

Grimm's *Children's and Household Tales* in Polish translations: a voice of a translator

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This article discusses the presence of Grimm's Fairy Tales in Polish schools. The first part outlines the main features of the so-called "Gattung Grimm" (Grimm's genre), knowledge of which is necessary to assess the quality and potential changes in the translations. The second part analyses existing Polish translations and their strategies, which result in modifications leading to a different sort of text. The third part presents the new Polish translation, made by the author, of the complete collection of 200 Grimm's Fairy Tales (*Bańnie dla dzieci i dla domu*, Poznań 2010) as a version whose aim was to render all mentioned features of the "Gattung Grimm."

Key words: Grimm's Fairy Tales in translation, Polish schools, children's literature, Translation Studies

Cet article étudie la présence des contes des frères Grimm dans les écoles polonaises. Une première partie repère les principales caractéristiques du « genre Grimm » (*Gattung Grimm*) car il faut connaître le genre Grimm afin d'évaluer la qualité des traductions ainsi que les changements qu'ils comportent par rapport aux textes originaux. Une deuxième partie examine les traductions polonaises existantes et les stratégies de traduction qui aboutissent à la création de textes différents. Une troisième partie présente la nouvelle traduction polonaise, réalisée par l'auteure, de la collection complète des 200 contes de Grimm (*Bańnie dla dzieci i dla domu*, Poznań 2010) dont le but consistait à rendre toutes les caractéristiques du genre Grimm.

Mots-clés : contes de Grimm en traduction, écoles polonaises, littérature jeunesse, études traductologiques

When we ask if the voice of the translator is audible at school, the different Polish versions of Grimm's Fairy Tales constitute an important case study. These stories written in German are known to (young) Polish readers in translation. It is interesting to ascertain what translations of Grimm's Fairy Tales Polish children read and learn about at school, and whether these versions are faithful translations or free adaptations of the original tales.

Origins and Sources of Grimm's Fairy Tales

The first edition of the German original containing 86 tales was published shortly before Christmas 1812 in Kassel where Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm lived and worked as librarians.

The second volume of the tales was published in 1815 (the number of tales increased from 86

to 156). Then, in 1819, the second edition of both volumes was issued followed by a third volume with commentaries in 1822: it is this edition which is known as the “Large Edition” (Grosse Ausgabe).

Very important for the later success of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales was the publication in 1823 by Edgar Taylor of a translation into English of a selection of 58 tales from the 1819 German edition, which he altered and censored aiming at a child reader. Thanks to this translation “Grimm’s tales remain an essential and permanent element in the canon of English-language children’s literature.”¹ But this translation was also important due to a “unique interaction between authors of the source text and translator.”² The brothers Grimm and Edgar Taylor stayed in touch – in their letters the brothers praised the quality of the translation and acknowledged the purpose of publishing a more child-friendly, illustrated, selection of tales. Under the influence of the English edition (illustrated by George Cruickshank) Wilhelm Grimm decided to create a child-friendly selection of 50 fairy tales. The so called “Little Edition” (Kleine Ausgabe), published in 1825, became so popular that it contributed to the great success of the “Large Edition.” Its seventh and final revision was done in 1857 before the deaths of Wilhelm and Jacob.

As we know, the Grimm’s Fairy Tales were not written by the brothers themselves. But is the common image presenting the two brothers travelling across Germany and noting down tales told by simple folks really true? Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm contributed themselves to such a legend, writing in their preface to the first edition of the *Children’s and Household Tales* that they had collected only folk tales coming from local oral traditions: “All [of the material] is collected with a few noted exceptions (...) according to oral tradition.”³ They repeated this statement in the preface to the third edition from the year 1837.⁴ However, the sources of the tales are much more complex.

First of all, the brothers Grimm spent practically no time travelling in search of tales: they did not leave their library as they had their ‘informants’ who worked for them collecting the material. These informants were mainly women, not representatives of the common people but young, well-educated ladies coming from the wealthy middle class.⁵ Many of them were of French origin which is worth remembering when we formulate opinions about the typically German cruelty of the Grimms’ Fairy Tales. A detailed reconstruction of these informants can be found in Heinz Rölleke’s books⁶. The brothers Grimm restrained from giving any information about their sources and decided to present information only about the geographical roots of the tales (“from Hessen,” “from Bavaria,” etc.)⁷.

