

Translating for Children: Equivalence Paradigm or Purpose Paradigm? An Explanatory Attempt

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Abstract

Translation of children's literature has always been a crucial concern for professional and trainee translators. This is due to the alleged vulnerability of its reader in terms of understanding of both developmental factors and the world of childhood. And the central issue in translation for the intended ilk of people is the adult-child duality (Klingberg, 1986, p.10) that sparks the question of what counts as children's literature. However, in this article we are mainly concerned with children's literature. Translator as a powerful mediator should consider all facets of translation when dealing with children's literature as well. Nida (1964, pp.164-71) points out decoding ability is categorized into four subgroups of which the first group belongs to children. To this effect, translator should consider the taste of children in translation with the purpose of fulfilling their needs thoroughly. The present study concentrates on challenging the two prominent paradigms in children's literature namely (1) equivalence paradigm and (2) purpose paradigm. The former checks equivalence availability in source language and the latter in target one. Equivalence paradigm abides from either natural equivalence or directional one being insufficient for children's literature. On the other hand, purpose paradigm spots more fully-fledged the taste of purpose and situation of the client (e.g. children) in this vein. More specifically, this study indicates that purpose paradigm is more exhaustive than equivalence paradigm in that it is more achievable throughout the translation of children's literature.

Keywords: Translation of children's literature, decoding ability, equivalence paradigm, purpose paradigm, purpose and situation of the client.

1. Introduction

Translating puts forward a lot of challenges and discussions, whether translating for children or for adults. Furthermore, there is not always a clear boundary in translating a text for children or in translating a text for adults (Klingberg, 1986, p.10). To resolve the problem, translators should bear firstly the definition, secondly the values and finally the objectives in mind. These factors would be discussed as we go ahead, respectively.

Oittinen defines children's literature as "literature produced and intended for children or as literature read by children" (2000, p.61). However, Hunt (1990, p.1) accounts for boundaries of children's literature that are not in such a clear manner and the literature for children cannot be clarified by textual characteristic, either of style or content, while a distinctive audience is not defined for it. For him, children literature is a part of literature which has primarily been described in terms of audience, reader, rather than the author's attention or the text itself. Klingberg defines children's literature as literature which is specifically belonging to children. This author excludes all the other pictures and writings and distinguishes between literature by children and literature produced for children (Oittinen, 2000, p.61). Defining this literature from a sociological and psychological respect, Helsing, a Swedish author, asserts that children literature is everything the child reads or hears, including newspapers, series, TV shows and presentations and books (cited in Oittinen, 2000, p.61-2). Considering these all into account, children's literature has some features which make it as a part

of literature. And there also exists some distinguishing qualities, elements, making it apart from adult literature, though there is lack of consensus over such elements. Egoff expresses that children's literature has two basic characteristics: it is written for children, up to early teens, and it is supposed to be read as literature not just for information or guidance. From Ottinen's point of view, literature for children is mainly delineated by the fact that children's book is often illustrated and meant to be read aloud (2000, pp.4-5). Therefore, it would be clear that children's literature is described in terms of fulfilling its audience's need. This suggests that children's interest should be considered when selecting or writing their literature. Those who write, select or translate books for children should keep in mind that children have their own taste which is represented in their values. Therefore, the consideration of children's values is indispensable.

Norton (1987) determines the ways the children's literature should be designed. She says that literature should open the ways for discovery and adventure; that is to say, it should provide enjoyment, understanding and vicarious experiences with children. It should, moreover, transmit knowledge, expand the imagination and stimulate development (p.35). It is a dominant view that the primary value of literature is pure pleasure, escape literature. Giving the opportunity of enjoyment, Children spent their times on looking at beautiful and imaginative pictures and in accordance with which they develop their desirable attitudes toward these pictures and illustrations (Norton, 1987, p.5). The second value of this literature is that it can serve the purpose of conveying a society literary heritage from one generation to another. It gives rise to preservation of the literary heritage of a society. The third value discussed by Norton is that children's literature plays an important role in helping the understanding of cultural heritage. Cultural heritage, here, means the anthropological view of culture that refers to the overall way of life in a society or community, i.e., all those traditional, implicit and explicit customs of living as potential guide for the manner of members of the culture (House, 2006, p.349). In this direction, children get to know more about culture and this leads to their social and personal development (Norton, 1987, p.5). The fourth value is that children, through literature, acquire the experience of people who lived in preceding periods. It helps children know how to deal with their problem in their own lives. The fifth and the sixth values lie in the fact that this literature expands their knowledge and also their imagination. As children start reading, they think about what they read and by doing so, they gain the capacity of flourishing their knowledge and imagination. Books move children toward imaginative worlds that encourage creative experiences as children tell or write their stories and communicate with each other during their performances inspired by what they have read. For instance, picture found in children's book stimulate their aesthetic development (Norton, 1987, pp.5-6).

