example, in the English society between the 1880s and the 1950s, the society was socially highly divided and different

groups lived very much in ignorance of each other. Dentith (2000:30) also points out that these societies were very unequal in material terms as well as in access to cultural resources. Parody was a principle cultural form used by people from the working-class and was so popular that people would know the parodic version of sentimental songs without knowing the original version.

Dentith (2000:31) comes to the conclusion that there are historical moments or social situations "when parody is likely to flourish, and to become the medium of important cultural statements." He adds that the particular form of parody in such periods should be specified and concludes that the predominant use of parodic mode will vary according to the social situation in which it is being used.

According to Hutcheon (1985:32),"The vast literature on parody in different ages and places makes clear that its meaning changes". Changing cultural values have also had an influence on parody and its use. For example, the value of wit and the predominance of satire brought parody to the forefront as a literary mode in the eighteenth century (Hutcheon 1985:36).

The *Collins Cobuild Student's Dictionary* defines *satire* as a play or piece of writing in which "humour and exaggeration is used to show how foolish or wrong something is." (Sinclair et al. 1992:496).

Dentith (2000:187) stated that "we always have to place parody within the specific cultural practices of particular social and discursive formations." Any social order is constantly reinventing what it considers as "sacred, heroic and pathetic." (Dentith 2000:188). This idea can be linked to Hofstede's description of culture as "software of the mind", where changing values are believed to influence thinking process (Guirdham 1999: 76). Parody is one of the ways of continuing this process.

33

Dentith (2000:7) develops the notion of intertextuality to further characterise parody. He distinguishes between two kinds of intertextuality, namely between deliberate and explicit reference to a text or texts on the one hand and, on the other hand, to a more general reference to the use of daily language.

The present study focuses mainly on parody and how it is manifested in poetry, with specific reference to the parody of a moralistic poem in chapter 2 of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland,* a 19th century work. This will be discussed in the next section.

3.2. *How Doth the Little Crocodile* vs. *Against Idleness and Mischief*

Shires (1988:268) describes the fantasy element in *Alice in Wonderland* as "the mirror that sucks the body in" and the use of parody as "the placement of distorted mirror image against an 'original' mirror image".

Alice finds the physical changes of growing taller and shorter confusing, but the loss of language ability confuses her even more. She criticizes her rendition of *How Doth the Little Crocodile* when she says "those are not the right words" (Carroll 2007:25), assuming that she must be the less intelligent Mabel (whom she knows from school) and not Alice after all.

Dentith (2000:7) points out that a distinction can be made between "specific" and "general" parody. Specific parody is aimed at a specific text, while general parody is aimed at a whole group of texts. Lewis Carroll's poem *How Doth the Little Crocodile* ("How doth the little crocodile improve his shining tail...") is a specific parody of Isaac Watt's poem 'Against Idleness and Mischief' ("How does the little busy bee improve each shining hour...") (Dentith 2000:7). At the same time, Carroll's use of parodies of various poems in *Alice* as a whole represents general parody of the moralistic Victorian poetry and norms of the time.

34

In order to continue the discussion of the 'specific' parody of 'Against Idleness and Mischief', the parody and the original poem are provided below:

How Doth the Little Crocodile
Lewis Carroll

How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spread his claws,
And welcome little fishes in
With gently smiling jaws!

(Carroll 2007:25)

Against Idleness and Mischief
Isaac Watts

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all day
From every opening flower!

How skilfully she builds her cell!
How neat she spreads the wax!
And labours hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

35

In works of labour of skill,

I would be busy too;

For Satan finds some mischief still

For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthy play,

Let my first years be passed

That I may give for every day

Some good account at last.

(Milner 1903:13)

Watt's highly moralistic poem is a call to thrift and industry. Carroll's parody of this poem is totally in the spirit of the upside down world he has created: he reverses the moralistic message by describing how a lazy and motionless crocodile succeeds in effortlessly consuming fish.

Shires (1988:275) states that the parody of *How Doth the Little Busy Bee* relies on "a shift to the metaphoric pole of similarity, since parody is a form of imitation." Carroll calls Watts' words into question: he mocks the moral "to be hardworking and dutiful", and parodies the whole process of moralizing by choosing adjectives and verbs that clash with what he is actually saying. For example, in the parody the crocodile "improves" his shining tail and he grins "cheerfully". The reader, who knows the original poem, is shocked by the reversal of the original poem's "moral" message (to be hardworking) into an "immoral" message of deceiving innocent prey (the fish).

By loosening the three signifiers (tail, shining, crocodile), Carroll shows how easily they can be replaced by other words. Shires (1988:275) claims that we laugh because our expectations are fulfilled (we didn't expect to read this) and because of "the collision of two kinds of discourse – moral and amoral." The parody is a reminder that poetry should

36

not be didactic, it should be fun. Shires (1988:276) emphasises that Carroll's parody of *How Doth the Little Busy Bee* "involves him in a metaphoric act of grouping, disengaging, and reforming the semantic field in order to point out difference by shaking loose the former signified and referent."

According to Reichertz (1997:49), "Carroll's parodies create what Donald Rackin calls a 'corrective laughter' that is turned against the harsh moral vision presented in children's books by such writers as Isaac Watts and Mrs Sherwood and, it must be added, against the sterility of informational literature imaginatively produced".

