

Nachtverhaal: Translating the narrative situation, intertextuality
and Paul Biegel's style of writing



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At the end of the second year, I took on an internship at Taalcentrum-VU and learned a whole lot about working in the translation sector. After completing this internship, I took on a temporary job in the cultural sector. The important difference between the internship and the job was the fact that during my internship, I was surrounded by people with a sincere interest in language. Language is where my heart is, and it is the area in which I want to continue developing myself. These past two years have been difficult at times, but the most important lesson is that through these difficulties, I have realised what I want to do.

After this 'small' break from my studies, I had a difficult time putting my mind back on my thesis subject and writing it again. Many thanks to my parents, close friends and boyfriend who made me remember why I wanted to write my thesis about Paul Biegel's *Nachtverhaal*, and encouraged me to pick it up again and go for it. A special thanks to fellow students and friends Anouk and Hilda for revising my thesis during my progress and in the final end. As a result, after almost half a year, I am glad to say: I've made it!

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Table of Content

Introduction	4
1. About <i>Nachtverhaal</i> en Paul Biegel	6
1.1 About Paul Biegel and his oeuvre	6
1.2 <i>Nachtverhaal</i> in Paul Biegel's oeuvre	10
1.3 Summary of <i>Nachtverhaal</i> and the genre	12
1.4 Genre	16
2. Translation for Children	18
3. Textual Analysis	29
3.1 Narrative situation	29
3.2 Intertextuality	38
3.3 Style	44
4. Concluding remarks	68
5. Translation	69
6. Works cited	86
7. Appendix	93
7.1 Source text	93
7.2 Bibliography of Biegel's work	106
7.3 Email correspondence	124

Introduction

This thesis studies the challenges posed by translating Paul Biegel's *Nachtverhaal* from Dutch into English. Biegel wrote children's literature. He was primarily interested in writing fairy tales, tales about fairies and tales about adventures. During his career, Biegel had a large impact on the development and the canon of children's literature in the Netherlands. He has inspired fellow writers of children's literature, and children, too, to read his books. Biegel set an example of what highly appreciated children's literature was, and still is today. He raised the bar. Biegel had been writing successfully for more than twenty years when *Nachtverhaal* was published in 1992, and continued to do so for more than twenty years after that.

Biegel's complete oeuvre consists of more than fifty novels written for children. A full overview of his work is given at the end of this thesis, in the form of a bibliography. The bibliography also includes English translations of his work and novels translated into Dutch by Biegel. I constructed this bibliography using the website www.paulbiegel.nl and an existing bibliography constructed by Wilma van der Pennen and published in *Literatuur zonder leeftijd*. During Biegel's life, twenty-one of his novels were translated into English. The first one, *Het sleutelkruid*, was translated by Biegel and Gillian Hume, and received the title *The King of the Copper Mountains*. Together with Gillian Hume, he translated two more novels into English. A few years later, Patricia Crampton took over the noble task and translated eighteen other novels into English. She came in contact with Biegel through her editor at publishing house J.M. Dent who asked her to have a look at a first-draft translation of *De kleine kapitein* to "tweak the verbs" (Crampton, 82). Crampton notes that "she immediately fell in love with the dramatic immediacy of [Biegel's] scene-setting from the first few lines" of the novel (82). She had translated Godfried Bomans' fairy tales from Dutch into English in 1970, introducing her to the genre of Dutch fairy tales. After she had translated *De kleine kapitein* into *The Little Captain*, she was surprised

Biegel “never suggested a single correction in the fifteen books to come” (83). She managed to transfer Biegel’s unique voice and narrative style into English.

My first encounter with Biegel was when I was only four years old. My parents used to read me Biegel’s novels as bedtime stories, as well as novels by Roald Dahl and Astrid Lindgren. After a trip down memory lane, I remembered how much I loved *Nachtverhaal* as a child. I received *Nachtverhaal* for my 7th birthday in 1993 and by then my collection of Biegel novels had already grown considerably. Before writing this thesis, I had reread *Nachtverhaal* a couple of times and was overwhelmed by Biegel’s choice of and play on words and how he allows readers to become familiar with his created worlds.

This thesis studies the translation problems that occur in *Nachtverhaal*. This process consists of finding possible solutions for the possible translation problems. To do so the narrative situation, the detectable intertextual references and Biegel’s style of writing in *Nachtverhaal* have been thoroughly analysed. This research allowed me to find multiple translation solutions, from which I was able to create the final translation. The final solutions were chosen in light of the novel written by Biegel and the translation norms applied. Before getting to the final translation, an introduction to Biegel’s life, his complete oeuvre and a summary of *Nachtverhaal*’s position in that oeuvre, followed by a summary of the novel and an analysis of the genre is given. This is followed by research conducted to see if translating children’s literature from Dutch into English in general creates translation problems, as well as what the norms of translating children’s literature into English are.

At the end of this thesis, the translation of a passage from *Nachtverhaal* can be found, to which my translation strategy is applied.

1. About Paul Biegel, his oeuvre and *Nachtverhaal*

1.1 About Paul Biegel

Biegel was born as Paulus Johannes Biegel on 25 March 1925 in Bussum, the Netherlands. He was the youngest of nine children; he had six sisters, Maria (1903), Annetje (1905), Cecilia (1908), Elisabeth (1910), Marguerite (1912) and Helena (1922), and two brothers, Herman (1913) and Rein (1918) (Boonstra, 1996: 8). His father Hermann Biegel (1876-1947) was of German descent and worked at Biegel & Bollentin merchant's office. He married the French Catholic Madeleine Marie Michèle Eugénie Povel (1879-1957) in 1902 (84). Biegel lived in Bussum during his youth and moved to Amsterdam when he left his parents' house.

Biegel married Marijke Sträter (1929) on 10 September in 1960, after having been engaged for three years, and had two children: Leonie (1963) and Arthur (1964) (Boonstra, 1996: 85, 86). Their marriage ultimately failed. His son Arthur ended his life when he was twenty-eight years old and Biegel had a hard time accepting this. In 1999, Biegel was knighted in the Order of the Netherlands Lion (L. Biegel: 2011).

By the time the Second World War had broken out, Biegel was only fifteen and still in secondary school. At that same age, he experienced his debut with *De ontevreden kabouter*, a short story which was published in the Catholic newspaper *De Tijd*, where his sister Anne worked (Boonstra, 1996: 13). Biegel completed his secondary school with a bit of difficulty, which can be seen on a report card with disappointing marks and a note from one of his teachers saying that she was displeased with his performance. This report card was published in *Paul Biegel: Een meesterverteller met een rovershart*, a book made for a museum exhibition about Biegel (Meinderts, 25). Nonetheless, he continued his studies. Biegel had had the ambition of becoming a pianist ever since he was a young boy, but he had lacked the talent (13). After the war ended, Biegel went to the United States for five years to stay with his sister Cecilia, where he

travelled around and published a few stories for expats living there in the *Knickerbocker Weekly* (ibid.). When Biegel came back, he worked for the *Radiobode* at the AVRO, where he wrote and completed multiple journalistic tasks and wrote the comic “Eddy the television-monkey” (ibid.). He also attempted to study Law at the University of Amsterdam, but did not manage to pass his Bar Exam. As a result, in 1959, Biegel became a text-writer at *Toonder Studio’s*, a comic book studio well known for *Tom Poes* and *Olivier B. Bommel*. It was here that he learnt how to write comic books, as well as how to compose a story and build a relationship between characters and events (ibid.).

After having completed many journalistic tasks at AVRO, Biegel decided to become a writer. He started by applying himself to works that were about themes and events that did not relate to Biegel himself. This ended disastrously. Biegel realised he had to approach writing differently, and thought to himself: “laat ik nou eens een keer mijn kop vergeten en kijken wat die pen doet. En die pen schreef over een meisje en een pop, een wolf en een donker bos” (Boonstra, 1996: 13). After having written this, he was finally satisfied and felt like he was going in the right direction (14). Ten years later, when he had elaborated that same story about the girl, the doll and the wolf in the dark forest, it was brought out by publishing house Holland as *Het sleutelkruid* in 1964 (14). After his first publication he became more and more popular and the novel was crowned children’s book of the year in 1965. After this, Biegel became even more productive and successful and even ended up taking a part-time job at publishing house Van Holkema & Warendorf, for whom he translated many English novels (15).

As noted before, Biegel’s oeuvre comprises of more than fifty novels. Apart from being a writer, Biegel also translated and adapted numerous novels. He translated *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton from English into Dutch, and adapted *Het beleg van Troje* and *De sprookjes van Grimm*. Many of his own novels have been translated into languages such as Afrikaans, Danish,

English, French, German, Greek, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish and Welsh. These translations are also included in the bibliography at the end of this thesis. Before being published as novels, a few of his earlier works were first published as episodes in magazines such as *Donald Duck* (Boonstra, 1996: 15). *De kleine kapitein* and *De dwergjes van Tuil* are good examples of this.

Biegel's voluminous oeuvre stands out in the Dutch canon of children's literature due to his interest in animals, his feeling for almost unsightly details and his unique use of language (Van Sande, 3). The latter being the most problematic for translators. *De kleine kapitein* trilogy is undoubtedly his most popular and well-known series. A few other well-known titles in the Netherlands are *De tuinen van Dorr*, *De dwergjes van Tuil* and *De rode prinses*, as well as *Haas* and *Anderland: een Brandaan mythe*. In 1972, *De kleine kapitein* was awarded with a Gouden Griffel, which is a very important award for authors of children's literature in the Netherlands; the successor of the Children's book of the year. In the years to come, more awards followed. Biegel received another Gouden Griffel for *Nachtverhaal* in 1993. He repeatedly received the Zilveren Griffel, which is the award for the second best book of a specific year. *De twaalf rovers* received the award in 1971, *Het Olifantenfeest* in 1974, *Haas* in 1982 and *De rode prinses* in 1988. Apart from these prestigious awards, he received an award for his complete oeuvre in 1974. And on top of that, he received the Libris Woutertje Pieterse Prijs for *Anderland: een Brandaan mythe* in 1991 and for *Laatste verhalen van de eeuw* in 2000 (Van der Pennen, 140-141). The latter award is the highest possible award for a children's book in the Netherlands.

Because Biegel was a respected writer of children's books, he was asked to write multiple children's book week gifts, which is a free book handed out by bookstores during the national children's book week. These were *Wie je droomt ben je zelf* (1977), *Een tijdje later* (1984) in collaboration with Willem Wilmink and *Het eiland daarginds* (1989) (Van der Pennen, 123).

Paul Biegel died of cancer on 21 October 2006 in Laren, and was buried in the same grave as his son Arthur at Zorgvlied cemetery in Amsterdam. In 2008, his wife was buried there as well.

After Biegel's death, his daughter Leonie took on the responsibility for all of his work. She runs the website and makes sure his books are still available in bookstores. Publishing house Holland joined forces with Lemniscaat, another well-known Dutch publishing house of children's literature, and have republished many novels as special editions in the so-called Biegel Library. In this library, ten of Biegel's novels have been reprinted and bound in red cloth so far. These novels are *De grote kleine kapitein*, *De rover Hoepsika*, *De rode prinses*, *De dwergjes van Tuil*, *De vloek van Woestewolf*, *Juttertje Tim*, *Ik wou dat ik anders was*, *Het sleutelkruid* and *Nachtverhaal*. In an article by Joke Linders, Leonie Biegel says that she had the best dad in the Netherlands, especially because her father created fairy tale-like atmospheres for her and her brother, so that they would always feel safe (20, 21).

1.2 *Nachtverhaal's* position in Biegel's voluminous oeuvre

Biegel often used themes such as friendship, love, loneliness, fear, jealousy, death and war.

Nachtverhaal, *De tuinen van Dorr* and *De soldatenmaker* are examples of stories based on the aforementioned themes. On the other hand, *De kleine kapitein* and *De dwergjes van Tuil* have a far more adventurous theme. Even though his themes altered, Biegel's literary world was definitely that of the fairy tale. He wrote about the eternal struggle between Good and Evil, which took place in rugged forests, dilapidated castles and smoky inns (Boonstra, 1996: 7). Biegel said that his works' theme was "how to reconcile yourself with whom you really are and what you are capable of" (Van Lenteren, par. 5). He himself did so by writing fairy tales (ibid.).

Nachtverhaal is written for children between the ages of seven and nine, to read and to be read aloud. Most of his novels are aimed at roughly the same age category, although some are written for children who are somewhat older. *Nachtverhaal* is set in a fantastic world where all kinds of folkloric characters such as fairies, gnomes, elves, dwarves, giants and kobolds live together. Most of his stories are set at night, when these characters come to life and talk to each other. Biegel's characters are similar to the characters in stories written by the brothers Grimm and Jules Verne; who, not so coincidentally, happen to be his favourite writers (Berkhout, par. 3). Biegel manages to create a fantastic world, in which stories are full of life, enthusiasm, humour and energy, but also filled with tragedy and cruelty (Detiger, par. 9). In the same article, Biegel notes that of the characters in his stories, the gnomes come to him unintentionally from feelings, thoughts and events (Detiger, par. 9). No wonder the gnome in *Nachtverhaal* makes readers think of Biegel as a person, too.

Due to the fact that this story is set in a fantasy world, the translator does not have to take the geographical location into consideration when translating. The protagonists happen to speak Dutch, but they could just as easily be speaking English. There are no signs that the geographical

location creates a problem, as no location is specified. Later on in this thesis, I will look at culture specific items that could possibly create translation problems.

Biegel's novels are often about quests. In *De tuinen van Dorr*, a fearless little princess goes on a quest for the perfect soil, in *Het sleutelkruid* a wonder doctor goes on a quest for a magic plant to get the old King Mansolein's heart beating normal again. In *Nachtverhaal*, the fairy is on a very unusual quest for mortality, which turns out to be an unattainable dream. The fairy wants to find death; she wants to find what she and the other fairy-tale creatures cannot have. A quest as a theme serves as "a narrative technical reason," according to Biegel, because it leads characters to the plot (Van der Pennen, 108).

Biegel was an inspiring writer. Many other writers of children's literature thought so as well. Nannie Kuiper, also a close friend, says that Biegel was a "virtuoso": he excelled in writing and always made up new words (Buenen, 59). Jacques Vriens notes that Biegel could work magic with words; he was the grand master of children's literature in the Netherlands (60). Hanna Kraan adds that Biegel magically creates sentences that dance and sing (62). Sjoerd Kuyper admires his playful and jittery use of language the most; especially the way that Biegel rambles on and on without losing anyone's attention makes him such a great writer (63). Thijs Goverde notes that he has admired Biegel ever since he was a child, and that no one has ever been able to exceed Biegel's literary quality (65). Goverde has always been amazed by Biegel's intertextual references and is convinced that Biegel's novels will always be popular (66). All these fellow writers believe that Biegel's novels will remain timeless and ageless for many years to come, as do I. The fact that Biegel wrote fairy tales makes them possibly even more timeless, as fairy tales are rarely bound to a specific time. Great examples of this are the fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm, such as the stories of Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and Snow White, which are still extremely popular in the twentieth century.

1.3 Summary of *Nachtverhaal*

Nachtverhaal is a story about a house gnome who lives in a doll house, in the attic of an old house. The doll house is perfect for the gnome, since all the furniture matches his size. The only human being that lives in the old house is an old grandmother. She has been living alone ever since the grandfather passed away and their children grew up and left the house. Every night, as soon as the grandmother has gone to bed, the gnome walks around the house to check if she put out all the candles, turned off the lights, extinguished fires in the fireplace and ashes in ashtrays, turned off the stove, closed the tap and locked the doors. He would also drive away mice. The following passage shows how Biegel describes the gnome's actions:

Vooral nu er alleen nog een oude grootmoeder in het huis woonde, ging hij iedere nacht rond om te zien of er geen kaars was blijven branden of een lamp was vergeten uit te doen, of er niet nog een vonk gloeide in de haard of in de asbak, of alle gaspitten waren uitgedraaid, of er geen kraan drupte, geen leiding lekte, de deuren op slot zaten – en hij joeg alle muizen weg, kssjt kssjt, dan gingen ze. (9)

The gnome has everything he needs in his house: a bed, a couch, a candle and a kitchen filled with little pots and pans. He gets his food from the grandmother's pantry. He mostly eats nuts and onions; sometimes he eats potatoes.

Besides the gnome and the grandmother, two other creatures live in the house, namely Rat and Toad. Rat and Toad live in the basement. Rat lives in a hole behind the “appeltjeskast,” a cupboard used to store apples, and Toad lives in a crack between the floor and the wall. They are allowed to live in the house as long as they stay down in the basement during the day, to not disturb the grandmother. However, every Saturday night, Rat and Toad go up to the attic to play cards with the gnome. Toad climbs on Rat's back because he is so very slow, due to the fact that Toads usually go into hibernation during the winter. On top of that, a wasp queen comes over

every winter to find a place to hibernate as well. She always ends up in the little doll bed on the second floor of the doll house.

Together with Rat and Toad, the gnome leads a fairly normal life. This all changes when a drowned fairy knocks on his door on a stormy November-night. She asks the gnome if she can stay with him for a night to let her wings dry and to get her strength back. The gnome believes fairies are not to be trusted, “[w]ant fee volk zit vol toverkunsten, wist hij. Vol listen en zwebbelarijen” (Biegel, 17), but he lets her stay for one night, but one night only. She cannot stay any longer. The fairy eagerly accepts this offer and sits by the candle to dry up and only then the gnome notices that what looked like tatters were actually her wings. This makes him curious and he asks her how she ended up looking like this. She is willing to tell him but says it will take her a long time, as she has seen and been through a lot. The gnome’s curiosity takes over and so he agrees.

The tale of the fairy begins when the fairy falls onto a flower after she has been singing and dancing and jumping with all the other fairies in the Kingdom of Fairies. That same flower happens to be the last resting place of a bumblebee. The bumblebee wants to be left alone. He is dying. The fairy does not know what that is and after he tells her, she says she wants to die as well. The bumblebee says that she cannot die because she is a fairy, and continues to tell her about death, marriage and children. When the bumblebee dies, the fairy waits for the children, but they never come. She flies back to the other fairies and asks them what they know about the circle of life. The fairy learns that she must find a husband to marry first, and then have children, and that death is supposed to come afterwards. As a fairy, she could try to marry an elf prince, a kobold or a frog. And so it was that the fairy goes on a quest to find a husband and leaves the Kingdom of Fairies. To continue her story she first needs to sleep, and thus the gnome lets her stay another night. She continues her story the next night, as fairies sleep during the day and then

become tenuous. The gnome lets her stay another night, and another and another, because she has too much to tell for the gnome to hear the end of it. The fairy tells the gnome about her encounter with the ugly kobold Uruku: about how he filled in the pond with earth and rocks because his own reflection scared him, and then made the white water lily go black, how he destroyed her wings, but she still asked him if he wanted to marry her. He agreed, but Uruku was rooted into the earth as a punishment for filling in the pond and needed to get out of the ground to do so, and thus the fairy went on yet another quest to find a new water lily.

Meanwhile in the gnome's world, things start to change, and he gets suspicious. He forgets to check the house when making his rounds, he forgets about the wasp queen sleeping in the little dolls bed upstairs and he forgets about Rat and Toad. The gnome is very frightened when he realises that Rat and Toad are knocking on the door on Saturday evening and interrupt the fairy's story. The gnome does not want them to see the fairy and so he makes up an excuse and shuts the door in their faces. The fairy then continues her story about her spectacular visit to the three wizards Mort, Mirt and Morbid Mir and about how her plan of marrying Uruku had failed, and that she went to the Kingdom of Elves to ask elf prince Ishere, and later on his brother elf prince Nothere, if he wanted to marry her. Unfortunately, they were disturbed before they could answer, as the Erl King has ordered the little Erls squirts to attack the Kingdom of Elves. The Erls kidnapped the fairy and destroyed her wings, again. She almost met Death, who was about to take away a little girl, but the fairy saved the little girl, because she was so scared. After she had managed to break free, she could not find Nothere and strolled through the forest for days, maybe even years, and met the giant Imbar. Imbar blew her away and she ended up near a pond where she tried to marry a frog, but that did not work either. In the mean time, Rat and Toad were busy with other things. They had become very curious about why the gnome was acting so suspicious, especially after Rat had seen him trying to get honey. The fairy had continued her

story about how she had also failed to marry all the other frogs in the pond, and how she ended up at the forest pond again with Uruku. After all the time had passed the water lily had grown a new bud, and thus Uruku could almost get out from the ground. The gnome interrupted her again, because he heard someone screaming from downstairs. Rat was in trouble. The gnome went downstairs as quickly as he could to save Rat, but did not know the old grandmother had bought a cat, Ratcatcher. When another frightening moment arrived, the fairy remembered that the wasp queen was sleeping upstairs and so she woke her up, hoping that she would go after the cat. The queen stung the cat and saved them all and the fairy told the gnome, Rat and Toad, about how she ended up on the gnome's doorstep.