In the end, children literature motivate language, personality, cognitive, and social development. Children acquire their knowledge as they read. Reading also contributes to children's personality development in the way that they attach their experience to their character involved in the story (cited in Norton, 1987, p.19). Cognitive development refers to development with respect to processes including perception, memory, reasoning, reflection and insight (Mussen, Conger and Kagan, 1979, pp.233-234). Literature may also contribute to children's emotional growth in the sense that it shows children that their feelings are both normal and natural and that they are shared by other people. In addition, they can learn about ways to cope with particular emotions through the manners of characters (cited in Norton, 1987, p.19). As to social development, children can, through reading, acquire behavior, beliefs, standards and motives valued by their families and their cultural groups (Norton, 1987, p. 24). As such, literature provides insights into the social behavior and norms of the society they live in. Children's literature has some purposes which should be considered in its translation.

Klingberg (1986, p.10) distinguishes between two basic aims when translating for children. There are to make more literature attainable to children and to promote the intentional perspective of the young readers. He mentions two pedagogical reasons that leads the original to be revised in order to serve children's purpose. The first reason is to give the readers a text which is understandable; in other words, it should be within the level of their understanding and the second one is to give the reader a text that contribute to the promotion and development of the reader's, children's, set of values. On account of the existence of these specific aims and reasons in translating for children, particular challenges appear when the renderer embarks on translating children's literature. To overcome such challenges or to lessen the unpleasant effect, at least, the renderer or translator is in need of some established frameworks, paradigms, used in translation. This study aims to investigate two paradigms that translators seem to utilize when dealing with children's works. The first paradigm focuses on the source text and the latter dethrones the focus of the first group and concentrates on the target text based on the brief or commission given to translator. It is the dimensions that we now turn.

2. Equivalence Paradigm

Equivalence paradigm as its name clears inspects the possible source of equivalents on the source language contexts. It is completely source-based. Various theorists work on this paradigm (e.g., Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958; Nida and Taber 1969; Vazquez Ayora 1977; Malblanc 1944/1963; Shveister 1973/1978; Malone, 1988). Equivalent in equivalence

paradigm mostly studies equal value between a source text segment and a target text segment. This suggests that source language does not have the priority over the target language.

Equivalence paradigm is the movement against structuralism in that they study the relation among variables. They thoroughly disagree on analyzing the things. They believe that different languages express different views of the world. Based on these definitions, one has to conclude that the process of translation is by nature an impossible task to do. The translator should resort to transcreate rather than to translate. That is due to the fact that equivalence is an unmovable part in their minds and policies per se. they are uncertain about the position of the words and equivalents in the source and the target languages.

Nida and Taber (1969) argue that "translating consists in reproducing on the receptor language the closest natural equivalent in the source language message. (p. 12)" As inferred equivalence is always an important task of translator. Translator is like the mediator or the catalyzer who seeks to connect the source language to the target one via some processes. Reconciliation of the source to the target is the sole duty of the translator. Therefore, she/he should study possible items in both poles, source and target languages in translation. In general, prior to the act of translating the translator should understand the intention of the source and target text so as to convey the main essence of the source text. Transferring the elements of the source solely depends on the translator's cognition in this direction. Translator can act both like the annihilator and ameliorator who can either reconcile or disperse the source language to the target one. Therefore, opting for correct and opportune equivalents is of great importance in translation.

