

## Reflecting upon children's literature based on translation and adaptation / *Refletindo sobre a literatura infantojuvenil a partir da tradução e da adaptação*

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### ABSTRACT

Secular children's literature which has lasted also through translation and adaptation are experienced either via oral literature or TV/books storytelling. These texts come originally from different cultural contexts and are spread by interpretations which keep the texts alive and amplify their comprehension. This paper aims at relating translation, adaptation and children's literature, seeking to reflect on how the knowledge about translation and adaptation may be useful to consider children's literature classic tales. Classified as a conceptual research (Williams; Chesterman, 2009), these are the main authors and their discussion areas considered as theoretical background: Jakobson (2012), Bassnett (2002), Plaza (2003) and House (2013) on translation; Katan (1999), Laraia (2001), Bassnett (2002) and Santos (2010) on culture; Hutcheon (2013) and Ribas (2014) on adaptation; and Lajolo and Zilberman (2007), Silva (2009) and Macêdo (2019) on a brief discussion about children's literature, including the adaptation of classic tales. Coming to terms with the idea discussed, considering linguistic, aesthetic and cultural aspects, may be an enlightening resource to understand how these texts are reinterpreted in new contexts, focusing on the genre and opening space for the narratives already known by the general public to be reconstructed in new cultures in different moments of life,

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and valuing translation and adaptation to be considered independent from the source text from a perspective that considers new audiences and contexts.

**KEYWORDS:** Translation; Adaptation; Children's Literature; Culture.

#### RESUMO

*Através da oralidade ou das contações lidas e/ou assistidas, entramos em contato com narrativas seculares da literatura infantojuvenil que perduram através da tradução e da adaptação. Tais textos são provenientes de outros contextos culturais e chegam à contemporaneidade por meio de interpretações que mantêm os textos vivos e ampliam suas possibilidades de compreensão. O objetivo deste artigo é o de relacionar a tradução, a adaptação e a literatura infantojuvenil, buscando refletir sobre como o entendimento sobre tradução e adaptação pode ser proveitoso para uma reflexão acerca dos contos clássicos da literatura infantojuvenil. A partir de um artigo do tipo conceitual (Williams; Chesterman, 2009), os principais teóricos que norteiam esta discussão são Jakobson (2012), Bassnett (2002), Plaza (2003) e House (2013), que embasam a argumentação sobre tradução; Katan (1999), Laraia (2001), Bassnett (2002) e Santos (2010), sobre cultura; Hutcheon (2013) e Ribas (2014), sobre adaptação; e Lajolo e Zilberman (2007), Silva (2009) e Macêdo (2019), com uma discussão sobre o percurso da literatura infantojuvenil, incluindo a adaptação de contos clássicos. Concluimos que pensar a literatura infantojuvenil, especificamente os contos de clássicos, a partir da tradução e da adaptação, através de aspectos linguísticos, estéticos e culturais, permite a visualização de como os textos são ressignificados, valorizando o gênero e abrindo espaço para que narrativas já conhecidas pelo público em geral sejam reconstruídas em culturas diversas ao longo dos tempos e para que a tradução e a adaptação sejam valorizadas e tratadas de forma independente do texto fonte a partir de uma perspectiva que considere novos públicos e contextos de circulação.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Tradução; Adaptação; Literatura Infantojuvenil; Cultura.

## 1 Translated and adapted children's literature

We commonly get in touch with children's literature, especially classic tales, during preschool, as mothers, fathers and caregivers of babies and children often retell narratives that are part of the stories that are passed down to this age group. These stories are passed down from generation to generation through translation and adaptation, perpetuating themselves both orally and through books (through interlingual and intersemiotic translations, in the case of illustrated books), films and series (through audiovisual translations) in a wide range of cultures.

Given the familiarity of this genre among children and adults, we are aware of the relevance of classic children's literature texts that come to us through translations and/or adaptations. To this end, before we come across these narratives, it is necessary to discuss the concepts of translation and adaptation and understand the relevance of these theories for the dissemination of children's literature in other cultures, as well as to question and mobilize discussions around the understanding of childhood.

In this study, translation and adaptation are considered as independent texts, in relation to their originals, and published for new readers and in new cultural contexts (Tourey, 1995; Nord,

2007; Hutcheon, 2013). The definitions of each of these terms are presented, considering language and culture as a *continuum* (Bassnett, 2002) and intrinsic to both forms of textualization.

