

CULTURAL CONTEXT ADAPTATION OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE:

A CASE STUDY OF *THE JOINING*

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Abstract

This research report is concerned with translation in which culture plays a major role, and examines the issues involved in translating for a specific audience – in this case Arabic-speaking Moslem children in Egypt. Translation is firstly discussed in a broader context, demonstrating that translation needs to be understood either as “rewriting” or “cultural textualisation” (Snell-Hornby, 1997:123). Secondly, the translation of children’s literature is discussed as a type of translation operating through an encounter with both culture and linguistics. Overlaps between language and culture are located and the importance of contextual adaptation is emphasised in relation to solutions proposed for addressing the cultural problems raised in the translation of Peter Slingsby’s *The Joining* for Egyptian children. In conclusion, suggestions are made concerning translation as adaptation in the form of possible guidelines for future translators of children’s literature into Arabic.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Translation at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

SULEIMAN SALAMA

Johannesburg, 2nd October 2006

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my entire family, to whom I will be forever
grateful for their patience and love.

Acknowledgements

To Doctors Inggs and Meintjes,

To my family members, who made a lot of sacrifices while I was at school, working on my Masters programme.

To all those whose names have not been mentioned here, I say a thousand thanks. Your help was greatly appreciated.

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Introduction

Aim

The overall aim in this work is to *identify* the *problems* that can occur in the Arabic translation of children's literature from English and to increase the awareness of the Arabic translator (as a negotiator of cultural differences) concerning these problems. The research also aims to suggest certain strategies to deal with such problems. The focus is on the Arabic translation of a South African youth novel, *The Joining*, by Peter Slingsby, published in 1996. Although Egyptian society is quite diverse, the target audience for the purpose of this research report is a conservative segment of the Moslem population.

In view of the above aims, issues related to translation across cultures are discussed, in addition to translation processes, which are often complicated by differences in language and culture. Since there is no pre-existing Arabic translation of the novel examined, the analysis is facilitated by carrying out my own translation of selected passages in order to achieve the above aims. For every translation of a segment of *The Joining*, there will be a back-translation into English.

Rationale

Since 1994, South Africa has transformed from an isolated state into an Afro-modernist democratic state in the world history. The fundamental transformation that has taken place in South Africa is highly visible in recent novels and children's books with their various representations of the country after the apartheid era. These novels and books for children are of importance for world-history because they embody values such as state-nation formation, multiple identity, and the valorisation of indigenous languages. *The Joining* (1996) is in many ways representative of this period. This novel portrays children of different races who come together on a camp (Jeremy, a white boy, Christina, a Coloured girl and a set of Xhosa twins, a boy, Phumzile and a girl, Sitheli) (See Inggs 1999:47). The experience of these South African children in many respects mirrors those of Egyptian children today. Egyptian children live in a society ethnically divided through history. Egypt, with its mixture of races (Egyptians, Arabs, Berber, Nubians and other immigrants from Europe) has been a good example to the world as children of different races go to the same schools and eat and play together without discrimination. The

‘common identity’ that this novel speaks about reflects what already exists in Egypt. Exposure to a novel of this kind translated into Arabic would enable the target audience to identify with their peers from South Africa.

In addition to this transformation, South Africa and its varied rich cultures serve as an inspiration to all Africa. Since literature can be considered as a window into the soul of transformation, translation provides a means of access for other cultures into this ‘soul’. This research work in particular is a study of one ‘point of access’ to a South African work through its translation into Arabic. Highlighting the problems inherent in this cross-cultural exchange as well as the need to find solutions to the problems that any translation across cultures poses will make an important contribution to the field of Arabic translation in particular as well as to translation in general.

Literature review

Over the years, oral literature has been the vehicle through which culture and folklore is passed on from one generation to another. In the Arabic world, most children are familiar with the Strange Tales of the Arabian Nights (Galland, 1870). With the passage of time, more writers have focused their energies on producing books especially for children (Mdallal, 2004: 9). This has come with the realisation that children have their own way of viewing the world and the events that are happening in it (Weinreich, 1978: 147). With the need for children’s books has come the need for translation as well as thought on how children’s books should be translated.

Klingberg’s (1986) *Children’s Fiction in the Hands of the Translators* is a major contribution to the study of the translation of children’s literature. In his book, he questions “how children’s books are actually being translated and how they should be translated” (Klingberg, 1986:7). He deals with books of literary merit, which in translation mean a valuable addition to the literature of the children composing the target audience. For Klingberg practical problems in this transaction process must be acknowledged. Therefore, a systematic treatment of the different problems which occur in translation and how they can be solved is of interest to publishers and educators as well as to translators. In his findings, Klingberg makes two important comments – relating to the pedagogical goals - which necessitate a revision of the original children’s book in

translation. The author argues that one of the aims of children's literature is to give the readers a text they can understand. However, since young readers can be assumed to have less knowledge of the foreign culture represented in the novel than their adult counterparts, the translator is tempted or forced to change or delete text more extensively in a children's book than in a book for adults for the purpose of comprehension. Another pedagogical goal is to contribute to the development of the readers' set of values. This means that when the translator encounters such values in the original that he does not deem appropriate to pass on to the target readers, he may be of the opinion that he should delete or change them (Klingberg, 1986:10). According to Klingberg it is often the case that there are cultural elements embedded in the source text (ST) which are not familiar to the target audience. If the translator does not make allowance for this, the degree of adaptation of the target text (TT) will be minimal. The target text will then be difficult to understand, or perhaps less interesting to its readers than the original ST was to the original readers. Thus the translator may make a relatively extensive adaptation for the new audience. Such an adaptation is what Klingberg calls "*cultural context adaptation*" (Klingberg, 1986:11-12).

Klingberg's ideas point to the fact that we need not only to understand literature and translation as practised in the West, but also to understand it as it is practised in other cultures. Although globalisation is a well established reality, most people still cling to their own world view and would more easily relate to the realities that they know best. So in order to translate a text from one culture to another, there is a need to select from a number of possible strategies. In short, the norms of the culture for which the target text is intended must always be taken into account if the translation is to be deemed a success in that culture (Zlateva, in Lefevere, et al. 1990:10-12) . If you are translating a book for children in a country like Egypt and you have to mention a game of cricket, there has to be some amount of reflection on how you are going to do that. You might have to change the game to soccer, which is a more popular sport in Egypt. If you insist on retaining the reference to cricket, you might have to make use of footnotes to educate your audience on what you want them to understand about the game of cricket.

The translator is a mediator and as such, he has to find a balance between the source language culture and the target language culture. Hermans (1985: 11) has argued that "all

translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose”. A translation can never read as a transparent piece of writing, or as an exact reflection of the original text. It is accompanied by either a deliberate or inadvertent influence on the writing by the translator.

There are several ways in which a translator can influence a translation. The first, as we have mentioned above, is the cultural. Then there is the pedagogic influence, featuring the translator as educator. Stolt (1978: 133) cautions that children are not childish minds that cannot comprehend complex arguments and emotions (1978: 145). According to her, translating a book with the express intention of correcting it so as to educate the target audience is not the right approach (1978: 133). However, the translator may decide to be impartial or didactic depending on his upbringing, education, and beliefs.

Several approaches to the translation of literature in general, and children’s literature in particular, have been suggested by translation theorists. Venuti (1995: 20) argues that a translation may be domesticated or foreignised (Venuti, 1995: 20). However, the translator needs to tread carefully. Nord (1997: 45) warns that adapting a book to reflect local realities does not mean that we should replace foreign items with local ones in all instances. Sometimes, children read books that leave a lasting impression on them. Such books are important in bringing the peoples of the world closer together. Children have to discover new heroes and new ideas that are different from the ones with which they are familiar (Bussewitz, 1978: 55). That is why Birgit Stolt cautions that when a translator is adapting a book to suit the needs of the local context, he has to be careful:

Where adaptation is absolutely necessary, it should be done with a gentle hand, as little as possible and in collaboration with the author. (1978: 145)

The end result of a translation should be a work that is understood and liked by children. This can be achieved if children are aided by the translator (Stolt 1978: 132)

Outline of chapters

The first chapter deals with general concepts in the translation of children’s literature. The question of the importance of translating children’s books and how children’s books

“should” be translated is explored, together with issues such as adults’ attitudes towards children’s literature, language and culture. Although there is a great shift towards a world in which people eat the same food, watch the same television programmes and wear the same clothes, there are also signs that some sections of the global society still prefer to hold on to the things that define us as Christian, Moslem or agnostic. I consider notions like *globalisation* and *culture*, to show how people view things differently and how someone’s language may influence the way they think.

The focus of Chapter 2 - *Children’s Literature in the Arab world* - is the role and function of children’s literature in the Arab world (including Egypt). The parameters for consideration in this chapter are factors such as the history of children’s literature in Egypt and the notion of childhood in this society as opposed to other societies. These parameters are based on the premise that writing for children, as for any other group, arises from particular cultural and historical contexts. This section of the study also describes ideologies underlying Egyptian children’s literature in order to establish why any translation of a children’s book in this world needs adaptation to preserve and maintain the human values that this community embodies.

The chapter begins with a discussion of children’s literature in the Arab world. It continues with a description of oral tradition and written and published literature for children. The focus then moves to themes and topics in Egyptian literature and foreign language books and translations in Egyptian literature.

The third chapter sets out the theoretical framework and methodology of the research report, while the fourth chapter contains the main body of the research. It begins with a synopsis of the novel. I then analyse selected passages of the novel and their translations into Arabic.

The translation problems posed by the novel are identified and possible solutions provided to suit the cultural context of the audience. Despite the identification of problems and their suggested solutions, this section does not claim to constitute an exhaustive account of all the problems faced by an Arabic translator in the translation of English texts into Arabic, but opens the way to more debate on the topic.

The concluding chapter provides some suggestions about translation as a process of adaptation drawing together the findings of the research and commenting on the strategies that may be adopted by future translators of children's literature into Arabic.

CHAPTER ONE

The translation of children's literature

This chapter discusses different aspects of translation in relation to children's literature, particularly the relationship between language and culture, and the ways in which 'adaptation' can be applied to the translation of children's books. The role of adaptation when translating for Egyptian children is then considered in more detail. Using selected examples, certain aspects of literary translation are examined in order to identify where a situational or functional perspective may help to solve problems of translation from English into Arabic.

Children live in a world of their own. They do not have the same world view as adults; they see things from a different perspective. In an essay entitled *International Book Production for Children Related to the Children's Local Experiences and Local Consciousness*, Torbin Weinreich (1978) mentions two different kinds of experiences that a child has when he/she reads a book: primary experiences and secondary experiences:

Primary experiences are those which the child himself has had. They are based on the child's own experiences and are subsequently built into and have an influence on the total idea-world of the child...secondary experiences are those which the child has mainly had through media such as TV, cartoon trips, and books. (Weinrich, 1978: 147)

When a child is born, it begins or goes on a learning curve that will last a lifetime. Ideas and realities are expressed according to the existing vocabulary of the child. This reflects in the kind of books and motion pictures that are destined for children. Movies like *Ice Age*, *Wallace and Gromit*, *The Wild*, *Madagascar* and *Stuart Little* are enjoyed by children all over the world. The vocabulary in these movies makes them easy to understand. However, this does not mean that children are dummies! They are human beings and are imbued with the same emotions that adults have. A child who experiences *hate* knows what it is even it does not know the word *hate* or *hatred* in a given language. Therefore it would be wrong to assume that children do not have the capacity to

understand certain concepts because of their age. In Stolt's article, *How Emil Becomes Michel - On The Translation of Children's Books*, Astrid Lindgren is quoted as saying that "children have the ability to re-experience the most alien and distant things and circumstances, if a good translator is there to help them, and I believe that their imagination continues to build where the translator can go no further" (Stolt 1998: 133)

At the same time, writers of children's literature are also often not respected while their work is considered to be "second class" (Stolt, 1978: 133). This prejudice is transferred to the translators of children's books. This is an unfortunate situation because history has shown that children's books are not the result of a haphazard exercise. Books such as *Gulliver's Travels*, although often thought of as children's books, have also been enjoyed by adults throughout the centuries. An increase in research in the area of children's writing would lead to a greater "respect for children, respect for children's books...and respect for the author of children's books" (Stolt, 1978: 145). Because children are the future and because they have a mind of their own, it is important that they get books that are written in languages that they understand and which reflect realities that they can relate to. Like adults, they understand other peoples' cultures by comparing them to their own.

1.1 Language and Culture

Culture plays an important part in every human being's life. It shapes our very existence and defines who we are. According to the online *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, culture can be defined as:

...behaviour particular to homo sapiens, together with material objects used as an integral part of this behaviour. Thus culture includes language, codes, knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs ...and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society
(<http://www.britannica.com/>)

In this definition, 'behaviour' is central. This means that culture is a way of life. The definition also mentions 'material objects', and this aspect is equally important. So books are definitely culture, and if we are talking about children's books, we are also talking

about the culture of a particular country. People hold their land, their way of life and the objects around them very close to their hearts.

