

Clean Reads for Teens? Purification Strategy in Andreas Steinhöfels *Rico, Oskar und die Tieferschatten* in the Chicken House's Edition

Anna Urban

Abstract Andreas Steinhöfel is one of Germany's most highly regarded authors and the winner of the prestigious German Youth Literature Prize 2009 (Children's Book category). The present chapter represents an attempt to compare the original text with its British translation, focusing on potentially controversial issues, i.e. the content considered inappropriate or unsuitable for the target reader. The author focuses on mentions of love, nudity, prostitution, disabilities and homosexuality and, based on the interview conducted with the author of the British translation, tries to free the translator from the blame of making the analysed alterations. Since more and more children's books (as well as animated movies) address a dual audience of children and adults, a double challenge for the translator is created, having to address both audiences at the same time—the child-reader as the primary and the adult-reader as the secondary audience. The conscious decision of omission and transformation of unwelcome passages may contribute to the fact that adults will not feel addressed and therefore will not enjoy the story while reading it to their children. The chapter clearly shows how the editor and the publisher influence the translator and the text in their struggle to make the text more suitable for children and sees translation as a decision-making process of everyone involved in it. In effect, the translator, caught up in a struggle to conduct a faithful translation, is forced to give up his or her loyalty to the author and surrender to the editor/publisher instead.

A. Urban (✉)

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland
e-mail: aurban@amu.edu.pl

1 Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to pointing out profound alterations of the source text (ST) and restoring the image of the translator as the one usually bearing the blame for all modifications. The chapter is an attempt to show how the editor's and publisher's requests and orders change the given text and how, in their struggle to make the text more suitable for children, they show their disrespect towards the author and the source culture.

The translator, reviewer and screenwriter, Andreas Steinhöfel, is the acclaimed author of numerous, in many cases award-winning, children's and young adult books. For his book *Rico, Oskar und die Tieferschatten* (published by Carlsen), hereinafter referred to as ROT, he received, among other prizes, the Catholic children's book award and the German Children's Literature Award (both in 2009).

The UK translation of the novel provided by Chantal Wright was published in 2010 by Chicken House and appeared under the title *The Pasta Detectives* (hereinafter referred to as PD), and a year later, in 2011, in the United States by Scholastic as *The Spaghetti Detectives*. The novel is graded 10 and up.

Rico Doretti is the main protagonist and a self-described "child proddity", being a blend of "child prodigy" and "oddity". He lives with his young mother (his father passed away) in an apartment building in Berlin. She is a single parent, works in a nightclub and sleeps during the day. She loves her son, however, he is often left alone, is directionally challenged, and spends a lot of time with his neighbour, Mrs Darling. He has no friends until he meets Oscar, a 7 year-old genius who constantly wears a blue crash helmet, quotes statistics and hard-to-remember facts. Together, the boys manage to solve the case of a child kidnapper.¹

2 Translation of Children's Books

Puurtinen (1995, p. 17) argues that the genre is unusual because of "the numerous functions it fulfils, and the diverse cultural constraints under which it operates. Children's literature belongs simultaneously to the literary system and the social-educational system", i.e. not only is it read for entertainment, recreation and literary experience, but it is also used for education and socialisation purposes. This fact affects both the process of writing and translation of children's literature, whose relationships with literary, social and educational norms make it, according to Puurtinen, a fascinating and fruitful field of research.

Fascinating and fruitful, as every item in children's books—e.g., the cover, the name of the publisher, author and translator; different literary aspects such as themes, motifs, the use of dialect—is the result of decisions made by those

¹ www.libraryofcleanreads.blogspot.com (accessed on 04.09.2012).

involved in the translation process. In the given framework, Lefevere (1999, p. 75) provides the following definition of translation:

A text formulated in code 1, usually equated with ‘the source language’, is reformulated in code 2, usually equated with ‘the target language’, and during that reformulation certain rules are observed. These rules were long thought to be eternal and unchanging, centring mainly on fidelity or any number of its synonyms; in recent years most scholars writing in the field of translation studies have come to accept that such rules are mainly imposed by those people of flesh and blood who commission the translation, which is then made by other people of flesh and blood (not by boxes and arrows) in concrete situations *with a given aim in mind* [emphasis added].

Munday (2008, p. 143) names explicitly, who those “people of flesh and blood” are. He says, “these would be the publishers and editors who choose the works and commission the translations, pay the translators and often dictate the translation method”.

It seems almost impossible to see translators of children’s literature elevated to an equal status with authors, as they seem to have a long shadow of editors, clients, entrusting them to make “appropriate, and rational decisions” that would best realise the intended translation task. In the introduction to *Translation and power* (2002), Gentzler and Tymoczko see translators simultaneously caught in both camps, representing both those in power (various institutions like e.g. publishing houses) and those seeking empowerment (being the translators themselves). Being caught in both camps is almost like being in the crossfire, or trying to walk on both cliffs at the same time, being naturally damned to run aground. Gentzler and Tymoczko (2002, p. xix) further state: “Indeed often a certain ethics of translation limits the amount of advocating a translator can do on behalf of either party, which puts the translator in a nearly impossible situation—similar to a lawyer having to represent both the plaintiff and the defendant in the same case. Often with divided allegiances, representing the status quo while simultaneously introducing new forms of representation, the translator acts as a kind of double agent in the process of cultural negotiation”.

