

Oittinen, Riitta, Anne Ketola and Melissa Garavini (2018) *Translating Picturebooks: Revoicing the Verbal, the Visual and the Aural for a Child Audience*, New York and London: Routledge, 213pp., ISBN: 978-1-138-08251-9 (hardcover), UK£110.

Translations of children's literature have been produced and reproduced in a great number, occupying the largest proportion of many domestic book markets for children. Thanks to widely circulated children's books, readers (both children and adults) around the globe share the same stories, and cheer or sigh for the same characters. However, the worldwide dissemination of this genre of literature also blurs the recognition of translation. Possible variations of the original via differing strategies of translation are at times ignored, and the same is true for what has happened in translating process. Translating picturebooks (or picture books), a special type of children's literature that integrates words, images and sounds, is inadequately researched despite the many angles of possible inquiry. Therefore, the launch of the monograph *Translating Picturebooks: Revoicing the Verbal, the Visual and the Aural for a Child Audience* (2018) is exciting news to researchers and students, in Translation Studies and Children's Literature, wanting to learn the latest insights in both fields.

The book starts with a short but well-structured chapter titled "First Steps", at the beginning of which, the authors* emphasize the poor status quo of researching picturebook translation, and notably, the professional practice of picturebook translation itself. To help with the current state of affairs, the book has collected—as explained by the authors in the chapter—various types of research adopting multiple perspectives and methods, to diversify readers' perceptions of picturebooks in translation. But before reaching the research section of the book, the authors recap and provide an overview of key issues regarding translation of children's literature in

* I use "the authors" throughout the book review referring to the three authors listed as the book authors. If the chapter/subchapter is contributed by any one or two of the three, or by any other author(s), such as the individual article author(s) in Chapter 4, I specify their names.

general, which include translators' ideologies and comments evolving from adult-child relationships, and translation strategies of foreignizing and domesticating, both the hottest topics under discussion so far in the field of children's literature research.

Chapter 2 "Picturebook Characteristics and Production" focuses on two questions: What are picturebooks? And what are their distinctive features? Based on Bosch Andreu's definitions (2007), a six-category view is developed to approach picturebooks in this chapter. Under each category, relevant works are reviewed, providing a cross-referenced look at the core of picturebook. Sorting out and clarifying definitions, the authors then proceed to carry out some important readings on intertextual and intervisual features of picturebooks that naturally leads to discussions in the next three subchapters. Given that the processing of words and images is fundamental in terms of reading picturebooks, Subchapter 2.3 offers theoretical and empirical understandings, with a note on translating multi-modal information. Drawing on and making amendments to O'Sullivan's communicative model (2003, 2005), Subchapter 2.4 signed solely by Melissa Garavini reveals how culture-specific elements are represented in the target text of a picturebook under the influence of publishing houses, with an effort to include illustrators' impact as well. The last section in Chapter 2, by Garavini again, reads as a fresh perspective into picturebooks by presenting a detailed account of digital picturebooks or e-picturebooks in production. With ever-changing technology and soaring electronic literacy (an ability young people are seemingly and increasingly presented as "born-with"), digitalized books thus seem never new to children, but still represent new domain to researchers. Therefore, Garavini's discussions about characteristics of picturebooks rising from a different production method are timely.

Entitled "The Translator Between Images, Words and Sounds", the third chapter delves into multi-modal interaction and its impact on translators. Having translators situated in the

procedure of reading the original, the authors illustrate different reading strategies in Subchapter 3.1, asserting as they do so that it's pivotal to comprehend meanings conveyed in different modes and to draw conclusions based on everything experienced. To specifically elaborate on that, visual techniques (e.g. color, line, framing and perspective) and aural aspects (e.g. tone, intonation, tempo, pauses) are discussed in Subchapter 3.2 and 3.3 respectively, to assist translators to better appreciate a picturebook as a process of technical and aesthetic decision-making which culminates in a 'finished product.' The last two subchapters are separately devoted to the most-researched topics in translating children's literature in a general sense: story characters and culture-specific items. With regard to story characters, identity issues resulting from narrative perspective are touched upon, together with discussions on translations of implicative names. In relation to culture-specific items, the subchapter mainly presents and reviews scholarly works on translation strategies of elements embedded in source culture.

Following the line of thinking concerning culture, authors in Chapter 4 devote more full attention to cultural issues pertinent to translating picturebooks, in the form of six individual articles, none of which are long but all well-written. Riitta Oittinen and Garavini co-write the first article that concentrates on a Finnish crossover picturebook and its translations into four languages. Their examination on how Finnish-culture carriers are distinguishably handled and full of intriguing details as well as solid explanation, leading to the enlightening conclusion on cultural knowledge as the essential parameter affecting translators' strategies (109). Subchapter 4.2, co-authored by Anne Ketola and Roberto Martínez Mateo, explores Spanish and Finnish translations of the story about a mild-tempered bull, originally named "Ferdinand" in English. When the bull is taken back to his Spanish "home", a sense of formality is increased in the translation, while when the bull is taken to Finland, educational purpose emerges. Picturebooks translated into Arabic are discussed by Hasnaa Chakir and Samir Diouny in Subchapter 4.3,

