

Studi Interdisciplinari su Traduzione, Lingue e Culture

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## Studi Interdisciplinari su Traduzione, Lingue e Culture

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# Translating for Children Beyond Stereotypes

## Traduire pour la jeunesse au-delà des stéréotypes

Edited by/Sous la direction de  
Adele D'Arcangelo, Chiara Elefante, Valeria Illuminati

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# Translating Children's Literature: Bridging Identities and Overcoming Stereotypes

Adele D'Arcangelo, Chiara Elefante and Valeria Illuminati

This book, together with its twin volume, *Literature, Gender and Education for Children and Young Adults* – edited by Raffaella Baccolini, Roberta Pederzoli and Beatrice Spallaccia (2019), are part of a line of research and activities promoted by a group of researchers at the Department of Interpreting and Translation of the University of Bologna (Forlì Campus). Both volumes are the result of different initiatives and activities of the MeTRa Centre. Founded in 2014, the Centre focuses on translation and linguistic mediation by and for children, including from a gender perspective. MeTRa aims to offer a wide range of bibliographic, theoretical, and documentary resources (national and international), and it also promotes research initiatives and collaborations with other centres and organizations. On the Centre's website there is a list of such similar associations, as well as a multilingual bibliography focusing on MeTRa's research areas. Although it is still in the early years of its existence, the Centre has organized various research initiatives, such as conferences, seminars, and symposia. More specifically, since 2016,

many activities have focused on gender-related issues. In particular, the Centre and the Centro Donna e Pari Opportunità (Women's and Equal Opportunities Centre) of the Municipality of Forlì signed an on-going agreement, involving the organization of various educational projects for raising awareness about gender issues. Among these actions are: a training course for preschool teachers (0-3, 3-6 years old), "Educare al genere parlando, leggendo e giocando" (Gender education through language, reading and playing); and a series of reading workshops for children and teens, social and healthcare workers, which were carried out in schools, libraries, and the city's Centro per le Famiglie (Family Center).

Today, children's literature is considered as a specific cultural and editorial product, which is critically and academically recognized. The production, publication and circulation of children's books are affected by cultural, ideological, and political factors, as well as by economic and commercial constraints. Translation has always been a constitutive element of children's literature, although its theoretical and critical study has emerged as an academic field only recently. In the last decade in particular a number of monographs and collected volumes bear witness to a special interest of scholars working in this field (Oittinen 2000; O'Sullivan 2005; Lathey 2006; van Coillie and Verschuere 2006; Frank 2007; Diament, Gibello, Kifié 2008; Di Giovanni, Elefante, Pederzoli 2010; Pederzoli 2012; Bazzocchi and Tonin 2015; Douglas 2015).

Until these recent declarations of interest, Children's literature and its translation had long been the 'Cinderellas' of academic research and literary criticism. Among the reasons for this, there is the peripheral role this literature has long occupied in the literary polysystem of different countries (Shavit 1981). One of the main aspects that Translation Theory has been investigating in Children's literature is its pedagogical role. The fact that there are many actors involved as potential target readers, apart from children themselves (Oittinen 2000), adds interesting perspectives from which to start new research paths and approaches.

Children's literature has also become a powerful economic drive in different countries within their national publishing market sectors. Analysis of figures on the economic impact of this publishing sector in recent years (see Piacentini in this volume), argues for a repositioning

and redefinition of Translation criticism in this field. There are many printed books and series launched with the purpose of creating a demand for new niches of target readers. The investigation of how these phenomena not only represent interesting economic case studies, but are also particularly relevant to understand cultural and social norms can be extremely interesting. This is so especially when research is carried out from a diachronic perspective, to observe how these phenomena change with time (see Lévêque in this volume).

This collection of essays sets out to present a variety of perspectives through which to challenge research in the field of Translating for children, mainly dealing with the issues of overcoming the concepts of identity and of stereotypes in children's and young adult (YA) books. The concept of identity and of how to overcome stereotypes is investigated from a relatively conventional point of view, considering national and transnational elements and how translation can help overcome barriers and bridge distances, as reported in the last section of this volume. However, identity is also examined from the perspective of those gender issues that have always assumed a crucial role in children's literature, given its more or less declared didactical aims and ethical reach.

