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# Translating Rwandan folktales into English: a culture-based analysis

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# CHAPTER TWO

# TRANSLATING FOR CHILDREN

## 2.0. Introduction

This chapter aims at discussing issues related to translating for children. In addition, it discusses folktales as a genre that is part of literature in general and one of the major components of children's literature in particular. I would like to begin with a short overview of children's literature because this is closely related to translating for children in the sense that translating for children involves either translating children's literature or translating any other type of literature and, therefore, making it their literature.

## 2.1. Children's literature

### 2.1.0. Definition

Oittinen (2000:61) defines children's literature as 'literature produced and intended for children or as literature read by children'. Hunt (1990: 1), however, says that the boundaries of children's literature are not clear-cut and that children's literature cannot be defined by textual characteristics either of style or content, while its primary audience is equally elusive. He adds that children's literature, as an outsider to the academic world, does not fit neatly into any of the established subject categories and has been positively snubbed by some of those categories**.** For him, children's literature is a species of literature which has mainly been defined in terms of reader rather than the author's intentions or the texts themselves.

For Klingberg, children's literature is literature produced specifically for children. This author excludes all other writing and pictures that children may read and specifies that a distinction should be made between literature read by children and literature produced for children. This is to mean that all that children read cannot be said to be part of children's literature (Oittinen, 2000: 61-2).

Defining literature from a sociological and psychological angle, Hellsing, a Swedish children's author, says that children's literature is anything the child reads or hears, covering anything from newspapers, series, TV shows, and radio presentations to what we call books. Taking this into account, children's literature could include not only literature produced for children but also literature produced by children themselves, as well as the oral tradition (Oittinen, 2000: 62).

From the discussion above, children's literature may be understood as literature meant for children. As such, it has its own characteristics and generally contains values which those who design it want it to convey.

Broadly speaking, children's literature has characteristics that make it part of literature as a whole. However, it does also have some elements that distinguish it from adult literature, despite the lack of consensus regarding what makes it different. Egoff (1981: 1) says that children's literature has two basic characteristics: it is writing for children (that is people up to early teens) and it is intended to be read as literature and not only for information and guidance. For Oittinen (2000: 4-5), children's literature is mainly characterised by the fact that children's books are often illustrated and often meant to be read aloud. To my mind, one can add to these the point that children's literature is characterised by the fact it is adapted to its audience and its audience's needs.

For children's literature to be appropriate and to fulfil the functions that it should fulfil in a child's development, it should be designed according to certain requirements. Norton (1987: 85-104) discusses some characteristics of children's literature with regard to plot, characterisation, setting, theme, style and point of view.

As far as plot (plan of action) in children's literature is concerned, Norton (1987: 85-6) says that children like a book (and hence a story) which has a good plot, characterised by action, excitement, some suspense and enough conflict to develop interest. A good plot is one which allows children to become involved in the action, feel the conflict developing, and recognise the climax when it occurs. Norton also says that children's expectations and enjoyment of conflict vary according to their ages. Young children like simple plots dealing with everyday happenings but as they grow older, they prefer more complex plots. Children, like adults, also like stories which have a good beginning that introduces the action and characters in an enticing way, a good middle section that develops the conflict, a recognisable climax, and an appropriate ending. In children's literature, events usually happen in chronological order.

Excitement in a story occurs when the main characters experience a struggle or overcome conflict, which is the usual source of plots in literature. Lukens (cited in Norton, 1987: 86) distinguishes four kinds of conflict: person-against-person, person-against-society, person-against-nature, and person-against-self. Usually, stories written for young children have

plots that develop one kind of conflict. However, older children enjoy stories which contain plots that use several conflicting situations.

As to characterisation, it should also be conceived of in such a way that it satisfies children's needs. It should make the story believable and enjoyable. To achieve this purpose, children's book writers should make the main characters seem lifelike and develop throughout the story. For Bond (cited in Norton, 1987: 90), children's literature usually contains three-dimensional characters, i.e. characters with pasts, futures, parents, siblings, hopes, fears, sorrows, and happiness, which the child reader may identify with and feel moved by the situation he is in.

As far as setting (location in time and place) is concerned, Norton (1987: 91) argues that it 'helps the reader to share what a story's characters see, smell, hear, and touch, as well as making characters' values, actions, and conflicts more understandable.' According to her (1987: 91-2),

> In some books, setting is such an important part of the story that the characters and plot cannot be developed without understanding time and place. In other stories, however, the setting provides only a background. In fact, some settings are so well known that just a few words place the reader immediately into the expected location. "Once upon a time", for example, is a mythical time in days of yore when it was possible for magical spells to transform princes into beasts or to change pumpkins into glittering carriages.

She goes on to say that details of the story should be accurate and both plot and characterisation should be consistent with what actually occurred or could have occurred at that time and place. It would sound quite absurd to tell a story in Rwanda set in the 18$^{th}$ century, for instance, in which a character is using a computer when it is known that Rwandan society, even the world, knew nothing about computers at that time.

As regards theme, i.e. the underlying idea that ties the plot, characterisation and setting together into a meaningful whole, writers of children's literature should make sure that it is worthwhile for children, by making sure that the content of their writings is in agreement with the values of the society in which the child reader lives. Most authors of children's books prefer to state a book's theme directly, rather than imply it, as is common in books for adults. In other words, they mention in plain words what they want to convey about life or society. As literature offers children an opportunity to identify with other people's

experiences and thus better understand their own process of growing up, the themes of many children's books involve the development of self-understanding (Norton, 1987: 95).

Concerning style, which is the way an author arranges words to create plots, settings, and characterisation, Norton (1987: 105) says that language should bring the characters to life, enhance plot development and create the mood of the setting. As to point of view, i.e. the viewpoint through which the author chooses to tell the story, the author can choose a first person point of view (telling the story through 'I"), an objective view point of view (letting actions speak for themselves: the author describes only the characters' actions, and the reader must infer the characters' thoughts and feelings), an omniscient point of view (telling the story in the third person) or a limited omniscient point of view (the author concentrating on the experience of one character, but having the option to be all-knowing about other characters) (Norton, 1987: 105). According to Norton (1987: 97), there is no preferred point of view for children's literature but an author's choice can affect how much children of certain ages believe and enjoy a story. Contemporary realistic fiction for children aged eight and older often use a first-person point of view or a limited omniscient point of view focusing on one child's experience. Finally, readability is another important characteristic of literature for children. Children's books should conform to children's reading levels so that they can read them independently and understand them.

