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**AN ANALYSIS OF JOHANNES AAVIK'S VISIBILITY IN TRANSLATING
EDGAR ALLAN POE'S *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER***

BA thesis

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ABSTRACT

A translation can be done to introduce the original text to a target language, but it can also be used as a means for language reform. Translating both the meaning of the text and also keeping the original style can prove difficult. When quality of a translation can affect the success of a translation, then for the sake of a translation's fluency, translator's invisibility is preferred. Johannes Aavik, an Estonian linguist and translator, has used translating *The Fall of the House of Usher* to introduce his neologism and grammatical features to the target language. The aim of this Bachelor's thesis is to analyse Johannes Aavik's translation of *The Fall of the House of Usher*, specifically focusing on the lyrical nature of the text and unity of effect.

The introduction offers an overview of Johannes Aavik in Estonian history, his work, briefly discusses Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* and its translation, and introduces the aim of this thesis. The first part of the thesis gives background information to the translated work and its translator based on studies of previously done research. The second part of the thesis focuses on analysing Johannes Aavik's translation and interpretation of lyric nature in *The Fall of the House of Usher* and unity of effect.

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INTRODUCTION

Johannes Aavik, being one of the founders and active members of literary movement Young Estonia, took part in the renewal and reformation of the Estonian language. The group aimed to further the development of national culture and its enrichment with European achievements (Stepaništševa 2020: 31). In a time of intense language standardization in Estonia, Johannes Aavik spent decades on promoting his new words and grammatical forms.

In 1926, Johannes Aavik translated Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* into Estonian. Known for his attempts in Estonian language reform, Johannes Aavik has translated literary texts not only with the primary aim to introduce the literature itself to the Estonian readers, but to use those translations as a tool to bring in his own language innovations (Stepaništševa 2020: 27). Considering that Johannes Aavik had his own goals for translating, it is possible that the more fluent the translation – the more invisible the translator (Venuti 1995: 2); and look for Johannes Aavik's visibility in his translation of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

Edgar Allan Poe's gothic tale *The Fall of the House of Usher* was first published in 1839 where the reader is led to experience the gloom and horror through the eyes of an unnamed and mysterious narrator (Thomson 2018: 57). According to Edgar Allan Poe's unity of effect which states that the elements included in a story should work cohesively to impact the reader - *The Fall of the House of Usher* is consistent in its attempt to create a melancholic atmosphere of gloom and horror through the use of different literary devices (Thomson 2018: 28). In *The Fall of the House of Usher* Poe has used first person narrative which leads the reader into a role of the person who experiences the gloom and does not just observe.

Due to the connection of Poe's lyric nature of text in *The Fall of the House of Usher* and unity of effect, this thesis will focus on the lyrical aspects of rhythm and rhyme while also commenting on the translation of unity of effect. The first part of this paper will attempt to shortly summarize Edgar Allan Poe's style in writing Gothic tales and give a brief overview to who Johannes Aavik was as a linguist and a translator who worked on reforming the Estonian language. This is followed up with the second part of the thesis which is an analysis of Johannes Aavik's translation of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. The main purpose of the analysis is to highlight how Aavik has brought over the rhythm, rhyme and consistent unity of effect that Poe uses and to pay attention to Aavik's choices in regards to this unity of effect, thus bringing out his visibility.

1. Theoretical Background

1.1 Edgar Allan Poe's Gothic tales

Two central points in Poe's theory of literary creation can be seen: firstly, the ultimate goal in the creation of any work of art for it to be considered successful is to produce one certain effect in the mind and feelings of the readers or observers; secondly, this production of a single effect can not be left to chance or inspiration, but should be conveyed through the accurate detail of style of the author (Wilson 1926: 677).

Even when Poe favoured poetry as a medium since he held it in high regards for its unique ability to convey Beauty through language he is also well known for his short stories (Thomson 2018: 7-8). When Poe shifted to tale writing and securing readership he had to consider certain limits, like the attention span of the reader, while still operating in his own guidelines not to create something that would reflect an *imperfect sense of Art* (ibid 27-28). Poe proposes great importance to the unity of effect or impression as his goal was to convey a predetermined emotion or effect to the reader in both his poetry and prose. In an attempt to create this unity of effect, the length of the text is also considered. As for Poe's short stories half an hour to two hours is considered to be the preferred length since then he has the reader to himself for long enough to use his literary devices for passing on the narrative and to engross the reader sufficiently while not causing excessive weariness in the reader. In his poetry he considered the length of a text in a similar manner: when the poem is too long, it can not sustain its effect and loses the impact; when the poem is too short, it does not get the opportunity to imprint itself and the desired effect evades the reader. (Thomson 28-29).