Reichertz continues to state that Carroll's parodies of moral poems are not merely imitations of words, style and tone, but that they reverse the attitudes and ideas of parodied work and therefore turn what was considered as morality and utility in 18th and early 19th century children's books upside-down (Reichertz 1997:49).

The dominance of informational literature in 18th century England provided a lively background for the rise of imaginative literature like fantasy. In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* Carroll creates an imaginary world, one that is upside-down, where the central distorting element is reversal/inversion (Reichertz 1997:22). Alice's conversations are an attempt to contrast her everyday reality with what is happening in Wonderland. Her recital of *Against Idleness and Mischief* is one of her attempts to reassert her sense of self (Reichertz 1997:22).

Reichertz (1997:51) states that "The themes, characterisation, and parody that Carroll uses to develop his overall satiric structure of inversion are incorporated from antipodean literature". The result is a double vision, an awareness of two different worlds.

In Carroll's time, morally didactic material was still being memorised and most people were familiar with the nursery rhymes (e.g. *How doth the little busy bee)* Carroll used in

37

his parodies. According to Reichertz (1997:28), "Proof that Carroll was familiar with the memorisation of morally didactic material in his childhood is presented in the first of the Dodgson family magazines, *Useful and Instructive Poetry.*"

Reichertz (1997:21) points out that children's literature from the last decades of the 18th century until the 1860s may be characterized as "a battle between several major kinds of literature: religious, rational/moral, and informational on one side and imaginative on the other".

Writers who were interested in a child's moral growth were keen in using the wonders of nature (also called "the history of realities") to shape the child who would otherwise be drawn to neutral fancies. Although they sometimes emphasised the "story" part of "history" to produce remarkable works for children, they tried to eliminate "silly" or "useless" works of imagination. Reichertz (19978:21) points out that "informational literature then, was one of the acceptable or 'official' literatures for children and was incorporated, to some degree, in all the other official literatures before the publication of the Alice Books".

Reichertz (1997:3) describes Carrolls's ability to parody didactic/moralistic material like Isaac Watt's poem *Against Idleness and Mischief* as a remarkable gift: "It is one of Carroll's remarkable gifts that he is able to take material that is diametrically in opposition to fantasy, generically alien material, and give it a home in his fantasies. Instead of joining in the fray between the champions of antagonistic genres, Carroll absorbs or turns such material back on itself through parody." According to Reichertz (1997:32) this makes it possible for the Alice books to transform "the many attacks on imagination still current in the middle of the nineteenth century into fantasy."

38

The next chapter focuses on the French and Afrikaans translations of the parody *How Doth the Little Crocodile* (in chapter 2), taking into account the translators' audiences. In both cases, the translators changed Carroll's parody into culture-specific poems/parodies.

Chapter 4: French and Afrikaans translations of the parody *How Doth the Little Crocodile*

Shires' (1988:268) definition of parody as "the placement of the distorted mirror image against the 'original' mirror image" is very appropriate when applied to the translated versions of the parody in chapter 2 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.* In the present chapter the two translations will be presented and discussed. Section 4.1 focuses on the French translation and section 4.2 on the Afrikaans translation.

4.1. The French *Alice*: Parody vs the original fable *Le Corbeau et le Renard*
4.1.1. Background to the French *Alice*

In the introduction to the Dover Edition of *Aventures d'Alice au pays des merveilles*, Cohen quotes Carroll as having written on 19 March 1867 to the publisher, Macmillan: "I am strongly advised to try a translation of *Alice* into French, on the ground that French children are not nearly so well off for well illustrated books as English or German. The great difficulty is, to find a man fit to try it, or at any rate to give an opinion as to whether it is feasible." (Cohen 1972:vi). Carroll also wrote that: "The verses would be the great difficulty, as I fear if the originals are not known in France, the parodies would be unintelligible: in that case they had better perhaps been omitted." (Cohen 1972: vi).

From this letter, it is clear that Carroll himself feared that the parodies in his original work would not be "mirrored" correctly in a translated version. However, Carroll found a competent translator, Henri Bué, to whom he gave a copy of *Alice in Wonderland* in 1865 (Cohen 1972:vii).

Bué's translation was finished by June 1867, but it took two years before Carroll wrote to Macmillan that he had "at last got the French *Alice* correct and the whole [...] may now go to the Press." (Cohen 1972:x) Although we do not know how successful the original French *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was commercially, it has subsequently been translated into French at least 17 times (Cohen 1972: x).

In the introduction to Bué's French translation of *Alice*, Cohen (1972: xii) praises the freshness and originality of the translation and states that it is "no doubt the result of all the care that both Bué and Dodgson lavished on it." Cohen also points out that more than a century has passed since the first French *Alice* appeared, and that its joy has not been diminished by time. He concludes by saying that "the French *Alice*, like its original English big sister, is not dated. A classic in its own right, it appeals to something quintessential in all readers of all ages in all times." (Cohen 1972: xii)

4.1.2. Parody in chapter 2 in the first French *Alice*

Bué's translations of the parodies in the original *Alice*, have contributed greatly to the fact that the original French translation of *Alice* has never dated. He used poems that were familiar to French children of Victorian times, and for that matter, to French children today. The basis for the parody in chapter 2, *Le Corbeau et le Renard* is a good example. This fable, by Jean de La Fontaine, is still as popular today as it was when written in the 17th century.

