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“When English so bad, how to do?”
Representation of Learner’s Language in *A Concise Chinese-English
Dictionary for Lovers* and Its Finnish Translation

Master’s Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Tämä tutkielma tarkastelee ”oppijan kielen” esittämisessä ja edelleen sen kääntämisessä käytettyjä keinoja. Tutkimuksen aineistona on Xiaolu Guon romaani *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* (2008) ja kääntäjä Ulla Lempisen siitä tekemä suomennos *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* (2008). Tutkimuksen materiaalina on romaanin päähenkilön kieli, ja siinä esiintyvät tietyt kieliopilliset merkit ja sanastolliset merkit, jotka saavat aikaan mielikuvan ”oppijan kielestä”. Nämä kieliopilliset ja sanastolliset merkit koostuvat erilaisista kielioppia ja sanastoa koskevista ”virheistä”. Tällaisen kielen kääntäminen on haasteellinen tehtävä, koska niissä esiintyvät kielenoppijan tekemät virheet eivät välttämättä ole yhteismitallisia.

Tutkimuskysymyksenä oli, mitä kielellisiä keinoja on käytetty sekä lähdetekstissä että kohdetekstissä, jotta saataisiin aikaan mielikuva ”oppijan kielestä”. Tutkimuksen aineistoksi valitsin 13 kappaletta novellista, joiden aiheet liittyivät joko kielen oppimisen vaikeuksiin ja esimerkiksi tiettyyn sanaan, jonka merkitystä novellin päähenkilö ei ymmärtänyt. Kohde- ja lähdetekstistä tunnistin kielioppia sekä sanastoa koskevia virheitä, eli, miten mielikuva ”oppijan kielestä” oli luotu. Kielioppia koskeviin virheisiin kuuluivat virheet verbien aikamuodoissa, artikkeleissa, prepositioissa, sanojen taivutuksessa sekä monikkomuotojen muodostuksessa. Sanastoa koskeviin virheisiin kuuluivat sanat, jotka olivat kirjoitettu väärin sekä sanat, joita käytettiin väärässä yhteydessä. Saamiani tuloksia vertasin Martinin & Siitosen tutkimuksen tuloksiin, jossa tutkittiin ”huonoa suomea” puhuvan fiktiivisen sarjakuvahahmon kieltä. Vertasin myös lähde- ja kohdetekstin kieliopillisia ja sanastoa koskevia virheitä keskenään.

Lähdetekstissä ”oppijan kieli” oli luotu jättämällä sanat taivuttamatta, tai pudottamalla artikkelit pois sekä käyttämällä virheellisiä verbimuotoja. Kohdetekstissä ”oppijan kieli” oli luotu jättämällä sanat perusmuotoon sekä muodostamalla sanojen monikkomuotoja virheellisesti. Lähde- ja kohdetekstistä tunnistettiin muitakin virheitä, mutta edellä mainitut keinot muodostivat suurimman osan virheistä. Molemmissa teksteissä oli hyödynnetty myös kielikohtaisia keinoja, joiden avulla luotiin mielikuva ”oppijan kielestä”.

KEY WORDS: Representation of learner's language in translation, grammatical markers, lexical markers of fictional learner's language, and metonymic representations in translation

1 INTRODUCTION

While learning a foreign language, all language learners make mistakes which often sound funny to native speakers. When a language learner uses a word in a wrong context, misspells or pronounces it incorrectly, it may sound strange or comical to native speakers. Especially foreign accents are a common source of humor. A Learner's language and the unintentionally humorous errors they produce are often heard in the speech of fictional characters in television programs and in literature. A case in point is *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* (2008) by Xiaolu Guo, a story about a Chinese girl, called Zhuang Xiao Qiao, who has not learnt English at school. She moves to Britain to attend a language school where she would study English. However, she ends up learning most of her English through interaction with a man with whom she gets into a relationship. The novel is for the most part written in a fictional "learner's language", while "correct" English is spoken by other characters.

The novel is mostly written in what can be described as learner's language which is a type of "nonstandard" variety of a language, in this case English. While standard is a variety that is codified in grammars and dictionaries and used in education. (Wardhaugh 1986: 33-35), the language of the novel can be regarded as a "nonstandard" because it deviates from that.

"Nonstandard" English literature consists mainly of writing in a dialect or accent, and it can be divided into writing in a literary dialect and dialect literature. Dialect literature is written entirely in a given dialect and the target audience is people who speak it. One could also say that it is written in order to achieve a special effect or just because it is the writer's own variety. Literary dialect, on the other hand, refers to "the representation of nonstandard speech in literature that is otherwise written in nonstandard English (Taavitsainen & Melchers 2000: 13).“ Nonstandard writing in literature is usually used for characterization and its function is to give information about the character so that the reader will recognize the character belonging to, for example, a certain social group or living in a particular region. It can also be used in representations of language in order

to have a humoristic effect. (Taavitsainen & Melchers 2000: 13) Nonstandard writing can be used for the setting or a character's ethnic origin. Most importantly, it is used for artistic purposes, e.g. in post-colonial writing or "immigrant writing". In a way, the novel *A Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* can be regarded as dialect literature since it is written entirely in non-standard language. However, it is not written in any particular regional or social variety, nor is it supposedly nonstandard writing, which makes it difficult to place the novel in either of the above categories.

Nonstandard language is usually represented in literature by giving only a few features of the variety which can often be very stereotypical in order to give the impression that the characters speech is authentic, and identifiable. These features, indeed, can be authentic features, but the language as a whole is not authentic. Its only purpose lies that the reader should distinguish the variety as not being standard language. In this regard the writing is metonymic because selected features represent the entire variety. (Taavitsainen & Melchers 2000: 14) This is the case with Guo's novel, that is, the material of the present study. We can assume that the author has not aimed at writing the novel in authentic learner's language, with all its deviations from the standard variety, because it might then come to contain errors that would make it difficult for the reader to understand it, which might affect the reading experience negatively. The above concerns then, also the translator of the novel. It must also sound authentic but be, at the same time, intelligible as well. The use of nonstandard writing in literature presents a challenge in translation because language varieties are culture specific and have no straightforward equivalents in other languages.

The most important theoretical study for my research concerns the representational nature of fiction. This study is the Finnish study *Mämmilän Mukun suomi – ulkomaalaispuhetta vai pelkkää fiktiota?* [*The Finnish of Mukku in Mämmilä – foreigner speech or mere fiction?*] (2000) by Maisa Martin and Kirsti Siitonen. They studied how the language of a fictional character in a Finnish graphic novel *Mämmilä* had been created, and what linguistic choices of his language had created the image of foreigner speech. They concluded that some features of *Mukku's* language were markers of authentic foreigner's speech and that others were probably included to have a

humorous effect. (2001: 261-262) I will discuss this study in more detail in subchapter 4.4.

Some research has been conducted into language specific representations and translations of these representations, such as translating dialects and accents. The following studies relate to representations of language varieties in translation and an authentic study of learners' errors. An unpublished Master's Thesis written at the University of Vaasa by Kaisu Makkonen (2004) focused on the translation of Trinidadian Creole English in the novels *Miguel -kadun väkeä* [people in Miguel Street¹] and *Täysinoppinut hieroja* [fully learned masseuse]. Her hypothesis was that when the source text has features of non-standard language that have no equivalents in the target language, the translator had used other means to transfer the variety into the target text. She had selected three characteristics of Trinidadian Creole English which deviated from standard English and found that the translator had mostly replaced syntactic markers with a lexical ones but also used morphological markers and phonological non-standard language markers. He had also used more standard language than the author. (Makkonen 2004: 3, 8-9, 62)

Another unpublished Master's Thesis in the University of Vaasa by Anne Penttilä (2000) also studied problems concerning the translation of a literary dialect. In her study *The Translation of Language Varieties in Tuulen Viemää* [gone with the wind] and *Häivähdys Purppuraa* [a touch of purple] she studied how speech characteristics of two black characters had been translated into Finnish. The translator had mostly used standard language but also a few Finnish colloquialisms in the speech of one of the black character's language. In the translation of the speech of other black characters, the translator had used general Finnish colloquialism, old-fashioned words, spelling errors, and words that were derived from dialect that originates from Western Finland. (Penttilä 2000: 68-69)

¹ Backtranslations are mine.

The above studies show that translators tend to use standard language in translating a given dialect or variety of a language. This eliminates the problem of trying to find a variety in the target language that could have similar associations as the source language variety. On the basis of these two theses we can conclude that the translators into Finnish of literary dialects or writing in nonstandard variety tend to use colloquialisms.

Guo's novel, however, is written in a learner's language, and all language learners make mistakes that have roots in their own mother tongue. Laura Miettinen and Marika Ylinen (2007) studied this in their thesis *Mother Tongue: Aid or Obstacle? Errors made by Finnish- and Swedish-speaking Learners of English*. More specifically they studied whether Finnish- and Swedish speaking learners of English make different type of errors due to their different mother tongues and whether the influence of the mother tongue is visible in the errors made while learning English. They also studied whether the influence of the mother tongue decreased when the language skills of the group that was studied became more advanced. The overall conclusions of the study were that the effect of mother-tongue on language learning was most visible in the errors that the ninth graders made and almost as visible in the errors that the entrance exam essays presented. The effect of mother tongue had decreased as a student's university studies had progressed, but the effect of mother tongue still remained somewhat visible in the errors made in the seminar papers. Also the Finnish –speaking ninth graders made more grammatical/lexical errors than the Swedish-speaking pupils, who made more lexical errors. (Miettinen & Ylinen 2007: 5, 9, 12) Although my study is not precisely a study of authentic learner's language but rather a study of how an image of learner's language is created linguistically in a fictional character's speech, there are some similarities between the two studies.

My aim in this thesis is to study how the main character's language has first been created in English and then translated into Finnish. I will conduct the study by identifying the levels of language on which the "deviations" from standard language occur which give the impression of a learner's language in both languages. I will compare the findings from both the source text and the target text with each other and further compare the findings from the target text with those of Martin and Siitonen's

study of “foreign speech”. The levels of language that will be of interest are grammatical and lexical markers that deviate from standard language. By grammatical markers I refer to errors in the inflection of words, errors in the use of prepositions, articles, verb tenses, as well as incorrect formation of plural forms. In lexical markers I include spelling errors, and the use of a word in the wrong context.

What is meant by the term standard English in this thesis is Sidney Greenbaum’s definition of the term. He (1991: 4) defines standard English as a specific dialect of English, which is used in the media, taught in schools, and codified in dictionaries and grammars that concern the English language. It is also perceived prestigious due to its former and present associations to educated and wealthy people. The grammar books I will use in my study in order to refer to the norms of standard language will be Sydney Greenbaum’s (1991) *An Introduction to English Grammar* and R.A. Close’s (1983) *English as a Foreign Language-Its Constant Grammatical Problems*, Leila White’s (2001) *Suomen kielioppia ulkomaalaisille*, and Fred Karlsson’s (1983) *Finnish Grammar*.

The primary data of my study consists of 13 diary entries in Xiaolu Guo’s novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* and its Finnish translation *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers] (2008). All in all, the novel consists of 80 diary entries written by the main character of the novel, Zhuang Xiao Qiao for whom English is a foreign language. A typical diary entry begins with a word which Zhuang has learned and its dictionary definition. The word will be either discussed, or it will have some other relevance to the diary entry. The material of this study will consist of errors she makes in her writing in the source text and their translation.