I would like see the translator rather a representative not of the source or target text or culture, but of the author. In that case they would not have to be “a double agent”, but a message carrier, a representative of the author.

Summing up, those who select the translators and decide whether or not to keep the illustrations from the source text, whether to give a style-sheet with linguistic or other recommendations to the translator, whether to change the translator’s text and whether to publish the book in a series, are the publishers (Alvstad 2003, p. 268). Toury (1995, p. 183 qtd. in Alvstad 2003, p. 268) claims that it is not possible to tell from an analysis of books exactly who made which decisions. The foundation of the present study, however, is based on a private interview with the translator of the book under analysis, conducted for the Chicken House, which, although translated faithfully, was “purified” of certain content. Therefore, attention is paid to the role of the publisher and the editor, an area that so far has been largely neglected in current research on translation, in spite of the fact that

the publisher is one of the most important mediators between the source text and the recipient of the translation (Alvstad 2003, p. 274).

In the present chapter children's literature is understood as "texts which are written and published by adults for children" (O'Sullivan 2003, p. 205), therefore addressing two audiences: children on the one hand and adults on the other hand, comprising editors, publishers, parents, educators, academics and critics. The adults are subsequently the ones who have the power to decide what is published. And this is what makes the literature for children unique and peculiar, namely its "asymmetrical communication structure":

One of the distinctive characteristics of children's literature is its asymmetrical communication structure. Ostensibly addressed to young readers, it is written by adults, published by adults, reviewed and recommended by adults. Adult librarians administer children's books, teachers use and encourage the use of them, they are purchased by parents, uncles, aunts etc. (Desmet 2007, p. 31)

One should probably raise the question of whether children readers are very different from adults when it comes to reading and understanding a text. One could claim that since the text itself and the intended audience or recipient group has already been written into the source text, everything to be done is to translate the text for the target audience. Stolze (2003, p. 209) argues that "[w]hen children's books are being translated for children, the original content is already adapted to the world of thought of children. So the translation could focus on its task of presenting the original text in another language".

It seems, however, that what one culture allows its children to read, does not necessarily reflect the views of the other culture involved.

Desmet (2007, p. 78) mentions that the "children's literature field allows for drastic change and adaptation of the source text". Anderson (2000, pp. 276–278) attributes these changes to the low status of those texts. Shavit (1986, pp. 112–113) speaks of educational norms governing children's literature as well as "the perceived limited cognitive capacity of the intended audience".

Is it really the children who demand the purifications? By the 1980s Klingberg (1986, p. 58) had already claimed that the "aim [of purifications] is to get the target text in correspondence with the set of values of its readers—or rather in correspondence with the supposed [emphasis added] set of values of those who feel themselves responsible for the upbringing of the intended readers: parents, teachers, librarians, critics".

In her paper, House argues that instead of treating texts belonging to children's literature as "literary products" (2004, p. 684) to be preserved in form and content as far as possible, translators, editors and publishers of children's literature express society's disrespect of children's literature by feeling "especially licensed" to change these texts. House claims that such an attitude would hardly go unnoticed if translators were handling books for adults.

Translators are bound to sign contracts stating that they will faithfully reproduce the source text and not misrepresent it. Therefore, the sole responsibility for changing anything lies with the publisher and editor. The bitter fact is that the

above quoted researchers are not mistaken: there is a general disrespect in handling books for children, and it all begins with adaptation.

Anything can be adapted. Names can be domesticated, the setting localized; genres, historical events, cultural or religious rites or beliefs can be adapted for future readers of texts. In Finland we domesticate for Finns, in the United States for American citizens; we domesticate for children, for minority cultures, for political ideals, for religious beliefs. (Oittinen 2000, p. 99)

Borodo (2011, pp. 329–330) states that the textual interventions are conditioned by adults’ perceptions of children’s age and related abilities, interest or emotional well-being on the one hand, and by the publishing industry or ideologies on the other hand. “Child-oriented translations are frequently acts of negotiations between several intersecting influences, being conditioned by ideological and business factors” (Borodo 2011, p. 330).

To the concerns of the publishing industry and the existing ideologies we must add the preconception regarding the readership’s ability to understand a book. The one under analysis is a good example for far reaching interventions, e.g. those concerning the adaptation of names. Due to the editor’s pressure, the translator was forced to translate the names—of people and places—arguing, those were too difficult for the readership to master. The translator was reassured that the children wouldn’t worry that the names sounded too English, and asked for a “hint of German” (Urban 2011a). She was also given an order—it is difficult to put it differently—to make simplified versions of the German street names, as the setting was Berlin, but she was also given greater liberties with the names of people. The most surprising decision concerns a double name of the main protagonist’s neighbours, *Runge-Blawetzkys*, which, according to the editor’s request, had to be a simpler Polish name, and became *Kaminsky-Kowalskis* (Urban 2011b, p. 179).