Equivalence paradigm consists of two subcategories: (1) Natural equivalence and (2) Directional equivalence. Natural equivalence is responsible for transferring the elements of the source language text to its counterpart in general. Andrew Chesterman (1996/2005) calls this equivalent as "convergent similarity". He depicts the scheme of natural equivalence as the reversible road in that one element in the source can be replaced by one element in the target language $A \leftrightarrow B$. That is one-to-one correspondence in translation. For instance, "bread" and its French equivalence "du pain" cover the superficial and arbitrary meaning of the intended meaning. Or as another example, "Friday the thirteen" might be rendered as "*martes 13*" having to do with one-to-one correspondence or natural equivalence. It should be noted that natural equivalence should be carried out prior to the act of translating. The translator has to ruminate about the possible correspondents in the source language and finds the ways to connect them in a typical way. However, in equivalence paradigm more attention is given to the hierarchy of languages in that the most robust countries have the right of equivalence theorizing. They can enrich the target language whatever they seek to. These incidences happen at the time of natural equivalence. Fortunately, after concocting printing press, copying, and the rise of directional equivalence, hierarchy of languages and the right of translation was eliminated from translation.

On the other hand, Catford (1965) defines directional equivalence as "replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language (TL) (p.20)." This implies that textual material in the source is not well-coincided with that of target language. As Chesterman (2005) clears, directional equivalence plays a divergent role in translation in that one element in the source might have two or more elements in the target language to show more possible in the target language contexts. It is one to two or more correspondences $A \rightarrow B, C, D \dots$ It is better to say that directional equivalence might be carried out during the act of translating. For instance, "Friday the thirteen" might carry out the connotational meaning in that it scrutinizes the ominous intention and pattern of the intended item in the target language. Hence, the translator should convey and then depict the real intention in accordance with the target regulation.

Moreover, directional equivalence studies ideological assumptions about the identity of language and the natural relations. It is the precise negative pole against the structuralist linguists and it can solve the problem of impossibility of translation. It is particularly concerned with the translator's ethics about the way of translator's rendering. More possibilities in directional equivalence allow the translator to feel less restricted in comparison with the natural equivalence who should observe some special frameworks so as to transmit the near and mostly literal understanding of the source language into the target one.

3. Purpose Paradigm

In this category, equivalence will be treated as data-driven, message-oriented, outcome oriented, and target-sidedness. Most of the translators or theorists in this category pay special attention to the surface level of the equivalent transference. In this direction, one of the precursors in purpose paradigm is Hans Vermeer who proposes Skopos theory. Skopos in Greek language means "purpose" and "aim" in which it inspects the function of the target language. It is better to say that purpose paradigm works in one dimension that it expatiates the relations via the function of target language contexts.

According to Vermeer (1989b/2004), "what the Skopos states is that one must translate, consciously and

consistently, in accordance with some principles respecting the target text. The theory does not state what the principle is; this must be determined separately in each specific case (p.234)." It can be inferred that target side priority is the sole reason of Skopos' institutionalizing. It is better to say that source language context is the critical turning point in this paradigm in that it connects the translator to the target language context. The translator as the mediator in this paradigm seeks to conglomerate the two poles of translation, source and target language. Therefore, source language text cannot be neglected from the exact checkpoint of the translator in this regard. Moreover, the paradigm is actually bulky in translation studies. Should the text seek to utilize one principle and the other text seek to use the other principle, the translator has to understand lots of principles and seek to ruminate about their situationality. So, Skopos theory is not generative enough in every field of study per se.