with a particular focus on how cultural taboos in the Arabic context exert impact on translating words and images. In Subchapter 4.4 Xi Chen unfolds a three-perspective translation account of how the Chinese legendary character Mulan is mediated in translation: one, as intralingual form-transfer from Chinese ballad to Pipa lyric; two the interlingual language-transfer from Chinese to English and three in the form of intersemiotic modal-transfer from verbal elements to visual images. Co-editions of travel books are investigated by Camila Alvares Pasquetti and Lincoln Fernandes in Subchapter 4.5, with an emphasis on translating typical culture-specific references including breakfast in London and animals unique to New York. As popular as Maurice Sendak's picturebooks are globally, translating them is never an easy task for translators as observed by Oittinen, Garavini and Ketola, co-authors of the final subchapter. They work to unveil the magic and wonder of Max's adventure in the original text, and how via translation, this iconic work pitifully risks losing the emotional bond to its new child-readers.

The penultimate chapter is heavily practice-oriented as the title "Translators' Diaries" suggests. Thanks to Oittinen's contribution in the first subchapter, readers are given access to first-hand experience of translating picturebooks in real-life scenarios. Reflecting on her translating process of three books from English to Finnish, Oittinen demonstrates the very skills and renditions to make a good picturebook translation, which include being thoughtful in relation to how to handle a food item that is unfamiliar to Finnish children, and showing delicacy in use of punctuation in order to fulfill the purpose of read-aloud. The second subchapter written by Ketola is an analytical account of students' translation diaries with a focus on their selections of source texts, their descriptions on readership/characteristic/ purpose of source texts and how they finally perform. Since the students under observation are beginners in translation training, Ketola concludes with pedagogical insights as references to translation training courses in general, which include sensitizing students to the non-identical purposes of the source text and

target text, training them to decode the relationship between multimodal elements and to better cater for different readerships (199). The final chapter “Last Steps” is again short but clearly written. The authors reaffirm the unique features of picturebooks and reemphasize the importance of translation.

The book, with no doubt, serves as an informative and illuminating source for anyone working in the area of translation of children’s literature. Researchers and students can find works of big names in the field quoted and referred to, such as O’Sullivan, Lathey, Van Coillie, to name but a few – as well as references to well-established studies in the domain of picturebooks, such as monographs and articles by Nodelman, Schwarcz, Nikolajeva and Scott. Translation practitioners can also find emotional resonance with translating procedures shared by the authors in this collection. In addition, a large number of currently researched themes and topics are covered, particularly facilitating research workers to expand knowledge. As for the content, the entertaining, engaging and relaxing nature of picturebooks would never bore any lay-reader.

Nevertheless, the above strengths may at the same time be the weak points of this publication. Although the book title and subtitles unanimously point to picturebook translations, discussions regarding their very specific visual features do not take up a large proportion, especially in subchapter articles. For instance, Garavini’s seven-page writing of Subchapter 2.4 is to propose a new communicative model elucidating how picturebooks are translated. She spends six pages on publishers’ voices with text-based analysis and only one page on illustrators, whose role is briefly explained with one example before reaching to the conclusion. The same can be noticed in Subchapter 4.4, where only two pages of content relate to the visual presentation of Mulan despite the eleven-page long article. And as much as the authors in this publication emphasize the multimodal nature of texts, when it comes to interpreting different modes and their interactive mechanism, perspectives are still conventional – whether texts

synchronize with or change according to pictures, how texts read in rhymes/puns/wordplays, how the tension between words and images is handled. In this respect, their insights contribute little in terms of new ideas on multimodal interaction and integration, a topic of great scholarly interest in the age of multi-media. What is more, the readership of the book may be left wondering if the question of whether to domesticate or foreignize is the only concern of translating picturebooks because such discussions repeatedly come up chapter by chapter.

In spite of inadequacies mentioned above, the book is definitely a worth-read. As a researcher holding a genuine interest in translation of children's literature myself, I find the book both intimate and inspiring. Since children's literature has been considered inferior, simple and not as serious as adults' literature, more research on children's literature in general, and in contexts of translation in particular is long overdue. Therefore, the excitement of reading the book is not less than reading Oittinen's *Translating for Children* (2000), the pioneering breakthrough that has enlightened so many scholars. As well as Oittinen's individual continuous exploration on reading strategies, situations of reading and translating, what makes this publication more delightful as a collaboration by multiple researchers, is its clear ethos of sharing thoughts from all around the world, embracing diversities as broadly as it can reach. Creating literary works for children, be it writing, translating or illustrating, is never a simple task. Quite on the contrary: if more people are telling complicated life matters in fewer words, shorter sentences and less sophisticated form of line drawings, wouldn't the art of story-telling be all the richer? For adults who remember their child-self all the way to their adulthood, to read the book is to hunt for treasures.

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