All this amounts to the fact that children's interests should be taken into account when selecting and/or writing their literature. Those who write and those who select books for children should bear in mind that children should read the books they like. In addition, they should take into consideration values that children should learn through reading.

### 2.1.1. Values of Children's literature

Norton's (1987: 35) opinion, which I personally subscribe to, is that children's literature should be designed in a way that it opens doors to discovery and adventure for children. It can do this by providing enjoyment, transmitting literary heritage, encouraging understanding and valuing cultural heritage, and providing vicarious experiences. It should, moreover, transmit knowledge, nurture and expand the imagination, and stimulate development.

It is a worldwide view that the primary value of literature is pure pleasure. As adults sometimes read for the purpose of enjoyment, children should also be given the same

opportunity. There is nothing wrong in letting children read for the sake of enjoying what they read. Time spent while looking at beautiful pictures and imagining themselves in new places is enriched and not wasted because, in discovering enjoyment, children develop favourable attitudes towards those pictures and places and these attitudes usually extend into a lifetime of appreciation (Norton, 1987: 5).

The second value of literature is that it can serve the purpose of transmitting a society's literary heritage from one generation to another. New generations can certainly enjoy the words of preceding generations through reading what those generations have written. In that way, the literary heritage of a society can be preserved (Norton, 1987: 5).

The third value discussed by Norton (1987: 5) is that children's literature plays a role in helping the understanding and valuing of cultural heritage. By reading the literature set in their culture, children get to know more about their culture and this contributes to their social and personal development.

The fourth value of literature lies in the fact that children get to learn, through literature, about the experiences of people who lived before them. Because they learn how people who lived before them handled their problems, sharing experiences with characters in books can help them deal with the problems they face in their own lives.

Literature is also a source of information and this constitutes its fifth value. Books open doors to new knowledge and expand children's interests (Norton, 1987: 5). Related to this is its sixth value consisting of the role that literature plays in fostering and expanding the imagination. As children read, they think about what they read and by doing so, they expand their imagination. Books, as Norton (1987: 6) says, take children into imaginative worlds that stimulate additional creative experiences as children tell or write their own stories and interact with each other during creative drama inspired by what they have read. Pictures found in children's books also stimulate their aesthetic development.

Finally, children's literature stimulates language, cognitive, personality and social development. Children acquire their knowledge of language as they read. They can learn new elements of vocabulary, usage and grammatical structures. According to Mussen, Conger and Kagan (1979: 233-234), cognitive development refers to development related to processes involved in perception, memory, reasoning, reflection and insight. Reading also contributes to children's personality development in the sense that they relate their

experiences to the characters they read. They can identify with characters, understand their feelings, and gain insights into how others have dealt with problems (Engel, cited in Norton, 1987: 19). Literature may also contribute to children's emotional growth in the sense that it shows children that their feelings are both normal and natural and that they are shared by other people. In addition, they can learn about ways to deal with particular emotions through the actions of characters (Glazer, cited in Norton, 1987: 19). As to social development, children can, through reading, acquire behaviour, beliefs, standards and motives valued by their families and their cultural groups (Norton, 1987: 24). In this way, literature provides insights into the social behaviour and norms of the society they live in.

It is clear, from the above, that children's literature is different from adult literature. On the basis of the fact that children's experience is more limited than that of an adult, Egoff (1981: 2) argues that their literature cannot claim the stature of that for the literate and knowing adult. She goes on, however, to say that it differs only from adult literature in that its audience imposes the necessity for certain techniques and emphases: the paring down of characterisation, the condensation of plot and incident, a faster pace, minimal description, and a basically straightforward story line – all in all, a less intricate web of plot, character and style. This does not, nevertheless, prevent it from being a literature of its own and playing the role that literature in general plays in a society.

### 2.1.2. Folktales as part of children's literature

There is a great variety of books that children can and do read. These normally vary according to a child's age. Two or three-year-old children, even younger children, are normally exposed to short picture-books, small books of poems and nursery rhymes, and simple nonfiction books that present basic and elementary concepts. These are the kind of books that shape a child's listening and looking in his earliest childhood. They also shape his sense of language, his taste in listening and later in reading, his ideas about books and what they contain, his sense of poetry and rhythm, and his approach to learning. As the child grows, it will proceed to longer books according to its age and reading level. Children's books include fiction, nonfiction, poetry and drama, while fiction specifically includes adventure stories and mystery and fantasy stories (Karl, 1970: 12-17).

Fiction seems to constitute the greatest share of these books. However, children, especially those who have reached schooling age, also read nonfiction books. These concentrate on

subject areas such as social studies, maths and science, arts, history, geography and so forth. Most of these are books that are used at school. Biographies are another important kind of book that forms a child's core reading (Karl, 1970: 18-21). All these kinds of book are important and each contributes to a child's development in its own way. I will not discuss the role that each kind of book plays but it is worth saying a word on the importance of fiction, to which the genre under study belongs. As Karl (1970: 18) says, fiction contributes to children's development in the sense that it helps them gain experience by taking them to other countries, other aspects of society, other times in history. It can help them face their own problems, as mentioned previously, in the light of the problems and solutions of characters that they are exposed to.

Folktales are probably one of the genres of stories that children read most. The importance of folktales as reading material for children can be looked at on the basis of the pleasure that children take in them. This is because folktales have fast-paced and dramatic plots and easily identifiable good and bad characters.

Favat's (cited in Norton, 1987: 208) research has identified four main reasons for the pleasure children derive from folk literature. These are:

> First, children believe that objects, actions, thoughts, and words can exercise magical influence over events in their own lives. Folktales are filled with such occurrences, as spells turn humans into animals, or vice versa, and humble pumpkins become gilded coaches.
>
> Second, children believe that inanimate objects and animals have consciousness much like that of humans. The objects and animals in folktales that speak or act like people are consistent with children's beliefs.
>
> Third, young children believe in punishment for wrongdoing and reward for good behaviour. Folktales satisfy children's sense of justice …
>
> Fourth, the relationship between heroes and heroines and their environments is much the same as the relationship between children and their own environment: children are the center of their universes: heroes and heroines are the center of their folktale worlds.