Can we treat the Grimm’s Fairy Tales as a faithful recording of oral folk traditions? Not necessarily because their collection was based on different sources, including not only folk tales, but also literary sources (by Kirchhoff, Rollenhagen, Hans Sachs) or written texts such as sermons. Wilhelm Grimm then transformed the tales initially intended for adults into children’s literature.

Suitable for Children

Reacting to alarming news that children had not wanted to listen to the fairy tales published in the years 1812-1815⁸ Wilhelm Grimm decided on editorial changes which were supposed to make the tales suitable for children. Such a decision was also influenced by marketing reasons because the first editions did not sell very well.⁹

First of all he eliminated sexual references and censored erotic allusions. A famous example for reduction of sexual references is the fairy tale *Rapunzel*. For instance, the original version contains a comment in which the pregnant Rapunzel naively wonders why her clothes do not fit her any more:

... die Fee kam nicht dahinter, bis eines Tages das Rapunzel anfing und zu ihr sagte: „sag’ sie mir doch Frau Gothel, meine Kleiderchen werden mir so eng und wollen nicht mehr passen.“¹⁰

The fairy did not discover what was happening until one day Rapunzel said to her, “Frau Gothel, tell me why it is that my clothes are all too tight. They no longer fit me.”¹¹

In the final version of 1857 Rapunzel reveals her meeting with the prince in these words:¹²

Die Zauberin merkte auch nichts davon, bis einmal Rapunzel anfieng und zu ihr sagte „sag sie mir doch, Frau Gothel, wie kommt es nur, sie wird mir viel schwerer heraufzuziehen, als der junge Königssohn, der ist in einem Augenblick bei mir.“¹³

The sorceress did not notice what was happening until one day Rapunzel said to her, “Frau Gothel, tell me why it is that you are more difficult to pull up than is the young prince, who will be arriving any moment now?”¹⁴

It is hardly logical that Rapunzel suddenly reveals her secret meetings with the prince in this way, but the brothers Grimm preferred to sacrifice logic rather than keep the implicit reference to Rapunzel’s sexual relations with the prince.

Secondly, Wilhelm Grimm made the text Christian in its message and gave pagan heroes features indicating piety. But he also decided on less remarkable changes such as deleting any words revealing French influences. For example in the first version of *Dornröschen* (*The Sleeping Beauty*) we can read about “Feen” (fairies)¹⁵ whereas the last version mentions “die weisen Frauen” (wise women)¹⁶ instead.

It was also more child-friendly to correct the picture of bad parents. In this way cruel mothers became stepmothers with the assumption that a real mother should always be kind and loving.

In the first version of *Hansel and Gretel* we can read:

Die zwei Kinder waren auch noch wach von Hunger, und hatten alles gehört, was die Mutter zum Vater gesagt hatte.¹⁷

The two children were still awake from hunger and heard everything that the mother had said to the father.¹⁸

In the final edition of the *Children’s and Household Tales* (1857) Hansel and Gretel’s mother is turned into a wicked stepmother:

Die zwei Kinder hatten vor Hunger auch nicht einschlafen können und hatten gehört was die Stiefmutter zum Vater gesagt.¹⁹

The two children had not been able to fall asleep because of their hunger, and they heard what the stepmother had said to the father.²⁰

Wilhelm Grimm also decided on many stylistic changes. A good example is the beginning of the first tale *The Frog King*. In the first edition we find one simple sentence, without any

details: “Es war einmal eine Königstochter, die ging hinaus in den Wald und setzte sich an einen kühlen Brunnen,”²¹ (“Once upon a time there was a princess who went out into a forest and sat next to a cool well.”)²² The final version is longer, enriched with details and typical “fairy-tale” features such as: 1) the famous introduction about “times, when wishing still did some good”; 2) typical description of the protagonist who is “beautiful as the sun itself”; 3) “fairy-tale” details such as “a large, dark forest” or “an old linden tree”:

In den alten Zeiten, wo das Wünschen noch geholfen hat, lebte ein König, dessen Töchter waren alle schön, aber die jüngste war so schön, daß die Sonne selber, die doch so vieles gesehen hat, sich wunderte so oft sie ihr ins Gesicht schien. Nahe bei dem Schlosse des Königs lag ein großer dunkler Wald, und in dem Walde unter einer alten Linde war ein Brunnen: wenn nun der Tag recht heiß war, so ging das Königskind hinaus in den Wald und setzte sich an den Rand des kühlen Brunnens.²³

In olden times, when wishing still did some good, there lived a king whose daughters were all beautiful, but the youngest was so beautiful that the sun itself, who, indeed, has seen so much, marveled every time it shone upon her face. In the vicinity of the king's castle there was a large, dark forest, and in this forest, beneath an old linden tree, there was a well. In the heat of the day the princess would go out into the forest and sit on the edge of the cool well.²⁴

“Gattung Grimm”

Despite all the above mentioned editorial changes which concealed fairy-tale features typical of the oral folk tradition, some scholars define the fairy tale as a story such as those collected by the Brothers Grimm in their *Children's and Household Tales*.²⁵ This view finds its fullest expression in the German term “Gattung Grimm:” the Grimm's genre.