The motivation for this study came from a personal re-encounter with children's literature accompanied by children and the perception of how narratives are organized in translations and adaptations, especially of classic texts of this genre. This perception was sharpened by the desire to research and work on the topics for the subjects of Translation in an English Language and Literature undergraduate course at a public university in the city of Campina Grande, Paraíba, Brazil. In the daily routine with children, the professional experience found an opportunity to raise new questions about the area of Translation.

The reflection on children's literature benefits from ideas on translation and adaptation when we face translation as a cultural mediation and adaptation as an expansion of the ideas of the source text (Hutcheon, 2013; Cronin, 2013). The contexts and the expansion of meanings envisioned in translation and adaptation characterize children's literature texts, giving them a new arrangement for other contexts of publication and reading, allowing new perspectives on texts written centuries ago. This updated perspective falls on the child reader in such a way that the text can bring them closer to narratives written in cultural contexts distant from their own. From this perspective, readers can benefit from these discussions, as they permit to think about language as culture and the possibilities of new expressions and interpretations of the text.

The objective of this paper is to make a connection amongst translation, adaptation and children's literature, seeking to reflect on how understanding translation and adaptation can be useful to think about classic tales of children's literature.

In order to pursue this objective, this conceptual paper (Williams; Chesterman, 2009) presents concepts related to translation and adaptation in children's literature, following ideas developed by authors such as Jakobson (2012), Bassnett (2002), Plaza (2003) and House (2013) that support the discussions on translation; Katan (1999), Laraia (2001), Bassnett (2002) and Santos (2010), on culture; Hutcheon (2013) and Ribas (2014), on adaptation; and Lajolo and Zilberman (2007), Silva (2009) and Macêdo (2019), with a discussion on the path of children's literature, including the adaptation of classic tales.

This discussion takes translation and adaptation to the cultural context, in which the focus is on the reading public in order to provide a better understanding of how translators and adapters make choices that are consistent with the reality of text circulation, allowing new forms of re-expression based on children's literature classic texts.

## 2 Translation and adaptation concepts considering children's literature

Throughout the history of translation theory, there have been different perspectives on language and text, resulting in translation concepts that have changed throughout the studies, leading to new points of reflection for the analysis of translations and adaptations, such as the importance of thinking about and giving greater focus to the target culture and text, as is the case with the deepening of discussions motivated by the Descriptive Translation Studies (Toury, 1995) and the Translation Functionalist Approach (Nord, 2007).

Jakobson (2012, p. 127) states that “the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further, alternative sign”. Among these signs, the author takes us to a place that is not what common sense expects when translation is discussed, commonly associated only with written text. For this theorist, translation can be classified into three types: intralingual translation, interlingual translation and intersemiotic translation. Intralingual translation is defined as the translation of verbal signs by means of other verbal signs of the same language; interlingual translation is the translation of verbal signs of one language by means of verbal signs of another language; and intersemiotic translation is the translation of verbal signs by means of non-verbal signs. Considering children's literature, for instance, it is possible to appreciate a variety of forms of text translation, contemplating the translation categories proposed by Jakobson (2012). Classic tales, such as those by Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, are available in interlingual translations, from other languages (French and German) to Brazilian Portuguese, or in intersemiotic translations, which can be found in illustrated children's books and in audiovisual adaptations.

House (2013) reflects on Jakobson's (2012) three categories of translation, emphasizing that the common point between them is the replacement of messages from one sign with messages from the same sign or another. These messages are designed to work for audiences that are different from the source text audience. Thus, treating translation as a mere transposition of one verbal code to another does not encompass the depth of reflection that translation allows. According to House (2013), the interest lies in the communicative use of the language, in other words, not only in linguistic forms, but in what these forms imply when they are used. Thinking about the audience brings to translation a reflection on language based on its pragmatic use, that is, on the context in which it will be received and who will receive it. Different audiences require

translation projects that will be executed based on specific uses of the language, even if the translations arising from these demands are made available at the same historical moment.