I have gathered material from both *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for lovers* and its Finnish translation *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers]. My thesis is divided into 5 chapters. First I will discuss my primary material and my method of conducting this study. Then I will move on to describe my primary material in this study in more detail. In chapter 2 I will discuss the

concept of standard language and how it is defined. In addition I will discuss English's role as a global language, the process of learning a language, learner's language and the particular difficulties that learner's of English and Finnish face when learning that language. I will also present problem areas in learning English by Chinese learners.

In chapter 3 I will discuss the representation of learner's language and foreigner's language, and introduce the most important study for this thesis, Martin & Siitonen's study, in more detail. I will also present the idea of metonymy in translation as described by Maria Tymoczko. The actual analysis of the source text and the translation will be conducted in chapter 4. First in 4.1 I will discuss the grammatical markers that were identified as markers of a learner's language in the source text, with each group of grammatical markers divided into subchapters. These markers will be presented by example sentences taken from the source text. Secondly I will analyse the lexical markers which were identified from the source text in 4.2. The discussion will then move on to the analysis of the translation by first introducing the grammatical markers which were identified in the translation in subchapter 4.3. The grammatical markers are also divided into subchapters similarly to the analysis of grammatical markers in the source text. Then in subchapter 4.4 the discussion will move on to the analysis of lexical markers which were identified in the translation.

In chapter 4.5 I will compare the representation of foreigner's language and learner's language by comparing the results of Martin and Siitonen's study and my findings of the language of the main character in *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*. In subchapter 4.6 I will compare the grammatical and lexical markers that were identified from both the source text and the translation to see whether the author and the translator of the novel had made any similar choices in creating learner's language. Finally in chapter 5 the conclusions will be drawn of the findings concerning the representation of a learner's language in the source text and its translation.

1.1 Material & Method

My aim in this thesis is to study how the main character's language, which can be described as learner's language, has been represented in the source text and its translation into Finnish. I will also compare my findings from the translation with those of the study by Martin and Siitonen of a Finnish representation of foreigner speech. The primary material for my thesis will consist of 13 diary entries in the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for lovers* and its Finnish translation *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers] by Ulla Lempinen. These particular thirteen chapters were selected as the material of this study on the basis of two particular themes. These were discussions concerning language learning and difficulties in understanding the meaning of particular words.

The novel begins with a prologue that is titled 'Before' and the last chapter of the novel is the epilogue 'Afterwards'. 'Before' refers to the time before Zhuang has arrived in England, and 'Afterwards' refers to the time after she has returned to China after spending a year in England. The diary entries always begin with an English word and its dictionary definition and are further grouped under months. The novel begins in February and ends a year later, again in February. The novel is written in a first person narrative, as can be expected of diary format. The entries vary in length ranging from 2 pages to 15 pages.

The first entry in my data is chapter 4 in the novel. Z² is taking a taxi for the first time in England and has problems in communicating with the taxi driver. She has spent her first night in England in a hostel and is now planning to go sightseeing in London. Since this chapter is situated at the beginning of the novel, Z's language is still fairly basic partly due to the fact that she has not had much interaction with people who speak English. The word Z has chosen for that particular day is "Properly" which she defines as an adjective, real or genuine; suited to a particular purpose; correct in behavior;

² Z refers to the main character Zhuang Xiao Qiao in the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*.

excessively moral (ST 2008: 19). The definition is then followed by her account of the traffic problems

(1) Today my first time taking taxi. How I find important place with bus and tube? Is impossibility. Tube map is like plate of noodles. Bus route is in-understandable. In my home town everyone take cheap taxi, but in London is very expensive and taxi is like the Loyal family look down to me. (ST³ 2008: 19)

In order to analyze the markers I will divide them into grammatical and lexical markers that deviate from the norms of standard language. Grammatical markers of a learner's language include errors such as inflection of words, the use of articles, prepositions, verb tense, word order, and plural forms of a word. Lexical markers refer to errors in spelling and the use of words in the wrong context.

Grammatical errors which Z makes, in the example above includes, for example, those in the use of articles, prepositions, plural forms and the verb tense. The errors produced in the use of articles consist of in some cases absence of indefinite article *a* or *an* and definite article *the*, but there are also instances where the article is used correctly, such as in the following example.

(2) He opens *the* door again, smashing it back to me hardly. (ST 2008: 20)

The following sentence also contains an error in the use of the indefinite article *a*.

(3) Tube map is like plate of noodles. (ST 2008: 19)⁴

The correct form would have been *The tube map*. In the sentence given above the indefinite article *a* is needed. The definite article is also used correctly as in the following example.

³ ST refers to the source text *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* (Vintage: London).

⁴ The page numbers refer to the source text *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*.

(4) In my home town everyone take cheap taxi, but in London is very expensive and taxi is like *the* Loyal family look down to me. (ST 2008: 19)

Errors in the use of prepositions consisted of using a wrong preposition in certain instances and the absence of a preposition from places where it was needed. For example the wrong preposition was used in the sentence below.

(5) In my home town everyone take cheap taxi, but in London is very expensive and taxi is like the Loyal family look down *to* me. (ST 2008: 19)

The correct form should have been, look down *on* me, not look down *to* me. However, there is correct usage of prepositions in Z's language. For example in the sentence where the correct uses of prepositions are italicized.

(6) *In my home town* everyone take cheap taxi, but *in London* is very expensive and taxi is like the Loyal family look down to me. (ST 2008: 19)

The lexical markers in the example entry of the fourth chapter were the misspelling of words written as one when they should have been written separately, such as *home town*, and the misspelling of *Loyal* to *Royal*. Z is referring to the Royal family in England, and this error in spelling of the word is a reference to the fact that the main character is Asian, and that people from Asia usually have difficulties in the pronunciation of *-r* sound, and they tend to pronounce it as an *-l* sound.

Other errors concerning individual words were for example in the case of the word *in-understandable* in the sentence:

(7) Bus route is *in-understandable*. (ST 2008: 19)

The word *in-understandable* refers to the bus route being difficult to understand for Z. She has added the prefix *in-*, to change the meaning of the word *understandable* to something negative. (Greenbaum 1991: 199)

The analysis of the translation will be conducted in a similar manner as the above example from the source text. More specifically, the grammatical markers will first be identified from the translation, which are then followed by typical examples of each error, and finally a discussion of these errors. Lexical markers identified from the translation will also be treated in a similar manner as the grammatical markers.

1.2 *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*

The novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for lovers* is written by Xiaolu Guo, a Chinese novelist and filmmaker, who has also written several other novels, essays and poems in both Chinese and English. She has directed, produced and worked as a scriptwriter in several films. The novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for lovers* received the Orange Broadband Prize for Fiction in 2007 and it has been translated into several different languages. The novel has been received well among critics, although not all of them were impressed by it. (“Complete-Review.com”)

The novel is for the most part written in an imitation of a learner’s language, which Z herself describes as “bad language”. There are also parts in the novel which are written in standard English because there are some characters whose mother tongue is English. For instance, Z’s boyfriend and her language teacher Margaret Wilkinson, who she refers to as Mrs. Margaret, speak standard language. The novel is a mixture of a diary and a kind of basic dictionary where Z gathers words and their dictionary definitions in the hope of learning English faster. It is, however, a story of a young Chinese girl who is coming to Britain to study English and trying to survive in a strange environment. Her full name is Zhuang Xiao Qiao, but she soon starts to introduce herself as “Z”, because most people find her name too hard to remember or to pronounce (ST 2008: 18). She comes from a small, rural town in China, where her parents first worked as peasants but later became financially successful owners of a factory which manufactures shoes. Her parents had encouraged her to travel to Britain for a year to learn English so she could help them to establish international business relations for

their factory. In her diary she discusses the experiences she has as she arrives to Britain, but she also starts gathering words which she hears native-speakers use in order to use them herself in conversations.

Soon after her arrival to England, she meets a British man, who is 20 years older and they get into a relationship. The man is described as a “drifter” by Z (ST 2008: 92). He has never stayed very long in one place when he was younger, and this has also been the case with his romantic relationships. More specifically, his relationships have not lasted very long. Z’s feelings towards him are very intense because he is her first boyfriend, and she is, for the first time in her life, in a romantic relationship that is physical. She continues to learn English in her classes at a language school and also through conversations with her lover, where she often feels frustrated by the language barrier between them. They have a great deal of difficulties because of cultural differences, and, also because Z constantly demands assurance that they will have a future together, whereas her lover does not want to commit himself. Z has very different views on, for example love and starting a family. Towards the end of the novel, he insists that Z should travel in Europe by herself, so she would experience something else besides their relationship. The book ends with Z going back to China, broken hearted, after her visa expires, but feeling that she has become more independent and mature. At the beginning of the novel Z’s language is very basic but it steadily improves towards the end of the novel as she communicates daily in English with her boyfriend. However, when she goes to Europe alone, her language deteriorates again, because she does not try to get to know other people and thus does not speak English during her trip. Towards the end of the novel, the language starts to improve again, as she continues to communicate with her boyfriend every day.

Although *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* mainly describes the main character’s process of learning a foreign language, it is also a very humoristic novel. Humor plays a major part of the style of the novel, and the translator who translates this novel needs to pay attention to how the humor is created in the source text in order to be able to recreate it in the target text. The humor comes from situations when the main character of the novel is trying to learn British customs, but more importantly,

humoristic elements mostly rise from unintentional lexical and grammatical errors that Z as a language learner constantly makes. There are words that have been spelled incorrectly or used in the wrong context. She uses expressions such as *man-made-in-China* and *Big Stupid Clock* which are accurate representations of the type of unintentional errors that sound funny to those who speak the language.

Guo's novel differs somewhat from literature that is written in non-standard language, for example literature that uses dialect, because it describes a learner's language. It is therefore in a way its own type of non-standard or variety of language. It also differs from literature written in a dialect or immigrant literature because the language does not have a major part in the novels that use dialect as it does in Guo's novel. Literature that can be, in a way, considered to belong to the same category as Xiaolu Guo's novel because it is written in a type of learner's English include, for example *Broken English Spoken Perfectly: The Ultimate Collection of Howlers in English* (2004), *Hyvää Enklantia*⁵ (2006) and *Parempaa Enklantia*⁶ (2006), which are all written by Stewart Clark. Clark has gathered unintentionally funny expressions on signs, menus and advertisements in English that he has encountered in countries where English is a foreign language. The errors are meant to be funny as often they change the meaning unintentionally. This kind of "broken English", is probably the most commonly used language in the world, and people who speak it often, for example, confuse the meaning of two similar words such as in a case of a restaurant that wanted to attend to their clients "with hostility". (Stewart 2006: 7-8) Unlike Clark's books, the main character of the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* is trying to learn the language, and the novel, therefore, does not aim at ridiculing her the way Clark wants to ridicule those who are making mistakes because of some other reason.

⁵ Good English

⁶ Better English

2. STANDARD LANGUAGE AND LEARNER'S LANGUAGE

The novel which is studied in this thesis is written in a way which can be described as learner's language. A learner's language often has features that are "deviant" from standard language because the learner has not yet learned, for example the grammatical rules which govern the use of the language being learned. This chapter first discusses what is standard language, and how it can be defined, and also what are the characteristics of standard Finnish and standard English. The discussion will then move on to describe the role of English as a global language, and to the description of learner's language and the process of learning a foreign language. There will also be a discussion of the difficulties that learners of English and Finnish face, and of the most common errors that Chinese learner's of English produce while learning English. This chapter will also discuss the two levels of language where a learner is likely to make mistakes as these will be used to analyse the data in the present study.