What are the main features of the Gattung Grimm and their significance for children? Grimms' Fairy Tales offer a simplified description of a situation: they disregard details and take the reader directly into the heart of the problem;²⁶ that is why so many tales begin with the death of a parent (for example *Cinderella*).

Moreover – and this can be irritating for an adult reader and translator – they follow the dualistic “black-and-white” thinking of the child: a character is either good or bad, a brother is either clever or stupid, a sister is either beautiful or ugly, and so on.

Apart from this, fairy tale characters are not so much individuals as representatives of a certain type. They are rather schematic and lack emotional or mental depth. Thanks to this

feature the child can easily identify with the positive character and experience vicariously his/her difficulties, overcome them and in the end taste the triumph.²⁷ Thanks to the schematic nature of the text, children accomplish such an identification fully on their own and in this way they can easily adopt the moral sense of a fairy tale.²⁸

Fairy tales use a language of symbols and not that of everyday reality. The typical introduction “Es war einmal...” (“Once upon a time...”) refers to a locally and chronologically distant world which exists “far away” from the child’s existence. In this way, a fairy tale never refers to the material world of the child, who does not get abandoned in the forest like Hansel and Gretel.²⁹

Cruel punishments in fairy tales are frequently regarded by adult readers (including translators) as harmful, senseless, and unnecessary but they have a very important function: children can be sure that a wicked character is going to be punished and the evil will never come back.

Adults often think that the cruel punishment of an evil person in fairy tales upsets and scares children unnecessarily. Quite the opposite is true: such retribution reassures the child that the punishment fits the crime. (...) the more severely those bad ones are dealt with, the more secure the child feels.³⁰

That is why it is so important that the Big Bad Wolf dies and does not get away or become vegetarian as often happens in contemporary adaptations.

Grimm’s Fairy Tales in Polish

All these features of Grimm’s Fairy Tales prove to be very important for children’s mental, emotional and moral development.³¹ Bettelheim explains that fairy tales take into account the real psychological and emotional being of the child; they address the inner pressures of the child in a way that the child unconsciously understands; they do not belittle the child’s inner struggles and they offer examples of solutions to difficulties.³²

A question arises if Polish children read translations which render all above mentioned features, intended by Brothers Grimm, or if they read adaptations which modify the Gattung Grimm. Maria Krysztofiak writes:

The authors of Kinder- und Hausmärchen were fully aware of the cultural and axiological value of the texts they edited. Through these texts, they tried to introduce into the collective German consciousness patterns of behaviour which would, at an early stage of human development, shape an identity based on a set of recognizable character traits.³³

First we shall take a short look at the history of Polish translations of Grimm's Fairy Tales. The first known translation, *Kopciuszek dla grzecznych dzieci* (Cinderella for Well-Behaved Children), occurred in 1868. At the end of the 19th century two editions of the Fairy Tales were published but they were not complete editions of all 200 tales (Polish readers had to wait nearly another century for a complete Polish edition). Until the Second World War there were 19 different editions of selected tales. An interesting edition is a collection of fairy tales published under the German occupation and with its permission, in Cracow – obviously in order to promote German culture among Polish citizens.

It is easy to say what Polish children read at school in the People's Republic of Poland as the manuals and school readings were totally controlled by the government and we know exactly which versions of Grimm's Fairy Tales teachers were obliged to teach.

