

# Subtitling *8 Mile* in three languages

## Translation problems and translator licence

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This article argues that when striving for quality in subtitling, special attention should be paid to the requirements of competence not only when recruiting translators, but also when recruiting local managers and subtitling co-ordinators. The findings are based on a stylistic comparison of the Finnish, French and Russian subtitled versions of *8 Mile*, a film that tells about Eminem's early breakthrough as a rap artist (UIP, 2002). The rap sections of the film present many 'text-specific translation problems' (Nord), which become even more troublesome in the context of subtitling, as the translator has space for less text. The worldwide subtitling and dubbing of *8 Mile* was an especially well-supervised procedure. The translators were given a lot of material support (e.g., a detailed 'dialogue list') but their work was also strictly controlled and limited. According to this study, the severe policy of some local UIP offices may have hindered the quality of subtitling in some countries.

**Keywords:** translation of rap, *8 Mile*, film subtitling, quality control in subtitling, dialogue list, translation problem

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 UIP and quality control

The worldwide subtitling and dubbing of *8 Mile*, a film that documents Eminem's early breakthrough as a rap artist (United International Pictures [UIP] 2002, director: Curtis Hanson, featuring Eminem, Kim Basinger, Brittany Murphy and Mekhi Phifer), was an especially well-supervised procedure. According to Jody Toll, an experienced coordinator in the field of screen translation who worked for UIP on this project, it was the most carefully prepared she had seen during the whole of her career (Jody Toll, e-mail communication, 20.8.2003). Toll supervised all the translations of the rap sections worldwide. In this article, I will discuss the

Finnish, French and Russian subtitles of the rap sections of the film.<sup>1</sup> In Finland the film was subtitled by the well-known rap artist MC<sub>2</sub> Paleface, i.e. Karri Mietinen, whose mentor was an experienced subtitler for film and television, Janne Staffans. Paleface had more space for his subtitles than Finnish subtitlers usually do, because this film was not simultaneously given Swedish subtitles.<sup>3</sup> The film's French subtitler, Marc Girard-Ygor, is a professional screen translator, who both dubs and subtitles from English and Spanish. In Russia, the official version of *8 Mile* was subtitled by Dimitri Usachov, who has been active professionally as translator, author and director in film dubbing since 1988. Usachov proposed a rhymed and free translation of the rap parts (see Appendices 1 and 2). However, the translation was not accepted by UIP, and another translator — despite my many inquiries, UIP will not reveal who subtitled the raps.<sup>4</sup>

As a means of supervision and 'quality control' (see below), UIP provided the translators with a detailed and helpful 'spotting dialogue list' (214 pages) and a leaflet entitled *8 Mile Lyric Translation Guidelines* (39 pages) that contained explanations, instructions (general guidelines, recommendations for keeping some expressions in English, etc.) and "alternate lyrics", i.e., intralingual translations of the rap lyrics. Díaz-Cintas (2001: 200), who emphasises the importance of a good dialogue list as a requisite for quality subtitling, defines a 'dialogue list' as follows:

[A] dialogue list (not to be mistaken with the script) is the compilation of the dialogue exchanges that materialise in the film, and that, according to Minchinton ..., is "the essential text" for the subtitler, although unfortunately its use is rather rare in the professional world... Such a list is usually supplied by the film distributor or producer and in its ideal format it offers, besides all the dialogue, metatextual information on the implicit socio-cultural connotations, explains punning, word play and possible double entendre, explains the meaning of colloquialisms and dialectalisms, elucidates the origin and the usage in context of certain terms that may be obscure at first sight, gives the correct spelling of all proper names, advises on the convenience of using a particular font type for some words in the subtitled version, clarifies implicit as well as explicit allusions to geographical realities, etc.

The *8 Mile* spotting dialogue list is very close to this ideal, even though it does not correspond 100% to the sound track, at least in the portion (reel 6 AB) that comprises my corpus.

Furthermore, the subtitles in all languages were translated back into English by the translators themselves or by other UIP staff members and sent back in order to check their acceptability. In cases where the entire translation did not meet UIP's requirements, the task was given to another translator. The Russian subtitler mentioned above is a case in point. There were some changes on the French side, too; the commission was given to Marc Girard-Ygor after UIP had turned down an earlier, non-rhymed and "catastrophic" version commissioned by Universal Music

(Marc Girard-Ygor, e-mail communication, 24.10.2004). It is difficult to say to what extent the decisions concerning the translations were made by the UIP head office and to what extent they were local. There seems to have been variation from one country to another. As Toll (e-mail communication, 20.8.2003) puts it: “The process we used for *8 Mile* was very successful, with each language turning out differently depending on the combination of the local translator, the local UIP office and the rap consultant we brought on for the film”. The Finnish translation of the rap sections was rather free, owing to the determination of the Finnish UIP office (Ulla Leisio, telephone communication, 20.9.2004). Even though Paleface changed many culture-specific references in the source text, he was forced to modify only a few passages in his translation (Janne Staffans, interview, 30.4.2005).

## 1.2 The film

The events of *8 Mile* take place in Detroit in the year 1995. Marshall Mathers, better known as Eminem, plays himself in the film, modestly renamed Jimmy Smith. Jimmy starts out as a loser with a poor background and unpromising prospects: a trailer-park childhood, an absent birth father, an alcoholic mother, the wrong skin colour for a rap artist. In the course of the film, however, steel worker Jimmy manages to channel his talents and frustrations into the beginning of a very promising artistic career. He improvises raps whenever he can, writes lyrics even on his hand, and spends every free minute on “trying to figure out how, and where, words fit together” (Frere-Jones 2004: 120). The film opens with a scene in which Jimmy ‘chokes’, i.e. loses confidence and is unable to utter a word in a ‘battle’, i.e., a freestyle rap contest. It ends with a similar battle, in the same place (a hip-hop club called The Shelter), but this time Jimmy overcomes his stage fright and defeats his opponents LC Lyckety-Splyt, Lotto and Papa Doc, who are members of a black gang called “The Leadaz of Tha Free World”, with a verbal mastery that faintly recalls Cyrano de Bergerac. In the last round against Papa Doc, which Jimmy has to begin, he anticipates everything that Papa Doc will say against him and then makes his opponent lose face by revealing Papa Doc’s middle-class background, totally unsuitable for an MC. As Adam Krims (2000: 95) points out, in rap the persona of an MC is supposed to be “a voice from the ‘streets’ speaking from authentic experience”. Murray Forman (2002: 62) talks of “ghetto chic” by which black rap artists seek to establish street credibility. In his battle against Papa Doc, Jimmy reverses the stereotypic roles that the Leadaz of Tha Free World had been trying to impose on the mainly black audience watching the battle. They had treated Jimmy as an Other, a white “hillbilly” who has no rap credentials, while they as blacks had natural access to the legacy of ‘Signifyin(g)’ (Gates 1988).<sup>5</sup> However, when Jimmy reveals in his rap that Papa Doc is in reality Clarence, son of a well-to-do family, he

diminishes the status of the other Leadaz as well. Meanwhile, Jimmy, who admits to being white trash and has grown up in a trailer-park, has earned his credentials as an authentic rap artist. Jimmy is “for real” because he can speak from his own experience. Forman (2002: 61–62) observes that white rap artists like Eminem typically seek legitimacy through the “imagery of trailer-park chic”. When Papa Doc chokes, Jimmy becomes the new champion.

