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Poudlard, Pudding and Perfect Pronunciation:

Linguistic and Cultural Translation in the French Harry Potter Series

by

Shawna Streeper

Introduction

For centuries translators have been breaking down language barriers between cultures, allowing religion and politics, art and literature to be shared around the world. For as long as humankind has desired to understand the unknown, translators and interpreters have held the key to discovering and communicating with foreign cultures by finding meaning in what had otherwise been meaningless. And what is meaning? It is the theme of this study, because it is the very foundation upon which translators base their work. Meaning changes with each reading of a text, since it is invariably connected to the perspective of the reader. The meaning of a text has multiple levels; these levels of meaning are very much like layers, the topmost being the most basic level of meaning accessible to anyone with a working vocabulary (or a dictionary or lexicon) of the words used within. Finding this literal layer of meaning, perhaps with the help of a bilingual dictionary or an automated translation service, allows for an understanding of the fundamentals of the text: the “who,” the “where” and the “when” are most easily identified here. Since languages tend to differ in grammatical rules (particularly in syntax) this basic level of meaning alone would present a story with sentences that are out of order, confused, and completely foreign – even if the reader understands enough to follow the plot. Here we find the product of the several free translation services that are available on the Internet, which seem to grow in complexity each year, but which will never likely be capable of producing a completely faithful translation. Looking deeper, the next layer of meaning is usually found with the help of specialised dictionaries,

encyclopaedias, or native-speakers of the source language, because it stems from the context or culture of the text rather than the words themselves. For example, common slang, colloquialisms and idioms used in France differ from those used by French-speaking Europeans, French-speaking North Americans, or French-speaking Africans. These languages are all French, and yet they differ drastically because they are the product of each respective culture that is speaking them. Finally, we reach the abstract level of meaning, buried far within the text, extracted by each individual based on immeasurable factors. This meaning may stem from personal experience or knowledge, emotional implications, or perhaps from the creative license of the reader. This the meaning can change with the crossing of borders, continents, or oceans because it is often the product of a popular history; it can also change with the crossing of generation gaps, gender roles and social groups, because it is also the product of a personal history.

When considering a piece of fictional literature, the literal meaning behind the words establishes major characters, details and events, essentially creating the setting and plot. This meaning is transferable across cultures: for example, *Harry Potter* is translated to over seventy languages,¹ which seems to be as universally transferrable as literature can be. The *Harry Potter* series is well on its way to becoming a literary classic, in a genre of its own that sits at a crossroads between Wonderland and Oz, Narnia and Middle Earth. These are several well-known examples of worlds that were created in the name of literature, all of which provided an extraordinary task for the translators. Oftentimes, as in the case of J.K. Rowling in her creation of the Harry Potter series, the names and words in

the source text may be a form of wordplay or may stem etymologically from another language. Further, the words used may be a window to various aspects of the culture behind the source text, which must then somehow be translated to or omitted from the target text. Harry Potter's world is a unique case because although it is entirely fabricated and fictional, it has been woven tightly together by very real contemporary language, cultural artefacts and cultural history. In other words, Harry Potter's world, though completely fictional, is also undeniably British! And what does it mean to be "undeniably British?" This is not a suggestion that the series was built upon stereotypes and generalisations, nor is it simply based on the fact that the books are set in Great Britain and the language spoken is British English. The British culture to which I refer is not the image of Britain from the outside looking in; it is a culture presented by J.K. Rowling, a British woman, who, save for a couple years teaching English in Portugal, has lived her life in Great Britain.ⁱⁱ Rowling thus writes the novels with a voice and language that is distinctly British, with lexical markers (Ron asking Harry to "bung" his owl some treatsⁱⁱⁱ), cultural references (Justin Finch-Fletchley's reference to Eton College^{iv}) and a mixture of the two (using dialogue to suggest the speaker's social sub-culture).

These linguistic and cultural elements are the basis of this study, more specifically, their translation from English into French. The feat of combining a distinct non-fictional setting and culture with a completely fictional world of wizardry makes the wide translation of the series so incredible. The collective effort put forth by translators of so many different languages is immeasurable, as

ultimately it is they who made the decisions that shape one of the most widely distributed youth fiction series of all time. And the decisions must have seemed endless, since there are several inconspicuous cultural elements that appear throughout the story, more subtle references that create a setting and atmosphere that are riddled with British tradition. These elements appear subtly and ubiquitously throughout each of the Harry Potter novels, and while they add an extra dimension of British culture for any readers who recognise them, the removal of the items is rarely detrimental to the plot. Regardless, any translatable cultural elements within the story are important, for they reveal a part of Harry that J.K. Rowling offers throughout each book: his British heritage. Such are the considerations made throughout this text, which will explore the translation of the Harry Potter series from English into French by Jean-François Ménard, who was faced with the task of translating not only the language and lexicon of the wizarding world, but also the cultural variations that rest between the target audience (in this case, France and the French-speaking world) and the United Kingdom. More specifically, we will explore the translation of specific elements of Rowling's lexicon (names and the meaning behind them), and then focus on the most consistent yet subtle expressions of culture present throughout the entire series (gastronomy and linguistic variation). For each element, Ménard was faced with the question of equivalence: whether it was possible and if so, the level at which it could – or should – be maintained.

Translating a Lexicon: People and Place Names

The translation of any piece of literature from one language to another could pose a number of interesting challenges in terms of the vocabulary of the source text and its translatability into the target text. The most apparent aspect of a translation is the lexicon: which words are used? In this case, which characters, curses, charms, potions, and places are translated into something new? Not as many as one might initially suspect, considering the intricate universe that J.K. Rowling created. In fact, most of the magical spells and potions derive from Latin, which the translator maintained. The majority of the character names were also left unchanged; those of the main protagonists, Harry, Ron and Hermione, their families, and most of their friends, teachers and enemies are the same in the French version as in the English, though at times spelled slightly differently in order to render the name more French. For example, Draco Malfoy, whose name is derived from the French *male foi*, or “bad faith,” becomes *Drago Malefoy*. *Drago* recollects the Latin meaning of *draco*, “dragon,”^v while the addition of the *e* to Malfoy simply accords the French adjective (*mal*) with the feminine noun (*foi*). Despite the fact that there are fewer than two-dozen names that have been changed dramatically in the whole series, the concept of translating character names at all is a subject of contention. Nancy K. Jentsch argues that by rendering British characters’ names more French, the French translator lessens the “desired contrast” between students from Hogwarts and the students who visit in the fourth novel from *Beauxbatons* in France. This is not likely, because if J.K. Rowling had wanted to heavily contrast the students, surely she would have provided more

than two French names. Fleur Delacour is one among “around a dozen boys and girls” in pale blue silk robes, all who remain nameless.^{vi} In the whole series, we are given only four French names: Olympe Maxime and Fleur, Gabrielle and Apolline Delacour. This is hardly enough to present a great distinction between British and French names. Further, had she been worried about a contrast in names, it is doubtful that characters such as Madame Pomfrey, Madame Hooch, and Madame Malkin would exist alongside the French Madame Maxine, who is introduced in the fourth book. Rendering the names more French did not detract from the story; it simply made them easier for the French reader to pronounce and in turn accept. Such is the case with Neville Longbottom, whose surname in French is *Londubat*. The translation makes sense when considered phonetically (*le long du bas* means “along the bottom”) and is much easier for a native French speaker to pronounce than Longbottom. Neville’s last name has no particular meaning in either language; however, other characters have names that somehow describe their role in the story. Consider, for example, the Herbology Professor and the Knight Bus driver. Professor Sprout, whose name reflects her green thumb, was translated into *le professeur Chourave*, derived from the masculine noun *chou-rave*, a variety of sprout cultivated for its roots.^{vii} Similarly, Stan Shunpike’s name in English also describes an element of his profession: a shunpike is a “road constructed to facilitate the evasion of tolls on a turnpike road,”^{viii} and Stan’s roll is to facilitate the evasion of “muggle” traffic and road obstructions while defying the laws of physics in order to deliver his passengers to their destinations. Stan’s last name in French is *Rocade*, which in its modern

sense means bypass^{ix} (a modern-day shunpike). Ménard's translated names are more meaningful for the French readers than they would have been in their original form.