For Nida and Taber (1982, p. 12), “Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style”. Combining the ideas of Jakobson (2012), House (2013) and Nida and Taber (1982), the communicative use of language (considering the language in context of use) corresponds to the spontaneity of its reading and, therefore, its interpretation. Thus, a translation prepared with a focus on the language pragmatism may have a better chance of reaching the intended audience, as it is more watchful to the uses of the language and the reader, bringing them closer to the translated text. Thinking about how the reading audience receives a text allows the translator to make more conscious and accurate linguistic choices, since a child reader does not have the same linguistic maturity as an adult reader, for example. This perception directly affects the translator's choices during the translation process and may be detrimental from the point of view of the originality of the original work and its translation, depending on the translator's experience.

The selection of linguistic forms for a translation involves the interpretation of the translator, who is, above all, a reader. Lucindo (2006) directs her reflection to translation as an interpretative process consisting of the understanding, deverbilization and re-expression of the text. In the process of understanding, the translator grasps the meaning of the text that is read, deconstructs this meaning based on their interpretation and, finally, re-expresses it through a reconstruction in another language, which is the materialization of the translation. From this perspective, the translated text is not a mere copy of a source text, but the interpretation and re-expression of its meanings in another linguistic context. This justifies the various possibilities of different translations (synchronously or diachronically) coming from the same source text.

As a new form of expression of meaning, translation is configured as a cultural act, in other words, it is not only linguistic, as pointed out by House (2013). According to the author, translation is “an act of communication between cultures” (House, 2013, p. 11), since culture is inherent to the language; both are interrelated, expressing the cultural reality of a specific context. Therefore, it is essential that the translator be aware of the values and conventions of the group that received the source text and of the group that will receive the translated text, since it is the cultural aspects that determine the appropriate verbal or non-verbal choices in a translation. Taking into account the cultures of the audiences involved in a translation process, we are able to realize that the

differences between them are more important than the similarities and the translator must be careful to move the ideas of one audience to another without distorting them, keeping in mind that cultural conventions are distinct and, in the translated text, materialized through language.

Plaza (2003) expands the concepts presented in this article, stating that all thoughts are translation, as in order to think, we bring to consciousness concepts that are represented in new signs. Furthermore, based on this definition, the author leads us to an interpretation of translation that already includes verbal and non-verbal signs, since, as part of thought, concepts are generated from signs of both natures, as we think not only through words, but also through images, sounds and colors, for instance. This perspective drives our attention to Jakobson's translation categories and dismantles the need to think of translation in a compartmentalized way, making it possible to think of translation categories in a way that they are interrelated, with translation being a transmutation of signs that is not stagnant, but which is materialized in the final product of the translation based on one of these categories. According to Plaza (2003), it is possible to untie the concepts of intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation, aligning them with a broader idea of translation as an expression of thought. We believe that this perspective is consistent with a perspective of translation that includes thought as a requirement for a translation to exist, regardless of the form (verbal or non-verbal) in which it is materialized.

According to Bassnett (2002, p. 10), translation is considered as “an act of both inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication”, ensuring the survival of a text. Based on reflections by Sapir (1956) and Whorf (1956), the author also states (making an analogy with the human body) that culture can be seen as the body and language as the heart; both coexisting and being interdependent. Thus, no language (heart) can exist without being inserted in a cultural context (body) and any change that occurs in one of these components interferes with the functioning of the other. Changes in languages arise from changes in behaviors which are conventionalized in the cultures to which they belong. Both are established in a *continuum*, and it is not possible to conceive one without the other or changing one without affecting the other. Cultural changes characterize the contexts of production materialized in translation.

Considering the intertemporality mentioned by Bassnett (2002), Cronin (2013) states that a text lingers within the use of language and translation, since the translated text reaches readers in different spaces and times. The author refers to this survival of the text through translation using the term “afterlife”. From this perspective, we interpret that the source text fulfills its purpose and “dies”, after being written and read by the public. However, from the translated text (and even

possible retranslations) over the years, a text can remain alive in contexts far from its own, being read by new audiences and understood from new temporal and cultural perspectives. Hence, translation is responsible for the new life of the text in another culture. Taking children's literature as an example, classic tales are presented to children through translations and adaptations, and not through the source text that originated these texts. Our contact with the texts of Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, originally written in French and German, takes place through the translators of these texts into Brazilian Portuguese. The children (or the storytellers) who receive the texts of these writers do not question whether they are translations. In fact, these texts are received as if they were written in their own languages. At this point, we disarrange the relationships established at the ends of the same thread between the source text and the translated text, opening space for a translation that is established independently of the text that originally generated it but, at the same time, guarantees its survival in other contexts.

