

**Searching for a Model for Translating Children's Illustrated
Books for the Age Groups B and C from an Inter-Semiotic
Approach**

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Introduction

This is an interdisciplinary qualitative research which investigates how illustration and text join together in conveying the message of illustrated works for the age groups of B and C. The researchers have considered children's illustrated books as comprised of two sign systems, and they want to investigate the translation of these books from a semiotic perspective.

Different theorists have presented different definitions of semiotics. Charles Sanders Peirce, known as the father of American Semiology, "designed the sign in a triadic system" (Nojoomian, 2015: 16). From his viewpoint, this triadic system includes the sign, object and interpretant. If we consider language as a verbal sign system, the process of translation in which the source text is decoded and the target text is encoded in target language is a semiotic process. Victoria Welby emphasizes the relationship between semiotics and translation when she describes translation as "a method of interpretation and understanding.

And given that translative processes as they develop across systemic and typological boundaries, and that meaning is generated in the relation among signs, from a signifiical perspective, theory of translation and theory of sign and meaning are interconnected (quoted in Petrilli, 2009: 518).

Methodology, Literature Review and Purpose

Based on the tradition of qualitative research, the two utilized instruments in this study were interview and content analysis. The type of interview employed in this research is semi-structured which is the most common type of interviews. In this research, the content of three children's illustrated story books for B and C age groups were analyzed: *The Magic Finger*, written by Roald Dahl and illustrated by Quentin Blake along with its four translations into Persian, *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle, *Kate, The Cat and The Moon* by David Almond and Stephen Lambert (in two formats of the original book and their translations). The model of inter-semiotic translation suggested by Quieroz and Aguiar in 2013 based on Pierce's theory is used as the framework of the study.

If the translated illustrated book is considered as a sign (semiotic-source), then the translator as an interpreter (semiotic-target) is the interpretant and the main book (the untranslated one) is the object of the semiotic-source. Therefore, this research accords to the model of inter-semiotic rendition. The researchers considered this model alongside the hermeneutic approach proposed by Steiner as the theoretical framework of the research. Since the study is an

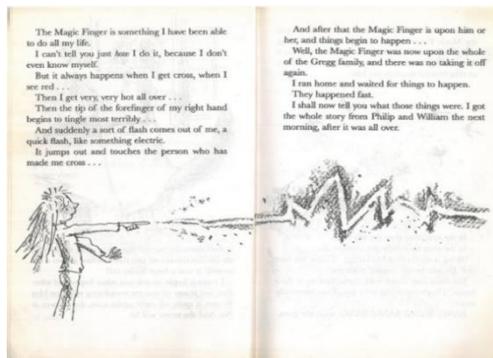
interdisciplinary one, the researchers found it necessary to interview a number of experts in illustration and translation as well.

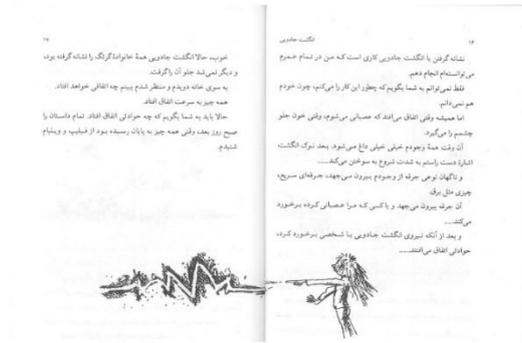
The purpose of this study is to specify the role of illustration as an inter-semiotic element in the process of translation, and to explore its impact on the translator's decisions. In addition to the significance of investigating the impact of illustrations in the translation of children's illustrated works, the specific cultural and ideological atmosphere in every country, including Iran, necessitates that researchers concentrate more on inter-semiotic aspects of translation.

Discussion

After conducting each interview, it was transcribed, analyzed and coded by the researchers. In the next step, contents of the books were analyzed. There were similar codes among the findings from the content analysis and the interviews. A sample of the content analysis is mentioned below:

Pages 8 and 9 of the book *The Magic Finger* and their second translated version:





Original text:

Then the tip of the forefinger of my right hand begins to tingle most terribly...

And suddenly a sort of flash comes out of me, a quick flash, like something electric.

It jumps out and touches the person who has made me cross...

Translation 1:

و نوک انگشت اشاره دست راستم به شدت شروع به سوزش می کند...

و ناگهان مثل یک شیئی الکتریکی، برقی از من می جهد و به کسی که مرا عصبانی کرده است برخورد می کند...

Translation 2:

بعد نوک انگشت اشاره دست راستم به شدت شروع به سوختن می کند.....

و ناگهان نوعی جرقه از وجودم بیرون می جهد، جرقه ای سریع، چیزی مثل برق.

آن جرقه بیرون می جهد و با کسی که مرا عصبانی کرده برخورد می کند.....

Translation 3:

بعد نوک انگشت اشاره دست راستم به شدت شروع به گز گز می کند...
و یک دفعه، یک جور برق از من بیرون می پرد، یک برق سریع، چیزی مثل الکتریسیته.
این برق بیرون می پرد و به کسی که عصبانی ام کرده، برخورد می کند...

Translation 4:

بعد نوک انگشت اشاره دست راستم شروع می کند به خارش...
طوری می خارد که انرژی از من بیرون می زند. چیزی شبیه نور یا جریان سریع الکتریسیته،
یک هو میپرد بیرون و به آدمی که مرا عصبانی کرده، می خورد...

The most important and noticeable point in this part is that although the source text clearly mentions “the forefinger of my right hand”, there is a contradiction between the text and its intended illustration in translations 2, 3 and 4, since the illustration demonstrates the forefinger of her left hand as the magic finger. This is because the pictures have been reversed (like a mirror image of the source illustration) according to the common publication method of translated works in Iran. This can create questions in children’s inquisitive minds. This strategy has been coded as re-localization.

Some of the resulting codes from content analysis are related to translation, and some of them are in regard to illustration. These codes alongside the codes taken from interviews were revised and categorized according to the chosen theoretical framework and represented as the outcome of the research.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers came to the conclusion that translators have utilized different strategies based on their personal preferences in their translations, and they have not paid equal attention to illustrations. In addition, although translators seem to be the only determining factors in translation, there are other influential factors that implicitly but intensely affect the translators' works, which include the copyright law, the publisher and the economic, political and cultural considerations. These factors have been classified in the final model.

Different groups whose activities are in regard to children's books, including publishers, translators, children's books critics, illustrators and even readers can benefit from the findings of this research. Publishers can utilize the model as a pattern for evaluating and ranking books. Since multilateral familiarity with any issue and work leads to achieving better results, the model can be applied by translators as an instruction for the improvement of their works. Critics of children's books can also benefit from the model in assessing the quality of works and passing more reasonable judgments on them. This model can also assist illustrators to better relate with textual factors.

Keywords: Children's illustrated books, illustration, inter-semiotic translation, rendition

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