### 1.3 Dubbing + subtitling

Probably owing to Eminem’s prestige as “the most significant recording artist in the English-speaking world” for people under thirty (Frere-Jones 2004: 119), UIP demanded that the rap sections of the film be subtitled, even in countries where dubbing is traditional. The sound track in the rap sections was to remain in English, even if the rest of the film was dubbed. Indeed, in some scenes of the French and Russian film versions, Eminem and some other characters switch from French and Russian into English and back again, as in example 1, taken from the French sound track of *8 Mile*. The dialogue between Jimmy and his friends is taken from the end of the film, right before Jimmy’s victorious battle. Jimmy has been beaten up by the Leadaz because he had broken the nose of Wink, one of the Leadaz whom Jimmy discovered having sex with his girlfriend. The English back-translations are my own, the scenic indications are from the *8 Mile* spotting dialogue list:

- (1) Jimmy to the group: *Je les emmerde. J’fais la bataille*. “Fuck them. I’m gonna battle”.

Dj Iz to Jimmy: *sérieux?* “Seriously?”

Jimmy to Dj Iz: *Ouais*. “Yeah”.

(The guys react with disbelief. Jimmy heads for the backstage door)

Jimmy to the group: *Bon ben alors, vous venez ou quoi?* “So, then, are you coming or what?”

(They follow Jimmy in)

Jimmy (rapping): Cheddar, I can rip you to a shred of / Cheddar cheese / There’s not a better MC than me / I’m B-Rabbit, bitch / Sting like a bee, float like a butterfly / What am I? So what if I cut a guy? Did I s-s-stutter, guy? ...

Jimmy’s rap is subtitled in French: *Cheddar, je te d’chire en lambeaux / Cheddar Cheese / Je suis le meilleur MC / B Rabbit / Pique comme l’abeille / Flotte comme le papillon / Aie, j’entaille un lascar / Est-ce que je bé-bégaye, tocard?*

“Cheddar, I will rip you into pieces / Cheddar Cheese / I am the best MC / Sting like a bee / Float like a butterfly / Ouch, I cut a guy / Do I s-stutter, airhead?”

(*8 Mile* spotting dialogue list, reel 5AB, pp. 20–23.)

This clash of languages and translation modes and the breach in verisimilitude suddenly bring out the “voice of the translator” (Folkart 1991, Hermans 1996), which usually stays more or less hidden, metaphorically speaking, in dubbed films. Here we can definitely talk about a multiplicity of voices: the voices of French dubbers and American actors alternate in this scene. But also another pair of essentially different voices take turns here: the translator of the dubbed version, Linda Bruno, and the subtitler, Marc Girard-Ygor.

## 2. The translator’s battle

### 2.1 Defining translation problems and quality control

Because the participants of the rap battles in *8 Mile* are trying their best to outdo one another in verbal acrobatics, they inevitably present some ‘translation problems’ for the subtitler. As Gideon Toury (2002) points out, ‘translation problems’ are a key concept in Translation Studies but what has often been neglected is its logical counterpart, **solution**. According to Toury (op. cit.) there are three kinds of translation problems. ‘Problem<sub>1</sub>’ is a utopian concept and has to do with translatability in general, its counterpart ‘solution<sub>1</sub>’ having no real existence. ‘Problems<sub>2</sub>’ and ‘<sub>3</sub>’ as well as ‘solutions<sub>2</sub>’ and ‘<sub>3</sub>’ are concrete and the difference between them remains slightly unclear. Problem<sub>2</sub> of the source text can be identified retrospectively from the target with the help of a realised solution<sub>2</sub> (see also Toury 1995: 77–81). Problem<sub>3</sub> is a dynamic concept and there might be several solutions<sub>3</sub>. Problem<sub>3</sub> reveals itself to the researcher from other data (notes and manuscripts etc.) than just the source and target texts. Clearly enough, the main perspective from which I am addressing translation problems in this study is that of problem<sub>3</sub>.

According to Christiane Nord’s more traditional approach (1991: 151), translation problems are linked to particular translation tasks. These problems arise irrespective of the translator’s competence or the technical conditions of the work. Nord (1991: 158–160) distinguishes in a rather fuzzy way between pragmatic, cultural, linguistic and text-specific translation problems. Inevitably in subtitling, there are always pragmatic translation problems such as ‘time-and-space constraints’, since there is more information in a film than can be conveyed by subtitles, which is a rather telegraphic mode of writing.<sup>6</sup> The mode-shift from sound track speech to writing unavoidably forces the subtitler to truncate the text (Mason 2001: 19, 22). In addition, the polysemiotic nature of subtitling both helps and hinders the translator. S/he is not as free as a literary translator to render wordplay, for example, since the translation must not contradict the other channels of expression in the film, such as the picture (Gottlieb 1997/2004: 67–68).

The subtitlers of *8 Mile* had to address a number of ‘text-type specific translation problems.’ In this article, I will concentrate on this type only. It has been said (e.g., by Gambier 26.9.2004: EST Congress, workshop on screen translation; Jääskeläinen 2005) that a common weakness in studies of screen translation is that researchers use films as research **material** only, not as research **objects**. Films tend to serve as corpora in studies that are actually about general translation phenomena, which are not themselves characteristic of screen translation. However, my aim is different: by studying translation problems and their solutions in this context, I want to shed light on the freedom subtitlers enjoy when they are translating for international film corporations, such as UIP.

