

# Trolls dat speak / Vat did you say? Literary translation approaches to cultural references and Terry Pratchett's novels in German translation

RHIANNYN GEESON  
MONASH UNIVERSITY

*This paper highlights the challenge presented to translators by a specific form of intertextual referencing, namely that of hyperculturality—references to the wider cultural environment. Through the use of examples drawn from original works of the popular British writer, Terry Pratchett, and from the German translations, the use of speech patterns to create culturally-specific characters which represent a 'transtextual' relationship to culture, and its translation into another culture, is discussed. The strategies employed by the German translator are then contrasted with some possibilities offered by the relevant translation strategies of Umberto Eco and Lawrence Venuti.*

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

This is the Discworld, which travels through space on the back of four elephants which themselves stand on the shell of Great A-Tuin, the sky turtle.

Once upon a time such a universe was considered unusual and, possibly, impossible.

But then... it used to be so simple, once upon a time. (Pratchett 1992:7)

Thus begins one of the first of the Discworld novels from the contemporary English writer, Terry Pratchett. Pratchett's Discworld novels are phenomenally popular, both in the English language market, and in other languages, including German.<sup>2</sup> There are currently over thirty novels in the series.<sup>3</sup> The Discworld, as the opening excerpt indicates, is a fantastical world, populated by humans and magical creatures. The novels are marked by an irreverent humour, as Pratchett parodies the tropes and stereotypes of fantasy, together with aspects of modern society<sup>4</sup>, and he delights in foiling expectations of genre and style—as well as those of the reader. This has led to his classification as an 'absurdist' or even as a 'postmodern parodist' (Bryant 1998).

Owing to his particular style, Pratchett's works present a significant challenge to the translator. One aspect of this challenge is the various forms of intercultural references. This paper examines how the speech patterns of characters on the Discworld have multiple functions; how these functions, wherever possible, need to be made available in translation. Discussion then turns to translation strategies offered by theorists, and how the general trend apparent in the German translator's strategies at times obscures the complexity of the original text, evinced by examples drawn from the dialogue of two of the Discworld's 'magical minorities'.

## Parody and Voice

When analysing Pratchett's works in terms of genre, it is necessary to consider the concept of parody. According to Gerard Genette (2000), parody has a transformational relationship to the original text, and is conducted in a playful mood.

It is, he argues, a form of hypertextuality, closely related to pastiche and satire. Hypertextuality is a reflection of one text upon another: the *hypotext* reflected within the *hypertext*, in a 'palimpsestuous' manner.<sup>5</sup> In other words, the original is still recognisable in the hypertext. In terms of Genette's definition, then, the predominant tone of Pratchett's novels is that of parody, reflecting and transforming not simply a single, but rather, a variety of hypotexts.

It is not only the predominant tone of the novels which is parodic. The characters, whether "stupid trolls", the woad-tattooed Nac mac Feegle, or the "stronkly"-accented Uberwald vampires, can also be considered parodies, and it is in dialogue that an important aspect becomes obvious: the speech patterns of the characters. In translation, therefore, there are two hypotexts that must be reflected: that of the 'transformational', transcendental fantasy figure, and that of the cultural stereotype, represented through the unique voices of the characters.

In *Mouse or rat? Translation as negotiation*, Umberto Eco (2003) argues that translation is "a matter of negotiation between the translator, the reader and the original author, whose unique voice should remain in the text" (Eco 2003:192). If this is so, the parodic narrative voice must be present for the German reader, and when one considers Eco's statement in conjunction with Linda Hutcheon's assertion that "... parodic codes... have to be *shared* for parody—as parody—to be comprehended", whatever the function of the parody (Hutcheon 1989:93), it is clear that Pratchett's translator faces a challenging task.

This is particularly so at times in Pratchett's works, not only because the translator should arguably aim to be a 'model reader'—in other words, the well-informed, competent reader (Eco 2003), who is aware of parody, irony, and satire as they appear in a text, but also because in Pratchett's case, his targets are so varied. In essence, in Pratchett's works, as Butler (2001) writes:

There is a two-way process of humour going on: we are laughing at the familiar by viewing it through absurdist spectacles and we are laughing at how the absurd seems so familiar. Certainly there is a sense [...] that two codes or fields of association are operating, and that they are conflated together or confused, or repeated." (Butler 2001:69)

Thus the translator of Pratchett has to deal with a double-coded, even multi-layered, text: not only must she/he be aware of the stylistic, the cultural-historical and the linguistic levels, but she/he must also be aware of the parodic aspects of the integral double-coding as it presents itself, in this case, in the Discworld characters' speech patterns.