The importance of folktales can be considered in terms of the role that they play in children's development as well. Folktales teach children what is proper and moral. They put the stamp of approval upon certain values held by the group and thus cement it together with a common code of behaviour (Arbuthnot, 1964: 255). From a content-based point of

view, folktales also have some characteristics that make children favour them. First, as Norton (1987: 209-211) suggests, folktale characters are less developed, have a limited range of personal characteristics and do not change in the course of the story. The conflict and action are also introduced at the very beginning of the story and the line of the story is straightforward. In addition, folktales contain universal truths and reflect the traditional values of the people telling them. All these make it easy for children to follow and grasp the meaning of the folktale easily and this increases their interest in folktales.

### 2.2. Translating for children

Translating offers a lot of challenges of different kinds, whether translating for adults or for children. Moreover, it is not always easy to define a clear boundary between the problems of translating a book for children and a book for adults (Klingberg, 1986: 10). Generally speaking, translating for children offers the same challenges as translating for adults and the methods used to solve translation problems encountered when translating for adults are also used when translating for children. To solve them when translating for children, the translator should, from a personal point of view, bear in mind, among other things, the objectives of translating for children.

#### 2.2.1. Translating for children: Objectives

Children's literature has a particular purpose that should be carried on in its translation. Klingberg (1986: 10) distinguishes two main aims of translating children's literature. These are to make more literature available to children and to further the international outlook and understanding of the young readers. He also says that there are two pedagogical reasons that can cause the revision of the original text in order to suit it to the children's needs. The first is to give the readers a text that is within the level of their understanding and the second is to give the readers a text that contributes to the development of the readers' set of values.

Because of these specific aims of, and reasons for, translating for children, particular challenges arise when the translator embarks on translating children's literature. For that reason, he needs to use specific methods to overcome such challenges. Before looking at challenges presented by translating for children and the methods applied when translating for children, let us have a general look at methods used in translation.

### 2.2.2. Methods of translation

To overcome translation problems, translators use different methods and/or techniques. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995: 31) distinguish two broad methods, namely direct translation and oblique translation, each of which comprises a set of methods. Direct translation is the method used when it is possible to transpose the source language message element by element into the target language because it is based on either parallel categories or on parallel concepts. Oblique translation is the method that is used when there are gaps between the SL and TL and certain stylistic effects cannot be transposed. Direct translation comprises three methods, namely borrowing, calque and literal translation, while oblique translation consists of four methods, namely transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation.

Borrowing is a method of translation that consists in taking a foreign word from the SL and using it in the TL. As Hervey and Higgins (1992:31) put it, a SL word or expression is transferred into the TT verbatim. This is used in order to overcome a lacuna, usually a metalinguistic one, for instance a new technical process or an unknown concept (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995: 31). Because borrowing is used to solve a cultural gap, Hervey and Higgins (1992:31) call it "cultural borrowing". Calque is, according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995: 32), 'a special kind of borrowing whereby a language borrows an expression form of another, but then translates literally each of its elements.' It may be a lexical calque (one that respects the syntactic structure of the TL) or structural calque (one that introduces a new construction into the TL). In this case, the expression consists of TL words and respects TL syntax but is unidiomatic in the TL because it is modelled on the structure of a SL expression (Hervey and Higgins, 1992:33). Literal, or word-for-word, translation is the method used when it is possible to transfer directly the SL text into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate TL text without having recourse to any oblique methods. All that the translator has to do is to observe the adherence to the linguistic servitudes of the TL.

Transposition is the method that consists in replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of message. As to modulation, it is a method of translation that consists in the variation of the form of the message, obtained by a change of view. Modulation can be resorted to when, although a literal, or even transposed, translation results in a grammatically correct utterance, it is considered unsuitable, unidiomatic or

awkward in the TL (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995: 36). Changing a negative into an affirmative or a passive into an active and vice versa are examples of modulation. The third oblique translation method discussed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995: 38), namely equivalence, is the method that is used when the same situation is rendered by two texts using completely different stylistic and structural methods. It consists, actually, in rendering an expression used in a ST situation by its equivalent in the TL situation. This method is the common method used in translating fixed expressions like proverbs, clichés, idioms, and so on (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995: 38). As to the fourth method, namely adaptation, it is the method used when the type of situation referred to by the SL message is unknown in the TL culture. Translators are required to create a new situation that can be considered as being equivalent. According to these authors (1995: 38), adaptation can be characterised as a special kind of equivalence, a situational equivalence (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995: 39).

Hervey and Higgins (1992) also discuss techniques used to deal with translation losses and come up with two techniques that they term 'compromise' and 'compensation'. To my mind, these techniques are particularly useful to solve linguistic problems.

Compromise means, for Hervey and Higgins (1992:34), "reconciling oneself to the fact that, while one would like to do full justice to the 'richness of the ST, one's final TT inevitably suffers from various translation losses.' Sometimes, the translator finds it necessary to allow these losses unhesitatingly. Some properties of the ST may be sacrificed in order to give priority to others. These authors illustrate this by giving an example where a translator of prose may sacrifice the phonic and prosodic properties of a ST in order to make its literal meaning perfectly clear while a translator of verse may sacrifice much of the ST's literal meaning in order to achieve desired metric and phonic effects.

Hervey and Higgins (1992) hold the view that compromise is a technique that can be used in translation and prove its merit in the following terms:

> Compromise should be the result of *deliberate* decisions taken in the light not only of what latitudes are allowed by the SL and TL respectively, but also of all the factors that can play a determining role in translation: the nature of the ST, its relationship to the SL audiences, the purpose of the TT, its putative audience, and so forth. (Hervey and Higgins, 1992:34).

With regard to compensation, Hervey and Higgins (1992:35) argue that it consists in 'techniques of making up for the loss of important ST features through replicating ST effects approximately in the TT by means other than those used in the ST.' They then distinguish four types of compensation: compensation in kind, compensation in place, compensation by merging and compensation by splitting.