After she had finished her story, they heard a man's voice. He was visiting his mother, the old grandmother, together with the woman he loved. The gnome had figured out that she was dying and took the fairy to her bedroom so that she could meet Death. The fairy finally understood that it could not take her, but notices that the grandmother is the same woman as the little girl she saw in the Kingdom of Erls. After the grandmother's death, the man comes up to the attic one more time to tell the gnome, whom he believes still lives there, to leave the house as it is being sold. And so, the gnome, the fairy, Rat and Toad leave the house together; and that is where the story ends.

1.4 Genre

Nachtverhaal is a mixture of many genres. Fairy tales, tales about fairies and fantasy, seem to have been woven together. Some might say that fairy tales and tales about fairies are the same, but there is a distinct difference: “fairy tales, unlike tales about fairies, more often than not, do not include fairies in their cast of characters and are generally brief narratives in simple language that detail a reversal of fortune, with a rags-to-riches plot that often culminates in a wedding” (Bottigheimer, 152). On one hand, *Nachtverhaal* is a fairy tale-like novel with various fairy tale characters that are often found in fairy tales, but it has a very different plot. *Nachtverhaal* is a tale about a fairy who lives in a world where fantasy and reality meet. According to Bottigheimer, tales about fairies used to be composed for adults due to the content, but some were simplified for children (153).

Nachtverhaal could also be seen as a fantasy tale about a fairy, which is another combination of genres. The story has many fantasy elements, such as the fairy and the gnome, but there is also the fact that these characters and the other animals are talking. According to Louisa Smith, “introducing fantasy into children’s real worlds is making the unbelievable believable while the central characters are surrounded by everyday settings and activities” (295). When children read fantasy stories, they learn about the difference between what is real and what is not. In *Nachtverhaal*, reality and fantasy merge on a few levels. The protagonists are fantasy creatures, but the novel takes place in the human world. The characters in the fairy’s stories are fantastical too, as well as the talking rat, toad, mice and cat. In one of the fairy’s stories, she meets a human child. At the end of the story, after the grandmother has died, her son, who is now a grown man, comes up to the attic to tell the gnome to leave the house. This last example also shows that reality and fantasy meet. Smith also notes that in order to make the events relatable to children, authors can create their own world by borrowing only those parts of reality that are

necessary (295). Similarly, Biegel merges reality and fantasy in a way that enhances and complements the novel, which makes the story believable for children, and a great read for adults.

In conclusion, this research has shown that *Nachtverhaal* fits into multiple genres, namely: the fairy tale, tales about fairies and fantasy stories. Characters frequently used in fairy tales also appear in *Nachtverhaal*, while it is a tale about a fairy. Furthermore, many fantasy-like traits appear in this novel. The genre in itself does not pose any problems when it comes to translation.

2. Translating for Children

Literary translation is very different to translating academic, medical or legal texts. It also poses other translation problems. Translating literature from one language into another can be quite a challenging undertaking. The emphasis is not only placed on what is being said, but also on how it is being said. Translating for children is even more difficult. Before we can even think about translating for children, we need to establish what children's literature is, and see how it differs from adult literature and if it poses different translation problems. These questions will be answered below.

The term children's literature is quite broad, but according to Rite Ghesquiere, it can have three meanings:

- a) Literary texts written by children
- b) Literary texts written for children
- c) Literary texts read by children (10)

In this thesis, I will translate a literary text written for children, which is read (silently) by children and (aloud) to children. However, Biegel states he did not write his novels for a particular audience, *Nachtverhaal* could also have been written for and read by adults. First, it is important to state that when translating for children, translators "require a knowledge of linguistics; an appreciation of literature for children; a writer's instincts; and an awareness of the interests of, in this case, English-speaking children" (Jobe, 913). These requirements, especially the last one, apply to this thesis as it includes a translation of a literary text for children from Dutch into English. Therefore, it is important to determine the interests of English-speaking children. Riitta Oittinen adds to these requirements that translators should be able to "produce a translation in the target language that not only reads naturally but also fulfils its intended function" (Oittinen, 901). Consequently, it is essential for translators to take their child audience

into consideration. Oittinen elaborates on this point by introducing reading as the most important issue when translating:

I consider reading the key issue in translating for children: first, the real reading experience of the translator, who writes her/his translation on the basis of how s/he has experienced the original; second, the future readers' reading experience imagined by the translator, the dialogue with readers who do not yet exist for her/him, that is: imaginary projections of her/his own readerly self. The translator reaches toward the future child readers, who are the beneficiaries of the whole translation process – the child and the adult reading aloud. Translators are readers who are always translating for their readers, the future readers of the translation. (Oittinen, par 10)

Oittinen clarifies that as a translator, you should not let your own experience get in the way. A translator needs to keep his or her future readers in mind at all times. It is her opinion that reading is the key issue, as the translator needs to read a source text in order to be able to translate it, and has the text's future readers in mind as a target audience while doing so.

In the 18th century, the term 'children's literature' came to be under discussion. It took on different meanings such as literary texts written explicitly for children, texts found appropriate for children and texts that would be adapted for a child audience (Ghesquiere, 14). Original texts and translations needed to be appropriate for children, they needed to meet pedagogical requirements, and inform and teach children about morals. Children needed to be faced with reality to raise their social awareness (16). Adults were of the opinion that it was necessary for novels to have these didactic and moral requirements for them to be appropriate. Bottigheimer even claims that fairy tales were "an integral component of the moral lesson composed for children" (156). This is still the case today, although it seems that the rules surrounding children's literature are less strict than they used to be, as more and more novels are published

with the sole aim of amusement; children should be able to enjoy books, too.

In English-speaking countries, the first children's books ever published were fairy tales. These tales were published in the form of chapbooks, which are "small books or pamphlets of popular tales, ballads or poetry" (Dictionary.com). With the translations of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's *German Popular Stories* from German in 1823 and Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales from Danish into English in 1846, "a greater awareness of the importance of translations in children's literature" was established (Jobe, 916). Both the brothers Grimm and Anderson wrote fairy and folktales, which were very popular. "Cinderella" is the most frequently published individual fairy tale ever (Bottigheimer, 157). From the 1960s and up until the early 1980s, "a golden age" of translation emerged, resulting in an increase in translations from Western European countries (Jobe, 916). Stories about the war were especially popular, and "writers in continental Europe and elsewhere were beginning to address the social problems" of that time (917). In the 1980s, things started to change again and "while in Europe the exchange of titles in translation continued, in English-speaking countries the exchange was almost entirely with other English-speaking countries" (918). During the 1990s, information books were becoming more popular, while the twentieth century brought more challenging novels (919). In the twenty-first century, poetry became immensely popular, together with dual-language books (919). Unfortunately, the general numbers have not increased much since 1991, "where 67,704 titles were published in Great Britain, [...] 2.4 per cent were translations". In 2001, this percentage had dropped to "1.4" (925). It would be promising for translators nowadays if this number had increased by now, but an exact number for 2011 has not been found. As fairy tales are still very popular among young children today, and as *Nachtverhaal* appears to be a timeless novel, it qualifies perfectly for a translation into English, in my opinion. The aspect of timelessness is what allows fairy tales to still be very popular among children today.

Translations play a major part in the world that we, readers, grow up in. In general, literature enhances people's lives. When growing up you learn about the world through reading. The things people do, the people they meet, the problems they encounter and the literature they read, enhance their lives. In my opinion, people's imagination and empathy would not be the same today without literature. Even though television and the Internet play a big part in people's lives today, literature will always be around. On top of that, translated literature enhances people's lives by providing a little insight into the lives of others living across the world. In Europe, "between 30 and 70 per cent of the children's books published [...] are translated" (Jobe, 912). Unfortunately, this is not the case for English-speaking countries according to Jobe because "the national output includes every genre and is of high standard" (912). Therefore, translated books are not necessary to enhance English-speaking children's lives any further. This seems a bit arrogant, but "English-language publishers feel their books are the best" (912). Jobe does not agree with this statement, he believes that children also need to read the best literature available in other countries to further enhance their knowledge (925).

By looking at the translation problems caused by the differences in linguistic and cultural systems, in my case the Dutch and English systems, we can see that a lot of attention is paid to the systems in the world of translation. Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin, as cited in Oittinen, believes that "at any given time, in any given place, there will be a set of conditions – social, historical, meteorological, physiological – that will ensure that a word uttered in that place and at that time will have a meaning different than it would have under any other conditions" (901). These specified conditions are essential for any translation because they can influence a text. In the case of *Nachtverhaal*, the place and time of the source text are the Netherlands and 1992, and are thus different to the time and place of the translation, but due to the timelessness of the novel and the little relevance of time and place to the story, it will not lead to problems, and thus the

message will be the same. Cathy Hirano, who translates from Japanese into English, states that literary translation is a balancing act:

[Translators] must strive to remain true not only to the essence, but also to the style and tone of the writer in the source language while at the same time render it in a way that is understandable to someone from a very different culture and way of thinking. (227)

This means that a translator should have good knowledge of the source culture but also of the target culture.

When translating novels such as *Nachtverhaal*, which is filled with assonance, alliteration, puns and onomatopoeia's, it is very important to know the target culture and to strive to really transfer Biegel to the English-speaking world. Crampton, also cited in Jobe, states that she believes that as a translator "you have to somehow got to be true to the artist in the author, his own creativity. While you hope to appeal to the English reader in the same way he appeals to the [Dutch] reader" (914). Crampton translated novels from over six languages to English, and it is her opinion that "a book needs to read easily and naturally, as if it were written in English in the first place," no matter what the source language (921). In an email-correspondence between Biegel's daughter Leonie and myself, Leonie says that Crampton was a wonderful woman with an amazing feeling for language and that Crampton consulted Biegel about the translations to ensure that she stayed true to Biegel's creativity (L. Biegel). This feeling for language is very important when translating Biegel's work, as it was one of his great qualities as well.

When Paul Biegel first started writing, he wanted to become "a real writer" (Van der Pennen, 103). He wanted to write for people who wanted to read his books. He wanted to create new worlds for people to get lost in. He wrote his first novel *Het sleutelkruid* with an adult audience in mind. However, this novel was classified as a fairy tale. It might be considered general knowledge that fairy tales are often written for children and thus, Biegel's novels were

classified as children's literature.

[m]en bestemt sprookjes voor kinderen. Daaruit is de wisselwerking ontstaan daar mee ik in mijn taalgebruik met kinderen rekening ben gaan houden. De essentie van sprookjes is vaak de diepste menselijke werkelijkheid. Ik meen kinderen met mijn boeken een reële wereld voor te houden. Het is van belang ze kennis te laten nemen van de werkelijkheid.

(Van der Pennen, 104)

Biegel says that he started to take his audience into consideration when he realised he was writing for children. He wanted to show his audience what the world looked like. He did not change the general idea of the morality in his novels, but he did adapt his choice of words so they would be more appropriate for young children. In an interview with Thea Detiger, Biegel adds that he never intended to write for a particular audience, but that he wrote his novels for himself, and that could express himself best by writing fantasy stories and that this is why he wrote them (Detiger, par. 4).

Biegel believed that the literary competence of children should not be underestimated. However, he disregarded the fact that children would not be accustomed to an advanced use of language. Astrid Lindgren, author of *Pippi Longstocking*, agrees on this subject by stating: “children have a remarkable ability to adapt and to experience strange things or situations the way they are expected to if a translator translates a text correctly” (Ghesquiere, 45). On the other hand, adults have a greater literary competence, mostly due to their age, which allows them to understand the advanced use of language in novels faster. Children do not have the same literary competence as adults, as they have (probably) read more novels in their life, simply because they are older. As an adult writing or translating for children, this is something that needs to be considered as well. Translators need to figure out a balance; they need to determine what they can and cannot adapt.

E.B. White, the author of *Charlotte's Web*, suggests that authors should not downgrade their stories, but that they should instead lift their readers to another level. According to White, authors that lower themselves to the level of children, betray them, as they are the most “observant, curious, enthusiastic, attentive, sensitive, quick and just sympathetic readers on earth” (Ghesquiere, 101). Biegel agrees with this statement. He says that writers should not “lower themselves” to the readers, but that readers should “upgrade themselves” to the writers. He believes that by downgrading a story, a writer will slow down the child’s development (103).

To stay true to a writer’s work, it is important for the translator to remain unnoticed, or invisible. The position and behaviour of the translator are very important when translating any type of text. In my opinion, the strength of a translator lies in his or her ability to remain invisible. Upon translating *Nachtverhaal*, my goal is to remain invisible so that the target audience can have the same Biegel experience as the source audience. A translator should be a chameleon and adapt to the world of the writer. It is not a compliment at all if people notice a translation is from a certain translator. That means he or she is visible. Lawrence Venuti notes that translators make themselves invisible because they generally “tend to translate ‘fluently’ into English, to produce an idiomatic and ‘readable’ target text, thus creating an ‘illusion of transparency’” (Munday, 146). A target text must read so fluently that it appears to be an original instead of a translation. Venuti further describes invisibility by elaborating on domestication and foreignisation.

According to Venuti, domestication involves “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to [English] target-language cultural values, [which] entails translating in a transparent, fluent, *invisible* style in order to minimise the foreignness of the target text” (Munday, 146). Foreignisation on the other hand “entails choosing a foreign text and developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target languages”

(147). When translating for children, the audience must be taken into consideration, and when problems arise and a translator has to make a decision, this decision must coincide with the context. Besides Venuti, Oittinen also looked at these two strategies, and believes that “foreignisation refers to a method or strategy of translation whereby some significant trace of the original ‘foreign’ text is retained. Domestication, on the other hand, assimilates a text to target cultural and linguistic values” (Oittinen, 905). Thus, when the reader is taken to the foreign text, we are talking about foreignisation, but when the text is accommodated to the reader from the target culture, we are talking about domestication. In the case of translating *Nachtverhaal* domestication would be the preferred strategy if cultural aspects would prove to be problematic. It would certainly not be a disloyalty to the writer. It remains important that the target text reads fluently enough to come across as if it were written in English in the first place. When translating for children, translators generally translate “what may seem strange and exotic” to become “if not familiar, [then] at least rational and acceptable” according to Edward Fenton, as cited in Jobe (913). The text will keep its function and will be vital enough to create a readable text for the target audience.

Another aspect of foreignisation is the fact that children of another culture might not even realise foreign elements in a novel. In general, children will not be aware of the fact that they are reading a translated text or that it is read aloud to them. According to O’Sullivan, “foreignness refers to what is not yet familiar to child readers,” which is generally more than for adult readers (O’Sullivan, 93). O’Sullivan continues by naming elements that can be specific to one culture, namely: “plants and animals peculiar to certain landscape, mentions of mythology, history and politics, consumer goods, literary allusions, quotations, etc.” (93). These elements would stand out in novel read by adults, but children might just skip the incomprehensible things, or they will ask an adult about it. Another interesting discovery about foreignisation and domestication is that

due to the lack of major studies, “there is no empirical basis for a translator’s decision on whether to foreignise or domesticate” culture specific items in a translation for children (94). Thus, every translator must look at the culture specific items in the novel they are translating to decide on a degree of foreignness. When translating *Nachtverhaal*, I will try to keep the foreignness alive as much as possible. The reason behind this decision is that there are only a few culture specific items visible in the passage I chose to translate. In addition, these culture specific items do not cause major translation problems.

The aspect of readability is another important aspect when translating for children; especially due to the fact that children’s literature is often read aloud. The following characteristics are important for readability and show how heavy readability counts when translating fluency, punctuation, sentence structure and other potentials of expression, such as intonation, tone, tempo, pauses, stress, rhythm and duration. All these characteristics are specific to a specific writer, and his or her style, and will therefore be elaborated on later on in this thesis. However, the consequences of a mistake in translating rhythm and punctuation can be appalling as it disables adults to read stories in the way they were meant to be read, to allow children to understand the stories. Reading aloud and reading silently are different types of reading, but readability is important for both. This point leads to another conclusion: children’s literature has a dual audience, namely children and adults. It is also very important that the word order and rhythm of a target text are appropriate for the target audience; “good translations should read well in the new language” (Jobe, 914). According to Emer O’Sullivan, “the audience for children’s literature includes adults as well as children – adults in their capacity as intermediaries (who buy, give and recommend books) reading with the child in mind, adults reading aloud to children and adults who read children’s literature for their own pleasure” (16). All writers of children’s literature face the issue of a large or double audience, especially when it comes to picture books

or other books that are written for children who are not able to read yet, and are meant to be read aloud. The audience consists of pre-literate children, but adults will be the ones reading these books aloud to them. Plus, adults could possibly re-read books 'meant' for children later on in life. To confirm this, O'Sullivan points out that "more than one implied reader can be discerned in certain children's books which address both child and adult readers," thus, creating dual audience (16). On the other hand, the function of a novel with a dual audience could be considered "ambivalent," meaning that certain texts belong to "one system (children's literature) but [are] read by members of another (adult literature)," according to Zohar Shavit, cited in O'Sullivan (16-17). This suggests that adults will always be positioned in between the author and the reader, because even though a text is not addressed to adults specifically, it might appeal to them (18). Barbara Wall, as cited in O'Sullivan, points out that when using "double address," the narrators will address child narratees overtly and self-consciously, and will also address adults, either overtly, as the implied author's attention shifts away from the implied child reader to a different older audience, or covertly, as the narrator deliberately exploits the ignorance of the implied child reader and attempts to entertain an implied adult reader by making jokes which are funny primarily because children will not understand them. (17)

As mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, Biegel did not write for a specific audience, so it might be fair to say that *Nachtverhaal* has a dual audience. When translating this novel, my task will be to maintain this dual audience, and look carefully at the source text to find characteristics of double address in order to take this across boundaries too.

The fact that adults will always determine the image of children's literature can be seen as a negative side (Ghesquiere, 23). A novel will only reach its implied reader after the adult, whether a parent, teacher or librarian, has approved. This implies that authors do not only have to write their books for children, but also have to take into account the adults who will decide if the

book is suitable for their child. The adults will decide whether a novel is appropriate for children or not. Therefore, translators will need to decide whether they should translate “with the ideological aim of transmitting the ‘correct’ norms and values of the target culture [or] with the purpose of making a text intelligible for young readers” (O’Sullivan, 91). Educational norms and values are very important in translating for children. For example, educational intentions can “impose a taboo or unwelcome phenomena or description,” to not bring trouble across borders (82). It is never the intention of a translator to shock his or her readers, and therefore it depends on the target culture if a text needs to be adapted or not. It is important that novels are appropriate for young children, and therefore, insults and bad language should be eradicated (84). Certain swearwords do occur in this novel, but I will discuss these translation problems later on in this thesis.

To conclude, it is important to take the child audience into consideration when working on a suitable translation. The translation needs to be readable and acceptable for the target audience. Due to the popularity of fairy tales and other timeless stories, this novel is a perfect candidate to be translated into English today.

3 Textual analysis

This chapter deals with the specific translation problems a translator encounters when translating *Nachtverhaal*. By taking a close look at the narrative situation and discussing the translation problems that I found, possible solutions will be provided to aid the translation process. Then, an analysis of intertextuality is given to identify the intertextual references that can be found in *Nachtverhaal*. This is done to see if the function of these references leads to translation problems. In the end of this chapter I will provide an analysis of Biegel's style of writing, by looking at his stylistic characteristics. Due to Biegel's creative use of language, this chapter deals with many translation problems that emerge when translating his stories. It is important to recognise and discuss all of these textual issues before attempting a translation of this novel filled with all that is Biegel for children in English-speaking countries.