2.1 Standard language

The term 'standard language' is not easy to define. There are many ways of defining 'standard language' and the ways to define it sometimes differ from one language to the next. The variety of a language that is historically the most prestigious get usually selected as the norm. It is likely to be the variety that members of the upper social classes use or which has strong links to power in society. Once it gets selected as the standard, it will be taught in schools and used in the media. Additionally according to Wardhaugh (1986) a language variety is considered standardized when it has been codified in grammars and dictionaries etc. There is a common agreement on what is considered to be features of to that language and what not. A standardized language resists change because the rules which govern the use of standard language are seen as the norm, and changes are seen as threatening its stability. The variety which is chosen as the standard language usually subdues other varieties of a language and also the people who speak that variety will be subdued. (Wardhaugh 1986: 33-35)

“Standard language is actually only the preferred dialect of language (Wardhaugh 1986: 39).” It is the variety of a language that has the most power and has been selected as the norm for other varieties, for example political, social or religious reasons. It is not considered to be a dialect of a language but as the language itself and the ‘correct’ way to use the language. Other varieties of that language are considered varieties that have less power. (Wardhaugh 1986: 39-40)

In Great Britain, dialect and accents have gained more acceptability in recent years. This is also the attitude of several sociolinguists. For example Andersson & Trudgill (1990: 167-169) speak for the wider acceptance of other varieties when they claim that in order to make other varieties of a language more equal to standard language, teachers should not consider features of a certain social dialect or other dialects as errors in language use. Instead could teach how dialects differ from the standard language, not present them as inferior to the standard language or encourage students to abandon their own regional or social dialect. However, teachers should also emphasize the usefulness of mastering standard language for formal purposes. They should emphasize rules of standard language as correct use of language in written forms.

Trudgill’s definition of standard English is one that is widely used. (Taavitsainen & Melchers 2000: 3) He defines standard language as

“[T]he dialect of English which is normally used in writing, is spoken by educated native-speakers, and is taught to non-native speakers studying the language. There is no single accent associated with this dialect, but the lexicon and grammar of the dialect have been subject to codification in numerous dictionaries and grammars of the English language. Standard English is a polycentric standard variety, with English, Scottish, American, Australian and other standard varieties differing somewhat from another. All other dialects can be referred to collectively as nonstandard English.” (Trudgill qtd. in Taavitsainen & Melchers 2000)

Trudgill has expanded his definition further through negation. According to him it is not a language, but a variety of English; it is not an accent; it is not a style; it is not a register, and finally, “it is not a set of prescriptive rules, as given by prescriptive grammarians over the last few centuries.”(Taavitsainen & Melchers 2000: 3)

The above applies practically to all languages. Also in Finland standard Finnish has the basic features of a standardized language. It is used in written forms of Finnish, and it is the preferred variety in formal situations. Very few Finns use standard Finnish in their informal communication situations. The variety used in informal situations is different in pronunciation, morphology and syntax. Most typical forms of colloquial spoken Finnish are omissions and assimilations of sounds and a number of morphological and syntactic features. (Karlsson 1983: 205-206)

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, standard language can be defined in various ways, and its definition varies from one language to another. For example the term has different connotations in English and Finnish. Finnish written language cannot be considered as being equivalent to the English term standard language. Standard Finnish is more associated to the written language, and its use in written form is more acceptable. An equivalent term for the spoken variety of standard English in Finnish would be general spoken language (Anhava 2000)

According to Anhava (2000) there is a difference between standard English and standard Finnish in that there is a written form of standard English that is governed by certain norms, and the spoken variety of standard English that also follows these norms. Similarly there is a written form of standard Finnish various spoken varieties which do not follow the norms of written standard Finnish.

Wolfram & Schilling-Estes (1998) maintain that there are various problems which are met when teaching Standard English. Firstly one must consider how to take into consideration vernacular dialects and how to find a balance between the use of vernacular dialect and Standard English. There are two types of Standard English. The formal type is codified in grammars and is used in writing, while the informal one is used in speech situations. (Wolfram Schilling-Estes 1998: 281)

Wolfram & Schilling-Estes argue that “students from vernacular background seem to resist efforts to teach them Standard English (1998: 286).” There are many reasons for

this phenomenon of which one is that vernacular dialect is a large part of one's identity. In addition, vernacular dialects and informal Standard English are reserved to specific situations. For example, in relaxed social situations, a student will usually use informal Standard English because of the threat of being ridiculed by his/her peers. An important issue that should be considered in teaching Standard English is that the student should feel a desire to belong to the group which speaks Standard English. However, there is very little that the teacher can do in order to achieve this. One way is to give reasons why it is useful to be able to use Standard English, and these reasons should be ones that the student will see as being important. (1998: 287)

2.1.1 English as a global language

In the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* the central theme is learning a foreign language, and more specifically English. Nowadays, this is a very common situation because English has become a *lingua franca*, a language that is used by people who do not share a common language and need to communicate with each other. The need to communicate with people from other countries has grown remarkably because of globalization and also the use of Internet has played a significant role in the spread of English as a global language. English is also taught as a first foreign language in many countries. Some even claim that there are hardly any places left in the world where one does not encounter English. A language can be regarded as a global language when it “develops a special role that is recognized in every country“. This special role can be given when it is adopted as an official language in a country where it is not the mother tongue of the people, or it can be chosen for a country's primary foreign-language teaching. (Crystal 1997: 2-3)

According to Crystal (1997: 5) a country that has political, economical or military power usually gives its language a dominant position in the world. The reasons why English is a global language are socio-cultural and geo-historical. The geo-historical reasons cover the spread of English through colonization which was done by the United Kingdom, when some of the colonized countries appointed English as an official language in their country. The socio-cultural reasons refer to people being dependent on

having English present in their daily lives. It is used in the media, in international politics, business, safety, education, entertainment and communication. (Crystal 1997: 24-25)

The United States became the leading economic power of the twentieth century which further enhanced the status of English as a global language. (Crystal 1997: 53) During the Industrial revolution new technologies were invented in Britain. This further enhanced the status of English as a global language because new words were created in English and those who wanted to benefit from the new technology, needed to understand English. (Crystal 1997: 71-72) When the United States became the leading economic power, new innovations were created which again lifted the status of English as a global language. These innovations were, among others, printing press, advertising, broadcasting, and transport and communications. International business and other international relations were becoming more common and a need to understand each other was an important issue. (Crystal 1997: 110-111)

It is hard to predict what will happen to English as a global language in the future. There are predictions where second language speakers will outnumber first language speakers, and because of this English will change. (Crystal 1997: 130-131) However, the change will not be so drastic that English will split into different languages. It will still be understandable to people who speak it, although they might speak different dialects of English. (Crystal 1997: 134-137)

2.2 Learners language and the process of learning a language

As it was stated in the previous chapter, English is learned as a foreign language in many countries. This chapter will now discuss the problems that learner's of English face while trying to learn the language. Also, as in the present study the representation of a learner's language in the novel's Finnish translation will be analysed, there will be a discussion on the features of Finnish that cause problems for learners of Finnish.

In the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers Z*, the main character of the novel, uses a type of language that can be regarded as a learner's language. Learner's language can be defined as a mixture of both learner's mother tongue and the language the learner is trying to learn. For this reason, it can be described as an interlanguage because it is something that is in-between these two languages. A learner's language can also be seen as a reduced variety of a language when compared to a language which is used as the native language by an adult. This definition can also be applied to, for example, to the type of language used by a child. (Faerch: 1984: 269-272)

A learner's language is further described by Ellis (1997: 25-27) as variable in that learners do not use only one form of a word during a particular stage of language learning development. However, this does not mean that a learner's language is not systematic, but in fact that the variability is systematic. Language learners use different forms of words of the L2⁷ according to linguistic, psychological and situational contexts which can explain why learners do not use the same form of a word during a specific stage of learning. Linguistic context refers to for example choosing a past tense marker by a verb in the sentence. Situational context refers to using formal language in formal situations and informal language in informal situations, similarly to L1⁸ speakers. Psychological context refers to situations where learners either produce language spontaneously or have an opportunity to plan it. (Ellis 1997 25-27)

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) involves many different factors which affect the way a person learns a second language. The way in which a person learns it depends on both the learner and the situation in which the language is learned. Even though there are many different ways how a person learns a second language, some generalizations about second language acquisition can still be made. The study of SLA is mainly interested in how L2 learners acquire grammatical aspects of the L2 such as negatives or definite and indefinite articles, and is interested in studying how a L2 learner produces

⁷ L2 refers to a foreign language that a person is learning or has learned.

⁸ L1 refers to a person's mother tongue.

the L2 and by studying the production of L2 evidence can be received about the internal learning processes. (Ellis 1991: 4-6)

There are different stages involved in learning an L2. First there is a silent period when L2 learners do not try to speak the language which they are trying to learn. After the silent period L2 learners start to speak in two different ways; they use “fixed expressions”, “propositional simplification” that is they leave words out of sentences. This kind of simplified speech is similar and also universal in all L2 and L1 learners. (Ellis 1997: 20-21) Ellis states that “[R]esearchers have shown that there is a definite accuracy order and this remains more or less the same irrespective of the learners’ mother tongues, their age, and whether or not they have received formal language instruction (1997: 22).” “Most of the learners they have studied perform progressive –*ing*, auxiliary *be*, and plural –*s* most accurately, suggesting that they acquired these features first. Articles and irregular past come next. The most difficult structures are regular past and third person –*s* (1997: 22).”

However, not all researchers agree with these findings. “When learners acquire a grammatical structure they do so gradually, moving through a series of stages en route to acquiring the native-speaker rule (Ellis 1997: 23).” Ellis refers to the acquisition as a U-shaped source of development. A learner “initially may display a high level of accuracy only to apparently regress later before finally once again performing in accordance with target-language norms (Ellis 1997: 23).” Although it may seem that learners are regressing, they are actually making progress in learning the language. (Ellis 1997: 23-24) Learners go through various stages as they are learning a second language and “these stages are not sharply defined.”

SLA has achieved some very important findings. By studying errors that learners make, it has found that “L2 acquisition is systematic and, to a large extent, universal, reflecting ways in which internal cognitive mechanisms control acquisition, irrespective of the personal background of learners or the setting in which they learn (Ellis 1997: 24-25).” Another important finding is that SLA has found that learner language changes over time in a similar way, which supports the findings about errors language learners make

being universal. Ellis suggests that one might “be able to explain when learners use one form and when another” (1997: 24-26) In the following subchapter the difficulties of learning English will be discussed in more detail.

2.2.1 Problems in learning English

There are some errors that are universal to learners of English despite what their mother tongue is. Such errors are past tense errors, omission errors and overgeneralization. The past tense error include, for example, to how ”most, if not all learners go through a stage of learning where the substitution of the simple form of the verb for the past tense form (Ellis 1997: 19).” Omission refers to how learners “leave out the articles ‘a’ and ‘the’ and leave the –s off plural nouns (1997: 19).” Overgeneralization can be described with the following example. “[T]he use of ‘eated’ in place of ‘ate’ (1997: 19).” In other words it refers to generalizing a grammatical rule, without taking into consideration certain exceptions of those rules, such as, for example, irregular plural forms. There is one type of error that L2 learners make which has to do with learners trying “to make use of their L1 knowledge (1997: 19).” These are called transfer errors. (1997: 19) In the present thesis the interest lies especially in studying what Ellis refers to as past tense errors, overgeneralization, and omission errors and whether they can be identified in Guo’s novel *A Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*.