In his poem *The Raven* (Poe 1845) consideration for the length of the poem regarding his creation of unity of effect can be found. It is easily short enough to go through it in one sitting,

while also being ample enough for enabling the author to have the reader engulfed in it for long enough to pass on the desired emotion. Same consideration can be found when we look at Poe's (1839) gothic tales such as *The Fall of the House of Usher* where it fits in the already mentioned half an hour to two hour length (Thomson 2018: 28).

James Southall Wilson (1926: 677-679) compares the style of Poe to one of a mesmerist. Just like a mesmerist uses his devices to produce the desired mental state in the subject, Poe uses his art of writing to secure a desired state of mind or bring out a desired emotion. Whether to create an exquisite sense of beauty, bring the reader to see the fear, horror or even disgust - Poe uses the incidents, atmosphere, tone and words in his writing to guide the reader to the desired emotion or mental state. In *The Fall of the House of Usher* we can observe how Poe has used the text to bring out the desired emotion: he puts the reader into the shoes of an unnamed narrator thus forcing the reader to experience the unsettling events that are about to occur; from the very beginning he slows down the reader by stretching out the sentences with excessive commas and dashes and by doing so makes the reader slowly take in the unnerving descriptions of the atmosphere. Poe's descriptions for animate and inanimate objects hammer the reader with constant sense of gloom and unease just as if a reminder – e.g rhetorical excess: *oppressive clouds, shades of the evening* (Poe 1839: 3); narrators boyhood friends' ghastly appearance and constant unstable presence: "The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me." (Poe 1839: 8).

Poe is consistent in keeping up the unity of effect in his writings. In *The Masque of the Red Death* he starts with the first sentence "The 'Red Death' had long devastated the country" and finishes with the last sentence being "And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all". It is visible how he starts the tale with a sentence that already sets

up the unity of effect and his final sentence still keeps it up. It can also be noticed in *The Fall of the House of Usher* as he starts by setting up a mood with “During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless day in the autumn of the year when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens,” creating a tense atmosphere of unsettling dread and fear; he then keeps it up throughout the story building up the gloom and dread while finishing with “the deep and dank tarn... closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the House of Usher”. (Wilson 1926: 681) From these examples of the beginning and the end, it can be seen that he is constant in his attempt to form a unified effect throughout the story.

Poe pays great attention to rhythm and rhyme. His poetry and prose have a sort of musicality in them as he uses alliteration and onomatopoeia (White n.d). Examples of alliteration can be seen in *The Fall of the House of Usher*: in the very first sentence he starts with “During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless...”, on the same page we can find “... a sinking, a sickening of the heart...” and at the very last sentence “... deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently” (Poe 1839: 3). Good examples for onomatopoeia in Poe’s (1845: 2) works can be found in his poems such as *The Raven*: “As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.” But they are also clearly visible in *The fall of the House of Usher* – while moving a heavy iron door, the sound of it is described as “... sharp, grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges” (Poe 1839: 17).

Craig White (n.d) also brings out in his style sheet of Edgar Allan Poe the use of *excess* in Poe’s writings. The excess in Poe’s writings comes from him adding superlatives such as *the most*, *the greatest*, *the darkest etc*, to amplify the emotion he tries to convey to the reader (White n.d). Poe also uses rhetorical excess that is not as realistic but adds to the effect: In the first sentence of *The Fall of the House of Usher* where he already uses alliteration to give the

sentence certain musicality he also describes the clouds as hanging *oppressively low in the heavens* which is not quite realistic as the clouds themselves can hardly be oppressive but it adds to the effect and creates more dread and fear in that situation while also giving a hint to the narrators mindset.

In majority of Poe's Gothic tales the first person point of view narrative is used. The reader is put into the mind of this character and made to experience the dread alongside this narrator. From the example of *The Fall of the House of Usher* we can see how the reader is borrowing the persona of the narrator to be found in this tale of horror, dread and fear. Poe has even made the narrating character too inept to notice the warnings and signs of upcoming horror so that the reader can make their own deductions. (Timmerman 2003: 159-160)

1.2 Unity of effect in *The Fall of the House of Usher*

When discussing psychological aspects in *The Fall of the House of Usher* David Roche(2009: 25) brings out that Poe uses repetition of words, words with the same root, sounds, alliteration and assonances to make the text 'resonate' thus creating a unity of effect. Poe's sentences such as seen in *The Fall of the House of Usher* tend to be extended with commas and dashes to a seemingly excessive extent which slows down the tempo and almost forces the reader to take in his descriptive narrations of the surroundings. Poe starts to set the gloomy atmosphere from the very beginning by placing the narrator in a setting of unease. When Poe starts to describe the narrator's arrival to the House of Usher while using words with negative connotation such as *dull, dark, soundless, alone melancholy* etc (Poe 1839: 3) – he already creates a depressive setting from the very beginning. Unity of effect comes from Poe's

consistency of hammering the reader with constant reminders of unease and dread throughout the story to bring out his desired emotion and its peak in the culmination of the story.