One recent example of the importance that people attach to culture can be found in the recent spate of unrest which was sparked when the editor of a Danish newspaper decided to publish cartoons of the prophet Mohamed (peace be upon him). The entire Moslem world was unanimous in the condemnation of the newspaper in question. Moslem countries boycotted Danish products and their anger boiled to the extent that they even went as far as burning Danish flags in several countries.

Today, there is a certain drift towards a centralised way of thinking, a world in which everyone speaks the same language and has the same habits. This is what David Katan refers to as McDonaldisation (2004: 31). You can walk into the local McDonalds in Bahrain or Beijing or Bloemfontein and order a 'Big Mac'.

Culture is the spectrum through which one sees the world. It is not something that one downloads into one's psyche over a twenty four hour period. It comes over time, from the day one is born. The onus usually falls on the parents to show their children how their predecessors lived. So it would be normal, for example, for every Scottish person to know the legend of the Loch Ness Monster because it is a story that is passed on from generation to generation.

Belief systems differ from country to country. The importance that people place on any given concept also differs from place to place. However, in most countries in the world, parents would generally want their children to do things the same way that they did them. Such ideas and habits may be passed on to the next generation consciously or unconsciously:

Every society has a system of conceptions which is normally shared by the majority of people in the country. You know more or less what is wrong and what is right. Parents bring up their children in accordance with this system of conceptions, but they are not necessarily aware that they are bringing up their children in such a system of conceptions. (Weinreich, 1978: 157)

Literature can play an important part in teaching children the ways of the elders and the forefathers of the land. This means that it is important for the translator to pay particular attention to his job because he could be influencing a whole generation of people. His words need to be well chosen because language is also a vector of culture.

Over the years, linguists have researched the relationship between language and culture. They are generally unanimous that there is a link between language and culture and that we see the world according to the language we grow up speaking. This theory is known as 'linguistic determinism.' O'Neil (2006: 1) agrees that "language is more than just a means of communication...it influences our culture and even our thought processes. Our countries and environments of origin influence the way in which we live and act". He continues by giving the example of the Tiv people of Nigeria who have only one name (pupu) for green, blue, grey and brown and one word (nyian) for brown, red and yellow. He also mentions that American men make far fewer colour distinctions than American women.

Research in the area of language, culture and thought started with Wilhelm von Humboldt's "Weltanschauung" hypothesis (<http://venus.va.com.au/suggestion/sapir.html>) According to Humboldt, thought was not possible without language, and language completely determined thought. On the other side of the ocean, in America, Edward Sapir and his student, Benjamin Lee Whorf came up with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. This hypothesis has two versions: the strong version and the weak version (Katan, 2004: 102). According to the strong version, language actually determines the way in which the language user thinks, while the weak version posits that language is one of the factors influencing our understanding of reality (Katan, 2004: 102).

The strong and the weak versions have a converging point: this is the fact that language affects thought and the way we see the world, be it totally or partially. This can easily be noticed when people are speaking. It is easier for an Egyptian child to relate to concepts like 'sand dunes' and 'sand storms' than snow and igloos. This is because he or she is growing up in a world where there is no snow.

A translator needs to take all these things into consideration when he is translating. A first-language speaker of Arabic would definitely know what children in the Arabic world are used to. He would incorporate these realities into his work to some extent. Someone who is not a native language speaker would at least have a working knowledge of the Arabic culture, and both types of translators would probably modify their translation to suit the receiving culture.

1.2 The translator as mediator

The translator usually has to make decisions according to the brief for a particular assignment. However, when he begins his work, he may well include concepts that are not in the brief. We have seen above how language can be a vector of culture. So even if the translator makes an effort to be as neutral as possible, there will still be evidence of his own education, childhood and cultural background in his work. Rather than adopt a middle-of-the-road approach in which he neither moves towards the source text culture or the target text culture, the translator has to decide to which side he should swing. He has to decide whether to tilt his work towards the source text culture or towards the target text culture. Stolt (1978: 131) illustrates this point by quoting Schleiermacher's famous dictum which goes thus:

Either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the author towards him.

In his work, the translator has to adapt to local realities, so that his work can blend in to the local system. I am going to look at adaptation again in Chapter 4 below. But first, I must define several concepts that are used in this research report, concepts that the translator has to make use of in the mediation process.

1.2.1 Domestication

The word *domestication* comes from the word *domestic*, which in turn comes from the Latin word *domus*. In translation, this refers to the modification of a text to suit the needs of the local target community. A Christian would definitely not select a book which preaches agnostic ways for his child. Similarly, a Moslem would not buy his child a book which teaches beliefs that are against those of Islam. Such a book would negate his work of bringing up the child according to the ways of Islam.

Domestication has been used for different reasons by different people over the years. In communist Germany, for example, it was used to make books acceptable for local children, as Becker (1978: 40) explains in the passage below:

The German translations differ from their respective original texts by virtue of the prettifying and harmonisation in the area of inter-action child/adult, the emphasizing of sex specific role stereotypes...German children's literature translators thus not only convey foreign images and information, but subject these intensively to the filter of the specifically "German ideology".

During the days of communism, it was important to avoid "Americanisation" by adapting texts to reflect the ideology of the receiving country. Nowadays, the Cold War has ended; however, people still feel a great need to hold on to their ways and beliefs.

Some scholars, such as Venuti (1995: 20) believe that a translated text should reflect the fact that it is a translation. In his essay *Neoclassicism and Enlightenment* (2000: 55) Venuti says that seventeenth and eighteenth century translators made sure that their translations read fluently, as if they had been written by someone from that cultural environment:

Translation strategies were rarely wedded to a programme for preserving the foreignness of the foreign text. On the contrary, they were guided primarily by domestic values that were assuming cultural dominance.

Venuti gives the example of translators in the past who did everything possible to make foreign texts recognisable, and even "splendidly English" (2000: 55). This approach has been used in many children's books. In Germany for example, "Pinocchio" has been

transformed into a local story in the “Kasperl Bucher” (Bamburger, 1978: 25). Venuti, however, generally favours a more ‘foreignising’ approach.

1.2.2. Foreignisation

Foreignisation on the other hand relates to the foreign aspect in a book, or what makes the book stand out from similar books or realities in the local language. *Foreignisation* comes from *foreign*, which means *different, them, ‘unlike us’*. When translating a text, there are usually two tensions: one leaning towards the source language culture and the other leaning towards the target language culture. Foreignisation gives more importance to what makes a book exotic or what it can do to show a child another world-view, different from the one he is used to.

Foreignisation is not just a matter of chance; it is born of a deliberate decision by the translator:

The “foreign” in foreignising translation is not a transparent representation of an essence that resides in the foreign text and is valuable in itself, but a strategic construction whose value is contingent on the current target-language situation. (Venuti, 1995: 20)

Foreignisation has been hailed as important by some translators. It helps the child to “break through the shore of the original and breathe in foreign air” (Stolt, 1978: 141). It also gives them a feel of another culture (Ivanova, 1978: 82).

The two concepts (foreignisation and domestication) are very important in the translation of literature. We will use the two terms when we look at how to adapt a South African novel for Egyptian children (see Chapter 4).

1.2.3. Purification

To purify something means to make it pure, to remove the imperfections or contaminations. Klingberg (1978: 86) defines *purification* in translation as:

Modifications and abbreviations aimed at getting the target text in correspondence with the values of the presumptive readers, or - as regards children's books - rather with the values, or the supposed values, of adults, for example, of parents.

Purification would remove what a translator deems to be offensive or incomprehensible in the target culture, in order to ensure the positive reception of his translation. The translator has to worry about how his book is going to be received in the target language culture by both the end-users of the work (children) and the literary critics of the community in question.

1.2.4 Faithfulness

This is translation which insists on respect for the source text. In this type of translation, the translator has to keep as close to the source text as possible. According to Jiri Levy, faithfulness is "the exactitude in reproduction by the translator" (Stolt, 1978: 131).

1.2.5 Adaptation

The word adaptation can mean many different things. It has different forms and degrees depending on the kind of writing one is dealing with. These cannot all be covered within the scope of this work but an attempt is made to show how one particular South African children's book can be adapted into Arabic.

Let us look briefly at some examples, which are analysed in more detail in Chapter 4:

i) Use of culture - specific words

Some of the words used in the novel are bound to the South African context or culture. These words would be unfamiliar to the target readers and therefore inaccessible to them. Examples of such words are: *Aub//gaa*, *Gau*, *Gau-aib*, *Uub*, *Xam*, *hamba*, *n!ore*, *n/um*, *Quena*, *!Xo*, *shaman*, etc. (Slingsby, 1996: 106, 156). When translating such words, the translator needs to make sure that the target readers - Egyptian children - are provided with a good translation that will enable them to understand these cultural differences. One

of the things he can do is either to provide a footnote, or an explanation in the text. For example, ‘shaman’, which is a technical word used in religious studies, needs to appear as in the text but with some explanation attached to it. Another technique would be to provide a glossary that could be included in the Arabic version as provided by Slingsby in the original. Such techniques may help promote an understanding of cultures.

ii) Idioms and fixed collocations

The following expressions from the text all sound idiomatic:

You guys are really deep in it (Slingsby, 1996:149)

“The bat-eared fox knows all, sees all, through its ears,” Wali said as he worked.
(Slingsby, 1996:149)

That is how you are, Je-re-mie. You are a listener and a thinker (Slingsby, 1996:111).

Always being “girlie-girlie”; Christina used to live with an uncle who...*hurt* her”
(Slingsby, 1996:115)

The main problem posed by idiomatic expressions in translation is the transfer of their meaning into other languages. According to Baker, the more difficult an expression is to understand and the less sense it makes in a given context, the more likely a translator will recognise it is an idiom (1992:65). However, it should be noted that some of these idioms sound more like euphemisms, other more like metaphors. That is why for their translation different strategies may be used, for example, a paraphrase, an equivalent idiom, a superordinate or a literal translation.

iii) Names

The area where the text requires considerable adaptation or domestication is where the writer uses names: proper, geographical and names of objects. Names are very important in literary texts. As Schogt posits “names are created by authors and many heterogeneous factors may determine their choice” (Schogt, 1988:74). Therefore, we suggest that religious names like *Christina* and *Jeremy* should be rendered in their appropriate Arabic forms (e.g. *Kristina*, *Jirmy* in Arabic). This is confirmed by Klingberg, (1996:47) who

also suggests that “if names of a primary language are known in the target language, the forms of the latter language have to be used” (Klingberg, 1996:47). In contrast, names like Sitheli and Phumzile (the latter meaning ‘you have given me a rest’ from the verb *phumla* ‘to rest’) can be kept in the original forms, but adapted to Arabic phonetics (Setaly, Fonzely). But some of these need to be adapted i.e. changed into Moslem names to create a balance with the Christian ones. Geographical names like *Gauteng*, *Khayelitsha* need not be changed but should, in my view, become more explanatory. For example, “Province of *Gauteng*”, “Town of *Khayelitsha*”, etc., to give to the child reader an exact idea of what the names refer to.

iv) Taboo words

Significantly, the writer portrays Christina as a ‘sex object’. It is said that her uncle has been *hurting* her constantly. The hidden meaning behind this verb is that her uncle had been raping/abusing the young girl. In fact, he had become her ‘husband’ while she had become his ‘wife’ (despite her being his niece and a very young girl) through a bitter and humiliating experience. The writer uses a strategy of purification to neutralize the power of this event. According to Klingberg, this type of adaptation can be used to modify or play down an event to minimize a child’s shock. He argues that it is used when “there could be different opinions in different cultures of how frightening a scene children can put up with” (Klingberg, 1996:59). This novel uses the technique of purification to some extent through the word *hurt* instead of *rape*. Given the taboo subject of sex in the Egyptian culture, the Arabic translator must find ways to render *hurt* by another Arabic phrase to avoid cultural shock.

As in most societies, Egyptian culture does not allow boys and girls to sleep together. We are told that:

[...]he hadn’t wanted to let Phumzile and Sitheli share a tent (at sleeping time) even though they were twin brother and sister.” (Slingsby, 1996:2).

Moslem culture similarly does not allow boys and girls to sleep together. So, it is advisable for the translator to render it simply as “*the boys went to their tent and the girls went to theirs to sleep.*”

Moreover, statements such as: “ *I need to go to the toilet,*” *Christina announced ...Christina reappeared looking flustered “ I am finished”* (Slingsby, 1996:19) may cause some shock for the child reader if translated as they are. The writer used the term “announced” which means that she spoke openly with no shyness. We are told that Christina went even further discussing with Phumzile the material that she is going to use to clean herself. Afterwards, she also announces:“*I am finished*”, thus drawing the attention of the old man. In Egyptian culture this action is particularly private, especially for ladies. When they are in the company of men they must never make such a statement. They may not make such direct references to these actions because of their modesty and chastity and it is an offence to speak about it. Egyptian women will always find their own way to sort matters out among themselves without involving men. A possible alternative is “*I want to go out for a while*”. The translator is likely to render the statement in this way.

