

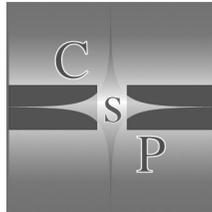
Whose Story?  
Translating the Verbal and the Visual  
in Literature for Young Readers



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Edited by

Maria González Davies and Riitta Oittinen



Cambridge Scholars Publishing

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To Carlos, Juan and Matti



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# PREFACE

Dear Reader,

The book<sup>1</sup> you're holding in your hands is based on two seminars coordinated by María González Davies and led by Riitta Oittinen at the University of Vic, Spain, in 2003 and 2005. At the seminars, doctoral students and researchers from around the world met and discussed issues related to translating, not only the verbal, but also the visual in literature for young readers. The main aims of the discussions were:

- To bring together translation research and practice related to the verbal and visual elements in literature for young readers
- To reflect upon the role of translation as a means to access other communities, and establish or question social roles from early ages
- To explore the challenges posed by the translation of literature for young readers and the translator's decision-making processes
- To describe and share teaching and reading practices related to literature for young readers in translation.

The main focus finally revolved around four questions: Tackling the challenges posed by translating literature for young readers, both picturebooks and books with illustrations, and the range of strategies available to solve specific issues; the special characteristics involved in reading aloud, its emotional dimension, and the sphere it occupies between (the child's future) private and (the child's present public) reading; the interpretation and manipulation of child images; and the role of the translator, publishers and mediators as active or passive agents whose decisions will finally mirror the images projected by the authors of the source books for the readers of the target communities.

The present book, then, is manifold: it is a set of texts that give voice to all the participants in the seminars. In other words, the book is a meeting point for these different voices and cultures from all over the

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<sup>1</sup> This book has been published thanks to the support of the CILCEAL (*Intercultural and Interlinguistic Competence in Language Learning*) research group, University Ramon Llull, Barcelona, Spain.

world, from South Africa to Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, and Finland. This makes the book very thought-provoking, not just culturewise, but also contentwise.

It is also the purpose of this volume to be professionally-oriented and present examples and cases that underline the interaction between theory and practice. There are many scholars who claim that literature for young readers is not a separate genre, but contains different genres, such as fantasy, poems, plays, picturebooks, fairytales, and novels for young adults. Other debates are centred around readership. For example, whether the demand to pay attention to reading aloud in translation is an issue that comes from a typical feature of literature for young readers, i.e., whether it is aimed at a certain age group.

The issue of age group leads us to pondering on child images, which are based on complex issues such as ideology and manipulation. When translating for young readers or, in fact, when translating any literary work of quality, linguistic and cultural features are closely interwoven in the text and the pictures. This is the crossroads where different communities may converge or diverge due to the deciding authority, either the publisher, author or translator. Who says which books are to be translated and how they are to be translated? Who has the authority to define a translation? For instance, could a re-illustrated text or a book rewritten to become film be considered as an intersemiotic translation or is translation verbal only? What happens when illustrations and cultural references are changed in retellings of fairy tales? Can these crucial aspects serve as a departure point for awareness-raising and discussions on intercultural competence as Maria González-Davies suggests in her chapter?

Bible translation is an issue certainly involving ideological problems. How are we to translate the Bible for children? Is the Bible a religious text only or could it also be defined as a literary work with certain characteristics that should be kept in translation? Bible translation is discussed here from different viewpoints by At Lamprecht and Jackie Du Toit.

The book also deals with the role of the translator. Do translators "just translate" or are they allowed to have a certain agenda? Can translators be active agents in intercultural communication? Do they have a message to convey? Can translators be social activists as Salvador Simó argues in his text on the translation of stories about children who live in conflictive areas of the world?

Moreover, the role of the visual is central in translating books with pictures and picturebooks. The distinction is a valid one, as illustrations play a different role in each case. Riitta Oittinen and Martin B. Fischer put

forward some interesting reflections on this issue. It is up to the translator to pay attention to what is said verbally and visually. Translators need both verbal and visual literacy: they need to know how to read illustrations and their interaction with the verbal text: the meanings of colours, patterns and the empty or "silent" spaces in between... They need to know the grammar of the visual, too, such as the symbology or hidden meanings of typography, page margin sizes and all the different ways of combining words and pictures. They also need to be able to recognize different styles and techniques involved in the making of books. Translators also need to be aware of the different ways of recycling characters in books and films.