The substitution of certain names in the book illustrates the Table 1. Drawing on her own experience, Astrid Lindgren took a stance on the translatability of children’s books in *Babel* magazine, emphasising the phenomenal imagination of children: “I believe that children have a marvelous ability to re-experience the most alien and distant things and circumstances, if a good translator is there to help them, and I believe their imagination continues to build where the translator can go no further” (Lindgren 1969 qtd. in Stolt 2006, p. 73).

Table 1 Substitution of names of German protagonists in ROT and their counterparts in PD (Urban 2011b)

Original names	English translation
Simon Westbühl	Simon Westhaven
Fräulein Bonhöfer	Miss Friedmann
Kiesling	Kirk
Thorben	Freddy
Runge-Blawetzkys	Kaminsky-Kowalskis
Sven	Sam
Tobias	Michael
Lucille-Marie	Claudia
Maximilian	Alexander

Hejwowski (2007, p. 94) argues that an author must have a reason for putting his work in a certain environment, therefore, it is not up to the translator to change the author's vision, on the contrary, the translator must do everything possible to make all allusions detectable in the source text accessible to the reader of the target text.

On the one hand, Adamczyk-Garbowska (1988, p. 81) notes that if the translator can assume certain knowledge of adult readers concerning the source-language culture, it remains strange to the children. On the other hand, she realises that children are more open to the new than adults, and are not surprised about foreign realities. Lathey (2006, pp. 7–8) convinces: “[...] but children can and do take delight in the sound and shape of unfamiliar names. Once a narrative engages their interest, young readers will persevere with the names and localities that are well beyond their ken [...], and they will never be intrigued and attracted by difference if it is kept from them”.

3 Purification Strategy

In the present chapter, purification strategy (cf. Schreiber 1993, p. 275; Desmet 2007, p. 204) is understood as a global strategy with the aim of removing all content considered inappropriate or unsuitable for the target reader. The mentioned focus is only one of many, as the book in question could serve as a paramount example of altering everything that can be altered, including the above-mentioned substitution of names of all protagonists sounding “too German”, and, where possible, omitting the foreign names of shops, streets, TV programmes (Urban, *in press*).

How careful the British publishing house is, might be seen in the example of a book *Prinzessin Isabella* (1997) by Cornelia Funke for four-year-olds, where the editor and the publisher decided on changing a picture in the book's translation titled *Princess Pigsty* (2007) because they were worried that parents would think of paedophilia when they saw a picture of a princess being held upside down by her butlers with her underwear showing. In the British translation the princess is well hidden under her bed and not held upside down.

Although the publisher seems to be especially careful concerning books for children, where the unwelcome passages are unexpected, and allows them to appear in books explicitly addressed to teenagers, as in books by Melvin Burgess, who is a good example of a British author who writes gritty realism with sex, drugs, etc., it is inconsequent in translation of books for young adults. In Zoran Drvenkars *Sag mir was du siehst* published by Chicken House as *Tell Me What You See* in 2005, scenes containing sex were generally toned down. Interestingly enough, there was a lesbian character in the book and the beginnings of a lesbian sex scene, which was only slightly softened in translation, which indicates it must have not seemed as problematic for the publisher as the heterosexual sex scenes.

Fernández López (2006, p. 42) claims that in the last years the criteria for censorship have changed. “While the inclusion of sex, vulgar expressions or

liberal views no longer represents a problem in children's literature, censorship is applied to texts considered racist or sociopolitically incorrect" claiming the censorship is undertaken because of the idea of power of the written word on "impressionable young minds (...) [seeing] it rather as a positive step in safeguarding childhood innocence and for maintaining the well-being of society in general" (West 1996, p. 507 qtd. in Fernández López 2006, p. 46).

The Chaps. 12–16 devoted to purifications present a comparison of the ST and TT excerpts with missing or altered content printed in italics. The omitted text is added under the Chicken House translation in square brackets.

The purifications include mentions of love; nudity, provocative clothing, men–women affairs; prostitution, handicaps, and homosexuality.

3.1 Mentions of Love

The following excerpts illustrate the mentions of love:

(1) Massoud kann ich nicht leiden, weil Jule in ihn statt in mich *verliebt* ist. (ROT, pp. 16–17)

I can't stand Massoud, because Julie *likes* him more than me. (PD, p. 16) [is in love with him and not with me]

(2) "Eine Freundin besuchen."

"Ach ja?" Wenn er grinst, sieht er immer ein bisschen arrogant aus. "Ich dachte, Freundinnen besucht man abends."