Some names provided Ménard with a deeper level of meaning to consider, a level that reveals a dimension of each character that would have been sorely missed by any reader lacking a rather broad English vocabulary. The school poltergeist is a prime example of this; Peeves retains his name in the French translation, which is something of a loss, since the name in English so exactly epitomises his personality. The verb “to peeve” means to “make peevish; to irritate, annoy,”^x which is exactly what Peeves does throughout the duration of all seven novels. The character in the French series is, of course, equally mischievous and bothersome, but his nature is not encapsulated by his name.¹ Translating the meaning behind a name is similar to translating poetic devices in a piece of prose: while the story goes on seamlessly with foreign names that could not be translated directly, finding and translating a deeper meaning behind such names, like translating the meaning behind a metaphor, creates a deeper and more rich experience for the reader. Severus Snape, for example, has an alliterative surname that is defined by the Online Etymology Dictionary as ““to be hard upon, rebuke, snub,” c.1300, from [Old Norse]. sneypa “to outrage, dishonor, disgrace.””^{xi} In English, the Potions Master's surname reflects not only his attitude towards Harry, but also Harry's attitude towards Snape. Ménard in turn

¹ A suitable name for a poltergeist who spends his time *en agaçant les élèves* (irritating/annoying the students): *Agaceur* or *Agaçard*. The masculine suffixes –eur and –ard are commonly used with more negatively implied nouns such as *menteur*, *voleur*, *connard*, *soulard* (liar, thief, wanker, drunk [Larousse Mobile]), as well as *geignard* (see p.8) and *Serpentard* (see p.13); comparable to the English suffix –ard in “drunkard”

sought a deeper meaning in his translated name, translating Severus Snape into *Severus Rogue*. The word *Rogue* is an adjective describing “that which is at the same time contemptuous, cold and severe, that which is of a stiff and unpleasant manner;”^{xiii} which perfectly describes Severus Snape’s personality. Moaning Myrtle and Mad-Eye Moody are similar examples where directly translating the meaning behind the names proved to be effective. These characters provided a particular consideration, however, because each has a nickname that involves a telltale adjective about the character. Moaning Myrtle, introduced in the second tome of the series, was translated into *Mimi Geignarde*, which is almost more suitable to her character than the English: according to *Le Grand Robert*, *mimi* was used in the eighteenth century as a pet name for young children and small domesticated animals^{xiii} and a *geignarde* is a person who moans constantly, at the slightest provocation.^{xiv} Myrtle’s translated name definitely adds dimension to her character, since she is the only child-ghost in the castle. Ménard translated Mad-Eye Moody similarly, faithfully depicting the character’s persona by calling him *Fol-Oeil Maugrey*. This surname is derived from the French verb *maugréer*, “to grumble,” and can be back-translated as “Crazy-Eye Grumbly,”^{xv} a successful translation since grumbling is an accurate adjective to describe the Auror, as much so as the English adjective “moody.” The underlined vowels reveal that the translation, while losing the alliteration of the source text, gains assonance with the repetition of the *o* vowel. Ménard tried to employ poetic devices such as this whenever J.K. Rowling did so in the original, which helped to render a faithful

representation of the text's style, even when the words themselves could not all be translated literally.

It's important to mention one name in particular that required an equal mixture of translation and creation: Tom Marvolo Riddle, whose title depends entirely on the language spoken by Lord Voldemort. It is no surprise that "Voldemort" remains intact in the French books, since it is a very telling name with a French origin: *vol de mort* can literally translate to either "theft of death" or "flight from death,"^{xvi} both of which could describe Voldemort's self-declared purposes in life: to control and evade death. In the second instalment of the Harry Potter series, we learn that Tom Marvolo Riddle and Lord Voldemort are one and the same:

He pulled Harry's wand from his pocket and began to trace it
through the air, writing three shimmering words:
TOM MARVOLO RIDDLE
Then he waved the wand once, and the letters of his name re-
arranged themselves:
I AM LORD VOLDEMORT^{xvii}

This excerpt reveals a key factor in Tom Riddle's translated name: all the letters in the name had to spell the translation of "I am Lord Voldemort." In this case, with no direct translation for "Lord" in French without adding a great number of letters to the mix, Jean-François Ménard omitted the title, translating the line as *Je suis Voldemort* "I am Voldemort."^{xviii} The translator also had to consider Tom's surname, Riddle, which is significant in itself because it reflects the enigma that surrounds both this complex character and his connection with Harry. A direct translation of the word, *énigme* or *devinette*,^{xix} would not have fulfilled the aforementioned anagram. Ménard instead translated Riddle to *Jedusor*, from *jeu*

du sort, or “game of fate.”^{xx} This translation, while different in meaning from the source text, gives some insight into the riddle that is Tom Riddle, who toys with his own fate – and that of countless others – throughout the series. Tom’s middle name, his grandfather’s name, had to fulfil the final five letters of the anagram, *i*, *s*, *v*, *l* and *e*; hence, Tom Marvolo Riddle became *Tom Elvis Jedusor*.^{xxi}

The wordplay that J.K. Rowling uses throughout the series is not just limited to the names of the characters; her enjoyment of the English language is evident in every aspect of the wizarding world. Once again, Jentsch argues that reinventing certain names in French “detracts from the translation’s ability to convey a sense of place,” that the French translations “do not add to the reader’s understanding of the text and they undermine the important sense of place in the novels.”^{xxii} Maria Nikolajeva refers to this sense of place as the “foreign flavor” that is preserved through foreignisation, in which “the translator may decide to keep some words untranslated.”^{xxiii} While most character names were left as such (untranslated), the names of most places in the wizarding world were translated at least slightly, without much regard to the foreign flavour of each. Consider the names of each of the school’s four houses. Like Malfoy’s name, Gryffindor has been rendered more French by altering the spelling: the *i* becomes an *o*: *Gryffondor*. The spelling in either case doesn’t change anything about the meaning, since both derive from French (*griffon d’or*, “golden griffin”^{xxiv}). The other three houses, however, were more considerably altered (see Table 1). It is likely that most decisions regarding the translation of the school houses were made with questions of length and sound in mind in order to render the houses

more French. Contrary to Jentsch’s argument, however, the translation of the houses was effective because it rendered the text more lyrical, more smooth and agreeable to read in the target language, without straying from the meaning of the source text. This flow and readability is important in literature of any language, translated or not, especially if the text might be read aloud.

TABLE 1

ENGLISH NAME	FRENCH TRANSLATION	DERIVED FROM	WHY?
Ravenclaw	Serdaigle	<i>serre d’aigle</i> = “eagle’s claw”	The animal on the house’s crest is an eagle; also much more lyrical than a more literal translation of Ravenclaw would have been (<i>serre du corbeau</i>)
Slytherin	Serpentard	<i>serpent</i> = “snake”	The English word invokes the image of a snake, while the French house has the word snake right in the title. –ard = negative suffix (cf. footnote 1)
Hufflepuff	Poufsouffle	<i>pouf</i> = “puff;” <i>souffle</i> = “breath;” <i>souffler</i> = “to blow,” “to breathe,” “to puff”	The two words were inverted in the translation, but otherwise it is a close direct translation

Without asking J.K. Rowling directly when considering places that belong to the wizarding world, the author’s word choice is a mystery. Why “muggle”? Quidditch? Horcrux? The name Hogwarts, for example, is the inversion of warthog, and invokes the image of a hog with warts, but otherwise has no special meaning in English. It was translated to *Poudlard*, a word that is much more natural to speak aloud in French than its English counterpart. The translator retained the image of a hog with some sort of affliction: *poux du lard* literally means “lice of bacon.”^{xxv} Here, bacon² is used as a synecdoche for pig. Whether French lice or English warts, the school’s name in either language suggests a pig in some form with an uncomfortable physical misfortune. The translation of Hogsmeade, the all-wizarding village near Hogwarts whose name means “hog’s