Some factors such as target language, the translator, and the role of the client as instruction giver in purpose paradigm are of great importance to mention. In the circle of interaction, one question always occupies the translator's mind in that she/he needs to decide for the end-product of the translation. In Purpose paradigm, special attention is given to the role of the client as the decision maker. Client in this sense is pertained to the target client. Willy nilly, the translator should obey the client's instructions. That is due to the fact that the fee of translation should be given by the client in this process. In this process, the translator should inspect the role of decoding ability in his/her translation prior to the act of translating. Nida (1964) defines decoding ability as "(1) the capacity of children whose vocabulary and cultural experience are limited. (2) The double standard of capacity of new literates, who can decode oral message with facility but whose ability to decode written message is limited. (3) the capacity of average literate adult, who can handle both oral and written messages with relative ease; and (4) the unusually high capacity of specialists (doctors, theologians, philosophers, scientists, etc.), when they are decoding messages within their own areas of specialization (p. 156-71)." Whether acceptable or not, the translator should render as much as he should. Fortunately, some theorists recognize the translator as an expert in this chain of interaction. According to Christiane Nord, the translator should be loyal to the source text. Nord (1997) then defines the term of loyalty as "responsibility translators have toward their patterns in translational interaction. Loyalty commits the translator bilaterally to the source and the target sides. It must not be mixed up with fidelity or faithfulness, concepts that usually refer to the relationship holding between the source and the target texts. Loyalty is an interpersonal category referring to social relationship between people. (p. 125)" In this connection, whether the translator sees the unworkability or impracticality of the equivalence into the target language, he or she can refuse to produce the translation. For example, one of the most pivotal issues in purpose paradigm is to render taboo and derogatory words in the target language. In this situation, the translator must pay attention to the commission of the target reader so as to amalgamate different ilks of people such as children and juveniles. As another example, the translation of childlike suicide (Pym, 2010) is an expressive text type and it must be rendered in such a way that the audience can be directly persuaded by the hidden and concealed intention of the source text in the target one. It is the task of the translator to prepare the situation for the role of decoding ability to convince and persuade the reader by his/her feasible and practical translation. Therefore, purpose paradigm concentrates fully on the role of client and the translator [expert] and it gives the right of rejection of translation to the translator.

To cut the long story short, purpose paradigm scrutinizes the equivalents in a professional situation in accordance with complex obligation to people and the target texts. Professional situations refer to the various principles in which the translator has to utilize in the target text so that the target contexts convey its essence to the target reader as well. Whenever the translators are allowed to utilize every principle, she/he should liberate him/herself from the function of the source language contexts and empower him/her to the target language context in this direction. However, different principles in rendering of the source texts cause the translation to be interpreted variously by the target reader. Sense of ambiguity is thoroughly different from the sense of falsification. Therefore, the translator should ruminate on the context and genre of the source language context prior to the act of translating. Source language is the first spot of translation.

4. Translating for Children

When a translator embarks on translating, he/she should consider two essential factors. The first factor is the purpose of translation and the second factor is the circumstance under which translation has occurred. Translators do not translate words in isolation, that is the context or the whole situation would be taken into account. Regarding the purpose of translation, Snell-Hornby (1988) contends that "the problem does not depend on the source text itself, but on the significance of the translated text for its reader as members of a certain culture, or of sub-group within that culture, with the constellation of knowledge, judgment and perception they have developed from it". Translators infuses the translation with their reading experience, their cultural heritage and specifically in translating for children, their child image. In fact, they become involved in a complex dialogic relationship in which authors, translators and even the publisher play an

important role. As we have discussed, this article has given an overview of two dominant paradigms, equivalence and purpose, with a special regard to translating for children. More specifically, traditional and modern approaches will be discussed.

Traditional approaches to translation focus on the very notion of equivalence, abstract structures, or matches between texts. This view of seeing translation pertaining to texts and to author's intention lead the renderer's action to obscurity or in another sense as Oittinen (2000) says "mechanistic act" of translation.

Nowadays, we look at equivalence as Marry-Snell Hornby (1988, pp.13-22) argues; equivalence between original and its translation is an "unsuitable basis for an integrated theory of translation". In a general sense, equivalence is a very challenging term, since it is "imprecise and ill-defined", i.e., it "presents an illusion of symmetry between languages which hardly exists beyond the level of vague approximations and which distorts the basic problem of translation". An example of which would be the term "*equivalence*". Considering the term in both German and English, everyone takes them similar in usage, however the otherwise is true. They seem similar but the usage of two words reveals that they are not "*equivalent*".

