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A Study on the *Artemis Fowl* Series in the Context of Publishing Success

C Essay in English
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ABSTRACT

A close reading of a series of books by Eoin Colfer that enjoyed universal success showed a change in the language between the books especially with respect to minor linguistic features such as choice of location and abstract vs. concrete language. The books are about the boy Artemis Fowl, and were presumably conceived as children's books.

My original thesis was that the writer could not be sure of the success of the first book, but would definitely be aware of a worldwide audience for at least his third book, due to, for example, questions raised by the translators. If the original audience was expected to be Irish, or British, with very much the same cultural background as the author's, the imagined subsequent audiences would change with success. My hope was to be able to show this by comparing linguistic features. And indeed, even though some changes could be due to coincidence there was a specific pattern evolving in the series, in that the originally Irish cultural background became less exclusive and more universal. The writer also used more details concerning locations, with added words to specify a place. What could thus be expected in the translated versions would be omissions and additions in especially the first book, but less need for that in later books. This, however, could not be proven in the Swedish translations. I thus conclude that the books became easier to follow for a wider, in this case Swedish, audience mostly because of efforts by the author and less because of the translator.

KEY WORDS

Artemis Fowl, Eoin Colfer, contextual understanding, cultural filter, covert and overt translations, Irish folklore, children's literature, leprechauns, fairies, supernatural species in literature.

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REFERENCE LIST

1 INTRODUCTION

When a writer is asked who he or she is writing for, there is generally someone they have in mind, a specific person in fact. The Irish writer Eoin Colfer is no exception. In interviews he sometimes says that the person he is writing for has not changed over the years, in other interviews he actually says that he is writing to himself at the age of twelve. But is it true that Colfer still is writing for the same person? Eoin Colfer, a primary school teacher, had known success in Ireland even prior to the release of the *Artemis Fowl* books. However, after the first book in that series he experienced worldwide fame. Colfer could leave his day-job and go into full-time writing.

Is it possible, without knowing all the facts about whom Colfer is aiming his books at, to trace the impact of this success linguistically in Colfer's books? This study is based on the hypothesis that the way locations, names, word puns, and specific cultural heritage are used also tells you something about the prospective reader of a book; it can, for example, indicate what things the reader is expected to be familiar with. If these cultural aspects are explained in more detail in later texts, similar to the way a translator adds or omits things in order to adapt a text to a new culture, this could be evidence for the fact that the writer is now writing for a different audience. If the readers of the *Artemis Fowl* books are becoming less Irish and more global, the same could be said of how the information about the Irish heritage is presented. This would also make a difference for the translators. Adaptation is a big part of the work for a translator of children's books. How many foreignisms, that is words that cannot be translated because the target language lacks the corresponding feature, can a child take? Generally, children's literature is culturally adapted to suit the new audience and foreignisms are avoided (Thomson 2004:86).

This study aims at tracing and analysing linguistic changes over a series of books. Even if the series may have been meant primarily for children, it should be added that some aspects are clearly aimed at an older audience, presumably the friendly voice reading for the children. The books are primarily set in Ireland, with culture-specific Irish fairies playing a significant part for the plot. The series starts with a book aimed at amusing and confusing Irish readers, not least by numerous linguistic jokes about the origin of specific words like *leprechaun*, but also through intriguing intertextual references. Some English books, which have been translated globally, are in fact devoid of cultural heritage, like the popular books by Enid Blyton, which House declares to suffer from "cultural neutrality of plot and character" (2004b:685). This cannot be said about the *Artemis Fowl*-series where the Irish leprechauns play a vital part. The leprechauns are famous in Irish folk tales for playing word games with humans in order to protect their gold on the other side of the rainbow,

but they do not feature in Swedish fairy tales. The references to old Irish tales in the books and the new, spectacular reading of old facts are some linguistic features, which imply difficulties for a Swedish translator. For a book to attract a worldwide audience it must have a general interest, or be partly universal in scope, otherwise it would not have been translated in the first place. But will these universal traits grow stronger in the sequels? The way English has taken over in the world of translations, where a majority of books are translated from English, has also led to the audience being more familiar with typical English customs. Still, there is a difference between the general Anglo-Saxon point of view and a Celtic point of view, in this case promoted by an Irish author, which also indicates that it will be tougher for the Swedish translator compared to if the writer had been English.

Finally, as Umberto Eco emphasizes in *Mouse or rat – Translation as negotiation* (2003:32ff) sometimes it is correct to translate a *rat* as a *mouse*, as is done in the Italian version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. This is due to the fact that Italian has different words for *rat* and *mouse*, but uses only one for both kinds of animals in general, namely the word for *mouse*. This is also something that any translator would be familiar with because of the differences between languages. One word could be translated in two ways, and sometimes two options can only be translated with one word. In Eco's example, the *rat* in the famous exclamation in act III, scene 4 of *Hamlet*, "How now, a Rat?", becomes a *mouse* in Italian and the translation. However, as Eco explains, this is still correct in the context. With a focus on how Irish wit and fairies were exported to a wider audience this study will expect to see some Irish rats turning into Swedish mice .

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In the beginning there were the Bible translations

The beauty of the written word, sometimes in stone for safekeeping through the ages, and the way it can describe and preserve history, is something which we nowadays take much for, granted. When people first started writing, the first translator was at work translating the oral words and thoughts into letters. Throughout the history of writing, some texts were translated and some were not, partly depending on their content. Translation theory argues that if the book has a universal theme, it can also be translated, or as Nida argues "Anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message (1982:4)", but when it comes to the

question of how to deal with cultural differences there are different approaches to choose from, as we will see later on.

Translations of the Bible have had a strong impact on translation theory. Saint Jerome (ca 342-419 AD) is the patron saint of translators due to his work with translating the Bible from Greek and Hebrew into Latin. His so-called Vulgate is still used by the Catholic Church (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). The task involved in making texts originally aimed at the Hebrews universal and accessible for all kinds of cultures, with or without prior knowledge of the Jewish faith, must have been monumental. Still, what may seem local and culture-specific often appeals to others, too. In the Bible there is a mentioning of “the goat for *Azazel*” (Leviticus 16:8). This is a foreignism, a word for a tradition not generally known, and the actual meaning has furthermore become obscure over the years even for the Jewish culture from which it developed. The meaning of the word *Azazel* is debated, it could be the cliff the goat was pushed over, or it could be the demons of the desert the goat was sent to but the meaning of the ceremony, that someone else takes the blame instead of the guilty person, was universally understandable and one word could thus convey the universal meaning of a foreign concept. In William Tyndale’s translation of 1530 the goat for *Azazel* became a *scapegoat* (from *escape*). Today, that word, with the original meaning transformed into referring metaphorically to people rather than goats is part of an almost universal vocabulary. What was unique and local became universal through inventive translation (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). This is an example how foreignism can be successfully tackled by a translator.

Martin Luther exemplifies the type of translator who translates into his or her native language, perhaps the most common type. Luther himself described his work as letting the people of the Bible speak like good Germans in the Bible of 1534, thereby contributing to the evolution of the German language (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). Translations therefore can be seen as adding to the richness of another language, by creating words for new concepts and views with lexical loans and direct translations.