### Speech Patterns and the creation of characters

Speech patterns play an integral role in character development in fictional works, in the 'creation' of difference. It is in dialogue—the character's voice—where difference (and sameness) can be most obvious, and which can mark the characters most easily for the readers. Phonetic representations of speech impediments, non-standard language forms such as dialects, accents, and argots, for instance, all assist in marking out specific characters, leading, in turn, to the creation and representation of group-specific speech characteristics.

Pratchett employs this technique in his works. The inhabitants of the Discworld, among them humans, trolls, vampires, and gnomes, often display certain linguistic traits which mark them as 'different' in the textual setting. These speech characteristics invite the reader to associate cultural stereotypes bound to such specific speech patterns of non-standard forms with the identity of the characters. The characters of the Discworld therefore serve different functions: as characters in their own right; as vehicles to parody cultural stereotypes;<sup>6</sup> finally, to parody stereotypical fantasy figures, such as witches, vampires, and dwarves.

In Pratchett's novels the comic effect of these characters and their speech patterns stems from an appreciation of the 'cultural baggage' associated with specific non-standard English dialects. This 'baggage' can be viewed as a form of hypotext, and therefore more accurately labelled *hypercultural* elements. Take, for example, the grand entrance of a magical minority group:

The shadow reached a flat rock that offered a magnificent view of the fields and wood below, and there the army came out from among the roots. It was made up of very small blue men, some wearing pointy blue caps but most of them with their red hair uncovered. They carried swords. None of them was more than six inches high. (Pratchett 1998:5-6)

The reader is thus introduced to obviously magical creatures. They wear pointy hats, indicating that they are gnomes,<sup>7</sup> although they deviate considerably from the usual associations of jolly, fat garden ornaments. The next section, directly following the passage above, reveals the extent of the hypercultural referencing in the creation of these characters:

They lined up and looked down into the new place and then, weapons waving, raised a battle cry. It would have been more impressive if they'd agreed on one before, but as it was it sounded as though every single small warrior had a battle cry of his very own and would fight anyone who tried to take it away from him.

'Nac mac Feegle!'

'Ach, stickit yer trakkans!'

'Gie you sich a kickin!'

'Bigjobs!'

'Dere c'n onlie be whin t'ousand!'

'Nac mac Feegle wha hae!'

'Wha hae yersel, ya boggin!'

 (Pratchett 1998:5-6)

The Nac mac Feegle, as well as being small, ferocious, foul-mouthed and blue, obviously speak with a strong, 'Scottish' (and in some cases, unintelligible) brogue. This brogue is an example of dialogue functioning as a continual reminder for the reader, reinforcing the peculiarities of the character.

Pratchett also draws on stereotypical representations to create a culturally-bound identity for his characters: they are 'pictsies'.<sup>8</sup> This image of fierce, clan-based warriors with a penchant for strong liquor, has a powerful and intentional historical resonance with the stereotypical, woad-painted, sword-wielding Scottish warriors—Picts<sup>9</sup>—encroaching on English territory. Pratchett's pictsies are drawn from a variety of cultural references and associations: they "had to be mound-dwellers, and they had to conform to the genuine fairy stereotype of North-West Europe—i.e. not automatically friendly, and fond of drink" (Pratchett, in Pratchett and Kidby 2004). Thus Pratchett begins by conforming to an aspect of a stereotype—as seen in many of his characters—then goes on to build the parody around it. At the same time, the associations with the Picts are very strong. Although historians have exploded some of the myths surrounding the Picts, popular images of these matrilineal, pre-medieval warrior-tribes, thought to have 'disappeared' in the early medieval years, reflect something of the origins of the stereotype. For instance, this excerpt from a novel by the very popular English children's writer, Arthur Ransome, first published in 1943, gives a sense of the popular image of the Picts:<sup>10</sup>

"Picts?" said Nancy.