² “Bacon” as known by North Americans is not a direct translation of *le lard*; if you are served *le lard* in France, you will likely get what looks like a very thick slice of bacon, and while it may be served *salé*, “salted,” this pork hasn’t been cured.

meadow” in archaic English,^{xxvi} retained its connection with the school. *Pré-aulard*, or “bacon’s meadow,”^{xxvii} again presents the above image of a pig, this time with his very own meadow. While Hogsmeade is the only exclusively magical town and Hogwarts is the only magical school in Great Britain, they are not the only magical environments that become part of Harry’s world. He also spends a great deal of time at the Burrow, whose name is translated directly as *le Terrier*,^{xxviii} and he regularly visits the very first magical setting to which he was introduced, Diagon Alley. This hidden back-street, as well as its diametrical cross-street Knockturn Alley, presented the translator with more of a challenge than the Burrow. Diagon Alley is a play on the word “diagonally,” perhaps reflecting the manner in which the cobbled street twists and turns out of sight.^{xxix} This play on words is impossible in French, and so Ménard called the alley *le Chemin de Traverse*. Upon searching the lexicography of the word *chemin*, or “path” in English, we learn that *chemin de traverse* is a specific type of path, and its entry into the dictionary dates to the early 19th century:

Chemin, sentier...de traverse. Chemin, sentier...qui est plus court, plus direct que la route habituelle, ou qui conduit en un lieu où elle ne passe pas. Synon. *raccourci*.^{xxx} “Path, pathway...that is shorter, more direct than the usual route, or that leads to a place that [the original route] does not. Synon. *shortcut*.”^{xxxi}

The above definition is significant because it refers to a shortcut that guides towards a hidden place – in this case, Diagon Alley, hidden in the streets of London, is the first step towards a wizard or witch’s education; it is the direct pathway to the world of magic. While the English name describes the alley itself, Ménard used an extremely effective lexical collocation (*chemin de traverse*) to signify the role that the alley plays in Harry Potter’s world. Similar to the

wordplay in Diagon Alley, Knockturn Alley recalls the dark side of the story with its play on the word “nocturnally.” Once again, this sort of wordplay was impossible in French. Interestingly, rather than using a simple direct translation such as *l’allée nocturne*, “Nocturnal Avenue,” Ménard opted for *l’Allée des Embrumes*, which seems to be a mixture between the adjective *embrumé*, “misty” and the plural noun *les embruns* (sea spray). In French, the two streets are lyrically similar: five syllables, four words, two nouns, one preposition and one article. Despite the fact that the direct approach was dismissed, *l’Allée des Embrumes* is an effective and appropriate street name that presents the reader with an image and atmosphere of fog and obscurity (thereby adding to the street’s character), with a title that mirrors *le Chemin de Traverse* in form (thereby identifying the two magical streets with one another).

Ménard changed his translation approach towards Harry’s two houses: one that he inherits from his Godfather that is hidden on a “muggle” street, one that belongs to his “muggle” legal guardians, and neither of which were rendered “more French” as the Magical environments had been. Ménard retained the English-sounding names of the “muggle” neighbourhoods to convey that each comes from a different suburb of England’s capital. In doing so, however, the meaning behind the name of each place was sacrificed. For example, in English number twelve, Grimmauld place phonetically describes the “grim old place,”^{xxxii} a phenomenon that is lost in the French series. In the translation this house is located at 12, *square Grimmaurd*. The translator changed a perfectly French word, *place* (a common name for a public square in France) to a borrowed

English word, “square,” which communicates that the address is located in an English location. Ménard also changed the *l* in “Grimmauld” to an *r*, creating an equally meaningless word in French that is simply more easily pronounced in the language. Privet Drive is also left foreignised; it is named in English after the privet plant (in French: *le troène*), a type of deciduous semi-evergreen shrub^{xxxiii} that we can assume lines each yard on the Dursley’s block. To translate the address directly, *l’allée des troènes*, would have made it extremely French-sounding and would detract from the foreign flavour of a street in London’s suburbs. Ménard’s decision to borrow the English street title, *Privet Drive*, ensured that the sense of place remained in tact. Interestingly, although in French the name no longer refers to shrubs, “privet” is phonetically pronounced in French as *privè*, which itself has no lexical meaning in the French language; however, the words that are most phonetically similar, *privé* and *priver*, bring an entirely new dimension to the address. *Privé* is both the French adjective for “private” and the noun for “private life,” while *priver* is the verb “to deprive”^{xxxiv}. The meaning is undeniably significant: the question of privacy is linked to Harry’s nosy Aunt, who spends “so much of her time craning over garden fences, spying on the neighbours,”^{xxxv} and yet is paranoid regarding her own family’s private life, keeping everything behind closed door to avoid revealing any sliver of truth about the magical member of her household. Further, deprivation is an extremely telling image of Harry’s life with his aunt and uncle: before being contacted by Hogwarts, Harry is forced to live in a cupboard, he has never known a personal possession that hasn’t been discarded by someone else, he is starved of affection,

and often starved of food as a means of discipline.^{xxxvi} By the time he receives his first invitation in the mail, deprivation is all he knows. Ménard's choice to borrow from the source text was an exceptional one, since "privet" may be more meaningful in French than in English, while the use of "drive" is still very Anglo-Saxon. We can see by the translations of people and place names throughout the series that Jean-François Ménard undoubtedly had to consider any literal and figurative meanings of the English names and then decide upon what was translatable and what needed to be altered. This is a crucial step in translating any form of literature, which presents several challenges when dealing with newly created and therefore totally abstract words that describe people and places.

Translating a Culture: From Candy to Cuisine

The translation of a lexicon, while a complex and arduous process, communicates the primary levels of meaning in a text – first, with the literal meaning of the words, and then moving deeper into the meaning behind any wordplay, double entendres, or biases that may be within. Literary and poetic devices enrich the meaning of a text, sometimes revealing subtle hints of culture along the way. Consider the branding present in the marketplace of the wizarding world: the titles of various magical shops, books, songs, music groups, famous events in history, and, of course, specialised wizarding snacks were translated as faithfully as possible, not so much by direct or literal translation as by wordplay and style. The magical candy industry, introduced on the Hogwarts Express in the very first book and resurfacing throughout the series, offers various different sweets that, like many characters, have names that are often alliterative that

describe the sweet in question. Stylistic devices such as alliteration add a poetic dimension to the language used in the story, while complicating the translator's already challenging task. There are very few instances where Ménard was able to directly translate a name while maintaining the alliteration. Instead, he used different literary devices whenever possible. By transforming Ton-Tongue Toffees into pralines³, for example, Ménard lost the alliteration and the assonance, but achieved instead double consonance with the *l* and *n* sounds in *Pralines Longue Langue*, "Long-Tongue Pralines."^{xxxvii} In dealing with brand names, of candy and otherwise, his preferred poetic device was the portmanteau: the combination of two or more words to create a single word that holds the combined meaning of the original two. Consider Pumpkin Pasties and Chocolate Frogs^{xxxviii}: the Pasties were translated fairly accurately with *Patacitrouilles*^{xxxix}, or *pâte à citrouilles*, literally: pumpkin pastry. To the French reader, the difference between a pastry and a pasta is too subtle to recognise.⁴ As for the Chocolate Frogs, rather than simply translate directly to *grenouilles au chocolat*, Ménard created a more lyrical portmanteau with *Chocogrenouilles*^{xl}. He repeats this approach often: "Butterbeer"^{xli} is translated into *Bièraubeurre*^{xlii} (*bière au beurre*, literally: beer of butter), "Gobstones"^{xliii} into *bavboules*^{xliv} (*bave boules*, or slobber balls), and Acid Pops^{xlv} into "*Suçacids*"^{xlvi} (from the word *sucette*, or sucker, and acid).