But when translating a book into 2,400 languages, as in the case of the Bible, there will be major issues to deal with depending on cultural differences. Nida argues that:

People, however, have many words for things which may not exist, or even for things which they may insist do not exist, e.g., unicorns, ambrosial fluid, Zeus and fairies, for meaning is not a feature of the referent itself but a feature of the concepts which we have about such a referent. Therefore, quite apart from the reality of any referent we can and must discuss the meanings not in terms of what we may personally think of such a referent but in terms of the ways in which those who use a particular expression conceive of the objects, events, and abstracts referred to. (Nida 1982:82)

According to Nida, another good piece of advice regarding Bible translations is to give greater thought to the non-believer than to the believer (1982:31), a rule which means that the language should be used to explain for - and not exclude - new believers, and also to use the language that is used by younger people, preferably “persons twenty-five to thirty years of age” (1982:32), and not the language of older people or children. The reason for this is that the elderly might speak with words going out of fashion and children may have invented words, which are not part of a common vocabulary.

The books in the Bible were presumably not written with a worldwide audience and translations into other languages in mind. Still, a valid argument is that the content is of general interest. The translator, when dealing with a text like the Bible, has, however, to use the language carefully and flexibly, with a great knowledge of linguistic features, and also with an eye to rendering the text understandable in its translated form. In fact, this is something that applies to almost all translation contexts, complex or simple.

2.2 Self-translations and the need for adaptation

What happens when the writer knows that the people reading his or her work will be unfamiliar with certain objects and traditions, for example Linda Olsson, a Swedish writer living in New Zealand, wrote her first novel *Let me sing you gentle songs* about a small village in Sweden for a New Zealand audience. Her language was regarded as exotic, but some of her descriptions, like that of the Swedish hand-woven rugs, were not understood by the publisher. When a Swedish publishing house wanted to publish her book in Swedish she first started to translate it herself but it felt, according to her, like writing the book all over again so an independent translator was given the task (Kalmteg 2006). This time the book would be aiming at a Swedish audience, clearly familiar with the culture described, and Linda Olsson felt as if the book should therefore be different from the one she wrote for a New Zealand audience.

Samuel Beckett wrote his masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* not in his native language English but in French (*The Literary Encyclopedia*). He chose to translate it himself later, but made radical changes and several of the more humorous lines were deleted and other things were added. For example, there is a reference to *camogie* in the English version, a Celtic game played by girls in Ireland, Beckett’s native country as well as geographical references to Ireland (Beckett 2000:37). The French original is quite different from the so called English translation, they are both adapted to their audience so Beckett made what Linda Olsson described as not a translation but rather another book (Kalmteg 2006). This is clearly not an alternative for the average translator who would feel

bound to follow the source text as closely as possible (Nida 1982:12). House has two definitions on how translations are done, either as an *overt version*, with additions of a special function, special editions for example for children, with added purposes like resumes and abstracts but still possible to identify as a translation, or as a *covert version* where the translator randomly applies a cultural filter thereby manipulating the original text (House 2004a:498-499). A covert translation House categorizes as a text that “enjoys the status of an original text in the receiving culture” (2004b:498). *Waiting for Godot* can therefore be seen as an example of a covert translation.

2.3 Semantic difficulties

Umberto Eco, the semiologist and famous writer, performed an experiment regarding *machine translation* by entering a text into the machine translator Babelfish, <http://babelfish.altavista.com>, which translated his text into a given language (2004:10). After that, he let the machine translator translate the translation back to the original language. The result was a mess, especially when several languages were involved, but Eco could show that this was due to the duality of the meaning of words. When one spoken or written form has different meanings due to polysemy or homonymy, the machine, unless it is properly programmed to distinguish between these meanings, can easily be led to choose a target language item that corresponds to the meaning that was not intended in the original. Eco showed how the phrase *the works of Shakespeare* translated into Italian and then back into English thus became *the plants of Shakespeare*. Since we depend on the context when reading a text, a context that will clarify the meaning of the words used, we would need a computer which also can take the context into account when translating. Associations and hidden meanings are also things that we so far cannot trust a machine to decipher but the reader is supposed to get most of this and a translator is supposed to get all of these associations and hidden meanings in order to convey them in the target language. A help for translators to avoid making a "plants of Shakespeare" mind of mistake is the cultural filter:

A cultural filter is a means of capturing cognitive and socio-cultural differences in expectation norms and discourse conventions between source and target linguistic-cultural communities. The application of such a filter should ideally not be based exclusively on the translator's subjective, accidental intuitions but be – as far as possible – in line with relevant empirical cross-cultural research.
(House 2006:349)

Therefore, even if human conditions are much more alike than we tend to acknowledge, the translator still has to be able to recognise, analyse and categorise “subtle if crucial differences in

cultural preferences, mentalities and values” before a cultural filter can be applied to a covert translation (House 2006:351).

2.4 Where do translations go wrong?

Form and content are two of the cornerstones when it comes to making a translation mirror the source text. The challenge is to try to keep both form and content similar to the original, which is easier in free writing compared to poetry with its fixed lines. To add explanations, to translate names, to omit things which will only confuse, to change wordplay in order to keep the form, or to change the form in order to keep the wordplay, is very much everyday work for a translator. But form and content is not everything, also important are cultural context and cultural awareness:

So many translation theories stress the principle according to which, in the translating process, the impact a translation has upon its own cultural milieu is more important than an impossible equivalence with the original. (Eco 2004:5)

The topic of cultural impact will further be dealt with in the discussion section, but first it is wise to see where the translation can make the right respectively the wrong turn. As Reiss (2000:4-5) argues “Every criticism of translation, whether positive or negative, must be defined explicitly and be verified by examples”. Reiss lists the following underlying causes for mistranslations:

- carelessness
- typographical oversight
- inexperience – idiomatic, technical terminology
- inadequate sensitivity
- insufficient familiarity with the topic

How many translation errors are due to the style of the original writer is hard to say. Revealing one of the results of my study now, I can, however, state that the translator’s more doubtful choices in this study sometimes seem to be the result of typographical oversights, but most of the time they are due to specialized terminology for the supernatural world (See 4.2.1 and 4.3.1).

2.5 What’s in a name and what isn’t

What's in a name? That which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet. (*Romeo and Juliet* II:2)

To only focus on errors in translations is a cul-de-sac because two translations are never the same so one translation cannot be used as a blueprint for the next; another text brings other challenges for the translator. For a series of books this is partly not true because a foundation has been laid like how the key words should be translated. However, if the translation proves to be slightly wrong after some books have been published in the series it is hard to put it right again as translators working with a translation memory know. But how do we make the distinction between a good and a bad translation? We have to move into the text if we want to understand where it went wrong. Pym calls for a distinction between binary errors, where one option is right and the other is wrong, and non-binary errors with “right but” or “wrong but” solutions (Pym 2003:72). In the latter part the translator has to make the best choice because there is no right or wrong. In this area the most challenging part of a translator's work is done.

We also have to take into account what the original writer of a text thinks of substantial changes in translation. Some writers do not accept changes of names for example, J R R Tolkien and later his relatives had fixed views on what should be translated and what should be left as it was, especially regarding names of locations (Bjerre 2003). Umberto Eco says about his experiences as both a writer and a translator that he tries to find a solution that will work but he uses the phrase “censorship by mutual consent” about cases when the translator and the writer have to resign to the fact that they have to accept a cut (Eco 2003:43).