Translating picturebooks and books with illustrations is highly challenging, partly due to the information given through many different channels: the verbal, the visual, and even the auditive, in accordance with the multimedia dimension of these publications. This may lead the translator to overread the visual and give the future readers of the book too much information. It is very important for the translator to let her/his readers use their imaginations and fill up the hermeneutic gaps by themselves. This goes together with the whole issue of translation strategies and linguistic creativity dealt with specifically by Neus Español, Miquel Pujol, Martin B. Fischer and Maria González-Davies: how the whole question of cultural transplantation or domestication, and exoticising or foreignization brings about drastic changes of the reflected child images in different cultures, and how inventiveness and creativity may lead to informed decisions when wordplay and cultural references have to be relayed.

Books with illustrations and picturebooks are usually co-prints (translations into different languages printed by the same printing house), which makes it normally impossible to change any details in the pictures. In this case, the translator may believe there is a need to be overexplicit in her/his verbal text so that it goes together with the illustration. Yet the translator may go overboard and explain more than is necessary.

The aims and discussions mentioned above form part of all the texts, although some of them are forefronted specifically in some, as is usually the case. The topics range from Bible translation, translating the classics, such as Beatrix Potter's tales and fairytales, fantasy worlds for young adults as depicted in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, or novels such as those by Christine Nöstlinger, stories with a psychological and social function such as the African war tales, and didactic applications that help enhance an awareness of the issues put forward here. In the first part, we start with a general theoretical framework and then we go on to deal with specific translation, linguistic and pragmatic challenges. The third part

deals mainly with child images in different communities and in translation and a final chapter deals with ideas on how to exploit these topics with future translators and teachers.

**PART I:**  
**GENERAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**



## CHAPTER ONE

# AUDIENCES AND INFLUENCES: MULTISENSORY TRANSLATIONS OF PICTUREBOOKS

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### **Abstract**

The starting point of my article is translating as rewriting for target-language audiences in target-language contexts. Translating implies change: every time a book is translated, it takes on a new language, a new culture, new readers, and a new point of view. Children's literature, such as picturebooks, has its own special features: children's books are often illustrated and read aloud. Children's books also have a dual audience: children and adults, who read aloud texts for their children.

What is extremely interesting is how the visual information in a story, e.g. picturebook, influences the verbal information and viceversa. In the case of picturebooks, market forces and the concrete ways of printing books also have an influence. Picturebook translations into different languages are often co-printed to save costs, which again has an influence on what kind of stories travel from culture to culture. In books to be co-printed, the pictures usually cannot be changed, which often restricts the translator's choices. These issues will be addressed here and illustrated with picturebooks I have translated myself.

### **Translating picturebooks: a special field of translation**

The relationship of illustrations and texts in words is a very topical issue in the modern world that is so markedly influenced by the visual. Yet the problems of the visual still appeal to few scholars within translation studies, even though translators more and more often have to deal with the visual, like in literary, technical, and media translation.

In several ways, translating picturebooks is a special field of translation: it involves the visual (illustration, cover) and the aural/vocal, when stories are read aloud. Moreover, the situation of using picturebooks involves closeness, the company of the child and the adult who performs the story to the listening child. The Danish scholar Cay Dollerup speaks of a ‘narrative contract’ between the parties in the read-aloud situation. As he points out, reading aloud is a continuation of the oral tradition, which again makes texts to be read aloud a special field of translation (Dollerup 2003: 82-83, 100).

Translating for an audience also involves a certain image of the audience. The Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin speaks of “super-addressees,” who do not exist in the flesh but are authors’ assumptions of the future readers of a story (Bakhtin 1979 in Morson and Emerson 1990: 135). The child image of the translator of children’s books (and her/his time and society) could also be described as a kind of a “superaddressee”: translators direct their words to some kind of a child, which influences the translator’s way of addressing the child, such as her/his choice of words (see child image in Oittinen 2000: 41-60).