3.1 Narrative situation

The narrative situation in *Nachtverhaal* is quite complicated. Throughout this chapter the various narrators will be discussed to clarify the narrative situation. In order to do this I will look at the different levels of narration and the speech representations in the source text. The reason behind an analysis of the narrative situation in *Nachtverhaal* is that certain elements pose challenges when translating this novel into English. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* helped out while writing this chapter. She defines narrative fiction as "the narration of a succession of fictional events" (2). A narrative can also be called a story. The way in which a story gets told, or the "mode" is, according to Abrams, "established by an author by means of which the reader is presented with the characters, dialogue, actions, setting, and events" (240). The source text author thus creates an implied author, who creates a narrator, who then tells the narrative to a narratee in the story. The source text is written for the implied reader, and

the real reader will read it. However, the real reader in this case is the translator, who becomes the real translator of the source text, and in his turn creates an implied translator of the target text, who creates a narrator, who in his turn tells the narrative to a narratee in the story which is translated for the implied reader, which is read by the real reader of the translation (based on figure 5.2, O'Sullivan, 108). Because this thesis involves a translation, another communication scheme of agencies was added. However, this chapter studies relationship between the narrator and narratee only, or in this case, the narrators and narratees.

Before looking at the different narrators, it is important to know that *Nachtverhaal* is a frame story. Abrams *Glossary of Literary Terms* gives the following definition of a frame story: “a preliminary narrative within which one or more of the characters proceeds to tell a series of short narratives” (296). A few great examples of frame stories, or frame narratives, are Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Boccaccio's *Decameron* and the Arabian *One Thousand and One Nights*¹. In the latter multiple short narratives are told by one of the characters, Scheherazade (296). This connection is no coincidence as *Nachtverhaal* is in many ways similar to *1001 Nights*. In order to do the relationship between these two novels justice, the next chapter will be dedicated to the visible intertextual references between these two novels. Some similarities will, however, already be dealt with in this chapter.

The reason why *Nachtverhaal* is so interesting is that it has multiple story lines (Van Sande, 6). The first story line is about the kind and worrying gnome, who forgets to make his rounds through the house like a proper house gnome does, and whose life gets turned upside down when a drenched fairy knocks on his door (6). The second story line is about the fairy's life story with which she manages to keep the gnome spellbound night after night by telling him about what she has seen and done while on her quest, to find a satisfactory answer to her

¹ From now on, *One Thousand and One Nights* will be referred to as *1001 Nights*.

questions about the circle of life, after having left the Kingdom of Fairies (6-7). These two story lines alternate, succeed and interrupt each other throughout the novel. The gnome's story takes place in the present and in chronological order. For the fairy's story, the reader is taken back in time.

These two story lines depict that it is likely that there are multiple narrators. To find out what kind of narrators *Nachtverhaal* has, it is important to work out the levels of narration. The general difference in narrative levels can be described as follows: "any event a narrative recounts is at a diegetic level immediately higher than the level at which the narrating act producing this narrative is placed" (Genette, 228). This difference between levels of narration will be used to analyse the different narrators further.

The first narrator in *Nachtverhaal* seems to be an omniscient narrator, as he knows more about the characters in the novel than they do themselves. This can be seen in sentences such as: "Een ding wist de kabouter niet: Rat was teruggekomen voor nog een stuk kaas en had hem bezig gezien met het heen en weer rollen van de honingpot..." (Biegel, 63) and "Als de kabouter geweten had in welke nood Rat verkeerde, zou hij veel voorzichtiger zijn geweest" (128). These examples also show the "overtness" of the narrator, who supplies the reader with information about what certain characters do not know, in order to keep the reader informed and enthusiastic about the novel, so that the possible intervals between levels of narration are minimised (Rimmon-Kenan, 98). The first examples show that the gnome does not know that Rat came back for more cheese and upon his return saw the gnome trying to get honey, and the second one shows that the gnome does not know the danger Rat is in. Both sentences are crucial to the reader's knowledge, as they are important to the story's plot and because they serve to create suspense and excitement. Overtness and omniscience complement each other, because the more

all-knowing a narrator is, the more overt he is likely to be. According to Rimmon-Kenan, the characteristics that come with omniscience are:

“familiarity, in principle, with the characters innermost thoughts and feelings; knowledge of past, present and future; presence in locations where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied; and knowledge of what happens in several places at the same time.” (95)

Most of these characteristics apply to the anonymous narrator in *Nachtverhaal*. Apart from being omniscient, the narrator is also “hetero-extradiegetic,” according to Gérard Genette, who introduces this term in *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (248). This implies that the narrator “is absent from the story he tells” and that he is situated in “the first narrative level” (ibid.). The narrator does not take part in the story, but he can be seen as a bystander. The first few sentences of the novel clearly show the hetero-diegetic omniscient narrator:

De kabouter in dit verhaal was een gewone huiskabouter. Hij woonde op de zolder van een oude villa, vlak onder het rieten dak waarin de geheimen van de bewoners werden bewaard. (Biegel, 9)

The narrator tells the readers about the gnome, he introduces him to the readers and identifies his character. This is also another sign of the narrator’s overtness (Rimmon-Kenan, 97). There are a few more instances in the chosen passage, where the narrator describes, summarises and comments on events that have occurred (97-98). These types of passages can be classified as a narrative text. They are written in a third-person narrative, which creates a distance between the narrator and the reader, as there no reference is made to the narrator (Leech and Short, 213). According to Leech and Short, the commonly used third-person style of narration allows the narrator to merge with the implied author, which enables him to have more knowledge about the characters and makes him an omniscient narrator (214). The presentation of speech and thought is done through various ways. The narrator presents the dialogue mostly through *direct speech*

(255). The following example, however, shows the dialogue between the gnome and Rat by using *direct speech* and *free direct speech* (258):

“Eh... vanavond schikt het niet,” zei de kabouter.

“O. Waarom deed je het licht uit?”

“Ik eh... het woei uit. Tocht.”

“Tocht?” zei Rat. Door een dichte deur?” (Biegel, 47)

“Er... it’s not convenient tonight,” said the gnome.

“Oh. Why did you turn off the light?”

“I er... it blew out. Draught.”

“Draught?” said Rat. “Through a closed door?” (my translation)

The first and last sentences in this example are “quoted using verbatim,” while the ones in the middle are uttered “without the use of the narrator,” showing the differences between *direct* and *free direct speech* (Leech and Short, 255, 258). The gnome’s thoughts are presented through *direct thought* (270). The following sentences show the gnome’s thoughts:

Ze moet toch maar weg, dacht hij. (Biegel, 43)

She should still leave anyway, he thought. (my translation)

Wat heb ik toch tegen haar, dacht de kabouter... (Biegel, 44)

Why do I not like her, thought the gnome... (my translation)

By reporting thought, Biegel has invited the readers to see things from the gnome’s perspective, thus allowing readers to be drawn into the character’s head to experience what he is thinking and going through in the same way (Leech and Short, 271). Reporting thought allows the reader to come closer to a character and allows him or her to have a ‘look’ in the stream of consciousness of that character. There is no specific narratee present in this story line. The narrative is narrated to the implied reader as narratee.

The second story line, which is situated on another narrative level, is narrated by the fairy and is about her life history. She could therefore be said to be a “homo-intradiegetic narrator” (Genette, 248). According to Genette, this implies that the narrator is a character “inside the first narrative,” (228) and that she is “present as a character in the story she tells” (245). The fairy is a primary character in her narrative, which makes her one of the protagonists, but I also think it is reasonable to say that she is the protagonist in *Nachtverhaal*, too. Her narrative plays a large and important part in the novel. As the fairy narrates in a first-person style of narration, she creates a “personal relationship with the reader, which inevitably tends to bias the reader in favour of the narrator character” (Leech and Short, 213). By being a narrator present in her own story, it is quite logical that she tells the story from her own perspective and thus presents much of it in *free indirect speech*. Her first-person narrative allows the readers to really be drawn into the story, just like the gnome is. The rest of the speech presentation in the fairy’s narrative is done through *direct, indirect, and free direct speech*. The first example shows the use of *direct speech*, and occurs throughout the chapter. The second example shows *indirect speech*, which only occurs a few times in this chapter. The third example shows *free direct speech*; when the fairy describes her encounter with Mir, the dialogue is almost completely presented in *free direct speech*. The fourth example shows the use of narrative text, in which the fairy tells the gnome about the things she has seen and done in a more general sense. This narrative text can also be said to be *free indirect speech*, as she is telling it to the gnome.

“Ga nu maar,” zei hij.

“Ja,” zei ik. “Ja, maar ik had eigenlijk nog iets willen vragen...” (Biegel, 51)

“Now go,” he said.

“Yes,” I said. “Yes, but I wanted to ask you something...” (my translation)

De weg deed zijn rug plat en ik stapte af, zei dank u wel en liep naar het huis. (Biegel, 46)

The road flattened his back and I got off, said thank you sir and walked towards the house. (my translation)

“Waarom niet, meneer Zbir? Alstublieft?”

“Omdat het niet kan. Maar als het kon, wat dan?”

Dan kwamen er nakomelingen, meneer Zir.” (Biegel, 53)

“Why not, mister Mir? Please?”

“Because it can’t work. But if it could work, then what?”

“Then we would have children, sir Mir.” (my translation)

Ik liep de weg op; ik wist niet welke richting ik moest nemen... (Biegel, 45)

I walked onto the road; I didn’t know which direction to take... (my translation)

These four examples show the variety of narrative styles within one narrative level. These styles themselves should not lead to translation problems. However, it is important to recognise them as a translator to maintain them in the translation, to let the target audience enjoy the variety of different narrative styles, as well. Another thing that must be specified here is that the narratee is, in fact, in the first place, the gnome. The gnome can be seen as an “intradiegetic narratee” because he is one of the characters in the story, and the fairy addresses him, just like Scheherazade addresses the Sultan in *1001 Nights* (Rimmon-Kenan, 104).

By looking at the two different levels of narration, there appears to be a relationship between them, even though there is no need for an explicit relationship between the extradiegetic and the intradiegetic narrator according to Genette, because “it is the act of narrating itself that fulfils a function in the diegesis” (233). In this case, it is the act of storytelling that allows the fairy to stay at the gnome’s house. Maria Nikolajeva also brings up the difference between “telling” and “showing,” where the first refers to “the narrator’s statements” and the latter refers to “the characters’ actions” (173). She notes that “early children’s fiction and especially popular

fiction tends to employ telling rather than showing based on oversimplified assumption of the readers' needs" (174). This is not completely true for *Nachtverhaal*, which displays a combination of both showing and telling.

The transition between the two narrators occurs in various ways. Sometimes a shift of narrator is announced, while others are brought up casually, meaning that the narrative shifts from one into the other quite smoothly. Sometimes they succeed each other, and in other instances they interrupt each other. The following example shows how the intradiegetic narrator succeeds the extradiegetic narrator. This transition is marked by "the act of narration which draws attention to the shift" (Rimmon-Kenan, 93).

"Stil nu," zei ze, "en luister, dan zal ik je vertellen:

<<Ik liep door het gras... (Biegel, 45)

"Be quiet now," she said, "and listen, I will tell you:

<<I walked through the grass... (my translation)

Due to the obvious mark of the narrator's start, it is easier for the readers to notice that, from this point on, the fairy is telling a story. The following example shows how the fairy's story is interrupted by a knock on the door, which causes a shift in narration. The first sentence shows a combination of *direct speech* and narrative text, narrated by the intradiegetic narrator. The second sentence, however, shows that the intradiegetic narrator, who continues with narrative text and *direct speech*, is interrupted by the extradiegetic narrator.

"Vooruit," zei de gapende mond. "Binnentreden." Er wordt hier geklopt.<<

Het bleef opeens stil.

"Er wordt hier geklopt," zei de fee. (Biegel, 46)

"Come on," said the gaping mouth. "Come in." Someone is knocking on the door. <<

Suddenly it went quiet.

“Someone is knocking on the door,” said the fairy. (my translation)

The next sentences show another marked transition where the fairy’s narrative succeeds the extradiegetic narrator. The fairy tells the gnome how her quest continued using *free indirect speech*; however, this could also be seen as narrative text.

De fee glimlachte. En vertelde:

<<Ik durfde helemaal niet... (Biegel, 48)

The fairy smiled. And continued:

<<I didn’t dare ... (my translation)

The examples above should not lead to translation problems either, although it is important that the transition is fluent like it is in the source text.

After analysing the transition of narrators and the different narrative styles, I have come to the conclusion that these transitions do not pose translation problems that could be caused by the different narrative styles. The translation problems that can be found in the examples above have been caused by the choice of words, and the meanings of those words. It was, however, very useful to analyse the differences between the narrators and the way in which they present speech, thought and narrative text, in order to be able to recognise the different styles. Important differences that need to be taken into consideration when translating are, for example, the extradiegetic narrator narrates in a third-person style and tells the story as it “unfolds,” while the intradiegetic narrator does so in a first-person style, and tells the story “in retrospect” (Nikolajeva, 175).

3.2 Intertextual references in *Nachtverhaal*

As stated earlier in this thesis, *Nachtverhaal* is a frame story written in the tradition of *1001 Nights*. Apart from the similarities found in the previous chapter the novels are similar in various other ways. These similarities can also be called intertextual references. By giving a definition of intertextuality, followed by an elaborate analysis of the intertextual references that can be found in *Nachtverhaal*, I will be able to identify the references in *Nachtverhaal* and see if they pose translation problems.

By looking at literature on intertextuality by Paul Claes, Cees Koster and Christine Wilkie-Stibbs, a comprehensive definition of intertextuality can be determined. Koster uses Claes' views in his dissertation *From World to World: an Armamentarium for the Study of Poetic Discourse in Translation*. Even though Julia Kristeva first coined this term in the 1960s, I find that the definitions and views provided by the aforementioned authors are more clear. Belgian author Paul Claes describes intertextuality as: “het geheel van relaties tussen teksten waaraan door een subject dat deze onderkent een functie kan worden toegekend” (1988: 207). This definition shows that any text can contain intertextual references to another text; however, the reader must recognise the references for them to be there and for them to have a function. Claes suggests two types of intertextuality, namely generic and specific intertextuality. The first “refers to those common features in texts that are characteristic of genres, whereas specific intertextuality occurs when the intertextual element refers to a specific, single text” (Koster, 142). These types of intertextuality become visible in the “fenotext,” which is “the text in which the element occurs that refers to another text,” which is known as the “architext” (Claes, 1988: 205). The intertextual references occur in a fenotext as a “quotation” or an “allusion”. According to Claes, an allusion is “a non-graphic repetition of elements” and a quotation is “a graphic repetition of elements from an architext in a fenotext” (Koster, 142).

Wilkie-Stibbs' views on intertextuality agree with the things Claes says, and divides the specific type of intertextuality into two different categories, creating these three categories: 1) "texts of quotation which quote or allude to other literary or non-literary works," 2) "texts of imitation which seek to parody, pastiche, paraphrase, 'translate' or supplant the original, which seek to liberate their readers from an over-invested admiration in great writers of the past, and which often function as the [architext] of the original for later readers" and 3) "genre texts where identifiable shared clusters of codes and literary conventions are grouped together in recognisable patterns which allow reader to expect and locate them, and to cause them to seek out similar texts" (181). Examples of these types of intertextuality will be provided later on in this chapter.

In order to find out what the consequences of the intertextual references are for the translation, we need to ask: 'In what way did Biegel use *1001 Nights* to write *Nachtverhaal*, and do these intertextual references have a function in the novel?'. It would not surprise me if Biegel wanted to teach his readers a little bit more than the adults would think. However, to answer this question it is important to remember what the general functions of intertextual references are. A reader must be able to decode the intertextual references for them to be there, meaning that a reader must have enough knowledge to recognise and interpret the intertextual references written into a text by the writer. A well-read child reader will easily spot certain references. A naïve reader, on the other hand, might not recognise them quite so easily. In the second chapter I have discussed the literary competence of children and adults, and it was shown that it is difficult to measure how good children's reading skills are, or how vast their literary competence is. As a result, writers and translators need to have a certain target audience in mind, the group that the implied reader is part of, because not every child has the same competence. Because some children might not have read earlier published novels or fairy tales before reading *Nachtverhaal*, it could be argued that they will most likely not recognise the references. Instead, it is quite

possible that the child audience might think that *1001 Nights* is based on, or very similar to *Nachtverhaal*. The reason for discussing this subject in this thesis is that it is important that a translator recognises the intertextual references in a novel he or she is translating. A translator must be an omniscient translator. As a translator, you must recognise these different types of intertextuality to see the influence the architext has on the fenotext and how big this influence is. The target text reader must be able or given the opportunity to recognise the intertextual references in his novel. In order to achieve this, a translator needs to bring the intertextual references in the source text over to the target text. A translator must therefore study the source text and analyse it along the categories given by Claes and Wilkie-Stibbs to recognise the references and bring them across to the target text in the translation process.

When taking a closer look at *Nachtverhaal*, it appears that both types of intertextuality given by Claes are present, as well as the extra category provided by Wilkie-Stibbs. Even before a reader will read the novel, a motto is put forward. A motto is like a quotation and, according to Claes, it shows a metaphorical connection between two worlds (1988: 208). Whenever a writer places a motto at the beginning of a novel, it might come across as mysterious to the readers, because they will not be familiar with its meaning. The motto that Biegel added to his novel is:

“... maar ziet lieve, de zon komt op, ik moet mijn vertelling staken...” Scheherazade. (5)

After having read the novel, the well-read reader might recognise this quotation. Plus, it makes sense why this sentence was added to the novel, because Scheherazade, like the fairy, needs to discontinue her storytelling when the sun comes up. Unfortunately, I have not been able to retrieve the existing English translation. Apart from this allusion, the title also incites intertextuality. *Nachtverhaal* literally means ‘night tale’, which is what happens throughout the novel: Scheherazade and the fairy both tell their tales at night time. Claes talks about this phenomenon as a lexical allusion: “de lexicale allusie in de titel (of eventueel in een motto) werkt

als een soort ontstekingsmechanisme waardoor de grotere structurele allusie op gang komt” (1988: 126).

The other text-specific intertextual references also fall into Wilkie-Stibbs’ second category. There are many elements in fenotext that are the same as they are in architext. *Nachtverhaal* is, as it were, a text of imitation which seeks to pastiche *1001 Nights*. The definition of a pastiche is: “repetition of style elements of an architext in a fenotext” (Claes, 1988: 208). First of all, *Nachtverhaal* is also a frame story. In the architext, the Sultan believes that all women are unfaithful after he caught his wife cheating on him (Van Leeuwen, 109). Therefore he kills his wife, and from that moment marries a new virgin every day, and has them killed the next morning. Scheherazade knows this, and when she marries him she begins to tell him a story but is interrupted by the break of dawn, which leaves the Sultan very curious towards the ending, and so he doesn’t kill her. He allows her to stay alive night after night, until he has been cured from his fear and lives happily ever after with Scheherazade (ibid.). In the architext, Scheherazade tells the Sultan stories to save herself from death, while the fairy tells the gnome stories about her quest to find death in the fenotext; almost paradoxical. Every morning when the fairy has to cut her story short because she becomes tenuous, the gnome wants to hear how the stories ends, because he is so curious, and as a result he allows her to stay another night, every time. The stories always end on a cliffhanger. A conclusion that can be drawn from these similarities is that being unfaithful can be seen as being untrustworthy. In *Nachtverhaal* the gnome wants the fairy to leave because he thinks fairies are not to be trusted, while the Sultan believes all woman are unfaithful. As a result, this similarity can be seen as another stylistic allusion.

Another text-specific intertextual reference is the name of one of the characters in the fairy’s stories. In *Nachtverhaal*, the fairy meets the “Erenkoning”. This seems to allude to the

poem “Der Erlenkönig” by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. This poem about a boy who is taken away from his father by the “Erlenkönig,” an omen of death, can be connected to *Nachtverhaal* (Tierney, par 2). The fairy wants to save the girl, who has been taken by the “Erlen” for death, which I do not think is a coincidence either. Due to the fact that the “Erlen” do not appear in the passage that I chose to translate, I will discuss the translation here. The problem was mainly to find translations that would still evoke the intertextual references, but would also sound fairly normal. Plus, I would prefer my translation to have something in common with the Elf King from the Kingdom of Elves. The examples below show the translations that I would choose.