The narrator in *The Fall of the House of Usher* can be considered a tool for Poe to keep the reader close to Poe's desired emotion (Roche 2009: 25). Unnamed mysterious narrator arrives at the House of Usher while already hinting his loneliness and unease "I had been passing alone", describes the House itself as melancholy and that gazing upon the house already gave him a sense of insufferable gloom (Poe 1839: 3). Arrival to proximity of the House of Usher is followed with narrators thoughts of Roderick Usher who was his boyhood friend, but who he "...really knew little of.." (Poe 1839: 4), which adds to the unease of the arrival and brings more uncertainty that it is not really known why he is there besides accompanying his old friend in desperate need of his company. Upon his arrival, the narrator is greeted in an almost unwelcoming manner of description: "A valet, of stealthy step; dark and intricate passages; sombre tapestries; ebon blackness" (Poe 1839: 6-7). Narrator's depressive descriptions and text's stalling rhythm create a unity of effect that keeps the reader in constant slow paced unease and in the presence of gloom and dread throughout the whole story.

Xiumei (2005) brings out how unity in setting is another important requirement for achieving the unity of effect in Poe's prose writing. Poe has used darkness and lack of light to emphasise the gothic setting, extreme weather conditions are used to further add to the effect and the story takes place in a constrained space. Upon arrival to the House of Usher, the narrator is greeted by "the shades of the evening" (Poe 1839: 3) and lack of light will be a theme throughout the story. Contrast to the opposite e.g sunshine when arriving at the House of Usher, shades of the evening set the stage for what is to come. Culmination of a storm throughout the story in the background also adds to the story's consistency and is used as a parallel with the growing gloom

and the terror to come. Constraint to one location and lack of influence from outside world is added to the already mentioned settings to trap the narrator in this tale of growing horror.

1.3 Johannes Aavik's Estonian language reform

In the early 20th century Johannes Aavik was one of the founders and active members of Noor-Eesti literary society (Young-Estonia) which had a slogan that roughly translates to '*More culture! Let us be Estonians, but also become Europeans!*'. Their goal was to further the development of national culture and its enrichment with European achievements (Stepaništševa 2020: 31).

Johannes Aavik had a noticeably outlined personal goal, a mission to develop and reform the Estonian language. He spent decades on relentlessly trying to promote his ideas and over time many of his new words and grammatical forms were taken into wider use (Stepaništševa 2020:31). His success in doing so was most likely aided by the favourable time in Estonian history: it was a time of intense national language standardization.

Johannes Aavik found that in every European language, there are words which do not have good and accurate equivalents in Estonian language. One of his ideas was to make a list of words from other languages, languages that are translated into Estonian the most, and then make an attempt to create estonianized versions of said words. He also had a similar idea with grammar: in his attempt of language reform he has tried to artificially create new grammar elements by taking examples from mainly Latin, French, Russian and even Finnish and German (Hint 2012: 82).

When discussing how Johannes Aavik views the Estonian language through the prism of other languages, Mati Hint (2012: 82) brings out that it is set into Estonian mentality to regard

anything foreign as 'better' which is also seen in Aavik's language reform when he makes an attempt to follow the examples of other languages. However Hint finds that even though there is something to be found in every language that should be *fixed*, reforming a language based on foreign standards is fundamentally wrong.

One of Aavik's aims was to find or create words that would convey the exact same meaning as their foreign counterpart. In his language reform he not only borrowed words from other languages but also made his very own new words. Hint (2012: 89) notes how this can be overwhelming for a language as it is not in correlation with how languages naturally evolve. As an example he even hints how Aavik himself is not always consistent with his use of new vocabulary or grammatical choices when he brings out how Aavik introduces something new once or twice and then as if seemingly forgets about it to later use it even too frequently or not at all (Hint 2012: 90-91). An example of this is when Hint (2012: 90) highlights a few seemingly random occurrences of new words or phrases in Aavik's diary that do not occur again.

Hint's (2012:90) theory is that it is a possibility that while living in his own world of translating and language reform, Aavik might have alienated himself from the natural use of Estonian language and could have felt as if it needed to be tweaked excessively to fit his own standards, thus being the likely cause for Aavik's regularly occurring impromptu changes or innovations.