"Ancient Britons," said Dorothea. "Prehistorics. Original inhabitants. They had to hide from the invaders and went on living secretly in caves and in the end people thought they were fairies and used to leave milk outside the door for them. Something like that. I heard Father talking about it..."

(Ransome 1993:35)

There is, moreover, an unmistakable reference to popular culture: the films *Braveheart* and *Rob Roy*, both released in 1995.<sup>11</sup> This referencing, either to history or to popular culture, is a technique Pratchett often employs. Eco calls this double coding, which "... characterises a literary work which displays a lot of erudite quotations but can also attain popular success, in so far as it can be enjoyed in a naïve way" (Eco 2003:116), sentiments echoed by Pratchett:

If I put a reference in to a book I try to pick one that a generally well-read (well-viewed, well-listened) person has a sporting chance of picking up; I call this "white knowledge", the sort of stuff that fills up your brain without you really knowing where it came from ...

I like doing this kind of thing. There are a number of passages in the books which are "enhanced"

if you know where the echoes are coming from but which are still, I hope, funny in their own right.  
(Pratchett 2005c)

### Hyperculturality in translation

Unfortunately, the assumed background knowledge needed for Eco's double coding may not apply to a reader from another culture:<sup>12</sup> the 'white knowledge' of a German reader may be similar, yet will not be the same as that of an English-speaking reader. The task of the translator, who must consider the target audience of the translation, is further complicated in Pratchett's case, by the variety present in his texts: if the translator is to be considered the 'model reader', then her/his task would seem to be to convey as much as possible of the original complexity to the reader: she/he must negotiate between the two cultures, either drawing on the target audience's assumed background knowledge of their own culture, or, alternatively, relying on the reader's previous exposure to the source culture. Pratchett's works are popular fantasy, and thus the translations may be targeted to an audience of fantasy readers, and yet the popularity of the novels suggests that the translation would be targeted to the widest possible audience. Although there is a strong interest in English historical and cultural studies in Germany, the translator could not rely on the depth of knowledge of English culture and society present in the variety of references in Pratchett's works. It is worth noting, however, that the popularity of Anglo-American films and culture in Germany could ensure that in this case, the allusion to the *films* may well be recognised, and thus, that *images* of painted Scottish warriors are present for the target audiences. In this case, however, the deeper historical and cultural associations present for a 'well-read' English reader could still be lacking.

The challenges of translating such double coded texts which draw on culturally-specific, hypercultural references, can be seen in the following excerpt, when the Ramtop witches are 'formally introduced' to the Nac mac Feegle and the full extent of the wordplay is revealed:

'Yings, yow graley yin! Suz ae rikt dheu,' said the blue man, taking the thimble.

'What is he?' said Magrat.

'They're gnomes,' said Nanny.

The man lowered the thimble. 'Pictsies!' (Pratchett 1998:139)

"Meine Güte, wurde auch Zeit, dass es was Flüssiges gibt, meine Kehle ist ganz ausgedörrt", sagte der blaue Mann und nahm den Fingerhut entgegen.

"Wer oder was ist das?", fragte Magrat.

"Es sind Gnome", antwortete Nanny.

Der Mann ließ den Fingerhut sinken. "Kobolde!" (Pratchett 1996:184)

What is immediately noticeable is the lack of the wordplay: the Nac mac Feegle are not 'pictsies', but rather, *Kobolde*. The hypercultural references—the historical background and their mock-Scottish accent—do not occur in the translation. This is compounded, in the case of the Nac mac Feegle, by the decision of the translator to replace the clan name, Nac mac Feegle, with *Wir-sind-die-Größten* (we are the biggest/best). The original name, for an English reader, is obviously recognizable as 'Scots'. In the translation, however, the decision not to leave the name 'as is', has shifted the characters away from their Scots-English origins.

