IN THE NAME OF GOD

SHEIKHBAHAEE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ON TRANSLATING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE NORMS AND ITS IDEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS IN PERSIAN CONTEXT.

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

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پژوهشگر

فاطمه حسین زاده

استاد راهنما

دکتر کتایون افضلی

مهر ۹۲

To my mother, for her compassionate encouragement,

To my father, for his unflinching support and

To my brothers and sister for their invaluable helps.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text. This work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was threefold: first, it aimed to specify the adaptation strategies employed by the translators in translating children literature for Iranian children. Second, it intended to recognize the socio cultural norms used in translation of story books for Iranian children. And third, it aimed to indicate the way Iranian society views the concept of childhood. In other words, the ideology of this society about children which has caused the translators reconstruct the story books for Iranian children in the way that they are. To this end 30 story books and their Persian translations were compared based on Lambert and Van Gorp's(2006) model then the frequency of common strategies adopted by the translators in preliminary, macro and micro-levels were separately specified.

The findings indicated that the norms more frequently used in translation of the story books for Iranian children are cultural adequacy, omission and creation. It was found out that the Iranian's society regards the child as a person who is inclined to immorality and is easily affected by the bad behavior. In the other words, children are viewed as an incomplete person who should be guided by the complete adults.

Key words: Children's Literature, Socio-Cultural Norms, Ideology,

ABBREVIATIONS

Descriptive Translation Study: DTS

Children Literature: ChL

Children Literature Translation: ChLT

Source Text: ST

Target Text: TT

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Preliminaries

Childhood is considered as an important stage in one's life since children in this phase start learning about different aspects of their lives. According to Hussein Taha(2010), children at this stage begin to acquire their social and cultural values and shape their identities. Therefore, literature written for children can be considered as an important tool for acquiring social and cultural values. Books accompany a person from childhood to adulthood; therefore, they play significant role in influencing and manipulating children's thoughts and behaviors (Frimmelova, 2010).

According to Puurtinen (2006), knowledge, customs, values and behaviors can be transferred via children's books to them and can shape their identities, values and cultural expectations.

In the same vein, Steven (1992) claims that children's stories are used purposefully to intervene in the lives of children as society regards childhood as a crucial period for socializing an individual into accepting its norms and values. Therefore, children's literature is considered as a means of educating and instructing children. Moreover, educators see the need for children to be exposed to the literature in other countries and cultures other than theirs. This is due to the fact that exposing children to the other world´s literature plays a

crucial role in instructing them; therefore, it would be an opportunity for them to broaden their experiences toward life. In this case translation plays an important role in socializing and instructing children (Hussein Taha, 2010).

Some researchers consider translating children's literature as a means of cross-cultural communication involving the culture of both children in source and target language. Regarding children's literature as means of cross-cultural communication, Vandergift (1997,cited in Hussein,2010) believes that children are introduced to literature read by people of their age in other countries and are exposed to domains of other lives and cultures through which they begin to understand and accept each other as being 'unique' and having different literary and cultural experiences.

Xeni(2006)also believes that translation of children's literature not only serves cultural aims and introduces children to the other culture but also is a major carrier of cultural content and a powerful medium for understanding the world. Moreover, Metcalf (2003) states that translation of children's literature introduces children to the segments of life in other countries and furthers cross-cultural understanding.

Exposing children to the other world´s culture play a crucial role in instructing them; therefore, it would be an opportunity for them to promote their experiences. Translation of children's literature is conducted according to certain norms much more than any other literary genre. These norms may be didactic, ideological, ethical, religious, etc.(Lathey, 2006).Furthermore, translated children's literature might cause breakdowns in morale, norms, ideologies and social customs, especially if the source and target cultures have little in common(Hussein Taha,2010). Therefore, the translators in order to translate successfully need

to be familiar with these norms since they are expected to obey the rules and norms established in the culture and society of the target text.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Despite the fact that translators need to be familiar with the didactic norms of children's literature, as well as the ideological and moral values accepted by the society (Frimmelová, 2010), most of them are not familiar with social, moral and ideological norms of Iranian culture (Sarshar, 2012).

In this relation, Eghbalizadeh (2009) warns about increasing growth of translation of foreign story books which are almost replete with western cultural norms. Mdallel (2003) believes that cultural differences between Islamic and English countries are not the matter to be ignored (Mdallel, 2003).