Another issue I want to address is quality control in subtitling. How much does quality control help in solving translation problems? What is, in fact, good quality control? How can it be organised in an effective manner? By quality control I mean assistance and support given to the subtitler by the commissioner in order to “eliminate routine errors, to ensure that the ‘product’ (the subtitle) meets the requirements of specific criteria (subtitle conventions) and to reduce the potential for perceived errors” (James 2000: 152). As James (loc. cit.) points out, thorough quality control also endeavours to satisfy the different expectations of the clients, i.e., the viewers, the author or scriptwriter, the producer, the broadcaster etc. Quality control more probably leads to satisfactory or good quality in subtitling, rather than the absence of quality control. By good quality in subtitling I mean a minimal number of translation errors, accuracy and acceptability (i.e. natural target-language style, Toury 1995) within the parameters of the text-type in question.

## 2.2 Text-type-specific translation problems in *8 Mile*

In the corpus I have selected for study, five text-specific features seem to have caused translation problems: rhyme, wordplay, sociolects, obscene language and culture-specific references. This list is not exhaustive, and there are overlaps, for example, in the categories of slang and obscene language, obscene language often being an indicator of slang.<sup>7</sup>

### 2.2.1 *Rhyme*

By rhyme, I mean the “[a]greement in the terminal sounds of two or more words or metrical lines, such that ... the last stressed vowel and any sounds following it are the same, while the sound or sounds preceding are different” (*Oxford English Dictionary* on-line, s.v. ‘rhyme’). Examples taken from the corpus are ‘one’-‘gun’, ‘jäättyy’-‘päätyy’, ‘toc’-‘Doc’. I count also imperfect rhymes (e.g., *pian-hormoonia*, *reum-Tom-gun*, *всегда-стероида* [vsegda-steroida]) as rhymes, because the translator’s effort to create a rhyme in the target language is significant. In

the analysis, I studied only end-rhymes, even though internal rhymes, which are becoming more and more common in rap (Krimms 2000: 43), appear in some of Jimmy's lyrics, as well as in the French translation. However, only end-rhymes are in consistent use throughout the corpus.

In the case of *8 Mile*, translating into rhyme was actually a self-created translation problem for some more ambitious translators (or local UIP offices), since initially, the UIP head office requested a literal, non-rhymed translation of the rap lyrics. In the *8 Mile Lyric Translation Guidelines* it says:

It is the intention of the film makers to keep the lyric translations literal, staying as close to the original as possible. This film documents rap culture in Detroit very closely and hence the original words, historical references and raw emotions should be kept intact for the fans of EMINEM. Although rap is clearly an art form which combines improvisation, usage of complex word structures and rhyme, the objective of the translation of this film is to convey, as exactly as possible, the original words of EMINEM, rather than attempting to create new rap rhymes in each language. (*8 Mile Lyric Translation Guidelines* page 2, caps in the original.)

However, the Finnish and French subtitles are systematically rhymed, while the Russian subtitler uses rhyme sporadically. There seems to have been a contradiction within UIP in the attitude towards rhymed translation. The local offices of UIP, at least in France and in Finland, favoured rhyme. Because the local offices persuaded the head office that precedence should be given to rhyme, they contributed to the good quality of the two subtitled versions. This illustrates an important role that local offices can play in international film corporations' quality control procedures.

### 2.2.2 *Wordplay*

My definition of wordplay is also from the *Oxford English Dictionary* on-line (s.v. 'play', emphasis in the original): wordplay or "**play on or upon words**: [is] a sportive use of words so as to convey a double meaning, or produce a fantastic or humorous effect by similarity of sound with difference of meaning; a pun". An example, taken from *8 Mile*, is "How can 6 dicks be pussies?" Here, the play is naturally on the double meaning of the words 'dick' [unpleasant fool / male genitalia] and 'pussy' [weak, effeminate man / female genitalia], which creates a paradox in Jimmy's rap (with the word 'dicks', he is referring to the Leadaz).

From the point of view of translation, the main problem with wordplay lies in its metalinguistic nature: "the words involved no longer merely serve the *function* of communication; they also become part of the object of communication" (Gottlieb 1997/2004: 54, emphasis in the original). Dirk Delabastita (1994: 227), writing about research on wordplay translation, emphasises that there should be a distinction made between intended and accidental wordplay. Delabastita (1994:

232–233) also wisely questions the usefulness of fine-grained analysis of wordplay in translation analysis: “To what extent are the numerous descriptive categories produced by the specialists in linguistics, stylistics, and rhetoric really needed for the purpose of understanding the various modes of wordplay translation?” In the context of this study I can safely say that all the play on words in my corpus is intentional. As for Delabastita’s other comment, I do not distinguish between any subtypes of wordplay, as it is not necessary for my translation analysis. What is essential is the presence or absence of wordplay in the studied texts.

### 2.2.3 *Sociolects: Slang and colloquial speech*

Slang is “[l]anguage of a highly colloquial type, considered as below the level of standard educated speech, and consisting either of new words or of current words employed in some special sense” (*Oxford English Dictionary* on-line, s.v. ‘slang’). Example: ‘choke artist’, ‘gonna’. I also include in the category of sociolects colloquial speech (“Belonging to common speech; characteristic of or proper to ordinary conversation, as distinguished from formal or elevated language”, *Oxford English Dictionary* on-line, s.v. ‘colloquial’), and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish clearly between slang and colloquialism.

The translation problems caused by sociolects in general are due to the fact that sociolectal connotations usually do not “travel” successfully from one culture to another (see e.g., Berman 1985, Chapdelaine and Lane-Mercier 1994, Leighton 1991 and Englund Dimitrova 1997). There is no complete correspondence of connotations, even in the field of rap and youth culture. In the United States, rap and hip-hop cultures are built on questions of racial identity and on the dichotomy between blacks and whites. Spatial and collective identities, linked with the home territory, are also essential. Therefore, words such as ‘representing’ are pregnant with meaning and cannot pass directly, without glossing, into other cultures.<sup>8</sup> It is true, as Adam Krims writes, that rap culture has lately become global and that it has stepped from the periphery into the centre of the musical polysystem. Yet its local manifestations might not use the racial dichotomy at all, although rap has often been adopted by local ethnic or linguistic minorities (Krims 2000: 156–197). In Finland, for example, racial questions are not central for rap, even though rappers are aware of them, since they follow the American rap scene closely. Therefore, words like ‘honky’ do not have equivalents with a similar, insulting effect in Finnish (there is an equivalent for ‘nigga’).