## What is a picturebook?

Before moving any further, I need to define a picturebook, which is no easy task. Several scholars have defined picturebooks as unities formed by words and images, which have a special language of their own. In other words, picture books are iconotexts, with the interaction of two semiotic systems, the verbal and the visual. As iconotexts, picture books and comics or animated films share many features—for example, they are all based on a series of images and have a serial character. Instead of frames, picture books have the turnings of the pages.

The American artist Uri Shulevitz makes a clear separation between picture books and story books: “A *story book* tells the story with words. Although the pictures amplify it, the story can be understood without them. ... In contrast, a true *picture book* tells a story mainly or entirely with pictures. A picture book says in words only what pictures cannot show.” (Shulevitz 1985: 15-17).

Yet I find it often much more difficult than the above description to tell a picture book from a story book or an illustrated book. The task gets extremely hard if we consider the postmodern picture book, such as books by Anthony Browne. As David Lewis points out in his *Reading Contemporary Picturebooks. Picturing Text* (2001), what is distinctive of postmodern picture books is their diversity: canons and boundaries have

faded, and there is “mixing of forms ... parody and pastiche.” (see Lewis 2001: 90).

The complexity of the picturebook makes me reluctant to compare picture books with story books and I’d rather use the term “picturebook” in the sense of Perry Nodelman: a picture book is the “province of the young child”; picturebook also “uses many codes, styles, and textual devices” and “frequently pushes at the borders of convention.” (Nodelman 1999: 69-80). There is one more thing I would like to add to the above: a picturebook is a polyphonic form of art. In other words, it is an art form with many different voices to be heard and seen. In picturebooks we can hear the voices of the author, the illustrator, the translator, and the different readers, children and adults.

### **Reading and translating picturebooks as a semiotic process**

Translators always start their work as readers. Translators of picture books start their work as readers of both words and illustrations. Mikhail Bakhtin speaks of the dialogics of all human understanding. A reading experience is dialogic and consists not only of the text but also of the different writers, readers, and contexts, and the past, present and future. Human words are always born in a dialogue (Bakhtin 1990: 426-427).

Bakhtin stresses the “unfinalizability” of all reading and understanding. And he makes a clear distinction between “the given” and “the created.” “The given” is “the ‘material,’ the resources, with which we speak and act” (Bakhtin 1987: 166), that is, concrete words and illustrations. “The given” also comprises language, culture, and the human being’s background. And yet no book, no original or translation, is only a “product” of what is given, but something new is created in the process of understanding and interpretation.

Dialogue is not far removed from what Bakhtin calls heteroglossia: “At any given time, in any given place, there will be a set of conditions – social, historical, meteorological, physiological – that will ensure that a word uttered in that place and at that time will have a meaning different than it would have under any other conditions.” (Bakhtin 1990: 428). Words are heteroglot: they are situated in time and place and born between the own (like the source culture) and the alien (like the target culture). If we change one tiny item in the set of conditions, the whole situation is changed. Illustrations are also part of the context of the words and the other way around. If we change the pictures or the words, the set of conditions are changed, too. Detached from its context, a word or a picture

is different. For instance, when I placed a picture from Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* on my kitchen wall, the picture became detached from its context and took on different meanings from the meanings the picture had as a page opening in the book.

Translating the verbal and the visual of picture books may also be understood as a semiotic process. Like Bakhtin, the American semiotician Charles Sanders Peirce describes semiosis as an endless process of interpretation and human cognition, involving signs. (Peirce 1932: 229) From the viewpoint of picture books, a word, an image, a page and even a whole book may be seen as signs. Everything in a book is of importance. Every detail carries meanings, which are to be interpreted by the translator. There are also many different visual and cultural signs that translators need to be aware of, such as, for instance, the reading direction and the symbolism of colors (e.g., ritual colours).

Peirce introduces three orders of signs: icon, index, and symbol. Icon is a sign of likeness; like a photograph, it resembles the thing it is referring to. Index is something that is in a causal relationship to its referent, like smoke implying fire. Symbol is an artificial sign: words are symbols referring to things in the real world just by agreement. There is no logical connection between meaning and the symbol itself, but it's something we have to learn. All the different signs can be found in a picture book. A picture is an icon; a picture of a girl resembles a real girl. A word in a picture book is a symbol based on agreement, and there is an indexical relationship between the words and the images. It is this relationship that influences the translator's choice of words and her/his idea of the whole book. In semiotic terms, translating picture books is intersemiotic translation (Peirce 2001: 415-426).