In fact the encounter between the two fields of Translation of Children's Literature and Gender Studies can give light to extremely interesting outcomes, and this is why the main section of the present volume is devoted to the analysis of which difficulties and challenges translation has to overcome when addressing gender identities and gendered representation in children's literary productions. The core of this volume is dedicated to discussing some of the issues – and, we might say 'troubles' – that translation undergoes when identity has to be affirmed not only against stereotypes but also against prejudice, and when not only cultural, but also social and political aspects are involved.

Feminist literary criticism has been investigating children's literature<sup>1</sup> since the 1970s, with Gender Studies not far behind. Research developed in multiple directions, such as the representation of femininity, the quantitative and qualitative presence of female and – more recently –

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<sup>1</sup> For a more complete overview on the relationship between Children's literature and Feminist Theory see the volume Baccolini, Pederzoli, Spallaccia (2019).

LGBTQ+ characters, gender relations and models offered to young readers (both positive and more stereotypical ones). The different research perspectives adopted thus seem to prove how fruitful the relationship between children's literature and Gender Studies can be. Initially, the main purpose of these analyses was to expose patriarchal and misogynistic values and representations fostered by children's literature. This militant speculative approach was followed by a more active, textually engaged phase, resulting in the production of gender-sensitive children's books. The publication and international circulation of this gender-positive children's and YA literature has taken place in different ways and at different speeds across countries, thus revealing different concern in societies towards these issues, especially in relation to crucial themes such as gender equality and empowerment, gender-based violence, LGBTQ+ rights, bullying, homophobia and transphobia, and discrimination. For example, ground-breaking picturebooks by Adela Turin were published in Italy in the 1970s by the pioneering feminist publishing house Dalla parte delle bambine and translated into French thanks to the co-publishing project with feminist publisher Des femmes, and into Spanish thanks to the collaboration with publisher Lumen. This series collects fairy tales that subvert traditional gender roles and models through the emancipation and empowerment of their heroines. Traditional stereotypical male models are disrupted in now classic picturebooks like *William's Doll* (1972) by Charlotte Zolotow – about a boy who wants a doll even though dolls are considered to be appropriate for girls only (see Sezzi in this volume) – and *Oliver Button is a Sissy* (1979) by Tomie de Paola, which deals with bullying and activities 'for girls or for boys.' In France, in the late 1970s, two picturebooks – *Histoire de Julie qui avait une ombre de garçon* (1976) by Christian Bruel et *Camille ou l'enfant double* (1978) by Vercors – challenged gender identities. In the 1980s, LGBTQ+ characters clearly made their appearance in some picturebooks published in English-speaking countries, thanks to books about same-sex families: Lesléa Newman's *Heather Has Two Mommies* (1989) remains a classic of the genre. More recently, children's literature has increasingly tried to meet ongoing social and cultural changes, thus overcoming a once 'pioneering' niche. Hence children's books attempt to offer younger readers new stories mirroring their lives,

as well as new, multiple and varied gendered representations to which they can resort to in order to build their own identity, including their gender identity. This trend within children's literature has often encountered strong societal and political opposition, which in turn has reinforced the need to research this disruptive production, while highlighting the potential of children's literature in countering gender stereotypes and other gender-based discriminations, such as homophobia. Children's literature can indeed serve a 'pedagogical' purpose and can prove extremely useful in the fight against prejudice and stereotypes.

While a gendered approach to the critical investigation of children's literature is widely established by now and spans several disciplines (e.g., Literature, Sociology, Pedagogy), the analysis of the translation of children's literature from a gendered perspective still remains widely unexplored. Yet feminist translation and gendered approaches to translation, on the one hand, and children's literature translation, on the other, show some common features, despite their undeniable differences (cf. Pederzoli 2011; Elefante 2012). In both cases, translation is assigned didactic and educational purposes, adding to a common awareness of the mediating role of the translator, an idea of translation favourable to manipulation of the source text and close attention to the rhythmical and musical aspect of the language. The role of the translator, however, varies considerably in the two fields, especially as far as her/his textual, and above all paratextual, visibility is concerned.