Compensation in kind refers to making up for one type of textual effect in the ST by another type in the TT. Compensation in kind may be used, for instance, to settle the differences between French and English narrative tenses. Concerning compensation in place, it consists in making up for the loss of a particular effect found at a given place in the ST by recreating a corresponding effect at an earlier or later place in the TT. For instance, an untranslatable pun in the ST may be compensated for by means of a pun on another word at a different place in the TT (Hervey and Higgins 1992:37). As for compensation by merging, it is concerned with condensing ST features carried over a relatively long stretch of text into a relatively short stretch of the TT. What is expressed in many words is thus rendered in fewer words (Hervey and Higgins, 1992:38). And finally, compensation by splitting is the technique that is the opposite of compensation by merging. It, thus, consists in translating one SL word by using two or more words or a short SL expression by means of a longer TL expression. Compensation by splitting can be used, for instance, in cases where there is no single TL word that covers the same range of meaning as a given ST word (Hervey and Higgins, 1992:39).

As can be seen, these methods can be used to solve translation problems whether one is translating for adults or for children. However, translating for children has some particularities, which give rise to particular challenges.

### 2.2.3. Translating for children: Challenges

The problems involved in the translation of children's literature are especially related to the fact that children's literature is produced with a special regard to the interests, needs, reactions, knowledge and reading ability of the child reader and the purpose of such literature.

When translating children's literature, one should, therefore, bear in mind the fact that one is translating for a particular audience and for a particular purpose. In addition, children are special readers. Everyone's reading ability depends on the level of development he has

achieved because, as Spink says, 'to be able to read, we need to go through several stages of development: physical, intellectual, emotional, social, moral, spiritual, and those concerning personality and language' (Oittinen, 2000: 16). Spink goes on to point that the reader reception is affected by factors like 'our reading skills and background, experience, and associations; our response to the imagined persona of the author, title, cover, illustrations; our past experience of the author's other books; time and situations and several others' (Oittinen, 2000: 16).

Certainly, these factors vary from one reader to another, which means that people are not able to read, and hence understand what they read, in the same way. The reader's understanding depends on a combination of the abovementioned factors. Children, in particular, can be said to be special readers because of their limited experience. Children lack some of the knowledge that adult readers have because they have not yet gone through all the stages of development. That is why what they read, be it in their mother tongue or be it a translation, should be tailored accordingly.

In order to produce a translation, like a text in the source language, that is appropriate for children, one should bear in mind that one is translating a kind of literature that has its own characteristics, for special readers and for a special purpose. The translator needs, therefore, to make use of certain special methods.

### 2.2.4. Methods of translating for children

In my opinion, the factor 'child as reader' and the purpose of translating should be given priority over anything else while translating for children. Translators should, therefore, adapt the source text and produce a translation that deserves to be part of children's literature, satisfies the child reader's needs and fulfils the given purpose. Klingberg (1986) argues that adaptation can be used as a particular method of translating for children.

For Klingberg (1986: 14), adaptation means in general 'the rendering of an expression in the source language by way of an expression in the target language which has a similar function in that language.' According to the same author (1986: 11), adapting for children consists in considering their supposed interests, needs, reactions, knowledge, reading ability and tailoring the literature intended to them accordingly. Shavit (cited in Oittinen, 2000: 86) identifies two main reasons for adapting for children: 'adjusting the text in order to make it appropriate and useful to the child, in accordance with what society thinks is

'good for the child'" and "adjusting plot, characterisation and language to the child's level of comprehension and his reading abilities.' Klingberg (1986) discusses five kinds of adapting for children. These are cultural context adaptation, language adaptation, modernisation, purification and abridgment.

### ❖ Cultural context adaptation

When translating for children, some elements of cultural context may not be as familiar to the readers of the target text as to the readers of the source text. If the translator does nothing about this, the target text may be difficult or less interesting to its readers. There are many concepts that are likely to drive the translator to resort to cultural context adaptation in this type of situation. Klingberg (1986:17-8) identifies ten of them. These are:

- literary references;
- foreign languages in the source text;
- references to mythology and popular belief;
- historical, religious and political background;
- buildings and home furnishings, food;
- customs and practices, play and games;
- flora and fauna;
- personal names, titles, names of domestic animals, names of objects;
- geographical names;

and

- weights and measures.

Adaptation consists in accommodating the source text to the reader. This is similar to the translation method that is called 'domestication' which is 'an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home' (Venuti, 1995: 20). According to Klingberg (1986: 18), cultural context adaptation can be achieved by means of the following:

- Added explanation (the cultural element is retained but a short explanation is added within the text).
- Rewording (what the source text says is expressed but without using the cultural element).
- Explanatory translation (by means of the function or use of the cultural element rather than using the foreign name for it).
- Explanation outside the text (explanation by means of a footnote, a preface or the like).
- Substitution of an equivalent in the culture of the target language
- Substitution of a rough equivalent in the culture of the target language
- Simplification (a more general concept is used instead of a specific one)
- Deletion (words or parts of sentences are omitted).
- Localisation (the cultural setting of the source text is made closer to the readers of the target text).

However, translating for children should not aim only at domesticating. Depending on the reason for translating for children, the translator may choose to take the reader to the foreign text. This is the translation method which called 'foreignisation', referred to by Venuti (1995: 20) as 'an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad.' This is, in Oittinen's (2000:89-90) terms,

> a means of retaining all the information in the original – like names, places and so forth – as it is. Thus, the translator emphasises that the story is really situated in a foreign country, in a foreign culture, letting the child readers learn new things about new cultures, educating the children about international themes.

### ❖ Language adaptation

As far as language adaptation is concerned, Klingberg (1986: 63) puts forward the argument that the author of children's literature may limit the vocabulary, use short sentences and prefer verbs to nouns, and avoid metaphors in order to adapt the capacities of the intended readers.

However, the translator may find this degree of adaptation not appropriate to his target readership. He may, then, in my opinion, find it necessary to readapt it. In other circumstances, the translator may be called upon to translate for children a text that, for some reason or another, has zero degree of language adaptation. This may be the case if the text was not, for instance, originally intended for children. In this case, he has then to adapt the language to the level of the child reader.