³ Toffee is made from sugar or treacle, butter and sometimes flour boiled together, while praline is made by browning nuts in boiling sugar; today, the nuts are then made into paste, which is used as a filling in chocolate. (Oxford A-Z of Food and Drink)

⁴ The word pasta is simply more specific: pasties are a pasta, "folded to enclose a (usually savoury) filling, similar to a turnover," and pastries are a "mixture of flour moistened with water or milk and kneaded to make dough." (Oxford English Dictionary)

The only instances where Ménard was able to maintain the alliteration involved Fred and George Weasley's Skiving Snackboxes – specifically, the Nosebleed Nougat and the Canary Creams. “Nosebleed Nougat”^{xlvi} became *nougat Néansang*^{xlvi} (*néansang* phonetically pronounces *nez en sang*, which means nosebleed), and “Canary Creams”^{xlix} simply became *les Crèmes Canari*^l. The latter of these two, like the other candy, has an alliterative name with an adjective that describes the sweet. However, while the other candies (toffee, nougat, pastilles, *etc.*) refer to nondescript sweets that are relatively generic, the Canary Creams are likely only recognised by English readers who are familiar with British packaged snack food. At first they are referred to as custard creams, a common packaged “sandwich biscuit with a vanilla-flavoured cream filling,”^{li} which suggests that they are like vanilla Oreo or Girl Scout cookies. Ménard translated “custard creams” into *crèmes caramels*, presenting French readers with an image of a caramel and not a cookie that changes a person into a canary, while favouring style (alliteration) over substance (literal meaning). Another sweet that offers a glimpse into the British culture that is a part of Rowling's history is the Fainting Fancy,^{lii} a rather obscure sort of snack for anyone outside of the United Kingdom. The Fancy refers to a common snack cake in Great Britain that likely derives from France, known commercially as the French Fancy, or in household cookbooks and cooking sites as a Fondant Fancy. French Fancies are a particular brand of sponge cake first introduced by the Mr Kipling Company in the 1970s. They are sold as small, brightly decorated squares, “usually topped with fondant icing and butter cream.”^{liii} One can assume that Fainting Fancies are similar

finger-sized desserts (only with the side effect of unconsciousness), but how can a fancy be translated? While Ménard once again must omit the alliteration, he serves up a formidable adaptation with *les petit fours*. These small cakes, derived from early 19th century France,^{liv} come in many different varieties; those that are *glacés* are covered in icing or fondant. Since the Mr Kipling Company was founded a century after the French delicacies were first documented, it is likely that French Fancies are actually a mass-produced representation of *les petits fours glacés*. Ménard's *petits-fours Tournedelœil*^{lv} are thus a faithful adaptation of the magical Weasley creation: small cakes that cause one to *tourne de l'œil*, a French expression meaning “to faint.”⁵ While the translator must sacrifice the original poetic devices, he translates a sweet that is distinct to Great Britain into its French equivalent, which is equally distinct to France.

The Canary Creams and the Fainting Fancies reveal how slivers of culture can appear subtly in a book, with similar culinary references appearing throughout the series. In fact, aside from the candy and drinks that Rowling herself created, the cuisine throughout the books is a unique element in the story: while the world as Harry knows it seems split between two different cultures – the non-magical (“muggle” currency, technology and dress) and the magical (wizarding currency, magic instead of technology, robes for various occasions) – everyday food and drink remains a *national* affair. For the most part, wizards and non-wizards alike eat and drink traditional fare as people belonging to the United Kingdom. These culinary references add depth and nostalgia to readers who have any cultural ties

⁵ Literally: “to turn the eye,” referring to the turning of the eyes upwards when fainting or while unconscious, showing the whites (*Le Grand Robert de la langue française*, s.v. “œil” n. 47).

to the country, but as Dinah Bucholtz points out in the introduction of her culinary tribute to the boy wizard, *The Unofficial Harry Potter Cookbook*, “If you’re not from the British Isles you may not recognize the foods mentioned in the Harry Potter series.” Bucholtz’s book is meant as a guide; drawing from several traditional cooking sources as well as a number of culinary history sources, she assures that in it one will “find more than just directions and recipes; [but also] discover their long and fascinating history.”^{lvi} Bucholtz indeed shines a spotlight onto a part of the story that is easy to overlook, and onto the fact that it cannot be a coincidence that J.K. Rowling managed to include almost every traditional or stereotypical British meal imaginable between the covers of all seven novels. From the sumptuous feast described after Harry’s sorting in the first book straight through to the meals served by Kreacher in the final instalment, Rowling consistently feeds her readers various bits of British heritage – whether the reader realises it or not.

How important is food in the translation of the Harry Potter series? Generally speaking, it plays its own role in developing the setting, enhancing certain characters, and guiding certain elements of the plot. For instance, the description of all the food Harry has available to him after leaving Privet Drive each year is a direct contrast to the amount and type of food he has available to him before he leaves, thereby adding even more value to his homes-away-from-home. Similarly, the contrast between Molly Weasley and Hagrid’s cooking, the only two people who regularly serve Harry home-cooked meals and home-baked sweets, places Molly in a strong maternal role while making a clumsy-yet-

endearing protector out of Hagrid. Finally, in learning that all the food served at Hogwarts is served by house-elves, Harry's trio learns of an important resource – for both snacks *and* information – that later proves to be invaluable. Clearly, food has a role, and that role must be translated. But how important is the translation of the aforementioned heritage behind the traditional food in the story? How important is it that the house-elves serve dishes such as Spotted Dick⁶ at the Welcome Feast, or roast turkey as part of the Christmas Feast?⁷ Realistically, not very. Ménard maintained the presence and description of the meals by directly translating all of the recognisable food (roasts, vegetables, cakes, tarts, *etc.*) and dealing with the translation of each different traditional dish as he came upon them. Some of these dishes translated easily, which is typical between cultures whose histories intertwine with dishes introduced cross-culturally at some point in history. For example, mead is very well-known in France as *l'hydromel* (from greek *hydro*– for water and *meli* for honey), custard as *la crème anglaise*, treacle as *la mélasse*, and bread pudding as *le pudding*.^{lvii} Strangely, although there are various references to different puddings in the series – treacle pudding, Christmas pudding, the aforementioned Spotted Dick, Yorkshire pudding and of course, simply pudding – Ménard only used the French borrowed word twice: he translated Christmas cake as *le pudding de Noël*^{lviii} and Spotted Dick as *le pudding aux raisins secs*^{lix} (literally, raisin bread pudding). Both of these translations are faithful representations of the food that they are describing and maintain the British “foreign flavour” of the dishes; the question is, why didn't

⁶ Spotted Dick is a traditional steamed pudding, spotted with currants or raisins and mixed with kidney fat, whose name dates back to the Victorian era (Oxford A-Z of Food and Drink, s.v. “spotted dick”).

⁷ Eating Turkey with the Yule Feast is a tradition supposedly started by King Henry VIII in the early 16th century (Bucholz, 205).

Ménard use it more often? Perhaps because even though bread pudding may be recognised by French-speakers, it is not a popular dish, and so may not be accepted by French readers the way it is accepted by English ones. This is not a problem. Using the borrowed word would still have been effective because the appeal of the dishes to the readers is not important; what is important is whether or not the readers recognise that the dishes are British. Foreignising more of the dishes would have in turn allowed Ménard to better represent a British culinary culture. Yorkshire pudding, for example, became both *la sauce de rosbif*, “sauce of roast beef” and *du rosbif et de la sauce*, “roast beef and sauce.”^{lx} *La sauce* refers to the drippings of whatever meat is roasted or fried, which in France is often seasoned (but *not* mixed with flour, which is the norm in North America) and then eaten spooned onto the meat after serving and typically mopped up and eaten with bread to finish off the meal. While it is understandable to maintain the idea of meat and sauce, Yorkshire pudding is neither of these ingredients alone: originally it was made by pouring the pudding batter into the meat drippings that gathered beneath the spit in a roasting tin; the batter, infused with *la sauce*, would then bake below the roast and be served first, *without* meat.^{lxi} Ménard’s translation omits the very essence of the dish. While Yorkshire pudding and bread pudding are somewhat different, it would have made perfect sense to translate the former into *le pudding de la sauce de rosbif* (beef-sauce bread pudding), considering that the loan word’s meaning is so close to the original dish. Granted, the omission of the pudding doesn’t alter the story in any way, but it is an unnecessary exclusion of an easily represented cultural artefact.