### **Fish in the forest: meeting with texts**

Peirce also discusses the three phases of meeting with texts: Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, which can also be applied to picturebook translation. At the first encounter with the text, we just feel it, without any analysis whatsoever. Like with the feeling of heat and cold, we just take the text in. At the second stage, secondness, we start analyzing what we have felt, pondering on things. At the third stage, we start thinking of the future, translating the text for an audience (Peirce 2001: 415-421).

In the following I'm applying Peirce's views about semiosis and the three phases to my Finnish translation of Hugh Lupton and Niamh Sharkey's collection of fairy tales *Tales of Wisdom & Wonder*. As an example, I chose the Russian folk tale "Fish in the Forest". In the first part,

Firstness, I tell the story as I read it and describe my first impressions of the visual in the story. In the second part, Secondness, I take a closer look at the verbal and the visual: In which ways do the verbal and the visual interact? What is told in words and what in images? What should I, as a translator, take into consideration? What kind of problems do I have with the visual? In the third section, Thirdness, I briefly describe my strategies and solutions, based on my first and second impressions (See Oittinen 2004: 158-178 and forthcoming).

### **Firstness**

The story tells us about a farmer and his wife, who could never keep a secret. One day, when digging turnips in the field, the farmer found an old chest full of gold. He was happy but also worried: how could he keep this secret from his wife? The Tzar was very greedy and would not hesitate to take their gold if he found out about it. So, on the following night, the man tried to hide the treasure from his wife, but in vain: the wife woke up and saw the sparkling treasure. Then the man thought and thought and in the end he had an idea. He got out of bed early in the morning and bought some trout, buns, and sausages. Then he hurried into the forest and scattered the fish on the ground, set the buns among the branches of the trees, and hooked the fish on the end of a fishing line. On the following morning they woke up and the man asked the wife to go with him to the woods. The wife followed and saw all the amazing things in the forest: fish among the grass, buns on the trees, and sausages on the fishing line. But then the Tzar found out about the treasure and summoned the man and his wife. And the wife told the Tzar everything about the treasure. But when she told the Tzar that it all happened when they, on the following day, had seen fish on the ground, buns on the trees and sausages on the fishing line, the Tzar got very angry and said that he didn't believe a word of what the woman had said. In this way the farmer and his wife kept their gold and lived happily ever after.

The story is rhythmic and easy to read aloud; it is full of humor and repetition (many of the sentences start with "and"). There are not many details in the illustrations, and yet the images of the man and the woman are very much alive. The man is wearing big trousers; the woman wears a big apron. The Tzar is said to be the King, but he looks more like the Tzar of Russia than any king. And in Russia, they didn't have any kings.

The story starts with a picture of the man standing under the moon. At the bottom of the page, like on every page, there is a row of fish. On the

right-hand page of the first opening, there are the man's two big feet and one turnip that has been pulled out of the ground.

On the second opening, pages 3 and 4, the man is carrying a heavy chest and the woman is looking out of the window. When I took a better look at the picture though, I realized that it wasn't any window but a picture of the woman. Yet it gives the impression that the man is looking at the woman and feeling very guilty indeed. The woman is looking back and their looks meet. On the right side of the opening, page 4, there are Russian-style houses decorated with pictures of a fish, a bun, and a sausage.

On the third opening, there is only one big picture that covers the upper part of both of the pages. On the left, the woman is standing with raised hands and looks very astonished. I cannot see her mouth but the position of the hands gives her a surprised look. The man is standing on the right and he follows the woman's reactions very carefully. There are fish and buns all over the picture.

On the fourth opening, on the left, there is only the row of fish at the bottom. On the right hand, there is a full-page picture of the castle, the woman, and a hen that looks very unhappy about the obvious fact that the woman is taking her eggs to the market. The colour in this page is much heavier than anywhere else: it is dark reddish brown. In the background, the illustrator has drawn Russian letters and words.