The survival or resurrection of the text is also mentioned by Benjamin (2012, p. 76): "If translation is indeed later than the original, it nonetheless indicates that important works, which never find their chosen translators in the era in which they are produced, have reached the stage of their continuing life". So, it is made clear that life after death is brought to the source text through the work of the translator in a new historical moment. Thus, without translation it would not be possible to revive the texts that Benjamin cites as being important to literature around the world, which would be forgotten or become inaccessible to other cultures due to linguistic barriers. It is through translation that the text can be retransmitted to other audiences and contexts, continuing its life based on the ways in which language and culture are organized in each new translation demand.

Revisiting Bassnett's (2002) idea of translation also as an intercultural act, the translator must be considered not only a decoder of the text or transposer of messages, but a cultural mediator, as pointed out by Katan (1999). For the author, the translator's work surpasses translation and interpretation, since, in addition to linguistic fluency, it is essential that the translator be culturally fluent.

Regarding adaptation, Hutcheon (2013) proposes a look towards the category of intersemiotic translation presented by Jakobson (2012), understood as the transposition of one system of signs to another. In Hutcheon's (2013) discussions, the transposition between verbal and audiovisual signs is evident. However, this focus needs to be expanded to address the adaptation of children's literature, for instance, in which we have adaptations both for audiovisual and for



books, which may be illustrated or not. Therefore, Plaza's (2003) conceptualization of translation can endorse the understanding of adaptation, since the author considers the transposition of one sign to another as inherent to human thought. In this case, for every adaptation process there is translation process, since both involve interpretations of signs into new signs (verbal or non-verbal) in specific contexts.

Resuming the interpretative process outlined by Lucindo (2006), adapters go through the same process as translators: first going through the interpretation of the source text and then, the adaptation that unfolds in the creation of a work through an intertextual relationship, leading the reader/viewer/listener to retrieve the source text and, for many, to the inevitable comparison between this and the new text resulting from the adaptation. Such dialogism often leads the target audience to perpetuate ideas that underrate the adapted content.

Ribas (2014) highlights three stigmas of adaptation that deserve discussion, as follows: 1. the adaptation seen as a subsequent work and, therefore, dependent on a work that precedes it; 2. the belief that the adaptation demystifies canonical works when they are adapted for cinema (a means of mass communication); and 3. this demystification is pictured as negative by critics. Based on these stigmas, we seek here to study and argue that there is no superiority of the original work in relation to the adapted work and that the demystification of a canonical work does not need to be viewed negatively by critics, since the objective of the adaptation is not to replace the source work, but to understand it as a work that can be reinterpreted and produce a new artistic object. According to Ribas (2014), it is necessary to go beyond the mere consumption of the adaptation based on the game of similarities and differences between the two works in question. In other words, comparing the two works in a dialogical relationship and, at the same time, thoughtful upon the new format created from the adaptation, observing the internal characteristics of this work and how it stands on its own, in an independent narrative. Furthermore, the idea of fidelity, deeply rooted in discussions about adaptation and translation, becomes unfeasible if we consider that the objective of translations and adaptations is not to copy the previous work, as if there was an original work and a copy of it.

Hutcheon (2013) points out that adaptations are seen as a work of lesser value, as it is considered secondary. Following this line of thinking, an adaptation would not be as good as the original work. However, being a work derived from another one does not make the adaptation an inferior work. In this sense, the source text is considered a source of information (Nord, 2007), not as an authoritarian text determining how the adaptation should be presented; the relationship



between the texts is established in intertextuality and not in the sacralization of the source text. Thinking about adaptation from a relationship of dependence on the source text can result in a depreciation of the new work, which does not correspond to the expectations of an audience that wants to recollect the source text, but that in fact, does not establish itself in such a way.

Just as it happens with translations, there may be many possibilities for adapting a text in circulation in the same historical moment, as is the case with the number of children's texts that are repeatedly adapted, either for books or for audiovisual productions. The source text does not give orders to subsequent works; it exists so that it can be restructured and linger over time based on other perceptions and modes of production. A clear proof of the non-authoritarianism of the source text is the possibility for a reader/viewer to have contact with this text after their experience with the adapted text. This guarantees, for instance, the lateral (rather than vertical) coexistence of the texts. Taking children's literature as an example, children come into contact with the narrative of "Little Red Riding Hood" adapted for other written texts or for the cinema, for example, without having read the texts by Perrault or the Grimms. This indicates that the translation is as independent as the text from which it is originated.