As Tolkien knew, names themselves mean something in the source language, and are therefore something to be careful with during translation. For instance, the irony of a giant being called *Lillen* ‘little man’¹ in Swedish would not be understood if the name was kept in an English translation, but if *Lillen* is translated into *Smalley*, or a similar nickname, it starts to make sense and adds something to the translation. Still, translating names is one of the areas where translators tread on thin ice. The teenage American sleuth may be *Kitty Drew* in Sweden, but in the rest of the world she is known as *Nancy Drew*. This translation of her name has no obvious explanation. Sometimes it is easier, as when Astrid Lindgren’s *Pippi Långstrump* got her surname translated into English and became known as *Pippi Longstocking*. Going back to the Bible, there are changes in the names as well, as when the disciple *Tomas* is known in Russia as *Fama*. Or consider the multiple versions of the name of the writer of the first gospel: *Matthew*, *Matthieu*, *Matteus*, *Matteo* and so on.

Changing titles is also sometimes done, as when J R R Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* became *Sagan om ringen* ‘The Tale about the Ring’, but the Swedish word used, *saga*, is usually associated with fairytales in Sweden (even if the same word is used for epic Icelandic novels). In movies this

¹ My own translations will be marked out with single quotation marks throughout this essay.

can be done in a way to promote popular actors, like when Goldie Hawn had all her movies named according to the same pattern in Sweden:

Original title	Swedish title	Back-translation of Swedish title
<i>Foul Play</i>	<i>Tjejen som visste för mycket</i>	'The girl who knew too much'
<i>Overboard</i>	<i>Tjejen som visste för lite</i>	'The girl who knew too little'
<i>Private Benjamin</i>	<i>Tjejen som gjorde lumpen</i>	'The girl who did her military service'

The current trend, however, seems to go towards not translating English titles. Most famously Superman (previously known as Stålmannen 'the Man of Steel' in Sweden), returned to this country as Superman in *Superman – the Movie* (1978).

2.6 Children's literature – another story

When it comes to children's literature there is a trend regarding translation that would be unthinkable when dealing with adults' books. Strange and exotic appearances, traditions, customs, objects and so on are adapted to local conditions much more regularly. That children could well take in new features and would also benefit from learning about a new culture does not seem to be an issue. But even if these exotic features are missing we can see in children's literature that "a cultural filter is nevertheless often placed between source and target texts, and changes are undertaken both subtly and systematically" (House 2004b:685). Even well known writers are translated with a lack of respect according to House. Astrid Lindgren for example had a chapter omitted in an American translation because of the mentioning of a nose full of snot (House 2004b:684). Lindgren correctly pointed out that a nose full of snot could appear even in America, so that could not be the reason for omitting that chapter. And the fact that the *Harry Potter*-books, although written in British English, had to be "translated" into American English shows that cultural context plays an important part not least in American translations, even if some readers of the books would strongly argue that they are able to cope with the British touch (Thomson 2003:89).

In children's books it is, however, not only the mentioning of excrements or bodily fluids that the translators sometimes go to some lengths to rephrase. They also have to take into account another aspect of culture: the political context. During the Cold War, Germany was divided into an Eastern and a Western part, East Germany being a dictatorial socialist republic. But, as in other socialist states, Astrid Lindgren was still translated. However, when it came to mentioning Pippi's

father as being a Negro king, that was unthinkable. All references to Pippi's father, as all references to black people, disappeared from the books (Thomson, 2003:84). According to the censorship files, black people were improperly depicted in the books. Some other elements were equally unmentionable for Germans and English readers – like going out for a pee. In Germany the child instead just wanted to go out for a while, and the English version had the child going out star-gazing (Thomson 2003:84).

Reasons for the changes in translated children books can, as we have seen, be political and ideological, but also moral or religious in nature. These changes are not all due to censorial adults; some changes are made because the child would not have the same kind of experience and awareness as an adult, with limited knowledge of the world as well as limited abilities to actually read. These changes are instead carried out in order for the child to be able to enjoy and understand the book. The experts are divided on the question as to how many foreign cultural elements a child can accept. As Thomson sums it up, the more the translator and the publisher trust their young readers to “cope with difficult expressions and unfamiliar concepts” the more they will also choose to stay close to the original, and let more of the foreign bits stay – thus enabling their audience to learn more (2004:86).

3 METHOD AND MATERIAL

3.1 Starting criteria

To test the hypothesis that an author who becomes internationally famous will, perhaps unconsciously, change his or her way of writing, the books to be analysed for this study needed to fulfil some specific criteria:

- The author should ideally have published before the attainment of international fame.
- The books tested should be a series of books, set in the same place with the same main characters, in order to facilitate comparisons.
- The presumed readers of the first book in the series should be a home audience, with essentially the same cultural background as the writer.
- The later books should be written for a wider audience
- The author's cultural background should be special and be reflected in the plot of the book.
- Lastly, the series of books should be translated into Swedish, preferably by the same translator.

3.2 Materials used

Because of my prior knowledge of Irish and Celtic mythology as well as English children's literature, two authors were both of particular interest to me as well as understood to fit the criteria: Jacqueline Wilson in England and Eoin Colfer in Ireland. Thus, a series of books by Jacqueline Wilson, about three teenage girls, with all titles starting with *Girls in...*, would have constituted a possible choice for primary material. However, I eventually decided on a series of books by Eoin Colfer with one and the same hero, Artemis Fowl, featuring in all books. To be precise, the first three parts of this series, including their Swedish translations, constitute the material for the present study: *Artemis Fowl* (first published in 2001), *Artemis Fowl and the Arctic Incident* (first published 2002), and *Artemis Fowl: The Eternity Code* (first published 2003). The Swedish translations were all done by Lisbet Holst: *Artemis Fowl* (2005), *Artemis Fowl Det kalla kriget* (2006) and *Artemis Fowl Evighetskoden* (2006).

Colfer had already published two books about an Irish boy abroad before he started to experiment with the supernatural world in *The Wish List*. According to Colfer himself, he was at this stage making an effort to live on his writing so he contacted an agent for the release of the first book about Artemis Fowl. He had, however, not anticipated the hyped campaign that first the agent and later the publisher set up in connection with the release of this book; in fact in interviews prior to the release of the book he was worried about all the attention in case the book would flop. It is important for the analysis of the material to know that the second book in the series was written after the contract with the agent was signed, but before the release of the first book.

3.3 Method employed

A close reading of the first three books in the series in the source language was made in order to note down things of interest. My reading focused on the areas listed below, all representatives of cultural differences that translators have to pay special attention to. This was done with a view to a subsequent comparison with the Swedish translations:

- Persons' and characters' names and their meanings
- Names of locations, that is names of sites, streets, houses, towns, countries, seas, mountains et cetera
- References to Ireland and the Irish
- References to the supernatural world
- Wordplay

Following this, the Swedish translations of the three books were also read closely. I compared all the items marked in the source texts with their counterparts in the translated books, and also checked if more issues arose in the translations. I was thus able to count the occurrences of specific items, including added or omitted ones in the translations, thereby doing a quantitative as well as a qualitative study. In the qualitative study the focus lay on comparing chosen extracts and note down changes. In the longer extracts I analysed the difference by comparing the nouns: Were they abstract or concrete? Could they be pictured? There happened to be similar mentioning of the journey by a fairy to Ireland in the different books so these travelling descriptions were compared. Another area, which stood out in the qualitative study, was how Ireland and the Irish were described, the home country of the author as well as the books' main character, Artemis Fowl. This was also possible to compare between the books.