While an English reader can appreciate a Nac mac Feegle claiming his clan are 'pictsies', not gnomes; the German reader is left with the *Wir-sind-die-Größten* insisting that he and his kind are not *Gnome* (gnomes), but rather, *Kobolde*. The term *Kobolde* covers a variety of different magical creatures named in English, including elves, bogeys, sprites, hobgoblins and goblins, but does not include 'pixies', which translates as *Fee* (fairy) or *Elfe* (elf). This is further complicated by the fact that most of the creatures covered by the noun *Kobolde* appear in other Discworld novels. It could be that the lost hypercultural elements have been 'replaced' by German fairy-tale, fictional associations. Nevertheless, in this case, the playful juxtaposition of the connotations associated with the historical 'Picts' and the fantastic 'pixies' which occurs for an English reader cannot be present for a German reader: the English hypercultural references are not present in translation, and the effectiveness of the wit is diminished.

### Character development and magical minorities

It is clear from the above example that Pratchett employs stereotypes and dialectal forms not purely to add humour to the text, but to specifically 'place' the characters within a particular cultural setting. Over time, particular characteristics have come to be associated with accents and dialects, and, like the dialects themselves, can mark a person as belonging not only to a certain geographical location, but also indicate other factors such as social class and age. (See Berezowski's discussion of dialect and dialectology: 1997:9-17, also the discussion of English dialectal forms in Hughes and Trudgill 1997) Although these general perceptions are often not any real indication of a person's place in society, or indeed intelligence, culturally-based figures have evolved. Dialect may still carry with it connotations of one's place in society, or of difference from the cultural norm (Berezowski 1997).

In the creation of his highly-accented, culturally-bound 'stereotypical' figures, Pratchett has also created 'magical minorities': creatures that are 'different', not only—as in the case of the Nac mac Feegle—in stature and colour, but also, and in a very obvious way, linguistically, through their speech patterns. This, then, is another example of 'hyperculturality': the speech characteristics of the characters are based on (or allude to and parody) stereotypes present in modern society, and have thus become a hypertext, reflecting the broader, cultural hypotext.

Through this link, the idiolects of the magical minorities share the concomitant 'cultural baggage'. In essence, Pratchett's characters are again 'double coded': the characters, functioning as parodies of stereotypes, allow the reader to be simultaneously amused by the reference to a recognisable historically and culturally-based, 'real-world' stereotype, but also by how this stereotype functions within the fantastical Discworld setting.

### Translation approaches and strategies

Double coding of the characters through the use of speech characteristics, however, presents a problem when it comes to translation. The possibilities proposed by Umberto Eco and Lawrence Venuti go some way to answering this challenge. Both writers tend to emphasise the importance of the balance between author, translator and reader, or 'target audience', in their discussions of translation. Eco's work in particular highlights the importance of *negotiating* the power balance between reader, writer—and translator. Moreover, he points out that "... the idea of translation as a process of negotiation (between author and text, between author and readers, as well as between the structure of two languages and the encyclopaedias of two cultures) is the only one that matches our experience" (Eco 2003:34).

The translator's task, then, is to negotiate, as he points out in his discussion in the case of the translations of his own novels:

I think that in each of the above cases the translator has *negotiated*, deciding whether it was more convenient to miss the intertextual link for the sake of comprehensibility or whether on the contrary it was necessary to risk a poor literal understanding in order to stress the link. (Eco 2003:121)

In this case, it would seem that the translator has to negotiate on three fronts. S/he must first decide whether the link must be explicated in some fashion, allowing naïve readers access to something which would normally be doubly hidden to them through lack of knowledge of the original language and culture. S/he must then attempt to sustain the same level of 'coding' in the German text (for the educated reader). Finally, s/he must attempt to recreate the code, but from within the German frame of reference. In other words, the translator here has to decide between domestication and foreignisation, to employ Venuti's terminology.

This is particularly pertinent in the case of the translation of the Nac mac Feegle's dialogue. To return to their first appearance in *Carpe Jugulum* (Pratchett 1998), when they have been forced to flee a kind of 'ethnic cleansing', their brogue is barely intelligible to an English reader:

'Nac mac Feegle!  
'Ach, stickit yer trakkans!'