Het Rijk der Erlen (Biegel, 58)

The Kingdom of Erls (my translation)

De koning der Erlen (Biegel, 72)

The King of Erls (my translation)

De Erlenkoning (Biegel, 74)

The Erl King (my translation)

De Erlen (Biegel, 74)

The Erls (my translation)

As the name appears to refer to the poem by Goethe, it is important to keep this allusion intact in the target text. In the end, my choice was based on the way the word “Erlen” would rhyme with “Elfen” in English. Therefore, my final translation is Erls.

Nachtverhaal also refers to the genre of fairy tales and tales about fairies in general. This generic type of intertextuality is something that occurs quite often. Because so many fairy tales and tales about fairies have been written in the past, and they all comply with similar norms, they allude to each other in a generic way. Examples of these intertextual references are the characters and talking animals that appear in *Nachtverhaal*, which have also been used in other fairy tales

before. There are a few typical fairy tale-like contrasts present in *Nachtverhaal*. For instance, the white water lily which turns black, the everlasting battle between good and evil, the beauty of the fairy and the ugliness of the kobold (Van den Hoven, 32). On top of that, Biegel leaves certain characters in his novel unnamed. He uses a so-called law that is commonly used in fairy tales; especially in Eurasian fairy tales (Sikkema, 50). The namelessness of certain characters will be analysed further in the next chapter. The following quote by Gerard de Vriend summarises my findings: “Biegels verhaal gaat, voor de lezer/interpretator, een dialoog aan met andere teksten, zowel bijvoorbeeld met die uit het *genre* ‘sprookje’, als met een *specifieke tekst* als *De vertellingen van Duizend-en-een-Nacht*” (35).

In conclusion, it seems fair to say that Biegel alludes to other novels in *Nachtverhaal*. The main translation problems were caused by the motto Biegel provides at the beginning of the novel, and the reference to the “Erlkönig”. However, these references are not included in the passage I chose to translate, and thus will not concern me at this point in time. Nevertheless, if I were to translate the entire novel, I would contact and consult fellow translators and Leonie Biegel for their opinions. The other intertextual references present in *Nachtverhaal*, the specific and generic ones, do not appear to cause major translation problems, at least not in a degree of seriousness that affects the translation.

3.3 Style

The first and most important challenge a translator faces when translating a literary text, is to preserve the novel's style. The way in which a writer says something is unique to his or her style and the translator needs to preserve this style when translating a text into another language. This chapter focuses on translation problems posed by style-related uses that are specific to the Dutch language and Biegel. Biegel did not write like other writers, he has a unique style of writing. In the Netherlands, his style is known as *Biegeliaans*. As stated before, he was loved by many fellow writers, mainly because of his “enorme fantasie, zijn afkeer van – of onvermogen tot realisme, zijn verteltalent, humor en ambachtelijkheid, zijn plezier in taal” (Boonstra, 2007: 7). These characteristics are specific to Biegel and are what made him known to the Dutch audience. In conclusion, these characteristics can be seen as most important to be taken across to the target text. There is no better way than to introduce Biegel's style of writing by the following passage from a review written by Lieke van Duin about *Nachtverhaal* in 1992:

[*Nachtverhaal*] is geschreven en vormgegeven als een klassiek (cultuur)spreekje, maar met een levendig, eigentijds taalgebruik (“bovenmoerdijkse ggg”, “een rooie kop”, “getver!”). [...] *Nachtverhaal* is een echt voorleesboek en doet met z'n typische Biegeliaanse taalgebruik een sterk beroep op de voorleeskunst: beeldende zinnen, herhalingen, overdrijvingen, magische getallen, rijmende en allitererende neologismen (“ruis en bruis”, “de raaf hipt en kript”, “wargen, wolzen, kollen en trollen”, “verdwaald, verregend, verhonseld”) en een personage, Pad, met een slissende spraak. En uitroepen, galmen, echo's, geritsel en getrip: broeah, rrrt, bennerikbennerik, hieie-iech, tssj!, arrrggg!, phoea! (*Trouw*, par. 2)

This typical use of language is something that posed many translation problems. Biegel played with words in a unique way and also created new words to create rhyme and alliterating

repetitions. He was a very expressive writer. Before looking at the use of phonological style elements, I will analyse the characters in this novel by looking at their names, if they have one, and at the problems the names pose in translation.

The names Biegel invented are unique creations. Due to his great imagination, the names say enough about a character to render any additional information unnecessary. By looking at Biegel's work in general, some very colourful names appear in *De rover Hoepsika*, in which the main character was translated into English as robber Hopsika, as well as the main characters Mijnewel and Jouweniet in *The Gardens of Dorr*, which Crampton translated into Nevermine and Evermine. However, some characters, and most often the protagonists, do not have a name. The little captain in *De kleine kapitein*, for example, and the red princess in *De rode prinses* have not been given a name, just like the gnome and fairy in *Nachtverhaal*. As this is something very typical of Biegel it will be preserved. Biegel did give "Rat" and "Pad" a capital letter, making them names. These will be preserved in my translation.

The gnome is called gnome by almost all the characters, except for the fairy who calls him "kaboutertje". The use of diminutives is fairly common in Dutch, but it is rarely used in English. The *Van Dale* describes it as a: "woord met een bepaald achtervoegsel waardoor iemand of iets als klein of gering wordt voorgesteld". Diminutives can also be used when it is something or someone that is affected by the person uttering it. The fairy uses this form of address throughout the book, which shows the level of affection she has for him. Because diminutives are used very rarely in English, and the use of it nowadays seems fairly archaic, it was difficult to find a translation. While doodling, I came up with the following translations for "kaboutertje" (Biegel, 44): "gnomey, gnomeo, gnomekin, gnomeling, gnomers, gnomerz, gnomelet, gnomemini, gnomeji or little gnome".

In English, diminutives are created by adding suffixes such as -y, -kin, or -ling, as in

puppy, lambkin and duckling respectively. “Gnomey” would, in my opinion, be acceptable, as well as “gnomekin,” while “gnomeling” does not seem to match the Dutch connotation. After having looked at the names of the seven dwarfs in Snow White, namely Doc, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, Bashful, Sneezzy and Dopey, it appears that mostly due to their size, five of the dwarfs have a name that is a diminutive, due to the addition of -y. Another, possible translation is “little gnome”. Even though this is a pleonasm, it would work. The tiny character in *The Dwarfs of Nosegay*, who is called “Kleine Pier” in the Dutch version, is called “Little Peter” in the translation (Biegel, 1976: 7). The nickname “gnomeo” is not a possibility either as it is character in an animated film “Gnomeo and Juliet,” based on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and was released early 2011. Because the film was released this recently, it is not an option to use this name. Plus, readers of this time might think that this story is about the same gnome. In the end, I had to chose “little gnome” because it is most suitable for the target text in my opinion. I believe this translation remains close to the source text word and fits into the target text context, as well.

The gnome addresses the fairy with “u” or “je”. Translating a text from Dutch into a language that does not have a distinction between a formal “u” and an informal “je,” generally causes a problem. In Dutch there is a clear distinction between the formal and informal forms of address. In Dutch, this is called “tutoyeren” and “vousvoyeren” from the French “tutoyer” and “vouvoyer”. In general, when there is no obvious distinction, or one that is relevant to the text, it is possible to just use “you”. In this story, the difference between the use of “u” and “je” is crucial to understand the relationship between the gnome and the fairy. It is important to know why the gnome makes this distinction, which surely has an effect on the rest of the story. If this were to be translated with “you” every time, the distinction would be completely lost. In the beginning of the novel the gnome is really distant, he speaks more formal, and addresses her with “u”. Later on in the novel the gnome starts to like her being around and addresses her with “je” to

express their friendship and be more informal. It sometimes just happens to him unintentionally, and that is when he realises he addresses her both formally and informally, and therefore it is important that this difference in forms of address is visible in the translation. There is a way to express these different forms of address in English between speaking to people you know and are close to and people you have just met or who have a much higher social status. For the first, informal form, people address each other with their first name in English, while the more formal form requires the use of titles and/or last names. However, in this novel the main characters do not have names, which makes this an even bigger translation problem. Translator Hirano, who translates from Japanese into English, says “I can think of eight ways to say *you*, each with a cultural nuance that reflects the speaker’s sex or social status in relationship to the listener” (229). Fortunately, this is not the case here, but it is a way of realising that, even though Dutch only uses two ways to say *you*, it is something not to be overlooked when translating. The following example shows the importance of this distinction in this novel. To find a suitable solution, all possibilities need to be looked at. Because these characters do not have names, as mentioned before, it is not possible to have the gnome say “you” and “last name”. Another option could be to use “you” and “ye/thou,” because this would give the text an archaic touch that is not present in the source text. In my opinion, the option of using a title is the most suitable. When being friendly to the fairy, the gnome uses “you” and when he wants to keep a distance between himself and the fairy, he uses “you miss”. These two words could be placed after each other where possible, and in other instances they can be separated. The example provided below shows the use of both “you” and “you miss”. However, the last sentence in the example proves to be a larger problem as the gnome asks himself how he addressed her. Due to the sentence structure, I could not translate this into “Did I say you miss or you to her, just now?”. Thus I left out the first “you”.

“Niks!” zei de kabouter. “Ik bedoel uh... gaat u verder vertellen, straks? Hoe u die waterlelie hebt gevonden?”

“Natuurlijk!” riep ze.

Zei ik nou *u* tegen haar of *je*? vroeg de kabouter zich af. (Biegel, 44)

“Nothing!” the gnome said. “I mean, eh... will you continue to tell, miss? How you found the water lily, miss?”

“Of course!” she cried.

Did I just say *miss* or *you* to her, just now? the gnome wondered. (my translation)

Whenever the gnome addresses her, he adds “miss” to “you” in order to make it more formal and thus create a distance between them, similar to the one created by using “u” in the source text.

There are also instances where she is addressed in a different way. This happens when she is with the wizards. Fortunately, this does not lead to translation problems. The wizards Mort, Mirt and Morbid Mir feel they are much more important than the fairy and this is reflected in their way of addressing her. This can be seen as condescending. The first wizard uses:

“kind” and “kindlief” (Biegel, 48, 50)

“child” and “dear child” (my translation)

The second wizard uses:

“kind” and “feeënkind (Biegel, 50)

“child” and “fairy child” (my translation)

The third wizard uses:

“feetje-lief” (Biegel, 53)

“fairy-dear” (my translation)

The third wizard, Morbid Mir addresses the fairy in a friendly but ironic way. This use of address does not pose a problem as the chosen translation has the same connotation in this context as the

source text. However, in my opinion, there were two possible translations for the words Morbid Mir uses: “dear fairy” and “fairy-dear”. I ended up choosing the second translation because it does justice to the rhythm of the sentence.

As mentioned before, Rat and Toad both have a capital letter in Dutch, and this will be maintained in the translation. Biegel has presented the sly and dapper Rat in this novel as a typical nasty rat. One of the traits is that whenever he pronounces a word with the letter /a/ in it, he opens his mouth really wide. The following sentence is an example from the passage I chose to translate:

“t Is nog waar ook,” zei hij met een lange aaaa vol adem en gele tanden. (Biegel, 47)

Because the /a/ was not present in my translation here, my first thoughts were to change it to an /i/, and thus changing the translation into “He’s right”. However, this elongation of the /a/ occurs on several other occasions throughout the novel. One instance is when the narrator tells the readers about their card games, and that when Rat suspects Toad of sitting on the Ace of Clubs, he says: “Jaaa!!!” riep Rat. “Klaaaver aaas!” (12). In English, however, I would need to change the card, to maintain the elongated /a/ sound. This would not be difficult, and the translation would be “Yeaah!!!” cried Rat. “Aaace of spaaades!”. Therefore, I wanted to find a translation for the sentence shown above that would also have the elongated /a/. In the end I altered the translation to the following sentence, this says the same as the source text but with a different tone. The literal translation into Dutch would now be “t is niet waar,” which would fit the context, too.

“You don’t say,” he said with a long aaaa filled with breath and yellow teeth. (my translation)

Apart from the bad breath and yellow teeth, Rat also has a bad mouth. In general, the use of bad language and insults is not common in children’s literature. The passage I chose only contains

one minor swearword. However, there are parts of the novel where swearwords are more common, and as a result it needs to be taken into account that this is not accepted everywhere in the world. The following example consists of two instances where Rat uses bad language. This passage is not part of my translation:

“Dikke vette sukkelzak! Blaasbalg!” (Biegel, 80)

“... hoe zo’n akelige, schurftige puistpad...” (117)

“De tering-takke-fee die alles verziekte met haar tering-toverkunsten.” (122)

The translation would need to be discussed with the editor of the particular country. In general, I do think that euphemisms will be used in translation of this passage, especially for the last example. However, it appears that Biegel did not simply throw in some swearwords, but used these words with a reason to depict Rat, and I would therefore try to preserve them in the translation.

Toad’s character poses bigger translation problems, because he talks with a lisp. The slimy and sleepy Toad adds an /j/ after every /z/or/s/ in Dutch. According to William Perkins, lispings is a speech or “articulatory disorder,” which means that “articulation is defective when phonemes are perceived as omitted, substituted, or distorted” (258). The most common type of lispings in English is to substitute sounds, which occurs when a person changes the /s/ sound into a /θ/, meaning that “wasp” would come out as “washp” or into an /ʃ/ sound, which would come out as “wathp”. The second type is supposed to show a combination of an elongated /s/ sound and the /ʃ/ sound of “ship”. Anyone who has ever seen Warner Bros’ Sylvester and Tweety can probably remember how Tweety used to say he saw a pussycat: “I thaw a puthy cat outthide”. Dennis Cantwell and Lorian Baker name similar types of speech disorders as Perkins does: “omissions of speech sounds,” “distortions of speech sounds” and “substitutions of one speech

sound for another” (78). They also note that sounds such as /s/ and /z/ are often misarticulated in “the middle or ending of a word” (ibid.). The misarticulated sounds reflect an inadequate or deviant phonological system. Cantwell and Baker also argue that substitution occurs most frequent, meaning that the /s/ is substituted by a /th/ sound, as in “thithorth for scissors” (ibid.). When looking at the distortion of sounds it seems that a person lisping utters sounds with no specific meaning. The most common types of lisping are the lateral lisp and the palatal lisp according to Cantwell and Baker. The first type is when someone “pronounces /s/ sounds with the air stream going across the tongue, producing a whistle-like effect,” while the second type shows a person forming the /s/ sounds “with the tongue too close to the palate, producing a ‘shh’-like effect” (79).

Due to the fact that my knowledge on the subject of speech therapy is still minimal, I can only assume that the Toad has a specific type of lisp. In my opinion, it is possible to say that he uses distortion and substitution. The Dutch toad distorts the /s/ sound, but also substitutes it with a /sj/ sound. This way of lisping is the most common type in Dutch, which is known as “slissen,” where people elongate the /s/ sound, and as “lispelen,” where people misarticulate the /s/ and /z/ with a soft hiss-sound (*Van Dale*).

In the end, two possible solutions were left for me to choose from: substituting the /s/ with the /th/ or the /sh/ sound. Even though the /th/ substitution is more common, the /sh/ substitution sounds the most similar to the Dutch /sj/ substitution. I believe that it is also more believable that a slimy Toad would produce a ‘shh’-like sound.

After having taken all this information into consideration, and having looked at the possible solutions, I was still left with the problem of choosing the right words to allow the lisp to be present. The Dutch verb “schijnen” is perfect in the sentence shown below. However, the most literal translation for this word in this context, “to shine,” already contains the /sh/ sound, and

because of this readers would not immediately notice that Toad has a lisp. I do believe that Biegel constructed this in this way to show the readers that Toad has a lisp. Therefore, the translation “But a light is shining” would not work. In the end, I came to the conclusion that I would change the translation to the following:

“Maar d’r sjchijnt licht,” zei Pad. “Zjwak licht.” (Biegel, 47)

“But I shee a light,” said Toad. “A shoft light.” (my translation)

Right after this utterance, Toad notices that the candle has been lit again and says:

“Kijk nou! De kaarsj! De kaarsj gaat weer aan!” (Biegel, 47)

“Look! The candle! The candle ish lit again!” (my translation)

Unfortunately, the lisping sound in the word “candle” is lost in the translation, but by changing the sentence structure, the verb “to be” is added and allows Toad to lisp. Then Rat thinks the gnome has a guest who lit the candle, and Toad asks Rat:

“Bezjoek?”

“Bezjoek ja,” herhaalde Rat met een lispel. (Biegel, 47)

“A guesht?”

“Yesh, a guesht,” repeated Rat with a lisp. (my translation)

Luckily, there is an /s/ sound in both possible translations, namely “guest” and “visitor”. I chose “guest” for my translation because it introduces a great opportunity for lisping. The second word also allows for the lisp to be preserved, but I prefer the first translation. And after Rat answers that someone is visiting the gnome, Toad asks:

“Ja Rat, maar wat voor iemand zjou dat zjijn?” (Biegel, 47)

“Yesh Rat, but what kind of shomeone would that be?” (my translation)

In this example a lisp appeared at “yes,” while another one was lost in the verb “zijn”. I first thought of changing “shomeone” here into “guesht” but then I would lose the repetition of the

word “someone” and Rat had already repeated it before. Therefore I kept “someone,” and also kept the playfully formulated sentence, as “what kind of someone” is not the generally know way of saying this. If I would not have to take the context into consideration “what kind of person” would be more common. Because there are not many people in this novel, this would be even more unusual, therefore I chose “what kind of someone”. Rat thinks that it could be the wasp queen, who has woken up from her hibernation. Toad disagrees and answers:

“Wesjpen worden nooit wakker,” meende Pad. (Biegel, 47)

“Washpsh never wake up,” thought Toad. (my translation)

This sentence did not cause any further problems either, as I could easily find a translation suitable for Toad’s utterance. When Rat then answers that the gnome’s guest could also be a beautiful butterfly, Toad gets really excited and asks him: “Denk je, Rat?” (Biegel, 48) which gave me the opportunity to add in another lispng moment: “Do you think sho, Rat?”. Besides this dialogue with Toad, there are many more instances in the novel where Toad is talking and lispng, and some sentences would definitely cause more translation problems when translated into English.

The other characters, such as the wizards, princes and kobold have much more interesting names, especially when looking for an equivalent one in English. The passage I chose only contains the three wizards, the kobold and the characters mentioned above. However, I think it is important to have looked at all the names before translating the novel, or in this case, only a passage. The wizards have names that are difficult to pronounce when you first read them. In order to create a similar effect in English, and maintain the alliteration, sound association and rhyme, I used a different construction of consonants. The final translation, as displayed below, was also the first one I came up with.

“Zbor of Zbir?” vroeg hij. “Of Zwartgallige Zir?” (Biegel, 45)

“To Mort or Mirt?” he asked. “Or to Morbid Mir?” (my translation)

The reason why the names all start with an /m/ is because of the translation of “zwartgallig”.

When I had decided on “morbid,” it was only a matter of minutes before I had decided on the names Mort, Mirt and Mir. The names also maintain their mysteriousness and really describe the characters with one word. However, the following examples show another trait of the wizards, namely, their eyes. Apart from the eyes, the following sentence structure is extremely similar, and thus the reason for the names to rhyme and sound so similar makes a lot more sense, too.

Daar stond de tovenaar Zbor. Ik had hem nog nooit gezien; hij had ogen als de zon en keek dwars door me heen. Het brandde. (Biegel, 48)

There stood the wizard Mort. I had never seen him before; he had eyes like the sun and looked right through me. It burned. (my translation)

[...] en daar stond Zbir in een kaal kamertje. Ik had hem nog nooit gezien. Hij had ogen als bliksems die me troffen met elektrische pijn. (Biegel, 50)

[...] and there stood Mirt, standing in an empty room. I had never seen him before. He had eyes like lightning, which struck me with an electric pain. (my translation)

Daar zat Zwartgallige Zir. Ik had hem nog nooit gezien; zijn ogen waren een zompig moeras waarin je verstikte. (Biegel, 52)

There was Morbid Mir. I had never seen him before; his eyes were like a squelchy swamp in which you choked. (my translation)

The way in which the wizards are addressed by the fairy also pose a problem, similar to the one posed by the way the gnome addresses the fairy. However, due to the fact that these wizards are, like any wizard, old and wise, it is very logical that she would address them with “u” in Dutch. On the plus side, she also uses various titles and sometimes adds “tovenaar” when speaking to them.