Other difficulties learners of English might encounter are the use of adverbs in a sentence, difficulties in using determiners that indicate aspects of quantity such as *all*, *any*, *some*, *every*, difficulties with using auxiliary and modal verbs, and difficulties with choosing whether use an infinitive or the verb ending *-ing*. (Close 1983: 15, 63, 110, 138) A part of the interest in this thesis will be to discover whether difficulties with choosing whether to use an infinitive or the verb ending *-ing* can be identified in Guo’s novel *A Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*.

2.2.2 Chinese learning English

Since the main character of the novel that is studied in this thesis is a Chinese girl, a discussion of common errors made by Chinese learners of English will be discussed next. Some features that cause difficulties for Chinese learners of English include the use of auxiliary verbs, the use of articles, the use of determiners, subject and verb agreement, grasping the idea of nouns being ‘countable’ and ‘mass’ nouns, and the use of subject in a sentence. The difficulties caused by the use of articles derive from the fact that Chinese does not have the indefinite and definite article ‘a’ and ‘the’, but uses other ways to convey the meaning that is expressed with them in English. The problems with the use of subject in a sentence are due to the fact that it is not mandatory in Chinese if the subject can be understood from the context. However, this is not the case in English since there has to be a subject in an English sentence, even if it can be inferred from the context of the sentence. (Hung 2005: 10, 12, 14, 23, 29, 32, 46)

The problem with subject verb agreement consists of the fact that Chinese learners of English have difficulties because “[T]he subject in English behaves differently from the subject in Chinese, e.g. in Chinese, the subject does not ‘control’ the form of the verb as it does in English, nor does it change positions with the auxiliary verb when asking a question (Hung 2005: 10).” Also a common error that Chinese learners of English make is leaving out auxiliary verbs when forming sentences in English because Chinese does not have auxiliary verbs. (Hung 2005: 70) The problems caused by distinguishing between ‘mass’ nouns and ‘count’ nouns comes from the fact that Chinese does not make a similar distinction between nouns. “All nouns in Chinese are ‘mass’ nouns (Hung 2005: 23).”

2.2.3 Problems in learning Finnish

The most basic characteristics of Finnish are word formation by adding endings to word stems, a fairly large number of case endings, the use of possessive suffixes, the use of

enclitic particles, the use of derivatives, no grammatical gender, no articles and agreement (Karlsson 1983: 12-14). The formation of words is done by adding endings to word stems. The same can be done with verbs. Endings that are attached to verbs give information about grammatical person, tense and mood. (White 2001: 12) This is not uncommon in other languages, but there are two main differences where the use of endings in Finnish differs from Indo-European languages, for example, English. There are more case endings in Finnish and where Indo-European languages have independent words, Finnish has possessive suffixes. Another basic characteristic of Finnish is the enclitic particles and derivatives. Enclitic particles are endings which are always attached to a word after all other endings for emphasis. Examples of an enclitic particles use include, for example, in the use of the second person singular verb *tule* [come] an enclitic particle *-ko* is added to the word to form the expression *Tuletko?* [will you come?] and *Sinäkin* [you too]. Derivates are endings which are used to form new words, for example from the root [kirj] *kirja* book, *kirje* letter, *kirjasto* library. There is no grammatical gender or articles in Finnish. (Karlsson 1983: 12-13) Another basic feature in Finnish is agreement, which refers to attributes which modify nouns that agree with the headword in case and number. Attributes that occur before the noun are pronoun attributes and adjective attributes. (Karlsson 1983: 71) Examples of attributes are for example *tämä* pöytä [this table] which is a pronoun attribute, and *vihreä* tuoli [green chair] which is an adjective attribute. Finnish sound structure consists of 8 vowels and 13 consonants. The first syllable of a word is always stressed and letters, as well as words, are pronounced the same way as they are written. (Karlsson 1983: 14)

Karlsson (1983: 14-15) lists the difficulties one might encounter while learning Finnish. First is learning Finnish vocabulary. The inflection of words also causes difficulties because endings are not always merely attached to word stems, but occasionally the stem has to also be modified. Case endings can also produce difficulties, as well as the correct use of object in a sentence. Concerning the pronunciation of words in Finnish, vowels and consonant length are also difficult for learners of Finnish, because the difference between the length of certain vowel and consonant sounds in a given word usually signifies a change in the meaning of the word. For example the words *takka* [fireplace] and *taakka* [burden] mean two totally different concepts although the way

that the two words are written differs only by one letter from each other. According to White (2001: 13), it can be very difficult for a language learner to learn to distinguish the different lengths of phonemes, because they might not have any meaning in his/her mother tongue. The study mentioned in the introduction which was done by Martin and Siitonen also listed the most common errors made by people who are learning Finnish in their study *Mämmilän Mukun suomi – ulkomaalaispuhetta vai pelkkää fiktiota?*.

Other errors include lack of vowel harmony and inflection of words, problems with case government, consonant gradation and duration of phonemes. Vowel harmony is a feature of Finnish which usually causes difficulties for a learner of Finnish. For example errors in vowel harmony consisted of words such as *sina*, where the correct form would have been *sinä* [you]. The word does not have a back vowel in it, so the letter *ä* must be used with the letter *i* in the word *sinä*. Karlsson (1983: 21, 30) maintains an important role of Finnish grammar concerning vowel harmony which is as follows; “If the stem contains one or more of the vowels u, o, a. The ending also has to have a back vowel (*u, o, a*). If the stem has no back vowels, the ending has to have a front vowel (*y, ö, ä*).” Another complicated issue for a Finnish language learner is consonant gradation. Most important type of change is consonant gradation, which causes consonants *p, t, k* to either be in short or long forms, or disappear completely. There are many different grammatical rules which govern consonant gradation.

3 REPRESENTATIONS OF LEARNER'S AND FOREIGNER'S LANGUAGE

This chapter will discuss the representation of learner's language and foreigner's language, and their metonymic representation in fiction. The discussion will begin by introducing the concept of metonymy and its role in translation as Maria Tymoczko had defined it. That is, the representation of a certain concept with only few features of it. Next a study of the representation of a fictional foreigner's language will be discussed in terms of how authentic the metonymical representation is in the character's language.

3.1 Metonymic translation

A translator is always faced with making certain choices concerning what elements of the source text will be included in the target text. In other words translation is a selection of features. The translator has to either omit or add some information which is present in the source text from the translation. For example Maria Tymoczko describes this as follows

“[S]ome of the differences between text and translation have to do with incompatibilities between the substance of any two linguistic systems (...) Many of the differences between source text and translation are inescapable, resulting from the shifts from the obligatory features of one language to the obligatory features of another.” (1999a: 22)

The translator also has to decide on how to translate other features of the source text in a way that is comprehensible to the target culture audience. This may involve, for example, explanation. According to Tymoczko (1999a: 22), this will almost always result in the translated text being longer than the source text, although, even then all the cultural features of the source text will not be included in the translation.

The aim in this study is to see what linguistic choices that deviate from standard language the writer and the translator have made in order to represent the language of the main character in the novel as learner's language. There are certain difficulties that

the author and the translator will encounter when writing and translating *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*. The main difficulties lie in selecting what elements of learner's language one should choose to represent it. Both the writer and the translator must consider the readability of the text. It cannot be written in authentic learner's language because that would result in the text being too difficult to understand by readers, so they both must select only certain features of learner's language that will give the reader the feel of authenticity. This type of selection of features is called eye-dialect, which is creating speech which sounds authentic with only a few features of it.

The choice of elements to represent the whole has been described with the concept of metonymy. "Metonymy is a figure of speech in which an attribute or an aspect of an entry substitutes for the entity or in which a part substitutes for the whole (Tymoczko 1999: 42)." The act of translation always involves selection of this type. In other words a translator has to choose what elements from the source text will represent the whole source text, and what elements of the source text to highlight, in general, in the translation. These elements might belong, for example, to the language of the source text, conventions of the source culture or the source culture's value structure. Tymoczko (1999: 44-50) maintains that all languages differ from one another and this will result in "linguistic loss or gain, and it is not possible to capture every linguistic feature of the source text, either in its paradigmatic or its syntagmatic levels." If a translator includes too much of the source text into the translation, there will be too much information, which will make the translation difficult to read.

This idea applies also to a translator who has chosen to emphasize linguistic elements of the source text by "importing or literally transferring lexis, syntax and the like into the receptor language" and has decided not to highlight any other element of the source text because the information load would be too great for the reader. Further, according to Tymoczko, the decision made by the translator about what to include in the translation depends on what the translator wishes to achieve with it. This is a very challenging task for a translator. For example if the translator is faced with the choice of whether to explain something that is unfamiliar to the target culture. By explaining the translator might ruin the genre, but by not explaining the target audience might not understand

some element which is from the source text. It will be like someone explaining a joke, after which it is no longer amusing.

3.2 Representation of foreigner speech: *Mukku* From *Mämmilä*

Kaisa Martin and Kirsti Siitonen (2000) have studied a fictional character's language in a Finnish graphic novel called *Mämmilä*. The character is *Mukku*, who has immigrated to Finland from Africa and does not speak fluent Finnish. The starting point for the study was the question whether *Mukku* could be recognized as a foreigner on the basis of his language without seeing his appearance, and whether his speech is similar to authentic foreigner speech. They also wanted to study whether *Mukku* resembled other fictional foreign characters in Finnish literature. (2000: 256)

The material of the study consisted of parts of dialogue taken from the graphic novels from which they gathered markers that separated *Mukku*'s speech from the speech of other characters in order to compare them to the speech of other "foreign" fictional characters in Finnish literature and also to authentic foreign speech. Martin and Siitonen also compared features to the language of somebody who is learning Finnish as a foreign language, and compared *Mukku*'s language to both written and recorded spoken language of foreigners. The features included the lack of vowel harmony, the inflection of words, problems with case government, consonant gradation and the duration of phonemes. Their aim was to find out whether *Mukku*'s language was "authentic" or artificial foreigner speech. (2000: 257)

In order to find out how readers reacted to *Mukku*'s speech, Martin and Siitonen asked 103 native Finnish-speakers to read dialogues that included no pictures of the characters, and to describe them and motivate their answers. The people who were asked to read the dialogue were not told whose speech was in the dialogues. Two out of three of the test subjects in the group recognized *Mukku* as a foreigner, whereas one out of three did not identify *Mukku* as a foreigner. Moreover Martin and Siitonen found the speech an imitation of authentic foreigner speech, which may explain the results. Most

of the people who answered based their answer on features of language. These features included poor language skills, and the quality and the quantity of the language. Some even made more specific observations about *Mukku's* language, such as errors in inflection of words, short sentences and the choice of words. (257-258)

On the basis of their findings Martin and Siitonen concluded that people who speak Finnish as their mother tongue will recognize Finnish spoken by a foreigner because it is a similar process to recognizing different varieties of Finnish. It is a part of their knowledge of language, and they applied this knowledge to fictional language, even though it might not even resemble authentic foreigner speech. Further, they interred that the most common way of representing foreigner speech in Finnish fiction was to leave words uninflected, or to add markers of a given geographical dialect of Finnish to the character's speech. Martin and Siitonen emphasized that even though *Mukku* was a fictional character, it was still important to make the language seem authentic so that the character will be perceived in the way that the author had intended. (2000: 256)

Martin and Siitonen (2000: 261-262) discovered that determining the features that characterized *Mukku's* language was not an easy task. It was difficult to determine if there were markers of a specific dialect of Finnish present in *Mukku's* language, or whether they were features of everyday language. However, they found that there were many features that can be defined as features of authentic foreigner's speech in *Mukku's* speech such as the lack vowel harmony, leaving words un-inflected, difficulties with case government, difficulties with consonant gradation and finally, difficulties in the duration of sounds. Some of these features were obviously used to produce a humorous effect. Moreover *Mukku's* language lacked some other common errors produced by learners of Finnish since this would have made the text difficult to read. The results of Martin & Siitonen's study will be compared to the findings of the present study to see whether there are similarities in the speech of *Mukku* and the main character, Z, of the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*.