### 2.2.4 *Obscene language*

Obscene language is low, offensive and/or indecent, and it contains such elements as taboo words and swear words (e.g. ‘fuck’, ‘ass’, ‘motherfucka’). Obscene language is closely linked with the usage of slang in a particular text, it being an essential

part of slang vocabulary. It is also common in ‘toasting’, an African-American tradition of rhythmic narrative (e.g., in the toasts of the Signifying Monkey, Gates 1988: 55–56), which is said to be one of the main ancestors of rap (Crowe 2004: 46). Obscene words and expressions tend to disappear or diminish in translation as they do in subtitling (Gambier 2002: 211, 214–216). This is partly caused by the different norms of oral versus written language, an issue that arises in subtitling (Díaz-Cintaz 2003: 223–229; Mason 1989: 16). As Gambier observes (2002: 214; see also Scandura 2004: 130), slang, swear words, insults, vulgar or obscene words, etc. seem more offensive and aggressive in written form, because writing is the authoritative form of a language: “*verba volant, scripta manent*”, quotes Gambier (loc.cit.). This leads to (self-)censorship in subtitling. Obscene words are often isolated exclamations or accessory adjectives that are the easiest — and thus the first — to be omitted from the translation even when the translator does not intend to be prudish (Ulla Leisio, telephone communication, 20.9.2004).

Cultural norms of the target culture also play a part in this phenomenon. In Russia, for example, the prescriptive norms of subtitling are stricter than in Finland or in France; no obscene words are allowed on screen or in any other written media for that matter. In Hong Kong, the dominant ‘language poetics’ leads to omissions, toning down or translation into Putonghua (i.e., not the mother-tongue of the viewers) of English swear words in subtitles (Chen 2004: 136, 141). Interestingly, financial profit might also be a motive for censorship in subtitling. Hong Kong film distributors interviewed by G.C.F. Fong admitted that their films are geared for teenager ratings, since most of the movie-going public consists of teens. If a single hard-core Cantonese swear word appears in the subtitles, the film is automatically forbidden to persons under 18 years of age. The audience decreases in size and profits drop accordingly (Chen 2004: 137).

### 2.2.5 *Culture-specific references*

Culture-specific references are signs referring to elements and features that, as a whole, constitute a civilisation — that civilisation itself consisting of several layers, including local or global subcultures. Culture-specific references can be proper names (e.g., ‘Cheddar Cheese’, ‘Eric Sermon’, ‘The D’) or ordinary nouns (e.g., ‘trailer-park’, ‘dollar’, ‘yearbook’) (Ballard 2003: 149, 173). I also include in this category allusions (e.g., ‘Leave it to Beaver’), which, at least in my corpus, seem to cause similar translation problems. Also certain numbers (e.g. ‘313’, a Detroit area code) belong to this category. Ritva Leppihalme (1997: 2) remarks that translating culture-specific references can cause more problems than the semantic or structural difficulties of a given text, even in cases where the source and target cultures are rather close. This seems to be true also of *8 Mile*, where the source and target cultures are quite close — rap culture in the US and in other countries — but

where the culture-specific elements of the raps refer to several layers of the American civilization. Some of these references (8 Mile, 313, ‘Leave it to Beaver’) are unfamiliar to the majority of the non-American film viewers, and without doubt also to some Americans. Leppihalme (op. cit., 22–23), who talks about the responsibility of the translator towards the reader, recommends paying special attention to the choice of translation strategy in order to facilitate the reader’s comprehension. For example, explicitation might be needed to avoid ‘culture bumps’ (i.e., “a situation where the reader of a TT has a problem understanding a source-cultural allusion” (op. cit., 4)).<sup>10</sup>

In screen translation, copyrights, advertising of trademarks in films and rivalry between film companies influence the way that some culture-specific references are translated. For example, Riitta Oittinen (2004: 104) observes that Disney has recently forbidden translators to change, and thus domesticate proper names in Disney films. The policy was similar in the translating of *8 Mile*. As a general rule, the subtitlers were asked to leave the culture-specific references intact:

Even in cases when it is felt that factual references or names of known rappers will not be understood, it is advised to keep them in English, in order to preserve the historical value of the film and to reach local hip-hop fans. (*8 Mile Lyric Translation Guidelines*, page 2.)

As will be seen from the analysis below, this policy was not rigidly adhered to. However, some of the Finnish translator’s substitutions were not accepted by UIP, even though, in the translator’s opinion, they would have worked best in the given context. He had referred to the Leadaz of Tha Free World by the Finnish equivalents of Huey, Dewey and Louie [*Tupu, Hupu ja Lupu*] but was forced to omit this allusion, as they are characters of UIP’s rival company Disney (Karri Miettinen, e-mail communication, 2.9.2004; Janne Staffans, interview, 30.4.2005).

### 3. Analysis

#### 3.1 Methods

The analysed corpus consists of the last scenes of the film, where Jimmy wages his battle against Lyckety-Splyt, Lotto and Papa Doc (reel 6 AB in the spotting dialogue list). Normal dialogue between the characters was excluded from the corpus, and only the rapped lyrics were part of the translation analysis. In the analysis, I had help from native speakers of French and Russian. Josselin Vasseur watched the French corpus with me on video, explained the slang terms that I did not understand and checked and revised my translation analysis of the French subtitles. The Russian subtitles were typed and back-translated into English by Andrey Shilov,

with whom I also later watched the Russian DVD-version of the corpus, discussing every subtitle, in order to make sure that we had the same criteria.

The methodology that I used in the analysis is from Toury 1995 and Gottlieb 2000/2004. The text comparison is indirect, done with intermediary concepts (Toury 1995: 80). This means that I do not compare the source text directly with the target texts (for an example of my analysis, see below). The source text is taken from the *8 Mile* spotting dialogue list, but following Gottlieb (1999/2004: 19), it is modified according to the sound track on video tape and DVD. The picture is also taken into account in the analysis, and it is essential for the mechanism of one of Jimmy's (Eminem's) wordplays in the corpus. The translation unit of my analysis is a 'rhyme complex' (Krimms 2000 43, 49), i.e., a "section with consistently rhyming words". In the target texts, the translation unit is usually longer than what appears on the screen at a given time (on video or DVD). There are 52 translation units in my analysis, and I have studied the stylistic effects in the five categories discussed above (1) rhyme, 2) wordplay, 3) sociolects (slang/colloquial language), 4) obscene language and 5) culture-specific references) by counting the shifts. A shift was simply defined as an omission of the stylistic effect, an addition of a stylistic effect or some other change within the category (e.g., the replacing of a culture-specific reference in the source text with a target-culture reference; an example: "The dude from 'Leave It To Beaver'" → "Kössi Kenguru", Kössi the Kangaroo, the main character in a Finnish children's cartoon series created by Heikki Prepula). Example 2 presents an extract of my translation analysis, with all the categories, classifications and shifts listed. In the source text, Jimmy plays with the double meaning of the expression 'your white ass', a pejorative slang expression meaning 'your white self'. Here he refers to Lyckety-Splyt's previous jibe "You need to take your white ass across *8 Mile* to the trailer park". The bracketed scenic indications are taken from the *8 Mile* spotting dialogue list; the back-translations from Finnish and French into English are mine; the back-translation from Russian into English is by Andrey Shilov:

- (2) (Jimmy turns his back on Lyckety-Splyt and pulls up his shirt, revealing that his pants are pulled down to show his buttocks — the crowd laughs hysterically)

ST (English source text): Now I'm gonna turn around with a great smile  
And walk my white ass back across *8 Mile*

rhyme yes (AA)

slang / colloquial language yes (gonna, white ass)

wordplay yes (picture of buttocks + "my white ass")

obscene language yes (ass)

culture-specific reference yes (*8 Mile*)

TT1 (Finnish target text): *Nyt hymyilyttää* “Now I feel like smiling”  
*Tää ei päättyny häviöön* “This didn’t end up in a defeat”  
*Niinku sanoit, mä lähen lähiöön* “Just like you said, I’m goin’ to the suburbs”  
rhyme yes (xBB)  
slang / colloquial language yes (päättyny, mä lähen)  
wordplay –  
obscene language –  
culture-specific reference –  
 Shifts: omission of wordplay, omission of obscene language, omission of culture-specific reference

In Finnish there is no equivalent for the expression or the concept ‘white ass’ that would mean ‘your white self’.

TT2 (French target text): *Avec le sourire, je me taille* “With a smile, I get out of here”  
*Et mon cul blanc* “And my white ass”  
*part traverser 8 Mile* “goes crossing 8 Mile”  
rhyme yes (AxA)  
slang / colloquial language yes (me taille, cul)  
wordplay –  
obscene language yes (cul)  
culture-specific reference yes (8 Mile)  
 Shifts: omission of wordplay

In French there is an expression for ‘white ass’, *cul de blanc*, e.g., “*Dégage ton petit cul de blanc*”. However, it seems to be rare.

TT3 (Russian target text): *Я ухожу, улыбаясь* [Ja ukhozhu, ulybayas’]  
 “I leave with a smile”.  
*8 Миль, я возвращаюсь туда* [Vosem’ Mil’, ya vozvrashchayus’ tuda]  
 “8 Miles, I return there”.  
 TT3: rhyme –  
Slang / colloquial language –  
wordplay –  
obscene language –  
culture-specific reference yes (8 Миль)  
 Shifts: omission of rhyme, omission of slang / colloquial language, omission of wordplay, omission of obscene language

Here ‘8 Mile’ is in the plural, which may be a misprint. The Russian subtitler never translates ‘ass’ with a Russian equivalent but with a milder word that could be translated back with the word ‘buttocks’.

### 3.2 Results

Table 1 recapitulates the results of my translation analysis. In the categories of rhyme, wordplay, sociolects and obscene language, I do not count individual rhymes or slang words (there is usually more than one per translation unit), but only their presence or absence as a stylistic effect in the translation unit (TU in the table). However, in the category of culture-specific references, I count individual references, and sometimes there are several occurrences within one translation unit.

Paleface's and Girard-Ygor's translations are stylistically quite close to the source text. Thanks to the translators themselves and to the supervision provided by UIP — as well as to Janne Staffan's mentoring of Paleface — the Finnish and French target texts can be considered high-quality translation products. Paleface has the fewest shifts in the categories of rhyme (44 rhymes kept out of 47 in ST + 4 additions), wordplay (11 out of 17 in the ST + 2 additions) and slang/colloquial

**Table 1.** *8 Mile*, reel 6 AB, results of the translation analysis

ST	52 TUs			
rhyme	47			
wordplay	17			
slang and colloquial language	50			
obscene language	35			
culture-specific reference	59			
TTs	no shift	omission	addition	change
<b>Paleface</b>	52 TUs			
rhyme	44	3	4	
wordplay	11	6	2	
slang and colloquial language	50	–	1	
obscene language	14	21	1	
culture-specific reference	31	15	2	13
<b>Girard-Ygor</b>	52 TUs			
rhyme	43	4	1	
wordplay	6	11	–	
slang and colloquial language	43	7	–	
obscene language	14	21	–	
culture-specific reference	50	4	1	5
<b>anonymous</b>	52 TUs			
rhyme	17	30	1	
wordplay	2	15	–	
slang and colloquial language	25	25	–	
obscene language	2	33	–	
culture-specific reference	44	11	1	4

language (50 out of 50 in the ST + 1 addition). It is astonishing how he has managed to render such a high percentage (almost 65%) of the wordplays in the original. In Henrik Gottlieb's case study on wordplay in subtitling (1997/2004: 62), the corresponding percentage was less than 50. Paleface's background as an MC has evidently helped him in translating this film. He has published two rap albums himself.<sup>11</sup> Marc Girard-Ygor also has few shifts in the categories of rhyme (43 out of 47 in the ST + 1 addition) and slang / colloquial language (43 out of 50 in the ST). However, he renders only a little more than a third of the wordplay in the original. Could this be explained in part by the fact that he was more limited by UIP in his work than Paleface, who had more freedom in translating the culture-specific references?

In the category of obscene language there are significantly more shifts: both Paleface and Girard-Ygor have omitted obscenities in 21 translation units (out of 35 in the ST). However, this has more to do with the selective reduction inherent in subtitling (Mason 2001: 20) than with self-censorship; they do not shun obscene language, as Examples 3 and 4 illustrate. Example 3 is taken from the original and from Paleface's translation; Example 4, from the original and from Girard-Ygor's translation. The back-translations into English are mine; the scenic indications are from the 8 *Mile* spotting dialogue list:

- (3) (JIMMY) (into microphone) (rapping)

ST: My motto:

Fuck Lotto

I'll get them 7 digits from your mother

For a dollar tomorrow

TT1 (Paleface): *Vittuun koko Lotto* "To cunt the whole Lotto"

*On mun motto* "Is my motto"

*7 oikein ja äidiltäs suihinotto* "7 winning numbers in the Lotto and a blow job from your mother"

- (4) (JIMMY) (into microphone) (rapping)

ST: These Leadaz Of Tha Free World rookies

Lookie

How can 6 dicks be pussies?

TT2 (Girard-Ygor): *Les Leaders: rappers néophytes* "the Leaders: novice rappers"

*Vous êtes chatte ou bite?* "Are you pussies or dicks" = women / i.e., homosexuals or men?