Culinary culture is present from the first book forward, and is highlighted for the first time as an aspect of nationality in *the Goblet of Fire*. The fourth instalment of the series introduces this fictional and fantastical world as an international body: the world of wizards, like the world of non-wizards, is divided into nations. In the fourth book, Hogwarts welcomes students from schools in both Bulgaria and France, and Harry Potter and his readers are given a more worldly perspective of the magical realm. The different nationalities are distinguishable by three features: their robes (the Bulgarians wear cloaks of thick, warm fur and the French wear robes of fine silk), their accents, which we discuss later, and their food. The tournament's Welcome Feast introduces the three protagonists to the concept of foreign:

There were a greater variety of dishes in front of them than Harry had ever seen, including several that were definitely foreign.

‘What’s *that?*’ said Ron, pointing at a large dish of some sort of shellfish stew that stood beside a large steak-and-kidney pudding.

‘Bouillabaisse,’ said Hermione.

‘Bless you,’ said Ron.

‘It’s *French*,’ said Hermione. ‘I had it on holiday, summer before last, it’s very nice.’

‘I’ll take your word for it,’ said Ron, helping himself to black pudding.^{lxii}

This excerpt is the first in the book that defines the main characters as belonging to a national culture by introducing them to a foreign food, *bouillabaisse*, amidst two distinctly British dishes, steak-and-kidney pudding and black pudding. *Bouillabaisse*, is a “classic Provençal fish stew, a speciality particularly of Marseilles, but made the length of the French Mediterranean coast.”^{lxiii} The traditional French dish is from one of the furthest places in France from the

British Isles, and the pronunciation is completely foreign for an Anglophone.⁸ The British dishes alongside the fish stew are traditional savoury “suet” puddings⁹ that date back to the 16th century in England^{lxiv}. In just a few lines Rowling creates the “desired contrast” that Jentsch described (see page 9), only rather than being a contrast between the students, as Jentsch suggested, it’s a contrast between the traditional cuisines of each nation. This culinary contrast in turn causes the main characters – and thus the readers – to recognise a distinct difference between themselves and the new French guests. Rowling represents all possible reactions towards the foreign: Hermione takes an open and positive approach to the *bouillabaisse*, while Ron rejects it, and Harry remains a neutral observer (it does not say whether or not he tries it in the end). The contrast simply offers the readers a gentle reminder that amicable relations between different nationalities will still encounter new and different aspects of the other’s culture that may seem unusual, but may be, as Hermione describes the French stew, “very nice.”

As the official French translator of the series, Ménard had a unique role in the translation of this excerpt, because for the first time in the series, Harry, Ron and Hermione are clearly made out as *British* characters faced with the foreignness of *French* food. Consider the translation and back-translation of Ron and Hermione’s dialogue:

⁸ The -ouill creates the phonetic /uj/. *Bouillabaisse* is pronounced phonetically as /bu/ /ja/ /bɛs/; for those untrained in phonetics the closest pronunciation would be “boo-ya-bess”

⁹ Suet puddings are made with the kidney fat of beef or port (called suet). Traditional steak-and-kidney pudding would have a mixture of steak, kidney, vegetables and spices encased and steamed within a cake-like pudding shell (Bucholtz 132-3). Black pudding is named as such because of its dark colour – made black because the ingredients, for example oats, suet and spices, are mixed with pig’s blood and stuffed into a sausage casing (Bucholz, 157).

TARGET TEXT:

– Qu'est-ce que c'est que *ça*? demanda Ron en montrant une grande soupière remplie d'un mélange de poissons, à côté d'un ragoût de bœuf et de rognons.

– Bouillabaisse, dit Hermione.

– À tes souhaits, dit Ron.

– C'est *français*, précisa Hermione. J'en ai mangé un jour en vacances, il y a deux ans. C'est très bon.

– Je te crois sur parole, répondit Ron en se servant une bonne part de ragoût bien anglais.^{lxv}

BACK-TRANSLATION:

'What is *that*?' asked Ron, pointing to a large soup tureen filled with a mixture of fish, beside a beef-and-kidney stew.

'Bouillabaisse,' said Hermione.

'Bless you,' said Ron.

'It's *French*,' Hermione clarified. 'I ate some one day on holiday, two years ago. It's very good.'

'I'll take your word for it,' Ron responded as he served himself a hefty portion of nice, English stew.^{lxvi}

Ménard opted to omit both traditional puddings. Instead, the *bouillabaisse* sits beside only one dish, also a stew, made with beef and kidneys rather than a "mixture of fish." It is not until Ron decides to pass on the *bouillabaisse* and serve himself the stew that is described as "*bien anglais*" that the reader understands that the two stews are to represent what is English and what is French; Ron isn't just declining a stew with questionable ingredients, he is favouring his own culture's food without tasting the other. In describing the stew as *bien anglais*, the contrast between nationalities is only slightly maintained. Overall, Rowling's desired distinction between the two cultures is severely lacking in the translation, because there is nothing distinctly British or even special about the *ragoût*, which Ménard used once more later in the chapter as *ragoût de bœuf*, to describe an unappetising beef casserole that Hagrid cooks. Furthermore, the cultural contrast could have been maintained with that simple yet distinctly British ingredient, *le pudding*. As mentioned earlier, *le pudding* is a

loan word that is defined in English as bread pudding. Once again, had Ménard directly translated the steak-and-kidney pudding using the borrowed word, *le pudding de bœuf et de rognon*, he could have later described it accurately as *le pudding bien anglais*. This would have not only maintained the foreign flavour of the dish, but also emphasised the cultural distinction between the visiting students and the students of Hogwarts. Similar to the translation of literary devices such as alliteration when translating a name, the translation of inconspicuous or non-pivotal elements of culture are more important than one might originally assume: fundamentally, removing these elements from the text might not detract from the overall meaning, purpose or plotline, but it does eliminate a certain dimension of the text that usually adds to the development of the setting and characters.

Translating Language: Foreign Accents and Regional Dialects

We are first introduced to the international world of wizards in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, and not only by means of gastronomic comparison. The book begins not with the debut of another school year, but with the world-renowned wizarding event, the Quidditch World Cup. Here wizards gather from all around the globe, with Irish, Bulgarians, Africans, and Americans among the “representatives of so many nationalities.”^{lxvii} Between the individuals at the World Cup and the students who visit Hogwarts for the Triwizard Tournament later in the book, Harry and his friends often find themselves socialising with people whose first languages are not English. Rowling phonetically creates accents with marked English spelling; for example, the Bulgarian Minister for Magic speaks in English by pronouncing *v* instead of *w* and often pronouncing the

short *u* sound with a short *o*, both to signify an Eastern European accent. Jean-François Ménard signifies the Bulgarian accent by having the Minister roll his *rs* excessively. Consider the original and the translation. Note the accents are bold in both excerpts in order to highlight the fact that different sounds convey accent in different languages; like the author, the translator decided upon marked spelling to represent the accent, and used it consistently throughout the book. :

SOURCE TEXT:

‘Vell, ve fought bravely,’ said a gloomy voice behind Harry.
He looked around; it was the Bulgarian Minister for Magic.
‘You can speak English!’ said Fudge, sounding outraged.
‘And you’ve been letting me mime everything all day!’
‘Vell, it vos very funny,’ said the Bulgarian Minister,
shrugging.^{lxviii}

TARGET TEXT:

– Nous nous sommes battus avec **grrrr**rand **courrr**rage, soupira
d’un ton mélancolique une voix derrière Harry.
Il se retourna : c’était le ministre bulgare de la Magie.
– Mais!...Vous parlez notre langue! s’exclama Fudge, indigné.
Et vous m’avez laissé parler par gestes toute la journée!
– C’était **vrrrr**raiment **trrrrr**ès **drrrrr**ôle, répondit le ministre
bulgare avec un haussement d’épaules.^{lxix}

Whether the translation is based on how a Bulgarian speaks French, or simply created because it’s a simple yet effective way to mark the accent, the purpose of Ménard’s decision is clear: the heavily rolled *r* signifies a Bulgarian accent, and anyone else who speaks this way will be considered Bulgarian as well. The reader – both English and French – doesn’t think twice, therefore, when both Victor Krum and another Bulgarian student speak in the same manner at Hogwarts later in the book.