Despite literary translation for children and feminist translation sharing these common points, the study of such relations has emerged as a discrete field of research only recently, in the 2000s. Most of the contributions have been produced in the last decade, which has seen research on gender and translation gain new momentum. While the number of gender-based studies on the translation of children's literature is increasing, a real theoretical debate on a gendered approach to literary translation for children is still lacking (Pederzoli 2011), with the exception of Epstein (see 2013; 2017). In her investigation of queer translation, Epstein describes strategies for a queer/queering approach, i.e., related to translating queer texts or to queering texts in children's literature (see also Epstein in this volume). Contributions to the topic are represented mostly by contrastive analyses of specific case studies focusing on and

highlighting key issues. Some studies highlight that in relation to the representation of characters, especially female ones, texts undergo a series of more or less invasive interventions and manipulations, which are symptomatic of a general lack of awareness of the gendered implications and consequences of translational choices (Le Brun 2003; Pederzoli 2011, 2013, 2017; Epstein 2013, 2017; Illuminati 2017a). If characters and their representations are paramount to the ideas of gender identities, roles, and relations conveyed by children's books, then additions, omissions, paraphrasing and rewriting can significantly affect their characterization and their reception in the target culture. Lexical, syntactic and stylistic choices are not without consequences in shaping the reader's perception of characters, including in terms of gender roles, models, and relations. So while in translations the most unconventional traits of characters tend to be tamed and downplayed through different strategies – from lexical choices to textual manipulations – the presence of mothers who deviate from ideas of motherhood socially, culturally and morally accepted at a given time entails the adoption of translational strategies, both linguistic and textual, aimed at censoring such deviations and behaviours (Pederzoli 2019) or criticizing and condemning them (Illuminati 2017a). Other studies examine the evolution of the role of female translators within publishing through a diachronic analysis of their translations (Elefante 2012) or focuses on the importance and role of the publishing industry in fostering, reinforcing, or countering stereotyped gender representations and models through series for girls (Pederzoli 2015). Translations published by independent militant publishing houses have been investigated to verify if and to what extent the attention paid to gender issues in book contents parallels gender-aware translational choices and approaches (Illuminati 2017b). The work of specific female translators has also been analysed, as in the case of Angela Carter, whose activity as translator of Perrault has attracted great attention as a unique example of a feminist translation project in children's literature (Paruolo 2006; Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère 2009, 2011). In her translations, Carter 'hijacks' (von Flotow 1991) the source text, manipulating it to convey a new updated feminist message. Translation can therefore encourage at different and varying levels a non-stereotyped representation of gender roles and models, and does this both through

gender-sensitive translation practices and as a tool, at the editorial level, for the promotion, circulation, and dissemination of gender-sensitive texts.

Research on gender and translation, and feminist translation theory in particular, has extensively revealed the ideological dimension of each translation act and the power relations at work when translating. This turns out to be crucial in children's literature, where the production, translation, and reception of books is often – if not always – mediated by adults – be they writers, editors, translators, parents, teachers, or librarians (Paruolo 2014: 136-137). This is all the more so when considering such a specific niche as gender-positive children's literature. Such production relies on the presence of gender-sensitive publishers and authors, as well as translators when books are to cross national borders. Attention to gender issues from these actors does not necessarily prevent books from undergoing some changes to meet the (supposed) expectations and knowledge of target readers. This points to the rather complex relationship between the editorial product and its target readers in translation as well as to differences in dealing with gender and other 'thorny' issues within different countries and societies. As a consequence, the target age for a book may change in the receiving language-culture, generally increasing when taboo themes are dealt with. This background is further complicated by the interaction between these two elements – gender-sensitive literature and target readers – and parents, who are likely to act as mediators in the purchase of books, as well as teachers, since these texts may be used in schools.<sup>2</sup>

A closer look at the editorial side of the production and translation of children's books reveals the economic and commercial relevance of this sector within the publishing market. In its report on the state of the publishing sector in Italy in 2017, the Associazione Italiana Editori/AIE (Italian Association of Publishers) points out that sales of children's books rose by 13.7% that year. Similarly, foreign rights sales for Italian children's books represented the main driver of internationalization in

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<sup>2</sup> For a more complete overview on the relationship between Children's literature, Education and socio-political implications see the volume Baccolini, Pederzoli, Spallaccia (2019).