“meneer Zbor” and “heer tovenaar Zbor” (Biegel, 49)

“mister Mort” and “Mr wizard Mort” (my translation)

“mijnheer Zbir,” “meneer Zbir” (Biegel, 50) and “meneer de tovenaar Zbir” (51)

“sir Mirt,” “sir Mirt,” “mister Mirt” and “mister wizard Mirt” (my translation)

“meneer Zir” (Biegel, 52), “meneer Zwartgallige Zir” (53)

“mister Mir” and “mister Morbid Mir” (my translation)

Any other time when the fairy says “u” in Dutch, I have added “mister”.

The ugly kobold also appears in this chapter. The kobold’s name, “Urukku,” also tells the readers what kind of character this is. Plus, the name can be pronounced in English, as such: /u:ru:ku:/. The additional /u/ in the end, causes the Dutch to elongate the /u/ sound. The /u/ sound in English is already long, therefore I deleted the last letter.

Urukku (Biegel, 45)

Uroku (my translation)

The rest of the characters do not appear in the passage I chose, but as mentioned before, it is important to look at the names of characters before translating an entire novel. But because it was such a fun task to find translations I have added them in this chapter. The translations of the “Erlenkoning” and the “Erlen” have already been discussed in the previous chapter, which is why I will only discuss the other characters briefly. It was most difficult to think of appropriate names for the elf princes. Because their names have a function in the text, it was necessary to find names that would do the same in the target language. When the fairy is looking for the princes but cannot find them she says “Isser-Isser en niet-niet” with every step (Biegel, 109). The giant hears her and asks “Is er niet? Wat is er niet? Zeg op!” (ibid.) This shows the pun in their names.

Prinsen Isserwel en Isserniet (Biegel, 77)

Princes Ishere and Nothere (my translation)

The giant's name should not create a problem in English, and therefore I would choose to preserve it.

Reus Imbar (Biegel, 103)

Giant Imbar (my translation)

The cat plays a significant role in the end of the story, as the old grandmother has bought him to get rid of the Rat. She had put out a mousetrap before, but that did not work. The cat's name is another nice Biegel invention. The name describes the animal as to what he is supposed to do. This name did not pose any further translation problems.

Rattepak (Biegel, 129)

Ratcatcher (my translation)

The humans in the story do not have names, nor does the wasp queen. This is most likely because they are flat characters. Biegel did not think names for the humans would make a necessary addition to the story, I think.

In the quote presented at the beginning of this chapter, Van Duin also mentions Biegel's use of magical numbers. This appears to be the case in this novel as well. The number seven is used a couple of times, which is known to be a lucky number in the Netherlands. However, I do not think that without knowing this, readers will not understand the text. Another recurring number is thousand; namely, there are a thousand frogs in the pond in the forest, the fairy can hear her echo through the thousand hallways in wizard Mirt's house, she thanks the wizards a thousand times, there are a thousand nightingales in Mir's magical wedding and the pot with the lily falls into a thousand pieces. These numbers do not pose any translation problems. However, I could not stop wondering if this is another intertextual reference to *1001 Nights*. Unfortunately I did not find any more literature on this subject and since the number itself does not pose any translation problems, I simply left it as it is.

Apart from the names Biegel invented, he invented many neologisms and used assonance, alliteration, onomatopoeia's, puns, rhyme, comparisons and repetitions. He played with the language. Most of the style figures mentioned are based on sound association between the words and the actions (*Claus-reading*, 49). Biegel said about his work: "Al schrijvend komt die alliteratie tevoorschijn. Ik lees het alleen over om te kijken of het ritmische een beetje klopt" (Van Os, 44). Biegel mastered these traditional authorial techniques thoroughly and had a creative mind, which led to the fact that his works are filled with imagery that fascinates the reader (41). Because of his creative mind and mastery of the style figures, he created many translation problems. The Dutch language is very rich and this poses a great challenge when translating such a text into English. The translation problems that arose will be discussed below.

Most of the words Biegel chose to describe the events in *Nachtverhaal* are not very complex. There are, however, two instances where words are used that might not be in the child reader's vocabulary yet. Even though these words are not used in the passage I chose to translate, it might prove to be interesting to discuss them briefly. The following sentences show the words I mean:

"Maar nu moet ik gaan voor het licht wordt. Is Acturus al op?" (Biegel, 95)

"... het schilderij van de Merapi..." (156)

In the first sentence, the gnome asks the fairy if "Acturus," a very bright star, has already appeared in the sky. The fairy has just finished another story and both characters are about to go to sleep. The gnome indirectly asks the fairy what time it is. The second sentence is uttered by the omniscient narrator who describes the grandmother's bedroom. In her room, apart from the bed and flower curtain, a painting of Mount Merapi is displayed. Mount Merapi is an active volcano on Java, Indonesia. It is very likely that child readers will still be able to understand the story without knowing what the words mean or what it refers to. However, because "Acturus" is

mentioned, we know that the gnome tells time by the position of the sun, moon and stars, and that the volcano symbolises life and death; whenever a volcano ruptures it brings death and life, too, according to Van Os (43). Another possibility is that the old grandmother is from Indonesian descent and therefore has this painting as a memory. The appearance of the grandmother is not specified anywhere, which leaves this up for guessing. These words should not pose any problems when translating, because I believe they could be presented to the readers of the target text in a similar way as they are presented to the target text readers.

The use of alliteration and assonance, however, does pose translation problems. Alliteration is “the repetition of a speech sound in a sequence of nearby words,” while assonance is “the repetition of identical or similar vowels – especially in stressed syllables – in a sequence of nearby words” (Abrams, 9). In my opinion, this extended use of speech sounds enhances the novel in this way in order to attract readers, and make it fun to the child audience to read. The audience will truly experience the novel. This is important because it allows young readers to immerse themselves in this book. Because Biegel combined the use of alliteration and assonance with repetition and rhyme, the translator is faced with a great challenge. These sentences are very much alive, and should be translated in a way that preserves this liveliness. The following sentence from the fairy’s narrative shows the use of all the aforementioned elements.

... en ik golfde langs bergen en bossen, over weiden en heiden... (Biegel, 50)

... and I rolled past mountains and forests, over meadows and moorlands... (my translation)

The first sentence shows the use of alliteration on the /b/, and assonance in /eiden/. As the Dutch language is very rich, it is easier to find words that rhyme, alliterate and have a meaning in the context as well, than it is to find equivalents with the same function in English. During the translation process I scribbled down many possible solutions for all four words: “mountains,

hills; forests, woods, trees; meadows, pasture, grasslands; heath and moorlands”. The most important thing is that I will achieve the effect that I aimed for, even though original words will be lost in translation. Another possibility is to change the words, and thus the scenery she passes. However, this must be done with the context in mind. In the end I chose “mountains, forests, meadows and moorlands” too keep most of the /m/ alliteration in. Another type of assonance is created by “forests and moorlands” as both words have a long /o/ in the beginning, and end with an /s/. The following sentence also displays a combination of alliteration and assonance, together with rhyme, and some neologisms along the way to allow the sentences to rhyme.

... bracht de weg me naar de bergen, over steen en been, langs ruis en bruis, hoger en hoger, over rotsen en botsen en klotsen en potsen tot de hoogste wots en daar bovenop stond een tovermanshuis met zijn spits in de wolken. (Biegel, 52)

... the road took me to the mountains, over stone and bone, past fuss and fizz, higher and higher, over cliffs and biffs and criffs and piffs up to the highest wiff and on top of it all stood a wizard house with its spire in the clouds. (my translation)

During the translation process, I made another list of words that could be possible translations: “stone, rock, gem; leg, limb, bone, feet; noise, murmur, sound, fuss; spume, fizz, foam and seethe”. After looking at the list, I realised that “stone, bone, fuss and fizz” would work very well in this sentence, plus, they are all words that fit into the context. This sentence also contains an example of assonant repetition and the use of neologisms. First, I tried to construct an enumeration by starting with “rocks” as a translation, and allowing the rest of the words to rhyme on it. Unfortunately actual existing words were made, which did not fit the context. I therefore changed some first letters and constructed another enumeration by starting with “cliffs”. By doing this I created a rhymed enumeration of English neologisms, which fit perfectly in this translation. The following example shows another sentence containing an enumeration which

contains rhyme and onomatopoeia at the end. This is also an example of the long sentences used in the narrative text. The fairy tells the gnome about her encounter with the three wizards. These passages are very lively and colourfully described. One of the most beautiful sentences comes from Morbid Mir's act of magic.

Hij begon allergeweldigst te toveren: de hele sterrenhemel als een bewegende zee van diamanten, een waterval van wijn, een goudgele honingval, een zilver-sputende fontein, een paleis op gouden pilaren, de zang van duizend nachtegalen, de aanblik van een enkele boterbloem, daaroverheen een denderende stoet ruiters en uit de grond rees een berg tot de hemel die veranderde in een reus, die veranderde in een draak, die veranderde in een muis, die veranderde in een slag, die veranderde in een tang, die veranderde in een pang!
En alles was weg. (Biegel, 53-54)

He used magic to make the most magnificent things: the complete starry sky became a moving sea of diamonds, a waterfall of wine, a golden waterfall of honey, a silver-spouting fountain, a palace built on golden pillars, the song of a thousand nightingales, the sight of a single buttercup, crushed by a roaring cavalcade, and then a mountain rose from the ground which turned into a giant, who turned into a dragon, who turned into a mouse, who turned into a snake, who turned into a rake, which turned into a pow! And everything was gone. (my translation)

The translation problems that arise from this passage are caused by the really long anaphoric enumeration, containing the phrase "die veranderde in". Plus, the wizard starts off with the sky, then a giant, then a dragon, and so on, changing the objects into smaller ones every time. The problem arises due to the rhymed last three words. The translation process is explained below.

However, Biegel also uses very short sentences, especially in dialogue. whilst others are extremely long. The long sentences occur most often in the narrative text. The short sentences

flow into one another by the use of full stops and comma's, which works well in Dutch. The many sentences that comprise this novel are all of different lengths. Some are very short, and sometimes do not even have a personal pronoun of a subject, while others are extremely long and go on and on, bound together by the use of comma's and conjunctions. In general, Biegel appears to have chosen "nonperiodic (or loose) sentences," which are sentences that follow one another quickly (Abrams, 312). The following sentence is an example of the use of very short sentences:

"Hier," zei de fee. "In je eigen huis. Aan de deur. Wordt geklopt." (Biegel, 46)

"Here," said the fairy. "In your own home. At the door. Someone knocked." (my translation)

The word order of the translation is different than it is in the source text and the sentences are therefore cut off at different parts. The structure is also different because the English version needs a pronoun. It needs to be clarified who knocked on the door.

The example of the longer sentence shown above also poses more translation problems because onomatopoeia are used. According to Abrams, onomatopoeia "designates a word or a combination of words, whose sound seems to resemble closely the sound it denotes," for example hiss, buzz and bang (207). These words used as onomatopoeia's can correspond to the denotations in various ways, in the passage I chose to translate only "pang" is used, which denotes to a sound (207).

... die veranderde in een slang, die veranderde in een tang, die veranderde in een pang!
(Biegel, 55)

... who turned into a snake, who turned into a rake, which turned into a pow! (my translation)

The problem in translating this was that "pang" rhymed with "tang," which rhymed with "slang". When starting with the English word snake, it is a possibility to work down the ladder; creating

“snake, rake, cake, etc”. Another solution would be to start with “pang” or “pow” and work back up. Possible translations would be: “cow, bow, pow”. In the end, I chose to use “snake” which would turn into a “rake” which would then turn into a “pow”. This did mean that the rhyme would be lost. Unfortunately it is not possible to preserve all style figures everywhere. In the rest of the novel, Biegel uses onomatopoeia when describing actions. The use of onomatopoeia encourages the child audience to experience the actions of the characters.

... *krtstj krtstj* terug naar de kelder... (Biegel, 12)

... blies de vlam puh-puh-puh uit... (20)

Hij geeuwde broeah-aaah... (43)

He yawned ouah-uah... (my translation)

“Braaaaah!” (Biegel, 56)

“Braaaaah!” (my translation)

Arggg! en Urggg! (127)

The first example shows us the sound that is made when Rat and Toad go upstairs and walk past the lath to visit the gnome. The second example shows the noise made when the gnome blows out his candle. The third one occurs in the selected passage, and it portrays the sound made when yawning. The fourth example is the sound made by Morbid Mir when he clears away the magical wedding, and the fifth shows the sounds Uruku makes when he is trying to get out of the ground. In order to find suitable translations for these problems, a translator needs to play with words. The use of onomatopoeia creates great opportunities for translators to be very creative. My final translation is directed at the target reader, he or she needs to be able to read it and make sense of it. Therefore, the translation “ouah-uah” was chosen.

The spells uttered by Mort and Mirt contain other sounds. The first example shows the spell muttered by Mort, in a way that the fairy cannot understand. She tells the gnome that she

did not hear any of the vowels that are known to her, or the reader for that matter. By naming all the consonants she did not hear, Biegel created another translation problem. A problem related to the language difference, because certain sounds, such as /eu/ and /ui/ are not written the same way in English. To solve this problem, I used the International Phonetic Alphabet in *Sounding Better* to find similar sounds, which could be used in this spell. That is how I came up with /oi/, /ea/ and /ou/, which can be found in the words choice, near and mouth. The singular vowels are the same in English and Dutch, so these could be preserved.

Geen a, geen E, geen I, geen O, geen U, ook geen EU, geen UI, geen AU... (Biegel, 49)

No A, no E, no I, no O, no U, no OI, no EA, no OU... (my translation)

Geen do, geen re, geen mi, geen fa, geen sol en ook geen bémol. (Biegel, 51)

No Do, no Re, no Mi, no Fa, no Sol and no La Ti Do. (my translation)

In the second example, the sounds do, re, mi, fa and sol are used to describe Mirt's utterances. The sounds are similar in English and are therefore perfect to use. The problem arose at the last utterance. The word Biegel used here is French, in the general known term used in Dutch is "mol". The English translation would therefore lead to "flat". However, this does not rhyme with "Sol," so I decided to continue the musical scale and finish with "La Ti Do," which does rhyme with "Sol".

Biegel also uses echoing in this passage. When the fairy arrives at the house of Mirt, she has to call in by yelling in a gigantic ear. Because there are many, many hallways, the words the fairy utters are resounded every time the fairy or the wizard say something. An echo is "a perception of a reflected sound wave" (Henderson, par. 2). These can vary in sound and length. It is necessary to preserve the echoing, and so I played with the English words to create a similar effect.

"Ik ben er!" riep ik.

sentence. An example taken from this novel when the dwarfs enter the rabbits' burrow during the cold winter, "Where are you-ou-ou?" (87), shows that Crampton translated this in a similar way. The Dutch version was probably "Waar ben je-je-je?" In the end, the importance lies in the fact that the reader realises that because of the big house the questions and answers echo, and not in how this sounds exactly, as long as it is pleasing to the eye and convincing. This problem is similar to Toad's speech impediment, which needs to be visible for the readers as well.

Biegel also introduced ambiguity to the novel. Ambiguity can lead to translation problems. Although it appears that Biegel introduced this phenomenon to change the narrative situation, it will be discussed in this chapter because of the word choice. There are two instances where a word uttered had two meanings. Both words, "weg" and "los" are ambiguous in their context in the source text, but there is no equivalent with the same connotation in English. The word "weg" is interpreted literally by the road, who attempts to take the fairy away when the wizards tell her to go away: "Weg!" riep hij (Biegel, 51). The first meaning of the word shows that each wizard in its turn calls the "weg" and it appears to take her away. Secondly, it could mean that the wizards tell the fairy to go away ('weggaan') and that at the same time the road ('weg') appears to take her along because he thought he was being called. "Weg" in the first instance means "go away" or "get out," or "go!". The second meaning of the word means "road," "path," "way," or "trail". The wizards could have said "go away" or "up up and away" for her to leave, but in Dutch it does come across as a threat, so "go" or "get out" would work better. The richness of the Dutch language allows for this ambiguity to occur. As "road" is the most common translation for the noun "weg," and seems to be the most logical choice in this context, I tried looking for a word that would either look or sound similar. The word "abroad" looks similar, but the sound is not similar. The second option, as stated before, is for the wizards to yell "Go!". By using this option the sound will be preserved and the road can easily appear because he would

have thought he was being called. Unfortunately, the reader will not be given the opportunity to see the ambiguity. Another option would be to add a few words to describe that the road though he was summoned, which would only need to happen once.

“Eén ding is genoeg, kindlief,” zei hij. “Weg!”

Plotseling was daar weer de weg. (Biegel, 50)

“One thing is enough dear child,” he said. “Now go!”

Suddenly, the road appeared again. As if he had been summoned. (my translation)

This solution would need to be discussed with the editor and Leonie Biegel, because it does involve an addition to the text. I do believe that this addition will add to the translation, and therefore I have chosen to add it.

The second example involves the word “los”. This word is used quite often throughout the novel; especially in Chapter Thirteen. In this instance, the word “los” is used for different actions, but does have a similar meaning. The narrative situation is interrupted here, too.

“Jaaah!” brulde hij. “Los!” Hij greep de fee beet in zijn takke-armen. “Urukkuu is los en –”

-

Maar de kabouter was opgesprongen. “Stil es!” riep hij. “Stil! Ik dacht...” Hij liep naar de deur van het poppenhuis, opende hem op een kier en richtte één oor naar buiten.

“Wat is er?” vroeg ze.

“Stil!” zei hij weer. “Ik dacht dat ik wat hoorde.”

De fee kwam naast hem “Wat dan?” vroeg ze.

“Ssst! Ik hoorde geschreeuw. Iemand schreeuwde *los*.”

“Welnee kaboutertje!” fluisterde ze. “Dat was ik! In mijn verhaal!”

“Nee!” Hij schudde zijn hoofd. “’t Was echt. ‘t kwam van beneden!” (Biegel, 127-128)

The intradiegetic narrator gets interrupted by the extradiegetic narrator in the form of the gnome,

who hears the same word, but in this case it is being called from downstairs. The fairy is telling the gnome about how Uruku was able to get out of the ground, because the water lily was in bloom again. At the same time Rat is caught by the cat and screams for help and that he is in pain. The gnome hears him scream “los”. A possible solution lies, yet again, on a phonetic level. The option of letting Uruku yell “I’m out” and Rat “ow” or “ouch” would enable the gnome to say that he heard something from downstairs. I do believe this would work out because the words sound very much alike.

4. Concluding remarks

The aim of this thesis was to find an adequate and acceptable translation for passage I chose to translate. Upon translating *Nachtverhaal*, the translation problems encountered are mostly related to the novel's style. Biegel's choice of words and the rhythm he created with those words is something very difficult to translate, as well as the way in which he allows his words to rhyme and alliterate. Other problems were related to the novel's intertextuality, namely that target readers are given the opportunity to recognise the intertextual references, and the narrative situation. The latter posed difficulties because the different characters and narrators all have their own way of narrating and speaking, which needs to be taken into the translation. By keeping in mind that the target audience exists of children and adults, the translation needs to allow both audiences to be able to enjoy it.

After studying Paul Biegel and *Nachtverhaal* I can say that I have learned a lot about him, about his work and about his style. My translation strategy is to let Biegel's style come through in English, and to translate the novel in such a way that it will seem as if it were originally written in English. By keeping the theories written about translation in mind, I was able to create a translation that is acceptable for the target text and reads fluently.

Another thing I learned during this thesis, is that translating into a language that is not your mother tongue is difficult. It is more difficult than translating into your mother tongue. Even though I have had my share of education in English, it is extremely difficult to translate literature into a language that is not your mother tongue. I am very glad I took on the challenge of translating *Nachtverhaal* into English, because I have learned a lot.

5. Translation

CHAPTER FIVE

The story of the Kingdom of Wizards; a knock on the door

By the time the gnome had woken up, it was already late in the afternoon. He yawned oouah-uah² and scratched his head with eight fingers, for he had an itch in his hair³. He slid out of his bed, dressed himself and stumbled down the stairs.