The following example where Phumzile mentions skin colour as one aspect of racism also illustrates also the more problematic area of having to make decisions in the target language along dimensions which are not explicitly stated in the source text. For, instance, we are told that:

Phumzile had told him (Jeremy) that he did not think that Rick liked him much, and maybe it was because he was black ... (The Joining p3)

This information may not help Egyptian children because there is no racism, segregation or anything similar in Egyptian culture. There is no difference between black and white, because children grow up together. But to help them understand the history of South Africa and the apartheid system, one might have to use footnotes to explain what happened in the apartheid system.

The Joining on page 106 Sitheli says: “*Shut up,*” When Phumzile laughs at her, but this kind of statement is not acceptable in Egyptian culture because it is seen as an insult and can cause problems between people. To translate it, we need to use a phrase such as the following: “please, leave me alone,” “please don’t irritate me” “please stay away from me”.

In one part of the novel there is a description of a naked part of the body. The Joining on page 107, we read that:

When they returned Wali showed them what he had done to Sitheli. Neatly painted upon her chest in pale blue paint was a picture of a hanging crow and the word Sitheli.

This is a serious translation problem as boys or unmarried males are not allowed to touch the body of a girl-woman. But in this paragraph we find that Wali painted and wrote on Sitheli's chest, which means that he spent more time touching her chest – one of the sensitive parts of the woman's body. Such a passage could be rendered as:

Wali painted a board or animal skin in a pale blue and drew a picture of a hanging crown and wrote Sitheli's name on it, then he gave it to Sitheli to hang over her chest.

As one can see, translation by paraphrase, abridgment and substitution are some of the strategies which can be successfully used in this work to purify the text. A strategy such as purification is appropriate for preserving and observing the values specific to a particular culture.

Taboo subjects are inconceivable as topics for children's literature in the Islamic world, not because such problems are alien to Islamic societies, but because it is believed that talking openly about such problems in children's literature is far more harmful than beneficial, and it is also believed that children should be spared such problems.

1.3. Conclusion

It is in this context that the Arabic translator will face some cultural problems which naturally will require cultural adaptation for the target readers. Today, there are many changes going on in the world. With a laptop or a desktop plus an Internet connection, a child can have access to everything he or she wants, from pornography to information on

how to commit suicide. Such information is just a click away. And on television, there is a daily dose of violence and American music videos. There is a certain tendency towards generalisation and seeing things from the point of view of America. In a world dominated by characters like *The Tasmanian Devil*, *Daffy Duck* and *Winnie The Pooh*, it is important to have other approaches to writing, a view on things which moves away from Americanisation. Children in the Arab world need to have other options. They need to read books that view the world in the same way they do.

It is therefore important that we show in this work how to adapt a text to an Arabic context. This is in the interest of future Arabic translators who would have some guidelines to follow when translating children's literature for an Arabic audience. The next chapter looks in more detail at the traditions relating to children's literature in the Arab world in order to provide a further context for the analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

Children's literature in the Arab World

The aim of this chapter is to examine the literature available for children and young people in the Arab world and identify the specific characteristics of Arab children's literature in comparison to English language children's literature. This literature is valuable to the youth because it promotes the culture and traditional heritage of the Arab people, and gives young people and children information about current developments in their societies.

Due to the lack of research on children's literature in the Arab World, this section draws on Mdallel (2004) article on *The Sociology of Children's Literature in the Arab World*, without strictly focusing on Egypt, although Egypt will be referred to from time to time. The reason for this is that children's literature in Egypt is similar to the literature in the other Arab countries such as Tunisia and Algeria. These countries have a great deal in common, particularly as they share the same religion (Islam) and a number of customs and traditions. As Arab children's literature has its origins in oral literature, the chapter begins with a description of this literature and then moves on to discuss written literature, and ideology in relation to this literature.

2.1. Oral tradition in the Arab world

For many years, Egyptian indigenous culture has been passed on from one generation to another through oral narratives. Telling children's stories has always been, and still is, considered important. These oral narratives drew their material from the society in which they were composed and performed. They came from a very rich history of Egyptian gods and pharaohs. Through storytelling children adopted values that informed their literature. These values were passed on from generation to generation and from children to children.

Oral literature was valued as one of the major means by which societies educated, instructed and socialised their younger members. From its many genres, young people learnt to assess the feelings of their people towards their neighbours and their attitude

towards each other, whether it was hostile, tolerant, aggressive or friendly and neighbourly. Thus oral literature acted as a means of educating young people in order to maintain order in society.

Historical, economical, moral and social issues of all types together with aesthetic appreciation and other cultural values were embodied in a people's folklore of which literature formed a major part. Oral literature as an indigenous literature projected an image of society and gave a clear picture of the world inhabited by that society and how it was interpreted by them.

Children in ancient Egypt learned not only from folktales, but also from proverbs, riddles, folksongs, rhymes and other aspects of oral literature. In all these genres, we find moral messages, wisdom and the philosophy or outlook on life of each tribe. So, besides promoting mental development, oral literature was also entertaining. Moreover, it provided this entertainment for both adults and children.

The situation has not changed that much even today. The traditions of various ethnic groups in Egypt are still used in constructing authentic Egyptian (children's) literature, in efforts to preserve and protect tradition and the oral heritage. To this end there has been a general trend towards printing and publishing oral stories. As such, oral literature ensures the perpetuation of Arab culture. However, today, storytelling does not have the same effect it had in the past where the storyteller would, for instance, manipulate the tales to suit the needs of the tribe he belonged to. Today, the oral tradition, as pointed out by Mdallel (2004: 3) has largely been replaced by reading, even though reading itself is not widespread in the Arab world as literacy levels remain below European standards. From 1980 – 1982 the rate of illiteracy in countries such as Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia was between 50 and 59% (Dupont and Ossandon in Mdallel, 2004:3).

Reading today, Mdallel goes on arguing, still involves the same rituals as telling stories in the oral tradition, though the setting has changed. Though manipulation was easier with the oral tradition, parents today resort to an equal or even greater amount of manipulation when they read to their children, for example. They change the names of places and persons, change themes, and add new moral themes not found in the original texts.

2.2. Written children's literature in the Arab world

“Written” children's literature was not recognised as such in the Arab World until the late nineteenth century (Abu Nazir in Mdallel, 2004:3). We are told that the pioneers of children's literature in the Arab world are Rifaa Tahtaoui who in 1870 wrote *Al-morshid Al-amin lilbanati wal-banin* (translated by Mdallel as ‘The best guide for boys and girls’) and Mohammed Othman Jalel, who in 1894 wrote *Al-uyun Al-yawakidh fil-amthali wai-mawaidh* (translated as ‘The best morals and sayings’)

According to Mdallel:

Many critics argue that the real history of children's literature in the Arab world dates back to the early twentieth century with Kamel Kilani (Egypt), who started by translating children's international classics in 1928 and then wrote his own books for children. Indeed, Kamel Kilani's contribution to the Arab children's bookshelf is substantial. It includes comic stories for children, adaptations from The Arabian Nights, chosen Indian stories, translations from Shakespeare (such as Julius Caesar, The Merchant of Venice, King Lear and The Tempest), and many others, including scientific fiction and adventures, and old Arab stories rewritten for children. In his thirty-year career he wrote and translated 200 books in total. (Mdallel, 2004: 3)

Hal-Haji's *Guide to Arab Children's Literature*, cited by Mdallel in his article, covers the period 1950-1999. In this bibliographical guide, the author admits that he was unable to find books published prior to that period (i.e. before the 1950s) with the exception of the few by Kilani, the Egyptian. Today, Mdallel acknowledges that writing in the Arab world has proliferated, and the production of children's books has become an industry with a number of publishing houses specialising in children's literature. According to the separate research by Al-Haji and Mdallel himself, 4,582 books for children were published between 1995 and 1999, while only 7,741 were published between 1950 and 1995. These figures, to repeat Mdallel's words, show that “children's literature recently received a great impetus, and as such was a new phenomenon in the Arab world” (2004:4). However, these figures are still below the number of books published in European countries.

The Arab world has also left its mark on the heritage of world literature. One of the most well known collections of Arab stories in the world is *The Arabian Nights*. This anthology is made up of hundreds of stories that are known to children everywhere, irrespective of nation, race or creed. Before they were transcribed by Arab scholars, they existed mainly in oral form, but were subsequently translated into languages like English and French. They have been shot on film (John Rawlins, 1942), translated (for example, *Mille et Une Nuits*, Galland, 1704), adapted and read by generations of readers. In Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and other Arabic countries, they have been handed down from generation to generation, in oral format. Mothers narrate these stories to their daughters, who in turn pass them on to their children.

According to the legend (Burton, 1997:1), the Caliph (or king) of Baghdad married a new bride, Queen Sheherazade. Now, this Caliph was known to behead his brides after one day. Queen Sheherazade was determined to live. She did not want to suffer the fate of the other women who had been beheaded after only a day of married life. So, she devised a plan to tell the king a new story every night. However, she never finished a story on the same night. She would start the story, and leave it halfway, to finish it the next day. That way, the king was sure to let her live, because he wanted to hear the end of the story. After a thousand nights, he promised not to behead his wife.

The first collection of *The Arabian Nights* in a language other than Arabic was published by a Frenchman, Antoine Galland (Galland, 1704). He translated his stories from Arabic manuscripts. In 1870, an Englishman, Sir Richard Burton, also translated some tales into English (Burton, 1870). His first collection was a translation of thirty stories. An edited version of his book was also published in 1997. This book includes stories such as:

- The tale of the bull and the ass (Chapter 2)
- The fisherman and the jinni (Chapter 3)
- Sinbad of the Land and Sinbad the Sailor (Chapter 6),
- The tale of Nurreddin and his son, Bar-Hasan (Chapter 11)
- Aladdin and the magic lamp (Chapter 29)
- Ali Baba and the forty thieves (Chapter 30)

Oral forms of these stories exist all over the Arab world. I grew up hearing them from my parents, from uncles, aunts and friends. In oral form, these stories are usually told with settings changing from one area to the next. Local flavour is added to make them more entertaining for the listeners.

Today, there are a number of problems facing children's literature in the Arab world. A recent article by Dalya Dajani in the *Jordan Times* discusses some of these issues (<http://www.jordanembassyus.org>). He gives the point of view of several researchers who gathered at a conference to look at both the quality and content of books that were written for children. An Iraqi author and expert on children's literature, he laments that Arab writers "often lacked the creativity needed to spur children's imagination or motivation to read" (Dajani: 2006). What is very apparent when one reads the article is that Arab writers have recognised that there is a shortcoming as far as children's literature is concerned and that there is need to address the issue. Dajani (2006) gives another even more scathing quote from Khazal:

Most children's books are too serious and realistic. Writers often make the mistake of writing about children rather than for children. ...what child would be stimulated by reading something such as, "An apple tree grows apples...a palm tree grows dates, and so on,"

However, the bleak picture painted above does not mean that the situation has not improved. There are a number of good books that children would love to read. It is true that these books do not match those of the west in volume. But there are still a good number of books that children can relate to, as Mdallel has shown.

Mdallel (2004) states that "children's literature in the Arab World is not exclusively impregnated with morality, ideology and didacticism. Indeed, there are also those who defend a child's right to read for mere pleasure." However, many books published today still deal with tradition and morality. Nawar laments the lack of imagination, due to "the multiple taboos and the traditional educational and religious concerns" that governs writing for children in the Arab world (Nawar in Mdallel, 2004:8). This statement shows

how some readers in the Arab world are still very critical of books written or translated into Arabic which violate certain moral values or norms. Such readers cannot accept sentences uttered by a child such as 'I'll eat you up', 'wild', 'you are mad', and 'shut up' (Nawar in Mdallel, 2004:8). The fact that this trend exists does not necessarily mean that everything that is produced for children is puritanical in nature. If you walk into a good bookstore in Egypt, you will certainly find copies of books like *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby* as well as books about Walt Disney cartoon characters like *Tweety Bird* and *Bugs Bunny*.

Mdallel (2004) does however show that a good number of books have been written for children to give them pleasure, with a focus on adventure and entertainment. *Comic stories* also form a major part of the literature presented to Arab children. According to Mdallel, most of the literature translated for children in the Arab world falls within this category, as do most of the international classics for children. This trend is, at present, becoming stronger. He further argues that a new wave of writers is emerging which supports the idea that children should be able to read for mere pleasure. Many series recently written for children are in line with this approach called for by Nawar and others. Such stories include *Birds are Dreaming* (*Ahlamu Al-assafir*), *The Little Roses* (*Al-wurudu As-saghira*), *The Misers* (*Al-Bukhala*), *The Adventures of Saad* (*Hikayatu Saad*) and many others (Mdallel 2004:9).

The study conducted by the same author found that modern literature for children in the West also displays a great variety of genres and themes, because it is the offspring of a dialogic situation characterised by its liberalism, where the rights of minorities such as homosexuals and ethnic groups are recognised and where problems are generally dealt with rather than ignored. In this context we find another type of children's books referred to as problem-solving literature. "This literature for children deals with drug addiction, juvenile pregnancy, divorce, death of a family member, ugliness, etc., topics popular in the United States but not yet so popular in Arab societies, although they might be welcomed by some liberal families" (Mdallel, 2004:9). Likewise, carnivalesque literature, where the teacher figure is mocked, has little chance of being translated into Arabic. Books on topics such as sex education, masturbation and homosexuality taught to nursery and primary school children in countries such Sweden would never be published in Arab

Islamic societies. That is why, as Mdallel observes, al-Hajji's *Bibliographical Guide*, does not include one such book.