2017 (Levi 2018). The central role of translation means that publishers can play a major role in promoting gender-sensitive children's literature and its translation, first and foremost through the choice of texts to be translated, and thus of whether to make a text available to new readers. Which texts get translated reveals to what extent a language-culture is willing to receive certain texts at a given historical moment. The idea of translation as a space for diversity, otherness and plurality, derived from a gendered perspective on translation, could fruitfully be integrated into the translation of children's books in this peculiar historical, political and cultural time when some sensitive publishers are trying to adapt their production to meet the needs of society as it faces social and cultural changes. While much of the Italian publishing industry shows a strong tendency towards genderization, with separate products and series for girls and boys that tend to reinforce a fixed gender division and rigid, binary, often conservative models (Pederzoli 2015), there are some publishers who have included gender education and standing up against stereotypes among their goals. From this viewpoint, children's literature becomes a way to promote differences and inclusion. Contemporary children's literature is increasingly encompassing themes such as the plurality of gender identities or same-sex parenting in order to offer younger readers stories that mirror their lives and experiences and that can turn into a source of inspiration for children's dreams and ambitions. For example, series like "Donne nella scienza" (Women in Science) by Editoriale Scienza and "Sirene" (Mermaids) by EL offer positive role models to girls through the lives of famous women. And indeed, biographies of women currently represent a major editorial trend. Plenty of volumes belonging to different genres, from picturebooks to comics and graphic novels, have been published in the wake of the international success of *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* (Favilli and Cavallo 2017, see also Elefante's contribution in this volume). The outcomes of this production vary in quality and have triggered a stream of translation across languages.

The list of Italian gender-sensitive publishers has grown longer in the last decade and new, sometimes overtly feminist publishing houses have been founded: Camelozampa, EDT, Giralangolo, Lo Stampatello, Matilda Editrice, Settenove, Sinnos and Terre di mezzo Editore, are

some of the publishers actively engaged in the promotion of a literature that encourages respect and diversity and strives to be open-minded and free from stereotypes. Although not all of these small-sized independent publishing houses openly focus on gender issues or thematize feminist and gender concerns in their goals (e.g. Beccogiallo, Camelozampa, Terre di mezzo Editore), they all certainly offer their readers stories that challenge and break stereotypes, including gender clichés. The series “Sottosopra” (Upside down) by EDT Giralangolo was created to promote alternative images, the plurality of gender identities and the ‘interchangeability’ of male and female roles through picturebooks, as specified in the publisher’s mission reported on the website. Similarly, Settenove was founded in 2013 as an editorial project devoted to the prevention of gender-based violence and discrimination. Matilda Editrice aims at publishing books for both girls and boys that foreground female characters, while fighting gender stereotypes and promoting diversity, inclusion and tolerance. Sinno’s aims are broader and while gender roles, models and relations are paramount to its production, this publisher strives to give children the means to deal with the complexity of contemporary society. Finally, the pioneering publishing house Lo Stampatello was established in 2011 with the ambitious aim of filling a vacuum in Italian books for children, namely the publication of books about same-sex families. Widening its original scope and with a particular focus on the portrayal of families, Lo Stampatello publishes picturebooks dealing with homosexuality, same-sex parenting, single parenting, adoption and any different kind of family, with LGBTQ+ characters, as well as unconventional girls and boys, thus answering a demand that was latent, and creating a new and growing market niche which addresses not only families with same sex parents who wanted to be represented in picturebooks to be read to their children, but also a wider potential target readership sensitive to these issues. Translation has played a crucial role in this respect, given that the first books published were translated mainly from the anglophone production as there was as yet no native production in this field. Indeed, a glance at the catalogues of these publishing houses reveals the high number of translated texts. This confirms the pivotal role of translation in this editorial niche and the added value of such a circulation of books and gender roles, models, and representa-

tions across borders, along with their cross-fertilization. As the experience of Lo Stampatello proves, at times, the publishing market and the production of books for children in a single country lack the books and resources to address and confront ongoing social changes, as well as to talk about them to young readers. In such cases, translation can help start to close the gap, bringing with it also the added value of exposing readers to societies that have dealt with similar issues earlier.