"*Nicht so eine Freundin!*" *Fast hätte ich ihm erklärt, dass ich in Jule verknallt bin*, aber das ging ihn nichts an. (ROT, p. 141)

'Visiting a girl.'

'Oh yeah?' He always looks a bit of a show-off when he grins. 'I thought evenings were for visiting girls.'

'Not a going-out-with kind of girl!' I said, though it's really none of his business. (PD, p. 133) [I almost told him I had a crush on Jule, but that was none of his business]

As harmless as it would seem, apparently a 10-year-old boy cannot be in love with a girl, therefore in the excerpt (1) "loving" is substituted with "liking". In the excerpt (2) the whole sentence including a declaration of feelings for the girl is excluded from the ST.

3.2 Mentions of Nudity, Provocative Clothing, Men–Women Affairs

Passages describing the mother's nudity, when e.g. standing in front of a mirror, or those referring to her concern about her appearance, including mentions of her body as her "working capital", seem to be especially disturbing to the editor.

(3) Als ich in unsere Wohnung kam, stand Mama vor dem goldenem Spiegel (...) Sie hatte ihr himmelblaues T-Shirt hochgezogen bis unters Kinn und *guckte besorgt ihre Brüste an, wer weiß wie lange schon*. (ROT, p. 17)

As I went into the flat, Mum was standing in the hall in front of the gold mirror (...) She was looking at herself in a worried way and prodding *her body all over*. (PD, p. 16) [looking at her breasts with concern, who knows for how long]

(4) Da läuft sie natürlich nicht mit raufgezogenem T-Shirt rum, aber sie sieht einfach toll aus. (ROT, p. 17)

[although she doesn't go to town with her T-shirt pulled up] She looks fantastic. (PD, p. 16)

(5) "Irgendwann werden das [die Brüste] Hängemöpsen" (ROT, pp. 17–18)—'At some point *everything's* going to start sagging,' (PD, p. 16)

(6) "Dann gibt's neue" sagte Mama entschlossen. (ROT, p. 18)

'Then I'll have a *tune-up*,' Mum said defensively. (PD, p. 16) [Then I'll get myself new ones [new breasts] (...)]

Other mentions of nudity concern tabloid newspapers the main protagonist accidentally gains insight into, such as:

(7) Ein leeres Glas stand auf einer aufgeschlagenen BILD-Zeitung. Es war nass am Boden und hatte einen welligen Rand *genau auf den nackten Busen von Cindy gezaubert*. *Cindy kommt aus Hohenschönhausen, stand da in dicken Buchstaben, ist zweiundzwanzig und von Beruf Fußpflegerin. Mehr konnte ich aus Entfernung nicht lesen. Echt, dass der Bühl sich so etwas Schweinisches anguckte!* (...) (ROT, p. 121)

An empty glass was standing on an open *newspaper*. The bottom of the glass was wet and had made a wavy stain *across one page*. (PD, pp. 113–114) [a wavy stain directly on the bare breasts of Cindy. Cindy comes from Hohenschönhausen, stood there in bold type, she is twenty two years old and pedicurist by profession. I could not read more from the distance. That Bühl was looking at something so swinish!]

(8) Ich muss mich beeilen, gleich gibt's nämlich Abendessen. Und wenn *Schwester Leonie* rauskriegt, dass ich den ganzen Nachmittag heimlich hier herumgekrizelt habe, gibt es Ärger. Sie ist toll und sieht klasse aus, *wie eine Mischung aus Jule und Fußpflegerin Cindy, auch wenn ich natürlich ihren Busen noch nicht gesehen habe*. (ROT, p. 219)

I have got to move on because it's nearly dinner time and if *the nurse* finds out that I've spent the whole afternoon writing away secretly, there'll be trouble. *She's great and very pretty too*. [She [Sister Leonie] is great and looks terrific, as a mixture of Jule and Cindy the pedicurist's, though naturally I haven't seen her breasts yet]

Other content is toned down, as in "sexy wie die Hölle" [lit. "sexy as hell"], (ROT, p. 40) which was substituted with "gorgeous" (PD, p. 39). In passages referring to "Leute, vor allem Männer" ["many people, especially men"] (as in ROT, p. 17) staring at the protagonist's mother in the street are generalised to simply "A lot of people" (PD, p. 16).