La Fontaine's poem is actually based on a fable credited to Aesop, a slave and story-teller who lived in ancient Greece between 620 and 560 BC. Aesop didn't enjoy the privilege of freedom of speech and therefore used fables to express his political views in a disguised manner. These fables were transmitted orally from one generation to the next. They were only written down in Latin in the first century and were used in school text books in the middle ages (Neser 2003:8).

Aesop's fables were short and simple. According to Reeves (in Neser 2003:9) they have always been popular because of their "peasant virtues of discretion, prudence, moderation and forethought."

La Fontaine based many of his fables on existing Latin, Greek and Indian fables. *Le Corbeau et le Renard* is based on Aesop's fable *The Fox and the Crow*. In Aesop's fable a crow has found a piece of cheese and retired to a branch to eat it. A fox, wanting the cheese, flatters the crow, telling it how beautiful it is and wondering whether its voice is just as sweet. The crow opens its beak to start singing and the cheese falls to the ground where it is eaten by the fox.

Le Corbeau et le Renard

(La Fontaine's original version from *Les fables de la Fontaine*)

Maître corbeau, sur un arbre perché,
Tenoit en son bec un fromage.
Maître renard, par l'odeur alléché,
Lui tint à peu près ce language:
"Hé! Bonjour monsieur le corbeau.
Que vous êtes joli! Que vous me semblez beau!
Sans mentir, si votre ramage
Se rapport à votre plumage,
Vous êtes le phénix de hôtes de ces bois."
A ces mots le corbeau ne se sent pas de joie,
Et pour montrer sa belle voix,
Il ouvre un large bec, laisse tomber sa proie.
Le renard s'en saisit, et dit: "Mon bon monsieur,
Apprenez que tout flatteur
Vit aux dépens de celui qui l'écoute.
Cette leçon vaut bien un fromage, sans doute."

The Raven and the Fox

(English translation by Elizur Wright 1804-1885)

Perch'd on a lofty oak,
Sir Raven held a lunch of cheese;
Sir Fox, who smelt it in the breeze,
Thus to the holder spoke:
"Ha! How do you do, Sir Raven?
Well your coat, sir is a brave one!
So black and glossy, on my word, sir,
Well fit to be the Phoenix of these days."
Sir Raven, overset with praise,
Must show how musical his croak.
Down fell the luncheon from the oak;
Which snatching up, Sir Fox thus spoke:
"The flatterer , my good sir,
Aye liveth on his listener;
Which lesson, if you please,
Is doubtless worth the cheese."

42

Le corbeau, honteux et confus,	A bit too late, Sir Raven swore
Jura, mais un peu tard, qu'on ne l'y prendroit plus.	The rogue should never cheat him more.
(De la Fontaine 1989:54)	(Wright 1882:35)

For British children, all fables belong to Aesop, while French children link all fables to La Fontaine. La Fontaine was so popular as *fablier* ("writer of fables") that he was invited by King Louis XIV to read his fables in the Court. Soon, people began to talk about the characters and about who was being criticised or praised in these satirical verses.

La Fontaine himself said "Les fables présentent un table complet de la vie à la Cour" (Neser 2003:9). Loosely translated, it means that "The fables are a complete representation of the life in the Court". His fables became so popular that Louis XIV created an area in his garden in Versailles where sculptures of the characters in the fables were displayed (Diwo in Neser 2003:10).

La Fontaine published his first Fables in 1663. In the Introduction to his book La Fontaine wrote: "On ne considère en France que ce qui plait; c'est la grande règle, et pour ainsi dire la seule." Two other important 17th century French authors, Molière and Racine, agreed with this rule, which can be translated as follows: "Only what is liked, is considered in France; that is the great rule, and so to speak, the only one" (Bornecque 1983:46).

The themes in fables have always been based on the observation of life itself, and on the wisdom of different nations, in order to have a general impact on people of all times and all countries (Bornecque 1983:37). It is therefore no wonder that they have remained popular with people of all times.

Bornecque (1983:46) refers to fables as a "cultural instrument", a way of training the spirit, of developing one's memory and of teaching good morals. Boileau (in Bornecque 1983:46) states that La Fontaine's fable is not a genre; it's a way of describing mankind. Calder (2001:15) furthermore states that La Fontaine's fables "provided not so much a well-

defined body of wisdom as a set of attitudes which encourages human beings not only to study themselves and their world, but also to laugh at them."

In all fables, the main characters are usually animals or lifeless objects acting like people, and the tale is limited to one significant scene which contains a moral lesson (Neser 2003:6). The moral lesson to be learnt from *Le Corbeau et le Renard*, namely to apply prudence when being flattered, is one that can be applied to people of all ages and all times. It also encourages us to laugh at ourselves as we recognise our own vanity in the crow.

The parody on *Le Corbeau et le Renard* and the moral lesson to be learnt from it is very different from the original English *Alice* where Carroll parodied Isaac Watts' poem *Against Idleness and Mischief*. In the original version the call to thrift and industry is reversed and mocked, as the crocodile in the parodied version lazily waits for its prey.