On the fifth opening, on the left, there is the Tzar: he looks very grim, very powerful and very greedy. He's very big but has very tiny eyes. He looks down on the woman who is standing on the right wearing rabbit ears. At the background of the woman, I discern three distant figures waving their hands.

## Secondness

According to Shulevitz, the book is probably not quite a picture book. On the other hand, without the illustrations, the story would be lacking a lot of information. And the mood would certainly not be the same.

The illustrator has stylized the characters: their eyes are drawn as small dots. The man is also identified with his big trousers—as being the man in the house; the woman with her big apron, as being a woman and taking care of the household. It seems that the illustrator has rather wanted to underline the roles of the characters and their moods than their actual features. (Of course, the same detail is shown in the story told in words: the man and the woman don't have any names.) Doing so, the illustrator has raised the story to a more general level. Now the story is as much a

story about a certain farmer and a certain wife as it is a story about the great lion (the Tzar) and the tiny little mouse (the farmer): the mouse is wise enough to beat the powerful lion. On the other hand, it is interesting that the man is actually afraid of the woman's reactions. In the end, it is hard to tell who is deceiving who.

The most powerful element in the illustrations is humor. The characters are easy to like (except for the Tzar) and the story is very entertaining. For the most part, the colors are light and dim, and yet the illustrations have a powerful influence on the story told in words. As a whole, the images together with the words gave me an idea of the tone of my language: the story should be readable, even singable on the aloud-reader's tongue.

The pictures and words take turns. Sometimes the author gives many details and the illustrator none. This is the case with the rusty chest, which is drawn as a mere square but explicitly described with words. On the other hand, when the woman sees the man's setting of fish, buns, and sausages, the author does not say how the man feels about the woman's reaction. Yet the illustrator has drawn the man with circled eyes, which makes him look very wary and attentive indeed.

Sometimes the illustrator has combined things happening at different times in the story. On the second opening, the man is carrying the chest and the woman is upstairs looking at the man. In the story told in words, the woman runs first downstairs and only then sees the man and the chest. There are also other paradoxes in the story. For example, the story clearly takes place in Russia, but the author speaks of the king. Throughout the illustrations, there are references to Russian culture.

There is also one picture, which makes the translator's task difficult. The picture of the woman wearing rabbit's ears as well as the words referring to the picture: "Mad as a March hare!" clearly refer to Lewis Carroll's "Alice." Yet, in the Finnish language, we don't have any similar phrases about rabbits. Moreover, the story of "Alice" is not quite as well known to Finnish readers, which means that it may be questionable to use a reference to Carroll's "Alice." Anyway, I decided to use the phrase and let the readers make their own conclusions.

On the last opening of the story, the composition, the way the illustrator has situated the Tzar and the woman, tell about their status in society: the Tzar is high up on the left and looking down on the woman. The woman looks tiny and humble on the bottom of right hand page and doesn't dare to look at the Tzar. The people at the background of the picture look as if they were laughing at the woman's stupidity.

## Thirdness

After considering my first impressions of the book, I started forming an entity and making the illustrations and my Finnish-language interact. In the core of my iconotext was the fact that the story is clearly a folktale and meant to be read aloud. I added repetition and avoided condensed language; I also read my text aloud several times.

The problem of the March Hare was not as hard to solve as I first feared. I believe that my Finnish readers who recognize the intertextual reference are happy with my solution. And those who do not recognize the rabbit take my words as referring to the picture depicting the woman with rabbit ears. As to the Tzar, I decided to call him the Tzar (*tsaari*) in Finnish, too, as that is the term we use for former Russian rulers. Moreover, in this way the translation goes nicely together with the illustration.

On the other hand, the illustrations helped me in many ways, especially when forming my translation strategy. The alternating of the words and images made me think of how much I could reveal at certain points of the story. Sometimes it was very hard, especially at those points when the illustrator shows in one picture two things taking place at different times.

I believe I finally managed to create an entity, a new iconotext, which is both entertaining and easy to read aloud. Yet I know that my semiosis is only one possible among many other possible semioses.