Content considered unnecessary, as too many adjectives, or even whole sentences giving supplementary information on mother's appearance, is missing, as in:

(9) Immer trägt sie *superkurze* enge Röcke und ein *knappes* Oberteil mit tiefem Ausschnitt. (ROT, p. 17)

She always wears short skirts and low-cut tops. (PD, p. 16) [very short and tight skirts as well as tight low-cut tops]

(10) *Sie sagt immer, es gebe einen Haufen Männer, sie das mögen, und deswegen sei sie bei ihrer Arbeit so erfolgreich.* [She always says that there is a whole bunch of men who like that and that's why she is so successful at work] (ROT, p. 17)

(11) Entdeckt hat die Schwerkraft ein Mann namens Isaac Newton. Sie ist gefährlich für *Busen und Äpfel*. Womöglich auch noch für andere runde Sachen. (ROT, p. 18)

A man called Isaac Newton discovered gravity. It is dangerous for *apples*. And possibly for other round things. (PD, p. 17) [It is dangerous for breasts and apples]

(...) ob Miss Jane Marple jemals Mister Stringer heiraten wird. Der ist ihr bester Freund, aber schrecklich paddelig und eigentlich zu dumm für Miss Marple, aber sie hat ja sonst niemanden zum verlieben, außer diesem dicken Besitzer von Pferdestall, *der ihr aber bei jeder Gelegenheit an den Beinen rumzutatschen versucht*. (ROT, p. 97)

(...) whether Miss Marple will ever marry Mr Stringer. He's her best friend. He's clumsy and too stupid for Miss Marple, but she's got nobody else to fall in love with, apart from the fat stable owner. (PD, p. 89) [though he tries to grab her legs when possible]

The excerpts listed above contain omissions of information about appearance of the main protagonist's mother, who is a beautiful and attractive woman. Omissions concern removals of passages where she looks at her naked body and comments on it.

Other removals concern contents of the BILD tabloid newspaper, where the boy, Rico, can see a nude woman. On the one hand he cannot believe that his neighbour could be looking at "something so swinish", on the other, he is attracted to what he sees, as he compares his love, Jule, to a nice and pretty nurse in the hospital, and to the woman from the newspaper.

It is also toned down in passages where it is possible that Rico's mother is found attractive by men. Throughout the book "men" are substituted with "people" and her "superkurze enge Röcke" ("supershort tight skirts") turn to simple "short skirts", and it is evident that it was hidden from the readers that Rico's mother, a bar-maid in a night club, understands her appearance as her "working capital" that helps her to be "successful at work". It is apparent that the mentioned phrases seemed too clear to the editor as to what the work at a nightclub might involve.

This way the ability of the book to address a dual readership of children and adults gets lost. Solely the grown-up readers, that is, the parents, will find the risqué passages amusing because the children surely will not understand them and will pass over them to the next interesting thing. Dual addressees, called dual audience, or "shifting boundaries between children's and adult literature" (Beckett 1999, p. xi) are much discussed in the theoretical literature on children's books, and in this case this second level on which the German text operates is lost.

3.3 Mentions of Prostitution

Although the author often describes the mother's appearance also in the context of her work in the nightclub, there is never a word about prostitution. The only two mentions of woman escorts can be found on pages 126–127 and 174, concerning a popular movie and late-night television:

(12) (...) habe ich einen neuen Film gekauft.”
 Ich lehnte mich gegen den Esstisch. “Ist es ein Krimi?”
 “Liebesfilm. *Pretty Woman*. Schon mal davon gehört?”
 “Nein. Worum geht's?”
 “Um ein Callgirl, das sich in einen reichen Mann verliebt.”
 “Was ist ein Callgirl?”
 “Tja.” Frau Dahling wandte sich wieder dem Kühlschrank und begann ziemlich hektisch darin herumzuwühlen. “Wo ist denn die Butter?”
 “Neben dem Senfglas. Was ist ein Callgirl? Wissen Sie's nicht?”
 “Doch, ich...” Ihre Schultern klappten nach vorn, als versuchte sie, sich selber zusammenzufalten. Sie drehte sich zu mir, die Butter in einer Hand, und musterte mich prüfend. “Ach, was soll's ich schätze, du bist groß genug für so was.”
 “Groß genug für wie was?”
 “Um über bestimmte Dinge Bescheid zu wissen.” Sie legte die Butter auf den Tisch zu den anderen Sachen. “Also, ein Callgirl, das ist eine Frau, die für Geld dafür sorgt, dass Männer einen schönen Abend verbringen.”
 “So wie Mama?”
 “Nein. Nein–nein–nein–nein!” Sie schüttelte heftig den Kopf. “Deine Mama arbeitet nur in einem Club, in dem Callgirls Männer kennenlernen! Sie passt auf, dass diese Männer höflich bleiben und dass sie, ehm... dass die genug trinken, wenn ihnen zu warm wird.”
 “Sie leitet den Club!”, sagte ich stolz. “Als Geschäftsführerin. Sie bestimmt, welche Getränke eingekauft werden und dergleichen.”
 “Und dergleichen, ja”, sagte Frau Dahling mit einem Seufzer. “So, nun lass mich mal das Essen machen. (ROT, pp. 126–127)
 ‘(...) it just so happens that I've bought a new film.’
 I leaned against the table. ‘Is it a thriller?’
 ‘A romance. *While You Were Sleeping*.’
 She took some bread out of the cupboard. “Now let me make the food. (PD, p. 119)