### ❖ Modernisation

In some instances, certain situations require modernisation. This strategy consists, according to Klingberg (1986: 56), in refreshing classics, using new expressions instead of old ones and even introducing modern objects and ideas. Details in the setting can also be changed to more recent ones and the time in the source text may be moved nearer to the date of the publication of the target text. This is not, however, typical of translation only. The same changes may be effected when new editions are published in the original language.

Modernisation can be essential particularly when translating for children, especially if the aim of translating is domestication. For instance, when translating a Rwandan folktale, it may be necessary to replace the old traditional home (which was round and of which the walls and roof were all made of sticks and covered by grass, and of which the parts that served as modern rooms had special names) by a new ordinary home (which is either rectangular or square, made of bricks and with a roof covered by tiles or iron sheets and divided into rooms with modern names) because it may be very difficult for a child to have a true picture of what that old traditional house looked like. This may, of course, depend on the purpose of translating. If one wants the child to learn the old ways of life, one may opt for leaving the source text as it is.

### ❖ Purification

As for purification, Klingberg (1986: 58) argues that the aim of purification is to get the target text to correspond to the set of values of its readers – or rather in correspondence with the supposed set of values of those who feel themselves responsible for the upbringing of the child reader. This relates to the above-mentioned idea that children's literature should contribute to the child's development. What does not seem proper in the

eyes of the translator will be purified and adapted to what is judged appropriate for the intended reader.

However, purification seems to be contrary to the goal of furthering the reader's international outlook and understanding (Klingberg, 1986: 58). By purifying the content passed on to the child reader, the translator finds himself preventing him from learning about the ways of life of other societies. What is considered to be a positive value in one society is not necessarily so in another. In addition, purification may leave the child reader with the impression that all societies have the same values or that the values that it is exposed to are the only ones that exist.

- **Abridgment**

As Klingberg (1986: 73) points out, there is a long tradition of shortened editions in the history of children's literature. They are mostly abridgements of works originally published for adults but there also exist shortenings of texts originally intended for children.

Translators may also find it necessary to produce shortened versions when they are translating for children. The main purpose for abridgement should be to provide the child reader with reading material of a reasonable length. Abridging goes, of course, along with some changes to content, form and even language.

### 2.3. Folktale as a text: Basics of text analysis

Text analysis is an important stage in the process of translation. Before undertaking the translation of a text, the translator must make sure that he understands it fully. The best way to understand it is to carry out an analysis. Different scholars have developed different models of text analysis. These include Nord (1991), Hatim and Mason (1997), among others. Although these models may differ, they have a similar aim: to provide the translator with a tool that may help him to understand the text before translating it. In this section, I want to discuss the basics of text analysis according to Nord's model of text analysis.

According to Nord (1991: 1) the translator should analyse the text comprehensively before embarking upon any translation. Text analysis ensures 'full comprehension and correct interpretation of the text and the explanations of its linguistic and textual structures and

their relationship with the system and norms of the source language.' Text analysis 'should also provide a reliable foundation for each and every decision which the translator has to make in a particular translation process' (Nord, 1991: 1).

Nord' s (1991: 36) model of text analysis is expressed in the set of WH-Questions that follow:

- who transmits,
- to whom,
- what for,
- by which medium,
- where,
- when,
- why,
- with what function,
- on what subject matter,
- what (what not),
- in what order,
- in which words,
- using which non-verbal elements,
- in which words,
- in what kind of sentences,
- in which tone

  and

- to what effect.

❖ **Who?**

Nord's question 'who' relates to either the text sender or the text producer. For Nord (1991: 43), 'the text sender is the person (or institution, etc.) who uses the text in order to convey a certain message to somebody else and/or to produce a certain effect' and 'the text producer is the person who actually produces the text according to the sender's instructions, and complies with the rules and norms of text production valid in the respective language and culture.' The sender and producer may be combined in one

persona (if the sender uses a text written by himself) or they may be two different personae (in case the sender uses a text written by someone else) (Nord, 1991:42).

Information about text sender/producer may be obtained by means of clues like imprints, blurbs, preface, epilogue, footnotes, and so forth. Other sources of information about the sender may be the sender or producer himself or the text itself. The translator needs to find information about the text sender and/or text producer because his personality, social role, status, and so on may influence the production of the text and be reflected in the text (Nord, 1991: 45-6). By knowing the sender or producer, the translator also comes to know his intention and the function of the text.

- **To Whom**

'To whom' refers to the text recipient or audience. When the sender or producer issues or writes a text, this text is intended for a certain audience and is normally produced according to the audience's needs and expectations. The translator should also know both the recipient of the source text and target text, who may be the same or different. In particular, he should take into account the audience of the translation he has to produce.

Nord (1991: 52) distinguishes two kinds of audience: addressee and chance recipient. The addressee is the person or persons addressed by the sender while the chance recipient is the person who happens to read or hear the text, even if they are not addressed directly.

Information about the recipients includes their age, sex, education, social background, geographic region, social status, role with respect to the sender, and so on. (Nord, 1991: 53). These are very important for the translator because they help him produce a translation which is in accordance with the recipients' needs and expectations.

- **What for?**

Concerning 'what for' question, it relates to the sender's intention, which is defined from the sender's viewpoint. In sending a text to his recipient, the sender wants to achieve a certain purpose (Nord, 1991: 47). For Nord (1991: 49), the intentions of communicating correspond, in normal communication, with the basic functions of communication. The text sender wants either to inform the recipient about something (referential intention), to tell something about himself and his attitudes towards things (expressive intention), to

persuade the recipient (operative function) or just to establish or maintain contact with the recipient (phatic intention). The information about the sender is of considerable importance to the translator because it determines the structuring of the text with regard to content and form (Nord, 1991: 48).

- **By which medium?**

By the question 'by which medium', the text analyser is interested in knowing whether the text was transmitted in a face-to-face communication or in writing. Medium refers to means or vehicle that conveys the text to the sender (Nord, 1991: 56).

