

**Requirements for Adaptation in Philosophical Stories for
Children from the Perspective of Philosophical Adequacy:
A Study of Two Novels, *Lisa* and *Leila*, as Comparative and
Research Samples**

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Introduction

Philosophy for children program is one of the new approaches in teaching thinking skills, especially critical thinking, which was developed by Matthew Lippmann, professor of philosophy at the

University of New Jersey, USA, and gradually flourished and evolved. The main purpose of developing this program was to increase the power of critical thinking and rational reasoning in children in order to make children rational citizens in the future. The most important tool for running this program is the "story". Stories designed for children to use in philosophy classes should be rich or sufficient in three ways: philosophical, psychological and literary. Matthew Lippmann and colleagues have authored books for different ages, which are used as the textbooks of a school year. In Iran, too, the authors have tried to adapt these stories to the culture of this region by adapting and localizing them and using them in the implementation of this program. Considering the fact that these stories are written for specific philosophical purposes, one can expect that some methods of localization reduce their philosophical function. This study examines and compares the story *Lisa* by Matthew Lippmann with the story adapted from it, *Leila, The Philosopher Child*, and examines the effects of localization on the philosophical function of the localized sample.

Methodology, Review of Literature and Purpose

Mousavi (2012) in the article "Philosopher Child, Leila" and Kermani (2012) in the article "*Lisa* and *Leila*, Distinctions and Similarities" have presented an analytical report of the two stories under study, and in a way have introduced these two work to the reader. Akbari et al., (2014) in the article "Investigating the Appropriate Method of Using the Philosophy for Children Program in Iran" believe that there are stories in the book *Leila*, that are difficult for Iranian children to communicate with and suggest that Iranian stories replace some parts of Lisa's stories.

Gorgi and Izadpanah (2016) in the article "Study and Criticism of Localization of the Philosophy for Children and Adolescents Program" review the book *Leila*, but only express the methods of localization of the story and do not examined it in terms of philosophical function. The difference between the present study and other studies is in examining the effects of localization on the philosophical adequacy of the stories. The results of this study show that simply addressing the issue of localization cannot create a good philosophical story, but it is important to pay attention to maintaining the philosophical structure of the story. The data retrieval method of this research is deductive content analysis (Mayring, 2000). First, the two stories *Lisa* and *Leila* were carefully studied and all the changes made in the story *Leila* were noted, and the methods used by the author to adapt the text were also identified and defined. Then, referring to the sources of philosophy for children, examples of philosophical adequacy were defined. After that, the modifications in *Leila* were analyzed based on the defined examples to determine whether or not the modified parts still fall under the category of philosophical examples.

Discussion

Lisa focuses specifically on moral issues with the aim of morally educating adolescents of 13 to 15 years of age. The characters of the story are portrayed in situations that will most likely occur to their audience. By raising issues such as fights, divorce or the death of parents, intellectual contradictions, ugliness and beauty, and the comments of the characters in the story about them, *Lisa* provides a

good space for discussion, understanding these situations and trying to find a better solution.

An important feature that philosophical stories for children are required to observe is "localization" because it is necessary to produce philosophical stories appropriate to the culture in which they are to be used. *Leila* is a philosophical novel by Naji. He has adapted it from the translation of Matthew Lippmann's *Lisa* and has tried to adapt it to the cultural characteristics of our country while preserving its structure and philosophical content. To this end, this study, by examining and comparing these two works, shows what methods the author of *Leila* has used to adapt, and what differences have the given changes made with *Lisa*. It also reveals whether this story, with the changes that have taken place in it, has still been able to bear the philosophical burden of the story of *Lisa* and achieve the philosophical goals of this story, or by only paying attention to localization and making changes for this purpose, causes harm to the philosophical function of the story?

Conclusion

Examining the adaptation methods in *Leila* shows that the author has used methods of adding, refining and changing events in the content section and changing the title, changing the names of the characters and matching the words in the structure section. Addition has been done with the two purposes of further explaining philosophical concepts and expressing cultural beliefs. The refinement of concepts related to self-decoration, gender, political instances and concepts related to marriage has also eliminated or changed these instances in *Leila* and due to the elimination of issues related to children's lives and experiences, the

realization of philosophical discourses and the elimination of themes such as death and fear, which are philosophically important, have reduced the philosophical weight of the story. In the structural part, changing the title from *Lisa* to *Leila, the Philosopher Child* as well as some other changes in the names of the characters are not in line with the exploratory modeling component. In the lexical equation section, some inappropriate equivalents have been used for philosophical terms that damage the philosophical richness of the story. Thus, the emphasis on localization has prevented the author from paying attention to some important philosophical aspects of the story and has made the story weaker than its source in terms of philosophical adequacy.

Keywords: Philosophy for Children, intellectual stories, *Lisa*, *Leila, the Philosopher Child*, Matthew Lippmann, Saeed Najji, culture, localization, adaptation, philosophical adequacy

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