A monolingual corpus can only give limited insights and the result of its analysis may be ambiguous. The choice of comparing the source texts with their Swedish translations reduced the risk of ambiguity. However, the primary focus in this study was on the source texts, with an additional test of my hypothesis with the help of the translations. The aim was not to criticize the translations but to analyse them and to see if the subtle changes in the source texts were reflected in the target texts.

In order not to misinterpret words referring to the supernatural, I also consulted books on Irish mythology, British and Swedish monolingual dictionaries, and English-Swedish-English dictionaries. The words used for supernatural beings in the source texts were looked up in the *Encyclopedia Britannica Online* and the *Oxford Reference Online* and for the translated version the words were checked in the on-line version of *Nationalencycledin*, the Swedish equivalent of the *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. *Nationalencycledin* also has a translation service on its website, so the English source words were all checked there.

3.4 Evaluation of the sources and the issues arising

Choosing three books in a series made the task of comparing the presence of specific features possible. The analysis of the bilingual corpus could still be managed in a scientific way even if the passages of interest inserted into Excel spreadsheets added up. The choice of books would ideally have involved the earliest works by the same author as well. However, a meaningful comparison would not have been as easy when the main characters and the locations are different.

One part of the analysis was to decide whether the supernatural beings could be found in Swedish tales but maybe under a somewhat different name, or if they would be considered as foreignism for a Swedish reader.

When it came to the names the original focus was on the associations they evoked but even here a cultural context was needed in order to get the jokes that many of them represented. A lot of these associations would be lost if the names were not translated. Word play was very much in evidence in the analysis of the names.

As to locations, I focused on how, or if, the places were introduced. I tried to see how detailed the descriptions were, if similar locations were described in more detail at any point in the series. The name *Tara* proved to be central here, the ancient site of the mythical high king of Ireland.

Lastly, I became aware during the work with the material that the amount of praise for everything Irish and for Ireland itself diminished even if it did not disappear from the books totally. This aspect thus also became an official element of my investigation.

By reading and comparing three original novels and their translations, and especially by extracting passages of interest, I was able to draw conclusions and to describe the transformation of the writings of one and the same author over a period of time, with a widening audience as one possible reason for the linguistic changes.

4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

For the *qualitative* study a search was made for similar passages in the three books in order for me to be able to compare them more in detail, the *quantitative* gathering of shorter expressions or names would provide arguments for my thesis in numbers and tables, but a longer extract could show how the language looked like in the first book compared to the third

In this section, the different types of features analysed will be described, followed by a discussion of issues that emerged after the subsequent analysis of the translations.

4.1 What's in a name?

The *Artemis Fowl* series consists of children's books full of wit that would be appreciated by a wider and older audience as well. The names are not randomly chosen, they tell the reader something about the person. There are many intertextual references and as always with intertextuality, it gives another dimension to what is said, but the text can also be read and

understood without the reader getting all the hints to the original context. The main character, Artemis Fowl, is a boy named after the Greek hunting goddess Artemis. He is, of course, himself a hunter. At one point in the series his name is further explained with jokes about it being a girl's name (Colfer 2004:20).

Another main character is the fairy Holly Short. She is described as being short, below fairy average which in turn of course is short compared with human size. *Holly* would allude to Christmas when the halls are decked with holly, and to Santa's little helpers, but Holly is also associated with ancient magic. Holly's pointy ears are her most prominent feature, often remarked about, as is her age (Colfer 2002:31).

Holly's commander, Julius Root, appears first to have an ordinary name, but as he gets angry and turns red the punch line comes. He is, of course, called *Beetroot* (behind his back).

The centaur has been given the name Foaly alluding to a horse (a foal). An interviewer asked the rhetoric question "...the inventor and computer expert Foaly -- what else could an Irishman call a centaur?" (Children's Literature 2007). As centaurs are usually extremely awe-inspiring creatures this is an example of Irish wit to dragging him down with a name alluding to a horse.

But it is with Butler, Artemis' bodyguard, that the linguistic twist is most obvious to start with:

The Butlers had been serving the Fowls for centuries. It had always been the way. Indeed there were several eminent linguists of the opinion that this was how the noun originated. The first record of this unusual arrangement was when Virgil Butler had been contracted as servant, bodyguard and cook to Lord Hugo de Fóle for one of the first great Norman crusades. (Colfer 2001:15)

So *butlers* are named after the first *Butler* at least in the parallel universe of Artemis Fowl. And the first (virgin) Butler had of course to be Virgil - a vigilante. This is very similar to how Colfer twists the origin of the word *leprechaun*:

If the Mud people knew that the word 'leprechaun' actually originated from LEPrecon, an elite branch of the Lower Elements Police, they'd probably take steps to stamp them out. (Colfer 2002:33)

Of course, this is not true: *leprechaun* comes from Old Irish, and the original word was *luchorpan*, meaning 'little body' (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

In the second book of the series Artemis is revealed to have been writing psychological studies under the name *Doctor F. Roy Dean Schlippe*. A Dean is an academic title but read out the name becomes *Doctor Freudian slip*, which Artemis's doctor Po (another name of

many meanings) fails to notice. Further, their conversation (Colfer 2002:7) takes place at St Bartleby's School for Young Gentlemen in County Wicklow, Ireland. *Bartleby* is a reference to Herman Melville's short story about the man who preferred not to do anything, which seems to be a strange association for a school. In the third book we see another alias of Artemis: *Emmsey Squire*, when he is posting entries on the Internet about physics. This is alluding to the pronunciation of the famous formula $E = mc^2$ and regrettably difficult to translate (Colfer 2004:45).

The new archenemy introduced in the second book is a pixie by the name of Opal Koboi. The name sounds as *cowboy* but also *kobold*, which is a German temperamental spirit who becomes outraged when he is not properly fed, and who sometimes is referred to as a spirit of caves and mines (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). This name suits the gold-digger Opal Koboi.

The dwarf Mulch Diggums (Colfer2002:161) is a re-occurring creature in the books, always using new aliases. In *Artemis Fowl and the Arctic Incident* he calls himself *Lance Digger* (alluding to digging habits) (Colfer 2006a:190) and in *Artemis Fowl The Eternity Code* he calls himself *Mo Digence*, alluding to more digging (Colfer 2004:119).

4.1.1 Translation of names

In the translated version most of the names, including their underlying meaning, remain untranslated. This includes the joke about *Julius Root* being called *Beetroot* because of his red face: "Root var lila i ansiktet av ilska. Detta var mer eller mindre hans naturliga tillstånd, vilket förskaffat honom öknamnet Rödbetan"(Colfer 2005:39). 'Root was purple in his face by anger. This was more or less his natural condition, which had obtained him the nickname Beetroot'. This is a good translation of the original sentence, which uses the colour purple for Julius' face, but in Swedish the colour red is part of the name of the root vegetable, so the obvious solution would have been to translate 'purple' with 'red' in order to make the joke more complete. This is similar to Eco's example of the rat correctly being translated as a mouse. In fact, in Swedish we get red in the face of anger, not purple which is instead associated with choking.