From this perspective, we see adaptation as a process of reinterpretation, of originality, undoing the perspective of fidelity in relation to the previous work, in the sense of copying. In this case, there is no sacralization of the source text, allowing the adapted text to be analyzed within its internal coherence, even going through unexpected paths that, at the same time, remind us of texts that we have already experienced.

According to Hutcheon (2013), adaptation is a repetition without replication, with no intention of being faithful to the text that originated the adaptation, but of making an allusion to that text through a new product. Hence, it is necessary that the source text be recognized in the adaptation for it to be considered as such. Clarifying this idea, the author states that the adaptation is not a 'vampire' product, which sucks the vital energy of the source text until its death. On the contrary, adaptation brings new life to an existing narrative, guaranteeing it a survival, just as it happens with translation.

Moving from the idea of replication, adaptations and also varied translations of the same text have been produced, such as children's literature classic tales retold through centuries, being justified by production demands coming from adapters, the audience that will receive the adaptation and contexts of reception and creation (Hutcheon, 2013). Therefore the idea that translations and adaptations become dated, being considered displaced from the reality in which they are being

consumed is accepted. New contexts, new cultures and even the cultural dynamism of the same group may require the production of a more current adaptation.

### 3 Culture in translation and adaptation

Communication between languages necessarily involves exchange between cultures. It is not possible to consider a translation or adaptation without relating them to the cultural context in which the source text is inserted and the cultural context in which the target text will be received. As Bassnett (2002, p. 23) states "No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture". It is necessary to treat translation and adaptation as a double-bind relationship and investigate cultural similarities and differences that can be found in the contexts in which texts are received (House, 2013).

Toury (1995, p. 21) asserts that "a translation is always a fact of a particular (target!) culture". The author, within a descriptive perspective of translation, looks at the culture in which the new text will be received by a new reading audience, giving relevance to the new context of circulation and intended reader.

One of the ways we consider culture is as an internal, collective, naturally and unconsciously acquired aspect, according to Katan (1999). That is to say that culture would be formed by the environment's vital elements that are continuously and unconsciously absorbed by a person, influencing their development throughout life. For the author, each aspect belonging to culture is linked to a unifying system that defines a person and their culture.

LoCastro (2012), converging with what is mentioned by Katan (1999), states that culture is a reflection of values and beliefs that members of a community have about the world and that build understanding about the language. Culture and language act mutually, articulating the way we understand and act in the world, an aspect corroborated by House (2013, p. 12) when considering culture as "a group's shared values and conventions which act as mental guidelines for orienting people's thought and behaviour". In other words, people from the same culture share, in a more homogeneous way, what they think and how they act in a given society.

From these ideas of culture, translations and adaptations cannot disregard culture, language, the context in which texts circulate and the presumed reader, since texts are not isolated from their contexts of production and publication. Furthermore, culture and language are interconnected, acting together as part of a *continuum*. From this perspective, it is necessary that,

in addition to in-depth linguistic knowledge, the translator is aware of how their translation choices may be received by readers in the target context. According to Oittinen (2002), for translators to produce successful translations, they need to consider the presumed reader. Thus, for an idea to pass from one culture to another, the focus on the target audience is irrevocable, since the translator/adapter constructs his text based on what he considers to be the presumed public's view of the world, trying to ensure that his choices fit into a specific cultural context that is different from the context of the source text, both linked temporally, spatially and politically to a society. Furthermore, it is important to pay attention to the fact that, being linked to these aspects, culture is also dynamic, it is not stagnant, as stated by Santos (2010). Thus, translation or adaptation that seems appropriate for the current (or past) context of a society may no longer be so in a few years, justifying new translations and adaptations of classic tales from children's literature, for example.

There is little possibility for an individual, being it the translator/adapter, to master all the cultural aspects of a society, since culture, in addition to being dynamic, is managed by individuals in specific contexts and the translator cannot appropriate all of them (Laraia, 2001). For that reason, it seems relevant to reinforce the importance of the translator's constant immersion in both the linguistic aspects and the cultural issues of the societies to which the texts are associated. This way, there is a greater chance of producing texts (whether translations or adaptations) that are appropriate to the contexts/cultures of reception.