This collection of essays presents a variety of contributions on how translation can challenge the concepts of identity and stereotype in children's literature, thus overcoming barriers and fostering inclusion and acceptance in books specifically addressed to young people. Opening the volume is an article by Mirella Piacentini who offers an extremely useful and competent overview on the vitality and dynamism in this specific publishing market sector. Figures show how the Italian market is extremely lively, comparing it to other experiences such as the French, Canadian and Chinese markets, this latter being very competitive and interesting not only in terms of sales. The author stresses the dichotomy between an economic market deemed as strategic for the publishing sector and the belief that translating for children is a 'simple' thing to do. Piacentini once again pinpoints the peculiarity of the target audience in this sector, discussing its differentiation, given that it is not restricted to children and young adults but involves parents, librarians and publishers, who all act as mediators between the books and the young readers. A very interesting consideration Piacentini makes refers to the presumed simplicity of translation for children and YA, which is perceived in itself as a stereotype. She argues that this shows that there is an ever more essential need for research in this field. Another crucial aspect which is examined by Piacentini is the collaborative approach to the book chain on the part of all of the participants, a peculiarity which adds to the success of some specific products. Given that collaboration in this field comes mainly through translation, Piacentini states how we need to pay more attention to this aspect in the market sector, in academic research and in translator training, possibly by offering specific higher education level training in this field.

Following Piacentini's article is another contribution in terms of editorial perspective, which this time considers the socio-cultural role of

children's literature in translation. Lévêque proposes to look at the whole range of novels for young adults translated into French at the end of the 1960s, in order to draw up an inventory of translated serial productions, examined according to the issue of gender. Examining the catalogues of French publishers around 1968 can help determine whether and to what extent the translations of novels published in series reinforce gender stereotypes. The analysis of the Hachette series for boys and girls seems to pinpoint a kind of need in publishing houses to stress gender differences. Translation and gender studies both use a multidisciplinary approach, and Lévêque, in turn, adopts von Flotow's approach to gender and translation as a transdisciplinary field of research dealing with universal and international aspects, as well as with local system, "where the struggle over meaning and the power to determine meaning is a constant" (von Flotow and Scott 2016: 350). Translation of novels series can thus work as a process of building genderized identities based on social domination forces and relationships, but it could also be analysed as resistance processes.

The section that follows is dedicated to considering how translation actually addresses textual and visual aspects in the books chosen as case studies and how these choices are relevant once again in terms of socio-cultural considerations in the field of reception theory.

Opening this section is Chiara Elefante's contribution, which examines a specific genre within the huge range of production of children's picturebooks, namely books dedicated to biographies. The article focuses its attention on a very successful editorial case, that is *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls*. Elefante's contrastive analysis approach highlights differences in the strategies applied in the Italian translated version as compared to the French version and the original English. This is a particularly interesting publishing operation because the two authors, both Italian, chose to write their book in English, subsequently entrusting the Italian translation to a translator instead of following the path of self-translation. One of the choices considered is the use of the personal pronoun 'You', which in both French and Italian can become either singular 'you' (tu) or plural 'you' (vous/voi). Analysing translations in a contrastive perspective allows researchers to elaborate socio-cultural considerations. In this sense, the contrastive analysis adopted by Elefante seems

to point to how the translations analyzed seek to stimulate a new community made of young male or female readers to look at the lives of the women reported in the volume with new eyes and to avoid stereotypes, and how they seek to make this element, which was already evident in the English source text, particularly striking.