The topic of this study is somewhat more complicated than in the case of the study on *Mukku's* language, because the translation involves translating the difficulties that an

English learner faces into Finnish. The translation is all about creating an illusion in the sense that it discusses learning English in English. The language is not authentic learner's language either in the novel or its Finnish translation but it is created metonymically by using only a few features of it. The findings of this study in regards to the representation of foreigner's language will be compared to the representation of a learner's language in the Finnish translation of the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*.

4 REPRESENTATION OF A LEARNER'S LANGUAGE IN A *CONCISE CHINESE-ENGLISH DICTIONARY FOR LOVERS* AND IN ITS FINNISH TRANSLATION

In this chapter the material selected for this study will be analysed. The focus will be on grammatical and lexical markers that deviate from standard language in the source text and its translation. The purpose of the study has been to find out what linguistic choices were made to create the image of learner's language in English and Finnish. The grammatical markers consist of errors in the inflection of words, errors in the use of articles, errors in the use of prepositions, incorrect use of verb tenses, and incorrect formation of plural forms of words, and lexical markers consist of words that are spelled incorrectly and using a word in the wrong context, that is, features that have been found to create problems for learner's of English and their transfer into Finnish. The material which has been analysed consisted of 13 entries of the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*. The topics of the entries were all related to either to the difficulties in learning English or difficulties in understanding the meaning of a specific word. All of the entries in the two novels, the source text and its translation begin with a single word and its dictionary definition. The entries that dealt with difficulties in learning English were titled 'beginner', 'progressive tenses', 'future tense', and 'timing'. The entries which dealt with difficulties in understanding a certain word were titled 'properly', 'guest', 'vegetarian', 'fart', 'nostalgia', 'pessimism/optimism', 'posses', and 'dilemma'.

The markers will be compared with the conclusions that Martin and Siitonen made in their study of foreign speech. Finally the grammatical and lexical markers that were identified in the source text and its translation will be compared in order to see what choices the author and the translator have made in order to give the impression of a learner's language in both English and Finnish. Conclusions will follow in the final chapter of the study.

Both in the source text and its Finnish translation the most prominent group identified was the group of errors involving the inflection of words, which belonged to the group

of grammatical markers. The errors were mostly errors that are typical to learners of English. The amount of lexical markers was similar in both the source text and its translation.

4.1 Grammatical markers in *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*

This chapter will discuss the grammatical markers of the source text, *A Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*. In the following subchapters the grammatical markers will be discussed by beginning the discussion with the largest group of grammatical markers identified from the source text, and then continuing to smaller groups of grammatical markers. The discussion will begin with the discussion of grammatical markers because the groups of grammatical markers were much larger than the groups of lexical markers.

4.1.1 Errors involving the inflection of words

The largest group of grammatical markers in the source text consisted of errors in the inflection of words. There were altogether 171 errors in the inflection of words in the source text. The errors consisted of nouns that were not inflected by number, errors in the inflection of pronouns and errors in the inflection of verbs.

Errors concerning the inflection of verbs consisted of errors in verb tenses, and errors concerning the use of third person singular *-s* and present participle *-ing*. There were 68 errors concerning the use of the present participle *-ing* in the source text. More specifically the errors consisted of using the present participle when another ending should have been used, such as third person singular *-s*, a base form of a word or past tense marker *-ed*. There were 45 errors concerning the use of third person singular *-s* in the source text. The errors consisted of either leaving the verb uninflected or using a present participle *-ing* when the third person singular *-s* should have been used. One example of using the present participle *-ing* incorrectly is illustrated in the following

example. Z is attending an English lesson at her language school where her teacher is giving a lesson on grammar.

(8) After lunch breaking, Mrs Margaret *introducing* us little about verbs.
(ST 2008: 24)

In the example above the error can be seen in the word *introducing*. The correct way to inflect the word would be using third person singular *introduces*.

An example of leaving a word uninflected instead of using third person singular *-s* can be seen in the following example. Z and her boyfriend are at a café and she asks her boyfriend to explain the meaning of the word anarchist.

(9) You stop describing as some working class man looks at us *stop* biting his sausage. (ST 2008: 189)

The error concerning the use of third person singular *-s* can be seen in the word *stop* which is in its base form. There was also one case where a past tense of a verb was used when the correct ending would have been third person singular *-s*.

An error concerning the use of verb tenses was using a verb which was in its base form or using a present participle when it should have been inflected according to person. An example of using present participle when the verb should have been inflected according to person is presented in the following example where Z is learning English grammar in the language school.

(10) She also *saying* nouns are three different gender. (ST 2008: 24)

The error has occurred in the word *saying*, whereas the correct form of the verb should be *says* because with the pronoun *she* an *-s* form of the verb should be used.

Another example of an error consisting of using a base form of a verb when the verb should have been inflected according to person is illustrated in the following example. Z is studying Shakespeare's poetry in hopes of being able to teach it to other Chinese people when she returns to China.

(11) Even my father *know* Shakespeare big dude. (ST 2008: 26)

In the example above the error occurs in the word *know* which should be in the third person singular form *knows*.

There were altogether 662 personal pronouns used in the source text, and there were only 11 errors concerning their inflection according to case. The errors consisted of using the first person singular *I* instead of the object case *me*, third person singular object *her* instead of third person singular *she*, first person plural possessive adjective *our* instead of first person object *us*, first person singular object *me* instead of first person reflexive pronoun *myself*, and *theys* instead of third person plural *their*. A typical example of this type of error can be seen in the following example where Z is trying to learn to speak English at her language school.

(12) 'Sally telling *I* that *her* just having coffee.' (ST 2008: 25)

There are two errors in the example above. Z has confused the nominative and the genitive case of the first person singular pronoun and the correct way would be to change the first person singular *I* into first person singular object *me*, since *me* is the object of the sentence. Also the third person singular object *her* should be changed into third person singular subject *she*, since *she* is the subject of the sentence.

4.1.2 Errors involving articles

The second largest group of errors in grammatical markers in the source text consisted of the use of articles. Altogether there were 247 cases where an indefinite or a definite

article were used correctly and 157 cases where a preposition was missing when it should have been used. The largest group of errors concerning the use of articles consisted of cases where either an indefinite article *a* or *an* or a definite article *the* should have been used but had been left out. According to Ellis these types of errors are called omission errors and are commonly produced by learners of English. (1998: 19) Difficulties in the use of articles are usually due to the choice a language user has to make “whether to use zero or a, zero or the, a or the” (Close 1983: 41) When deciding what article to use, one has to consider whether the noun is a mass or a unit noun. Mass nouns are not marked with an indefinite article, whereas unit nouns can have an indefinite article. (Close 1983: 41)

There were altogether 157 cases where either an indefinite article or a definite article should have been used but was left out of sentences. The largest group of this type of errors consisted of leaving out a definite article *the*. There were altogether 67 definite articles missing from sentences. An example of this type of error can be seen in the following sentence where Z is attending her first grammar lesson.

(13) ‘My name is Margaret Wilkinson, but please call me Margaret,’ my grammar teach tells in front *blackboard*. (ST 2008: 23)

In the example above the word *blackboard* should have a definite article. The correct form should be *the blackboard*. Here Z has most likely made an error which is common to learner’s language. More specifically, she has had difficulties choosing what article would be correct in the sentence above, or should it be used at all. Chinese is Z’s mother tongue and it has probably had an effect in producing this error, as there are no articles in Chinese. This type of error can be referred to as a transfer error, because she has tried to apply the grammar rules of her own mother tongue in producing this sentence.

There were also 63 cases where an indefinite article *a* or *an* should have been used but was left out. One example of this type of error is illustrated in the following example where Z is leaving the cinema after seeing a scary film and is afraid to walk home.

(14) The world scary and strange like *deep dark dream*. (ST 2008: 41)

The error can be seen in the phrase *deep dark dream*. In the above example, although Z has used the definite article correctly in front of the word *world*, she has omitted the indefinite one in front of the word *deep*. The correct way to express it would be *a deep dark dream*.

There were only few other types of errors in the use of articles in the source text. These errors consisted of using a definite article where it was not needed, using a definite article when the correct form would have been an indefinite article and using an indefinite article when it was not needed.

The errors concerning the use of articles can be regarded as transfer errors. Z's mother tongue is Chinese where articles do not exist, and she is trying to produce English by applying the grammatical rules of her own language to her utterances. Thus, leaving out articles from sentences.

4.1.3 Errors involving verb tenses

The third largest group of grammatical markers in the source text consisted of errors in the use of verb tenses. There were altogether 1009 verbs used by the main character in the source text, and 141 errors of different types concerning the use of verb tenses in sentences. The second largest group concerning errors in the use of verbs was using either the present participle or a base form when the verb should have been in the past tense form.

Errors concerning the use of verbs consisted mainly of using present participle instead of present tense of a verb. The largest group of errors consisted of using a present participle instead of the base form of that verb. An example of this type of error can be seen in the following example where the main character Z is thinking about the differences between English grammar and Chinese grammar.

(15) Chinese we not *having* grammar. We *saying* things simple way. (ST 2008: 24)

The error can be seen in the verb *having* and *saying* which both should be in the base form *have* and *say*. In other words, instead of using the present participle *-ing*, the verbs should be in their base form.

The second largest group of errors involving verb tenses was the use of either the present participle or the base form when past tense should have been used. An example of using present participle instead of past tense can be seen in the following example where Z is reading in the newspaper about a language that had been used by Chinese women, but which had now disappeared because the last speaker of that language had died.

(16) This four-hundred-year-old secret language *being* used by Chinese womans to express theys innermost feeling. (ST 2008: 119-120)

In the example above the word *being* is incorrect and the correct form should be formed by using the past tense form *was*. In other words the sentence would be correctly formed with a relative clause: *that was used by Chinese women to express their innermost feelings*.

An example of Z's use of a base form of a verb instead of the past tense is presented in the following example where Z is considering how different words in different languages are considered taboo.

(17) I never *hear* English person says anything about fart. (ST 2008: 120)

The error can be seen in the word *hear* which should be in the present perfect form *have heard*. According to Ellis (1997), using a simple form of the verb instead of past tense form is a common error made by learners of English.