(13) Ich konnte von Glück reden, dass der Anschluss nicht im verschlossenem Wohnzimmer lag oder dass die misstrauischen RBs es vor mir versteckt hatten aus lauter Angst, ich könnte eine von den Frauen mit den dicken Brüsten aus dem Nachtfernsehen anrufen, das ist nämlich wahnsinnig teuer. (ROT, p. 174)

Luckily the suspicious KKs hadn't hidden it in one of the locked rooms just in case I called one of those expensive phone numbers. (PD, p. 163) [women with big breasts on late-night television]

The only possible problematic area was the after-discussion about the movie *Pretty Woman* (12). The main protagonist spends a lot of time with his neighbour, an elderly lady, with whom he usually watches movies or television. The purchase of the film *Pretty Woman*, a romantic comedy about a female escort hired by a

wealthy businessman,² leads to a discussion between the grown up and the child about “call girls”. The elderly neighbour, Mrs Darling, decides that Rico is old enough to know about certain things and tries to tackle the subject in a delicate manner, explaining that a “call girl” is “a girl who in exchange for money makes sure that men spend a nice evening” (ROT, p. 127), and that Rico’s mother only works in such a club where call girls meet men, and she solely “makes sure that the men stay polite and drink enough if they get too warm” (ROT, p. 127). Rico protests and adds that his mother is responsible “for the purchase of drinks”.

In order to avoid any unwanted discussions, the editor has decided to substitute the movie title with a title of another romantic comedy about a ticket collecting romantic pretending to be engaged to an unconscious man *While You Were Sleeping*,³ and one can see from the excerpts from the ST and the TT that in effect more than one book page was lost.

The other above listed passage containing a mention of calling “women with big breasts on late-night television” on the phone (13) is another passage directed at the grown-up reader. That passage was also omitted, probably owing to the fact that Rico does not watch late-night television, not to mention programmes directed to adult audience.

3.4 Mentions of Handicaps

The main protagonist, Rico Doretti, is a self-described “child proddity”—a blend of “child prodigy” and “odddity”. He always tries to think things through and tries to be sophisticated in his use of language. Apparently the editor did not want to make him sound like a ‘special needs’ child, although it was clear that Andreas Steinhöfel’s intention was to make readers realise that ‘special’ children can be intelligent and creative in different ways and can even solve a kidnapper case.

(14) “Setz dich ins Wohnzimmer und wirf schon mal die Flimmerkiste an. Dann kannst du mir beim Essen erzählen, was in der Welt los ist. (...)”

“Das kann ich mir nicht behalten.”

“Doch, das kannst du. Du hast ein fabelhaftes Gedächtnis, lass dir von keinem was anderes erzählen.”

“Aber Politik verstehe ich nicht.”

“Wenn alle, die sie nicht verstehen, in dein Förderzentrum geschickt werden, müsste dort bald angebaut werden.”

“Es ist nicht mein Förderzentrum!”, grummelte ich leise.

Sie wedelte mir mit dem Brotmesser vor der Nase herum. (ROT, pp. 127–128)

‘Have a seat in the living room and turn on the goggle box. Then you can tell me what’s going on in the world while we’re eating.’ (...)

‘I won’t remember.’

‘Yes, you will. You’ve got an amazing memory; don’t let anybody tell you any different.’

² <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0100405/> (23.01.2012).

³ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0114924/> (23.01.2012).

[But I don't understand politics]
 [If everybody, who doesn't understand politics were to be sent to your special school, it
 would soon have to be enlarged]
 She wagged the bread knife in front of my nose. (PD, p. 120)

(15) Aber von Dieffe aus kann ich sogar allein zum *Förderzentrum* gehen (ROT, p. 30)
 But from Dieffe Street I can actually go to *school* by myself. (PD, p. 28)

(16) "Ich kann mir Adressen und dergleichen nicht behalten. Ich bin *tiefbegabt*".
 'I can't remember addresses and things like that. I'm a *child proddity*.'
 Felix kniff die Augen zusammen. *Er verstand das Wort nicht*. Es dauerte nur eine Sekunde, dann war der Kampf mit mir selbst ausgefochten und ich sprach *das verhasste andere Wort dafür* aus. "Behindert. Aber nur im Kopf und nur manchmal" fügte ich rasch hinzu. (ROT, pp. 147–148)
 Felix screwed his eyes together. He didn't *understand the word*. It only took a second for me to battle with myself and say *the other thing I hated*: 'I have *learning difficulties*. But only sometimes,' I added quickly. (PD, p. 139)

(17) Plötzlich hatte ich das schreckliche Gefühl, dass alle möglichen Menschen mich nur deshalb einigermaßen freundlich behandelten, weil sie mich für *behindert* hielten. In Wirklichkeit ging ich ihnen auf die Nerven, aber das sagt man einem *Spasti* natürlich nicht, damit er nicht losheult. (ROT, pp. 173–174)

Suddenly I had the terrible feeling that all kinds of people only treated me nicely *because they thought they should feel sorry for me*. (PD, p. 163) [In reality they find me annoying, but it's not what you would say to a *retard* ...]