Yet even today, scholars who have expertise in children's translation tend to ignore equivalence, in terms of the sameness (e.g., Oittinen 2000; Koskinen 1992/1994), in rendering this literature. They claim that an adequate translation is an equivalent, faithful translation and a good translator is an invisible and faithful translator, and that the function of translation and its original should be the same (Koskinen, 1994, pp. 446–52). The mentioned approach is one of the dominant ones discussed in the study of equivalence.

There are a large number of different ways for investigating this issue, equivalence. For instance, Eugene A. Nida, an expert in Bible translation, speaks of dynamic or functional equivalence: the reaction of readers in both source and target should be the same (1964, pp.159-167). Yet, this effect, or reaction, is not always accessible. Since the translation is written in different times, different places, different languages and cultures. Therefore, translation happens under different circumstances. Christane Nord (1991, p. 230) asserts that "functional equivalence between source and target text is not the 'normal' Skopos of translation, but an exceptional case in which the factor 'change of functions' is assigned zero".

Equivalence as relation between two texts is not the only way of looking at equivalence. There are scholars like Gideon Toury (1980) who regards the *relationship* between a source text and its counterpart. And also on the other side, Barbara Godard sees equivalence between two systems not between the contents, or the message of the two texts (1990, p. 92). Equivalence is more manageable, digestible and fruitful tool in the words of Douglas Robinson (1991), "equivalence is an interpretive fiction that helps the translator work toward the true goal of translation, a working TL, and is only one of many such fictions" (p. 259). He also points out that the very notion of equivalence is something ideal and indeed moving toward this ideal can bring about a good translation but this ideal is "not an accessible goal to measure relative failure by" (p. 284). Likewise, in the same line, Pym (1992, p.115) presents that translators hope that they will "be seen as producers of equivalence. And the kind of equivalence... [they] produce can then only exist as a belief held by the receivers of ... [their] work".

However, there are some approaches which do not support the equivalence between source and target texts. If the translator's invisibility is considered positive and this belief comes to surface through "real" translation, the author of the original becomes accessible. These kinds of views have been proposed by "manipulative school" of translation. The scholars of the intended school understand translation as manipulation. They reject the conception of "translation as reproducing the original, the whole original and nothing but original" (Hermans 1985, p.9).

In the same line, feminist theorists express identical views: translation is manipulation, and the translator becomes visible. Sherry Simon also writes that, in many cases, translation is defined as an activity "deeply, and consciously, engaged in the social and political dimensions of literary interchange" (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990, pp.110-16).

Therefore, translators not only act in situations individually, but they also play parts in different interpretive communities. In this respect, all times, cultures, conventions, norms guide translational action (Zlateva, 1993; Chesterman, 1997). It is actually up to the translator, based on his/her commission, and to what extent she/he selects to take the mentioned factors into consideration.

Background information as well as literary conventions are both the basic components of the interpreter's situation. Hence, our analysis and interpretation of the texts are affected by our prejudgments. This is a significant matter with respect to translating for children who are unaware of the conventions of literature (Vermeer, 1989; Reiss and Vermeer 1984; Paepcke 1978/1986).

Analyzing a text, as an essential part in any translation, is always fulfilled within a situation and for a certain purpose, which Nord (1991) points out in her significant book "*Text Analysis in Translation*". In her book, she presents her model as "a model of translation-oriented text analysis" comprising of three sets of factors: extratextual (who? why? to

whom?), intratextual (what? Which verbal or nonverbal element? By means of which word?), and the effect on the reader (pp. 35-8). The abovementioned factors refer to the communicative function that influences the ways the translated texts are analyzed, as Snell Hornby (1988) points out.

What has been presented, concerning translating for children, to this point explicitly or implicitly refers to functional approach in translation which has been introduced by Katharina Reiss in 1978, and later on by Vermeer as Skopos theory (Nord, 1991, p.4). These German scholars (1986, pp.67-68) claim that the function of a translation and its original may not be in the same line. They further remark that a translation should be coherent in itself not to draw a comparison between the translation and its original text.