'Gie you sich a kickin'!  
'Bigjobs!  
'Dere c'n onlie be whin t'ousand!  
'Nac mac Feegle wha hae!  
'Wha hae yersel, ya boggin!' (Pratchett 1998:5-6)

Although a German audience is exposed to a great deal of Anglo-American material (and could thus perhaps be seen as Eco's 'educated', or 'model' reader), it is doubtful that many German readers would have been exposed to Scottish brogue to such an extent that the dialogue would be comprehensible. The German section is translated thus:

"Wir sind die Größten!"  
"Hier geht's lang, und dann geht's rund!"  
"Es gibt Hiebe und ab die Rübe!"  
"Wir haun alle um!"  
"Ich mach jeden platt!"  
"Nix wie ran an die Buletten!" (Pratchett 1996:6)

The original dialogue of the picties has not been 'translated'. Instead, idiomatic German expressions have been employed: a wholly target-oriented approach. In this case, it seems that 'literal comprehensibility'<sup>13</sup> has won out, the decision has been made that does not allow the German audience to share the 'parodic codes' of which an English reader of Pratchett could be expected to be aware, and the balance between author and German reader seems to have been disturbed.

In his discussion of intertextual allusions, Eco argues for the creation of 'similar effect' in the mind of the target reader as that in the native language mind, even if this means employing references to the target culture.<sup>14</sup> Although he goes on to warn against excessive domestication, the stress on *faithfulness* is key to his argument for negotiation. The translator creates the same effect in the mind of the reader—without destroying the meaning, or, in Eco's words, 'deep sense' of a text. Applied to Pratchett's texts, this would indicate that an examination of the effect that has been created in the mind of an English reader of Pratchett would have to be undertaken, analysing what is evoked by the specific use of speech characteristics: class, religion and historical background, for example.<sup>15</sup> The translator might then search for an equivalent in the many different German dialects, and then consider whether the use of such a domesticated choice of dialect would alter the underlying 'sense' of the text.

The example of another magical minority of the Discworld, the trolls, highlights the importance of the underlying 'sense' of a text. The trolls are the 'muscle-men' of the Discworld: they guard bridges and borders, are "splatters" (bouncers, only harder), and the hired heavies—characters reminiscent of the stereotypical American gangster. They are, for the most part, portrayed as not very intelligent figures, hence their speech patterns. Their dialogue is filled not only with ungrammatical expressions and contractions, but also malapropisms and other examples of unintended humour. Unintentional word plays and puns form a part of the argot which creates and sustains the characters of the trolls, seen here in an exchange between an Igor (a member of another magical minority, the traditional servitors of vampires and mad scientists in castles) and a troll:

"What'th thith?' Igor demanded.  
'Pardon?'  
'Thith... thtupid mark!'  
'Well, the potato wasn't big enough for the official seal and I don't know what a seal look like in any case but I reckon dat's a good carvin' of a duck I done there,' said the troll cheerfully. (Pratchett 1998:31)

Trolls are 'stupid' characters, who cannot distinguish the difference between an 'official seal' and the animal 'seal'. The above exchange has been translated thus:

'Waf ist daf denn?', fragte Igor.

'Tschuldigung?'

'Diefef ... dumme Zeichen!'

'Nun, die Kartoffel nicht groß genug war für das offizielle Siegel, und eigentlich ich gar nicht weiß wie aussieht ein Siegel, aber ich glaube, das ist gute Darstellung einer Ente', entgegnete der Troll fröhlich." (Pratchett 1996:39)

Unfortunately, the German word for the animal *seal* is nothing like an 'official seal', and the translator has ignored the wordplay, since the German language has not offered a ready chance to make a comic reference. The troll is made to look even more illogical and dim-witted, and while there is some humour in his choice to carve a duck instead of a 'seal', the lack of the double meaning in the German translation is clear. Although theories of translation of humour suggest various strategies when dealing with linguistic and cultural puns (the works of Delabastita 1996, 2002, 2005 and Antonopoulou 2002, among others), for example 'replacing' the 'untranslatable' pun, or switching rhetorical devices, such a compensation strategy—the use of another mistaken homonym, either close to the original word play, or within the text as a whole, for example—does not occur in this translation.

Consequently, if Eco's comment that the translator should be aiming for the creation of the 'same effect' in the mind of the target reader is considered in light of the above excerpt, it is apparent that, although the animal imagery (*Ente* 'duck') has been retained, the same level of humour has not been created (it has been 'dumbed down'): the humorous authorial voice has been changed. This would seem to indicate that the strategy of compensation is a risky one: by considering a pun 'untranslatable' and waiting for the opportunity in the target language, a translator may tend more towards normalisation and condensation in the translation, and consequently disturb the authorial voice. In this example, for instance, a possible translation is apparent: *Igel* (hedgehog) could be used instead of *Ente*, the similar sounding words (*Siegel*—*Igel*) replacing the lost rhetorical device to create an approximate effect in the mind of the German reader. This would retain the 'deep sense' of the character of the troll and the underlying humour of the exchange.