2.3. Islam and children's literature: Ideology

In *Arab Children's Literature, An Update*, Tami Al-Hazza (2006: 14) points out helpfully that not all Arabs are Muslims. There reason for the proliferation of books about Islam in this part of the world is simply because Islam is the dominant religion in the area. Islamic children's literature might appear on the outside to have concerned itself mostly with moral issues, perhaps so because all Arabs accept that "learning at a young age is like carving on stone" (Arabic Proverb). As Mdallel also observes: "many writers for children in the Arab world see the spreading of Islamic moral values as the main purpose of the literature they are writing" (Aziza Manaa in Mdallel, 2004:7). Religious, moral and political values are very important in Arab children's literature, as it is this literature which is partly responsible for the construction of Egyptian image and dignity. Bakri Sheik Amin had this to say about children's literature and the Koran:

The Koran relies heavily on the story frame. Numerous are the stories within the Koran that depict the struggle between good and evil. A moral always emanates from such stories. The stories in the Koran have all the constituent parts of a normal story or tale..." (Mdallel, 2004:6).

It is said that most of the stories of the Koran have been rewritten for children in a language and style judged fit for them. Most of these stories display a struggle between good and evil and there is always a moral in the story: "A great part of children's literature in the Arabic and Islamic world is a response to this call, hence the dominance of morality in children's literature" (Mdallel, 2004:6).

Perhaps an important factor that gives Islamic children's literature a great advantage over others is that it originates from the Prophet, Mohammed, an internationally known person, and an important religious figure. The stories of the *Qu'ran* are interesting and cover important moral issues such as love, patience, honesty, and chastity. The characters are simple and do not require much intellectual depth of thought to understand. The stories are adapted in a simple language and the characters are clearly enjoyed by young readers. Moslem children find the adventures of the characters extremely interesting.

In fact, Arab children's literature expresses the values of a religious education. To a great extent this is so because Islam as a religion considers that a child's education should guide him along the path of salvation. The main aim of children's stories taken from the *Qu'ran* is, therefore, to arouse in the child the desire for spiritual salvation. This can be illustrated by one story from the *Qu'ran*. The *Qu'ran* records a pre-Islamic children's story of three boys who run away from a wicked (tyrant) King demanding to be worshipped as god and who hide in a cave. This was to protect their belief in the One and only God 'Allah'. Although the story happened long before Islam was born, it bears the marks of spiritual salvation that Islam enjoys teaching to children. We are told that God rewarded them by putting them into a sleep that lasted 309 years. For many people they were dead. But when they woke up from their sleep, they thought they had spent one or two days. One of them was sent to buy food with the few coins they had and the seller realized that these coins were three hundred years old and no longer in use. The story finally portrays the boys' sudden death and tells that a place of worship was build next to their graves in memory of them and the *ayat*, which means 'God's miracle'. It is from such an example that the standard Arabic faith in One God evolved teaching people, including children, to be obedient to God.

The *Qu'ran*, though not written especially for children reinforces these major virtues, such as salvation and the rights of children, and other values. More than anything else, this book reveals the nature of the literature considered acceptable by Moslems for children. However, the Prophet Mohammed eventually accepted amusement as contributing to children's education because they learn while playing as he said: "play with your children during seven years, befriend them during seven years, then let them do what they like" (Mdallel, 2004: 5). This, to repeat Mdallel's words, shows clearly that Islam recognised childhood a long time ago by recognising children's right to play. Since then, it has been widely agreed throughout the Arab world that children have wider capacities of learning when playing and that teachings are better assimilated by children when presented in a playful form.

Although the stories are suitable for Moslem children, they are very much alien to the average Egyptian child from other religions or non-religious families. Egypt, where

various religious groups cohabit, is a country which presents a mosaic of micro-cultures within the same cultural community. The literature presented to Christian minorities in this country differs greatly in theme and register from that presented to the Moslem majority. Children who attend Moslem schools are required to conform to Islamic norms irrespective of their religions. And if they are not from this religious background, they will soon be alienated and regard their tribal culture as unworthy. However, when this Islamic children's literature is didactically examined, it is, in our view, seen as eliminating everything it regards as morally incorrect. This is not to say that the morality that Islam offers does not suffice. What we are trying to say is that children who are beneficiaries of Islamic education leave school with knowledge only of the local religious context and are not equipped with a knowledge of other religions, cultures, or traditions which would enable them to cope better in their adult lives. That is why translating children's books from other languages into Arabic is relevant to Arab children. They need exposure to other cultures. They need something other than just religion; this will enable them to acquire knowledge of the world. The novel analysed here can inform and provide a basis for such a goal.

2.4. Main themes in Egyptian and Arab children's literature

Ancient Egypt is one of the most important themes in Egyptian children's literature, and there are very good books available on this topic for children. Like adult historical literature, children's literature on Ancient Egypt tells stories about pyramids, mummies, and daily life in Ancient Egypt. It should be noted that most books that are published, even today, are based on ancient Egyptian civilisations. Very few have modern Egypt as their setting.

In the tales of *The Arabian Nights*, going on a journey ,living under a Caliph, who rules wisely with Allah's guidance and divine favour (McCaughrean: 1-2). Sometimes, the language is made suitable for children. McCaughrean talks about the king's wife's adultery (1993: 3) in these words:

She has uncovered her face in front of the palace cook ...and waited
on him with her hands.

The author uses the image of the *chador* (the veil worn by Moslem women) and taking it off in front of someone other than one's husband. However, on the same page, the writer uses a poem from the original story, which represents a male point of view, and condemns women in the harshest terms (McCaughrean, 1993: 3):

Women are worthless
Women are liars;
They seem to be roses
But grow into briars

Here, the author forgets that children are conditioned by early literature that they read or hear. In the first quote, an Egyptian child will know that a woman cannot take off her veil before strangers. A South African child who knows nothing of Arabic culture may not notice the allusions to adultery here. The song quoted above perpetuates male-dominated language in stories. I believe that children can notice that the language in the poem above is overtly 'anti-woman'. If boys do not pick it up, girls will.

In a 2005 article published by the *Daily Star* in Lebanon, it is argued that Beirut stores in Lebanon, for example, are full of beautifully illustrated books for children in French, and almost as many in English on many different themes: games, how-to books, adventure and friendship. However, when one wants to find them in Arabic, there are very few available. Books like *Tales of Ancient Egypt* (Green, 1996) are all in European languages. Fairytales and historical storybooks dominate bookstores and libraries. They are generally based on ancient Egyptian civilisation and mythology. *The Egypt Game* for example (Berwick, 2000) focuses on ancient pharaohs and their reigns

Other themes exist in children's literature. Al-Hazza (2006:8-15) mentions some of them, such as city life, life during the Lebabon war, children's suffering in Palestine, life in Gaza, the Golden Age of Baghdad and even friendship between Palestinians and Jews¹. On page 14 of his article, Al-Hazza shows a picture of several covers of the Bright and Early Books, which is a series for beginners.

2.5. Arabic children's books' publishing

Many book specialists agree that Arabic children's books are a problem. The reasons are multiple: a difficult market, society's view of reading, and the Arabic language in a post-colonial culture. Children in the Arab world seem to prefer reading in European languages (French and English) rather than in Arabic. Most of the books quoted in Al-Hazza's article (2006: 7-14) for example are in English. Nevertheless, it has been observed that Egyptian children's books, in particular, are of a higher quality. Some are written in Arabic, while some are translated. This publishing initiative needs to be encouraged so as to make literature available for Arab children. Promoting children's literature is a way to secure the future of the country.

The issue of appearance is also an important one. Many publishers don't realize the value appearance has for children. Publishers would rather publish a book without illustrations than pay an appropriate price for the illustrator (Dajani, 2006: 2). The existing reading culture is also affected by class and education: the elite buy French books. The masses, who might buy books in Arabic, do not have money. Sometimes parents do not buy a good book with illustrations because it costs two to three times the price of one. This is

¹ For a series of blurbs of some of the books that are mentioned in Al-Hazza's article, see Appendix 1.

perhaps why Moslem children have not developed a reading culture. In his article, Dajani, (2006: 2) mentions that there are Arab scholars who feel that it is time that pictures and cartoons in Arab children's books in the Arab world matched the quality and popularity of cartoons like Superman and comic heroes like Mickey Mouse in America and the western world.

The main focus of this chapter was to look at the possibilities that exist for children's books in the Arab world. I looked at both the quality and the catalogue of books that exist for children in the Arab world as well as in Egypt. The overview shows that books for children in the Arab world is limited in originality as well as pictures and illustrations. It is important to think of ways to translate what is destined for tomorrow's leaders. What children learn today will last a lifetime. Yes, they need to discover other cultures and other world-views. However, the translator needs to make conscious decisions while he works and he has to know why he makes the decisions that he makes.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical framework

This research work is based on the premise that translating for children, as well as writing for them, takes place within particular cultural and historical contexts. The frame of this research is therefore twofold. The study is, on the one hand, concerned with the translation of children's literature in general and, on the other, with translating for (Egyptian) children.

Translating for children, as Oittinen remarks, shares one major problem with translating for adults: like other translation, it is anonymous, even invisible (2000:4). Some people do not acknowledge translating for children as a task with its own methodology and requirements. What many have ignored is the fact that if we write books for children, we have a child image in mind that drives us to this writing, so the same thing happens when translating for children. Translators also have this child image in mind. This mental image of the child to which a translator refers is part of the ideologies (assumptions) that influence the translation. Therefore, special attention needs to be paid to such issues in any study related to children's literature and its translation across cultures.

For some time now in translation studies culture or context has become a focus of interest. Notions such as 'cultural adaptation', 'domestication' and 'foreignising' have been applied to the translation process (e.g. Venuti 1995; Klingberg 1986). There is a paradigm shift in translation, which has brought change, moving towards an increasing awareness of cultural issues.

Chapter One discussed important issues in the translation of children's literature. In this case of the translation of children's literature, the issue of adaptation and invisibility relates directly to the controversial issues of domestication and foreignisation. The main argument is that children's literature and its translation should not ignore the socio-economic, political and cultural divisions in which all of society, including children, are caught. These socio-economic situations mean that adaptation is inevitably part of any

form of translation. It could be argued that adaptation could still be avoided – it depends on the translator's approach and ideology

Because of the importance of culture in translation, translators are permanently faced with the problem of how to treat the cultural aspects implicit in a source text (ST) and of finding the most appropriate technique of successfully conveying these aspects in the target language (TL). These problems may vary in scope depending on the cultural and linguistic gap between the two (or more) languages concerned (Nida 1964:130). The cultural problems for translation may take several forms ranging from lexical content and syntax to ideologies and ways of life in a given culture. The translator also has to decide on the importance given to certain cultural aspects and to what extent it is necessary or desirable to translate them into the TL.

In this study, it is useful to follow the steps of those who treat translation as a context-dependent discipline and from them come up with procedures and strategies that relate directly to translation across cultures. Klingberg's work *Research into the Translation of Children's Books* (in *Children's Books in Translation: the Situation and the Problems*, 1978) is particularly useful in this respect. Although Klingberg himself does not claim to have suggested a systematic method to follow, his approach provides a systematic means of achieving our objectives. His identification of translation problems and solutions are relevant to this project and are carefully applied to the current Arabic translation.

When we translate a book into another language, there is a certain "degree of adaptation" (Klingberg, 1978: 86). We do not chop and change at random. Rather, the translator should make certain informed decisions that are aimed at making the reading experience an enjoyable one. The translated text should fit quite well, if not seamlessly into the catalogue of books that already exist in the target language community.

Every work comes with its own difficulties. The fact that a given book is written for children does not mean that the translator can translate it with his eyes closed. It is as arduous a task as translations that are destined for adults. This difficulty becomes even more acute where the translator and the writer of the original text do not belong to the

same community (Klingberg, 1978: 86). This would mean that they see things through totally different spectrums.

If the translator has a different world-view from that of the source text writer, his translation has to be based on context adaptation. He has to translate according to the context for which the text is destined. For example, if we want Egyptian children to read *The Joining* in Arabic and enjoy it, then we have to make sure that the realities in the translated text are not only South African in nature. We do not have to create a world that is totally strange to the child. It is true that, sometimes, children want to discover new things, explore new imaginary worlds and go through new, exotic doors. However, there also exists another approach (cultural context adaptation) which is informed by the realities that the child is used to. Of course, the translator has to do this bearing in mind the brief of the commissioner of the work.

Among the things that lend themselves to context adaptation, Klingberg (1978: 86) lists the following:

...personal names, titles, geographical names, names of plant and animal species, measurements, concepts concerning buildings and home furnishing, meals and food, customs and practises, the play and games of children, of singularities in the source language such as word-play, homonymous or similarly spelled words, newly-created words and foreign language in the source text. Further, in mythology and folklore, personal and geographical names as well as terms used for supernatural beings and events, and historical and literary references.