## Translating picturebooks: coherence and effect

When reading the visual and interpreting images, there are a number of conventions we need to know. John Spink, the American scholar on children's books, has studied children as viewers of illustrations. According to Spink, we need to be aware of conventions like “scaling down” (a picture is smaller than the thing in itself), “indicating three-dimensional objects in a two-dimensional medium”, and “indicating colour in monochrome”. For example, when we see a picture of a landscape, we can imagine the colors and the depth in the picture.

Yet the visual appearance of a book includes not only the illustrations, but also the actual print, the shape and style of letters and headings, composition, and picture sequence. Even the elements of the layout and typography can be strictly culture-bound. In *Translating for Children* I present an example of the Finnish author and illustrator Tove Jansson's picture books. In my example, such a seemingly tiny detail as the shape of

letters can be considered as a translation problem. In the Swedish-language original *Vem skall trösta knyttet?* (1960, *Who Will Comfort Toffle?* 1991) and its Finnish-language version *Kuka lohduttaisi nytyitä?* (1970) the words are written in cursive and look somehow “hand-written.” They seem to bring “closeness” to the reading situation and they complement the stylized paper-cut technique used in the illustrations.

Yet, for some reason, the publisher of the English and German versions decided to use ordinary typeface, which emphasizes the linearity of the text blocks. In this way, the text in words is more clearly separated from the illustrations, and there is no rhythmic fluctuation of hard and soft lines any more.

This detail of handwriting is more significant than it may seem on first sight. As many studies on Jansson’s art show, she typically gives rhythm to her narration by counterpointing opposites like safety and danger. And this is seen in her illustrations as well. The same rhythm is repeated in the roundness of the handwriting and the hard squares of the text blocks; every detail is part of the whole. As to the readability of the cursive writing, I have read this book (in Finnish) aloud to children of all ages, and the hand-written text has been a source of delight to both the reader and the children listening and looking on. On the other hand, with different readers in different cultures the situations are different, too. For instance, unlike in Finland, in American schools children might find cursive writing even difficult to read.

Whatever the translator decides to do in individual situations, she needs to be aware of the visual effect on different text types. As Joseph Schwarcz points out, in picture books, letters and words may have various tasks and forms. For instance, letters may be signs of loud or soft sounds by growing bigger or smaller. For example, it is very important to pay attention to how – and from which angle – the characters are looking at each other. Even placing one figure higher than the other may tell of a higher status of the character.

A picture book is a combination of the verbal (silent and aloud reading), the visual, and also the effects like sound bulbs or movement lines. All these details add to the contents of the story. As a whole, the visual appearance of a book always includes not only the illustrations but also the actual print, the shape and style of letters and headings, composition, and picture sequence. The American scholar Rudolph Arnheim (1974) speaks of different kinds of movement: not only actual, physical movement, but also other kinds of motion. Either the object moves or the mind of the viewer moves. For instance, if we take a picture of a dancer, we have a certain memory of what a dancer in motion looks

like. We are fooled into seeing motion where there is none and we can add the missing details with our own imaginations.

Many scholars suggest a division of four functions of the visual. An illustrated text may be based more on pictures than on words, or the other way around; there may also be collaboration of the verbal and the visual; or the visual may tell quite a different story than the verbal. In other words, illustrations affect the reading experience through congruency and deviation. Deviation may also be called irony: when the visual is telling something very different from what the words are doing, the reader stops believing in what she/he is being told and starts putting words and images in quotation marks.

We might also say that illustrations both domesticate and foreignize. Illustrations may bring the text closer to the story told in words. By means of domestication, keeping close to the text in words, they add to the smooth entity. On the other hand, by telling a different story than the text in writing, illustrations may also foreignize: in this way they bring along intrusion of something foreign, something unclear, something maybe difficult to understand. While domesticating, translators need to pay special attention to the visual. If, for instance, a story is situated in Paris, France, and the illustrator shows the Eiffel tower and other landmarks of the city, the end result may be strange, if, in the Finnish translation, the story is situated in Helsinki, Finland.

### **Translator's choices and strategies**

Translators interact with illustrations in many ways. On the one hand, translators try to match the text in words and the illustration; on the other, translators have – either consciously or unconsciously – internalized the images from their reading of the words and illustrations.