#### **4 Children's literature: from classic tales to contemporary adaptations**

The emergence of children's literature dates back to the 17th century, based on Fénelon's texts, with the aim of educating children through the moralizing nature of the narratives (Silva, 2009). In the same period in France, Perrault removed obscene passages of incestuous and cannibalistic nature from the folk tales told by peasants, originating the large contingent of children's stories that we know today.

In Germany's 19th century, it was the Brothers Grimm's turn to give prominence to what would become children's literature, according to Volobuef (2011). For Adelino Brandão (1995), Brazilian authors were strongly influenced by the folkloric material collected by the Brothers Grimm, which resulted in a cataloging of 2010 European narratives that help to maintain the memory of the tales, in addition to several versions of the same tale, which implies that, although the narratives

may present a common sense, they also manifested specific cultural aspects of the people who recount them, an element that makes it difficult to identify the origin of these stories.

It is necessary to emphasize that even with the notorious popularity of the tales cataloged by Charles Perrault or the various versions that the Brothers Grimm wrote of the same tale, the texts presented by them are not exactly what we expect from a text that captures the interest of children today. In Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood" (2019), she is devoured by the wolf and the tale ends; and, in the Grimms' "Cinderella" (2019), the sisters are encouraged by their mother to mutilate part of their feet so that they can fit into the little shoe lost at the ball, for example. The moralizing nature of these narratives was commonly permeated by punishments distributed to the characters in the tales, often women, as in these examples.

According to Lajolo and Zilberman (2007), it was between the 18th and 19th centuries, during the Industrial Revolution (France and England), that books for children began to be considered important, since it was during this period that the family began to be considered a tool of the State to organize society. Faced with the search for jobs in industries, which offered better working conditions, rural workers migrated to the city, making it necessary for the State to encourage a new family model, encouraging men to provide for the family and women to manage the household. Within this context, there was the child, who began to receive society's attention and, at the same time as negative values were attributed to them (fragility, lack of protection and dependence), new services were oriented towards them (toys, books and branches of science, such as Psychology and Pediatrics, for example).

In this movement, school gradually became a mandatory activity for children. This institution would be the one responsible and qualified to prepare the immature individuals for society, and from then on, there would be cooperation between family and school for the development of the child. It is in this space, which enables the child to read, that children's literature begins to consolidate itself as a product. As a result, literature begins to assume a pedagogical bias in an institutionalized way (Lajolo; Zilberman, 2007).

According to Zilberman (1985), it was only in the 20th century that children's literature grew as a literary genre in Brazil and when we started to find children's literature with a more attentive look at its reading audience in the national scene, with Monteiro Lobato as a reference. Formiga (2009) points out that Monteiro Lobato was an author who explicitly included references to classic tales in his work, when, for example, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Snow White, Tom Thumb, Ali Baba, Peter Pan, Bluebeard, Puss 'n Boots and many other characters from the stories of

Perrault, Grimm and Andersen (which were also translated and adapted by Lobato himself) visit the nationwide famous “Sítio do Picapau Amarelo” in “Reinações de Narizinho” (2019).

For Zilberman (1985), the commitment of children's literature should be focused on aesthetics, literary creativity, and art. It is from this perspective that it becomes important to approach classic texts of children's literature from a critical perspective that leads the student (and for us, readers, in general) to understand the realities of their own as well as of others, expanding their knowledge of the world (Silva, 2009). Thinking from this perspective provides an understanding of the linguistic, aesthetic, and cultural aspects that construct the texts. We believe that, based on the understanding of how translation and adaptation perpetuate these texts, a greater criticality can be directed to the interpretation of classic tales, considering these aspects, in contemporary times.

Analyzing adaptations in contemporary times, Macêdo (2019), in a study that involves Afro-Brazilian issues in the adaptation of European tales into Brazilian Portuguese, presents a discussion on the narratives “Rapunzel e o quibungo” (2012) and “Cinderela e Chico Rei” (2015), adaptations of the classic tales “Rapunzel” and “Cinderella” by Perrault and the Grimms. The author shows how elements of the narrative adapted to Afro-Brazilian cultural aspects, such as physical characteristics (skin color, physical features, and hair), food, objects, and names of the characters; in addition to the setting of the story in Brazilian regions and the inclusion of national animals in the narratives, revealing the intention of the adapters and illustrators of the texts to contribute to raising the self-esteem of black children who experience these new forms of storytelling, having been starred for centuries as European characters. In these texts, the adaptation would be responsible for creating black representation within narratives that were initially white centered. Creative resources, designed through cultural aspects of Afro-Brazilian children, used throughout the adapted narratives can create a new way of seeing texts that have been known for a long time, expanding their possibilities of interpretation.