Bué (1869) uses a completely different poem, adapted to the French audience of the time, to reverse a whole other lesson that can be learnt from the original fable, La Fontaine's *Le Corbeau et le Renard*. In Bué's parodied version, the crow outwits the fox and recognises its attempt to flatter. The crow even responds with the word *fromage* ("cheese"), the commodity which was so much desired by the fox in the original fable.

Parody in Bué's French translation of *Alice*	**My own (direct) translation**
"Maître Corbeau sur un arbre perché,	"Sir Raven perched on a tree,
Faisait son nid entre des branches;	was making his nest between branches;
Il avait relevé ses manches,	He had rolled up his sleeves,
Car il était très-affairé.	For he was much occupied.
Maître Renard, par là passant,	Mr Fox, passing by
Lui dit: 'Descendez donc, compère;	said to him: 'Come down, accomplice
Venez embrasser votre frère.'	Come and embrace your brother.'

44

Le Corbeau, le reconnaissant,	The Raven, recognising him,
Lui répondit en son ramage:	Answered in his chatter:
'Fromage.'"	'Cheese.'"

The original message of Isaac Watts' poem, namely to be hardworking, comes across in the parody (in chapter 2) in the French *Alice*. The crow has already rolled up its sleeves (an indication of being very busy) and smiles upon the fox's attempt to flatter in order to gain something. Contrary to the crow's reaction in La Fontaine's fable (or in Aesop's fable) the crow knows exactly what is going to happen. In other words, the crow in the parodied version has already gained the wisdom needed to deal with the situation. This wisdom is typically learnt through lessons found in the fables. However, the role of the main character in this fable has been reversed. This crow no longer needs to learn the valuable lesson of being prudent when being flattered. In contrast to the main character in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, namely Alice herself, who is constantly at odds with her situation, he is not at all confused in this potentially dangerous situation – he is totally in control.

In the parodied version of *Le Corbeau et le Renard,* the fox addresses the crow as "accomplice", when he invites him to come down and embrace his "brother". The implication is that, should the crow go down, he himself will become the fox's prey.

The translator of the first French *Alice,* Henri Bué, used a fable of Jean de la Fontaine which was dear to French children and adults of the Victorian age, as much as it was to adults and children of the 17th century (and for that matter, is still dear to adults and children of the 21st century). French children still associate fables with La Fontaine. Bué succeeded in choosing a "cultural instrument" suitable for French readers of all times – a classic fable which would be recognised by French people over centuries. Cohen (1972:xii) points out that the first French *Alice, Aventures d'Alice au pays des merveilles* (1869), is "a classic in its own right, [as] it appeals to something quintessential in all readers of all ages in all times." Part of the reason for this successful long-lasting translation, is the fact that

Bué used material that was familiar to French readers in the 19th century, and that is still familiar to French readers today. The La Fontaine fable that Bué parodied in chapter 2, has become part of the national French heritage.

As noted in chapter 2, France measures high on the uncertainty avoidance index in Hofstede's model of cultural difference. Hofstede (in Gudykunst 2003:18) claims that members of high uncertainty avoidance cultures have a lower tolerance for uncertainty and a greater need for absolute truth than members of low uncertainty avoidance cultures. This fact (together with the initial popularity of the La Fontaine/Aesop fables) could contribute to the fact that modern day French readers enjoy the first French *Alice* (and the translation of the parody in chapter 2) as much as Victorian age readers did.

The chosen fable is one of La Fontaine's best known works. It contains a very different moral lesson to that of the poem *Against Idleness and Mischief* which was parodied in Carroll's original English version. However, the idea of wisdom being transferred from one generation to the next, and from one nation to the next, is central to both the original version and the French translation. As wisdom is a topic of universal interest, this could also explain why the French translation of the parody in chapter 2 is still relevant today.

Although Bué's choice of the La Fontaine fable is effective in the context of the French translation, it does not achieve the same effect as Carroll's parody. This is in line with the translation theory of Venuti in which the "invisible translator" plays a role, as the process of domestication seems to have been followed (see section 2.2). It is questionable then whether the translation, while being effective, is in fact equivalent. This corresponds with Toury's theory, according to which translation is an act governed by norms which themselves determine the extent of equivalence that a translation may attain. In this case, one of the translator's norms was to find a culturally acceptable equivalent.

The nonsense aspect of the original parody appears to have been lost, as the parodied French version is totally different to the original English parodied version. However, a closer look reveals that Bué succeeded in "not making sense" in his parody, as he provided an upside-down version of the classic fable. The crow outwits the fox (who has always been depicted in fables as the ultimate seducer).

4.2. Afrikaans translation: Parody vs the original poem *Lenteliedjie*
4.2.1. Background to the Afrikaans *Alice*

André P. Brink's translation of the Afrikaans *Alice* was done to celebrate the 100th birthday of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). The Afrikaans translation appeared in 1965.

In the introduction to *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland* Brink refers to the country in which Alice's adventures are situated as one where anything is possible: "waar alles volkome sinloos is en – paradoksaal – (en) juis daardeur 'n veel dieper sin as die oënskynlike verwerf."[3] (Brink 1965:5).