In the next chapter, we follow the same approach in looking for the elements that may require cultural context adaptation. I am talking about things like names, meal times, swear words, social and ethical issues and racial issues.

If we take swear words as an example, what might be considered a normal utterance in South Africa could be considered an insult in the Arab world! In the text we are told that Sitheli told Phumzile to 'shut up' because he laughed at her (p.107). This expression 'shut up' is not accepted in Egyptian culture where it is interpreted as an insult and is

likely to cause serious problems between people. I therefore suggest three alternatives of translating the expression which will not leave the addressee with a bad feeling:

Please leave me alone: *من فضلك اتركني وحدي*, Please don't irritate me:

من فضلك لا تزعجني or Stay away from me: *ابتعد عني*. Ideologically speaking, the register or the style of the source text changes from 'less polite' to 'polite'.

Cultural categories such as *material culture*, and *gestures* and *habits*, are other examples that will pose problems for translators. One such case is the reference to the term 'bushman'. It is difficult to translate due to its 'foreign' origin. In Egypt there are no bushes (there are only few cultivated areas and deserts), and therefore, translating it according to the South African idea of primitivism would imply using the same word in Arabic. But in Arabic the word which is known is 'man of the jungle' is referred to in historical fiction. So, in this context 'bushman' hardly seems appropriate bearing in mind the difference in form of the TL reference.

The cultural knowledge of the TT reader implies translating in a way so as to clearly convey notions that may otherwise go unnoticed. It is difficult for an Arabic translation to overemphasise the strength of the original ST term. The sarcastic attitude conveyed by the author to the source text reader is difficult to respect or reproduce. In this way, cultural references or codes of references are respected in our process of translation. By code of reference, we mean specific elements that allow us to determine the text as a South African fiction. So, names like Johannesburg, Cape Town and Xhosa names like Phumzile, remain as in the original.

To adopt the approach of looking at concepts like meals, mythology, customs and practises among others obviously means that we are not going to go the route of shaping the work according to translation concepts like purification and faithfulness. We are going to use these concepts under different topics. In the example I gave above, there was purification. I replaced what would have been considered an insult with a more neutral translation. So every other translation concept or solution will be discussed as part of a given cultural concept that is used as a sub topic.

Various cultural concepts are analysed in terms of methods such as transference and componential analysis (Newmark, 1988:96). As Newmark mentions, transference gives 'local colour', by keeping cultural names and concepts. Although placing the emphasis on culture, meaningful to initiated readers, he claims this method may cause problems for the general readership and limit the comprehension of certain aspects. The importance of the translation process in communication leads Newmark to propose componential analysis which he describes as being 'the most accurate translation procedure, which excludes the culture and highlights the message' (Newmark, 1988:96). Looking at translation from a cultural perspective presents a number of challenges that necessitate a balance between methodological demands and cultural imperatives. Such a translation must be conceived in such a way that it accommodates cultural values of the target reader based on languages, belief and other social aspects.

The first step is to establish the nature of the source text by means of an analysis. An analysis establishes whether the author presents certain aspects of South African life which may be interesting culturally and emotionally for the Arab child. The analysis also seeks to identify any culturally specific words and notions whose implications for translation merit attention. It identifies the ST and TT readership in order to establish how the source text readership corresponds to the potential TT reader. In the text *The Joining*, this notion may be seen as particularly relevant due to the context of the novel which is specifically linked to culture, tradition and history and might also be a subject of interest for Arab (Egyptian) children eager to know their past: the ancient reign of the pharaohs.

In this case there is potentially a considerable gap between the ST and TT readership. Indeed, the historical and cultural facts are unlikely to be known in detail by the TT readers nor will they be familiar with the specific cultural situations described. Furthermore, despite considering the fact that the source and target readers are all Africans, further differences may possibly be noted in response to the knowledge of culturally specific items that must be considered when translating.

After the analysis has been carried out, the problems relating to translating the text are identified. The problems when translating such a text are therefore not only of a purely lexical character but also of a fundamental nature - the understanding of a social,

economic, political and cultural context. As with all texts of foreign literature, historical, political and other such cultural references always have a certain importance and the TT reader is unlikely to have a full understanding of such notions. When considering the cultural implications for translation, the extent to which it is necessary for the translator to explain or complete such an information gap should be taken into account. On the basis of conclusions reached concerning the TT reader, the translator should decide how much may be left for the reader to simply infer. Taking these last points into consideration, different elements are discussed in relation to their cultural implications for translation or context adaptation.

At the same time, adaptation, though important, has some limits or shortcomings that need to be addressed. Adaptation involves the loss of ST elements, thus making the TT a very different text from the source one. 'Too much' adaptation may also affect the register of the text and it may also water down the exotic nature and quality of the source text. It is a delicate process and must be handled carefully. It is advisable that such losses and incoherencies be compensated for in the ST in order to create a balance.

To summarise, there are two main stages in our analysis in the next chapter:

1. Passages are selected from the novel under the various chapter headings (e.g. the *Ledge* pp.1-10, *Shaman* pp.107-116, *The return* pp. 145-154)
2. Cultural problems in these passages are identified. Then there is a translation into Arabic and a discussion of suggested solutions. Where necessary, a back translation is provided.

Context adaptation is necessary in translation. It helps in an understanding of the translation. It also makes the reading experience more enjoyable for the person who reads a translation. At the same time, context adaptation is not a ruthless replacement of all source text realities with target text ones. The next chapter will explore categories for context adaptation according to cultural notions. Here, we are adopting a soft-handed approach which consists in replacing notions like swear words, toilet jokes and nakedness with more neutral ones. That way, when someone is reading, he or she does not have to blush and look around the room to make sure that no one else is there.

CHAPTER FOUR

Cultural-context adaptation

This chapter explores some aspects of culture, especially religious beliefs, ethics and other traditions among Arab Egyptians before proposing strategies that an Arabic translator needs to use in his/her practice of translation to give access to his readers (Egyptian children). It consists of an analysis and translation of selected passages from Slingsby's *The Joining* (1996). The translations are based on a model of cultural context adaptation as developed by Klingberg and Oittinen.

The themes that are discussed in this area fall under certain headings according to their importance. This discussion is also guided by what is moral and ethical. Morality and ethics are always important topics in Egypt. What is basically ethical and moral for Egyptians is clear. This involves not cheating, not stealing, and working hard to earn a living, etc. The themes recalled in the traditional Arab virtues of loyalty, honour, friendship, bravery and chivalry are part of both Egyptian adult and children's literature. These themes are part of what is referred to as polite literature. In short, Egyptians have standards of conduct in moral values.

The clothing code represents another important tradition and convention. In Egypt both boys and girls are required to cover their shoulders, and, in the case of girls, the skirts must be knee-length. Girls may opt to wear long (to the floor) skirts. This is much better than jeans during the hot months. But due to the influence of modernism, they can dress in western fashion, but wear a jacket or another item of clothing to cover the fashionable outfit. Wearing such dress on the street would be considered offensive to the public at large in Egypt.

Peter Slingsby's story, *The Joining*, is basically a time-shift story. The *joinings* refer to rock art paintings which date back several thousand years and join events and people to each other and their surroundings. Briefly, the story concerns four children -a mixed group of one coloured girl, one white boy and a set of Xhosa twins, one boy and one girl - who are brought together on an environmental camp in a relatively deserted area of the

Western Cape. They then find themselves transported far into the past, but in the same geographical location. The story explores the children's search for identity and their relationship to their culture and history. After moving backwards and forwards in time on several occasions, the children are finally given the choice - whether to return home to the South Africa of 1996, or to stay in the past. In an unusual ending to a time-shift story, the children decided to turn their backs on their own time, and stay in the past, a reflection of their feeling of insecurity in the present, and the problems that they have with their families.

In light of the above, it is clear that the Arabic translator of *The Joining* (a youth novel authored by a non-Moslem author for non-Moslem audience) is likely to face cultural problems in the translation of this novel for his target Moslem audience. The following passages give a full description of these problems and the suggested solutions.

4.1. Speech patterns

This section deals with the adaptation of verbs and pronouns. This brings us to argue that the relationship between language and culture is not a simple one. There are people who suggest that culture is a product of language, whereas according to some, only the existence of a language makes it possible for culture to exist (Kaikkonen 1994:66-67). Whatever the case, it is clear that culture and language are closely connected to each other, language being a part of culture and culture a part of a language. According to Brown (1980:124), the two are so intricately interwoven that one cannot separate them without losing the significance of either language or culture. A careful translator needs to look at all these issues if he is to convey meaning to his readers. To understand this let us consider the examples below:

The ledge الحافة

Jeremy paused and looked down at the ledge. "Find a quiet, secret place," Rick had said. Well, that had been no problem. The great red rocks reached high above him: the ledge below was wide, a few straggly bushes clinging to its side, the comfortable "seat" smooth and worn. He clambered down to it, took off his cap and pushed his red hair back from his forehead (Slingsby, 1996:1).

The Arabic translator has rendered it into this passage in the following way:

قال "ريك أن "جيرمي " : "توقف مؤقتا عن السير ونظر إلى اسفل إلى الحافة ، فوجد مكانا هادئا سريريا. "حسنٌ ، فهذا ليس مشكلة. فالصخور الحمراء تصل إلى أعلى من فوقه، والحافة اسفل منه كانت متسعة وتتعلق بعض الشجيرات المنتشرة بجوانبه والمقعد الملائم كان أملسا وتالفا. هو تسلق نازلا إليه، وخلع قلنسوته (طاقيته) وأزاح شعره الأحمر إلى الوراء عن جبهته

Back-translation:

Rick said that Jeremy found a quiet secret place. Jeremy paused and looked down at the ledge. Well, this is not a problem. Because the big rocks reached high above him and the ledge under him was wide. And some bushes hanging to its sides and a comfortable seat was soft and worn. He climbed down to it, and took his cap off and pushed his red hair back from his forehead.

We also read:

I will leave you for about half an hour," Rick had said. "Find a quiet, secret place and sit down there. Observe as much as you can around you, any birds, insects, lizards - any interesting smells. Keep absolutely quiet - that way you'll see and hear much more. Don't spoil it for the others by trying to call your friends. When you hear the whistle, come back."(Slingsby, 1996:1)

The Arabic target text has rendered it into:

وقال "ريك " إنني سأترككم لما يقرب من نصف ساعة وعليكم أن تجدوا مكان هادئا سريريا وتجلسون فيه هناك. تراقبون ما يدور حولكم بقدر ما تستطيعون. أي طيور، أو حشرات، أو سحالي - أي روائح مثيرة. التزموا الهدوء التام - فبهذه الطريقة سترون وتسمعون أكثر. ولا تخربون الفرصة على الآخرين بالنداء على أصدقاءكم. وعندما تستمعون الى الصفارة ، عليكم أن تبادروا بالعودة.

Back-translation:

Rick said, I will leave you for about half an hour and you must find quiet, secret place, sit there and watch what is happening around you as you can. Any birds, insects or lizards - any strange smell. Be completely quiet. By so doing, you will see and hear more. Don't spoil others' chances by calling out for your friends. When you hear the whistle, return immediately.

In English the direct speech ends with the comments of the reporter as in "I will leave you for about half an hour," Rick had said. But in Arabic, this must be reversed as in: Mohammed said, I am going to leave you for about half an hour. The English written form is very keen on this kind of speech while the Arabic does not make any difference between the two. In fact, in English this sentence can be either way while in Arabic there is only one way as just suggested. The Arabs write in very much the same way they talk.

From the same chapter about the ledge, we also read that:

Jeremy had found the ledge the previous afternoon, when the camp had been set up and they had been told to go and explore until supper - time. He'd felt that mood of his then - just wanting to get away from the noise and bustle of the others. He felt the mood now. I suppose it's because I'm an only child,- he thought. I like being alone.

(Slingsby, 1996:1).

The Arabic translation of this passage is:

لقد وجد جيرمي الحافة بعد ظهر اليوم السابق، وعندما نُصِبَ المعسكر وطلبَ منهم أن يذهبوا للاستكشاف حتى وقت العشاء. قد انتابته مشاعر نفسية بأنه يريد فقط ان يبتعد عن الضوضاء ولغط الآخرين. لقد شعر جيرمي بهذا لتوه.. جيرمي حدث نفسه قائلا: أظن أن هذا سببه أنني مازالت طفلا. احب أن أكون وحيدا.

Back-translation:

Jeremy found the ledge in the previous afternoon and when the camp started, they were asked to go and explore the environment till dinner time. He had the feeling that he wanted to be far away from the noise and bustle of the others. Jeremy had just felt that feeling. Jeremy talked to himself saying “I think the cause of that is that I am still just a single child. I like to be alone”.

The second issue is that of the repetitive use of subjects. Some languages repeat subjects while others replace them by pronouns. Baker (1992:184-5) remarks that English prefers to pick up the reference by means of a pronoun while Arabic prefers lexical repetition. The repetition of the same subject in several lines can be seen in Arabic where the translator repeats Omar (substitute of Jeremy in English) three times while English persists in using the pronominal reference ‘he’.