The potential power the process of translation takes on, in adding specific cultural value once a picturebook is transferred into a new context and context, is also emphasized by Annalisa Sezzi, whose work focuses on the growth of non-sexist or anti-sexist picturebooks in the Western publishing market worldwide. Sezzi's article examines the translation of the pioneering picturebook *William's Doll* by Charlotte Zolotow published in the US in 1972, a revolutionary text presenting a potentially gender transgressive character. The most evident choice of the Italian edition was to change the visual element, using French edition pictures to replace the original American illustrations and hence presenting a complex interplay between the visual and verbal aspects of the translation process. According to Sezzi, this example is emblematic of how translations can enhance gender diversity and inclusion and how the image of the child and of the adult reading aloud may diverge in the source as opposed to the target text. According to Sezzi, the Italian edition appears as a more enjoyable text with no transfer of anxiety, whether through the situation described or through the images, which in the Italian version tend to be more colourful and cheerful. *Una bambola per Alberto* is a positive example of how translations can successfully breathe new life into source texts and promote gender equality more effectively.

The final example of how children's literature and translation can help overcome stereotypes is given by Valeria Illuminati, who considers the translation of two classic fairy tales in the graphic novel *The Sleeper and the Spindle* by Neil Gaiman. This article pays attention to semiotic translation, in that Gaiman's text is a rewriting of two classics of Western children's literature (*Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*). By twisting traditional plots, Gaiman challenges the traditional image of the two princesses and typical stereotyped female representations in fairy tales. Although Illuminati does show how overcoming some gender stereotypes is not always successfully accomplished in Gaiman's work, she

nonetheless considers that some positive aspects have resulted from the translations into Italian and French. Gaiman's original use of inclusive language in children's books is reflected in the translations, without the texts seeming particularly heavy and authoritative. The use of inclusive language shows that attention to ethical questions on the part of authors – and, in this case also of translators – can become a fundamental practical instrument in the wider struggle against gender stereotypes among children. As Illuminati states, both images and language often impose models on girls from a very young age, which tend to make them interiorize a sense of linguistic and social inferiority.

Following these interesting contrastive analyses, there is a sub-section specifically dedicated to translating LGBTQ+ children's literature. The first contribution is by B.J. Epstein, who starts by explaining how the term 'queer' has often been employed as an umbrella term, which is often opposed to straight and cisgender. Epstein's introduction discusses the need to define the term 'queer', which is certainly not an unproblematic term, especially when it comes to the concept of identity. Epstein, however, also states her aim to use the term in a positive sense, that is if we consider queer as declared action, then translating queer literature can be considered as acting against heterosexual norms. Hence queer translators/translators of queer texts can act by applying different strategies which Epstein interestingly enough defines as 'acqueering,' as they emphasize or even acquire queerness. The possible strategies listed in this sense are discussed in relation to the case studies of two US queer novels translated from English into Swedish.

In the field of LGBTQ+ literature and translation for a young audience, Dalila Forni presents her work on the picturebook *And Tango Makes Three* (2005) by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson. The author first gives a general overview of literary products for children in which new family models are proposed, and then describes the reception of these books in different countries. After analysing textual and visual aspects, Forni stresses the unconventional description of possible new family models in a LGBTQ+ scene, reporting some data on the reception of *And Tango Makes Three* in the US and Italy, two geographical and to a certain extent culturally very distant countries where the book was widely criticized, and even banned. One consideration which is made

about reception is that books on same-sex parenting fascinate LGBTQ+ families, but cannot address a wider audience because of their generally poor structure and iconography. Translating picture books always involves the interaction of two semiotic systems (visual and verbal), creating a polyphonic form of art (Nikolajeva and Scott 2001). Forni states that although the topic of LGBTQ+ families is perceived as highly complex and ‘inadequate’ for children, this picturebook demonstrates that works for younger readers can address the subject in the clearest way, showing different kinds of families that are now part of modern society. To conclude, *And Tango Makes Three* is an important example of a sensitive literature whose aim is to teach children diversity through providing positive examples.