There were also many errors concerning the use of auxiliary verbs in the source text. Altogether there were 70 cases where an auxiliary was missing from a sentence when it would have been correct to use it. According to Ellis (1997) the use of auxiliaries typically causes problems for learners, and this is also the case with Z. There were many occasions where an auxiliary verb was missing when it should have been used in a sentence. There are different types of auxiliary verbs in English. More specifically there are four types of auxiliaries which are modal auxiliaries such as *can*, *may* and *will*, perfect auxiliary *have*, progressive auxiliary *be*, and passive auxiliary *be*. The different auxiliary verbs determine in which form the verb that follows the auxiliary verb should be in. There is also something called “the dummy operator” *do* which is added to a sentence where an auxiliary verb would be in. The verb that follows the dummy operator *do* is in its base form. (Greenbaum 1991: 55)

The largest group of errors concerning the use of auxiliary verbs was leaving out the auxiliary *be* from sentences. There were altogether 70 cases where it was missing from a sentence. An example of an error of this type can be seen in the following sentence where Z is describing the future she would want with her boyfriend to him.

(18) When I describe this, the image so strong that it must be a will from my Last Life. (ST 2008: 300)

The error in the sentence above is due to leaving out the auxiliary verb *be* after the word *image*.

The second largest group consisted of leaving out the dummy operator *do* from sentences where it was needed. An example of this is from an entry where Z is finding it hard to understand Shakespeare’s poetry.

(19) I not *understanding* it at all. (ST 2008: 27)

The error in the example above consists of leaving out the dummy operator *do* after the word *I*. Also the verb after the dummy operator *do* should be in its base form, so the verb *understanding* should be *understand*.

Other minor groups of errors consisted of leaving out other auxiliaries such as *have*, *can* and *will*. An example of an error of this type is visible in the following example where Z is thinking about keeping another diary in which she would write about her thoughts about her experiences in England in her mother tongue.

(20) Then I have my own privacy. (ST 2008: 122)

The error in the example is due to leaving out the auxiliary verb *would* (after the word *I*) because the sentence is implying something that will happen in the future, therefore the auxiliary *would* should be used.

These types of errors can also be regarded as transfer errors since Z is trying to apply the grammatical rules of her own mother tongue to the language she is trying to learn. Since Chinese does not have auxiliary verbs, Z is very likely to have difficulties with learning to use them correctly in sentences.

4.1.4 Errors involving prepositions

The fourth largest group of grammatical markers in the source text consisted of errors in the use of prepositions. In the case of errors in the use of prepositions in the source text *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* there were altogether 552 prepositions used by the main character Z. The largest group of errors in the use of prepositions consisted of missing prepositions. There were altogether 55 cases where a preposition which was needed in a given sentence was missing. The most common preposition that was missing from a sentence was *to*. There were 28 cases of this type of errors. An example of this can be seen in the following sentence where Z is considering

a word that she has learned *a dilemma* and how it applies to her difficult decision about the return to China or an application for an extension for her visa.

(21) Now, when think about whether I should stay here or go back China, I understand this word totally. (ST 2008: 323)

The preposition which is missing from the sentence is *to*, and it should be placed before the word *China*. The preposition *to* refers to “movement in the direction of a point” (Close 1983: 149). Z is trying to express in the sentence above that “when she will go back to China”, which means movement in the direction of a point, and the preposition *to* is needed in the sentence.

The second largest group of errors was using a wrong preposition. Most of these types of errors consisted of errors in mixing the use of prepositions *to* and *in*. The preposition *to* was used in situations where other prepositions, such as *on*, *at*, *of*, *towards*, *for*, or *into* should have been used. The preposition *in* was used in situations where other prepositions, such as *into*, *on*, *from*, *at*, *for* should have been used. An example of the preposition *to* and *in* used incorrectly in a sentence can be seen when Z is attending her first class in the language school, and her teacher tells her that she will learn English and smiles at her reassuringly.

(22) Mrs Margaret smiles *to* me. (ST 2008: 24)

In this sentence, the main character Z uses the preposition *to* where the correct preposition would be *at*. The preposition *To* refers to some type of movement, whereas the preposition *at* does not. *At* refers to “concentration on the final point of the movement (Close 1983 :149-150).”

Another example of errors in the use of prepositions is illustrated below in the following example where Z is visiting Kew Gardens with her future boyfriend, and they share a romantic moment as they lay beside each other in the grass.

(23) You look *in* my eyes. (ST 2008: 53)

Instead of the preposition *in* there should be the preposition *into*.

The smallest group of errors in the use of prepositions consisted of unnecessary use of preposition in a sentence. There were altogether 11 cases of this type of error. No particular preposition was added to a sentence unnecessarily more often than any others.

4.1.5 Errors involving the formation of plural forms

The smallest group of grammatical markers identified in the source text consisted of errors in the formation of plural forms. There were altogether 177 cases where a plural form of a word was used in a sentence. The formation of a plural form of a word was correct in 130 cases, and incorrect in 47 cases. The incorrect cases consisted of errors such as adding *-s* to an irregular plural such as *woman* and *man*. This is illustrated in the following example where Z is expressing her frustration with the usage of gender definition used in English, which does not exist in Chinese.

(24) Always talking about *mans*, no *womans*! (ST 2008: 26)

In the example above the correct formation of the plural forms of *man* and *woman* would have been the irregular plural forms *men* and *women*. This type of error can also be categorized according to Ellis' categories as overgeneralization, because Z has simply added the marker of a plural form *-s* to a word, even though the correct way to produce the word would be by using the irregular plural forms.

Other errors in the formation of plural forms of words consisted of leaving words in singular form when it should have been a plural form, or giving a plural form when a singular form was needed. The following example illustrates an error which is caused by leaving out the *-s* out from a plural word. Z is thinking about how her lover has changed during their relationship.

(25) All our *fight*, all your struggling with London, all of that has made you look like a small dried fig fell from the tree. (ST 2008: 327)

In the example above the word *fight* contains an error, and it is produced in a way that is typical to learners. It is referred to as an omission, where a learners leaves out *-s* that marks a plural form from a given word. (Ellis 1997: 19)

There were also errors in the choice of plural forms *-s* or *-es*, such as in the following example where Z is visiting Kew Gardens in London with her lover, and they are looking at different types of gardens that represent different parts of the world.

(26) South America garden are cactus. (ST 2008: 52)

In the example above the error can be seen in the word *cactus*. The correct way to produce a plural from the word *cactus* would be *cactuses*.

4.2 Lexical markers in *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*

The largest group of lexical markers in the source text consisted of words that were used in the wrong context. Altogether there were 33 cases of these types of errors. Words that were used in the wrong context were verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs. The words which were used in the wrong context were words such as *concisely*, *hardly*, *noise*, and *accounter*. *Accounter* was used in the sentence as referring to *a counter* in a bookshop where one pays for purchases. *Concisely* and *hardly* were similar cases in the sense that they are both adverbs but the main character Z is using them in a way where she tries to derive an adverb from an adjective by adding the suffix *-ly* to the adjectives and produces a grammatical error by doing so. (Greenbaum 1991: 83) An example of this is illustrated in the following sentence where Z is having trouble communicating with a taxi driver who becomes frustrated with her because she does not understand him. The word *hardly* is used in the sentence in the following manner.

(27) He opens the door again, smashing it back to me *hardly*. (ST 2008: 20)

It is used in the sentence to mean *hard* when, in fact, the word *hardly* means “**Hardly** is an adverb meaning ‘almost not’. It cannot be used instead of **hard** (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2000: 587).” The word *concisely* is used in the following way in the sentence where Z is having trouble understanding what a taxi driver is saying to her.

(28) Driver shout me again: ‘Shut the door properly!’ in a *concisely* manner. (ST 2008: 19)

It is used in the sentence to mean saying something in few words, which would normally be expressed *in a concise manner*, not *in a concisely manner*.

Another example of a word which is used in the wrong context is illustrated in the example below where Z is considering writing down every word she hears an English speaking person say.

(29) I hear *a new noise* from an English’s mouth. (ST 2008: 20)

The word *noise* is used in the wrong context because usually when referring to a person who is speaking in a normal tone of voice, the word *sound* is used.

There were altogether 24 cases where words were spelled incorrectly. These words consisted of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The misspelling of words consisted of words such as *for ever*, *home town*, *Loyal*, *everyday*. The words *for ever*, *home town* and *everyday* should be *forever*, *hometown* and *every day*. The correct form of the misspelled word *Loyal* is *Royal*. The main character is referring to the Royal family in England, and this error in spelling of the word is a reference to the fact that the main character is Asian, and that people from Asia usually have difficulties in the pronunciation of *-r* sound, and they tend to pronounce it as an *-l* sound. Other errors

concerning incorrect spelling of individual words were for example in the case of the word *in-understandable*, which is presented in example 30 and *English's*, which is presented in example 31 in the sentences. In example 30 Z is finding the public transport system difficult to understand, and in example 31 Z is thinking of ways how she could learn English fast.

(30) Bus route is *in-understandable*. (ST 2008: 19)

The word *in-understandable* refers to the bus route being difficult to understand to the main character Z. She has added the prefix *in-*, which means 'not', in front of the word *understandable* in order to change the meaning of the word *understandable* to something negative. (Greenbaum 1991: 199)

(31) I write down here and now, in every second and every minute when I hear a new noise from an *English's* mouth. (ST 2008: 20)

In the case of the word *English's* the word was used to refer to an *English speaking person*, but the word was formulated incorrectly by using genitive inflection *-s* because one cannot add a genitive inflection *-s* to the end of the word *English* in order to refer to a person who speaks English, even though *English* can refer to a person from England. The correct way to produce this utterance would be *English speaking person's*.

There were also 24 cases of words that were created by Z herself. They are the type of words that a person with a limited vocabulary of English might produce. These types of words were such as *for my pocket*. The use of the phrase *for my pocket* seems strangely expressed when considering the sentence in which it is used. The phrase is illustrated in the following example where Z is buying a new dictionary when she discovered that she will not survive without one in England.

(32) I go to counter buy little Collins *for my pocket*. (ST 2008: 20)

Usually in this type of context one would say *to keep in my pocket* or *to keep with me*. Another example which is similar to the previous one can be seen in the following example where Z is thinking about how Chairman Mao's words 'Dare to struggle and dare to win' are words that she should apply to the struggles she faces as she is living in another country.

(33) Chairman Mao's words like *long time no see friend* coming to me.
(ST 2008: 43)

In the example above Z uses the expression *long time no see friend*, with which she refers to a friend she has not seen in a long time. She has done this by combining the English expression *long time no see* with the word *friend*.

4.3 Grammatical markers in *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille*

In the following subchapters the discussion will move on to the grammatical and lexical markers which were identified in the translation, *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers]. The discussion will begin from the largest group of grammatical markers identified in the translation, and then continue to discussions on the smaller groups of grammatical markers.

4.3.1 Errors involving the inflection of words

The largest group of errors in *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers] consisted of errors in the inflection of words. There were altogether 247 errors of this type. Words that were not inflected correctly consisted of verbs that were not inflected according to person, errors in the use of pronouns, in adding possessive suffixes to words, and in the use of grammatical cases. The errors mostly consisted of leaving the word in its base form, when it should have been

inflected. There were 84 words that were in base form when they should have been inflected.

The largest group of errors of this type consisted of errors in the use of grammatical cases, especially in the use of the partitive case. There were altogether 61 errors of this type. According to Karlsson the partitive case “expresses an indefinite, non-limited quantity of something, allowing the possibility that more of it may exist.” (72) It has three endings in its singular form which are *-a*, *-ä*, *-ta*, *-tä*, *-tta*, *-ttä*, and in the plural form the endings *-a*, *-ä*, *-ta*, *-tä* are used after *-i* or *-j* which marks the plural form of the word. A typical example of an error concerning the use of the partitive case is illustrated in the following example. Z is drawing the attention of other customers in a café because she is asking her boyfriend about issues that are considered a taboo in England.