As a main rule the translator seems to translate some of the minor characters' names, but leaves the main characters' names untranslated. The name of the villain *Loafers* (Colfer 2004:114) is translated as *Jagarn* (Colfer 2006c:106) 'the hunter', alluding to a Swedish name for what used to be trendy shoes *myggjagare* 'mosquito hunters', and the relevant jokes about his name are therefore also adjusted to suit the new word used. When some of the other name jokes are left untranslated, it therefore looks as if the translator did not get the joke. This could of course also be due to

restrictions from the publishing house. However, the fact that no explanations are added seems to suggest that the translator simply misunderstood, which is one of the possible explanations of translators' mistakes listed previously (see section 2.4). Similarly, even if Irish children understand the mentioning of *Liá Fail* Swedish children would need an explanation. The names could of course have been left as they are just to provide local colour, but the fact that other things have been adapted to Swedish culture, such as the leprechauns, makes the translation a mixture of a covert and an overt translation (see section 2.2).

4.2 Location, location, location – where is it?

There are 45 mentioning of named locations in *Artemis Fowl* compared to 104 in *Artemis Fowl and the Arctic Incident* and 127 in *Artemis Fowl The Eternity Code*. That difference can partly be explained by the fact that a large part of the story no longer takes place in Ireland, but it is also true to say that locations become more and more specified. Therefore the word *Ireland*, for example, becomes more frequent in the later books. The residence of Artemis Fowl, Fowl Manor, is first described as *Fowl Manor, Dublin* (Colfer 2001:14) but in a later book as *Fowl Manor, Dublin, Ireland* (Colfer 2004:94).

When looking at a more detailed level we find *Tara*, located in Ireland. An Irish audience would know about Tara and its connotations because it is the ancient site for the High King of Ireland. Outside Ireland the name Tara is perhaps better known as the plantation in *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell. It could therefore be expected that an Irish author writing for an Irish audience would not explain the name further, but another audience would require an explanation. In *Artemis Fowl*, Tara is just called Tara, with no explanation added. In *Artemis Fowl and the Arctic Incident* there is the added description of Tara as the place "in the middle of the McGraney farm" and of the influence the presence of fairies had had on that family: "...they had enjoyed exceptional good luck. Illnesses mysteriously cleared up overnight. Priceless art treasures unearthed themselves with incredible regularity, and mad cow disease seemed to avoid their herds altogether" (Colfer 2006a:50). It is also made clear that the place is located close to Dublin.

With respect to the next place name of interest, how many readers outside the British Isles would be able to place *County Wicklow* in Ireland? Wicklow features as the location for Artemis' school. It is rather a famous county south of Dublin, as well as the name of the main town of the county, associated with wealth, gardens, and closeness to the Irish Sea. This too, would need to be explained for an international audience. In *Artemis Fowl and the Arctic Incident*, when the school is introduced, it is defined as situated in *County Wicklow, Ireland* (Colfer 2006a:7). This is the full

address, but this is not how addresses were written in *Artemis Fowl*. There, *Dublin port* for example, was just *the port* to start with (Colfer 2002:85). In regard to this it may be useful to remember that Eoin Colfer wrote the first as well as the second book before he actually knew that the books would reach a world audience. The third book, however, is definitely written with the knowledge of such an audience waiting to read it. Within the framework of this study, it is in fact easiest to compare the first and the third books in the series, while the second one is heading in the direction of book three. This can be seen in Figure 1 below. Ireland is as important in all books, with roughly the same amount of mentioning, but the world outside Ireland grows more interesting – pretty much mirrored by how the world outside Ireland grows more and more interested in Artemis.

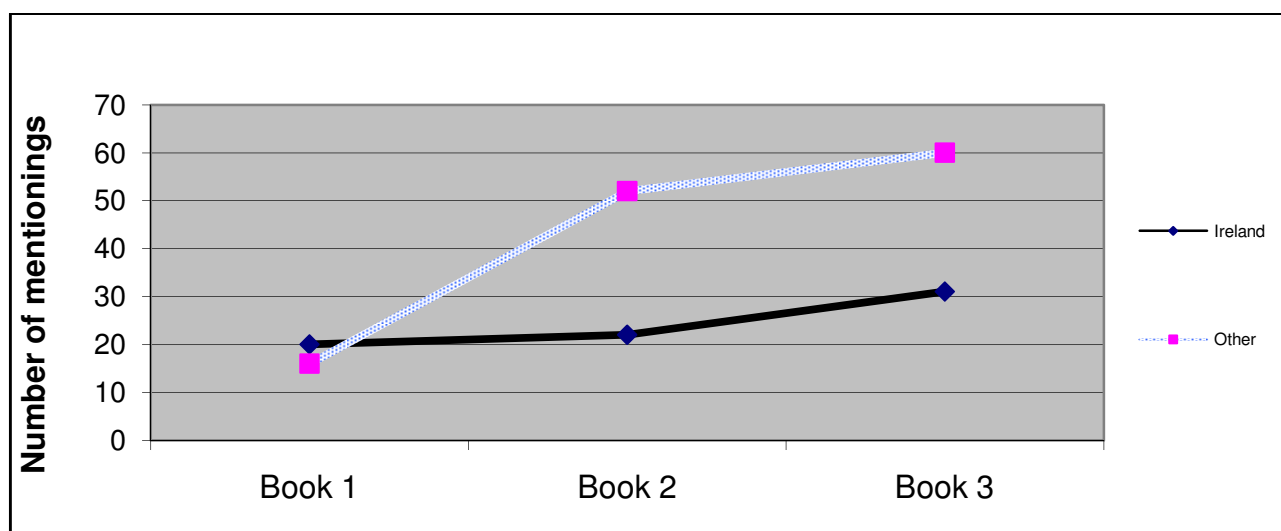


Figure 1: Locations in Ireland vs. locations outside Ireland mentioned in the first three books.

A count of the locations mentioned proves that there is a change of location. Other locations are taking over. The locations abroad I here define as anything except the mythical fairyland, Ireland and the UK (due to the close historical ties between Ireland and the UK).

Table 1: Locations mentioned in the first three *Artemis Fowl* books.

Locations in...	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
Fairyland	5	26	15
Ireland	20	22	31
UK	4	1	19
Other	16	52	62
Total	45	104	127

Every location abroad is treated differently than Irish locations from the start. In *Artemis Fowl* the adventure starts in the city of Ho Chi Minh which is described not only as being situated in Vietnam but also as previously known as Saigon. In *Artemis Fowl And the Arctic Incident* there is a similarly precise description of the Russian city of Murmansk which is said to be situated in Northern Russia, the Bay of Kola (Colfer 2006a:1). The fact that it is made clear that it is situated above the Arctic Circle also helps a young reader to place the location on the map (Colfer 2006a:70). Furthermore, *Murmansk* is almost always connected with either *Russia* or *Arctic* in the same way as *Disneyland* in the books is connected with *Paris* and sometimes *Paris, France*. In *Artemis Fowl: The Eternity Code*, *Chicago* is introduced as *Chicago, Illinois, USA* (Colfer 2004:109). To sum it up: there is a distinct difference how the Irish locations are described, especially in the first book. *Tara* is only “possibly the most magical place on earth”, with no closer description of its location, and it is in fact not even placed explicitly in Ireland to start with (Colfer 2002:13). Not only are there more mentioning, and more detailed mentioning, but it is also worth noticing that the other locations are from all over the world, as can be seen in table 2.