Now that gender questions relating to the concepts of identity and stereotype have been addressed, the two contributions of the final section proceed to other possible ways of addressing identity issues in translation, with particular attention paid to the role of this human practice in overcoming barriers and building cultural bridges. The first contribution is by Virginie Douglas, who focuses on the specific constraints involved when translating for a fast-evolving readership. The current generation of young adults has been affected by the postcolonial context they grew up in. Translating culture – which is a significant stumbling block in texts for young people – is all the more problematic when what is to be translated is not a homogeneous language and culture but a network of different cultures consisting of a dominant culture and several embedded ‘minor’ ones. The very multiplicity and hybridity of voices poses a challenge to translation: the polyphony of young first-person narrators whose voices follow on from each other in young adult novels finds an echo both in the increased representativeness of a cultural diversity that was seldom found in children’s novels until very recently, and in the cultural and linguistic cross-fertilization linked to this diverse context. Not only does the representation of cultural diversity remain limited in British and French children’s novels, but the translations of such texts are still scarce. The example of Benjamin Zephaniah is significant: this famous British children’s novelist, poet and musician of Jamaican descent has scarcely been translated into French, and this absence of translations deserves analysis. *Face*, his only novel that exists in French

translation (*Un autre visage*), is far from being the most 'multicultural' example of his writing. As a result, the French target context has been deprived of a translation of the rhythmic, creative urban language of his children's novels, leading to the question of what it is that prevents some authors from being welcomed in a new cultural context. And one of the areas of research investigated in the field of Translation for children is indeed the issue of 'missing translations.'<sup>3</sup>

Following Douglas's article is Lopes's contribution on how translation took on a crucial role in widening young readers' horizons and getting them acquainted with the Other through reading books. Lopes focuses on the genres of adventure books and science fiction, which were imported into Portugal, a country that had no native production in the field. Hence the role of translation was to enhance reading habits for young male and female Portuguese readers, getting them acquainted with different peoples, institutions, habits and food. By raising awareness of diversity and fostering a taste for the foreign, this experience produced a community around translation (Venuti 2000), an almost cosmopolitan conviviality amongst young readers. Thus, according to Lopes, translation shows its vocation for inclusiveness, as it aims to give a welcome and a voice to otherness, while still remaining inextricably tied to its own domesticity (Venuti 2000). In crossing linguistic, intellectual and cultural boundaries, and remixing languages, traditions and idiolects, translators enable their readership to get acquainted with or feel at home in a foreign textual landscape.

The volume closes with Federica Ceccoli's article, which focuses on Child Language Brokering. This might be perceived as being along different lines from the other contributions, with their focus on literary translation strategies and policies against stereotypes. However, we decided to include this article in order to bear witness to one of the principal areas of inquiry the MeTRa Centre pursues, the role of children of migrant families as linguistic and cultural mediators for their parents. This is a field of research in which it might be interesting to examine the

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<sup>3</sup> The issue of 'missing/untold/omitted/excluded' narratives in history, is particularly relevant to Translation Studies. A specific approach followed by Ranajit Guha (1985) and Gayatri Spivak (1988) was examining and finding the subaltern history.

concept of identity in the light of children's non-professional experience as translators/interpreters. Ceccoli reports some figures on the role of female Vs male children of migrant families as child language brokers and on the situations in which they perform, which seem to be more often in contexts where mothers are involved, an important aspect that needs further attention.

The variety of the methodological approaches adopted by the authors in this volume, as well as the themes that their contributions deal with, demonstrates that the translation of children's literature is an activity which can fundamentally enhance reflection and exchange between languages, cultures and identity-building processes. The crucial 'cultural turn' in Translation Studies has made it increasingly difficult to justify regarding the translation of children's literature as a neutral process, also considering that in any discussion of gender issues the concept of neutrality finds scant recognition. When considering children's literature, then, it seems even more necessary to commit to a translation process able to convey imagery, visual aspects, representations of identities and positive models, as well as to enhance gender diversity and avoid stereotypes. Writers, translators, publishers and all the actors involved in the production of children's literature need to continue their collaboration in this area. This commitment, moreover, is also a prerequisite for scholars researching theoretically and critically in this field and we hope that this volume will contribute to promoting new research in the field of Translation and Gender Studies. In this way, it will be possible not only to enhance awareness of all the implications involved when dealing with these themes, but also to encourage future fruitful collaboration, and a widening of perspective.

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