When solving the problem of the verbal and visual, translators may choose different strategies. The Finnish translation scholar Andrew Chesterman, following the Polysystem Theory, has pointed out that translators' strategies are governed by different norms, which promote certain values and ethics (see, e.g., Chesterman in Oittinen et al. 2004: 341-348). Norms place restrictions on the translator but they also give her/him freedom.

There are several strategies that translators may use, such as addition and omission. Translators may, for example, add comments like footnotes to explain and clarify some culturally specific details. At best, this helps the reader to understand and enjoy the book better; at worst, the translator may destroy the pleasure of the reading experience. In picturebooks,

footnotes are probably not suitable, unless the very idea of the book is to play with book conventions (see, e.g., Scieszka et al. 1992).

Moreover, translators also need the ability to recognize the gaps left in the text by the author and the illustrator. Sometimes translators may feel tempted to explain the story told in words on the basis of what they see in the illustration. However, this may change the indexical relationship of the verbal and the visual altogether. This may result in dull texts, explaining too much, and giving no room for the reader's own interpretation. This happened to the American edition of Michel Gay's *Papa Vroum (Nightride)* and the first German translation of John Burningham's *Granpa (Mein Opa und ich)* (see Emer O'Sullivan in Lathey (ed.) 2007: 113-121).

The Jordanian scholar Jehan Zitawi (2004) also deals with visual manipulation, which is common in translating comics from English into the Arabic, especially in the Persian Gulf area, and rather uncommon in Europe and North America. This is probably partly due to the use of co-prints, where translations into different languages are printed at the same time. Yet sometimes illustrations may be censored, too, like in one scene in the Finnish picture book artist Kristiina Louhi's *Aino* series (1985), where the little girl Aino's little brother is going out and about to get dressed. On the Finnish original book cover the little boy is running in the snow stark naked, except for a tiny cap on his head. The Finnish readers find the cover only funny, a prank by a very little boy, but Methuen, the British publisher of the translation, found the cover obscene and wanted the artist to change it. In the end, in the British version (1987), the little boy is fully dressed (see Louhi in Oittinen 2004: 116-117).

Whichever strategy the translator chooses, and for whatever reason, illustrations may help her/him in many ways: they show the time and place where the story is situated. They also show the looks and the relations of the characters in the story. As a whole, illustrations give all kinds of hints to the reader. Sometimes the text in words does not give this kind of information, and yet it can be found in the pictures (see above the "Fish in the Forest").

Illustrations also help by showing how things look like exactly. With the knowledge about the details, it is easier for the translator to describe what the characters do and how they sound. If, for instance, the illustrator shows how many petticoats a princess has while she is running, it is easier for the translator to visualize the situation and describe what kind of sounds she makes. When I and a group of students translated Lee Kingman's *The Secret Journey of the Silver Reindeer*, Lynd Ward's illustrations were of great help when making the decision of which verb to

use when describing the sound of the reindeer's hooves, because the illustrator showed the hard snow covering the earth.

Illustrations may also create great problems for translators, because, due to co-prints, usually pictures cannot be altered. At first the translations into different languages are printed at the same time by an international publisher; then the books are released by the national publishers. Taking co-prints also influences the book publishing business on a more general level – and not always in a positive way. The practice of taking co-prints implies that several countries want to have the same book(s) translated and that only such books are chosen that “travel” easily from one culture and language to another.

Sometimes pictures are heavy-weight opponents, like when I translated two books by the South African author-illustrator Niki Daly. The first story tells about a little black South African Zulu girl Jamela living with her mother. In one of the scenes of the book *Jamela's Dress* (1999) I encountered with a problem concerning the visual. In one scene, the little girl Jamela and her mother are playing games and singing while waiting for a beautiful fabric to get dry. The fabric was to become the mother's dress for a wedding party. In the scene Jamela asks her mother: “Lets' do teapots, Mama!” and teaches her mother how to do “a little song about a teapot with a spout. They dipped and tipped and the tea poured out.” In the Finnish culture we don't have anything quite similar, so I decided to read the illustration more closely and try to find a song game matching with the body and hand movements shown in the illustration. After a long hunt, I found the Finnish song “Aamulla herätys, sängystä pois”, which tells about what people do in the morning when they wake up. In the end, the solution seems successful, as the tune is international (“Lou, Lou, Skip to My Lou”) and the way the song is played in Finland is very close to Jamela and her mother's hand and body movements.