The concepts of the domestication and foreignisation of a text, terms coined by Venuti<sup>16</sup> in the 1990s, are also important concepts in the translation of Pratchett. In a recent article, he advances his argument, stating that translation "never communicates in an untroubled fashion because the translator negotiates the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text by reducing them and supplying another set of differences, basically domestic, drawn from the receiving language and culture to enable the foreign to be received there" (Venuti 2004:468).

Indeed, this is reflected in the possible strategies discussed above: in an attempt to recreate a similar effect in the mind of the reader of the translation, 'basically domestic' differences are employed—the use of a dialect from the target language is perhaps the most obvious example of this. The target audience is experiencing difference through their own cultural framework. For Venuti, then, translating is an ideological act, since translators, in order to tailor a best-seller for the target audience, for instance, are "inscribing [the foreign text] with a domestic intelligibility and interest" (Venuti 2004: 484). Indeed, even if the translator attempts to create a 'defamiliarising' translation, thus catering to a smaller audience, which wants to experience "foreign intelligibilities", it can still only really be achieved through displacement, "through a domestic difference introduced into values and institutions at home." (Venuti 2004:469).

#### Between deep sense and domestication

If the translator, then, were to negotiate between Eco and Venuti, to create a translation that, while producing a 'defamiliarising' effect, also keeps the 'deep sense' of the text, and still catering to a mass audience, a closer representation of the original speech characteristics could be used. Where possible, the translator would attempt to give an impression of the vowel and consonant sounds of a (mock-) Scottish accent; leaving in 'Trakkans' and 'Boggin' (although with capitalised nouns, as in German); and, on line three, using the less usual 'Kicken' as a noun:

'Nack mack Fiegel!'

'Ach, nachoben mit dein'r Trakkans!'

'Gi' dich selb' 'ne Kicken!'

'Großmacher!  
'S kann nur ein Tausand geb'n!  
'Nack mack Fiegel hey, hey!  
'Hey Hey zurück, du Boggin!

While this example attempts to recreate the sounds of the speech pattern of the original, it is very obviously not any recognisable dialectal form of German: the choice of words is odd (indeed, the use of the verb 'kicken' has very different—lewd—connotations in some regions of Germany) and yet the German reader is exposed, in a limited way, to the 'difference' which the English reader experiences when reading the dialogue. The bizarre nature of the original dialogue is maintained in the translation, which is very idiomatic, possibly indicating that the translator has attempted to replace the original associations with German-audience-oriented, domestic, idiomatic expressions to allow the reader to associate the language used with regional areas of Germany.

If, on the other hand, a less obviously 'foreign' translation was undertaken, (i.e. by employing a target audience-focussed 'lexical equivalent'), a possible solution available to the translator would be to find a dialectal form sharing similar historical connotations of territorial war and invading tribes within the *Germanic* setting, if possible within approximately the same period of history. This approach is similar to that which Eco's translators adopted, when faced with obscure medieval (Italian) texts as chapter titles for *Island of the day before*, where titles were chosen from the literary framework and time of the target audience, which created the same kind of association in the mind of the reader—and in some cases, added another layer to the reading of his novel: for example, references to other literary works from the target culture which released a different, and yet apposite domestic 'cultural remainder', which does not change the "deep sense of [the] text" (Eco 2003:71).

The translator might instead employ a Northern European accent, sharing—approximately—the same sort of connotations, perhaps a 'Viking-like', Scandinavian accent to accentuate the fighting aspect of the Picts. For example, if the translator, having decided that the allusion to Picts was too distanced from the target audience of his translation, were instead to use an allusion to *die Hunnen* (the Huns), such a picture of warrior Huns would stress the historical resonances of the original text. The remainder of the text, to use Venuti's terms, would produce a similar effect, since an approximate, appropriate historical referent is there, and there is the sense of invading warriors. While the associations made by the reader are different in other cultures, the intent is to create the same *effect*, and for Eco, when dealing with specific aspects of a text, for instance the creation of stereotypical figures, creating a similar effect is what is most desirable in translation.