Johannes Aavik often used translations as his means to test and implement his language innovations. His main goal was not to introduce foreign literature to Estonian readers but to use those texts as a tool to introduce his language reforms. His choice of source text was mainly based on how attractive it was to the translator and the reader. (Stepaništševa 2020: 27)

During his language reforms Johannes Aavik also looked into Edgar Allan Poe's literature. As Aavik's goal was to modernize the language and make it more flexible, he invented many new words while translating Poe. Aavik did not believe that the *old* words had the right sounds nor did they carry the right emotion, thus there was a necessity for new and more 'accurate' vocabulary. By creating extensive glossaries filled with new vocabulary it was now essential to at least somewhat keep up with the new words being used to understand the texts. This made the translations understandably hard to read but it is estimated that a third of the elaborate new vocabulary used to translate Poe made its way into current Estonian usage. (Vines 1999: 27)

1.4 Johannes Aavik's visibility as a translator

Lawrence Venuti describes translator's invisibility as a 'weird self-annihilation' where the translator represses their own personality and makes an effort to stay faithful to the basic text in such a way that their own personality is not noticeable (1995: 8). He also connects this to how acceptable a translation is according to how fluent it is – the more fluent the translation the more invisible the translator (Venuti 1995: 2).

Johannes Aavik did not just translate Poe but also used the translations as a tool to introduce words into the Estonian language that he had come up with himself. Having to constantly look up the meaning of a word in Aavik's translation of *The Fall of the House of Usher* greatly affects the fluency of the translation. When according to Venuti (1995: 2) the more fluent the translation then the more invisible they are, then it can be said that Aavik becomes more visible by disrupting the fluency of his translated text with his new vocabulary.

According to Kaia Sisask (2008: 118), even though Aavik's translations are accurate in details, then the same can not be said for the translation as a whole, as he occasionally does not translate what he does not deem necessary.

Natalia Kaloh Vid (2016: 127) explains that translators have their target audience defined and by that they decide on how to adapt their cultural transfer strategies to that target audience. She explores this through the different ways translators have chosen to domesticate or foreignize the source text by examples of how they have explained the ideological and cultural background of the text (2016: 126). **Domesticating** - reducing the strangeness of a foreign text by adapting it to the common words and culture of the target language; **foreignizing** – keeping the culture-specific aspects of the source text and bringing them over to the target language.

Venuti (1995) quotes Friedrich Schleiermacher (1813): “Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him” saying that this phrase is believed to be the foundation for distinguishing domestication and foreignizing - where domestication means bringing the text closer to the language it is being translated to, which can result in the loss of information from the source text, and foreignizing means staying true to the source text, even if it can involve unconventional use of the target language. When applying the foreignizing and domestication theory to how Johannes Aavik has translated Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* we can see Aavik's 'visibility', however we can also see that his approach does not exactly fit into one nor the other as he had his own agenda while translating. It is as if by using the text as a vessel to bring his language reform ideas to life he had used a third option where he foreignizes the text not into the source language but more to his own idea of what the target language should be.

A noticeable example of Johannes Aavik foreignizing and domesticating the text is when he either: follows Poe's pace by elongating the sentences with commas and dashes, which is not natural in the target language, thus foreignizing the text by taking it closer to the source text or; when he does the opposite and divides the sentence into shorter ones, thus domesticating it by making it more digestible for the target audience.

Aavik's 'visibility' as a translator becomes even more apparent when we take the idea of translators having a defined target audience by which they would adapt their cultural transfer strategies to that target audience (Vid 2016: 127) and apply it to how Aavik has used his translations to promote his personal ideas for language reform.

2. Translation analysis

2.1 Analysis of *The Fall of the House of usher*

Published in 1839, *The Fall of the House of Usher* was a short story of Roderick Usher - an anxious and melancholic boyhood friend of the narrator and his sickly sister Madeline Usher. This gothic tale uses an unnamed and mysterious narrator, a tactic to disorient the reader, presumably to ensure that the reader has to rely on the writer to arrive at the emotion or effect Poe desired them to (Thomson 2018: 57). Poe often leaves the narrator in a passive and motionless state where he e.g *finds* himself in gloomy situations – “and at length found myself..-..within view of melancholy House of Usher” (Poe 1839:3). By doing this, the narrator distances himself from the experiences and gives more of an observation of what is happening even though he himself is present – this distancing amplifies the uncertainty and uneasiness in the short story. Constantly occurring reminders of unpleasant gloom are repeated throughout the story which eventually ends with the collapse of the House of Usher and narrators fleeing.

Even though *The Fall of the House of Usher* has been retranslated in 1989, Aavik’s attempt to enrich the Estonian language through his translations of Poe could be considered a success in the sense that many of the words he introduced are still in use today – e.g *leevendama* (*relieve/soothe*), *taust* (*background*).