(18) "Du *behinderter* kleiner *Schwach*-"
 "Unterbrechen Sie mich gefälligst nicht!" (ROT, p. 208)
 'You *stupid* little-'
 'Please don't interrupt me!' (PD, p. 197)

Förderzentrum is consequently removed from the TT. The British Rico goes to school or gets special classes. The German Rico learns how to deal with people offending him as *Spasti* or *Schwachkopf* [moron], calling him *behindert*. The German word *Spasti* [en. *spastic*] is an insulting name given to a mentally or physically handicapped person—en. *retard*]. The English Rico is not handicapped, and cannot be called retarded or spastic, he remains a "child proddity".

3.5 Mentions of Homosexuality

(19) "Das geht kleine Jungs nichts an."
 "Warum nicht?"
 "Weil's was mit großen Jungs zu tun hat."
 Dann eben nicht! Der sollte sich bloß nicht einbilden, ich hätte noch nie zwei Männer knutschen sehen oder dergleichen. (ROT, p. 144)
 'That's of no interest to little boys.'
 'Why not?'
 'Because it's got something to do with big boys.'
 [Then not! Does he think I have never seen two men snogging or something like that?]

There is one mention of homosexuality that seems to be normal to the protagonist. What might not be a taboo subject in Germany, is evidently a taboo in Great Britain, where such a mention was removed from the translation.

4 Conclusion

The purification measures undertaken in the book under analysis (UK Chicken House's edition, and in consequence the American Scholastic edition) are the result of pressure of the editor on the translator to fulfil expectations with respect to the pedagogic norms and avoidance of target culture taboos.

The interviewed translator of the book under analysis, Chantal Wright, recalls that after all the censorship of naughty passages, debates over names and places etc., the one thing that most Anglophone reviewers have commented upon negatively was the ALDI kidnapper and the whole discussion about him posting body parts back to parents should the parents not come up with the whole ransom. A lot of reviewers thought this was entirely unsuitable for the age group, but the translator did not recall the publisher ever being concerned about that. "It just goes to show that you can never tell what will offend people", states Wright.

The above listed profound changes of the ST hidden from the reader result from the publisher's concern about the reader and disregard the author, his intention and his dual readership in mind.

We have to realise that more and more children's books (as well as animated movies) address a dual audience of children and adults, which can present a double challenge to the translator, who must now address both audiences at the same time—the child-reader as the primary and the adult-reader as the secondary audience. The conscious decision of omission and transformation of unwelcome passages may contribute to the fact that adults will not feel addressed and therefore will not enjoy the story while reading it to their children. There is probably no overstatement in claiming that the preservation of both levels poses one of the greatest challenges in translation of children's literature.

One question remains unanswered, namely why publishing houses purchase the translation rights without the knowledge regarding the kind of text they are receiving. Perhaps if they were well-informed prior to the purchase, they would decide otherwise.

The blame for the status quo does not lie solely on Chicken House. It is probably also the fault of the German Carlsen Verlag, which gives only general information about the book, excluding, as was shown in the present paper, the extraordinarily important issues.

If we go back to Levý's definition of translation as a decision process, we will be reminded that "[f]rom the point of view of the working situation of the translator at any moment of his work translating is a *decision process*—a series of consecutive moves, as in a game—situations imposing on a translator the necessity of choosing among a certain (and very often exactly definable) number of alternatives" (Levý 1967, p. 1171).

Those “moves” can be referred to as translation transformations in the sense of Bednarczyk (2005), who understands them as conscious and intentional choices: “This means that in the optimal situation translator is well aware of what is being changed in the text of the translation compared to the original and what purpose does the change serve. It is therefore desirable to realise that transformation of a certain segment of the text often affects a larger fragment, or even the whole translation, and modification of a certain plane of a literary work may cause changes within other planes” (2005, p. 33, translation—A.U.).

The conclusion can be only that translation seen as a decision-making process should be understood as such, not only by the translator, who caught up in a struggle to conduct a faithful translation, is forced to give up his or her loyalty to the author and surrender to the editor/publisher instead.

Critics and readers of translated texts, aware of discrepancies between the original texts and their translations, should be more understanding to the translator and must bear in mind that the above mentioned choices belong not only to the translator, but above all to the editor and publisher.

Lefevere claimed a long time ago that “[t]ranslations or other refractions, then, play a vital role in the evolution of literatures, not only by introducing new texts, authors and devices, but also by introducing them in a certain way, as part of a wider design to try to influence that evolution” (1984, p. 97). “They [translators] make mistakes only on the linguistic level. The rest is strategy” (Lefevere 1984, p. 99).

References

Primary Sources

- Steinhöfel Andreas. 2008. *Rico, Oskar und die Tieferschatten*, Hamburg, (ROT).
Steinhöfel Andreas. 2010. *The Pasta Detectives* (translated by Chantal Wright), Frome, (PD).