Table 2: Other locations specified in the three books. Note that a large part of the plot in book two takes place in Russia and in book 3 the same goes for the US.

Other locations in...	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
Finland		2	4
France	2	8	
Germany	1		1
Israel	1		1
Italy	2		
New Zealand			2
Russia	2	28	
USA		12	38
Vietnam	4		
Africa	2		7
Other Asia		1	3
Other Europe	2	1	3
Sea locations			3
SUM	16	52	62

This movement from a non-descriptive naming to a more descriptive naming of places can also be seen in the travel descriptions. First an extract from the third book:

...the inlets and coves along the Irish coast.... They passed Rosslare's ferry terminal following the coastline northwards, over the Wicklow mountains /.../ Dublin squatted to the east, an aura of yellow light buzzing over its highway system. Holly skirted the city, heading for the less populated north of the country. In the centre of a large, dark patch sat a single building, painted white by external spotlights: Artemis's ancestral home, Fowl Manor. (Colfer 2004:93)

Someone unfamiliar with Ireland can follow this journey on a map: *Rosslare-Wicklow mountains-Dublin*. This extract can be compared to the description of a similar journey from the first book:

Once over the Channel, Holly flew low, skipping over the white-crested waves.... Finally the coast loomed ahead of her. The old country. Éiriu, the land where time began. The most magical place on the planet. It was here, 10,000 years ago, that the ancient fairy race, the Dé Danann, had battled against the demon Fomorians, carving the famous Giant's Causeway with the strength of their magical blast. It was here that the Lia Fáil stood, the rock at the centre of the universe, where the fairy kings and later the human Ard Rí were crowned... (Colfer 2002:68-69)

This travel starts in a similar way, with a flight over Europe, but as soon as the fairy leaves the Channel the references become more difficult to decipher if you are not familiar with Irish history: *Éiriu- Giant's Causeway - Lia Fáil*. The Giant's Causeway is the only thing here you can locate on a map.

Places in Ireland mentioned in *Artemis Fowl The Arctic Incident* are also possible to locate on a map: *Kilkenny, Killarney, Limerick* and *Dublin Airport*. The mentioning of the shopping street, *Grafton Street*, which does not get any more explanation than that it is the place to go to in order to measure out a new suit, is perhaps most troublesome to locate. This is, however, an exception from the rule that a context is provided with the location to make it possible to place it.

How specific the names are to start with can be seen here:

Quote from book:	English/Irish²:	Explanation of expression:
Éiriu	Eire	Gaelic word for Ireland
Dé Danann	n/a	Characters in Irish mythology
Fomorians	n/a	Characters in Irish mythology
Giant's Causeway	n/a	Spectacular site in Northern Ireland
Lia Fáil	n/a	Sacred stone in Ireland
Ard Rí	High King	Gaelic title for the ruler
Emerald Island	Ireland	Petname for Ireland

² If no alternative words exist this is marked with non applicable, n/a.

Some of these would be tricky for an English audience as well but most of them can be understood in their context if you have some knowledge of Ireland. For locations such as Kilkenny, Limerick, Dublin, Dublin Airport, there is no need for extra context, they are obviously places in Ireland and you do not have to know anything about how they are perceived in Ireland to follow the storyline, even if it adds a dimension if you have this inside information. Limerick has been known as a place with many criminals so there is an extra point to be made when a man in Limerick can help.

4.2.1 Translation of locations

When it comes to the translation one notable change in the previous quote is that *the Channel* is translated with *Engelska kanalen* and not only ‘*kanalen*’. Otherwise locations are left untranslated, leaving an element of foreignism to the translated text. Strangely enough *County* is translated in some paragraphs (to grevskap), but in the name of the school of St Bartleby it is left untranslated, in fact even the English genitive is preserved, although this implies a breach with Swedish grammar rules: ST BARTLEBY’S SKOLA FÖR UNGA GENTLEMÄN, COUNTY WICKLOW, IRLAND, NUTID (Colfer 2006b:17). It seems as if the locations mentioned in a heading or a sub-heading are not as consistently translated into Swedish as those in the body of the text.

When it comes to the land of the fairies, place names are almost always rendered in Swedish, with odd exceptions. Below are some of the locations mentioned in the world of the fairies with the Swedish translations, if there are any, and the back translation of the Swedish choice.

Original name of location	Swedish translation of location
The Lower Elements	Undre världen ‘The Underworld’
Haven	Fristaden ‘the Haven’
Police Plaza	Polishuset ‘the Police house’
Spud’s Spud Emporium	Potätens Potatisvaruhus ‘The Spud’s Potatostore’
Howler’s Peak	<i>Not translated.</i> Remains as Howler’s Peak
Principality Hill	<i>Not translated.</i> Remains as Principality Hill

The locations Howler’s Peak, i.e. the prison, and Principality Hill, the posh part of Haven, have not been translated. As both locations are packed with associations to their names, there is no obvious explanation for this choice. The translations chosen for the other names do not change the meaning of the names, except maybe *Undre världen* (which is normally only associated with criminal gangs) for *The Lower Elements*.

Of course an Irish writer would not over-describe Irish locations but be more precise the further away the described location was situated. In a translation on the other hand the Irish locations are as foreign as the other locations and are the natural place for an addition, some extra words describing those locations in the same way as other locations are described. This is, a bit surprisingly, not done in the Swedish translation, with small exceptions. By following the source language too closely the translator leaves Swedish readers on their own. But later when the writer starts accommodating his global readers a word-by-word translation is then sufficient to follow the plot of the books.

4.3 Puns and wit

One of the most characteristic language-related features of *Artemis Fowl* is the humorous redefinition of phenomena, especially those with a strong cultural baggage, like *leprechaun*, the Irish fairy:

The fairy suited up, zipping the dull-green jumpsuit up to her chin and strapping on her helmet. LEPrecon uniforms were smart these days. Not like the top-o'-the-morning costume the force had had to wear back in the old days. Buckled shoes and knickerbockers! Honestly. No wonder leprechauns were such ridiculous figures in human folklore. Still, probably better that way. If the Mud People knew that the word 'leprechaun' actually originated from the LEPrecon, an elite branch of the Lower Elements Police, they'd probably take steps to stamp them out. Better to stay inconspicuous and let the humans have their stereotypes. (Colfer 2002:22-23)

In most cases the size, the dominant features and other characteristics and traits of supernatural species would be part of a cultural heritage. There would be paintings, fairy tales and proverbs giving a general depiction of a fairy or other supernatural species so that people actually have an opinion as to what is and what is not supposed to be true about them. In Ireland the leprechaun is associated with the costume described in the quote above. But *Artemis Fowl* provides a twist here and reveals that *leprechaun* is a title, not a species, and the dress they use is in fact a police uniform. In order for this to make sense and amuse you first need to have the original picture of a leprechaun in your mind and then re-adjust it to the new information provided.