2.2 Translation as a tool for language reform: methodology

The analysis of Johannes Aavik’s *The Fall of the House of Usher* will focus on the lyrical aspects of the text and how they have been transferred in the translation while also taking into account Johannes Aavik’s choices as a linguist with an objective of reforming the Estonian language and using his translation of Poe’s text as a way to introduce his ideas into common use. In regards to Edgar Allan Poe’s consistency of emotion and unity of effect, the main focus will

be on the beginning and the end of the text to see if Johannes Aavik follows Poe's consistency. The analysis will be divided into two main parts. Firstly the lyrical aspect of the text with a specific focus on the lyric nature of the text created by alliteration and onomatopoeia while regarding the rhythm manipulated by the elongated descriptive manner of the sentences. The second part will focus on Johannes Aavik's choices in regards to the desired consistency of the text and the emotion Poe's short story is supposed to carry.

The original text of Edgar Allan Poe and Johannes Aavik's translation will be read side-by-side while taking notes of how the translation has followed the original text's lyric nature and what noticeable modifications Aavik has done to either interpret Poe's musicality or where he has changed it entirely. Aavik's more interesting choices for vocabulary will also be highlighted to later comment on where he has interpreted the text so that it gives a different effect when compared to Poe or where he has brought in something new. In the spirit of unity of effect the main focus when looking for interpreted musicality or anomalies will be on the beginning and the end of the text to also compare the consistency of Johannes Aavik's choices to those of Edgar Allan Poe.

For the side-by-side reading, the English version of *The Fall of the House of Usher* has been read from a PDF e-book version. The Estonian translation has been read from a 1970 paperback collection *Kaev ja Pendel* which includes the 1926 translation by Johannes Aavik. Both versions of the book were partially transcribed into a separate file for ease of access when doing the analysis. The more noticeable interpretations and anomalies from the beginning and the end of the text were examined and then later compared to the rest of the text to find consistencies.

2.3 Interpretation of Poe's lyric nature of the text

Alliteration – the repetition of usually initial consonant sounds in two or more neighbouring words or syllables.

The Fall of the House of Usher begins with a winding and descriptive sentence that starts to set the gloomy emotion which will carry on throughout Poe's short story. Looking at Aavik's translation of the very first paragraph it is visible how he has made an attempt to translate not just the words but also Poe's musicality – musicality that Poe creates by using alliteration in the already stretched out sentence. Aavik does this by mostly keeping the sentence as long and winding as Poe did with commas and dashes but also in his own attempts at alliteration. Even though Aavik has not completely translated every occurrence of alliteration, he has still made an attempt to generally keep it in his translation of *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

The placement of where the first case of alliteration occurs in a sentence, when Aavik does choose to translate it, has mostly stayed the same but the sounds are different – while Poe starts with repeating a voiced D consonant of *dull, dark* and *day* (Poe 1839: 3) then Aavik has changed that to a hissing S sound of *synge, sumeda* and *sygispäeva* (Poe 1926: 41). If Aavik started the translation by following Poe's alliteration he seems to have dropped some of it in the very same sentence – where Poe uses the repeating T with '*through a singularly dreary tract*' (1839: 3) Aavik has not used alliteration.

By taking examples from the very first and the very last page to see how Aavik has chosen to translate the repeating sounds, there is no visible pattern in Aavik's choice of sound when translating alliteration nor when he translates alliteration at all: *dull, dark* and *day* on the first page have been changed to S sounds of *synge, sumeda* and *sygispäeva*. *Desolate* and *terrible* from the first page and *deep, dank* and *tarn* from the last page have not been translated with alliteration. When Aavik has not exactly followed where Poe has placed alliteration: *deep, dank*

and *tarn*; *sullenly* and *silently*, he has instead repeated the Estonian ü/y in that sentence on the last page. Poe writes:

“While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the ‘House of Usher’ “

From this example we can see how Poe has a long and winding sentence with the added musicality of mentioned alliteration. Now when we compare this to Aavik then the very first thing to notice is how Aavik has divided this sentence into three shorter sentences. Aavik writes:

„Kuna vaatasin, laienes kiiresti see pragu; tuli äge tuulekeerd, --trabandi kogu ketas ilmus äkki mu vaatele. Mu pää pööritas, kui nägin vägevad myyrid laiali varisevat. Syndis kestev myrin, nagu tuhandete koskede myha,--ja sygav ning mäda tiik mu jalge ees sulgus syngesti ja hääletumalt yle USHERI MAJA rusude.“ (Poe 1926: 57)

Aavik’s choice of dividing the long sentence that Poe had created into three separate ones makes it easier to follow for the reader as it is more common in Estonian language, thus Aavik has domesticated the text by dividing it into more palatable parts and still translated the lyrical nature of Poe by using the repeated ü/y: *syndis*, *myrin*, *myha*, *sygav*, *syngesti* and *yle*.

Aavik does not translate every instance of alliteration, and when he does, he translates the idea of having alliteration rather than the sound itself e.g. changing the T sound to an S or uses alliteration in a different part of the sentence. One could argue that this benefits the fluency of the translation since it would be incredibly difficult to translate the meaning while also keeping the same repeating sounds.