The blanket was still there on the couch, it showed a bump like someone was tucked in with it, but you couldn't see a head and no breath was moving. The gnome wanted to push it with his hands to see if it collapsed, through the tenuous⁴ fairy, but he didn't really dare to. And, he thought to himself, I will not know if she is lying underneath it. Maybe she is floating in the corner over there and looking at everything I do.

She should still leave anyway, he thought. She should leave tomorrow morning after she has told her story. It is very unpleasant to have someone invisible stay about the house. Who sees everything.

He went to wash himself in the kitchen. Afterwards, he made soup from his last cabbage leaf and a few drops of cream that he had ladled from the milk jug with an acorn shell. It had turned sour⁵. The gnome loved it.

² See chapter 3.3 about onomatopoeia's.

³ An addition of "he" was necessary here to preserve the rhythm of the sentence.

⁴ After looking into the word "ijl" I found this to be the best solution. A definition of this word is given earlier in the novel because the gnome does not know what "ijl" is. This helps the reader too and therefore this word works. A second option was "floaty" but I chose "tenuous" in the end because the physical consistency can hardly be perceived, which is what "tenuous" indicates (*Old English Dictionary*).

⁵ Because "zuur worden" can be translated as "to turn sour" I deleted the "room".

“I forget to do everything,” he mumbled. “My rounds through the house, getting food, everything. Early tomorrow morning, the fairy should really⁶–”

But at that very moment he heard her sweet voice from the living room: “Are you there, little gnome⁷? I slept really well on your sofa. Shall I light the candle?”

“Oh, eh... yes please!” cried the gnome. “Thank you⁸ for doing that, miss!”

He continued to stir his soup, but he could have hit himself with the wooden spoon. “I am much too friendly,” he hissed to himself. “Much too nice.”

“Yeaah?” cried the fairy. “What did you say? I can’t hear you!”

“Nothing!” said the gnome. “I mean, eh... will you continue to tell, miss? How you found the water lily, miss?”

“Of course,” she cried.

Did I say *miss* or *you* to her, just now? The gnome wondered. I don’t remember, oh darn⁹.

The soup was warm enough; he went to eat it inside where the fairy was sitting so nice and cosy, so innocent, so sweet. Why do I not like her, thought the gnome, and oh dear oh dear, she can probably see what I’m thinking. He turned his mind to the soup he was slurping off his spoon and immediately thought about the honey.

“Oh dear, oh dear, the honey,” he cried. “Honey for you miss! I forgot it again! Should I get you some miss, before you–”

She shook her head and smiled. “No, no, little gnome, not a chance. I’m not even hungry at all. We don’t eat much in the wintertime. Just like animals in hibernation.”

⁶ Due to the change of sentence structure, the sentence is cut off at a different word.

⁷ See chapter 3.3. about diminutives.

⁸ See chapter 3.3 about the form of address.

⁹ The Dutch word “verdorie” is euphemism of the word “verdomme”. Therefore I used a euphemism of the word “damn,” which is “darn” and I added “oh” because he is upset with himself for not remembering anything.

It gave the gnome a fright. Hibernation, that meant staying, just like the wasp queen, but he said: “I need to go downstairs anyway, to make my rounds, and then I will get it for you miss.”

She kept smiling at him; he took his dirty saucepan¹⁰ to the kitchen, washed it clean and took a seat next to her again.

“Well then,” she began, “I walked. And I walked and walked and walked until my feet hurt, but I didn’t find a water lily anywhere, I didn’t find water, or a lake, or a stream, or a pool¹¹. I did find something else, for I was already far past the edge of the forest and there lies, as you know, the Kingdom of Wizards.”

“What?” cried the gnome. “What?!” His eyes were shining with wonder and he leaned forward as if he wanted to have better view of what she was saying.

“The Kingdom of Wizards, little gnome,” the fairy said. “That is where I found myself, in the high summer grass filled with sorrel and crickets. I thought: how convenient, here they can repair my wings and find a water lily for me and – and maybe put a different expression of Uruku’s face, for when¹² I marry him...”

The gnome nodded. He could understand that. “Any luck¹³?” He asked.

“Be quiet now,” she said, “and listen, I will tell you:

¹⁰ Even though the source text does not specify what kind of pan it is, although it is a small one, I chose this translation because this certainly shows the readers that it is a small pan. The other option was “dirty little pan” but I did not like the way that fit in the sentence. By changing the “pannetje” into a “steelpannetje,” I maintained the rhythm in the sentence, and kept the connotation of a small pan.

¹¹ It is not standard to use “I found no”. Therefore, I changed the positive into a negative. The use of “or” helped the translation keep the same rhythm it has in the source text.

¹² At this point in her story, the fairy is still convinced that she will marry the kobold. Therefore I chose to use the word “when” instead of “if”.

¹³ By adapting this sentence, I believe I preserved Biegel’s style. Another option would have been “Did it work?” which will be similar to words and the sentence structure used later on in this passage when Morbid Mir asks her whether she is able to marry the kobold. However, preserving Biegel’s style is more important here and therefore I chose this translation.

<<I walked through the grass, it smelled very nice, and I came up to a road¹⁴. “Where do you want to go?” the road asked.

I didn’t understand him right away. “To the three wizards,” I said.

“Mort¹⁵ or Mirt” he asked. “Or Morbid Mir?”

“Mort,” I said.

“Get on then,” said the road.

I didn’t know what he meant.

“On me!” he cried impatiently. “Come on.”

I walked onto the road; I didn’t know which direction to take, but before I could think about that, he arched his back, so high that I slid down, and I kept sliding because the arched back rolled forward like a wave, faster and faster, that the scenery flashed by me, faster than I could have ever flown, until we reached a wizard’s house¹⁶. The windows were eyes, the door was a mouth and the porch above it a nose, but everything was shut and closed.

The road flattened his back and I got off, said thank you sir¹⁷ and walked towards the house.

“Wipe your feet, wipe your feet,” cried the doormat, and while I did, the nose above me sniffed at me to smell who I was, and the windows opened their eyes to see who I was, and then, slowly,¹⁸ very slowly, the mouth opened in a gaping yawn and said, “Aaaah! A fairy!”

I didn’t dare to enter. I saw a dark, red throat with a wet glistening uvula, hanging in front of it like a curtain. I’ll be swallowed down, I thought.

¹⁴ See chapter 3.3 for information on ambiguity in the text. The fact that this road can talk is very believable, as this is a fairy tale and the road is taking her to the Kingdom of Wizards.

¹⁵ See chapter 3.3 for information on the characters’ names.

¹⁶ The last part of the sentence seems grammatically incorrect. I changed the order of the sentence to maintain the rhythm of the sentence and translate into a grammatically correct sentence.

¹⁷ Addition of “sir” because the Dutch used “dank u wel”. To maintain the differences in forms of address, I chose to add “sir” in this instance. See chapter 3.3 for more information of forms of address.

¹⁸ I inserted this comma to maintain the rhythm in this long sentence.

“Come on,” said the gaping mouth. “Come in.” Someone is knocking on the door¹⁹. <<

Suddenly it went quiet.

“Someone is knocking on the door,” said the fairy.

The gnome blinked. “Huh, what?” He said. “Did you have to knock, miss?”

“Here,” said the fairy. “In your own home. On the door. Someone is knocking.”

The gnome needed to really shake his head terribly to get out of the story. Only then did he hear it himself. It gave him a terrible fright. “Oh heavens²⁰!” he cried. “Oh good heavens! Is it Saturday evening? Will it be Toad and – Oh no!”

He jumped up, blew out the candle and cried: “I’m not here!” But immediately realised that he had only made it worse and ridiculous by doing that, so he stumbled to the front door in the dark and cried: “Not tonight, er²¹, it er... It’s you right? Toad and Rat? Yes?”

“What are you mumbling about?” called Rat. “Come outside!”

The gnome opened the door a crack.

“You’re acting strange,” said Rat. “Get off, Toad.”

Toad slid down Rat’s back. The two of them pressed themselves on the gnome. “Can we not come in, or something?”

“Er... it’s not convenient tonight,” said the gnome.

“Oh. Why did you turn off the light?”

“I er... it blew out. Draught.”

“Draught?” said Rat. “Through a closed door?”

¹⁹ The transition between narrative situations is discussed in chapter 3.1.

²⁰ By using this translation, it does appear to be a very gentleman-like gnome, but I believe that Biegel meant for him to be gentleman-like.

²¹ To allow this sentence to be fluent, I gave the gnome a type of stutter. He does not want Rat and Toad to come in, and therefore makes up that he is not feeling well. In Dutch, this sentence has the interjection “zeg,” which works really well in Dutch, but does not in English. Therefore I introduced the interjection “er” a bit earlier, to show how hesitant the gnome is.

“Uh...” said the gnome.

“But I shee²² a light,” said Toad. “A shoft light.”

Rat peeked inside cheekily. His whiskers brushed against the gnome’s face. “You don’t say²³,” he said with a long aaaa filled with breath and yellow teeth. “The gnome has a secret, Toad. We’re not allowed to know.”

The gnome was really nervous. “N-no,” he said in a high voice. “No secret at all. I-I don’t feel very well tonight. I wanted to go to bed early.”

Rat gave the gnome a mean look, and Toad cried, “Look! The candle! The candle ish lit again!”

“It is indeed,” said Rat. “You know what, Toad? Our gnome has a guest.”

“A guesht?”

“Yesh, a guesht,” repeated Rat with a lisp. “A candle doesn’t just light by itself. Someone does it. Someone who is visiting the gnome, and who we’re not allowed to meet²⁴. We are not good enough.”

“Yesh Rat, but what kind of shomeone would that be?” Toad asked loudly.

“I thought,” said Rat, keeping his eyes fixed on the gnome as he talked to Toad, “I thought maybe it’s the wasp queen. Woken up from hibernation.”

“Washpsh never wake up,” thought Toad.

“Or maybe,” said Rat, “a late butterfly came over. A beautiful big red and black butterfly²⁵.”

²² Toad has a speech impediment, he talks with a lisp. See chapter 3.3 for more information about this impediment.

²³ Rat really elongates the /a/ sound in words. See chapter 3.3 for more information about this.

²⁴ I chose for a translation that would allow the readers to understand how Rat feels. By altering the literal translation into a freer one, I believe I managed to do so.

²⁵ This cultural specific item did pose some problems. First I tried to find out what kind of butterfly it was. After doing some research online, I came to the conclusion that Biegel probably meant the Red Admiral, a butterfly with black wings that are intersected by red bands. Due to the fact that I will never be 100%

“Tjehee, tjehee, tjehee²⁶!” Toad uttered while slavering, with a mouth wide enough to swallow such a butterfly at once. “Do you think sho, Rat?”

“Probably,” said Rat. “Is it true, gnome?”

The gnome didn’t answer. He looked from Rat to Toad and from Toad to Rat, and suddenly said: “I have never heard you two not argue for such a long time.” And he shut the door. He²⁷ simply shut it in their face. He was shaking all over after his bravery. How did I dare do that all of a sudden? he thought, and without listening whether the two of them had left or stayed, he walked back to the living room²⁸.

“I lit the candle again,” said the fairy. “Was someone at the door?”

“Er, yes,” said the gnome. “But they have left again. Do continue²⁹, miss.”

“But you can let your friends in,” said the fairy. “I will not stand³⁰ in your way. I’m not *standing* in your way am I³¹, little gnome? You have to tell me the truth.”

“No!” cried the gnome. “No no, not at all. You should continue the story, miss. You were standing in front of the house with a mouth as a door, miss, it was the house of a wizard³². And then?”

certain, I kept the same vague description: a red and black butterfly, so that the readers are able use their imagination.

²⁶ Toad is smiling and laughing because he believes that the gnome’s guest is a butterfly, and that is one of the things toads love to eat. In Dutch the “Tjeej, tjeej, tjeej” comes across as if he is laughing but drooling as well, I hope I created the same image here.

²⁷ I added the pronoun to keep the sentence grammatically correct and maintain the rhythm.

²⁸ I made the room explicit by calling it a living room. However, “kamer” generally refers to the “woonkamer” in Dutch, anyway.

²⁹ The Dutch sentence is very direct. To keep the level of politeness in the translation I chose “Do continue, miss”. This way I was able to keep “miss” and keep the sentence short.

³⁰ To keep the same type of idiom, I changed the verb, even though “sitting” would have been grammatically correct. In my opinion, this is more vague, which is what the source text implies in my opinion.

³¹ By adding “am I” to the end of the fairy’s question, I created a question to which the gnome cannot say yes. The source text seems to imply this as well.

³² By changing the verb “wonen” into the noun “house” the message will remain the same, only by using other words the rhythm of the sentence is maintained.

The fairy smiled. And continued³³:

<<I didn't dare to enter the mouth, but all of a sudden a sticky tongue came out and swallowed me, straight past the red uvula into the dark throat. I fell into the depths, I spread my wings but that didn't work, I was fluttering with tatters³⁴ and fell down into a field of sweet clover. There stood the wizard Mort. I had never seen him; he had eyes like the sun and looked right through me. It burned.

“Child,” he exclaimed. “Why are you drifting³⁵? Can't you fly properly?”

I said: “My wings are broken.”

He couldn't see it with his solar eyes, he had to touch them. “Ah! Did you fly into a blackberry bush?”

“No mister Mort,” I said. “But, could you repair them, sir? Please?”

“Repair,” he cried. “Repair!?! Child, what we do is use magic.”

“I'm sorry, mister Mort.” I said. “Could you use magic³⁶ to repair them, sir? Please?”

He nodded. He closed his eyes. He felt my wings. His magic fingers passed along the rips and tatters softly and gently, while his mouth was muttering³⁷ miraculous words. I heard vowels and consonants that don't exist for us. No A, no E, no I, no O, no U, no OI, no EA, no OU, but a

³³ By using “continued” I am implying that she has already started telling her story, which is what happened before they were interrupted.

³⁴ By choosing “fluttering” and “tatter” I was able to keep the alliteration. In the source text the words both begin with the same letters, but now the alliteration has shifted to the middle.

³⁵ Due to English punctuation rules I added a question mark. I don't believe it is necessary in Dutch, as the wizard it just making a remark.

³⁶ The verb “toveren” in Dutch is a tricky verb. This again shows how rich the Dutch language is. The first thing that comes to mind is “use magic”. Unfortunately, buy only using “can you use magic” it doesn't bring across the same humour as the Dutch word does, in combination with the verb “maken”. I also tried the verb “conjure up” but that did not bring across the same connotation either. In the end, I decided to use a combination of “use magic” and “repair”. Unfortunately a great coincidence of events is lost here.

³⁷ I altered the words in the translation to let it make sense. I remembered that Professor Snape, in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, was muttering non-stop (140). This sentence in *Nachtverhaal* reminded me of the muttering, and thought it fit perfectly here. On top of that I created another use of alliteration with the /m/.

– a – a vowel³⁸ that I cannot pronounce, because I don't speak wizard. But it helped. With his last whispers, which sounded like the singing of a nightingale, I could feel everything on my back attaching itself again to how it was. I could flap again and flutter³⁹, and rise and descend and drift.

“Oh!” I cried. “Thank you sir! Thank you sir, thank you sir a thousand times, Mr wizard Mort!”

He opened his eyes again, it burned through me, but I cried, “Please, I'm looking for a water lily, do you know sir–”

But he turned around as if I no longer existed. “One thing is enough dear child,” he said. “Now go⁴⁰!”

Suddenly, the road appeared again. As if he had been summoned. It wriggled underneath me and asked: “Where to?”

I said: “To Mirt,” and the road arched its back and I rolled past mountains and forests, over meadows and moorlands and foaming rivers⁴¹, for one day and one night, until he set me down at another wizard house. This one had really big ears, in which you had to cry that you were there.

“I'm here!” I cried.

It resounded through a thousand hallways and the echo said hereiam-hereiam-hereiam⁴²,
but through it sounded who-oowho-oowho?

I cried: “a fairy” and the echo said a fairy-fairy-airy-airy!

“Oooh!” it sounded through, “Come on in-oninonin!”

³⁸ I inserted “vowel” to maintain the fluency of the sentence. See chapter 3.3 for more information on the sounds muttered by the wizards.

³⁹ I introduced another use of alliteration with “flap and flutter”.

⁴⁰ The fact that the road appears when the wizards scream “Go!” is explained in chapter 3.3.

⁴¹ See chapter 3.3 for more information on the use of alliteration and assonance.

⁴² See chapter 3.3 for more information on echoing and resounding.

I climbed into the big ear and began to wander through the thousand hallways. It looked like a palace: everything was nacreous, infinite and as slippery as glass. I went to the left and to the right, I cried sir Mirt, are you there sir? Sir-ir-ir.

And his voice answered: Here-ere-ere. The sounds came from all sides, I opened one door, two doors, three doors, and there was Mirt, standing in an empty room. I had never seen him before. He had eyes like lightning, which struck me with an electric pain.

“Child,” he said. “Fairy child, what brings you here?”

I couldn’t answer until he closed his eyes. “Please,” I said, “mister Mirt, a water lily. I’m looking for a water lily. A white one. Could you use magic to make one for me sir? Please?”

“Magic,” he cried. “Magic!? A living plant? Fairy child, do you really think that *life* can be made by using magic?”

I became rather shy⁴³.

“I could obtain a living thing⁴⁴ somewhere, at the most,” he said. “What kind of lily do you want? One from the blue ponds of the Emperors of China? One from the white ponds of the Emperor of Japan? Or one from the dark pools of the Amazon?”

I thought about the forest pond with its dark water and I said, “The last one please, mister wizard Mirt. The one from the Amazon, please. Please.”

He turned away from me, opened his lightning eyes and started singing tones that we don’t know. No Do, no Re, no Mi, no Fa, no Sol and no La Ti Do⁴⁵. He sang a tone – tones⁴⁶ that I

⁴³ Before coming to this conclusion, I also thought about the translation: “I turned rather pink”. This would also let readers know that she became shy or maybe a little embarrassed because she, apparently, asked a stupid question. In the end I did choose this translation because it stays closer to the source text sentence.

⁴⁴ I changed the noun “life” into “a living thing”. I did this to create a grammatically correct sentence, which also remained fluent.

⁴⁵ See chapter 3.3 for more information on the wizards’ spells.

cannot sing because I don't have a wizard's throat. But it helped. With the last note, a beautiful white water lily appeared, still dripping wet, with a long stem and thin white roots at the end, she was perfect because Mirt had sang gently and carefully.

"Oh," I cried. "Sir Mirt! What a beauty!"

He used magic to make a bowl of water – with his eyes closed to not let it boil immediately – to keep the lily in. She fit in it with her roots turned seven times, and I thanked Mirt a thousand times.

"Now go," he said.

"Yes," I said. "Yes, but I wanted to ask something about U... about Uru–"

"Go!" he cried.

And there in the empty room, the road appeared again⁴⁷. He bulged the floor and washed⁴⁸ me away through the window, forward on its high arched back. "Where to?" he asked. "Where to?"

I cried: "To the forest. To the pond. To Uruku!" For I had my water lily, and that was most important.

But from the mountains came a voice, sharp as glass, which cut right through mine: "Come heerrre!"

It was the voice of Morbid Mir. And while I held the bowl with the water lily as straight as possible to minimise the spill, the road took me to the mountains, over stone and bone, past fuss

⁴⁶ This was a similar problem to the one posed after the spell uttered by Mort. The word "een" cannot be translated literally in this case; therefore, I changed the word order around and added "tone-tones".

⁴⁷ I added "again" to this sentence because of the missing ambiguity in the Dutch word "weg". The addition of "again" shows that the road appears when someone screams "go". See chapter 3.3 for more information on the use of ambiguity.

⁴⁸ I chose an equivalent of the action described to allow the sentence to remain fluent. Instead of using the action of rolling waves, I opted for the washing away of water. Therefore I remained close to the source text and the fluency is maintained.

and fizz, higher and higher, over cliffs and biffs and criffs and piffs up to the highest wiff⁴⁹ and on top of it all stood a wizard house with its spire in the clouds. There was a rope, which wriggled itself around me and pulled me up to the top of the spire. There was Morbid Mir. I had never seen him before; his eyes were like a squelchy swamp⁵⁰ in which you choked.