4.2. Meal times

The time of meals (e.g. supper, dinner) have different context in Western and Arabic cultures. Even if we focus on the specific times of meals, we must also discuss cultural insights in terms of cultural understanding of meals and other habits. The main daily meal for Egyptians is *dinner*. *Dinner* is taken in the afternoon at around 2 pm and is formally structured with rules of good manners and traditions such as the washing of hands and reading certain prayers. They pray before meals in these words: ‘*By the name of God we start eating*’ or ‘*O God bless what you have given us and protect us from the punishment of hell*’. Egyptian children learn all these customs either by teaching them or through routine. Supper for Egyptians is in the evening, say, between 6 and 7 pm. Unlike Westerners who have their dinner (sometimes also called supper for others) after work between 6 and 7 pm, the Egyptians consider this supper as a light meal consisting of things such as eggs, butter, jam, biscuits and tea.

Translating these meals into Arabic, the translator substituted *dinner* for *supper* of the original text to fit with the Egyptian child’s knowledge of meals.

4.3. Social and ethical issues

The paragraph below illustrates the cultural problem regarding the issue of divorce which an Arabic translator needs to be aware of:

The divorce hadn't helped either. He'd wanted to live with his father in Johannesburg, but his mother had won, so she had said. He hadn't really understood what she meant by "won" - it made him feel like the prize in some sort of competition. He'd had to go and live with her, but then she'd promptly gone overseas with that other bloke, leaving him stuck with his fussy aunt (Slingsby, 1996:1).

This passage has been translated into Arabic with the following changes:

إن انفصال والديه بالطلاق لم يساعده أيضا. فقد أراد أن يعيش مع أبيه المريض في مدينة جوهانسبرج، ولكن أمه قالت أنها فازت. هو لا يفهم حقيقة ما تقصد أمه بقولها أنها " فازت " - فقد جعلته يشعر بأنها فازت بجائزة في نوع ما من المسابقات. لقد اضطر أن يذهب ويعيش معها، ولكنها ذهبت بعد ذلك مباشرة إلى خارج القطر مع أخيها تاركة إياه يعاني مع عمته النمطية.

Back-translation:

Verily, the separation of his parents by divorce did not help him. He wanted to live with his sick father in the city of Johannesburg, but his mother said that she had won. He had not understood what his mother really meant by saying she won - this made him feel that she won a prize in some sort of competition. So he was obliged to go and live with her, but she went immediately after that overseas with her brother, leaving him to struggle with his meddling aunt.

The changes brought in this paragraph include: (a) the sick father, which is an additional item introduced by the translator, (b) the verb *obliged* which does not exist at all in the original text, and (c) the *brother* instead of *the other bloke* to avoid cultural shock, which is in essence toning down the sense.

First, the translator substituted the word *brother* for *bloke* because *bloke* gives the idea of this woman going with another man, which is the intention in the original. The translator hopes that this will give the readers an opportunity to understand that the reason for

Jeremy's mother going overseas was not motivated by immoral purposes. Reading the original text it appears that she is such an immoral woman. The word *bloke* refers to a young man, a man or a person. It is always male. It could refer also to a boyfriend, which means that he was not her husband or even a family member. In the Egyptian culture, however, a lady is allowed to travel only with her husband, father, brother or uncle and not with any other person. It is in this context that the translator used the term *brother* instead of *that other bloke*. This is one of the several instances where the translator has purified the original text.

In the same vein, it is also unacceptable according to Egyptian culture for the divorced mother to look after the children of her ex-husband or leave him with her family while the father is still alive. The living father has to fulfil his duties towards his own child as a father. That is why the translator had also added something to alter the text and make it acceptable and meaningful (context-related) for his readers (Egyptian youth). This suggests that the reader should know the setting. If he is aware that it is for Westerners, the focus changes, just as it would for Arabic readers. The additional part reads as follows:

The father was ill and unable to look after the child, so the divorced mother had to look after the child.

These variations appear in the translation/interpretation of the above paragraph in order for the child reader to understand why Jeremy had to live with his aunt. For some these additions and substitutions, which I consider to be appropriate strategies, may be seen by others as under and over translation. This is so because where the English word (e.g. *bloke*) may be found to carry an implication in addition to its meaning, its implication is made explicit in Arabic, frequently by an added word. Words with a negative connotation suffer especially by over-translation in which an additional or substitute meaning is sometimes brought in. These strategies are common among translators, but may be regarded by others as faults. This way of bringing out the meaning by substitution appears to them as commentary rather than translation.

But this is not a question of simple substitution. It is clear that translation usually requires more than a simple substitution of one term for another. What is being suggested here is that when translating for the Arab world, and the Egyptian world in particular, the main ideas of the original text need to be conveyed without losing or transforming the value system of Arab society.

By detecting dissimilarities (omissions, additions, under-and over translation, syntax, lexicon, etc.) and investigating whether the sense is preserved or not, an attempt is made, at the same time, to create a balance between the two cultures (source and target), which can be difficult.

Another important section which proved difficult to translate is the one related to the sharing of a bed by brothers and sisters in a family. This is not accepted in most cultures, including Egyptian culture, where boys and girls would not share a tent either. This is illustrated in the passage below:

First he'd taken away all their penknives and all their watches. Then there had been a row because he hadn't wanted to let Phumzile and Sithele share a tent, even though they were twin brother and sister. It was a new tent that their father had bought especially so that Phumzile and Sitheli could be together. "It's the rule" Rick had said. "No boys and girls in the same tent." Phumzile had protested vigorously (Slingsby, 1996:2).

The Arabic translator renders it like this:

إن أول ما فعله ريك عند النوم هو انه اخذ منهم لعبهم حتى يناموا مبكرا. ثم كانت هناك مشادة بسبب رفض ريك السماح لمزير وأخته سيتالي أن يناما في خيمة واحدة ، رغم انهما توأمان أخ وأخت. لقد كانت خيمة جديدة اشتراها لهما أبوهما خاصة من اجل أن يكون فمزير وسيتالي سويا. قال ريك: " هذا هو القانون. "ولكن فمزير احتج بقوة قائلا: "لا يسمح لأولاد وبنات أن يكونوا في خيمة واحدة.

Back-translation:

The first thing Rick did at the sleeping time was to take their toys so they could sleep early. Then there was an argument because Rick refused to allow Phumzile and Sitheli to share a tent, even though they were twin brother and sister. It was a new tent that their father bought. Rick said "It's the rule" "No boys and girls in the same tent." Phumzile protested vigorously (Slingsby, 1996:2).

4.4. Adaptation of names

The above translation leads us to the discussion of the **adaptation of names**. Personal proper name translation is not a problem. However, it is noticed that names are sometimes adapted to the regional pronunciation. Thus, for example, the Russian name "Dmitrij" is sometimes translated as "Demeter", becoming, for example, Dmitri or Dmitry in English. Similarly, the names we find in this novel such as Phumzile and Sitheli, can easily be pronounced in Arabic as Fomzely فمزيلي and Setaly ستالي with the omission of some sounds. There is no sound in Arabic for the vowel *u* Phumzile and no sound for the *th* as in Sitheli, which is pronounced with a 't'. From this point of view, the attitude is towards adaptation, despite philological correctness. Here we are adapting to the sound system of the target language.

Another strategy that has been used by the translator is the substitution of *penknives* by toys. Unlike other cultures, where children are allowed to play with dangerous weapons, in Egyptian culture children are not allowed to carry penknives or any dangerous items with them. Given this context, the translator did not want to inculcate such a mentality in his readers. Thus he found it much better to substitute penknives by *toys* as already said although the source text writer only wanted to create a natural environment free of gadgets and modern equipment and this is why he confiscated the penknives.

4.5. Racial issues

Racial segregation was identified as an area which is likely to pose problems in the Arabic translation of this passage. We are told that:

Phumzile had told him that he didn't think that Rick liked him much, and maybe it was because he was black. Jeremy thought about that for a while. He got on well with Rick himself, even though he wasn't so sure about him any more. Rick obviously thought that he was white. Rick didn't know that his aunt and his mother were nearly as dark as Christina. He supposed that maybe if Rick didn't like black kids, Phumzile would notice better than he would. It was all very confusing, Jeremy sighed (Slingsby, 1996:3).

The Arabic text reads as:

قال فمزيل إلى جيرمي انه لا يعتقد أن ريك يحبه كثيرا، وربما سبب هذا هو أن لونه اسود. لقد فكر جيرمي عن ذلك لبرهة من الوقت. انه ساير ريك بنفسه، حتى رغم انه لم يعد واثقا منه بعد. لقد اعتقد ريك بالطبع انه ابيض. فريك بالطبع لا يعرف أن عمته وأمه كانتا تقريبا غامقتي السواد مثل كريستينا. هو افترض انه ربما إذ لم يحب ريك الأطفال السود فان فمزيل سيلاحظ ذلك افضل منه. جيرمي تنهد قائلا: أن كل هذا محير جدا.

Back-translation:

Phumzile had told him that he didn't think that Rick likes him much, and maybe it was because he was a black. Jeremy thought about that for a period of time. Jeremy himself is on good terms with Rick, even though he wasn't yet sure of him. Rick obviously thought that he was white. But Rick doesn't know that his aunt and his mother are nearly as dark as Kristina. He supposed that maybe if Rick does not like black kids, Phumzile would notice better than him. It was all very confusing, Jeremy sighed saying all this is very confusing.

South Africa is known for its history of apartheid. Afrikaner intellectuals started to use the word apartheid in the 1930s. The word means *apartness* (Thompson, 1996: 186). In 1948, The Afrikaner National party won a general election (in which only whites could vote) and began to apply its policy of apartheid. Strategists in the National Party invented apartheid as a means to cement their control over the economic and social system. Initially, the aim of apartheid was to maintain white domination while extending racial separation. Racial discrimination was institutionalized with the enactment of apartheid

laws in 1948. In 1950, the Population Registration Act classified people by race. There were three categories: white, black (African) and coloured (of mixed descent).

Clearly the issue of race has a particular significance in contemporary South Africa, and South African scholars have focused their research efforts on the subject of race, thus, producing some literary works (such as the one under analysis) in the country's efforts to stabilize a non-racial democracy.

In Egyptian culture, there is no difference between black and white, because people grow up together with the same background. In my translation I translated it as is but I would add a footnote in the translated novel to explain the apartheid system. This means that something will have been added.

The same strategy is applied to the next passage where the word *Bushmen* is used. The paragraph below foregrounds the expressive meaning of this word:

Rick seemed to ramble on and on about the Bushmen and their primitive lifestyle. Suddenly, to his surprise, Jeremy found himself standing up. "Why do you keep talking about "Bushmen?", he demanded. "Some people think it's very insulting to call them 'Bushmen'. Why don't you call them 'San'? That's their proper name." He sat down flustered by his sudden outburst (Slingsby, 1996:5-6).

Arabic text:

لقد بدى ريك هيمن وهيمان في التفكير في إنسان الغابة ونمط حياتهم البدائي. وفجأة ، وجد جيرمي نفسه واقفا ليفاجئ ريك بالأمر قائلا: " لماذا تواصل الحديث عن "إنسان الغابة" أن بعض الناس يعتبرون انه إهانة لهم إذا ناديتهم بإنسان الغابة، ولماذا لم تسميهم الإنسان البدائي؟ فهذا هو اسمهم الصحيح.

Back-translation:

Rick seemed to ramble on and on about the primitive men and their primitive lifestyle. Suddenly, to his surprise, Jeremy found himself standing up.

“Why do you keep talking about “primitive men”,” he demanded.

“Some people think it’s very insulting to call them ‘primitive men’. Why don’t you call them ‘San men? That’s their proper name.” He sat down flustered by his sudden outburst.

In *A short history of South Africa* (2005: 1) we are told that in the racial diversity of this country the earliest representatives of that diversity - at least the earliest we can name - were the San and Khoekhoe people (otherwise known individually as the Bushmen and Hottentots or Khoikhoi, collectively called the Khoisan). Both were resident in the southern tip of the continent for thousands of years before its written history began with the arrival of European seafarers. The San (Bushman) are among the oldest indigenous peoples of South Africa. About 2,000 years ago, the pastoral Khoikhoi (called Hottentots by Europeans) settled mainly in the southern coastal region. By at least the 8th century, Bantu speakers moving southward from eastern central Africa had settled the northern region of present-day South Africa. The whites also came and joined the Bushmen and the Bantu. The relationship between these other races and the Khoekhoe was initially one of bartering, but a mutual animosity developed over issues such as cattle theft - and, no doubt, the growing suspicion on the part of the Khoekhoe that Van Riebeeck's outpost was becoming a threat to them (Giliomee and Schlemmer, 1989: 52). In fact, the White settlers soon began complaining about stock thefts and petty crimes committed by the Hottentots and Bushmen. By the early 18th century, most San had migrated into inaccessible parts of the country to avoid European domination. But what is sad in this

history is that the San felt always humiliated, insulted as primitive small people. *A view of the San circa 1951* (Oregon State University website) stipulates: “The Bushmen are one of the most primitive peoples living on earth.”