As Nord (1991: 56) points out, the means of transmission determines how the information should be presented in respect of level of explicitness, arrangement of arguments, choice of sentence types, features of cohesion, use of non-verbal elements such as facial expressions and gestures and so on. The medium is very important because it affects not only the conditions of reception but also those of production. This is because spoken language is different from written language. As an example of the difference between face-to-face communication and written communication, Halliday and Hasan (in Nord, 1991: 57) say:

> in face-to-face communication, deictic expressions, such as *here*, *by my side*, or *today*, or expressions referring to the participants of communication, such as *I*, *all of us,* or *as the speaker before me correctly remarked*, are unambiguous. However, in a written text, they can only be decoded correctly in connection with the information on time, place, sender, recipients etc. given in the text itself or in the text environment, such as page, imprint, introduction lead, etc.

- **Where?**

The place of communication is also important in text analysis. In connection with the question 'where', Nord (1991: 60) distinguishes between the place of text production and the place of text reception. The place has some influence on the text because the text is produced in a given culture and culture influences the source text to a large extent. In fact, the source text reflects the culture in which it is produced.

The dimension of space is of particular importance where languages exist in various geographical varieties. The place of production may provide a pre-signal for the variety used in the ST and it determines the variety the translator has to use in his translation.

However, the translator who tries to find information about the place of production should not consider only linguistic aspects. He should also pay attention to cultural and political conditions because these exert influence on both the text and the text producer, who may express what he wants to express accordingly (Nord, 1991: 61-2).

- **When?**

With the question 'when', Nord (1991) refers to the time of communication. The dimension of time is important in text analysis because, as Nord (1991: 63) points out, every language is subject to constant changes in its use and its norms. The period in which a text is produced is an important pre-signal for the historical state of linguistic developments the text represents and may help the translator to understand the source text better. The dimension of time may also throw some light on the communicative background of the sender and the recipient, and thus provide a clue to understanding the sender's intention (Nord, 1991: 64).

- **Why?**

The question 'why' concerns the motive of communication, that is, the reason for text production or writing. The dimension of motive does not only apply to the reason why a text has been produced. It applies to the occasion for which it has been produced as well. For instance, a wedding announcement is made because someone is getting married. Getting married is the reason for the production of the announcement. However, if someone writes a poem because he has fallen in love or because his grandfather's is celebrating his birthday, this is the occasion for the production of the poem (Nord, 1991: 67).

According to Nord (1991: 68), some motives are conventionally linked to certain text types or media. On certain occasions, therefore, it becomes necessary to produce a text of a certain type and/or in a particular medium to transmit it. The motive is, therefore, the event that has motivated a certain text.

The motive is of much interest in text analysis because the translator has to contrast the motive for source text production with the motive for target text production and find out the impact this contrast has on the transfer decisions. While the motive for ST production can be found in the 'environment' of the sender or text producer, the motive for TT

production can be inferred from what is known about the transfer situation, i.e. the initiator or translating instructions he gives to the translator (Nord, 1991: 69).

### ❖ With what function?

As Nord (1991: 70) puts it, the text function means the communicative function or the combination of communicative functions, which a text fulfils in its concrete situation of production/reception. Following Bühler and Jakobson's models, she distinguishes between four main functions of communication, namely:

> (a) the referential (also denotative or cognitive) function, focussed on the referent or context referred to boy the text, (b) the expressive or emotive function, focussed on the sender, his emotions, and his attitudes towards the referent, (c) the operative (also appelative, conative, persuasive or vocative) function, focussed on the orientation ot the text towards the recipient, and (d) the phatic function, serving primarily "to establish, to prolong, or to discontinue communication between sender and recipient, to check whether the channel works, to attract the attention of the interlocutor or to confirm his continued attention" ( Nord, 1991: 42).

Text function is a crucial factor in most approaches to translation-oriented text analysis. Nord (1991: 73) distinguishes three possibilities with regard to transferring the ST function. First, the ST function can be preserved. In this case, the TT function is the same as the ST function. Second, the ST functions can be adapted if they cannot be realised as such by the TT recipient. The translator should, however, see to that the TT functions are compatible with the ST functions. The third possibility consists in achieving a homologous effect by reproducing in the TC literary context the function the ST has in its own SC literary context.

### ❖ On what subject matter?

The subject matter is what the text is about, or what the sender talk about. Reiss (in Nord, 1991: 85) points out that there is a convention that the subject matter has to be indicated in the title or in some other part of the text.

Information about the subject matter can be found in the title. If the information about the subject matter is not given by the title or heading or title context (main title or subtitles), the subject matter can be formulated in an introductory lead, as is very often the case, for

instance, in newspaper articles, or in the first sentence or paragraph which can then be regarded as a kind of topic sentence. If the subject matter is not described in the elements mentioned above, it can be elicited by from the text by making a kind of summary (Nord, 1991: 86-7).

### ❖ What (what not)?

The question 'what' refers to the content of the text to be analysed. For Nord (1991: 90), content means 'the reference of the text to objects and phenomena in an extralinguistic reality, which could easily be a fictitious world as the real world.' It is usually expressed by the semantic information contained in the lexical and grammatical structures. According to Nord (1991: 90), the analysis of content starts from the analysis of information carried by the text elements linked on the surface of the text by the text-linguistic linking devices, such as logical connections, theme-rheme relationships, functional sentence perspective and so on. It can also be done by considering linking devices which appear in a text, such as anaphora, cataphora, substitutions and repetition of some elements or patterns.

As to 'what not', this refers to presuppositions, that is what the speaker or writer takes for granted that the hearer or reader knows. Presuppositions comprise all the information that the sender expects to be part of the recipient's 'horizon' (Nord, 1991: 96).

As presuppositions are not verbalised, they cannot be spotted in the text. To find them, the translator has to ascertain which culture or world the text refers to. Translators should take into account the cultural environment. Nord (1991: 98) elaborates on this environment in the following terms:

> If the ST is linked to the world of the source culture, some information on this world is usually presupposed in the text because of the convention that 'trivialities' should not be verbalised. If, on the other hand, the ST refers to the world of the TT recipient, which cannot be assumed to be familiar, it would seem logical for the ST producer to verbalise a certain amount of information for the ST recipient which would seem trivial to the TT recipient.