Brink makes the following remarks about translating the parodies in *Alice:* "Om Carroll se spitsvondige taal, sy heerlike dolrympies, sy parodieë en woordspelings te vertaal, is nie 'n benydenswaardige taak nie"[4] (Brink 1965: 6). He points out that French, German, and Dutch translators often created their own verses, which don't have anything in common with the original. However, he considers this practice to be disrespectful, but at the same time he emphasises that a literal translation would result in a loss of meaning: "Daarenteen sou letterlike vertaling die verrassende sin en die pragtige teëstelling

---

[3] "where everything is completely nonsensical – and paradoxical – (and) for that reason acquires much deeper meaning than what it seems to have."

[4] "To translate Carroll's subtle language, his delightful whirl rhymes, his parodies and puns, is no enviable task"

heeltemal verlore laat gaan."[5] (Brink, p.c.). This is the reason why Brink chose an in-between solution. According to him (p.c.), where Carroll parodied a well-known English poem into a comical version, he (Brink) used an Afrikaans model. De Roubaix (2010:97) points out that this approach is in line with Venuti's concept of 'domestication' rather than the concept of 'foreignisation'. These concepts refer to a translator's choice of either remaining faithful to the source text (foreignisation) or to focus on the target culture (domestication). Like the translator of the first French *Alice,* Brink focused on the target culture (domestication).

In the introduction to the Afrikaans *Alice*, Brink states that he is not usually in favour of translating an English book into Afrikaans: "Daar is m.i. min te sê vir die vertaal van 'n Engelse boek in Afrikaans."[6] (Brink 1965:6). However, in the case of a classic, which could pose many problems for the young Afrikaans reader, either because of the dialect (like *Huckleberry Finn*) or the playing with words (*Alice)*, Brink is of the opinion that such a translation is justified. He states that it should be done on condition that the translation should incite the young reader to read the original work as soon as possible.

Brink concludes the introduction of his translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by quoting Cervantes' view on translation being the other side of a tapestry: "'n Vertaling is soos 'n kosbare Vlaamse tapisserie wat jy van die verkeerde kant af bekyk: jy sien die prente, maar die gladheid en glans daarvan is bedek met 'n kruis-en-dwarsspul van drade."[7](Brink 1965:7)

Brink's translation of *Alice* has recently been criticised by De Roubaix (2010) as no longer suitable for the modern Afrikaans reader. She proposes that a new translation might be

---

[5] "By contrast, a literal translation would result in a complete loss of the astonishing meaning and the beautiful contrasts".

[6] "In my opinion, there is not much justification for translating an English book into Afrikaans."

[7] "A translation is like a precious Flemish tapestry that one looks at from the wrong side: you see the pictures, but the smoothness and glossiness are concealed with a whole crisscross of threads"

necessary in order to give *Alice* the timelessness of a classic tale (De Roubaix 2010:170). De Roubaix criticised Brink's statement that he regards the translation as serving to incite readers to read the original by saying: "dit wil byna voorkom of hy hiermee enige tekortkominge in die vertaling slegs as 'n vastrapplek vir jong lesers op die pad na die bronteks beskou."[8] (De Roubaix 2010:98).

At the same time, De Roubaix (2010:87) quotes O'Sullivan who emphasised that every text, especially children's literature, is created within a specific culture in a specific moment of time and that it would be over-idealistic to think that children's literature crosses all borders.

The author of the present thesis approached Brink to comment on De Roubaix's criticism. Brink (p.c.), writes: "Daar is so baie faktore op die spel in die vertaling van 'n teks (veral 'n teks gebonde aan 'n bepaalde tydperk) dat dit werklik 'n baie breë blik en aanvoeling van die vertaler verg."[9]

4.2.2. Parody in chapter 2 in the Afrikaans *Alice*

Brink chose the Afrikaans poem *Lenteliedjie* by C. Louis Leipoldt as a model for the parody in chapter 2. Brink (p.c.) states that this choice was determined by the context: "Die keuse van *Lenteliedjie* as model in die betrokke Alice-vertaling is bepaal deur die konteks: dus deur die behoefte om iets van die sfeer van die oorspronklike oor te dra in die keuse van 'n bekende Afrikaanse gediggie met ietwat 'ouderwetse' gevoel" (*Alice* is immers 'n verhaal uit die Victoriaanse era, nie die moderne nie)."[10]

---

[8] "it almost gives the idea that he considers any shortcomings in the translation as a stepping stone for young readers on their way to the source text."

[9] "There are so many factors at play in the translation of a text (particularly a text tied to a specific era) that it really requires the translator to be broadminded and attuned (to the text)."

[10] "The choice of *Lenteliedjie* as model in the specific *Alice* translation was determined by the context: therefore by the need to transfer something of the atmosphere of the original in the choice of a well-known

Brink (p.c.) also points out that *Lenteliedjie* might not be so well-known today as it was in 1965 when he translated *Alice* into Afrikaans, but that a more modern choice might have caused the reader to miss the whole point: "deur iets eietyds te gebruik, sou ek die risiko loop dat die leser glad nie daarmee vertroud sou wees nie en dus die hele 'punt' van die versie sou miskyk" (Brink p.c.). [11]

Lenteliedjie is a tribute to animal life and harmony found in the veld. It is one of Leipoldt's poems in which his love of nature is revealed.