The Headmistress of Beauxbatons Academy, Madame Maxime, also has an accent, speaking in English by saying words like “this” as “zis” and by dropping the *h* sound from words such as “Hogwarts.” Madame Maxime

presented a rather unique consideration for our translator: when a book that is written in French is set in England (and therefore the characters are theoretically speaking English even though their words are in French), how can a French accent be portrayed from the point of view of an English character who has never heard the accent before? Once again, Ménard created a formidable representation of the accent, by embellishing on several of the vowels spoken by Madame Maxime in order to make her seem foreign and therefore French within the language of the translated work. Not once more the bold accents in the source and target texts:

SOURCE TEXT:

‘I ‘ave nevair been more insulted in my life! ‘Alf-giant? Moi?
I ‘ave – I ‘ave big bones!^{lxx}

TARGET TEXT:

– Je n’**eu** jameus **euteu** autant insulteu de ma vie! Une demi-
euante? Moi? Sachez, monsieur, que j’**eu** simplement une forte
ossature!^{lxxi}

TARGET TEXT (WITHOUT ACCENT):

– Je n’**ai** jamais été autant insultée de ma vie! Une demi-
géante? Moi? Sachez, monsieur, que j’**ai** simplement une forte
ossature!^{lxxii}

The translator assumed that the French readers would understand that since Hogwarts is in the United Kingdom, the characters are supposed to be speaking English. Without changing her spoken French too much – he simply made her pronounce any long *a* as /ø/¹⁰ – Ménard managed to render Madame Maxime a foreigner in her own language. Questionably, the Headmistress of Beauxbatons is the only French character whose accent is consistently translated into French. For some reason, Ménard all but

¹⁰ /ø/ is a common French phonetic vowel that is not often pronounced in the English language (the number two in French, “*deux*” is pronounced /dø/). Here Madame Maxime pronounces words like “*n’ai*” and “*été*” as “*n’eu*” and “*euteu*” instead of as “*n’ay*” and “*aytay*”)

omitted the accent otherwise, despite the fact that J.K. Rowling's contrast between languages is similar to her contrast between foods in the fourth book. Fleur Delacour, like the *bouillabaisse*, represents French culture; in her case, the inevitable role that French culture has in Great Britain. Fleur develops a lasting role in the novels when she moves to England to ameliorate her language, which ironically seems to worsen rather than improve. In Rowling's original, her accent is actually stronger in *The Half-Blood Prince* and *The Deathly Hallows* than it was in the *The Goblet of Fire*: while she seems to have no problem pronouncing "is," "in" and "it" with the regular English spelling in the fourth book, she often says words like "eet," "eez," "seester" and "weesh" in the sixth and seventh.^{lxxiii} In other words, the distinction between English and accented English becomes even stronger as the series progresses. This accent is not maintained in any of the French novels; rather, the young woman's French (and therefore English) is relatively flawless right from her first dialogue in the fourth book, other than one mispronunciation of "*Poudlard*" with "*Potdelard*."^{lxxiv} By the sixth book, Ménard changed his approach: Fleur's language, as well as the language of her French family members, is indistinguishable from any of the British characters, aside from her referring to our hero as "*Arry*," and in her constantly saying, "*oh, là, là*."^{lxxv} Ménard's decision to discontinue his original technique of marked language in favour of a stereotypical interjection is questionable, to say the least. Fleur's accented language signifies her foreign role in the Weasley family, and her marriage to Bill is a

marriage between cultures, an element that is deemphasised in the French

version by the lack of language contrast between Fleur and her in-laws.

Jean-François Ménard was faced not only with the question of foreign accents while he worked on the novels, but from the beginning of the first book he also had to consider dialectal variances of the English language. With one exception, these dialectal accents belong to minor characters with little dialogue (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

CHARACTER	J.K. ROWLING'S TEXT	JEAN-FRANÇOIS MÉNARD'S TEXT
Seamus ¹¹ Finnigan	"Me dad's a Muggle. Mam didn't tell him she was a witch 'til after they were married." ^{lxxvi}	"Mon père est un Moldu et ma mère a attendu qu'ils soient mariés pour lui dire qu'elle était une sorcière." ^{lxxvii} (no accent)
Stan Shunpike	"anywhere you like, long's it's on land. Can't do nuffink underwater. 'Ere, [...] you did flag us down, dincha?" ^{lxxviii}	"absolument où on veut, à condition que ce soit sur la terre ferme. Il ne roule pas sous l'eau. Mais dis donc, [...] tu nous as fait signe, pas vrai ?" ^{lxxix}
Mundungus Fletcher	"Wha've I done? Setting a bleedin' 'ouse-elf on me, what are you playing at, wha've I done." ^{lxxx}	"Qu'est-ce que j'ai fait? Lancer sur moi un maudit elfe de maison, à quoi vous jouez, qu'est-ce que j'ai fait" ^{lxxx1}

In English, Seamus Finnigan's accent, as well as his first and last names, suggest that he is Irish: both names are Irish in origin,^{lxxxii} as is his use of the possessive "me" in the place of "my."^{lxxxiii} Stan's use of the double negative and his substitution of *th* with *f*, along with Mundungus' t-glottalisation¹² and sinking of the *h* where it should be sounded, display common marks of the Cockney¹³ dialect.^{lxxxiv} Ménard's translation does not develop the characters through their spoken language as much as the original does, without any reference to each character's possible origin: Seamus speaks in flawless French (signifying no accent at all), while Stan and Mundungus speak French that is peppered with

¹¹ Pronounced "SHAY-mus"

¹² Dropping the t while blocking off the airstream for a split second at the same instance, *ie*: butter – bu'er

¹³ Cockney refers to the "working class Londoner, especially in the East End," as well as their variety of English, spoken by approx. seven million people in Greater London. (Oxford Companion to the English Language)

common colloquial speech. For example, in the excerpt above we see that Stan's "dincha" is translated into the collocation, *pas vrai?* (literally, "not true?" an informal way of confirming fact by employing the negative), while Mundungus' common vulgarity, "bleedin'" is translated into a similar French vulgar adjective that would be used in the same context, "*maudit*," (cursed, blasted, damned). These characters do not have pivotal roles in the story, and do not have many lines of dialogue; their Irish or Cockney origins are therefore minor concepts that, while adding dimension to each character, can go relatively unnoticed when lost in translation, since they ultimately do nothing to further the storyline. The same cannot be said of Rubeus Hagrid, who is not only one of the major players in Harry's life, but also the character with the most prominent accent in the entire series. Anne-Lise Feral describes Hagrid's accent as "unrefined, uneducated, and unquestionably working-class,"^{lxxxv} which hardly paints Hagrid in a positive light. Meanwhile, J.K. Rowling has expressed that Hagrid's accent comes from a region in which she herself grew up, near the Welsh border. In one interview in particular, she jokes that he is "West-country-yokel," admitting that "it's the accent English people always put on to sound stupid [...] Hagrid isn't stupid, but he's got that kind of very country – you know, way of speaking."^{lxxxvi} Hagrid's dialect is important for the development of his character: his apparent social status highlights the significance of Dumbledore's confidence in him, while his uneducated and unreformed past make him the first unlikely member of Harry's ragtag group of friends and heroes (which, along with the half-giant, includes a poor pureblood, a "muggle-born," an awkward klutz, a quirky outcast, and a

house-elf, to name a few). Translating the dialect, however, is not as simple as substituting it with a French dialect of the same stigma. Firstly, it would be politically incorrect to actively choose a specific dialect of France to equivocate a “country-yokel;” secondly, utilising an actual dialect from France would completely detract from the fact that Hagrid is British (of which the readers are fully aware). And so, just as he did with Fleur Delacour, Jean-François Ménard completely omitted Hagrid’s accent. Rather than have the game-keeper speak with oral collocations like Stan Shunpike and Mundungus Fletcher, however, Ménard has Hagrid speaking with an eloquence very near to Dumbledore’s:

SOURCE TEXT:

"Yeh're ter go back up ter the castle. I told yeh, I don' wan' yeh watchin'. An' yeh shouldn' be down here anyway ... if Fudge an' Dumbledore catch yeh without permission, Harry, yeh'll be in big trouble."^{lxxxvii}

TARGET TEXT:

– Il faut que vous retourniez au château, répliqua-t-il. Je vous l'ai dit, je ne veux pas que vous regardiez ça. Et de toute façon, vous ne devriez pas être ici... Si Fudge et Dumbledore te voient dehors sans autorisation, Harry, tu auras de gros ennuis.^{lxxxviii}

BACK-TRANSLATION:

"You must return to the castle," he replied. "I told you, I do not want for you to see this. And in any case, you should not be here... If Fudge and Dumbledore see you outside without permission, Harry, you will have some big problems."^{lxxxix}

The extent of Hagrid’s formal speech in the French books is superfluous; J.K. Rowling’s half-giant speaks colloquial, extremely informal English while in the translation the only mark of informality that Ménard maintained is his reference to people of authority by their surnames. Otherwise, Hagrid’s language is immaculate, with nothing to distinguish him lexically or disconnect him socially from the other teachers. This is a significant alteration to the character, who is supposed to be more easily relatable to students than to other professors, supposed

to speak like a man whose mother would have been considered by most as barbaric, who was expelled after only a few years of formal education and has therefore remained as unrefined as he was at a young age. This role is far less defined in the French translation, in which we find a character who looks and acts like Hagrid - but who still *sounds* like any other teacher. This dialectical consideration had no simple solution; however, while a cultural substitution was not a realistic approach, Ménard could have easily maintained a constant level of informality by translating Hagrid's dialogue into spoken language. Consider an informalised version of the above French excerpt, written in a contracted, spoken register:

TARGET TEXT (CONTRACTED):

– **Retournez-vous** au château, répliqua-t-il. **J'vous** ai dit, **j'veux** pas **qu'**vous regardiez ça. Et **d'**toute façon, vous **d'vriez pas** **ê**t'ici... Si Fudge et Dumbledore **t'**voient **d'hors** sans autorisation, Harry, tu **t'f'ra coller**.^{xc}

BACK-TRANSLATION:

"Return to the castle," he replied. "I told you, I don't want you to see this. An' in any case, you shouldn't be here... If Fudge and Dumbledore see you outside without permission, Harry, you'll end up in detention."^{xc1}

The bold words reveal where changes could have been made to maintain a hint of the unrefined, colloquial character that is Rubeus Hagrid. Note from the back-translation that even an abundance of slight alterations - dropping silent *es* and the use of familiar colloquial language - does not change the basic meaning of the words, and yet it completely changes the register of the person speaking. The use of colloquial terms, such as *tu te fera coller* (which is contracted above into *tu t'f'ra coller* and is slang for landing oneself in detention), along with excessive use of the contracted form (apostrophes replace the *e* in *je, que, de, te, fera*),

would not create an exact equivalent of Hagrid's marked English. It would, however, bring his language to a more informal level. This level of informality would better represent the relationship he has both with his students and his fellow teachers. Granted, Ménard's decision to refine Hagrid's dialect was not completely detrimental to the series' storyline, but the French Hagrid is completely lacking in an important and definitive aspect of his personality – an aspect that could have been portrayed without difficulty.

Conclusion

Since the publication of the first novel, the *Harry Potter* series has sparked interest across an eclectic array of academic fields in the English-speaking world, including Theology, History, Marketing, Literature, Folklore, Film and Philosophy. With the translation of the novels into seventy-three different languages, this interest spread across fields in the worlds of several different target cultures, while introducing Harry to the wide worlds of Language, Translation and Cultural Studies. Rowling's story is alive with playful language and cultural significance, and its numerous translators are the communicators of both the wordplay and the source culture within; it is they who decide upon what is revealed to the target audience and what is lost forever in translation. Studying this process - the target language and culture, the source language and culture, and the translation from the former into the latter - reveals certain complexities and complications that might otherwise go unnoticed. As the French translator of the series, Jean-François Ménard was in a unique situation, since his language and culture play a significant role in J.K. Rowling's originals: not only do many of the

original English names derive from French words (Malfoy, Voldemort, Gryffondor, *etc.*), but also several important characters arrive halfway through the series who are from France, bringing cultural and linguistic signifiers of their own. Ménard's translations of the series and the supplementary texts that Rowling published along with them¹⁴ create a vibrant and creative version of Rowling's world in ten books that are sure to become staples in French-speakers' repertoires around the globe. His translations echo Rowling's wordplay and manipulation of language because he used meaning on a deeper level to help him translate the words created by the author, which had no previous meaning in English. He rendered certain names into words that held a deeper meaning in French similar to that of English, while some were translated directly into the French variation, and some were quite simply altered slightly to make them more easily pronounced in the target language. By maintaining the original English names of the majority of characters as well as of any addresses in "muggle" communities, Ménard managed to preserve the foreign setting, which is revealed in the first chapter of the first book to be in Great Britain. To further accentuate the British setting, he made a foreigner of a French woman by having her speak French with marked spelling, setting her apart from the British characters and creating the cultural diversity that Rowling had intended. Unfortunately, this about sums up Ménard's translation of any cultural distinctions in the books: most of the subtle cultural markers found throughout the series were glossed over or omitted, even though a certain few were translatable to some extent. Examining such decisions allows

¹⁴ *Quidditch Through the Ages* and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* were published concurrently with *the Goblet of Fire* in 2001, and *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* was published in 2008, not long after *the Deathly Hallows'* literary release.

students of translation to understand the implications behind them, and to understand that meaning can reach very deeply into a culture, and that before any decisions can be made, all levels of meaning must be considered. The eternal question here is that of equivalence - the importance of literal equivalence and the necessity of cultural equivalence - because undoubtedly not all aspects of the story can be paralleled in seventy-three different languages and cultures. Any aspects that *are* translatable to any degree, while perhaps seeming insignificant to the plot as a whole (a national dish or a marked accent, for instance), are the threads of equivalence that weave together the most faithful translation possible.

It is important to mention here that disputing a translator's decisions is not a suggestion that the translation is incorrect; just as meaning may differ from one culture to another, the process of translating that meaning may differ from one translator to another. Jackson and Mandaville put it best in their study discussing Harry Potter's global presence, stating that "modifications from the original text" are necessary when "moving from one linguistic and cultural context to another." These modifications, regardless of how trivial they may seem, are "an opportunity for contestation, even as they simultaneously exemplify efforts to render a cultural product comprehensible in a new context."^{xcii} In other words, even if a translator has a very valid reason to modify a text (offering the target reader something culturally comparable and therefore understandable), his or her modification is bound to be disputed. This fact doesn't devalue the original translation; rather, it adds to the value of the translation by allowing it to reveal different perspectives on both the source and target texts, as well as different approaches to both the

theory and practice of translation. In the case of *Harry Potter*, those who are studying the translation of the series must consider the one factor that all of the official translators shared: an extraordinary sense of urgency. Translating one of the top-selling books of all time meant working against the clock to feed a hungry market in each respective language. The French books were each published a year or less after the English originals, which is an exceptional amount of time considering the books are some of the longest ever written for young readers (between the seven of them: over 3,000 pages in English and over 4,500 pages in French). A year or less to translate, edit and publish each novel meant working as efficiently as possible and making important decisions quickly while recognising and discarding the untranslatable. It's not surprising, then, that several elements of the story were lost in translation, since priority during such a time-sensitive project would undoubtedly focus on the base lexicon of the story, as well as the major plot and key character developments. Regardless, any contestation over lost elements or changed names in the series will lead to further exploration into the translation of *Harry Potter*, into the source text, the target texts, and into the fields of linguistics and cultural studies. As the official decision-makers in sharing Rowling's story with the rest of the world, the contracted translators have been and will continue to be the subjects of much contention; any changes made make the translator him or herself – his or her theories, ideals and beliefs - the topic of discussion. While this study focused on the French translator's specific decisions, there are some who might choose to consider the deeper meaning behind his choices. Consider, for example, Ménard's superfluous formalisation of

Hagrid's speech. Is the portrayal of the oversized gamekeeper as classless indeed an oversight created by time restrictions, or is it a reflection of "the French's view of their society as classless?"^{xciii} This is a significant assumption to be made that places enormous responsibility in the hands of our translator, however it reveals yet another direction of studies, one that warrants a deeper exploration: How are deep and historic cultural ideologies transformed between a source text and its numerous translations?