Another example of how the illustrator's solutions influence the translator's work is *To Every Thing There Is a Season* (1998) by the American artists Leo and Diane Dillon, which I translated quite recently. The passages in the book are from the Book of Ecclesiastes, the King James version of the *Bible*. On every page opening there is one line of the book with an illustration depicting different cultures and different periods of time. After reading the book a few times, I decided to use an existing translation: the newest Finnish translation of the *Bible* from 1992. However, my decision proved to be problematic in a passage that goes like this: “A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.” The translators of the 1992 Finnish version had a different point of view than the translators of the King James version. The 1992 version reads: “aika

on syleillä ja aika olla erossa,” which can be rendered into English as: “Time to embrace and time to be separated.” Now there was an unwanted contradiction of the story told by the verbal and the story told by the visual. On the left-hand page, the family are in a private home, embracing and leading a cosy family life. On the right-hand page, the family are working together; they are probably tradespeople as there are coins and a pair of scales on the table. The family are not embracing but they are still together and certainly not separated.

To solve the problem, I decided, in this part of the text, to use an older Finnish translation from 1933, where the translator's solution is very close to the King James version: “Aika on syleillä ja aika olla syleilemättä.” In English: “A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing.” Elsewhere in my translation I leaned on the newer 1992 version. There are forewords in the book, so it was easy for me to add a comment on my solution, which was, in its entirety, based on the iconotext, the indexical relationship of the words and the illustration.

The authors of picturebooks also give visual hints to readers through punctuation and sentence structure. Through punctuation, like using commas and full stops, as well as sentence and word length, the reader is given subtle instructions on when to stop and when to make haste. At periods and commas, the aloud-reader may stop to breathe in. In the case of books to be read aloud, the translator is supposed to make the aloud-reader's task as easy as possible. The text to be read aloud must roll on the aloud-reader's tongue; the verbal text also needs to collaborate with the visual and the turnings of the pages.

Sometimes it is clearly mentioned that the book is supposed to be read aloud, like in Hugh Lupton and Sophie Fatus's *The Story Tree. Tales to Read Aloud* (1998). Lupton's verbal text is full of repetition, alliteration, and side addresses to the reader/listener. The story “The Sweetest Song” begins like this:

**ONCE UPON A TIME Little Daughter was picking flowers. Once upon a time Little Daughter was picking flowers** on the far side of the fence. **Her papa had told her not to. Her mama had told her not to.** But her papa and mama weren't watching and Little Daughter had seen a beautiful yellow flower nodding in the breeze just beyond the fence. (My bolding)

The illustrator has a similar repetitive style, and the main characters, the Little Daughter and the wolf, simultaneously appear several times on each page. The Finnish translation (2001) goes like this:

**OLIPA KERRAN Pieni Tytär, joka poimi kukkia. Olipa kerran Pieni Tytär, joka poimi kukkia** liki aittaa kaukana kotitalostaan. **Isä oli häntä kieltänyt. Ja äiti oli häntä kieltänyt.** Mutta isä ja äiti eivät aina ehtineet katsoa Pienen Tyttären perään, ja tytär oli juuri nähnyt kauniin keltaisen kukan, joka nöykytteli lempeässä tuulessa aivan aidan toisella puolella. (My bolding)

Even without competence in the Finnish language, it is easy to see that the author's message certainly influenced the rhythm, punctuation, and overall style of my translation.

### Some final thoughts

Translators of picture books translate whole situations including the words, the illustration, and the whole (imagined) reading-aloud situation. When reading picturebooks, readers participate in a dialogue between themselves and the story told by the author and the illustrator with words and pictures. Yet the verbal, the visual, and their dialectical and indexical relationship are also part of a greater whole: the original work and its translations and the various individual readers in different cultures.

Translating picture books may also be compared with translation for the theater. As in drama translation, translators of picture books need to pay attention to the readability of the verbal text: the text is “performed” for the child and it must flow while being read. In addition, the illustrations are a kind of set design for the text: as in the theater, they have an effect on the audience. Like theater translation, picture book translation is a stage for a multitude of voices.

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