Venuti (2004:469) also draws attention to the need to be aware of the ideological resolution translators bring to translation: although the act of translation can be seen as bringing together divergent readers into 'imagined', and 'utopian' communities, they are drawn together by *different* texts, the translation inscribed by the domestic ideology of the translating culture. Thus Venuti (2004:484-5) acknowledges the impossibility of seeing translation as 'cross-cultural communication', and that even when a translator adopts, as above, a foreignising approach in order to present the reader with an idea of the source culture, it will still be presented through the target culture's framework: the relationship is still asymmetrical. If translators are aware of the impact of their ideology, and that of the target culture, however, they may nevertheless be able to translate in a less invisible way, serving both foreign and domestic interests within the translation.

## Conclusion

This paper has clearly uncovered many challenges not previously apparent, the most evident of which is Pratchett's use of 'double coding'. This is apparent not only in the creation of his characters through the use of culturally-specific speech patterns, but also through his many references to both the English literary framework and to contemporary culture. In conclusion, aspects of Pratchett's works, including his use of specific speech patterns, are 'palimpsestuous': they share a relationship with the world outside that of the Discworld which is regenerative and reflective. If this is to be successfully translated, the translator's work must make evident both hyper- and hypo-text, to truly reflect the palimpsestuous relationship between them. Nevertheless, the hypotext has to be recognised by the translator, before the hypertext can be

realised. This can, at times, cause difficulties in the case of writers like Pratchett, who himself acknowledges the challenge:

A year or two ago, on a signing tour, the car happened to pass a sign to Great Dunmow. I mentioned the Flitch to the other occupants, all intelligent, apparently well-educated people, and they'd never heard of it. I found this actually difficult to take in. I'd just assumed it was part of what I think of as 'white knowledge', things that you never actually learn but which get insinuated into your brain by some kind of semi-genetic process. But my mail sometimes make [sic] me feel that I'm on a different planet, which I am to some extent, but I pride myself of having a strong attachment to this one. (Pratchett 2005b:250-1)

#### Notes

1. This paper is an extension of a presentation given at the 'Translation and/as Culture' Conference of the School of Languages, Cultures, and Linguistics, Monash University, held at the Bayview Conference Centre, Melbourne, on 11-12 November, 2005.
2. All the novels in the Discworld series have been translated by Andreas Brandhorst. The first Discworld novel, *The colour of magic* (1983) was translated under the title of *Die Farben der Fantasie* in 1986, by Dagmar Hartman, and re-translated by Brandhorst in 1992 as *Die Farben der Magie*. Other novels written by Terry Pratchett, and not part of the Discworld series, have been translated by Brandhorst as well as other translators.
3. At the time of writing, the latest release was *Thud!* (2005), Pratchett's 30th Discworld novel for adults. Pratchett has also written Discworld novels aimed more specifically at children, which are not marketed as part of the adult series.
4. Pratchett has said of his own writing that he "started off by parodying post-Tolkien fantasy and [has] more or less ended up parodying real life" (Pratchett 2005b:238).
5. Intertextuality is defined strictly by Genette as "the actual presence of one text within another, by way of such mechanisms as quoting, plagiarism, and allusion" (Genette 2000:2).
6. For the purposes of this paper, the definition of 'stereotype' is that of the Oxford English Reference Dictionary: "a person or thing that conforms to an unjustifiably fixed, usu. standardized, mental picture", which exist with very little links to reality (the laid-back Ozzie, the Scottish berserker, and the upper-class English eccentric).
7. Another image also springs to mind, since the creatures are small and blue: that of the cartoon characters, the 'Smurfs'.
8. Wordplay, a significant part of Pratchett's humour, and its translation, is a topic in its own right, which cannot be explored in any depth in this paper.
9. 'Picts' refers to a collection of Scottish tribes, who were very powerful and influential between the 4th and the 9th centuries (Collins 1993).
10. Arthur Ransome's novels were first published in the 1940s and 1950s, and were extremely popular, especially in Britain. It can be reasonably assumed that Pratchett has been exposed to Ransome's works in some form.
11. Although Picts were no longer in existence during the historical periods to which the films refer, the stereotypical image of the painted warrior is one that carries over to the later Scottish/English conflicts, for example, the blue painted faces of the Scottish warriors in *Braveheart* (1995), as well as in popular myth, as in the given example from Ransome.
12. And indeed for less 'generally well-read' readers—something on which Pratchett later comments. In this case, however, the reference still functions on at least one level, since the image of 'painted warriors' has been introduced into popular culture by, for instance, the above-mentioned films, and, more recently, by the film *King Arthur* (2004).
13. Time and budget constraints placed on the translator may also have played a role in the decision-making process.