The author also points out that the adapters “chose to implant some of Brazilian cultural traditions onto a story traditionally placed in European settings” (Macêdo, 2019, p. 100, our translation<sup>1</sup>). For her, this strategy did not make the text trustworthy, because even with Afro-Brazilian cultural elements present in the adaptations, the stories do not seem accurate in relation to Afro-Brazilian reality. The clothing worn by the characters in “Cinderela e Chico Rei” for the ball,

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<sup>1</sup> “optaram por enxertar algumas das tradições culturais brasileiras em uma história tradicionalmente ambientada em cenários europeus” (Macêdo, 2019, p. 100)

for example, remains similar to what we expect from narratives starring white characters and does not relate to the clothing of Afro-Brazilian royalty. Furthermore, we add that, in both narratives, the romanticization between characters and the salvation of the female character by the male character remains, maintaining this patriarchal aspect of the source narratives and which we consider outdated for today. Despite this, we do believe that visualizing one's own culture and ethnicity in the context of a classic children's and young adult tale can spark interest and identification among readers in this age group. Furthermore, we emphasize the importance of adaptations continuing this movement of outpacing the initial narratives through current and local linguistic and cultural aspects according to the context of the publication.

In the discussion about children's literature, we highlight the following: while texts of this genre are written by adults and, therefore, can reveal the way adults expect children to see the world, it is also up to the writer to create a text of an emancipatory nature that can be viewed by this specific reader and reach their sensitivity, strengthening the child's perspective and avoiding becoming a merely doctrinal text, as seen at the end of Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood" narrative, where the writer clearly mentions the care that "young girls so delicate and beautiful" (Perrault, 2019, p. 158) must take when encountering wolves and which reveal the moral of the story at the end of his text.

### Final considerations

In children's literary storytelling over the years, both translation and adaptation are responsible for keeping the memories of the source texts alive for different audiences.

In this paper, the reflection on translation and adaptation was highlighted, since both are interrelated, and, as we have seen from Plaza (2003), translation is a transmutation of sign into sign; process carried out when we think, when we translate within the same language, when we translate between different languages or when we translate from one semiotic medium to another (Jakobson, 2012; Hutcheon, 2013).

Based on this reflection, the relevance of considering how the afterlife of these texts reaches each new culturally marked context and audiences with specific interests and needs was reinforced. Children either reading or listening to classic tales at the time of their original publications were in different social and historical contexts, also spatially determined. Children immersed in another socio-historical context experience and have world perspectives that can be

fed by texts that contemplate linguistic, aesthetic and cultural aspects that bring them closer to the texts and are consistent with their realities.

Considering that childhood is constantly revised by society, we need to reflect on how narratives for children, especially classic tales, were and are treated in translations and adaptations in contemporary times, seeking to understand the texts in circulation that are mirrored by texts written so many years ago, which may not be in keeping with the present day or may not generate interest in current readers.

It is important to re-signify and expand the meanings of classic texts from the children's universe and observe how they can be interpreted and retold based on current experiences and problems, distancing themselves from a merely pedagogical or moralizing bias. How the characters are presented (aesthetically or psychologically) in the texts and how the actions that drive the narratives bring meaning to the texts are reflections that can be made when we experience translations and adaptations of texts that we already know and guide our gaze towards a more attentive and critical reading.

New forms of re-expressing already known texts (both in translations and adaptations) can provide an expansion of meanings based on the source texts and enhance children's literature, which is often treated in a marginalized way by the adult public, who, in some cases, perceive the existence of outdated aspects of children's literature for our days (when they consider classic texts), but, perhaps, they do not consider the existence of new artistic forms of text production that reach the young audience and that keep the history of literature alive and valued. It is in this place where translation and adaptation, both inherently organized through the transposition of signs into new cultural contexts, consolidate children's literature, guaranteeing an expansion of the possibilities of seeing and feeling classic texts.

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