Onomatopoeia – word that resembles or imitates the sound that it describes.

By examining the lyrical nature of the text, then in Poe’s resonating short story of *The Fall of the House of Usher* we can also find cases of onomatopoeia. Recurring scraping gr/kr sound from the word ‘grating’ comes up three times (Poe 1839: 17- 24). It is consistently used to describe the tomb’s heavy metal door that seals away Madeline Usher. The first time a ‘grating’

sound of a heavy iron door is used is when the body of Madeline is taken to the tomb, later again when the narrator is not certain if he is imagining things and hearing things that should not be heard, and finally when the narrator is certain that he is hearing things and omits that sound to the iron door that is supposed to seal the ever-present horror. The importance of this particular use of sound is that the unity of effect can be applied here: this unpleasant sound is first used when sealing away the terror and then later used again almost as a reminder for the exact same thing that it is still present – both the tomb and the terror connected to it.

In the previous examples of Johannes Aavik interpreting Poe's lyrical nature of text by his translations of alliteration, Aavik has not always kept the same sound or the position of its occurrence in the sentence. In this case of onomatopoeic word use, Aavik in his translation has noticed the recurring sound, kept in the use of onomatopoeia and even used the exact same sound. Where Poe has used *grating*, Aavik has used *kriiskavat* (Poe 1926: 51), *kraapivat* ja *kratsivat* (ibid 55) and *kriiksumine* (ibid 56). This choice of words is important since it reflects the unity of effect in the source text and adds fluency to Aavik's translation.

In *The Fall of the House of Usher* Poe uses a slow rhythm created with long descriptive sentences which are filled with dashes and commas. These long sentences force the reader to slowly take in the melancholy atmosphere that Poe describes. Alongside translating alliteration, Johannes Aavik has also brought over Poe's long sentence structures which add to the lyrical nature of the text. The excessive use of commas and dashes that occur in *The Fall of the House of Usher* is not common in Estonian.

Poe (1839: 24) writes:

“Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and have *heard* it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I *dared* not—I dared not speak!”

Aavik (Poe 1926: 56) writes:

Kas kuulete seda? – mina kuulsin seda ja o l e n seda kuulnud. Kaua – kaua – kaua, -- mitu minutit, mitu tundi, mitu päeva olen seda kuulnud, aga ma ei julgenud – oh, haletsege mind viletsat õnnetut! Ma ei julgend, ma ei j u l g e n d rääkida!

Here we can see Poe's extensive use of commas and dashes which create this stretched out sentence and how Aavik has followed Poe's example. The given examples summarise how Aavik has dealt with Poe's lyric nature of the text in general – he has paid attention to it but sometimes made modifications e.g the last sentence in *The Fall of the House of Usher* is divided into three shorter sentences (Poe 1926:27).

In addition to seeing Aavik following Poe's pattern of using excessive amounts of dashes and commas, we also see how Aavik has translated Poe's use of italics for emphasising certain words: “..and have *heard* it”, “—I *dared* not”(Poe 1839: 24). Where Poe has used italics, Aavik has written the words with spaces between each individual letter: “.. ja o l e n seda kuulnud”, “ma ei j u l g e n d r ä ä k i d a !”(Poe 1926: 56).

2.4 Johannes Aavik's choices in regards to unity of effect

“In almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance”(Poe 1831: 571) - While examining Poe's *Letter to B-*, Jennifer J. Thomson quoted (2018: 28).

Personification - the act of giving human characteristics to nonhuman things.

Considering previously discussed Poe's idea for unity of effect, *The Fall of the House of Usher* is consistent in creating a gloomy and depressive atmosphere. Through his lyric text and slow rhythm Poe almost forces the reader to slowly take in his depressive descriptions of the events and experiences of the narrator beginning from the very first sentence. To add to the oppressive nature of the atmosphere, Poe has omitted characteristics of human emotion to things that are not even alive: *“melancholy House of Usher”* (Poe 1839: 3) giving emotion to the House itself and foreshadowing the depressive nature of what is to come.

Poe has also described things with rhetorical excess – omitting traits to things that would be impossible in the literal sense: “when the clouds hung *oppressively* low... - ... *shades* of the evening” (Poe 1839: 3). Clouds themselves can hardly be oppressive as they have no consciousness. Using them when describing the atmosphere and adding that they had been oppressive - Poe has created a situation where the narrator is as if under attack by the depressive nature of the environment that he has arrived to. He has done a similar thing by saying that evening has shades – a time of the day has no physical body to affect light and create shades but in this instance we can see how, in this already dragged out depressive and descriptive sentence, arrival of the evening with its darkness adds to the effect.