Lenteliedjie (original version: first part)	**Spring song** (own translation)
C. Louis Leipoldt	
Al die veld is vrolik;	All the veld is jolly;
al die voëltjies sing;	All the birds are singing;
al die kriekies kriek daarbuite;	All the little crickets are chirping outside;
elke sprinkaan spring	Every single grasshopper is hopping
Al die koggelmannetjies	All the little lizards
Kom om fees te vier;	are gathering to celebrate;
Hier gallop 'n goggatjie	Over here a little insect is galoping
Daarso dans 'n mier	Over there an ant is dancing
Selfs die vissies spartel	Even the little fishes are wriggling
Teen die kafferskuil;	in the patch of rushes
In die groot ou eikeboom	In the big old oak tree
Droom 'n oupa-uil	a grandpa owl is dreaming

Afrikaans poem with a somewhat 'old-fashioned' feeling (*Alice* is, after all, a tale from the Victorian era, not from the modern time)."

[11]"By using something contemporary, I would run the risk that the reader would not at all be familiar with it and that he would overlook the whole 'point' of the little verse."

The creator of *Lenteliedjie,* C. Louis Leipoldt (1880 - 1947), was a medical doctor, poet and nature lover. His contribution to Afrikaans literature is well-known in literary circles. In Kannemeyer (1999:326) the poet Peter Blum is quoted (from a letter written in 1948) as regarding Leipoldt as "...the father of literary Afrikaans."

Leipoldt was always inspired by nature, as the choice of words *vrolik* "jolly", *sing* "sing", *galop* "gallop" and *dans* "dance" in *Lenteliedjie* clearly indicates. The rhythm in this poem also contributes to the feeling of abundant joy. The poem was well-known by readers of the Afrikaans *Alice* of 1965, as it was also included in the F.A.K. *(Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuur)'s* volume of traditional folk songs that was first published in 1937.

In Brink's parody of *Lenteliedjie,* he keeps the light tone and rhythm, as well as the use of nouns in the diminutive form (like *krokodilletjie* "little crocodile" and *vissies* "little fishes"), which contributes to the feeling of joy in the original poem. However, like the crocodile in the parodied English version, the little crocodile in the Afrikaans parody deceives his prey by inviting them in a friendly manner to come closer.

Parody of *Lenteliedjie*	Parody of *Spring song* (own translation)
Al die veld is vrolik,	All the veld is jolly
Al die vis is hier,	All the fishes are here,
En die krokodilletjie	And the little crocodile
Kom om fees te vier.	Has come to celebrate.
Hy maak sy bek so groot-groot oop,	He opens his mouth big and wide
Mens sien sy tande blink.	One can see his teeth shining
Hy nooi die vissies: "Kom maar in,	He invites the little fishes: "Do come in,
Kom in my maag rinkink!"	Come and play in my stomach!"

In the Afrikaans translation of Carroll's parody *How doth the little crocodile*, Brink has tried to transfer something of the atmosphere of the original poem (namely Watts'

Against Idleness and Mischief) by choosing a poem with a somewhat "old-fashioned" feeling (Brink p.c.). He admits that the poem might not be so well-known to the modern day reader. However, when Brink translated *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Afrikaans in 1965, his target readers would have been familiar with Leipoldt's poem *Lenteliedjie,* as it was very much part of the cultural heritage of the time.

The fact that Afrikaans readers are no longer so familiar with this poem (and might therefore struggle with the parody as well), might have a lot to do with the fact that the Afrikaans culture has changed a lot since the poem was written (1930s) and since *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was translated into Afrikaans (1965)[12]. The Afrikaans culture is no longer a "veld" culture, it has become a much more urbanised culture. The themes and poems of older poets might therefore no longer be popular.

At the same time, Afrikaans readers are probably individualistic according to the Hofstede model that was discussed in section 2. This means that individuals are more important than groups (Gudykunst 2003:9). One can therefore conclude that freedom, innovation and self-expression are important. Each generation admires its own artists, poets and authors, who are known by that generation. A generation, except perhaps in academic circles, might therefore not be familiar with poets/poems from previous generations.

The modern reader of *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland* will probably not be familiar with *Lenteliedjie* anymore. They will therefore also not be able to appreciate Brink's adapted version in which he aimed to recreate something of the original English parody. Although Brink used a different source poem for his parody, he managed to use the same elements of Carroll's original parody, namely the crocodile and the fish. Brink's version doesn't convey the same nonsense effect that the original parody did. However, given his view of

---

[12] As noted in footnote 1, the new edition of *Die avonture van Alice in Wonderland* (2010) retains Brink's original translation (1965), including the parody of C. Louis Leipoldt's poem *Lenteliedjie.*

the Afrikaans translation as a stepping stone to reading the original text, this is perhaps not objectionable.

Bué's adaptation of the classic French fable cannot be considered as parody, given the definition of parody in chapter 3 as "a work aimed at mocking, commenting or poking fun at an original work". It could be argued that Brink's adaptation, on the other hand, is indeed a parody of the original poem as it could be seen to be mocking the "simplistic", "innocent" view of nature present in *Lenteliedjie*. Both translators adapted poems from their respective cultures – achieving a similar effect to that of the original – however neither translator appears to have captured the "critical" element that Carroll achieved in mocking the typical Victorian values.