“What do you need that flower for⁵¹?” he asked.

“Oh, er...” I said. “That lily is for in the forest pond, mister Mir. To get Uruku out again. Isn’t that how you meant it sir? Please?”

The wizard began to laugh sneeringly. “Ha, do you think it will work?”

“I hope so, mister Mir.”

“That lily will long be dead before you get back to that pond over there.”

“I am keeping her very wet, mister Mir. I will add water on the way.”

“Well well! And if she’ll still be alive, then what you do want, tiny fairy?”

“Then I will plant her on the bottom and then Uruku will get out of the ground. That’s how you made it using magic, sir.”

“Yes yes! And if he gets out, then what?”

“Then we’ll get married, Uruku and I.”

It made him laugh again. It was a sly⁵² laugh. “A kobold and a fairy getting married! Oh oh! Do you think it will work?”

“Why not, mister Mir? Please?”

“Because it can’t work. But if it could, then what?”

“Then we would have children⁵³, mister Mir.”

⁴⁹ See chapter 3.3 for more information on the use of assonance, alliteration and rhymed repetitions.

⁵⁰ I used this instance to introduce another use of alliteration.

⁵¹ I altered the sentence structure to let it bring across the same message as the source text does.

⁵² I have interpreted “een zielig lachje” as a “geniepig lachje” as I do think his laugh is somewhat sarcastic. That is how I came up with “sly”.

“That will not happen, not happen at all. But if it happened, then what?”

“Then Death⁵⁴ would come,” I said. “And he would take us, mister Morbid Mir.”

This made him laugh louder than ever. “Death,” he cried. “I have never heard anything more impossible⁵⁵! Do you really think that Death will take a fairy? Or a kobold? Or a witch? Or a giant? Or a dwarf? Or a wizard? Phahahaaa⁵⁶! If that were true, fairy-dear, if that were only true... We will live eternally, without ever being able to rest, without ever hoping of being able to rest, without...” He ran out of things to say.

Then, I said really carefully: “But mister Morbid Mir, can’t... can’t you use magic sir?”

That caused him to burst. Like a flood. “Magic,” he cried. “Ah! I can use magic to make anything! Come with me, fairy! Come on!” He pulled me down along the rope, with such fury that I fluttered after him like a string, and once we were down on the bare plain of the Kingdom of Wizards, he put me down. “Look,” he cried. “Look and see, fairy. See and observe.”

He used magic to make the most magnificent things⁵⁷: the complete starry sky became a moving sea of diamonds, a waterfall of wine, a golden waterfall of honey, a silver-spouting fountain, a palace built on golden pillars, the song of a thousand nightingales, the sight of a single buttercup, crushed by a roaring cavalcade, and then⁵⁸ a mountain rose from the ground which

⁵³ My first translation was “offspring,” however, I do not think that this would fit in the context of target text. My second draft translation was “children”. In my opinion this fits better.

⁵⁴ I used a capital letter for “Death” as well. This personification comes back throughout the novel.

⁵⁵ This sentence created a translation problem because of the phrase “meets onmogelijke”. A literal translation would not suit the context and therefore I looked at it from a different perspective.

⁵⁶ This use of sounds really shows how hard Mir is laughing at what the fairy is proposing. I have not altered the spelling of this laugh, because it fits in the English language as well.

⁵⁷ I had to change the word forms to make a grammatically correct sentence in Dutch. Due to the overwhelming use of magic, this sentence caused a translation problem. See chapter 3.3 for more information on the use of rhyme and onomatopoeia.

⁵⁸ I added the comma and “then” to be able to maintain this beautiful long sentence.

turned into a giant, who turned into a dragon, who turned into a mouse, who turned into a snake, who turned into a rake, which turned into a pow⁵⁹! And everything was gone.

“Now it’s your turn, fairy⁶⁰!” he cried. “Your turn! I will magically turn you into a bride!”

He didn’t mumble any words, he didn’t sing any songs, he just closed his swampy eyes for a second and instantly a white veil folded around my head, a white dress with a long train around my body, a bouquet of white lilies appeared in my left hand and in my right I got a twisted branch, which was supposed to change into my kobold.

“Groom and bride!” Morbid Mir cried. “Turn around!”

Behind us I saw a parade of wedding guests: nymphs, naiads, spirits and animals, twelve dragonflies carried my train and with every step flowers shot up from the ground. But it wasn’t real, it wasn’t real, it was magic, and a sheep was turned into a minister to marry us and we said yes I do and we had to kiss each other but the kobold’s branchy cheeks were rough, and⁶¹ they scraped my lips and Morbid Mir cried: “Well then, well then, does it work or doesn’t it?”

I did not know an answer. Music started to play for the groom and bride to dance on, but the kobold’s wooden feet stepped on my toes, it hurt and I tripped and Morbid Mir said: “Well then, does it work or doesn’t it?”

I could not answer this either and he took an axe, cut off a branch of my branchy groom and chopped it into pieces, which changed into little kobolds.

“Children,” he yelled. “Are they, or aren’t they?”

I did not know, it was all magic and I thought: now he’ll magically make Death appear, but it didn’t happen, he couldn’t, his eyes could not look that far. “Up to the door,” he yelled. “We can

⁵⁹ This translation problem posed by the use of alliteration and rhyme is analysed further in chapter 3.3.

⁶⁰ I chose to change this sentence because a literal translation is not appropriate here. The message is still the same, but I created it by using more words.

⁶¹ I inserted “and” to maintain the rhythm of the sentence.

get up to the door of Death, but not behind it. We're not allowed to come or look there, not even through a crack. Not even through the keyhole. We are not allowed to know anything, nothing nothing nothing, fairy," and with a loud "Braaaaah" he cleared the whole wedding off the plain, the dancing nymphs, the naiads, the spirits and animals, the witches, the giants, the dwarfs, they faded away while dancing and prancing⁶², the music weakened and finally I was left alone with Morbid Mir.

"Well then fairy?" he asked. "Well then?"

I answered that it hadn't worked by using magic, but that it would maybe work in real—"

He interrupted me angrily: "Then leave!" he cried. "Leave, little know-it-all⁶³ fairy, and take your white lily! Go! Go! Go!"

Immediately I felt the road underneath me; he arched even higher than ever before, I hardly had time to grab the pot with the lily;⁶⁴ the water splashed and spilled while the arched back washed me away like a tidal wave, out of the Kingdom of Wizards, and dumped me somewhere in a wasteland.

Half of the water had been lost; the lily became thirsty and hung her head. I took off carefully with my magically made wings, but the bowl was too heavy, I couldn't carry on in the air for long, the edge of the woods were as far as I could come, I had to come down and I landed with a bang causing half of the water to splash over the side. The lily had little to drink and hung her head down far and almost snapped her neck.

⁶² In Dutch Biegel used an neologism here, however, there is a great English word that perfectly fits the context and rhymes with "dancing" and that is "prancing". While all these creatures were dancing and prancing, the wizard wipes them off the table, so to speak.

⁶³ The addition of "little" exaggerates the wizard's interruption. Because Biegel appeared to be fond of exaggerating, I think he would allow me to do this here too. It only adds to the fact that the fairy is a little know-it-all, according to Morbid Mir.

⁶⁴ I changed the comma into a semicolon to bring a pause into this sentence, which, like the action it describes, moves very quickly.

I walked into the forest, as fast as I could, holding the pot with my arms stretched in front of me to spill as little as possible, but occasionally some drops splashed onto the ground. It was very heavy, very heavy and the pond was yet very far, very far, but it had to work, it had to! I walked and walked, and thought I saw the pond with Uruku bent over the water like a weeping willow already, and I made haste and tripped over a root. The pot fell out of my hands and onto the ground into a thousand pieces; the lily lay there, tainted and dying. But I picked her up carefully, wound the stem around my arm seven times, took the roots in my mouth that they wouldn't dry out and ran forwards without breathing. When I finally reached the pond, the flower was weak and had no sign of life, but I let the roots in water carefully anyway, wound the stem from my arm so that she was upright and laid the flower onto the soft surface of the pond carefully.

Would the lily make it? There was nothing left to do but to wait. To wait...⁶⁵<<

But at the word *wait* the fairy became tenuous. The gnome saw it happen right in front of him. She yawned terribly, her mouth wide open and she⁶⁶ leaned back in the chair and while he looked at her he saw the dresser appear vaguely through the fairy, and just shortly afterwards,⁶⁷ he saw the dresser really clear and sharp, like a cloud of steam had been there and had now dissolved.

“Fairy!” he called to the empty chair. “Er, miss fairy... er...”

Now what, he thought, now what? Would she fly away and not come back? Or would she stay and reappear in the chair this evening? To leave then? A touching farewell? After two days? Or three? Or four? Had she been his guest for four days? The gnome hit himself against his forehead. What should I do, he thought, what should I do? The fairy had not finished telling her

⁶⁵ This is an example of a cliffhanger. The fairy stops her stories, even if she want to or not, at very exciting moments.

⁶⁶ I added the pronoun “she” to maintain the rhythm.

⁶⁷ The addition of this comma is used to maintain the rhythm and fluency of the sentence.

story, not by far⁶⁸, he was aware of that, and he had to confess that he had become more and more curious about what happened next. I want to know, thought the gnome. I want to know. She has to stay to continue her story.

He blew out the candle and went to bed. Stay, he thought with his head crushed in the pillows. Do I really want that? Or does she make me want it? Am I becoming a magical gnome?

But he was exhausted and fell asleep.

⁶⁸ The addition of “, not” provides the reader with a bit more space to breath before finishing this chapter. It also redefines the fact that the fairy has a lot more to tell, to keep the reader enthusiastic.

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7. Appendix

7.1 Source Text

Nachtverhaal by Paul Biegel

VIJFDE HOOFDSTUK

Het verhaal van het Rijk der Tovenaars; klop op de deur

Toen de kabouter wakker werd, was het al laat in de middag. Hij geeuwde broeah-aaah en krabde zich met acht vingers op zijn kop, want er zat kriebel in zijn haar. Hij liet zich uit zijn bed glijden, kleedde zich aan en stommelde de trap af.

Het dekentje lag nog op de bank, het lag in een bobbel alsof er iemand eens toegedekt was, maar je zag geen hoofd en er bewoog geen adem. De kabouter wilde er met zijn hand op duwen om te kijken of de bobbel inzakte, door de ijle fee heen, maar hij durfde toch niet echt. En, dacht hij bij zichzelf, dan weet ik nog niet of ze er ook onder ligt. Misschien zweeft ze wel daar in de hoek en kijkt naar alles wat ik doe.

Ze moet toch maar weg, dacht hij. Morgenochtend als ze haar verhaal verteld heeft moet ze weg. Het is veel te akelig om een onzichtbaar iemand over de vloer te hebben. Die alles ziet.

Hij ging zich wassen in de keuken. Daarna maakte hij soep van zijn laatste koolblad met een paar druppels room die hij met een eikeldop uit de melkkan had geschept. Zure room was het geworden. De kabouter hield ervan.

“Ik vergeet alles,” mompelde hij. “M’n ronde door het huis, eten halen, alles. De fee moet echt meteen morgenochtend –”

Maar op dat ogenblik hoorde hij uit de woonkamer haar lieve stem: “Ben je daar kaboutertje? Ik heb zo lekker geslapen op je sofa. Zal ik de kaars vast aansteken?”

“O uh... ja graag!” riep de kabouter terug. “Fijn dat u dat doet!”

Hij roerde verder in zijn soep, maar hij kon zich met de pollepel wel voor zijn kop slaan. “Ik ben veel te vriendelijk,” siste hij tegen zichzelf. “Veel te aardig.”

“Jaaa?” riep de fee. “Wat zij je? Ik versta je niet!”

“Niks!” zei de kabouter. “Ik bedoel uh... gaat u verder vertellen, straks? Hoe u die waterlelie hebt gevonden?”

“Natuurlijk!” riep ze.

Zei ik nou *u* tegen haar of *je*? vroeg de kabouter zich af. Ik weet het niet meer, verdorie.

De soep was warm genoeg, hij ging het binnen opeten en de fee zat er zo gezellig, zo onschuldig, zo lief. Wat heb ik toch tegen haar, dacht de kabouter, en o jee o jee, ze ziet vast wat ik denk. Hij richtte zijn gedachten op de soep die hij van de lepel slurpte en moest ineens denken aan de honing.

“O jee, o jee, de honing!” riep hij. “Honing voor u! Wéér vergeten. Zal ik niet eerst wat gaan halen voor u –”

Ze schudde lachend haar hoofd. “Nee nee kaboutertje, geen denken aan. Ik heb helemaal geen honger. Wij eten haast niets ’s winters. Net als dieren in hun winterslaap.”

De kabouter schrok. Winterslaap, dat betekende overblijven, zoals de wespenkoningin, maar hij zei: “Ik moet toch naar beneden, het huis rond, en dan haal ik het voor u.”

Ze bleef naar hem lachen; hij bracht zijn vuile pannetje naar de keuken, waste het schoon en kwam weer bij haar zitten.

“Goed dan,” begon ze te vertellen, “ik liep dus. En ik liep en liep en liep tot mijn voeten pijn deden, maar een waterlelie vond ik nergens, ik vond zelfs geen water, geen vijver, geen beek, geen poel. Ik vond wel iets anders, want ik was al ver voorbij de grenzen van het bos en daar ligt, zoals je weet, het Rijk der Tvenaars.”

“Wat?” riep de kabouter. “Wat?!” Zijn ogen glommen van de geweldigheid en hij leunde naar voren alsof hij nog beter wilde zien wat ze vertelde.

“Het Rijk der Tvenaars, kaboutertje,” zei de fee. “Daar kwam ik terecht, in het hoge gras van de zomer vol zuring en krekels. Ik dacht: dat komt goed uit, hier kunnen ze mijn vleugels heel maken en een waterlelie voor me vinden en – en misschien Urukku een ander gezicht geven, voor als ik met hem trouw...”

De kabouter knikte. Dat begreep hij wel. “Is het gelukt?” vroeg hij.

“Stil nu,” zei ze, “en luister, dan zal ik je vertellen:

<< Ik liep door het gras, het rook zo lekker, en ik kwam aan een weg. “Waar wil je heen?” vroeg de weg.

Ik begreep het niet zo gauw. “Naar de drie tovenaars,” zei ik.

“Zbor of Zbir?” vroeg hij. “Of Zwartgallige Zit?”

“Zbor,” zei ik.

“Stap op,” zei de weg.

Ik wist niet wat hij bedoelde.

“Op me!” riep hij ongeduldig. “Vooruit.”

Ik liep de weg op; ik wist niet welke richting ik moest nemen, maar voor ik verder kon denken zette hij een hoge rug, zo steil dat ik naar beneden gleed, en ik bleef glijden want de hoge rug ging als een golf vooruit, sneller en sneller, zodat het landschap langs me heen flitste, sneller dan ik ooit had kunnen vliegen, tot we kwamen aan een tovermanshuis. De ramen waren ogen, de deur was een mond en het afdak daarboven een neus, maar alles was dicht en gesloten.

De weg deed zijn rug plat en ik stapte af, zei dank u wel en liep naar het huis.

“Voeten vegen, voeten vegen!” riep de deurmat, en terwijl ik het deed, snoof de neus boven me om te ruiken wie ik was, en de ramen deden hun ogen open om te zien wie ik was, en toen, langzaam heel langzaam, ging de mond gapend open en zei: “Aaaah! Een fee!”

Ik durfde niet naar binnen. Ik zag een donkerrood keelgat met een nat glinsterende huid die er als een gordijn voor hing. Daar word ik opgeslokt, dacht ik.

“Vooruit,” zei de gapende mond. “Binnentreden.” Er wordt hier geklopt.<<

Het bleef opeens stil.

“Er wordt hier geklopt,” zei de fee.

De kabouter knipperde met zijn ogen. “He, wat?” zei hij. “Moest u aankloppen?”

“Hier,” zei de fee. “In je eigen huis. Aan de deur. Wordt geklopt.”

De kabouter moest vreselijk met zijn kop schudden om uit het verhaal te raken. Toen pas hoorde hij het zelf. En schrok ontzettend. “O hemeltje!” riep hij. “O lieve hemel! Is het zaterdagavond? Zijn dat Pad en – Oh nee!”

Hij sprong op, blies de kaars uit en riep: “Ik ben er niet!” Maar meteen begreep hij dat het daarmee alleen maar erger en idioter werd, dus hij stommelde in het donker naar de voordeur en riep: “Vanavond niet zeg, het eh... Jullie zijn het toch? Pad en Rat? Ja?”

“Wat zeg je allemaal?” riep Rat. “Kom eens tevoorschijn!”

De kabouter opende de deur op een kiertje.

“Wat doe jij raar,” zei Rat. “Ga er eens af, Pad.”

Pad liet zich van Rats rug afglijden. Met z’n tweeën drongen ze op de kabouter toe. “Mogen we er niet in, soms?”

“Eh... vanavond schikt het niet,” zei de kabouter.

“O. Waarom deed je het licht uit?”

“Ik eh... het woei uit. Tocht.”

“Tocht?” zei Rat. “Door een dichte deur?”

“Uh...” zei de kabouter.

“Maar d’r sjchijnt licht,” zei Pad. “Zjwak licht.”

Rat gluurde brutaal naar binnen. Zijn snorharen streken de kabouter in het gezicht. “’t Is nog waar ook,” zei hij met een lange aaaa vol adem en gele tanden. “De kabouter heeft een geheim, Pad. Dat mogen wij niet weten.”

De kabouter werd doodzenuwachtig. “N-nee hoor,” zei hij met een kopstemmetje. “Helemaal geen geheim. Ik-ik ben niet erg lekker vanavond. Ik wou vroeg naar bed en zo.”

Rat keek de kabouter vals aan, en Pad riep: “Kijk nou! De kaarsj! De kaarsj gaat weer aan!”

“Waarachtig!” zei Rat. “Weet je wat het is, Pad? Onze kabouter heeft bezoek.”

“Bezoek?”

“Bezoek ja,” herhaalde Rat met een lispel. “Zo’n kaars gaat niet vanzelf weer aan. Dat doet iemand. Iemand die bij de kabouter op bezoek is, en waar wij niet bij mogen. Waar wij te min voor zijn.”

“Ja Rat, maar wat voor iemand zjou dat zzijn?” vroeg Pad erg hardop.

“Ik dacht,” zei Rat en hij keek de kabouter strak aan terwijl hij tegen Pad praatte, “ik dacht misschien de koningin der wespen. Waker geworden uit haar winterslaap.”

“Wesjpen worden nooit wakker,” meende Pad.

“Of misschien,” zei Rat, “is er nog een late vlinder gekomen. Een mooie grote rood-zwarte vlinder.”

“Tjeej, tjeej, tjeej!” bracht Pad kwijlerig uit, met een bek die breed genoeg was om zo’n vlinder geheel op te slokken. “Denk je, Rat?”

“Vast,” zei Rat. “Is het zo, kabouter?”

De kabouter gaf geen antwoord. Hij keek van Rat naar Pad en van Pad naar Rat, en opeens zei hij: “Ik heb jullie nog nooit zo lang achter elkaar geen ruzie horen maken.” En hij deed de deur dicht. Gewoon dicht in hun gezicht. Hij was helemaal beverig van zijn dappere daad. Hoe durf ik dat opeens? dacht hij, en zonder verder te luisteren of die twee weggingen of bleven staan liep hij terug naar de kamer.

“Ik heb de kaars weer aangestoken,” zei de fee. “Was daar iemand aan de deur?”

“Eh ja,” zei de kabouter. “Maar ze zijn weer weg. Vertelt u nou verder.”

“Maar je kunt je vrienden best binnen later hoor,” zei de fee. “Ik zal je niet in de weg zitten. Ik *zit* je toch niet in de weg, kaboutertje? Dan moet je het eerlijk zeggen.”

“Nee!” riep de kabouter. “Nee nee, helemaal niet. U moet verder vertellen. U stond voor het huis met een mond als deur, en er woonde een tovenaars. En toen?”