What Irish people are considered to be like is also the focus for puns:

Thankfully the rest of the world assumed that the Irish were crazy, a theory that the Irish themselves did nothing to debunk. They had somehow got into their heads that each fairy lugged around a pot of gold

with them wherever they went. /.../ This didn't stop the Irish population in general from skulking around rainbows hoping to win the supernatural lottery. But in spite of all that, if there was one race the People felt an affinity for it was the Irish. Perhaps it was their eccentricity, perhaps their dedication to the *craic*, as they called it. And if the People were actually related to humans, as another theory had it, odds on it was the Emerald Isle where it started. (Colfer 2002:69)

This is warming praise for crazy Irish people and a possible explanation to their love for 'craic', that is, having fun. It is interesting that the trend of praising the Irish continues, but in a more general way, in *Artemis Fowl The Eternity Code*. Consider the following quote: "The Irish had always been Mulch's favourite humans, so he had decided to be one." (Colfer 2004:124).

Further proof for the Irish hype is the fact that the young boy *Artemis Fowl*, Irish of course, at the age of twelve manages what no one else has managed: he deciphers the gnommish language of the fairies in much the same way (bar the computers) as Michael Ventris when he deciphered Linear B at an early age, also without a scholarly background. (Robinson 2002:12-13). Artemis' counterpart in fairyland, the only one to give him a match, would be the centaur Foaly who plays the same role as Q in the Bond-movies, developing gadgets and being quite paranoid (Colfer 2006a:265). That characters in the book speak (or paraphrase) like people in movies or in books, is part of the wordplay, like when Mulch Diggums thinks he is getting away from Artemis:

'You'll never take me alive, human. Tell Foaly not to send a Mud man to do a fairy's job.' Oh dear, thought Artemis, rubbing his brow. Hollywood has a lot to answer for. (Colfer 2006a:208)

For people even closer to Colfer it can be good to know that the goblins are modelled from the writer's brothers, as he frequently points out in interviews.

4.3.1 Translation of puns and wit

Colfer is leading the reader into a parallel universe where leprechauns are nothing to joke about, but rather to fear. But if you have never heard about leprechauns and there is nothing similar to leprechauns in your culture many of the jokes will fall flat and if translated literally they will fail to make sense. When Holly is described as an *elf*, working as a *leprechaun*, and *fairy* being the general term for her sort (Colfer 2002:31), all three labels will evoke images of distinct creatures in the original audience. These original images will eventually be altered by Colfer.

In Swedish fairy tales other supernatural beings are more dominant. The writer and painter John Bauer is largely responsible for Swedes' shared image of trolls and the fairies (John Bauer 2007).

Lately however, translated writers like J R R Tolkien have been more influential in creating access to supernatural worlds and their inhabitants. The supernatural species specific for Sweden and Scandinavia are partly different from their Celtic counterparts. Gold is not what they are longing for, only cattle or children. However, these are objects even the Celtic and British fairies are known to snatch. In the choice between an overt and a covert translation as mentioned earlier, the translator has to make up his or her mind from page one. Should the species be turned into a target-culture counterpart? If they are to get Swedish names, for example, should they also get the features and characteristics commonly associated with the Swedish supernatural species?

The Swedish translator of *Artemis Fowl* has chosen to give Irish supernatural species the names of Swedish one, but she has kept the original characteristics from the books. The Irish *leprechaun* has been converted into the Swedish *pyssling* ‘pixie, manikin’, the *fairy* has become *vätte* ‘gnome’ and the *elf* is a *vittra* (also ‘gnome’). The relationship between *vittra* and *vätte* is fairly similar to the relationship that is between *fairy* and *elf*. They are, however, not the same kinds of creatures. And an even greater difference is to be witnessed when it comes to the transition of the *leprechaun* into a Swedish *pyssling*. The suggested translation by *Nationalencyclopedia* is actually *troll* ‘troll’ for *leprechaun* which is wrong.

Pyssling is a homonym which could be used to describe a certain family member in relation to another (‘third cousin’, ‘fourth cousin’), a person or animal of short stature, a toddler or a supernatural, not very distinct, species (*Nationalencyclopedia*). In *Artemis Fowl*, it is obviously the last meaning that is used. The specific dress, the fondness for gold, the shoe-making ability, and the association with the other end of the rainbow are rather at odds with a Swedish *pyssling*, since those are features generally attached to the word *leprechaun*. Leprechauns are quite famous in the US due to American films such as *Darby O’Gill and the Little People* (1959), *Leapin’ Leprechauns* (1995), and *The Luck of the Irish* (2001), just to name some. The Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren wrote about a Swedish *pyssling* in her children story *Nils Karlsson pyssling* ‘Nils Karlsson Pixie’, in English known as *Simon Small Moves in*, so the term *pyssling* is well-known in Sweden. By using the Swedish term the translator has done a covert translation using a cultural filter: the original setting has been transformed into a Swedish world and the Swedish words will not reveal a *leprechaun* under the skin of the *pyssling*, though attributes or context might. This is because the Swedish translator went for literal translation and left the jokes as they were which in fact contradict the covert translation. But the Swedish translator has been consistent with *pyssling* later when she encounters some tricky decisions, like how to deal with the LEPrecon explanation, that it was humans who mistook the title LEPrecon for the name of the little men in green. The Police force

has been translated into: *PYSS (Polisiära Yt Spanings Styrkan)* ‘The Surface Reconnaissance Force of the Police’, which is quite clever.

A similar problem is posed by the goblins with their forked tongue, the lidless eyes, scales instead of skin and their general stupidity. They do not figure in the Swedish fairy tales. *Goblins* are made into *svartalf* in the Swedish translation of *Artemis Fowl*, a species known to be evil, so they have at least that in common with the goblins. (*Leprechaun* and *vittra* have one thing in common, too – they are both smaller than human beings). *Svartalf* is the term used in the translation of goblin in the Harry Potter series. Due to the huge popularity of the Harry Potter books, the species *svartalf* will conjure up a different picture for the young generations of Swedes than for older ones.

The feeling when reading the books in Swedish is that the Swedish forests are suddenly populated with unknown creatures. This is, however, much an age thing, as pointed out earlier you should choose the language of the younger generation in a translation. In the 70-s when I grew up children read the Swedish fairy tales, and the paintings of John Bauer were present in schools. Astrid Lindgren also played a significant part in populating the imaginary world of a child with supernatural beings, like *Nils Karlsson Pysling*, the little pixie under the bed. But much because of the intense popularity of the Harry Potter books and the success of the Lord of the Rings-trilogy films, new creatures have entered the minds of the Swedish children and with the new creatures come new names or new attributes to old names. It is, however, hard to see what point there is not to give the leprechaun its own name in Swedish, instead of categorizing him with all other pixies, be they Swedish or British or Celtic. The translation also has a trouble with the amount of different species in English compared to Swedish and the translation is therefore not a one-to-one exchange and on top of that there are times when English species are translated in more than one way in Swedish.

5 DISCUSSION

Language is a context-dependent feature; we adjust our language to the surrounding circumstances. This is mainly done instinctively. The most prominent difference for oral and written language has always been that the audience in the latter is more invisible. Therefore a writer has to imagine an audience and write to and for that specific audience in order to find the appropriate voice in the text. Theoretically it could then be possible to describe the audience from a linguistic point of view just by scrutinizing what is said and what is not said in a book. Furthermore, if several books in a series

were analysed in the same way it would be possible to describe a change regarding the presumed audience. What would trigger a change in audience for a writer? One possible factor would be the awareness of a wider audience, for example worldwide success and several translations. But how is this to be spotted? This is where context comes in. As House (2006:338) concludes in her abstract: “While research on texts as units larger than sentences has a rich tradition in translation studies, the notion of context, its relation to text, and the role it plays in translation has received much less attention”. Therefore this study was always bound to be context-conscious.