Such a view confirms how these people are still viewed by many people yet they have a very rich culture and craft that we can all learn from. In light of the above, the translator, when translating the word *bushman*, gave a footnote explaining how this word should not be taken in its pejorative meaning but rather used to point to their location (Bush). Bush exists in Arabic, but connections would be more to reeds, which are usually in water. This makes connections to forests easier to make.

Reflecting on the above passage, it seems that, Jeremy’s idea of defending the rights of Bushmen is probably what influenced the translator in his decision of providing a footnote for this passage. ‘Bushman’ is in South Africa a very insulting word while South Africans know well that these people want to be referred to as ‘San’.

You are likely to find similar references in Egypt where people can be identified with the places in which they live. But in a different context and with different connotations. For example, the people living in the desert ‘*Badiya*’ are referred to as the Badawy or (Bedouin in English) and those living in the *Reif* (countryside) *Reify*. It follows that if the Bushman were living in Egypt, they would be called or referred to as people living in the Bush or Jungle (i.e. Junglemen) but without any intention to mock them or make them feel inferior. So, the text will be translated as is but with a comment provided in a footnote to show how Bushmen as an expressive word is perceived in South Africa.

The following paragraph is an over-translation by adding the adverb ‘almost’ to ‘naked’ as we found it impossible to delete the whole construction as it is part of history dealing with the primitive life of the Bushman on which the plot of this story is based.

[...] but one of the girls suddenly giggled. Although the paintings were faded, one of them showed a group of men, running. They were clearly naked, and they were clearly men (Slingsby, 1996: 6).

[...] ولكن واحدة من البنات فجأة ضحكت مقهقهة. فبرغم أن الألوان كانت باهتة فإن إحدى اللوحات أظهرت مجموعة من الرجال يجرون. وكان واضحا انهم شبه عراة في الصورة، وكان واضحا كذلك انهم رجال.

Back-translation:

[...] but one of the girls suddenly giggled. Although the paintings were faded, one of them showed a group of men, running. They were almost naked, and they were clearly men (Slingsby, 1996: 6).

This calls for purification as well. One of the girls showed the painting of a group of naked men, and she giggled. This is an indication that she was excited and found it a funny thing and did not feel ashamed when she saw such a painting. That is why in the Arabic translation, the translator added an additional element 'they were *almost* naked.' The reason behind this choice is the following: the translator wants the child reader to be put in a position whereby she/he will not expect these men to be completely naked. This is so because in the primitive life of people even in Egyptian history we never see completely naked people. Their private parts are always covered. This we believe would be more acceptable than portraying pictures of naked people. In other words, the Arabic translation partly covers the nakedness of these paintings to reduce the shock for the target reader. Although problematic for translation these paintings of naked hunters in the caves that one of the girls pointed to have a very significant role in history. In fact, in South Africa these so-called primitive people (Bushmen) had a rich legacy they passed on to future generations. This indigenous knowledge is recorded in this book to show how clever these people were. In his "Author's Note" Slingsby (1995) remarks that their rock art has been dated at over 27 500 years. This legacy is something South Africa and the rest of the world needs to know about. The translation of these paintings is a further field of research by itself but one which goes beyond the scope of this work.

The issue of nakedness mentioned in the previous paragraph is described in the paragraph below in relation to clothing.

“Well,” Sitheli continued, “I don’t think they painted people naked because they were primitive or rude or anything. I mean, it’s obvious, isn’t it? If you were a spirit person, you wouldn’t have any clothes, would you? (Slingsby, 1996:7).

لقد واصلت سِثَالي حديثها قائلة: "حسن ، لا اعتقد انهم لونوا الناس شبه عراة لأنهم كانوا بدائيين أو وقحين أو أي شيء. إني اقصد أن الأمر واضح، أليس كذلك؟ لأنك إذا كنت شخصا روحانيا فانك لا تهتم كثيرا بملابسك ، أليس كذلك؟

Back-translation:

“Well,” Sitheli continued, “I don’t think they painted people naked because they were primitive or rude or anything. I mean, it’s obvious, isn’t it? If you were a spirit person, you wouldn’t not care too much about clothes, would you?”

According to Sitheli the Bushmen as spirits are more spirit-oriented than body-oriented. This aspect is reflected in this novel as much as the spiritual dimension is given to the !Xam people through their prayers, visions or trance dreams (p.151) paintings (p. 7) and healing ceremonies (p.151). As a matter of fact, the body’s desires are minor or secondary things in their lives. They eat simple food (see p.150), wear thongs and skins (see page 150) which all are images of people detached from materialism and therefore, it makes sense when Sitheli says that it is not an offence if such people do not wear clothes at all.

However, this paragraph contradicts the Egyptian culture where the spirit (e.g. *Shiekh*/Priest, *Mofti*/ Legal advisor) always dressed formally so as to be honoured and respected. For this reason, the Arabic translation has altered the meaning slightly. It is suggested that spirit persons do not care too much about clothes. Such a decision was taken to suit the needs of the Egyptian children. For children reading from the Islamic point of view it is hard to believe that spirit persons such as (*Shiekh* and *Mofti*) can walk bare or naked in the street. Children know them as people who always dress properly.

4.6. Behaviour and gestures

“Purification” is, as Klingberg remarks, “a contentious issue, attacked as well as defended” (1986:58). The aim is to get the target text to correspond with the set of values of its readers. The following phrase was purified as it was found not to correspond with the set of values of the intended readers:

“Sitheli snorted” (Slingsby, 1996:8) translated into Arabic as "سَيْتَالِي فُوجْنَتْ"

This word “snorted” presents a major problem in the target language. According to the Egyptian culture a person who snorts intentionally is often regarded as a vulgar person. In this regard, it was preferable to use other terms. For example: ‘wondered’, ‘exclaimed’, or ‘was amazed’ which all mean "سَيْتَالِي فُوجْنَتْ"

Another case of purification related to sexual issues is reflected in the following text by the substitution of the verb to ‘shake’ by ‘to call loudly’. The Arabic version has changed ‘touch’ to “sound” For example:

“Good idea,” Phumzile replied. “I’ll wake the girls.” He shook Sitheli and Christina awake (Slingsby, 1996:19).

أجاب فمزيل قائلا إنها فكرة جيدة . إنني سأيقظ البنات . فنادى كل من سَيْتَالِي وكِرْسْتِينَا بصوت عال
موقظا إياهما .

Back-translation:

Phumzile replied, it is a “good idea.” “I’ll wake the girls.” He called them loudly to wake them up (both of them).

A male in Egyptian culture is not allowed to come close to a sleeping female because her body might be uncovered, which is a taboo. The idea of shaking the girls is not acceptable in this culture. So it was replaced by calling them loudly to wake them up.

A short version is given in the Arabic translation of this passage, thus evoking the strategy of “abridgement” (Klingberg, 1986:73). Though the intention here is not to falsify the original, it is undertaken carefully in order to transfer meaning while remaining morally acceptable. Let us first have a look at the original text:

“I need to go to the toilet,” Christina announced. “Well, you’ll just have to go behind the bushes,” Phumzile said. “There’s no toilet here!”

“I need some ... you know.” She stopped, embarrassed

“Just use some grass,” Phumzile said pragmatically. “Come on, you must hurry up. We need to find a place to wait to be rescued.”

Christina reappeared, looking flustered. “I’m finished,” she said unnecessarily.

At that moment there was a cough behind her. The old man stood there on curiously bent legs. He leant on a staff; in his free hand he held a stout stick that he seemed to be holding out to them. He spoke to them, a string of strange sound.

“Maybe he wants us to take the stick,” Jeremy observed. “To defend ourselves.”

As if in reply the old man suddenly squatted on his haunches, clearly mimicking Christina’s toilet activities. He stood up and made vigorous digging movement with his stick.

Sitheli burst out laughing. “Oh, Christina, she laughed. “He is telling you to go and bury what you left behind!”

Christina was covered in confusion. “You mean he was watching me?” she wailed.

“Go and bury it, Christina,” Phumzile said quietly. “These people may not have been very helpful, but they haven’t been hostile. We can’t afford to offend them.” (Slingsby, 1996:19)

It is shortened in Arabic as:

وعندما استيقظوا في الصباح أرادوا الذهاب إلى المرحاض ، ولكن لسوء الحظ لم يكن هناك مرحاض بالقرب منهم ، ولذلك كان يجب عليهم أن يجدوا طريق أخرى لقضاء حاجتهم اما في الأدغال أو خلف الصخور ، ويستخدموا المواد المتاحة لتنظيف انفسهم.

Back-translation:

In the morning when they woke up they wanted to go to the toilet, but unfortunately there were no toilet facilities around. So, they had to find other ways to relieve themselves either in the bushes or behind the rocks and use the available materials which were there to clean themselves.

The cultural problems that arise in this paragraph are related to the taboo words used by Christina reading the use of the toilet. The narrator uses the word ‘announced’, which openly expresses her need to go to the toilet. In Egyptian culture one cannot speak in public about such an issue. It is a culture where people have respect for privacy, more especially when it comes to men’s (boys’) and women’s (girls’) relationships. Ladies in the company of men for reasons of modesty and chastity cannot openly mention their need to go to the toilet. They use, instead, indirect words such as “I need to go to the bathroom.” But one could argue and say that Christina was right since there are no bathrooms among the !Xam people. Nevertheless, Egyptian ladies in such circumstances will always find their own way to solve such a problem without involving men. Christina went farther than this to the extent of discussing with Phumzile the material she had to use to clean herself. She also drew the attention of the old man who became aware of what she is doing.

In societies where we find a division between gender roles, females usually try to keep their privacy secret. In effect, this means that women exclude men completely from what they do (except for husband and wife). Such ideological roles or asymmetrical power relations can cause problems for an Arabic translator especially when it comes to the translation of texts addressed to both boys and girls (male and female), as it is very important to respect these different gender roles.

Similarly, in Egyptian culture boys and girls are not allowed to bath or bathe together. The text provides us with an example where Sitheli, the twin girl, takes off her clothes to swim together with the boys:

In seconds Phumzile and Jeremy had their clothes off and were splashing in the pool. Sitheli joined them but Christina sat on the rocks, her eyes averted (Slingsby, 1995:22).

وفي لحظات خلع فمزيل وجيرمي ملابسهما وكانا يطربشان في البركة ، بينما سيتالي وكريستينا
انتظرتا بعيدا تحت شجرة حتى انتهى الأولاد وراحا بعيدا ثم نزلتا إلي البركة.

Back-translation:

In seconds Phumzile and Jeremy went into the pool, Sitheli and Christina waited faraway under a tree till the boys finished and went away, then the girls went into the pool.

Here again the translation is problematic for various reasons. First, the fact of being naked in front of one another (boys and girls), and swimming or bathing together conflicts with cultural norms. This makes it difficult for the translator to render such a text into Arabic. The translator is obliged to distort or rewrite the text regardless of its authority. As said at the beginning the purification strategy is used in many instances in this book in order to ensure that the values of the target culture are respected. That is why the highlighted words show how the translator avoids cultural shock by translating the text with the target audience in mind and suggesting what they would have done at the pool. The Arabic translator suggests that the girls would have waited faraway under a tree till the boys had finished and then gone into the water afterwards.

It is interesting that in South Africa, where this novel is written, girls and boys play the same games and the boundaries between them are found to be almost non-existent. Or perhaps it is just Sitheli who is like this. The narrator explains this when he says that “Sitheli had not lost her desire to be involved in many of the boys’ adventures” (Slingsby, 1995:82). By contrast, the Egyptian religion and culture forbids mixing male and female

in games that may incite any sexual desires between them, depending on the ages of the children. The mismatch between these two cultures can be avoided by the Arabic translator by means of techniques such as omission, compensation and paraphrase to move away from the source culture (text) to suit the needs of his target readers.

In the previous paragraph we said that the Egyptian culture does not allow the mixing of boys and girls in order to avoid premature sexual relations between teenagers that may occur as result of this mixing. The Bushmen's culture described here, though also a gender-based culture, shows no restrictions about this when it comes to the performance of traditional ceremonies on the body of a woman by a painter or traditional healer. That is why:

[...] Wali showed them what he had done to Sitheli. Neatly painted upon her chest in pale blue paint was a picture of a hanging crow and the word Sitheli (Slingsby, 1995:107)

It is worth mentioning that though painting as art played an important role in their lives. Wali painted Sitheli's chest as some sort of punishment after she had transgressed the ancestors' (tradition's) rules. Nevertheless, this is still going to be a problem for an Egyptian child reader who will not understand why a boy would touch the body of a girl. So, in this context, painting is not an excuse for touching a girl's chest. Given this state of affairs, the Arabic translator once more felt obliged to effect some major changes for the sake of his readership. He renders the passage as follows:

Wali painted a piece of animal skin in pale blue and drew a picture of a hanging crow and wrote Sitheli's name on it, then he gave it to Sitheli to hang over her chest.

ولي لون قطعة من جلد حيوان باللون الأزرق الفاتح ورسم عليها صورة لغراب معلق ثم كتب اسم
سيتالي عليها ، ثم أعطاها إلى سيتالي لتعلقها على صدرها .