(The crowd shrieks and cheers as the Leadaz glare at Jimmy)

In the category of culture-specific references, Paleface has the most shifts (15 omitted and 13 changed out of 59). The modification of these references (e.g., 'trailer',

‘trailer-park’, ‘8 Mile’, ‘Eric Sermon’, ‘Willie Nelson’, ‘New Kids on the Block’, ‘Leave it to Beaver’, etc.) is a clear strategy in his translation. This is partly caused by audience-awareness (Janne Staffans, interview, 30.4.2005), partly because he gives priority to rhyme. Marc Girard-Ygor retains most (50) of the culture-specific references; he only omits four of them and changes five.

As to the anonymous Russian subtitler, this translation is of a very different nature. There are a great many shifts in all categories except culture-specific references (44 out of 59 retained): approximately one third of the translation units are converted into rhyme (17 out of 47), a fraction of the wordplays (2 out of 17) and half the slang (25 out of 50 instances), which is usually not rendered into real slang, as in the Finnish and French versions, but into more neutral colloquial language. In the category of obscene language, it is not surprising that 33 of the 35 obscenities have been omitted (only two mild obscenities remain, possibly to create some stylistic effect of rap). As mentioned earlier, these omissions are the result of the stricter norms of subtitling in Russia and would have been evident in any translator’s work. The Russian subtitles also contain some translation errors, the nature of which suggests that the translator was not a professional. In the view of Andrey Shilov, this translator might not have been a native speaker of Russian. I also believe that this translator has worked directly from the sound track, without the spotting dialogue list, since the number of errors is so high: eight mistakes in the studied corpus. Examples 5 and 6 show two instances of translation errors. The scenic indications are from the *8 Mile* spotting dialogue list and the back-translations into English are by Shilov:

(5) (LOTTO) (into microphone) (rapping)

ST: Fuck Lotto

Call me your leader

I feel bad that I gotta murder

The dude from “Leave It To Beaver”

TT3 (anonymous Russian translator)

*К черту Лотто, я твой лидер.* [K chortu Lotto, ya tvoy lider] / “Damn Lotto, I’m your leader”

*Кто будет мочить белого, как* [Kto budet mochtit’ belogo kak] “Who will murder a white guy that way”

*чувака из «Оставь это для Бобра»!* [chuvaka iz “Ostav’ eto dlya bobra!”] “the dude from ‘Leave It To Beaver’ was murdered!” (emphasis mine)

(6) (JIMMY) (into microphone) (rapping)

ST: I am white

I am a fuckin’ bum

I do live in a trailer with my mom

My boy Future is an Uncle Tom

I do got a dumb friend named Cheddar Bob  
Who shoots himself in his leg with his own gun

ТТЗ: Я белый, да, и у меня нет дома, [Ya bely, da, i u menya net doma] / “I am white and I am homeless”.

Я с матерью живу в трейлере [Ya s materyu zhibu v treylere] / “I live in a trailer with my mother”.

Мой парень Фьючер [Moy paren’ Fyucher] “My boy-friend Future”

Как Дядя Том с белыми тусуется. [Kak Dyadya Tom s belymi tusuyetsya] / “like Uncle Tom hangs out with white guys”

Ну и что, что Чеддер Боб дурак, [Nu i chto, chto Chedder Bob durak] / “Cheddar Bob is a fool, so what?”

Прострелил себе колено и рад. [Prostretil sebe koleno i rad] “He shot himself in his knee and is happy about it”. (emphasis mine)

In Example 6, Jimmy’s image changes in the Russian version when he is talking about his boyfriend. How would the notoriously homophobic Eminem react to this? (In the film, however, Jimmy is on good terms with one homosexual, who even helps him.) Here we can clearly see that quality control has failed; not even elementary mistakes have been avoided. Quality control in Russia failed at several stages. Eivor Gummerus and Catrine Paro (2001: 140–142) distinguish six important steps in assuring translation quality (for national broadcasting companies):

Step one: Start an in-house translation unit

Step two: Pay special attention to requirements of competence when recruiting translators

Step three: Provide thorough training on the job

Step four: Pay special attention to the commissioning stage

Step five: Make sure that the “production line” works smoothly

Step six: Establish a reviewing system

I would say that UIP’s quality control failed in steps two, three, four, five and six. It would have been better to have accepted Usachov’s rhymed translation *mutandis mutatis*, even though his translation was much freer than Paleface’s and Girard-Ygor’s (see Appendices 2 and 3). Probably also in the producer’s view, deliberate, bold changes are less harmful than significant translation errors.

### Conclusion: Translator profiles and invisibility of the profession

The translator profiles or the ‘implied translators’ (Schiavi 1996) that we can deduce on the basis of the three versions are, in the end, quite different and they probably also reflect the different professional situation of subtitlers in Finland,

France and Russia. The image we have of Paleface is that of an ambitious, talented, self-confident, young professional (thanks to Staffans) and a highly visible translator. This visibility was actually quite concrete when the film was released in Finland. Paleface's name was mentioned in some of the reviews (e.g. *Nyt-liite / Helsingin Sanomat*, 24.1.2003), and he was even interviewed for television. Janne Staffans's name is unfortunately missing in the laudatory film reviews, but his name is not totally unknown to the Finnish film and TV audience. In Finland the professional status of film translators is better than in many other countries. Marc Girard-Ygor also seems to be ambitious, talented and professional, but he remains "invisible" in Venuti's (1995) sense. Does this make him an ideal translator from the film distributor's point of view? To Girard-Ygor's disappointment, his name was not mentioned anywhere when *8 Mile* was released in France, but he has become accustomed to working behind the scenes; subtitling is, as he puts it, "*une activité de l'ombre*" "an activity in the shadow" (Marc Girard-Ygor, e-mail communication, 4.10.2004). The impression we have of the Russian subtitler is negative and unprofessional, even though the comments on the subtitles in Russian internet forums seem to have been rather positive (what elicited the most praise, however, was the decision not to dub the rap battles).

As for quality control in subtitling, the corpus of this study actually presents two extremes of quality in screen translation. Quality control succeeded marvelously in two cases, partly thanks to the careful work of the local UIP offices in Finland and in France. It seemed to fail in Russia, or in the United States (if the Russian subtitles were in fact made there; see note 4). It is practically impossible for one person, or for one bureau in Los Angeles, to supervise a worldwide translation procedure. Therefore, special attention should be paid to the requirements of competence, not only when recruiting translators, but also when recruiting local managers and co-ordinators.