ⁱ Jkrowling.com, "The Books," accessed March 10, 2012, http://www.jkrowling.com/en_GB/#/works/the-books.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., "Living in Portugal," accessed March 10, 2012, http://www.jkrowling.com/en_GB/#/timeline/living-in-portugal.

ⁱⁱⁱ Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 138.

^{iv} Ibid., *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, 73.

^v Gester and Michel, *Lexique de base du Latin*, v.s. "Draco," 55.

^{vi} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 214-15.

^{vii} *Le Grand Robert En Ligne*, s.v. "chou-rave," Accessed November 8, 2012, my translation, http://gr.bvdep.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/version-1/login_.asp.

^{viii} *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "shunpike," accessed November 4, 2012, <http://www.oed.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/view/Entry/179025?rskey=LrvqZM&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid22717535>.

^{ix} *Le Grand Robert En Ligne*, s.v. "rocade," accessed November 4, 2012.

^x *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "peeve," accessed November 4, 2012,

<http://www.oed.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/view/Entry/139744?rskey=Ao3tA3&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid>.

^{xi} Ibid., s.v. "snape" accessed March 21, 2012,

<http://www.oed.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/view/Entry/183007?rskey=D3gTKi&result=4&isAdvanced=false#eid>.

^{xii} *Le Grand Robert En Ligne*, s.v. "rogue," Accessed November 2, 2012, my translation, http://gr.bvdep.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/version-1/login_.asp.

^{xiii} Ibid., s.v. "mimi," accessed November 3, 2012, my translation,

http://gr.bvdep.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/version-1/login_.asp.

^{xiv} Ibid., s.v. "geignarde," accessed November 3, 2012, my translation,

http://gr.bvdep.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/version-1/login_.asp.

^{xv} My translation.

^{xvi} Id.

^{xvii} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, 231.

^{xviii} Ibid., 327.

^{xix} *Larousse Mobile Dictionary*, s.v. "riddle," accessed March 22, 2012.

^{xx} My translation.

^{xxi} Rowling, *Harry Potter et la Chambre des Secrets*, 327.

^{xxii} Jentsch, "Harry Potter and the Tower of Babel," 294.

^{xxiii} Nikolajeva, "What Do We Translate?" 286.

^{xxiv} My translation.

^{xxv} Id.

^{xxvi} *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "mead," accessed October 7, 2012, <http://www.oed.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/view/Entry/115383?rskey=LDSFbw&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>.

^{xxvii} My translation.

^{xxviii} *Larousse Mobile Dictionary*, s.v. "burrow," accessed October 15, 2012.

^{xxix} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, 56.

^{xxx} *Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales*, s.v. "traverse," accessed October 16, 2012, <http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/traverse>.

^{xxxi} My translation.

^{xxxii} Wolosky *The Riddles of Harry Potter*, 10.

^{xxxiii} *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "privet," accessed October 15, 2012,

<http://www.oed.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/view/Entry/151621?rskey=vnk5Kr&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>.

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- xxxiv *Larousse Mobile Dictionary*, s.v. “privé,” accessed March 22, 2012; *Larousse Mobile Dictionary*, s.v. “priver,” accessed March 22, 2012.
- xxxv Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, 8.
- xxxvi *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, 21-22.
- xxxvii *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 49, my emphasis; *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le Coup de Feu*, 59, my emphasis.
- xxxviii *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, 76.
- xxxix *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter à l’école des sorciers*, 108.
- xl *Id.*
- xli Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 119.
- xlii *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le prisonnier d’Azkaban*, 167.
- xliiii *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 43.
- xliv *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le prisonnier d’Azkaban*, 57.
- xlv *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 149.
- xlvi *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le prisonnier d’Azkaban*, 210.
- xlvii *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, 98.
- xlviii *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et l’Ordre du Phénix*, 130.
- xlix *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 320.
- ¹ *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le Coup de Feu*, 392.
- ^{li} *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. “custard cream,” accessed October 7, 2012.
- ^{lii} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, 98.
- ^{liii} Ifood.tv, “French Fancy,” accessed October 7, 2012, http://www.ifood.tv/network/french_fancy.
- ^{liv} *Le Grand Robert En Ligne*, s.v. “petit four,” accessed October 3, 2012, my translation, http://gr.bvdep.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/version-1/login_.asp.
- ^{lv} Rowling, *Harry Potter et l’Ordre du Phénix*, 130.
- ^{lvi} Bucholz, *The Unofficial Harry Potter Cookbook*.
- ^{lvii} *Larousse Mobile Dictionary*, s.v. “mead,” accessed October 7, 2012; *Ibid.*, s.v. “treacle;” *Ibid.*, s.v. “custard;” *Ibid.*, s.v. “pudding.”
- ^{lviii} Rowling, *Harry Potter à l’école des sorciers*, 210.
- ^{lix} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 197.
- ^{lx} Respectively: Rowling, *Harry Potter et le Coup de Feu*, 197; *Ibid.*, 579 .
- ^{lxi} Bucholz, *The Unofficial Harry Potter Cookbook*, 119.
- ^{lxii} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 221.
- ^{lxiii} Ayto, *An A-Z of Food and Drink*, s.v. “bouillabaisse,” accessed October 6, 2012, doi: 10.1093/ref:9780192803511.001.0001.
- ^{lxiv} *Ibid.*, s.v. “black pudding,” accessed October 6, 2012, doi: 10.1093/red:9780192803511.001.0001; *Ibid.*, s.v. “pudding,” doi: 10.1093/red:9780192803511.001.0001.
- ^{lxv} Rowling, *Harry Potter et le Coup de Feu*, 269.
- ^{lxvi} My translation.
- ^{lxvii} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 78.
- ^{lxviii} *Ibid.*, 104., my emphasis.
- ^{lxix} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le Coup de Feu*, 125-6, my emphasis.
- ^{lxx} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 373 my emphasis.
- ^{lxxi} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et la Coupe de Feu*, 457 my emphasis.
- ^{lxxii} My translation.
- ^{lxxiii} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, 240-245; *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, 580-81; *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 408.
- ^{lxxiv} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le Coup de Feu*, 430.
- ^{lxxv} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le Prince de Sang-Mêlé*, 109.
- ^{lxxvi} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, 93, my emphasis.
- ^{lxxvii} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter à l’école des sorciers*, 132.
- ^{lxxviii} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 31, my emphasis.
- ^{lxxix} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le prisonnier d’Azkaban*, 42, my emphasis.
- ^{lxxx} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 180, my emphasis.
- ^{lxxxi} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter and les Relics de la Mort*, 262, my emphasis.
- ^{lxxxii} Behind the Name, “Séamus,” accessed March 20, 2012, <http://www.behindthename.com/name/se10amus>.
- ^{lxxxiii} Burridge, “A peculiar language,” 306.
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- ^{lxxxv} Feral, “The Translator’s ‘Magic’ Wand,” 463.
- ^{lxxxvi} J.K. Rowling, interview by Christopher Lyndon, *The Connection*, WBUR Radio, October 12, 1999, accessed March 20, 2012, <http://www.accio-quote.org/themes/hagrid.htm>.
- ^{lxxxvii} Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 241.
- ^{lxxxviii} *Ibid.*, *Harry Potter et le prisonnier d’Azkaban*, 338-9.
- ^{lxxxix} My translation.
- ^{xc} Rowling, *Harry Potter et le prisonnier d’Azkaban*, 338-9.
- ^{xci} My translation.
- ^{xcii} Jackson and Mandaville, “Glocal Hero,” 51.
- ^{xciii} Feral, “The Translator’s ‘Magic’ Wand,” 464.

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