In both the French and Afrikaans versions of parody in chapter 2 of *Alice*, the reader is invited to read between the lines to see how the meaning of the original version of the poem has been changed. The reader of the Victorian French *Alice*, as well as the reader of the Afrikaans *Alice* of 1965, is approached in a manner that they would be able to relate to. Both translators succeed in adapting their translated versions of Carroll's parody to their target cultures. From the discussion above it would seem that the French version is still well-known today, while the Afrikaans version has (as part of the whole translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Afrikaans) been criticised for no longer being suitable for today's reader. This claim is based on De Roubaix's research which indicates that the target reader of Brink's translation will not necessarily identify with the target text. De Roubaix (2010:167) claims that the Afrikaans text (Brink 1965) doesn't always succeed in providing the target reader with the same experience as that of the reader of the original English version.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Translating *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into any language is a challenging task, as it poses culture-specific, text-specific and language-specific problems (De Roubaix 2010: 12).

Of specific relevance to the current study was the challenge posed by Carroll's use of parodies of well-known poems, i.e. how did the translators look at the original text, and how did they adapt or change the original to find a culturally acceptable equivalent.

The aim of the study was to examine the French and Afrikaans translations of a parodied poem (as found in chapter 2 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland)* from an intercultural perspective. It was shown that both translators used equivalents from their respective cultures as translations for Carroll's parody of Watt's moralistic poem, *Against Idleness and Mischief* that would be acceptable to their target readers.

The parody in the original *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was examined, as well as the French and Afrikaans translations thereof. In the first French translation, *Aventures d'Alices au pays de merveilles (*1869), Henri Bué replaced *How Doth the Little Crocodile* with a parody of a fable written by La Fontaine. Bué's parody was compared to the classic French fable, *Le Corbeau et le Renard,* taking into account the context in which the fable was written. The same was done with André P. Brink's Afrikaans translation *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland (*1965), in which he used a parody of Leipoldt's poem, *Lenteliedjie.*

In order to provide background for the study, several translation theories were described, as well as several theories of intercultural communication. The concept 'parody' was also examined in order to understand this concept in a broader sense. The translation theories

54

and intercultural communication theories helped to explain the translators' choices of poems to parody in translating the original parody *How Doth the Little Crocodile*.

The fact that both translators used equivalents for the parodied poem that would be acceptable to their target readers is in line with Zandberg's (2009:1) suggestion that translators (specifically translators of children's books) are "more focused on their target readers than on the author/narrator of the source text".

The fact that La Fontaine's fables are still well-known in France (it is part of the cultural inheritance that is familiar to today's audience), but Leipoldt's *Lenteliedjie* is no longer well-known in the Afrikaans culture, seems to be influenced by the different characteristics of the two cultures.

France measures high on Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance index. This characteristic seems to contribute to the fact that modern day French readers enjoy the first French *Alice* as much as readers enjoyed it in the Victorian age. The initial popularity of the La Fontaine/Aesop fables could also have contributed to this fact. The theme used in Bué's translation of the parody, namely wisdom, is a theme that appeals to readers of all times. Therefore, modern French readers who might not even know the fable, will still be able to relate to the translation of the parody in chapter 2. This then may account for the fact that the first French translation is still very popular, although it was translated as long ago as 1869 (Cohen 1972:xii).

In the Afrikaans translation of the parody *How Doth the Little Crocodile*, Brink tried to transfer something of the atmosphere of the original poem by choosing a poem with a somewhat "old-fashioned" feeling. When Brink translated *Alice in Wonderland* into Afrikaans in 1965, his target readers were familiar with Leipoldt's poem *Lenteliedjie*. However, De Roubaix (2010: 168) comes to the conclusion that Brink's translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Afrikaans (1965) is no longer suitable for modern day Afrikaans readers. This may have to do with the fact that Afrikaans readers are no

longer familiar with Leipoldt's poem, as the Afrikaans culture is no longer a "veld culture" and the themes and poems of "older" poets might therefore no longer be particularly relevant.

Of course, if the themes/characters in a story continue to appeal to the target readers, a book (original/translated) can remain popular. This phenomenon becomes clear if one considers the fact that the children's story *Liewe Heksie* ("Dear Little Witch") by Verna Vels has been popular ever since the first *Liewe Heksie* book was written more than 40 years ago. The characters appeal to today's young readers as much as to the first reader audience. The author has made sure that *Liewe Heksie* doesn't get outdated by adding modern books to the series, such as *Liewe Heksie en die rekenaar* ("and the computer"). Once again, the fact that these books are still popular has more to do with innovation (a characteristic of individualistic cultures) than with tradition (a characteristic of collectivist cultures). The ever-popular theme of the little witch, who has made children laugh and cry for 40 years, has also played a role in its popularity.

The translators of both the Afrikaans *Alice* and the French *Alice* succeeded in finding cultural equivalents for the parody (*How Doth the Little Crocodile*) that would be acceptable to their target readers. However, the Afrikaans translation seems not to be suitable for modern Afrikaans readers anymore (De Roubaix 2010:170), while the French translation, according to Cohen (1972:xii) is still very popular.

De Roubaix's (2010: 170) conclusion could create the opportunity for a new Afrikaans translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* which will appeal to the modern target reader. At the same time, however, today's target readers could also be educated to have a better understanding of the translator's innovative choices in the translation of the first Afrikaans *Alice* in 1965. Even Carroll's original text has been updated (amongst others by Walt Disney) as many of the references would be even more unfamiliar to a modern English audience than *Lenteliedjie* is to modern Afrikaans readers.