She goes on to say that, in either case above, 'the translator will adjust the level of explicitness to the general background knowledge of the intended TT recipient'. But 'if the ST refers to a world that is equally 'distant' to both the ST and TT recipient, it is less probable that translation will arise from the contrast of ST and TT presuppositions.' In this

case, as Koller (cited in Nord, 1991: 98) puts it, the subject matter in the ST can be considered as 'generally communicable' or 'transculturally communicable'.

### ❖ In what order?

This question relates, according to Nord (1991:100), to text composition. For Thiel (cited in Nord, 1991: 100-101), the text has an informational macrostructure (composition and order of the information units) consisting of a number of microstructures. The macro and microstructure of the text are important aspects of a translation-oriented text analysis for a number of reasons: the segments of a text made up of different text segments may require different translation strategies according to their different functions; the detailed analysis of the beginning and end of a text can help to find out how they guide the reception process and influence the effect of the whole text; their analysis can help to obtain information about the text type and function since there are some culture-specific conventions as to them; and their analysis may help find out the basic information or subject matter in very complex or incoherent text (Nord, 1991: 101). Macrostructures consist of embedded or sub-texts and in-texts. These are parts that constitute the texts as a whole. Unlike macrostructures, microstructures consist of different parts of a sentence.

One of the crucial aspects in the analysis of macrostructure is the identification of sub-texts or in-texts embedded in the source text. Embedded text or sub-text could be a metacommunicative sentence like 'A says' and in-texts could include quotations, footnotes and examples. These fulfil some functions and the translator should find out which function each sub-text or in-text fulfils (Nord, 1991: 102).

As to the analysis of microstructures, this is concerned with the analysis of the text at the level of a sentence. Sentences can be analysed in terms of theme-rheme structure. The theme refers to that part of information presented in a sentence or clause which can be inferred from the context (given information) while the rheme is the non-inferrable part of the information (non-given information). (Nord, 1991: 104).

As the theme-rheme structure is realised in different ways by different languages and bear meaning, the analysis of microstructures is also important in translation-oriented text analysis. Macrostructures are marked by means of syntax structures (main/subordinate clauses, tenses, voice etc) or lexical devices (e.g. cataphora) and by suprasegmental features (e.g. focus structures, punctuation and so on.) (Nord, 1991: 107).

### ❖ Using which non-verbal elements?

According to Nord (1991: 108), non-verbal elements refer to elements that can be used to supplement, illustrate, disambiguate or intensify the message of the text. They include paralinguistic elements of face-to-face communication (e.g. facial expressions, gestures, voice quality) as well as non-linguistic elements belonging to written text (e.g. photos, illustrations, emblems, special types of print). These are opposed to Nord 'suprasegmental features' such as intonational features and pauses, and the graphical devices that perform analogous functions in written communication (punctuation, capitalisation, italicisation and so on.). Furthermore, she distinguishes between non-verbal elements accompanying the text (layout and gestures) from those used to supplement the text (statistical tables, drawings, diagrams and so on.), those that make up an independent text part (pictures of a comic strip) and those that replace certain text elements (e.g. the * that can be used instead of a taboo word) (Nord, 1991: 108).

It is clear of course that these non-verbal elements differ according to the medium of communication. In face-to-face communication, the speaker can use gestures of the face and the body. Leonard (cited in Nord, 1991: 109) distinguishes between gestures used involuntarily by the speaker to express his feelings and those used intentionally with a specific meaning. Involuntary gestures constitute a universal phenomenon, which, apart from differences in temperament and certain culture-specific conventions, are common to all the peoples of the world whereas intentional gestures vary from culture to culture and a gesture may mean differently in two different cultures.

Often used in face-to-face communication, mimical expressions or gestures cannot, however, be used in written communication. They can, instead, be compensated for by means of suprasegmental features like punctuation, bold type etc. or by means of non-verbal elements like pictures, etc. (Nord, 1991: 109). Once used, these elements should thus be interpreted correctly and translated and that is why they should be taken into account at the stage of text analysis. The translator has to find out which of the non-verbal elements can be preserved in translation and which have to be adapted to the norms and conventions of the target culture. He should, in particular, be aware that these non-verbal elements are culture-specific. As examples, a logo or name intended to have a positive connonation in the source culture may be associated with a negative value in the target culture, the target culture conventions may not allow the graphic representation of a certain

piece of information or the target culture text-type norms may require non-verbal instead of verbal representation or vice-versa, etc. (Nord, 1991: 110-111).

### ❖ In which words?

By addressing the question 'in which words?', the translator who analyses a text seeks to find out the kind of words used and their impact on conveying the meaning of a text. As Nord (1991: 112) says, the choice of words in a particular text depends on both extratextual and intratextual factors.

With regard to intratextual determinants of lexic, Nord (1991: 112) says that

> The selection of lexical items is largely determined by the dimensions of subject matter and content. Depending on the subject matter, certain semantic fields will be represented by more items than others, and the textual connection of 'keys words' will constitute isotopic chains throughout the text.

She goes on to say that 'morphological aspects (suffixes, prefixes, compositions, acronyms, etc.), collocations, idioms, figurative use (metonymy, metaphor), etc. have to be analysed from the point of view of textual semantics.'

As to extratextual determinants of lexic, Nord (1991: 112) argues that the extratextual factors not only set the frame of reference for the selection of words, but they are themselves often—directly or indirectly—mentioned in the text. By considering extratextual factors, the translator seeks to find information about a number of questions. First, he aims at finding out whether or not the expectations deriving from the external information and clues as to the general character of the sender (time, geographical and social origin, education, status, etc.) or his particular position regarding the analysed text are verified by the text. Secondly, his purpose is to find out whether the author himself is mentioned in the text as sender, in which case the use of the first person, of expressions like 'in my opinion' or 'to my mind' gives the reader the impression that the sender is addressing him directly (Nord, 1991: 112-113).

The analysis of various lexical items in a text often shows that a particular stylistic feature is characteristic of the whole. If the translation skopos requires the preservation of such features, individual decisions have to be subordinated to this purpose and the translator has to plan strategies with this purpose in mind, looking for stylistic means which serve to achieve this purpose in the target language and culture (Nord, 1991: 114).