## Notes

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2. The MC stands for Master of Ceremonies and in the context of rap and hip-hop culture it means a rapper.
3. In Finland cinema subtitling is usually bilingual, both in Finnish and in Swedish.
4. Here is Usachov's comment on the change of translator: "... I translated into Russian both dialogues and rap, using the dialogue script as well as the sound track. As I mentioned before, I'm quite proud of my rap verses, however for some obscure reason the Western party chose to use for subtitles reportedly a weaker word-for-word translation done by some guy in the U.S. I have not seen the final Russian version of the movie, so the last statement is just hearsay" (Dimitri Usachov, e-mail communication, 29.4.2005).
5. Although Gates's Derridean book eschews clear definitions of concepts, Signifyin(g) could be defined as follows: "... Signifyin(g) constitutes all of the language games, the figurative substitutions, the free associations held in abeyance by Lacan's or Saussure's paradigmatic axis, which disturb the seemingly coherent linearity of the syntagmatic chain of signifiers, in a way analogous to Freud's notion of how the unconscious relates to the conscious. The black vernacular trope of Signifyin(g) exists on this vertical axis, wherein the materiality of the signifier (the use of words as things, in Freud's terms of the discourse of the unconscious) not only ceases to be disguised but comes to bear prominently as the dominant mode of discourse" (Gates 1988: 58.) It should be noted that according to Gates (1988: 90), Signifyin(g), "is not in any way the exclusive province of black people".
6. According to Gottlieb (1997/2004: 58), no more than ca. 10 characters can be read per second, and a subtitle block (a two-liner) can contain no more than ca. 70 characters. The number of characters per line is generally up to 33, in some cases 40 (Mason 1989: 14).
7. A German colleague pointed out that intratextual allusions by which the rappers refer to each other's utterances constitute another translation problem of this corpus. Naturally, they limit even further the work of the subtitler, since in subtitling it is more difficult to maintain cohesion (Mason 2001: 22).
8. Murray Forman (2002: 194) defines 'representing' as follows: "Representing involves the artist's employment of numerous and often subtle communicative codes and cultural practices to define and articulate individual and posse identities, spatial locales grounded in the 'hood, and other aspects of individual and collective significance".
9. "Eight Mile is a road which forms the boundary between predominantly African American Detroit, Michigan and the city's mostly white northern suburbs. The term '8 Mile', therefore, represents a barrier that is difficult to cross" (*Wikipedia, on-line* s.l. 'Eight Mile').

10. For other translation strategies, see e.g. Tomaskiewicz 2001.
11. *The pale ontologist* (2001) and *Quarter past* (2003).

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## Résumé

Quand on cherche à assurer la qualité du sous-titrage, il ne suffit pas d'être attentif aux compétences des traducteurs embauchés, mais également de veiller à la qualification professionnelle des responsables locaux du sous-titrage. L'article est basé sur une analyse stylistique comparée de trois versions sous-titrées (en finnois, en français et en russe) du film *8 Mile* (UIP, 2002), qui raconte les débuts du rappeur Eminem. Les passages rap du film posent plusieurs problèmes de traduction liés au type de texte (Nord) qui deviennent encore plus complexes dans le contexte du sous-titrage, à cause des limites d'espace et de temps. Le projet de sous-titrage et de doublage

de *8 Mile* a été géré avec un soin particulier, à l'échelle mondiale. Les traducteurs ont su bénéficier du concours de l'UIP (par exemple, ils ont reçu une 'liste de dialogues de post-production' bien détaillée), mais, en retour, l'UIP leur a imposé des contraintes très strictes. Selon l'auteur, la rigueur extrême exercée par des bureaux locaux de l'UIP a pu nuire à la qualité du sous-titrage dans certains pays.

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## **Appendix 1. Usachov's rhymed translation (the first rap battle between Lyckety-Splyt and Jimmy)**

ЛИККЕТИ-СПЛИТ (рэп) РЭПЕР ОН ЛЕВЫЙ  
 НЕМОТА ОДОЛЕЛА?  
 ДОБИТЬ ЕГО, ИЛИ  
 САМ УЖЕ ОКОЛЕЛ ОН?  
 ТВОЙ ПИСК НАТУЖНЫЙ  
 - ГРОШ ЕМУ ЦЕНА  
 ТЫ СЯДЕШЬ В ЛУЖУ  
 ЖИДКОГО ГОВНА!  
 ТЫ НЕ ИЗ ДЕТРОЙТА  
 В АСФАЛЬТ ЗАРОЙСЯ  
 В ЗАТЫЛОК СТРОЙСЯ,  
 НАЦИСТСКИЙ ПОТРОХ!  
 НИХТ ШИССЕН, СДАВАЙСЯ  
 ВО СМЕСЬ, ПРИКОЛИСЬ:  
 ВАНИЛЛЫ АЙСА  
 И [СУЧКИ] БРИТНИ СПИРС!  
 СМЕРДИТ ОТ КРЫС  
 КАНТРИ И ПОПСЫ  
 НАКЛАЛ В ТРУСЫ?  
 ТЕМ БОЛЕЕ — БРЫСЬ!  
 ПРАВДУ НЕ СКРОЕШЬ  
 КТО ТЫ ЕСТЬ, ПАРЕНЬ?  
 БЕЛЫЙ ОБОРВЫШ  
 С БИТОЮ ХАРЕЙ  
 КРОЛИК ПРИРУЧЕН  
 ОН ФЬЮЧЕРА ПОДРУЧНЫЙ

БУДТО БЫ ФЬЮЧЕР  
МОРКОВКАМИ НАВЬЮЧЕН  
СОСИ МОРКОВКУ,  
ПОКА НЕ УСТАНЕШЬ  
ФЬЮЧЕР НЕ ГОРДЫЙ  
- САМ ЕЕ ДОСТАНЕТ!  
РАЙОНЧИК ОПАСЕН  
НА УЛИЦЕ МРАК  
РАЗ УЖ БЕЗГЛАСЕН –  
ЧЕШИ В СВОЙ ТРЕЙЛЕР-ПАРК!