The most important conclusion from this study is that cultural differences play a role in translation, specifically in a translator's choices in focusing on the target reader. At the same time, cultural differences play a role in the extent to which a translation is accepted by its target readers, and in the extent to which it will be appreciated by new generations of readers.

Bibliography

Bornecque, P. 1983. *La Fontaine fabuliste.* Paris: Sedes réunis.

Calder, A. 2001. *The Fables of la Fontaine: wisdom brought to earth.* Genève: Librairie Droz S.A.

Carroll, L. 2007. (1865 & 1871) *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass.* London: Vintage Books.

Carroll, L. 1965. *Alice se Avonture in Wonderland.* Translated by André P. Brink. Kaapstad: Human & Rousseau.

Carroll, L. 1972. (1869). *Aventures d'Alice au pays de merveilles.* Translated by Henri Bué. New York: Dover Publications.

Carroll, L., and M. Gardner. 1985. (1960). *The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass.* London: Penguin.

Cohen, M.N. 1995. *Lewis Carroll.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Cohen, M.N. 1972. Introduction. In L. Carroll. *Aventures d'Alice au pays de merveilles.* Trans. Henri Bué. (1869). New York: Dover Publications

Dean, C. 1997. *Alice-Mutton: Mutton-Alice:* Social Parody in the Alice Books. Online: http://www. Alice-in-wonderland.net/school/alice

De la Fontaine, J. 1989. *Fables.* Paris: Presses Pocket

De la Fontaine, J. (1882). *The Fables of la Fontaine.* Translated by Elizur Wright. Middlesex: The Echo Library.

Dentith, S. 2000. *Parody.* London: Routledge.

De Roubaix, L. 2010. *Alice se avonture in Afrikaans: 'n Vertaalteoretiese beskouing van geskiktheid, aanvaarbaarheid en gepastheid.* MA Thesis, University of Stellenbosch.

Drury, L. 1984. *Alice in Kammaland:* vertaal en verwerk. Johannesburg: Macdonald.

Even-Zohar, I. 1990. Polysystem studies. *Poetics Today, 11(1): 1-262*

Frank, H.T. 2007. *Cultural Encounters in Translated Children's Literature: Images of Australia in French Translation.* Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.

Gudykunst, B. 2003. *Cross-cultural and intercultural communication.* London: Sage Publications.

Guirdham, M. 1999. *Communicating across cultures.* London: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Hardwick, L. 2000. *Translating words, translating cultures.* London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd.

Haughton, H. 1998. Introduction. In Carroll, L. *Alice's adventures in wonderland and through the looking glass and what Alice found there.* London: Penguin Books. ix-ixv.

Hutcheon, L. 1985. *A theory of parody: The teachings of twentieth-century art forms.* London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.

Kannemeyer, J.C. 1999. *Leipoldt.* Kaapstad: Tafelberg.

Kwoka, B. 2009. *Alice in Wonderland*: Concealing Social Criticism in Nonsense. Online: http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/carroll/kwoka8.html (10 August 2010).

Jacobs, A. 1991. *The Penguin Dictionary of Music.* London: The Penguin group.

Martin, A. 2001. *A translator's view of translation norms. The Electronic Journal of the Department of English at the University of Helsinki.* 1(200): 1-10.

Meek, M. 2001. *Children's literature and national identity.* Staffordshire: Trentham Books Ltd.

Milner, F. 1903. *The poems in Alice in Wonderland.* Online: http://wwww.durrant.co.uk/alice/

Neser, L.C.. 2003. *Die berymde fabels van La Fontaine: uitdagings en riglyne vir 'n nuwe Afrikaanse teikengehoor*. MA. Thesis, Rand Afrikaans University.

Newmark, P. 1995. *Approaches to translation.* Cornwall: Hartnolls Limited.

Pisarska, A. 1989. *Creativity of translators: The translation of Metaphorical Expressions in Non-literary texts.* Poznan: Ada Mickiewicz University Press.

Reichertz, R. 1997. *Lewis Carroll's uses of earlier children's literature.* McGill-Queen's University Press.

Sinclair, J. et al. 1992. *Collins Cobuild Student's Dictionary.* Glasgow: Harpers Colllins Manufacturing.

Sperber, D. 1996. *Explaining culture: A naturalistic approach.* Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

Shires, L.M. 1988. Fantasy, Nonsense, Parody and the Status of the Real: The Example of Carroll. *Victorian Poetry* 26(3): 267-283.

Ting-Toomey, S. 1999. *Communication across cultures.* New York & London: Guilford Press.

Toury, G. 1995. *Descriptive translation studies and beyond.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Van Coillie, J. & Verschueren, W.P. 2006. Editor's preface. In Van Coillie, J. & Verschueren, W.P. (eds). *Children's literature in translation*: Challenges and Strategies, Manchester: St Jerome. v-ix.

Van Graan, T. 2009. *Alice in Wonderland.* Pretoria: Fantasi Books (Pty) Ltd.

Zandberg, A. 2009. *Die rol van die vertaler as kulturele bemiddelaar: die Afrikaanse Harry Potter as gevallestudie.* MA Thesis, University of Stellenbosch.