In Aavik's case of translating, the emotion stays relatively the same, however in his translation a grammatical shift has happened. Where Poe says the clouds themselves are

oppressive and the evening has shades, Aavik has translated: “pilved rippusid rõhuv-madallas taevas” and “kui õhtused varju ilmusid”(Poe 1926: 41). The meaning has shifted here as the clouds are no longer oppressive but are hanging in oppressively low heavens and the shades no longer belong to the evening but appear during the evening. If Aavik wanted to keep the rhetorical excess he could have translated it as “rõhuvad pilved rippusid madallas taevas” or “kui õhtu varjud ilmusid”. Generally this would be a barely noticeable difference but when we consider that ideally the author should begin with creating the unity of effect and drawing of the desired emotion from the very beginning, then this difference can carry a different emotion from what the author had originally desired. At the end of this winding sentence, Aavik has kept the personification of “*melancholy* House of Usher”(Poe 1839: 3) – “*nukrameelse* Usheri Maja”(Poe 1926:41).

From the very first page it is possible to see parallels with the actual house and Roderick Usher as his mental state is decaying just like the house is. Poe adds rhetorical excess through ‘*melancholy* House of Usher’ giving the house emotions and even the fissure that the narrator notices as an indication of something being wrong also reflects Roderick’s own mental state as well, even before the narrator has spoken to his old friend directly.

In his gothic tales Poe builds the emotion from the very beginning and is consistent in keeping to it. On the very first page he starts to set the unity of effect when he begins with ominous and descriptive vocabulary while slowing down the tempo by dragging on the sentences and with his use of alliteration he also gives it a certain musicality. Aavik initially follows Poe’s tempo by not dividing the sentence into smaller parts, makes his own attempt at alliteration and keeps the rhetorical excess of ‘*melancholy* House of Usher’ with ‘*nukrameelse* Usheri Maja’.

However if Poe's goal is to bring out a certain desired emotion in the reader, then we can take issue with Aavik's translation of the word *melancholy*.

Now when we look at the '*..melancholy House of Usher*' while taking into account that throughout the story Roderick Usher is literally losing his sanity and the house itself reflects his state of mind, then translating melancholy as simply *nukrameelne/kurvameelne* seems to be missing some vital elements of the story as it mainly revolves around Roderick slowly losing more and more of his sanity and finally dying from his own terrors.

The earlier meaning of melancholy is quite fitting when describing the House of Usher as it was closely related to mental illness or depression. Later on however it was more used to describe sadness or mourning (Fraser: 2017).

In connection with unity of effect, Liu (Xiumei 2005) talks about unity of setting and Poe's creation of 'atmosphere without activity' where the narrator is in a passive and motionless state and led if not dragged through the events. By the example of "finding himself" we can see how Poe has placed the narrator in a passive situation where he is motionless and acting as an observer which is supposed to suggest the narrator's depressive mood. This passivity in general occurs often in the text but by taking an example phrase *found myself* we can compare it to Aavik's translation to see how and if he has used this passive state.

The first occurrence from the first sentence: "*..and found myself.. ..within view of the melancholy House of Usher.*"(Poe 1839:3) was not used by Aavik as "*silmasin enese ees nukrameelse Usheri maja*"(Poe 1926: 41) is not in the same passive state. The second occurrence where: "*The room in which I found myself.*"(Poe 1839: 7) is again different as "*tuba kuhu olin eennud*"(Poe 1926: 45) translates as 'the room in which I had entered' – *eennud/eenma* being Aavik's neologism. The third and final occurrence of this phrase: "*The storm was still in all its*

wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway”(Poe 1839:25) was translated by Aavik as:”Torm kestis yhe edasi oma vihas, kui *leidsin end* yle vana puiestee minevat”(57) – in this instance Aavik has translated the passivity and even the phrase. If Poe purposely used the same phrase *found myself* in the very beginning and then in the conclusive final paragraph, it can be seen as a continuation of the setting. By this example we can demonstrate how Johannes Aavik has not been as consistent with this use of passive state but has still occasionally translated it when translating Poe.

Considering how the setting of atmosphere, the emotion and the beginning of this story’s unity of effect can be seen being set out in the very first sentence and later in the conclusive end of the story, then this adds to the value of this recurring phrase *found myself* as it is present in both the beginning and the end: “*found myself*, as the shades of the evening dew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher”(Poe 1839: 3) and “The storm was still in all its wrath as I *found myself* crossing the old causeway”(Poe 1839:25).

In *The Fall of the House of Usher*, the most noticeable thing visually would most likely be the elongated sentences with excessive commas and dashes but when observing Johannes Aavik’s translation, we can find something that is almost as noticeable. In his text, Edgar Allan Poe has used italics to emphasise certain words in the text:”..—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!*”, “*Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*”(Poe 1839: 24). This use of a visual cue is used near the end of the story emphasising the emotion even further.

