

UNSUITABILITY AND READABILITY ISSUES IN THE TRANSLATION OF CHILDREN`S LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

Translating children`s literature has never been an easy task, as translators should faithfully convey both the message and what lies behind that message following the norms and background of the target language. This article begins with a brief overview about the definition and importance of children`s literature, then continues to focus on providing answers to the current problems of translating for children associated with its readability and unsuitability issues.

Keywords: children`s literature, unsuitability issues, age categorization, child image, readability issues, translation techniques.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Перевод детской литературы никогда не был легкой задачей, поскольку переводчики должны верно передавать и послание, и то, что скрыто за этим посланием, с учетом норм и особенностей целевого языка. Эта статья начинается кратким обзором определения и важности детской литературы, затем сосредотачивается на предоставлении ответов на текущие проблемы перевода для детей, связанные с читаемостью и проблемами несоответствия.

Ключевые слова: детская литература, проблемы несоответствия, возрастная категоризация, образ ребенка, проблемы читаемости, техники перевода.

ANNOTATSIYA

Bolalar adabiyotini tarjima qilish hech qachon oson ish bo`lmagan, chunki tarjimonlar tarjima tilining me`yorlari va xususiyatlarini hisobga olgan holda haqiqiy matni ham, matndagi yashirin ma`noni ham bolalarga to`g`ri yetkaza bilishlari kerak. Ushbu maqola bolalar adabiyotining qisqacha ta`rifi va ahamiyati haqidagi ma`lumotlar bilan boshlanib, tarjimada nomuvofiqliq va asarlarning o`qilishida yuz beradigan muammolarga yechimlar topishga qaratilgan.

Kalit so`zlar: bolalar adabiyoti, mos kelmaslik muammolari, yoshga oid guruhlash, bola obrazi, o`qish qiyinchiliklari, tarjima texnikalari.

INTRODUCTION

Children`s literature, which is a distinctive literary genre specially created for children and young adults, plays a crucial role in shaping the minds of young readers. It has a broad and rich history by undergoing significant evolutions. The origins of children`s literature can be traced to the 18th century, aligning with the recognition of childhood as a unique life phase. It consists of books, magazines, stories, and poems that are specifically created for children. Granting children access to literature is essential for their emotional intelligence, imagination, and profound thinking abilities as reading holds value not only for academic accomplishments, but also for various aspects of their lives. While writing books for children is considered as one of the crucial works of literature, translating them hold a greater significance. Because while translating children`s literature, another important person which is translator comes to the stage. Oittinen (2000:26) believes that “to communicate with a child reader is to enter an imaginary dialogue with sharper and fresher readers than adults”. In children`s literature, the translator serves as a bridge by connecting adults and children. However, it has never been an easy task for them because of the difficulties that may occur while translating. In this article we will discuss these challenges.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The primary methodology of this article includes descriptive analysis methods, involving the collection and systematic organization of facts. The data of the research is based on a comparative analytic type. The several steps were carried out in order to conduct a research. Firstly, various theories of scholars regarding the challenges of translating children`s literature were collected. For example, well-known scholars such as Oitten, Barone, and Sullivan`s theories are given and identified. Then findings were briefly summarized and underwent a qualitative discussion.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Academics classify children`s literature based on various criteria. According to Barone, these three criteria matters: 1. Age group; 2. Distinction between good and bad; 3. Child`s interests (Barone, 2011, p.6). Other scholars believe that children`s literature has two meanings: 1. General meaning; 2. Specific meaning. The general meaning refers to intellectual creations designed for children across various fields of knowledge, such as educational textbooks. On the other hand, specific children`s literature involves expressive language with aesthetic value, transforming children into artists and enriching their cognitive development. Defining children`s literature into different groups is very important, as it can make translation process easier. Here, in this table you can see the classification of children`s literature according to the age criteria:

Age groups:	Names:	Characteristics:
Infant to age 3	Board books	Designed for durability, these books use thick paperboard for easy handling by toddlers. They often include rhymes and repetitive lines, usually containing fewer than 20 pages and 300 words.
Ages 3-6	Picture books	These books are defined by plentiful illustrations, commonly present on each page with both images and text collaborating to depict scenes and advance the story. Both of them are equally significant in these books, and they typically have a length of fewer than 48 pages.
Ages 6-10	Early reader	These books target children who are beginning to read independently, remaining enjoyable for read-aloud sessions. Typically under 70 pages, they may feature fewer pictures, focusing more on intricate text compared to picture books.
Ages 8-12	Middle grade	These books typically range from 100 to 150 pages, though they can extend beyond this. Commonly known as chapter books, they contain minimal pictures, as the narrative is primarily text-driven. The text complexity of them increases, introducing more character, sub-plots, and richer vocabulary compared to early reader books.
Ages 12 and older	Young adult	These books include more sophisticated language and delve into more mature themes, which could be suitable for middle grade books. They encompass the typical thymes and emotions that teenagers commonly experience, involving aspects like friendship, finding their identity, or forming good relationship with relatives.

However, a current discussion revolves around whether authors should clearly specify if their books are intended for children. Some critics suggest that such labeling might exclude potential readers and limit creativity by establishing boundaries. Another complexity emerges in determining the criteria of age for a children`s book. Some researchers prefer classifying all

kinds of written stories directed at children, while others reject the idea of writing for a particular age group.

Unsuitability issues: Efforts to establish a distinct literary genre for children encounter numerous challenges, and there is no clear agreement on whether a particular work is best categorized as children`s or adult literature. Many books originally written for adults, like Mark Twain`s “Huckleberry Finn”, or “The Prince and The Pauper”, are now commonly perceived as books for children. Conversely, there are instances where fiction originally written or intended for children gains recognition as adult literature. For instance, nowadays a renowned children`s book “Alice`s Adventures in Wonderland” is appreciated by adults as well. In some cases, books originally written for adults, such as Swift`s “Gulliver`s Travels” have been changed to make them more suitable for children. While translating such books, translators should be very careful; because, they play a crucial role in helping the target audience understand the language, codes, and references. According to Sullivan, it`s important to recognize that the translator doesn`t create a new message. Nevertheless, the translator forms a new connection between translated text and the target audience (O`Sullivan, 2003).

Readability issues: While translating many believe that the cultural component plays a pivotal role in determining the ultimate goal of the translation. Clearly, the main challenge to be avoided is cultural constraints, as translators deal with two different languages. However, linguistic components should not remain as the loser player of the game. I will explain why. We have conducted a research according this issue. We gathered a group of children aged from 6 to 10 years old, and made them read two different statements. Two statements: A) The boy standing beside the lady knows three languages; B) The boy knows three languages and he is standing beside the lady. As you see the first statement is a complex sentence with an embedded subordinate clause, the second one is a compound sentence. Then, we asked a question to assess their comprehension. “Who knows three languages?” While majority children answered correctly for sentence B, over 60 % of children made the mistake of thinking it is the lady who speaks three languages when reading sentence A. That`s why, it is suggested that linguistic norms that govern the use of language in children`s literature should be simple, playful, and appropriate for the specific age groups. In that case, while translating, misspellings are often corrected, complex sentences are changed into simple sentences, slang and informal registers are translated into more formal ones.

Some translation techniques of children`s literature:

- 1) *Omission and deletion* – it is adopted when translators fear that children might not properly understand what is said in the story;

- 2) *Localization* – it is the most radical form of cultural context adaptation as the whole scene is moved;
- 3) *Simplification* – it is adopted when there is a long difference between the age of the source reader and target reader;
- 4) *Purification* – it is done to get the target text in correspondence with the values of the readers or rather with the values or the supposed values of adults;
- 5) *Modernization* – it is adopted when the translator finds himself obliged to make the characterization of the story up to date to which he brings old fashion language.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a description of challenges related to unsuitability and readability issues in translating children`s literature reveals some obstacles faced by translators when dealing with cultural and linguistic nuances. Addressing these issues requires a clear approach that considers both linguistic elements and cultural content, highlighting the distinct balance required to preserve the essence and accessibility of children`s literature across different languages and cultures. As the article delves into the complexities of maintaining appropriateness for diverse age groups, it emphasizes the crucial role of translators as mediators between the source and target-intended audience.

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