One of the studying points of this study was to read the translated version parallel in order to see if the changed language of the writer was visible or not in the target language. For one of the noticed differences, the more international setting of the storyline, there should not be a difference. Two Englishmen who speak English when walking around in London would in a French translation speak French but they would still be in London. Instead the difference should be noticeable in the description of the location; *London* could well be *London, the capital of England*, in a translation. If the Englishmen instead visited Marseille they would still speak French in the translation but *France* might be omitted from the description of location as in *Marseille, France*.

One difference between the close readings that initiated this study was that the translator as best only read the first two books before starting the translation, while I had the privilege of reading the complete series in a row. Even if the books were promoted for a world market as we know, there was no way to predict the success and for a writer to imagine going from selling good in Ireland (4 million inhabitants) to selling extremely well all over the world, must be quite a change. But after the two first books had sold like that, the second book actually selling better than the first one, the writer could predict a good outcome for his third book which looks to have had an impact on his writing. The close reading in this study leads to the discovery that several linguistic features actually did change. The changes were, however, small and subtle. In children’s literature as a rule you see more changes to the translated text than in adult literature. For the *Artemis Fowl* series there were major changes in the Swedish versions but also word-by-word translations where you would have expected additions or omissions.

A major work was naming the supernatural creatures in the imaginary world of the fairies. Here the writer used artistic freedom keeping some of the old, Celtic traditions but also twisting some of the so-called facts about fairies, as well as inventing new stuff. For a Swedish translator there were some added help in the previous translations of J R R Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, a tale partly populated with the same kind of supernatural beings, especially the elves with their pointy ears. The problem here could be that the original Swedish translator of Tolkien’s trilogy, Åke Ohlmark, has received much criticism lately for his translation done during the years 1959-1961, even if the

translations initially received much praise (Bjerre 2003). The way Ohlmark changed the melody of language in books has been criticised and this was also changed in a new Swedish translation of *Lord of the Rings*. Recently the books that have attracted a worldwide audience are the *Harry Potter*-books, books that *Artemis Fowl* was compared to. In the *Harry Potter* books some supernatural or magic beings are also mentioned. Here a translator has some. When it came to naming the supernatural beings in *Artemis Fowl*, the Swedish translator had to decide on how much foreignism a Swedish audience could.

When House minted the expressions overt and covert translations it was very much putting a label on an obvious phenomenon. The choice to go Swedish with the supernatural beings makes this series an example of covert translation because: “A covert translation is thus a translation whose source text is not specifically addressed to a particular source culture audience, i.e., it is not firmly tied to the source culture context.” (House 2006:347). When the *leprechauns* are given the general name of *pyslingar* in Swedish they are covertly translated to a Swedish context. But when they are supposed to keep a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, they are still overtly translated, because this is a remaining feature from the original.

When Åke Ohlmark was faced with the new term *hobbit* in *Lord of the rings*, he went for the decision to translate them into *hober* (Salminen 2004, Bjerre 2003), and did not chose an existing Swedish word for a creature which did not exist in the Swedish fairy tale history. Another translator chose *hompar* and yet another one *hobbitar*, none opted for an existing Swedish species. After reading the *Artemis Fowl* series I cannot help to wonder if it really is not about time that the little Irish leprechaun got its own name in Swedish as well. The leprechaun has after all figured in books for 700 years. This might seem like a small issue to discuss at such length but Swedish is a small language fighting against too many loan words from English, which might lead to us sometimes being too restrictive against loan words. It is interesting to see that the same struggle is going on in just Ireland, where Gaelic is official language alongside English. Michael Cronin, Director of the Centre for Translation and Textual studies at Dublin City University, Ireland, has written about translation and globalization, and also about adding new features to the language:

If translators are agents of change in a culture, then it would seem that infidelity, not fidelity, must be their constant preoccupation. They must drift out of the window of the family home, let down the language of their parents and go to find other languages and cultures practising a form of disloyalty to their former linguistic selves. (2003:68)

Cronin talks about linguistic impoverishment and how the translation is “both a predator and deliverer, enemy and friend” (p 142). In order to avoid assimilation with the dominant language the translator must “resist incorporation” (p142). His conclusion about what could happen if the translator is not a watchdog, if Anglicism is allowed to enter into the language, is that “then the language into which they translate becomes less and less recognizable as a separate linguistic entity capable of future development and becomes instead a pallid imitation of the source language in translatoresque” (p 147). The other ditch is when the door is shut completely and you end up with “complacent stasis” and your language is not renewed (p 147). He also sees the trend where Irish Anglophone publishers and their British and US counterparts are eager to sell translations but reluctant to buy (p 152). On the other hand, as John McWhorter points out, “a mere one percent of the words in English today are not borrowed from other languages” (2002:12), so it is not all fair to blame English only, even if most new words come via English to us. But in the case of *Artemis Fowl* it is more the case of promoting Irishness, not Englishness, using Gaelic words without added explanation and using Celtic features naturally as if they were part of everyone’s cultural heritage. In many ways these books could be seen as a Trojan horse bearing hidden foreignism inside the English package.

For the change of location much has already been said under results, but added could be the reflection that the influx of letters from readers might have something to do with all these new places that the characters are visiting? Colfer mentions in one interview that as a reason for setting a part of the plot in Finland.

In the future, a follow-up study with another author, with the same development of success, would shed even more light on how international success changes a writer’s linguistic fingerprint. Authors possible for such a follow-up study could be Jacqueline Wilson or JK Rowling. For a Swedish audience it would in the same way prove interesting to see how Sweden’s best known children’s writer Astrid Lindgren changed her language over the years. Were there less changes made by the translators with a fantasy story like *Mio my Mio* compared to *Seacrow Island* and its typically Swedish life on an island? Nobel prize winner William Faulkner could see when his works were translated that distinctions like the four dialects of the Negroes depending on their origin, as well as the witty parts, were often missed or neglected by the translators (*William Faulkner Encyclopedia* 1999:422). It is clearly harder to faithfully translate a particular linguistic feature than a more general feature.

Also interesting is the intentions of the writer. How important are the names in the book? Colfer himself admits that “I spend a lot of time on the names, because, with a fantasy series you have the leeway, which you don't have with other books. I like to give the characters names that mean

something. Artemis Fowl means the 'nasty hunter', The Butler is the butler, Holly Short is small with rosy cheeks and Mulch means 'he who digs and fertilises', which is what he does.” (BBC 2007). This would be a good indication for a translator to try to keep these hints, if not in translated names so at least in added attributes and hints.

For Artemis Fowl, the boy genius from a book called by its creator a “Die Hard with fairies” this study is completed. And even if Mr Colfer does not think that he has changed with the success, the findings speak another language. By now, two more books have been published in the same series and this study could very well be expanded to also take these books into account: *Artemis Fowl And the Opal Deception* (2005) and *Artemis Fowl: The Lost Colony* (2006).

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