A translator working from one culture to another, especially if the second one is more conservative, will always face such problems because of the norms imposed on him by the target culture. That is why equivalence is something that is not expected if this is meant to be *sameness* as suggested by some scholars. We therefore agree with Oittinen who says that “situation and purpose are an intrinsic part of all translation” Oittinen (2000:3). We do not just translate without taking into account the person who is going to read the material. We have to make sure that that person is going to like what he reads. We have to make sure that his attention is maintained in the work before him. Furthermore, it may be useful to suggest that South African culture (half traditional, half westernised) brings the translator to continuously see things in terms of adaptation. The following example is adapted from the text to illustrate this point:

Christina laughed and suddenly she spoke for the first time since the meeting at the pool. “They saw us naked” she said. “Yesterday, when we met them for the first time, they saw that we were just as big as them. They thought we were grown-ups who could care for ourselves. But at the pool they saw us naked. Now they know,” she ended simply, “that we are still only children” (Slingsby, 1995:25)

Patterns of cultures vary considerably. For Christina to be seen naked was a laughing matter. For her it was good as the !Xam discovered their virginity. To repeat her words, they discovered “that we are still only children” (p25). However, if this happened to an Egyptian girl she would rather feel ashamed, nervous or this would even upset her. In translating this paragraph, the Arabic translator rewrote it making changes to both meaning and grammar. Once more, rewriting plays an important role to make the text accessible to the target readers. The above paragraph was rewritten as follows:

Christina is a child and wants to be viewed and treated as such.

Translated as:

كريستينا كانت منزعجة وتوقفت عن الكلام ، لأنه قد انتابها شعور بالخزي منذ أن رآهما الناس
عريانتين في البركة

Since any translation is undertaken for a “purpose” (Nord, 1997), here the translator wants to achieve this purpose by showing that Egyptian girls respect their dignity. The function of a literary text in Egypt cannot, we believe, be understood without taking moral values into consideration.

Swear words and insults are another feature that has no place in Egyptian culture. In the text we are told that Sitheli told Phumzile to ‘shut up’ because he laughed at her (p.107). This expression ‘shut up’ is not accepted in Egyptian culture where it is interpreted as an insult and is likely to cause serious problems between people. The Arabic translator therefore suggests three alternatives of translating the expression which will not leave the addressee with a bad feeling:

Please leave me alone: من فضلك اتركني وحدي, Please don't irritate me:

. ابتعد عني or Stay away from me: من فضلك لا تزعجني

Ideologically speaking, the register or the style of the source text changes from ‘less polite’ to ‘polite’.

The main thrust of this chapter was the series of things that a translator needs to take into account when translating the novel *The Joining* from English to Arabic. I showed how some aspects of the source text need to be changed to suit the moral and ethical upbringing of the child in the Arab world. People have different ways of approaching life, and it is always important that children grow up with the right notions. This also depends on what the translator intends to achieve. There should be a balance between what is changed and what is maintained.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion and future research

The results seem to show that translating children's books into Arabic places higher demands on the translator than translating into another culture which may be more similar to the source language culture. However, there is considerable potential in translating English texts into Arabic. A larger number of translated children's books are likely to bring children into the modern world without letting them lose their own tradition and identity. Further work is required in order to determine exactly what is achievable and not achievable.

When we translate across cultures, we need to have a knowledge of the cultures we are working with. By using a culture-based approach, we include the target reader in our work. However, it is true to say that this approach to translation is more complicated to implement than an instruction-based one, that is, where we translate a recipe word-for-word, for example. It is probably also true that it is more difficult to implement it well. But is it valid to avoid such an approach simply because it is more difficult to implement and implement well, when there is an advantage in terms of efficiency, and possibly also in terms of accommodation of the target culture and readers? It is clear that culture is very important in translation rather than only relying on language, but the next question to be answered is: how much do they exclude each other and how much do they relate to each other? This question has not been satisfactorily answered by this thesis. We know for sure that the theoretical study of language (linguistics) can continue to provide insight into the future of the translator's task. As Bassnett posits:

The purpose of translation theory, then, is to reach an understanding of the process undertaken in the act of translation and, not, as is so commonly misunderstood a set of norms for effecting the perfect translation. In the same way, literary criticism does not seek to provide a set of instructions for producing the ultimate novel, but rather to understand the internal and external structures operating within and around a work of art. The

pragmatic dimension of translation cannot be categorised anymore than the “inspiration” of a text can be defined and prescribed.
(1980:37)

For a translation to be successful, we argue that many approaches need to intervene: (1) linguistic theory and its extension in applied linguistics and the processes of language can be applied in translation, (2) literary criticism which provides information into the understanding of characters and situations in which they operate and (3) cultural studies which studies translation in terms of cultures and contexts. In other words, this work stands at the intersection of Cultural and Translation Studies and tries to investigate a range of linguistic and cultural behaviour issues between English and Arabic.

The work has provided some discussion of the cultural aspect of translation, but we acknowledge its limits. It is true that the work tackled the processes involved in the creation of Arabic translated text, but we must acknowledge the fact that this work has focused more on the question of influence i.e. the effect of the Arabic culture and language on the source or target text rather than on the theory behind the creation of the new product.

This study has hinted at a number of research areas which merit further study in the areas of the theory of ideology in children’s literature, the history of children’s literature, and the criticism of Egyptian children’s literature. It would be helpful for there to be an ongoing effort to deepen research in these areas. Surely there will be improvements and even greater improvements in the future if these areas of research are given attention. There should be additional work to promote translation between Arabic and other languages such as English by creating and disseminating cultural materials that can inform Egyptian children about other worlds as well. This can encourage intercultural dialogue and the intellectual exploration of knowledge. People have learned much from Egypt; it is high time that we also learned from others.

The research effort was, thus, limited initially by the lack of a theoretical foundation on the critical study of children’s books translated from other cultures into Arabic. There was no available work which could provide us with linking materials to our present study of *The Joining*. While the methods used here are reliable, and the means of measurement

appear valid, the concepts involved have not previously been investigated elsewhere and should be subject to further study

The limited scope of this project meant that it was not feasible to speak of culture and translation without looking at the value of other approaches as well. The step beyond getting an accurate or specific methodology of cross-cultural translation is obviously to get a working system, which could replace other methods of translation. Such a project would constitute a massive task. If that were possible one day, the foundations have already been laid through many other works including this one.

5.2. Recapitulation of key points

The introductory chapter was concerned only with preliminaries, describing the genesis of the study and the methodology adopted. Apart from reminding the reader that the study was based on the South African youth novel '*The Joining*' and its translation into Arabic by identifying and providing solutions to cultural problems that might arise in the process, there is no need to recapitulate the aim, rationale, and research questions here.

The first section (chapter 1) was concerned with background. We considered, briefly, the nature of *translating for children*. We looked at a theory of translating for a specific audience concentrating on the question: 'What do translators actually do when translating for children?' Our position is simply stated: translating for children is translating for a purpose therefore a translator must take into consideration the moral values that we need to inculcate in the children. This is spelt out by Oittinen (2000:3). In this we understand that the intentions of both the translator and the publishers have to be directed to the purpose of translating for children. That is why adaptation is considered a key issue in children's literature translation because children's reading material needs to be carefully monitored. This does not mean that we need to adopt a "big-brother-is-watching-you approach" It was noted that the translator is responsible for the text he translates. It was also noted that the texts for translation are very frequently the product of authors who write in their mother tongue and conform to the realities of the places in which they live. Consequently, translators of this type of literature (Arabic translators in this context) are called upon to a degree unknown in other translation services to adapt texts to their target

culture. The term 'translation' only becomes meaningful as long as the texts suit the needs of target readers. Then the readers can be said to have enjoyed equal status with the source text readers.

After providing a background to the topic, we focused on an examination of *children's literature in the Arab world*. This literature originated in an oral form - folk literature in which professional storytellers recounted popular tales - often adding new anecdotes and individual touches in the hope of collecting more money from their audience. Although written Arabic literature has existed for a long time (for example the use of paper was introduced to the Arab world long before it became available in Europe - and this partly accounts for the early development of Arabic literature for which parchment or papyrus was generally used until the 8th century) this literature was inaccessible to the illiterate masses and largely incomprehensible by many people who preferred storytelling. Written children's literature as a genre only became influential in the 20th century. It is relatively new.

The study of Arabic translation is followed by an account of *cultural context adaptation* in relation to the translation of children's literature. This chapter consists of the practical analysis and translation of certain extracts from the novel *The Joining*. The whole object of the exercise was to show the problems that arise in this type of translation, and to suggest the steps that need to be followed to find possible solutions for the Arabic translation of children's literary texts. It was never our intention to provide final answers to these problems. Given the kind of text we been dealing with, the decisions reached were to a large extent subjective, and depend very much on personal taste. Nevertheless, the translation was guided by general principles or strategies of literary translation as outlined by many translation scholars.

Three main issues were tackled in this chapter: (1) the specification of the translator's competence (the knowledge of the English and Arabic languages, the knowledge of the two cultures, and the skills required by the translator in order to be capable of translating); (2) the familiarity of the translator with different disciplines from which to draw inspiration, and (3) the application of all of the above issues to the novel by Slingsby. "It must not be forgotten that this is a discipline (translation) firmly rooted in

practical application (Bassnett, 1980:7). It must be clear that the application depended on insights from cultural studies, which gave us the licence to change certain things in the text. The adaptation took into account the demands of producer and product, distribution, reception, and post-production processing. We were guided by questions such as who is the writer? How does his text read? Will it be accepted as such by the target audience? How will they react if not adapted?

It is now our intention to show how this work is relevant to both the practical concerns of the Arabic translator and reader and also to the interests of translation studies. The work permitted us to move the focus progressively away from viewing literary translation as a text (language) -fixed theory towards context-sensitive functional view of language, as a system of resources available to the translator for the expression and comprehension of meaning (in the broadest sense of the term).

We must remember that faithfulness and accuracy in translation cannot be expected. To be meaningful and communicative, a translation must take into consideration mismatches between the source language and the receptor language, the balance between fidelity to the source text and readability in the target language. The best translation is the one that no one recognizes as a translation. In other words, the document should read as if it were written by someone of one's own cultural background. Keeping this metaphor in mind gives support both to the recent theory of translation and the present work. Translation should not keep anyone slave to the theory of faithfulness in translation.

Bassnett (1980), when discussing translation studies, expresses clearly her opinion on language issues as she remarks that what is generally understood as translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted.

As we see it in this work, translators of fiction can only adapt texts as the meaning across cultures or language does not always correspond. Translation and adaptation always go together. Adaptation however is also considered an issue of authority and manipulation

usually in a negative sense (Oittinen, 2000:164) yet adaptation and translation, Oittinen further argues, should not often be argued as different issues. They are part of the same whole; all translation includes adaptation, as we, when translating; always think of our future readers, who might be called the “super addressees” of our stories, the stories by both original authors and translators as authors.

These findings are significant for the discipline of translation because they show that much progress has been made to integrate cultural issues into the discipline. We come back to the hypothesis that we have been supporting in this research that translation is an event, which unifies language and culture. That is to say that there are, in different languages or cultures differences and similarities. Translation is an event, a transformation which fights against any attempt to the effacement of language or culture that carries it. As a whole, translators need to work much more effectively to produce more about culture and translation.

Throughout the research the results have shown a permanent resistance to their effacement from bringing a cultural approach to the text. We assume that the results provided by this work are believable since they support the aim we wished to reach for this work, that of adapting the novel, *The Joining*, into the Arabic context. The adaptation of children’s texts into a given target language should therefore be seen as an essential field of study for the Egyptian Arabic translator of children’s books without which the chances to be read become very much limited. By trying to deny or overlook the Arabic culture unacceptable products result.

This research did not intend to make claims about the entirety of the problems pertaining to Arabic translation. Rather, the research was aimed at making generalizations about how these cultural problems can be handled when translating from other languages into Arabic. This research therefore supports the work done by Oittinen (2000) and Klingberg (1986) in translating for children.

It also corroborates the view that:

Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever the intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspects can help in the evolution of a literature in a society (Lefevere, 1992: vii).

The above quotation makes us believe that the literature produced in the Arabic culture is arguably a literature of power because the Islamic religion embodies ideologies that govern the community and therefore any translation is bound to respect these ideologies in order to be accepted.

An attempt has been made to present various solutions in the translation of English children's books into Arabic, and how children's literature is perceived in a religious culture, as well as the relevance of various theoretical and critical assumptions concerning cultural studies developed in translation studies in recent years. In the research report, we also explained how culture is linked to literature and how it influences the manner in which we interpret thoughts and view the world. This consciousness of cultural aspects should be studied more in translation, especially in a post 9/11 world where many countries and continents are divided along religious lines.

The recent spate of attacks on Danish embassies all over the world after the publication of cartoons (Jyllands Posten 30/9/05) on the Prophet Mohamed shows that culture is very much an important part of every country and community. It translates into the field of translation and this burgeoning field of study on *cultural adaptation* has the merit for having categorised and assessed the critical response to fiction paving the way between culture, children's literature and translation. At the same time, we showed that cultural context adaptation does not mean that the translator should go on a moralising crusade to show that his culture is better than all other cultures.

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Appendix 1