Notwithstanding emphasizing on the importance of the function of the translation, Reiss and Vermeer (1986) view a translation as an act, a process, carried out in a particular situation. Moreover, Vermeer maintains that a translator is a human being and a translation is an interpretation, i.e., recreating a new text in a new setting.

When we discuss translation as an act, it is proper to say that translator is the actor in translation situations. Texts do not work by themselves. A text is influenced by the author, translator and the reader's expectations. Furthermore, loyalty is appreciated in Nord's (1991) words. She defines the loyalty to the future readers of the translation and what the statement implies is loyalty toward the author of the original. In her words "The translator is committed bilaterally to the source text as well as to the target text situation, and is responsible to both the ST [source text] sender... and the TT [target text] recipient" (p. 29). It is what she calls loyalty. She further makes a distinction between loyalty and fidelity which refer to the relationships between "human beings" and relationship between texts, respectively.

Considering translation of Iranian folk or fairytales, translators can select between traditional paradigms which focus on the equivalence and the modern paradigms which focus on the purpose. This part of literature, folktales and translation of which, can be considered as basic part of children's literature. For instance, the initial situation in these tales starts with the clause "*Yeki bood yeki nabood, joz khoda hich kas nabood*". Some Iranian translators like Forough Hekmat (1970), a specialist in folklore and folktale translation, claims that such a clause is imbued with philosophical thought that when the world was nothing and void, there still existed creative force to which may be attributed, may be, the miracles which come to pass in the tales that follow. She asserts that this clause should be translated as "there was one, there was no one, except God, and there was no one else". And also she adds that "once upon a time" which is mostly used for the translation of these stories cannot convey the meaning as it should. In such cases, once again, we face the problem of equivalence. If we understand the translation in terms of target language addressees and ask the critical question, for whom? We cannot attach to the equivalence in the sense of the sameness as our guiding principle. Translations are always influenced by what is translated for whom and by whom, and where, when and why. Thus in response to these questions, one can pay to what Vermeer defines as "Skopos and commission in translational action":

"Any form of translational action, including therefore translation itself, may be conceived as an action, as the name implies. Any action has an aim, a purpose.... The word Skopos then, is a technical term for the aim or purpose of a translation.... Further: an action leads to a result, a new situation or event, and possibly to a "new" object.... The aim of any translational action, and the mode in which it is to be realized, are negotiated with the client who commissions the action" (Chesterman 1989, pp.173-4).

5. Conclusion

Nowadays, translation as an interdisciplinary field covers the broad range of subjects to convey the nature and essence of its identity or reality. In this respect, interdisciplinarity makes translation more interventionist so as to address the addresser and the addressee. The ultimate goal of this field is to convey the real or near essence of the source text into the target one. Hence, this requires considering some pieces of realities in Translation Studies. For instance, meeting the needs of the reader especially children along with their particular literature is of crucial importance. Translator as a mediator should reconcile the source language to the target one in order to simulate the approximate situation for all ilks of people.

This paper has clearly shown that equivalence and purpose paradigms are the robust poles in translation studies so as to convince the source and target reader. Equivalence paradigm pays more attention to the original translatorial items and it seeks to create either natural or directional equivalents in the target language. Natural equivalence labeled as one-to-one correspondence. Directional equivalence is a multivariate equivalence and it is labeled as one-to-two or one-to-several correspondence in translation. On the other hand, purpose paradigm keeps an eye on the role of the client and commission of translation or client's brief (Nord 1997). Pym (2010) argues that translation brief "conjure up a defense attorney who receives information from the client but is ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the case.

(p.55)" In this direction, the translator should consider the needs of the target reader thoroughly. Purpose paradigm regards translator's liberation and client instruction. Indelible translations or interpretations are such ones putting their attentions to the client's side or target-sidedness. And it also seeks to satisfy the needs of the target reader thoroughly.

This study suggests that the role of purpose paradigm in translations especially in children's literature should be taken into account. This is due to the fact that this particular group-children- plays the crucial part in target translations. The reason behind this notion is that children are the most sensitive group and it is of great importance paying more attention to the intended group. The existence of these expatiations implies that purpose paradigm is more utilizable than equivalence paradigm in that it pays special attention to the target-sidedness of translation.

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