14. See Eco (2003). Eco points out in his discussion of the domestication process involved in the translation of *Name of the rose* that:

“Kroeber [the German translator] seems to apologise, in speaking of [his] solutions, because his translation was ‘belle’ but ‘infidèle’. I think that, if his purpose was to create in the mind of German readers the same effect that I tried to create in the mind of the Italian one, he was not unfaithful at all.” (Eco 2003:96)

15. Although this approach has been criticised, since it is difficult, if not impossible, to gauge the effect created in another’s mind (see Munday 2001), it is assumed that the translator must judge the ‘effect’ created in her/his mind, drawing on her/his cultural competency in both languages.

16. Although Venuti coined the English terms in the 1990s, it is based, in part, on the German terms “*verfremdend*” and “*verdeutschend*”, used by the German philosopher Schleiermacher in the 19th century (in Lefevere 1992).

## References

### Primary Sources

- Pratchett, T. 1992. *Witches abroad*. London: Corgi Press.  
Pratchett, T. 1996. *Ruhig Blut!* Trans. Andreas Brandhost. München: Goldmann Verlag.  
Pratchett, T. 1998. *Carpe Jugulum*. London: Doubleday.  
Pratchett, T. 2005a. *Thud!* London: Doubleday.  
Pratchett, T. & P. Kidby. 2004. *The art of the Discworld*. London: Harper Collins.  
Ransome, A. 1993. (1943.) *The Picts and the Martyrs or, Not welcome at all*. London: Red Fox.

### Secondary Sources

- Abbott, W.T. 2002. *White knowledge and the cauldron of story: the use of allusion in Terry Pratchett's Discworld*. Masters thesis. East Tennessee State University.  
Berezowski, L. 1997. *Dialects in translatio*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.  
Bryant, C. 1998. *Postmodern parody in the Discworld novels of Terry Pratchett*. Honours thesis. Plymouth: University of Plymouth.  
Butler, A.M. 2001. Theories of humour. In A.M. Butler, E. James and F. Mendlesohn (eds), *Terry Pratchett: guilty of literature* (2nd ed). Baltimore: Old Earth Books.  
Eco, U. 2003. *Mouse or rat? Translation as negotiation*. London: Phoenix.  
Genette, G. 2000. (1982.) *Palimpsests: literature in the second degree*. C. Newman and C. Doubinsky (trans). Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press.  
Hughes, A. and P. Trudgill. 1997. *English accents and dialects. An introduction to social and regional varieties of English in the British Isles*. London: Arnold Press.  
Hutcheon, Linda. 1989. *A theory of parody*. New York; Cambridge: Methuen.  
*The Oxford English reference dictionary*. 1995. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
Pratchett, T. 2005b. *Once more\* with footnotes*, Framingham MA: NESFA Press.  
Pratchett, T. 2005c. Words from the Master. Viewed 10 January, 2006, <http://www.ie.lspace.org/books/apf/words-from-the-master.html>.  
Schleiermacher. 1992. (1813.) On the different methods of translating. In A. Lefevere (ed.), *Translation / history / culture. a sourcebook*. London; New York: Routledge.  
Venuti, L. 1995. *The translator's invisibility. a history of translation*. London; New York: Routledge.  
Venuti, L. (ed.) 2004. (2000.) *The translation studies reader*. (2nd edn). New York: Routledge.  
Webster, B. 1997. *Medieval Scotland: the making of an identity*. New York: St Martin's Press.  
*Rhiannyn Geeson is a PhD candidate in the Translation Studies program of the School of Languages, Cultures, and Linguistics at Monash University.*