De fee glimlachte. En vertelde:

<<Ik durfde helemaal niet naar binnen in die mond, maar opeens kwam er een kleverige tong naar buiten en ik werd opgeslokt, voorbij de rode huid het donkere keelgat in. Ik viel in de diepte, ik sloeg mijn vleugels uit maar ze deden het niet goed, het werd een gefladder met flarden en ik viel neer in een veld vol zoete klaver. Daar stond de tovenaars Zbor. Ik had hem nog nooit gezien; hij had ogen als de zon en keek dwars door me heen. Het brandde.

“Kind!” riep hij uit. “Wat zwalk je. Kun je niet behoorlijk vliegen?”

Ik zei: “M’n vleugels zijn kapot.”

Hij kon het niet zien met z’n zonne-ogen, hij moest voelen. “Ah! In een braamstruik geraakt?”

“Nee meneer Zbor,” zei ik. “Maar kunt u ze heel maken? Alstublieft?”

“Maken!” riep hij. “Maken!?! Kind, wat wij hier doen is toveren.”

“Neem me niet kwalijk, meneer Zbor.” Zei ik. “Kunt u ze heel toveren? Alstublieft?”

Hij knikte. Hij sloot zijn ogen. Hij betastte mijn vleugels. Zacht en voorzichtig gleden zijn tovervingers langs de scheuren en flarden terwijl zijn lippen zich kronkelden tot wonderbaarlijke woorden. Ik hoorde klinkers en medeklinkers die bij ons niet bestaan. Geen A, geen E, geen I, geen O, geen U, ook geen EU, geen UI, geen AU, maar een – Een – die ik niet kan uitspreken, want ik heb geen tovenaarsstong. Maar het hielp. Bij zijn laatste fluisteringen die een beetje leken op het rallen van de nachtegaal voelde ik op mijn rug dat alles zich daar hechtte zoals het hoorde, ik kon weer wapperen en fladderen, ik steeg en daalde en zwenkte.

“O!” riep ik. “Dank u! Dank u, dank u duizendmaal, heer tovenaars Zbor!”

Hij deed zijn ogen weer open, het brandde door me heen, maar ik riep: “Alstublieft, ik zoek een waterlelie, weet u –”

Maar hij draaide zich om alsof ik niet meer bestond. “Een ding is genoeg kindlief,” zei hij. “Weg!”

Plotseling was daar weer een weg. Hij kronkelde zich onder me en vroeg: “Waarheen?”

Ik zei: “Naar Zbir,” en de weg zette zijn katterug op en ik golfde langs de bergen en bossen, over weiden en heiden en over schuimende rivieren, een dag en een nacht lang tot hij me neerliet bij een ander tovermanshuis. Dit had verschrikkelijk grote orden, daar moest je in roepen dat je er was.

“Ik ben er!” riep ik.

Het galmde door duizend gangen en de echo riep bennerik-bennerik-bennerik, maar daar doorheen klonk wie-iewie-iewie?

“Ik riep: “Een fee!” en de echo deed feen-feen-feeene-feeene!”

“Oooh!” klonk er doorheen, “Kom maar binneninneninnen!”

Ik klom in het grote oor en begon door de duizend gangen te dwalen. Het leek een paleis: alles was er van paarlemoer, eindeloos lang en spiegelglad. Ik ging naar links en rechts, ik riep mijnheer Zbir, bent u daar? Udaar-udaar-udaar?

En zijn stem antwoordde: Hier-ier-ier. Het klonk van alle kanten ik opende een deur, twee deuren, drie deuren, en daar stond Zbir in een kaal kamertje. Ik had hem nog nooit gezien. Hij had ogen als bliksems die me troffen met elektrische pijn.

“Kind!” riep hij. “Feeënkind, wat kom je doen?”

Ik kon niet antwoorden tot hij zijn ogen dicht deed. “Alstublieft,” zei ik, “meneer Zbir, een waterlelie. Ik zoek een waterlelie. Een witte. Zou u die voor me kunnen toveren? Alstublieft?”

“Toveren!” riep hij. “Toveren!? Een levende plant? Feeënkind, wat denk je wel, dat *leven* kan worden getoverd?”

Ik werd heel verlegen.

“Leven, dat kan ik hoogstens ergens halen,” zei hij. “Wat voor lelie wil je? Een uit de blauwe vijvers van de keizers van China? Een uit de witter vijvers van de keizer van Japan? Of een uit de donkere poelen van de Amazone?”

Ik dacht aan de bosvijver met zijn donkere water en ik zei: “Graag de laatste, meneer de tovenaer Zbir. Graag die uit de Amazone. Alstublieft.”

Hij wendde zich van me af, opende zijn bliksem-ogen en begon te zingen met tonen die wij niet kennen. Geen do, geen re, geen mi, geen fa, geen sol en ook geen bémol. Hij zong een – die ik niet kan zingen want ik heb geen tovenaarskeel. Maar het hielp. Bij de laatste toon verscheen er een prachtige witter waterlelie, nog druipend nat, met een lange steel en dunne witte wortelstrengen aan het eind, alles helemaal gaaf want Zbir had zacht en voorzichtig gezongen.

“O!” riep ik. “Mijnheer Zbir! Wat een mooie!”

Hij toverde een kom water – met dichte ogen dat het niet meteen zou koken – om de lelie in te bewaren. Zij paste erin met zeven bochten, en ik bedankte Zbir duizend maal.

“Ga nu maar,” zei hij.

“Ja,” zei ik. “Ja, maar ik had eigenlijk nog iets willen vragen over U... over Uru –”

“Weg!’ riep hij.

En daar, in de kale kamer, verscheen de weg. Hij bolde de vloer en golfde me door het raam naar buiten, en voort op zijn hoge katterug. “Waarheen?” vroeg hij. “Waarheen?”

Ik riep: “Naar het bos. Naar de vijver. Naar Urukku!” Want ik had nu mijn waterlelie en dat was het voornaamste.

Maar daar klonk uit de bergen een stem, scherp als glas, die dwars door de mijne heensneed met: “Hierrr jij!”

Het was de stem van Zwartgallige Zir. En terwijl ik de kom met de waterlelie zo recht mogelijk vast hield om zo min mogelijk te morsen bracht de weg me naar de bergen, over steen en been, langs ruis en bruis, hoger en hoger, over rotsen en botsen en klotsen en potsen tot de hoogste wots en daar bovenop stond een tovermanshuis met zijn spits in de wolken. Er hing een touw dat zich om me heen kronkelde en me naar binnen trok tot in de top van de spits. Daar zat Zwartgallige Zir. Ik had hem nog nooit gezien; zijn ogen waren een zompig moeras waarin je verstikte.

“Wat moet dat met die bloem?” vroeg hij.

“O uh...” zei ik. “Die lelie is voor de bosvijver, meneer Zir. Dat Urukku weer los komt. Zo had u het toch bedoeld? Alstublieft?”

De tovenaer begon schamper te lachen. “Pha, denk je dat dat lukt?”

“Dat hoop ik wel, meneer Zir.”

“Die lelie is al lang dood voor je terug bent bij die vijver daarginds.”

“Ik houd haar goed nat, meneer Zir. Ik zal onderweg steeds water bijvullen.”

“Zozo! En als zij nog leeft, wat wil je dan, dunne fee?”

“Dan plant ik haar in de bodem en dan komt Urukku los uit de grond. Dat hebt u zelf zo getoverd.”

“Ja ja! En als hij los komt, wat dan?”

“Dan gaan we trouwen, Urukku en ik.”

Daar moest hij weer hard om lachen. Een zielige lach was het. “Een kobold en een fee die samen trouwen! Ochoch! Denk je dat dat gaat?”

“Waarom niet, meneer Zir? Alstublieft?”

“Omdat het niet kan. Maar als het kon, wat dan?”

“Dan kwamen er nakomelingen, meneer Zir.”

“Dat gebeurt niet, dat gebeurt helemaal niet. Maar als het gebeurde, wat dan?”

“Dan kwam de Dood,” zei ik. “En die nam ons mee, meneer Zwartgallige Zir.”

Daar lachte hij allervreselijkst om. “De Dood!” riep hij. “Dat is het meest onmogelijke van alles! Denk jij heus dat de Dood een fee meeneemt? Of een kobold? Of een heks? Of een reus? Of een dwerg? Of een tovenaar? Phahahaha! Wat dat maar waar, feetje-lief, was dat maar waar... Eeuwig bestaan moeten we, zonder ooit rust, zonder ooit hoop op rust, zonder...” Zijn woorden raakten op.

Toen zei ik heel voorzichtig: “Maar meneer Zwartgallige Zir, u... u kon toch toveren?”

Daar barstte hij van los. Als een overstroming. “Toveren!” riep hij. “Ah! Toveren kan ik alles! Kom mee, fee! Komt!” Hij trok me langs het touw naar beneden, zo woest dat ik als een sliert achter hem aan fladderde, en beneden op de vlakte van het Rijk der Tovenaars zette hij me neer. “Kijk!” riep hij. “Kijk en zie, fee. Zie en schouw.”

Hij begon allergeweldigst te toveren: de hele sterrenhemel als een bewegende zee van diamanten, een waterval van wijn, een goudgele honingval, een zilver-sputende fontein, een paleis op gouden pilaren, de zang van duizend nachtegalen, de aanblik van een enkele boterbloem, daaroverheen een denderende stoet ruiters en uit de grond rees een berg tot de hemel die veranderde in een reus, die veranderde in een draak, die veranderde in een muis, die veranderde in een slang, die veranderde in een tang, die veranderde in een pang! En alles was weg.

“Nu jij, fee!” riep hij. “Nu jij! Ik tover je tot bruid!”

Hij prevelde geen woorden, hij zong geen zangen, hij sloot alleen even zijn moeras-ogen en meteen plooide zich om mijn hoofd een witte sluier, om mijn lijf een witte japon met lange sleep, in mijn linkerhand vormde zich een boeket van witte lelies en in mijn rechter kreeg ik een kronkelige tak die de vorm aannam van mijn kobold.

“Bruidegom en bruid!” riep Zwartgallige Zir. “Zie om!”

En achter ons zag ik een bonte stoet bruiloftsgasten: nimfen, najaden, geesten en beesten; twaalf libellen droegen zwevend mijn sleep en bij elke voetstap schoten bloemen uit de grond. Maar het was niet echt, het was niet echt, het was getoverd, en het schaap was omgetoverd tot dominee om ons te trouwen en we zeiden ja ik wil en we moesten elkaar kussen maar de takkewangen van de kobold waren hard, ze schaafden mijn lippen en Zwartgallige Zir riep: “Welnu welnu, gaat het of gaat het niet?”

Ik wist geen antwoord. Er kwam muziek voor bruidegom en bruid om op te dansen, maar de houten voeten van de kobold traptten op mijn tenen; het deed pijn en ik struikelde en Zwartgallige Zir riep weer: “Welnu, gaat het of gaat het niet?”

Ik kon weer niet antwoorden en hij nam een bijl, sloeg een tak van mijn takken-bruidegom af en hakte die in stukken waaruit zich kleine koboldjes vormden.

“Nakomelingen!” schreeuwde hij. “Zijn ze het, of zijn ze het niet?”

Ik wist het niet, het was allemaal toverwerk en ik dacht: nu zal hij ook de Dood gaan toveren, maar dat gebeurde niet, dat kon hij niet, zijn ogen konden zover niet kijken. “Tot aan de deur!” schreeuwde hij. “Tot aan de deur van de Dood kunnen wij komen, maar daarachter niet. Daar mogen wij niet komen en niet kijken, zelfs niet door een kiertje. Niet eens door het sleutelgat. Niks mogen we daarvan weten, niks niks niks, fee!” en met een hard geschreeuwd “Braaaaah!” veegde hij de hele bruiloft van de vlakke, de dansende nimfen, najaden, geesten en beesten, de heksen, de reuzen, de dwergen, ze vervaagden dansend en jansend, de muziek verzwakte en tenslotte stond ik daar nog alleen met Zwartgallige Zit.

“Welnu fee?” Vroeg hij. “Welnu?”

Ik antwoordde dat ik had gezien dat het met toveren niet ging, maar dat het misschien in 't echt –”

Hij onderbrak me woedend: “Ga dan!” riep hij. “Ga, eigenwijze fee, en neem je witte lelie mee! Weg! Weg! Weg!”

Ik voelde meteen de weg onder me; hij bolde zich hoger dan ooit, ik had nauwelijks tijd om de pot met de lelie te pakken, het water klotste en knoeide terwijl de katterug me als een vloedgolf wegspoelde, het Rijk der Tovenaars uit, en ergens in een woestijn neerkwakte.

De helft van het water was verloren; de lelie kreeg dorst en liet haar hoofd hangen. Ik steeg voorzichtig op met mijn heel-getoverde vleugels, maar de pot was zwaar, ik hield het niet lang vol in de lucht, verder dan de rand van het woud kwam ik niet, daar moest ik dalen en ik landde met een bons waardoor nog eens de helft van het water over de rand klotste. De lelie had nauwelijks meer te drinken en hing diep voorover met bijna geknakte hals.

Ik liep het bos in, zo snel als ik kon, de pot met gestrekte armen voor mij uit houdend om zo min mogelijk te knoeien, maar af en toe spatte toch een druppel op de grond. Het was zo zwaar,

zo zwaar, en de vijver nog zo ver, zo ver, maar het moest lukken, het moest! Ik liep en liep, en daar meende ik ook de vijver al te zien met Urukkuu als een treurwilg over het water gebogen, ik maakte haast en struikelde over een wortel. De pot viel uit mijn handen op de grond en brak aan duizend stukken; de lelie lag er besmeurd en stervend tussen. Maar ik raapte haar voorzichtig op, wond de steel in zeven bochten rond mijn arm, nam de wortels in mijn mond dat ze niet zouden uitdrogen en holde voort zonder te ademen. Toen ik eindelijk de vijver bereikte was de hele plant slap en alle leven eruit, maar toch liet ik de wortels voorzichtig in het water, wond de steel van mijn arm af zodat hij rechtop kwam te staan en legde de bloem behoedzaam op het zachte oppervlak van de vijver.

Zou de lelie het halen? Er zat niets anders op dat te wachten. Te wachten...<<

Maar bij het woord *wachten* werd de fee ijl. De kabouter zag het voor zijn ogen gebeuren. Ze gaapte ineens verschrikkelijk, met wijd open mond en leunde achterover in de stoel en terwijl hij naar haar keek zag hij het dressoir vaag door de fee heen, en even daarna zag hij het dressoir duidelijk en scherp, alsof er en wolkje stoom voor had gezeten dat nu was opgelost.

“Fee!” riep hij naar de legen stoel. “Uh, mevrouw fee... uh...”

Wat nu, dacht hij, wat nu? Zou ze wegvliegen en niet meer terugkomen? Of zou ze blijven en vanavond weer zichtbaar worden in de stoel? Om dat te verstrekken? Roerend afscheid? Na twee dagen? Of drie? Of vier? Was ze al *vier* dagen bij hem te gast? De kabouter sloeg zich tegen zijn voorhoofd. Wat moet ik, dacht hij, wat moet ik? Het verhaal van de fee was nog lang niet uit, begreep hij, en hij moest bekennen dat hij steeds benieuwder werd naar wat er gebeurde. Ik wil het weten, dacht de kabouter. Ik wil het weten. Ze moeten blijven om het te vertellen.

Hij blies de kaars uit en ging naar bed. Blijven, dacht hij met zijn hoofd in de kussens.

Wil ik dat echt? Of laat zij het mij willen? Ben ik een betoverde kabouter aan het worden?

Maar hij was zelf ook doodmoe en sliep in.

7.2 Bibliography of Biegel's work

This bibliography is an addition to the information given throughout this thesis. It was made using the existing bibliography constructed by Wilma van der Pennen for a special edition of *Literatuur zonder leeftijd* in 2007, a year after Biegel died, and the website www.paulbiegel.nl. It contains the following categories:

- Children's literature
- Adult literature
- Children's literature translated and/or adapted by Paul Biegel
- Translations of books by Paul Biegel: Afrikaans, Danish, English, French, German, Greek, Japanese, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish and Welsh.
- Awards
- Theses on Paul Biegel

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Awards

1965 Kinderboek van het jaar voor *Het sleutelkruid*

1972 Gouden Griffel voor *De kleine kapitein*

1972 Zilveren Griffel voor *De Twaalf rovers*

1973 Nienke van Hichtumprijs voor *De twaalf rovers*

1974 Staatsprijs voor kinder- en jeugdliteratuur 1973 (oeuvreprijs)

1974 Zilveren Griffel voor *Het olifantenfeest*

1982 Zilveren Griffel voor *Haas: Eerste boek: Voorjaar*

1988 Zilveren Griffel voor *De rode prinses*

1988 Tip van de Nederlandse Kinderjury (10 t/m 12 jaar) voor *De rode prinses*)

1990 Tip van de Nederlandse Kinderjury (6 t/m 9 jaar) voor *Beer in het verkeer*

1991 Woutertje Pieterse Prijs voor *Anderland: een Brandaan mythe*

1992 Tip van de Nederlandse Kinderjury (6 t/m 9 jaar) voor *Juttertje Tim*

1993 Gouden Griffel voor *Nachtverhaal*

2000 Woutertje Pieterse Prijs voor *Laatste verhalen van de eeuw*

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7.3 Email correspondence

March 29, 2011

Beste mevrouw Biegel,

Momenteel ben ik bezig met het schrijven van mijn scriptie voor de Master Vertalen Engels aan Universiteit Utrecht.

In februari ben ik in Den Bosch naar de voorstelling van *Nachtverhaal* geweest. Hier heb ik Rob Vriens kort gesproken over mijn scriptie. Ik heb hem toen ook mijn e-mailadres gegeven in de hoop dat deze bij u terecht zou komen.

Mijn scriptie betreft het vertalen van een fragment van *Nachtverhaal* naar het Engels. Voordat ik ga vertalen maak ik een analyse van de narratieve situatie van *Nachtverhaal* en Paul Biegel's manier van schrijven, oftewel het Biegeliaans. Daarnaast zal ik de problemen die ik tegen kan komen bij het vertalen bespreken. Omdat het om een vertaling gaat, wil ik ook graag aandacht besteden aan de vertalingen van zijn werk, en dan met name de Engelse vertalingen.

Ik vroeg mij af of u misschien meer informatie heeft over deze Engelse vertalingen van zijn werk. Ik weet dat Patricia Crampton achttien van zijn boeken naar het Engels heeft vertaald, alleen vroeg ik me af waarom juist die boeken vertaald zijn. Ook ben ik natuurlijk benieuwd naar waarom *Nachtverhaal* nooit eerder naar het Engels is vertaald.

Ik zou u veel meer willen vragen, alleen weet ik niet of u hier tijd voor heeft. Vandaar dat ik met deze begin. Ik hoop dat u mij verder kan helpen.

Alvast bedankt.

Met vriendelijke groet,
Ploon Rademaker

-

4 April, 2011

Geachte mevrouw Rademaker,

Hartelijk dank voor uw mail. Wat leuk dat u zo geïnteresseerd bent in het werk van mijn vader. Het Biegeliaans is mooi en muzikaal! Het lijkt mij inderdaad voor een vertaler heel lastig om nu niet alleen de sfeer en toon van een boek te behouden, maar ook het Biegeliaans in een andere taal op een rake manier over te zetten. Ik ben bang dat ik u helaas niet veel verder kan helpen: ik weet alleen dat Patricia Crampton heel goed werk heeft verricht. Het was een ontzettend leuk mens, ik heb haar een paar keer ontmoet, en ze had werkelijk een geweldige talenknobbel. Ze sprak en schreef, meen ik, zeven talen. Ze heeft veel overlegd met mijn vader bij het vertalen. Zo

heeft mijn vader ook samen met een andere vertaler Gillian Hume zélf twee boeken in het Engels vertaald: *De tuinen van Dorr – The gardens of Dorr*

En *Het Sleutelkruid – The King of the Copper Mountains*. Waarom het boek *Nachtverhaal* nooit in het Engels is verschenen, weet ik niet. Ik denk gewoon om het simpele feit dat er geen uitgever geïnteresseerd was? Zijn boeken zijn niet meer in druk in Engeland, alleen *Het Sleutelkruid* is weer verschenen.

U veel succes met uw studie wensend,

en vriendelijke groet,

Leonie Biegel