(34) Vanha mies joka lukee sanomalehteä tuijottaa meidät monta *sekunti* ja hautaa taas itsensä lehteen. [Old man who reads newspaper stares us many second and buries again himself in paper.⁹] (TT¹⁰ 2008: 126)

The error can be seen in the word *sekunti* [second] which should be in partitive case *sekuntia* [seconds] because Z is referring to an indefinite quantity of something.

The second largest group of errors consisted of the inflection of words according to person. There were altogether 39 errors of this type. In the following example an error of this type can be seen. In the example Z is going to the cinema for the first time in England.

(35) Siellä näyttää kaksi elokuvaa: Moholland Driver ja Blue Velvet. [There show two films: Moholland Drive and Blue Velvet.] (TT 2008: 50)

⁹ The backtranslations are mine.

¹⁰ TT refers to the target text *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille*.

In the example above the error can be seen in the verb *näyttää* [show]. Instead of using third person singular *näyttää*, the correct form would be a passive form *näytetään* [is showing].

The third largest group of errors was those of the inflection of words with possessive suffixes. The use of possessive suffixes often causes problems for learners of Finnish. In Finnish a possessive suffix is attached to the word which is possessed. The possessive varies according to the person. There are no independent possessive pronouns in Finnish. (Karlsson 1983: 91) There were altogether 29 errors of this type in the translation. An example of an error of this type is illustrated in the following example. Z is writing into her diary about how she and her boyfriend have drifted apart as the time of her departure back to China is approaching.

(36) Sitten elät taas omassa *maailmassa*, jossa välissämme on suuri kuilu.
[Then you live again in own world, where between us is a big gap.] (TT 2008: 306)

The error occurs in the word *maailmassa* [world], which should have the possessive suffix *-si* because in this sentence it is the word which is possessed. In other words the correct way to express it would be *maailmassasi* [in your world].

Other errors in the inflection of words consisted of errors in the use of pronouns, genitive, which indicates possession, inessive case (*-ssa, -ssä*), which indicates inside of something, and elative case (*-sta, -stä*), which indicates out of something.

The large amount of errors found in the inflection of words is not very surprising, as it is considered to cause difficulties to learners of Finnish. Especially those learners, whose mother tongue involves using prepositions.

4.3.2 Errors involving the formation of plural forms

The second largest group of grammatical markers in the target text consisted of errors in the formation of plural forms. There were altogether 182 cases in the target text where the plural form of a word was used of which majority were formulated correctly. There were 142 cases where the plural form of a word was formulated correctly, whereas in only 40 cases where the plural form was incorrect. The errors consisted of leaving out the *-i* or *-t* which marks a plural form in Finnish, and using a plural when it was not necessary. The incorrect formation of a plural, by leaving out *-i* that indicates a plural form, can be seen in the following example where Z is considering the differences between Chinese grammar and English grammar.

(37) Meillä *kiinalaisella* ei ole kielioppia.[Us Chinese do not have grammar.] (TT 2008: 31)

The error occurs in the word *kiinalaisella* [Chinese], which is a singular form. However, Z is referring to the Chinese as a whole nation in this sentence, and the plural form, *kiinalaisilla*, would have been the correct way to convey the meaning. The letter *-e* in the word *kiinalaisella* should be changed into an *-i* in order to produce the plural form of the word.

Another type of error concerning the formation of a plural form in the translation was giving a plural form of a word when a singular form would have been needed. This type of error can be seen in the following example where Z is thinking about all of her favorite foods she will have to stop eating because her lover is a vegetarian.

(38) Entä minun lihapallot, minun *lampaat*, minun *naudanlihat* mustapapukastikkeessa? [What about my meatballs, my lambs, my beefs in blackbeanssauce?](TT 2008: 86)

The error in the example above can be seen in the words *lampaat* [lambs] and *naudanlihat* [beefs], which have the letter *-t* which indicates a plural form. However,

the plural form is not correct in this context. The correct forms would be the singular forms of these two words, which are *lamma*s [lamb] and *naudanliha* [beef].

4.3.3 Errors involving verb tenses

The third largest group of grammatical markers consisted of errors in the use of verb tenses. There were altogether 867 verbs used by the main character in the target text. There were 16 errors concerning the use of verb tenses, and 4 verbs that were needed were missing from the sentences. In other words, it can be said that she seems to be able to use verbs in sentences correctly. The majority of errors concerning verb tenses consisted of verbs left in present tense when past tense or perfect should have been used. An example of using present tense when a perfect should have been used is presented in the following example where Z is talking about figs that are growing in her boyfriend's garden.

(39) Meidän puutarhassa viikunat *putoilevat* viime päivinä puusta, kukattomasta hedelmäpuusta. [In our garden figs are falling in the last couple of days from the flowerless fruit tree.] (TT 2008: 329)

The verb *putoilevat* [are falling] is in present tense when the correct tense should be perfect, which “is formed with the present tense of the auxiliary ‘be’ inflected for person, followed by the past participle in the singular or plural form according to the number of the subject (Karlsson 1983: 133).” In this sentence the correct form would be *ovat putoilleet* [have fallen].

The majority of errors concerning use of verbs in sentences were due to leaving out auxiliary verbs such as *olla* [be] and *voi* [can]. The auxiliary verb *olla* [be] was missing in 75 cases in the target text and the auxiliary *voi* [can] was missing in three cases. There were also many cases where the auxiliary verb had been replaced with the first person singular pronoun *I*. An example of leaving out the auxiliary verb *be* is presented in the following example where Z and her boyfriend are discussing the sculptures that her boyfriend makes.

(40) Mutta miksi sinun patsaat niin rumia ja onnettomia? [But why your statues so ugly and unhappy?] (TT 2008: 307)

In the example above the error consists of leaving out the auxiliary verb *be* after the word *patsaat* [statues].

4.3.4 Errors involving prepositions

There were no errors in the use of prepositions in the target text. However, there were errors concerning the use of postpositions. Postpositions are more common in Finnish than prepositions (Hakulinen & Karlsson 1988: 83). There were only three prepositions used in the selected diary entries in the target text, and 31 postpositions. Altogether there were only four errors concerning the use of postpositions. There were three cases where a postposition was missing in a sentence when it should have been used, and one error that consisted of using a wrong postposition in a given sentence. An example of not using a postposition into a sentence when it was needed can be seen in the following sentence where Z is appalled by the behavior of the Chinese staff in a Chinese restaurant.

(41) Ehkä siksi muutamat englantilaiset katsovat meitä kiinalaisia *nenänvarsista*. [Maybe that is why a couple of English people look at us Chinese along noses.] (TT 2008: 84)

The error in the sentence above is due to leaving out the postposition *pitkin* [along] after the word *nenänvarsista*. The two words refer to a Finnish saying *katsoa pitkin nenänvartta*, which can be translated into English as *look down on something or somebody*.

4.4 Lexical markers in *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille*

The largest group of lexical markers in the translation, *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers], consisted of words that were used in the wrong context. There were altogether 66 errors of this type, and they were found in nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. An example of a word that was used in the wrong context can be seen in the following example where Z is thinking about her relationship with her lover, and how he is the first person who she has been so intimate with.

(42) Tiedän ettei kukaan elämässäni ole niin *lähellä* kuin sinä. [I know that no one in my life is as close as you.] (TT 2008: 306)

In the example above the word *lähellä* contains an error because the word *lähellä* refers to someone being at a close distance, and the correct word to use in this context would be *läheinen* which refers to a person who is dear to you.

There were altogether 18 cases in the target text where a word was spelled incorrectly. These errors consisted mainly of nouns and the most typical type of error can be seen in the following example where Z is discussing her encounter with a drunken man on the streets of London.

(43) Ehkä hän luulee minua *prostituutiksi*. [Maybe he thinks I am a prostitute.] (TT 2008: 50)

In the example above the error can be seen in the word *prostituutti* which is spelled incorrectly. The correct way to spell the word would be *prostituoitu*.

There were 17 cases of lexical errors that consisted of words that are typical to a person learning a language. They were words that are formed by putting together words that one knows when they are unable produce the correct word because of their limited vocabulary. One example of these types of errors can be seen in the following example where Z is appalled by the behavior of the staff in a Chinese restaurant.

(44) *Poninhäntänainen* tiskin takana vielä ilkeämpi. [Ponytailwoman behind counter even meaner.] (TT 2008: 83)

In the example above the word *poninhäntänainen* is not a standard Finnish word. The word has been formed by putting together the words *poninhäntä* [ponytail] and *nainen* [woman]. The correct way to express this is with a relative clause in the following manner: *nainen, jolla on poninhäntä* [a woman who has a ponytail].

4.5 Foreigner speech versus learner's language

This chapter will discuss whether the grammatical and lexical markers that were identified in the translation of *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* were similar to the foreigner speech analysed by Martin & Siitonen in their study of the representation of a fictional character's language. Z has studied the language and is trying to learn more, whereas *Mukku* has probably not got that much background in language learning, which will most likely affect the results of the comparison.

The results of Martin & Siitonen's study were that *Mukku's* language consisted of features that are commonly recognized in actual foreigner's speech as they are learning Finnish. These features consisted of the lack of vowel harmony, leaving words uninflected, difficulties with case government, difficulties with consonant gradation and finally, difficulties in the duration of sounds. There were also some features of a dialect which is spoken in the southwest parts of Finland. In other words, *Mukku* had been in Finland for some time and was also learning more by imitation.

In *Mukku's* Finnish there were altogether 16 errors concerning consonant gradation in the translation *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers]. Proportionally, there were not many errors of this type in the translation, as there was approximately one error in the use of consonant gradation per chapter. One example of an error of this type is presented in the following sentence where Z's fellow students tell her where one can see films at a cheap rate.

(45) Se on kuulemma Lontoon *halpin* elokuva. [I am told that it is London's cheapest cinema.] (TT 2008: 50)

The error can be seen in the word *halpin* [cheapest] which should be *halvin* because according to the rules of consonant gradation in Finnish, “short consonants generally alternate with other consonants (Karlsson 1983: 30).” In this case the word has been formulated from the base form *halpa* [cheap], but in order to convey the intended meaning of the word *halvin* [cheapest], the short consonant *p* should be changed to *v*.

There were no errors concerning the use of vowel harmony in the target text, whereas this was identified as a feature of *Mukku*'s language.

In the translation *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers], *Z*'s language had, however, similar features that were identified in *Mukku*'s speech as well. There were 16 words that had incorrect duration of phonemes. The words that were incorrect should have had long phonemes in them instead of short phonemes. The duration of phonemes is important in Finnish because the meaning of a word changes when the phoneme changes from long to short or vice versa. (White 2001: 13) The duration of phonemes in *Z*'s speech did not result in any major difference in the meaning of the words. One example of an error of this type that was identified in the translation is presented in the following sentence, where *Z* is thinking about how words in one language are in everyday use, but in others they might be considered taboo words.

(46) Kiinalaisista miehistä *ihana* käyttää tämä *sana* joka päivä. [Chinese men love to use this word every day.] (TT 2008: 127)

The errors can be seen in the two words *ihana* [wonderful] and *sana* [word] which should be *ihanaa* and *sanaa*.