Aavik has followed Poe’s example of distinguishing the text at the same instances but he has done something different that is visually quite noticeable: “aga ma ei julgend, -- ma ei j u l g e n u d r ä ä k i d a ! M e o l e m e t a e l u s a l t h a u d a p a n n u d !”. Aavik has spaced out the

letters in the words Poe had emphasised thus creating his own way of emphasising which is quite visually noticeable and also adds to the effect by slowing down the rhythm. In the second Poe's sentence used as an example, Aavik has again done something new: "MEELETU! YTLLEN TEILE, ET TA PRAEGU SEISAB UKSE TAGA!" (Poe 1926: 56). Where Poe used italic, Aavik has used capital letters which makes the text look even more aggressive and again adds to the emotion. Aavik has used this all capital letters font only once more in the last sentence: ".yle USHERI MAJA rusude" (Poe 1926: 57). When discussing Johannes Aaviks visibility as a translator then perhaps these choices are literally the most visible.

CONCLUSION

The current bachelor's thesis offers an overview and analysis of Johannes Aavik's translation of *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allan Poe with an emphasis of Johannes Aavik's visibility in translating rhythm, rhyme and unity of effect. The lyric nature and unity of effect in *The Fall of the House of Usher* are discussed and then compared to the translation of Johannes Aavik to bring out the visibility of the translator.

In the first part of the thesis, previous research on the topic of Edgar Allan Poe's writing is studied with the emphasis on his gothic tale writing to familiarize with the topic and unity of effect is discussed in *The Fall of the House of Usher* to lay ground for further work with the short story. Johannes Aavik as a language reformist is also discussed to bring out his importance and later his work as a translator. In the second part of the thesis, a general analysis of *The Fall of the House of Usher* is done as an introduction and the method for the analysis is discussed. Finally, analysis is done focusing on two main parts of the translation: how Johannes Aavik has translated and interpreted the lyric nature of the text and how has he brought over the unity of effect.

Reading Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* and Johannes Aavik's translation while paying attention to mostly the lyrical nature of the text and unity of effect, it is noticeable from early on that Johannes Aavik has followed Poe's style but not consistently.

As for the lyric nature of the text, Johannes Aavik has inconsistently brought over Poe's alliteration and mostly followed his rhythm by adding excessive commas and dashes, which are uncommon in the Estonian language. Inconsistency comes from Aavik not always adding musicality to text where Poe did, shifting its position in the sentence or doing it in the exact same position with the exact same sounds.

Regarding Edgar Allan Poe's idea for the unity of effect, the inconsistencies in Johannes Aavik's translation do meddle with the flow and the effect that Poe wished to convey. In addition to his inconsistencies, Johannes Aavik's neologisms also affect the flow. Besides mostly following what Poe did with the theme, Johannes Aavik has made his own interpretations to Poe's style.

Overall, it could be said that the inconsistencies in adapting Poe's example made Johannes Aavik generally quite visible. The lyric nature of *The Fall of the House of Usher* is present in Johannes Aavik's translation and he has made his own adaptations to the target language. Although Aavik has put effort into interpreting Poe's gloom, the final desired emotion in unity of effect can be different for people reading the original and the translation.

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RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Aigar Kähr

An Analysis of Johannes Aavik's visibility in translating Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*

Analüüs Johannes Aaviku väljapaistvust tõlkides Edgar Allan Poe 'The Fall of the House of Usher'

Bakalaureusetöö

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Lehkülgede arv: 30

Annotatsioon:

Käesoleva bakalaureusetöö eesmärgiks on analüüsida Johannes Aaviku tõlget Edgar Allan Poe lühijutust 'The Fall of the House of Usher'. Analüüs keskendub peamiselt Edgar Allan Poe teksti kõlalisusele ja ühtse efekti loomisele.

Töö koosneb kahest osast: kirjandusele põhinevast ülevaatest ja empiirilisest analüüsist.

Esimeses osas tehakse lühiülevaade Edgar Allan Poe kirjanduslikust taustast keskendudes tema lühijuttudele. Johannes Aaviku roll eesti kirjanduse ajaloos ja tema tõlketegevus jäävad samuti töö esimesse ossa. Töö teine osa sisaldab Johannes Aaviku tõlke analüüsi võrdluses Edgar Allan Poe originaltekstiga teosest 'The Fall of the House of Usher'. Bakalaureusetööst tuleb välja, et Johannes Aavik on valikuliselt jälginud Poe stiili teksti kõlalisuse ühtse efekti loomiseks.

Märksõnad:

Johannes Aavik, tõlkeanalüüs, Edgar Allan Poe

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

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