305 (299)

ДЖИММИ (рэп)

И ЭТО САТИРА?  
РЭП ТВОЙ ПОЗОРЕН  
РЭП ДЛЯ СОРТИРА,  
СТИЛЬ ДЛЯ ЗАБОРА.  
МНОГО ЗЛОБЫ,  
ДА НЕТ МАСШТАБА  
ШОБЛА ШЕСТЕРОК,  
БАЗАРНЫЕ БАБЫ  
ТАК Я НАЦИСТ?  
СКАЗАНО СМЕЛО.  
НО ЧЕРНЫХ РАСИСТОВ  
НЕ МЕНЬШЕ, ЧЕМ БЕЛЫХ  
СТРЁМНО, СЕСТРИЧКИ:  
ВЫ — ДИЛЕТАНТЫ  
БАНТЫ В КОСИЧКИ  
И РЕЖЬТЕСЬ В ФАНТЫ  
ПРОГНАЛ САМ ТЫ  
ПРО ЛУЖУ ГОВНА -  
ЛУЖА ПОЛНА  
И ТЕБЯ ЖДЕТ ОНА.  
МОЯ ВИНА:  
НЕ ВЫКАЗАЛ СТРАХА  
В ГОНКЕ КРОЛИКА  
С ЧЕРЕПАХОЙ  
ЕСЛИ Я НАЦЦИ –  
ТЫ ПЛОД МАСТУРБАЦИИ  
ДЕЛАННЫЙ ПАЛЬЦЕМ  
ИЛЬ МНЕ ПОЛАГАЛОСЬ БЫ  
ОБЛАЖАТЬСЯ?  
ЗДЕСЬ СТРЕЛЫ И ЛУК -  
ТАМ ЧУГУННЫЙ УТЮГ...  
ЧТО Ж, ДЛЯ ЖОПЫ БЕЛОЙ  
ВОСЕМЬ МИЛЬ НЕ КРЮК.

## Appendix 2. Back-translation of Usachov's rhymed translation (by Andrey Shilov)

Liketty Split:

He is a false\* rapper.

Did he surrender to muteness?

Should I deal a final blow or

Did he die\*\* anyway?

ABAA

\* a youth slang word is used

\*\* a disparaging verb is used

Your strained squeak

Isn't worth a pin.

You will sit in a paddle\*

Of liquid shit.

ABAB

\* a wordplay:

“to sit in a paddle” means in Russian “to disgrace oneself”

You are not from Detroit

Bury yourself in asphalt

Line up one behind the other,

Nazi's bastard\*

AAAB

\* reference to a Russian expression “bitch's bastard”

Nicht schissen,\* give up!

Appreciate\*\* the mix

Of Vanilla Ice

And [bitch] Britney Spears.

ABAB

\* the words are written in cyrillic letters. Don't mean anything in Russian, don't refer to a well-known translation/quotation etc. but sound very German

\*\* a youth slang word is used

Pop-\* and country-music rats

Stink here.

Are you scared?\*\*

Get out,\*\*\* even more so!

ABBA

\* a well-known derogatory word for “pop music” is used

\*\* literally Russian line sounds like “did you put it in your pants” i.e. “did you shit in your pants” (of fear)

\*\*\* literally a peremptory shout to cats

The truth can't be hidden.

Who are you, guy?

White ragamuffin

With beat mug.

ABAB

The Rabbit is tame,

He is Future's helper.

As if Future

Is loaded with carrots.

AAAA

Suck a carrot

Untill you get tired.

Future isn't too proud,

He'll get it for you.

ABAB

This little district is dangerous,

The streets are gloomy.

Since you are dumb —

Go away\* to you trailer-park.

ABAB

\* a slang word is used

Jimmy:

Is that satire?

Your rap is disgraceful.

That rap is for a toilet,\*

That style is for a fence.\*\*

ABAB

\* a colloquial word is used

\*\* reference to the Russian expression "near a fence", i.e. "homeless", "vulgar"

There is a lot of anger

But there is no size.

A gang\* of gofers,

Fishwives.\*\*

ABCB

\* a rare slang word is used

\*\* a definition of talkative noisy shrewish people of any sex, literally "market women"

So I am Nazi?

It's a brave definition.

But amount of black racists

Isn't smaller than of white ones.

ABAB

It's strange, sisters,

You are dabblers.

Put bows in your braids

And play\* forfeits.

ABAB

\* a slang verb is used, creating an image of a men's game

You yourself told\*

About the paddle of shit.

The paddle is full

And it's waiting for you.

ABBB

\* a youth slang verb is used with exact meaning "to tell rubbish"

It's my fault, I didn't show a fear

About the turtle-and-rabbit race.

ABCB

If I am Nazi

Then you are a result of masturbation\*

You've been made with a finger.

So is it me who should disgrace oneself\*\*?

AAAA

\* a word play: "a result of some action" can be described in Russian as "a fruit of something".

Also in Russian the same word is used for "fruit" and for "fetus"

\*\* a youth slang word is used

Arrows and bow are here,

Cast-iron iron is there

Well eight miles are not too far

For a white ass.\*

AABA

\* reference to the Russian saying "seven versts are not too far for a mad dog"

### Appendix 3. The original text (battle between Lyckety-Splyt and Jimmy)

Lyckety-Splyt:

This guy's a choke artist

You catch a bad one

You better off shooting yourself

With Papa Doc's handgun

Climbing up this mountain

You're weak

I leave you lost without a paddle

Floating up shits creek

You ain't Detroit

I'm the D, you the new kid on the block

But to get smacked back to the boondocks

Fuckin' nazi, your squad ain't your type

Take some real advice

Form a group with Vanilla Ice

And what I tell you, you better use it

This guy's a hillbilly  
This ain't Willie Nelson music

Trailer trash  
I choke you to your last breath  
Have you look foolish  
Like Cheddar Bob when he shot hisself

Silly Rabbit — I know why you called that  
Cause you follow Future  
Like he got carrots up his ass crack

And when you acted up  
That's when you got jacked up  
Stupid like Tina Turner when she got smacked up

I'll crack your shoulder blade  
You'll get drop so hard that Elvis'll start turning in his grave

Why'd they let you running out in the dark?  
You need to take your white ass  
Across 8 Mile to the trailer park

Jimmy:  
This guy raps like his parents jerked him  
He sounds like Eric Sermon  
The generic version

This whole crowd looks suspicious  
It's all dudes in here, except for these bitches

So, I'm a German, eh?  
That's okay  
You look like a fuckin' worm with braids

These Leadaz Of Tha Free World rookies  
Lookie  
How can 6 dicks be pussies?

Talk about shits creek?  
Bitch you could be up piss creek  
With paddles this deep — you'd still sink

You're a disgrace  
Ya they call me Rabbit — this is a turtle race

He can't get with me,  
spittin' this shit wickedly  
Lickety-shot  
A-spicha-spicketly  
split lickety

Now I'm gonna turn around with a great smile  
And walk my white ass back across 8 Mile

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