Another similar feature in the translated language of *Z* and *Mukku*'s language was problems with inflection of words and with case government. Errors of this type actually proved to be the largest group of errors that were identified in the target text.

Errors concerning the inflection of words consisted mainly of not using grammatical cases correctly, especially the partitive case when it should have been the correct form, not inflecting verbs according to person and errors in the use of possessive suffix.

4.6 Markers of learner's language in English and Finnish

In this chapter the grammatical and lexical markers that were identified in the source text and its translation are discussed in order to see what types of decisions were made by the author and the translator of the novel had made in order for the language of the main character Z to seem like learner's language. There will also be a discussion on whether, and how, the translator had recreated in the translation any of the grammatical or lexical markers that were identified in the source text. It is also been taken into consideration that Finnish and English are two different languages, and they cannot be directly compared to each other. Moreover, Chinese learners of English are likely to produce different errors than those learning Finnish. After all, the two languages are from different family of languages with different means of expressions (both in grammar and lexis). The most apparent feature of Finnish that makes it different from English is the amount of case endings that are attached to word stems. In English prepositions etc. serve the same function as case endings have in Finnish. Finnish differs from English especially in the inflection of nouns. Postpositions are more in common in Finnish. Finnish also has no articles but the same effect can be achieved with for example word order. (Ringbom 1987: 19-20)

Overall the amount of grammatical and lexical markers was similar in both the source text and the target text. In the group of grammatical markers which included the incorrect uses of the plural forms of words there were 47 cases of incorrect uses of a plural form in the source text and 40 cases of incorrect uses of plural forms in the translation. In the source text the errors in the formation of plural forms consisted of leaving words in their singular form when a plural form was needed, giving a plural form when a singular was needed, adding *-s* to an irregular plural form and using *-s* when *-es* would have been the correct form to be used. In the target text the errors

consisted of leaving out *-i* or *-t* which mark a plural form in Finnish and using a plural when a singular was needed. From these observations one can argue that the author had made similar choices concerning the incorrect usages of plural forms. Both the author and translator had for example used the plural form of a word when a singular form would have been correct.

In the case of the lexical markers identified in the source text there were altogether 33 words used in the wrong context and 66 cases of words used in the wrong context in the target text. There were 24 cases of incorrect spelling of words in the source text and 18 cases of incorrect spelling of words in the target text. There were 24 cases of words that were made up by the main character Z in the source text and 17 cases of words that were made up by Z in the target text. Here again, the amount of lexical markers found in both source text and target text are quite similar.

There were also language specific grammatical markers that could not have been recreated in the translation of the novel, such as the use of definite and indefinite articles in the source text. The author had used quite a lot of errors of this type, possibly because it is a common error in the language use of learners of English. On the other hand the Finnish translator had used a lot of errors in the inflection of words which are common errors made by students who are trying to learn Finnish. So it can be argued that the author of the novel and its Finnish translator had used language specific elements in creating a learner's language.

In the case of prepositions, most errors identified in the source text consisted of the omission of prepositions from sentences when they were needed. There were altogether 55 prepositions that were missing from sentences when they should have been used. The most common preposition that had been left out of sentences was *to*. The second largest group of errors concerning the use of prepositions was using a wrong preposition in sentences. There were for example prepositions such as *to* and *in* used in sentences when the correct prepositions consisted of prepositions such as *on*, *at*, *of*, *towards*, *for*, *into* and *from*. This differed considerably from the translation. In the translation there were no errors concerning the use of prepositions. However, there were some errors

concerning the use of postpositions which are much more in common in Finnish than prepositions. The largest group of grammatical markers in the translation consisted of errors in the inflection of words. These types of errors consisted of errors in the use of grammatical cases which can be said to express in Finnish what prepositions do in English. In conclusion, it can be said that the author and the translator of the novel had used errors which are language specific.

Errors concerning the use of verb tenses in sentences in the source text consisted mainly of using a present participle *-ing* instead of the present tense. The second largest group of errors consisted of using present participle or the base form of a verb instead of the past tense which would have been correct. There were also many errors in the use of auxiliary verbs in sentences. In many cases they were missing altogether from sentences. Both the source text and the target text included many errors concerning the use of auxiliary verbs, when both the author and the translator had left out auxiliary verbs from their texts. However, the target text consisted of far fewer errors in the use of verb tenses than the source text. There were only 20 errors in the use of verb tenses in the target text whereas in the source text there were altogether 141 errors in the use of verb tenses.

The largest group of grammatical markers in both the source text and the target text consisted of errors concerning the inflection of words. There were altogether 247 errors of this type in the target text. The majority of errors in inflecting words were due to errors in the use of the partitive case. There were also errors in inflecting words by person and in the use of possessive suffix. In the source text there were 171 errors concerning the inflection of words. Most of the errors identified consisted of using the present participle *-ing* and third person singular *-s* incorrectly, as well as errors in the inflection of nouns.

The errors involving the inflection of words were the most prominent group of errors in both the source text and the translation. Other groups of errors were similar in their number except for the group of errors in the use of prepositions. This can be explained by the fact that prepositions are not common in Finnish. The errors were created by

using most common errors that language learners make. For example in the translation, errors in the inflection of words were used, because inflection of words is challenging to learners of Finnish. In the case of the source text, the errors were created by using, for example, overgeneralization which is a common error that learners of English make. In this sense, the learner's language was created metonymically, because only few features of errors that learners make were used in the source text and its translation to represent the whole concept of learner's language. This was probably done in order for the language to remain legible.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Translating a novel that is written in a way that is not considered to be standard language proposes a problem for the translator of that novel. In the case of Guo's novel, *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*, the problem its translator meets is unique because it is written in a way that an English learner would use English. The translator has to consider how to convey an English learner's language in another language, in this case Finnish. She cannot merely translate it into a type of Finnish that a Finnish learner would use. She also needs to convey to the reader of the novel the difficulties in learning English, as it starts with the comment "Anteeksi paha englanti" [sorry bad English].

The aim of this thesis was to study how the representation of learner's language was created in both the source text *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* and the translation *Pieni Punainen Sanakirja Rakastavaisille* [a little red dictionary for lovers]. The study was carried out by identifying grammatical and lexical markers from the main characters language from both the source text and the target text. Grammatical markers consisted of errors in the use of articles, errors in the use of prepositions, errors in the formation of plural forms of words, errors concerning the use of verb tenses, errors in inflection of words and lexical markers consisted of words that were spelled incorrectly and words that were used in the wrong context.

In the source text the biggest group of grammatical markers was errors in the inflection of words. There were altogether 171 cases or errors in the inflection of words. The second largest group of grammatical markers was errors in the use of articles. Most of the errors consisted of articles that were missing from the text when they should have been used. Third largest group of grammatical markers consisted of errors in the use of verb tenses, and the two smallest groups consisted of errors in the use of prepositions and in the formation of plural forms.

Altogether there were 247 cases of errors concerning the inflection of words in the translation. Errors of this type consisted mostly of errors in the use of the partitive case, inflecting verbs according to person and errors in the use of possessive suffix. The second largest group of grammatical markers consisted of errors in the formation of the plural form of a word. There were 40 cases of this type of error. The errors consisted mostly of leaving out the *-i* or *-t* which marks a plural form in Finnish or using the plural form of a word when it was not necessary. The third largest group of grammatical markers consisted of errors concerning the use of the verb tenses. There were altogether 20 errors of this type. The errors consisted of leaving verbs in the present tense when the past tense or the perfect tense should have been used. There were also errors in the use of auxiliary verbs. More precisely, many of the auxiliaries were missing from sentences. There were not any errors in the use of prepositions in the target text, and only few errors in the use of postpositions which are more in common in Finnish than prepositions.

The most prominent group of errors in the translation was the group of errors in the inflection of words. This group was significantly larger than any of the group of grammatical markers. This could be partly due to the fact that it is quite easy to give the impression of poor language skills in Finnish, by using the grammatical cases incorrectly. It is also the most difficult aspect of Finnish for Finnish learner's to master. Also grammatical cases are used in Finnish to express similar issues, whereas the same issue would be expressed by for example prepositions in English.

The largest groups of lexical markers consisted of words used in the wrong context in both the source text and the target text. There were also equal amounts of words spelled incorrectly and words that were invented by the main character in both the source text and the translation. Thus it can be said that the author of the novel and the translator of the novel had made similar choices concerning lexical markers.

Many of Ellis' findings on learner's language were also noticeable in both the source and the target text. More specifically in the sense, that Z, the main character of the novel, formed grammatically correct forms of words in some instances, but not in

others. In that sense Ellis' findings on language learners not using the correct form of a word in all situations was valid. Another one of Ellis' findings was also visible in both the source text and the target text, which was that Z's language was simplified. (Ellis 1997: 21) This type of speech was referred to as "propositional simplification" by Ellis. Considering these observations one could argue that Z's language did, in some respects, resemble authentic learner's language.

There were also similarities with the findings Martin & Siitonen. Although the majority of the errors made by the main character Z were not similar to the language of *Mukku* a foreigner whose speech formed the material of Martin & Siitonen's study, some similarities still existed. For example the Finnish translator of the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* had constructed Z's language by using errors concerning the inflection of words, errors concerning consonant gradation and duration of phones, which were also identified in *Mukku*'s language. However, there were also differences between the languages of these two fictional characters. For example there were no errors concerning the use of vowel harmony in Z's language, but were identified in *Mukku*'s language. Also, *Mukku*'s language had features of a specific Finnish dialect but there were no elements of Finnish dialects in Z's language. This can be understood against their background in learning Finnish.

When the results of this study are viewed from the perspective of Maria Tymoczko's theory on metonymic translations, it can be argued that the translator had in some cases followed the source text by selecting some features of it which she included in the translation. More specifically the translator had in some cases used similar errors in creating the image of learner's language as the author had used.

The target text mainly focused on errors in the inflection of words because that is a common error that learners of Finnish make. She had also chosen to use errors that were represented in the source text in her translation of a learner's language. These errors included leaving out auxiliaries from sentences and forming plural forms of words incorrectly. Also the number of lexical markers in both the source text and the target

text were similar and the translation of the words that were included in the group of lexical markers was fairly literal.

However, not all errors that were included in the source text by the author to represent learner's language could be recreated in the translation because as Tymoczko stated that translating always involves some type of linguistic loss or gain. For example errors concerning verb tenses and the amount of errors concerning inflection of words were somewhat smaller in the source text than in the target text. Also there were some errors that could not be recreated in the translation. Such as errors in the use of articles and prepositions because articles do not exist in Finnish and postpositions are more common in Finnish than prepositions. Even though the inflection of words was the largest group in both the source text and the target text some of the words that were inflected incorrectly were different. In the source text most of the errors consisted of incorrect inflection of verbs and nouns. In the target text errors in the inflection of words consisted mostly of errors in the use of grammatical cases, inflection of words by person and in the formation of plural forms.

The types of errors found in the study were due to language specificity. The aim of both author and the translator of the novels were to achieve authenticity, but both texts were representations and in that sense metonymic. Further studies could be, for example, to investigate how new immigrant varieties are created in literature. They differ from a learner's language in that they are often second or third generation, fairly stable speech that still represents a particular variety. However, the translation is likely to depend on the function of the speech. In the novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*, the language issue was at the core of the novel, and finding an equivalent in the translation was more important, than say, in literature written in a dialect, where a particular dialect does not play a major role.

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