Secondary Sources

- Adamczyk-Garbowska, M. 1988. *Polskie tłumaczenia angielskiej literatury dziecięcej* [Polish translations of English children’s literature]. Wrocław: Ossolineum.
Alvstad, C. 2003. Publishing strategies of translated children’s literature in Argentina: A combined approach. *Meta: Translators’ Journal* 48: 266–275.
Anderson, K. J. 2000. Children’s literature in English Translation. In *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation Into English 1–2*, ed. O. Classe, 276–278. London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publisher.
Beckett, S. L. 1999. *Transcending boundaries. Writing for a dual audience of children and adults*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.
Bednarczyk, A. 2005. *Wybory translatorskie. Modyfikacje tekstu literackiego w przekładzie i kontekst asocjacyjny* [Translator’s choices. Modifications of the literary text in the translation and the question of the associative context]. Łask: Leksem.

- Borodo, M. 2011. "The regime of the adult". Textual manipulations in translated, hybrid, and glocal texts for young readers. In *Language, culture and the dynamics of age*, eds. A. Duszak and U. Okulska, 329–348. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.
- Desmet, M. 2007. *Babysitting the reader. Translating English narrative fiction for Girls into Dutch (1946–1995)*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Fernández López, M. 2006. Translation studies in contemporary children's literature: A comparison of intercultural ideological factors. In *The translation of children's literature: a reader*, ed. G. Lathey, 41–53. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Gentzler, E., Tymoczko, M. 2002. Introduction. In *Translation and Power*, ed. M. Tymoczko, E. Gentzler, xi–xxiii. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Hejwowski K. 2007. *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu* [A cognitive-communicative theory of translation], Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- House, J. 2004. Linguistic aspects of the translation of children's books. In *Übersetzung-Translation-Traduction. An International Encyclopedia of Translation Studies 1*, eds. H. Kittel, A. P. Frank, N. Greiner, T. Hermans, W. Koller, J. Lambert with J. House, B. Schultze, 683–697. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.
- Klingberg, G. 1986. *Children's fiction in the hands of the translators*. Malmö, Libervörlag.
- Lathey, G. 2006. *The translation of children's literature: A reader*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Lefevere, A. 1984. That structure in the dialect of men interpreted. In *Comparative criticism*, ed. E. S. Shaffer, 6: 87–100. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lefevere, A. 1999. Composing the other. In *Post-colonial translation: theory and practice*, ed. S. Bassnett, H. Trivedi, 75–94. London and New York: Routledge.
- Levý, J. 1967. Translation as a decision process. In *To honour Roman Jakobson. Essays on the occasion of his seventieth birthday 11 October 1966*, vol. 2. 1171–1182. The Hague and Paris: Mouton.
- Lindgren, A. 1969. Traduire des livres d'enfant – est-ce possible? In *Babel* 15 (2): 98–100.
- Munday, J. 2008. *Introducing translation studies: theories and applications*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Oittinen, R. 2000. *Translating for children*. New York/London: Garland Publishing Inc.
- O'Sullivan, E. 2003. Narratology meets translation studies, or, the voice of the translator in children's literature. *Meta: Translators' Journal* 48 (1–2): 197–207.
- Puurinen, T. 1995. *Linguistic acceptability in translated children's literature*. Joensuu: University of Joensuu.
- Schreiber, M. 1993. *Übersetzung und Bearbeitung. Differenzierung und Abgrenzung des Übersetzungsbegriffs* [Translation and adaptation: on the differentiation and delimitation of the translation concept]. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Shavit, Z. 1986. *Poetics of children's literature*. Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press.
- Stolt, B. 2006. How Emil becomes Michael: on translation of children's books. In *The translation of children's literature: a reader*, ed. G. Lathey, 67–83, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Stolze, R. 2003. Translating for children – world view or pedagogics. *Meta: Translators' Journal* 48 (1–2): 208–221.
- Toury, G. 1995. *Descriptive Translation Studies – and beyond*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Urban, A. 2011a. *Unpublished interview with the translator Chantal Wright* (14.11.2011).
- Urban, A. 2011b. Deutsche Personennamen in englischer und polnischer Übersetzung [German proper names in English and Polish translation]. *Studia Linguistica* XXX: 175–183.
- Urban, A. 2012. Eigennamen und Titel in der Übersetzung der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur vor dem Hintergrund ihrer lokalisierenden Funktion [Proper names and titles in the translation of literature for children and young adults in the aspect of their localising function]. In *Studia Germanica Gedanensia* 26 (in press).
- West, M.I. 1996. Censorship. In *Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, ed. P. Hunt, 498–507.

Language in Cognition and Affect

Piechurska-Kuciel, E.; Szymańska-Czaplak, E. (Eds.)

2013, XX, 343 p. 21 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-642-35304-8