Other factors influencing the choice of lexical items include the medium that mainly influences the level of style of lexical elements (colloquial, formal), word formation (e.g. 'economic' words used in telexes), the motive or occasion for communication (e.g. a funeral address), text function, etc. These must be taken into account in translation-oriented analysis so as to identify the meaning they convey in the source text, and see how it should be rendered in the target text (Nord, 1991: 115- 117).

### ❖ In what kind of sentences?

The formal, functional and stylistic aspects of sentence structure are important factors in approaches to translation-related text analysis. As a matter of fact, a number of scholars have discussed some relevant features like the construction and complexity of sentences, the distribution of main and subordinate clauses in the text, the length of sentences, the use of functional sentence perspective and the cohesive linking devices on the text surface (Nord, 1991: 118).

The analysis of sentence structure helps the translator, according to Nord (1991: 118), have information about the characteristics of the subject matter (simple or complex), the text composition (order of informational details for instance), and the suprasegmental features and some syntactic figures may indicate presuppositions. It can also yield information as to the aspects of intention, the medium and the text function.

### ❖ In which tone?

The question 'in which tone?' is concerned with the suprasegmental features of a text, defined by Nord (1991: 120) as 'those features of text organisation which overlap the boundaries of any lexical or syntactical segments, sentences, and paragraphs, framing the phonological 'gestalt' or specific 'tone' of the text. Nord adds that the framing of a text depends on the medium by which the text is transmitted. Suprasegmental features are signalled, in written texts, by optical means, such as italics, bold type, quotation marks while they are signalled, in spoken texts, by acoustic means such as tonicity, modulation, variations in pitch and loudness.

These suprasegmental features are thus signalled in spoken texts by means of prosody, intonation and stress. Then the question that arises is in connection with how these are manifested in written texts. With regard to this, Nord (1991:120-1) argues that even written

texts can also be assumed to have a 'phonological' gestalt, which becomes evident to the careful reader and gives him further information about the intention of the sender and other factors. She goes on to say that the phonological organisation of a written texts are represented by means of the selection of particular words, word order, onomatopoeia, certain features of typeface etc. (Nord, 1991: 124). It is clear that the analysis of these is very important in translation-oriented text analysis because they yield information about the meaning of the text.

### ❖ To what effect?

Nord's question 'to what effect' is regarded as a recipient-oriented category. This is in connection with the fact that the recipient receives the meaning of the text against the background of his expectations deriving from his analysis of the situational factors and from his background knowledge. 'Effect' is defined as the impression –conscious or unconscious– that the text recipient gets from the comparison between the intratextual features of the text with the expectations built up externally (Nord, 1991: 130).

For Nord (1991: 130-1), the effect of a text on the recipient is the result of the communicative process. Both interlocutors are affected by this result in a dialogue but the effect works on the recipient only in a unidirectional process of communication. This effect makes him change his social relationship towards the sender, his level of knowledge or his emotional state and even his future actions may be influenced by his reception of the text. The meaning of effect can also be extended to include the medium or long-term consequences that the reception of the text will have on the reader.

The effect of a text is determined by both extratextual and intratextual factors and both can play a part in producing text effect. Nord (1991: 131) discusses three most important relationships between the factors that are possible in a communication process. These are the relationship between intention and the text, between the recipient and the text-world, and between recipient and style.

Concerning the relationship between the intention and the text, Nord (1991.: 131-2) points out that the intention of the sender is one of the most important factors in the text effect and says that the intention is a teleological anticipation of the effect. By considering the effect as the purpose he wants to achieve, the sender or text producer will orient the intratextual elements he is going to use in the text towards the intended effect.

As to the relationship between the recipient and the text-world, Nord (1991: 132) says that it lies in the recipient's comparison between the representation of the text-world, that is the section of the extralinguistic 'world' which is verbalised in the text and his expectation, which is determined by his knowledge, his horizon, and his 'mood' (referring to medium,

time, place, and occasion which make the recipient susceptible or insensitive to the particular effects of a text).

As far as this relationship is concerned, Nord (1991: 133) argues that the choice of the subject matter and the content (informational details and presuppositions) can be used to achieve a certain effect on the reader. For instance, a subject that is normally taboo might shock the recipient while a popular subject might please him; a report about a political event relating positive will produce an effect which is different from that produced by a report relating negative details; and the greater the amount of knowledge presupposed by the sender, the more he can produce a that can help him achieve his purpose.

Regarding the relationship between the recipient and the style, Nord (1991: 134) holds the view that the choice of the intratextual means of expression depends on the anticipation of the effect. The effect-producing qualities of a text are assigned to certain stylistic principles or instruments of rhetoric. The text producer can use these to achieve the effect he wants his text to have on the reader/recipient.

As can be seen, this model of text analysis provides information about the author or sender of the text, the sender's intention, the addressee, the channel used to communicate, the place and time, the motive for communication and the function of the text. In addition, it allows the translator to acquire information about the subject matter, the content of the text, the knowledge presuppositions made by the author, the composition of the text, the non-linguistic elements of communication accompanying the text, the lexical characteristics, syntactic structures found in the text, the suprasegmental features of intonation, stress and prosody and finally the effect that a text has on the recipient. As far as translation is concerned, the analysis of a text by means of this model allows for the full comprehension of the text and hence ensures its best translation.

### 2.4. Translating folktales

Like any other texts, folktales must be analysed before being translated. In addition to the above elements that can serve as the basis for their analysis, it should be borne in mind that they have their own characteristics, as discussed previously, which make them different from other kinds of texts.

Like the translation of other types of texts, the translation of folktales follows some principles, depending on many factors. These factors include, of course, many of those identified by Nord's in her model of translation-oriented analysis of the text to be translated like the producer, the sender, the sender's intention, the function of the folktale, the intended effect, and so on. In addition, it should be borne in mind, in particular, that folktales are a special genre of folklore that is deeply rooted in the culture producing them and the culture-specific elements should be given due attention. They can be analysed, therefore, from a cultural point of view and that is my task in the next chapter.