To sell their books, translators need to be able to deal with foreign elements such as ethnicity, racism, violence, divorce and taboos which are inappropriate subjects for children (Frimmelová, 2010), But among the translated stories for Iranian children some of them contain these forbidden issues.

Since in our culture, it is believed that children should not be exposed to some issues of life like death, divorce & etc., translators needs to be able to render the foreign elements in a way that do not shock the Iranian child reader. "They should be able to intervene in the text, applying certain protective measures by first selecting an acceptable text for translation, then purifying it" (Mdallel, 2003). In this connection, Hussein Taha(2010) claims that translators may modify the text using strategies such as adaptations, additions, abridgements,

modifications and deletions, to make it conform to the social and ideological traditions of the target language.

Oittinen(2000) also claims that translators need to have a good knowledge of both source and target culture in order to deal with socio-cultural context of translation. Both linguistic and cultural factors involving cultural references, customs and other cultural, social and ideological aspects which make translation of children's literature challenging for translators need to be taken into account.

Considering the important role of socio-cultural norms in translation of children's literature, this study intends to specify the Persian socio cultural norms employed by translators in translation of English story books for Iranian children. Furthermore, the current study intends to reveals what the norms adopted by translators indicate about our society's ideology regarding the children.

1.3. Research Questions

The current study intends to address the following research questions:

1) What are the adaptation norms used by translators in translating children's literature from English to Farsi?

2) What do adaptation norms used by translators in translating children's literature indicate about the concept of childhood in Iran's society?

1.4. Significance of the study

Since children's literature plays an important role in forming the thoughts and values of children and is considered as a means of educating and instructing them, translation for children can play an important role in educating them.

Frimmelová (2010) states that ideological and social differences among the different languages and cultures indicate that translation is not a mere transferring of one word from one text to another, but is also accompanied with transforming values and norms from one culture to another which finds more significance in the translation of children's literature.

By considering this fact that parents want their children to internalize order and discipline so that they would be easier to deal with and to bring up their children in such a way that they adopt their parent's social values, the findings of this study will help the translators to know how they can manipulate the TT books to be consistent with the values and norms of the society. In other words, translators would be able to recognize the ways a text could be manipulated to be more attractive to children and make them read it.

According to Thomson (1998), authors will adapt to survive in the market and write only "good" books- sanitized books-avoiding controversial and taboo subject. He said what society wants in the end are good citizens who function according to society's norms. This study therefore, intends to describe the norms and constraints to which the translated text is subjected in order to function and accept in the target culture.

The finding of this study can shed some light on ideological and cultural differences existing across English and Farsi and can reveal how ideological aspects, moral values and behavioral patterns reflected in texts should be modified in translation of foreign works for

children. The findings also indicate to the translators the way translations for children may pose cultural, ideological and social differences because of the specificity of its readership, namely Iranian children.

The present study can also provide guidelines for specifying the appropriate strategies for translating cultural, social, ideological factors appropriate for translating children's literature.

1.5. Definitions of key terms

1.5.1. Norm

Toury(1995) defines norms as translation of general values or ideas shared by community as to what is right and wrong, adequate or inadequate into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations (Cited in Munday, 2008).Norms is a way of behaving or believing that is normal for a group or culture. All societies have their norms; they are simply what most people do.

1.5.2 Ideology

Lefever(1992) considers ideology as a conceptual grid that consists of opinions and attitudes deemed acceptable in a certain society at a certain time and through which readers and translators approach texts.

1.5.3 Manipulation

Manipulation refers to the manifestation of manipulative strategies used in translation to hide one's true intentions, both good and evil (Kramina, 2004).

1.5.4 Children's literature:

Both fiction and non-fiction books, written especially for children 0-12 years old.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Overview

This chapter has five sections. Section2.2presents reviews of the nature of children's literature and provides definitions of children's literature. Section 2.3deals with children's literature and its translation.Section2.4is concerned with manipulation in children's literature. Section2.5 deals with norms in translation for children's literature including polysystem, Toury and DTS, Lambert and Van Gorp's model. Section 2.6 is concerned with adaptation strategies suggested by Bastin (2005).

2.2. Children's literature

In recent years, children's literature has attracted tremendous attention and has become a popular subject. It is noteworthy that there is no single definition for children's literature and because of the complex nature of the subject matter, many different definitions have emerged in the literature.

Defining children's literature might seem simple at the first sight, it may cover the books written for and read by children, or the books written for the readers under the age of