It was an edition of Grimm's Fairy Tales with a simple title *Baśnie* (Fairy Tales) which was published in 1956 and then re-edited for decades. It was not a complete edition of all 200 fairy tales but just a selection of 22 texts which became a school reading for the 4th class of the primary school, i.e. for ten-year-old children. This version thus became the "canonic" Polish edition of Grimm's Fairy Tales to be read and studied at school. It was based on a pre-war translation by Marcei Tarnowski but modified by the editor Stefania Wortman who admitted during a conference on children's literature in Warsaw in December 1973³⁴ that she selected the fairy tales very carefully. But she did more than this. She also removed from tales all punishment and even decided to remove some popular stories from her edition:

We selected the tales carefully so that nothing terrible is mentioned [in these fairy tales by brothers Grimm] [...]. For example, Snow White's stepmother did not have to dance in red-hot iron shoes, but she died a mild death instead at the sight of her happy stepdaughter [...]. Of course, we could not include Hansel and Gretel because the burning of the witch was too cruel.³⁵

This explains why this edition contains many popular stories such as *Cinderella*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Snow White*, *Tom Thumb*, and *Mother Hulda*, but not other famous tales such as *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Frog King* or *Rapunzel*, which were evidently regarded by the editor as being too cruel (*Hansel and Gretel*) or indecent (*The Frog King*, *Rapunzel*).

After 1989, in the time of transformation and democracy it is more difficult to refer to one obligatory school reading. The book market and school textbooks include re-editions of old translations/adaptations (by Z. Kowerska, C. Niewiadomska, M.Tarnowski). Numerous contemporary editions of Grimm's Fairy Tales use existing translations by authors who lived in the 19th century or before the Second World War. Their translations were mainly modified versions of the original texts and these versions can also be found in textbooks. Apart from this, many publishing houses present their own modernized versions of the Grimm's Fairy Tales (very often of poor quality). A characteristic feature of the globalized book market is the increasing presence of translations of German fairy tales via English and Russian translations.

Modifications and Manipulations in Polish Translations

Most of the Polish translations,³⁶ whose aim was to adapt the fairy tales to the needs of the Polish readership, can be considered adaptations because of repeated textual manipulations and reworking strategies, such as

1. mitigation³⁷: toning down controversial issues and taboo subjects (for example: reducing the endings in which the villains are punished);
2. moralization³⁸: imposing certain values on young readers;
3. amplification³⁹: increasing the text's appeal and introducing a peculiarly understood fairy-tale convention⁴⁰;

4. infantilization: adapting the text to a child audience by means of simplification and using diminutives⁴¹.

It is worth looking at a few examples to demonstrate how the translators, introducing seemingly harmless changes, create in fact a new text which lacks all the values typical of the “Gattung Grimm.”

In many fairy tales, the closing scenes, in which the villains receive punishment, are censored by translators, who seem to be driven by a didactic assumption that children should be taught forgiveness. For example, the bad stepmother of Snow White does not have to put on red-hot iron shoes: instead she turns in a black bird or an ugly old woman:

Da mußte sie in die rothglühenden Schuhe treten und so lange tanzen, bis sie todt zur Erde fiel.⁴² (She had to put on red-hot iron shoes, in which she had to dance until she fell down dead.)

Z krzykiem wybiegła z pałacu i ukryła się w wielkim, gęstym lesie. Nikt jej już więcej nie widział i nikt nie wie, co się z nią stało.⁴³ (With a cry she ran out of the palace and hid in a large, dense forest. No one has ever seen her since then and no one has known what happened to her.)

Zamieniła się w okropną staruchę. Na zawsze.⁴⁴ (She became an ugly old woman. And this forever!)

Deleting any allusions to sexuality from the text is equally common. The Big Bad Wolf in Polish translations of *Little Red Riding Hood* does not satisfy his fancy, or even lust (German: “sein Gelüsten“), but only his appetite or hunger. And when he asks The Little Red Riding Hood what she is carrying under her apron (“Was trägst du unter der Schürze?”⁴⁵), the Polish translation finds it too suggestive and transforms it into: “A cóż to niesiesz w koszyczku?”⁴⁶ (“And what are you carrying in your basket?”) Seeing the wolf asleep in grandma’s bed, the huntsman calls him an old sinner in the original (“Finde ich dich hier, du alter Sünder”)⁴⁷ whereas in the translation the wolf becomes an old pest (“stary szkodnik”)⁴⁸.

Little Red Riding Hood in Marcelli Tarnowski’s translation is a well-behaved little girl who promises her mother that she will obey her orders: “Zrobię wszystko, jak każesz – przyrzekł Czerwony Kapturek mamusi,”⁴⁹ (“I will do everything as you say,” Little Red Riding Hood promised her mummy.”) In the original, however, Little Red Riding Hood is a responsible

partner: she does not promise anything to her “mummy,” but confirms her decision with a handshake: “Ich will schon alles gut machen,” sagte Rotkäppchen zur Mutter und gab ihr die Hand darauf,⁵⁰ (“I’ll do everything as it should be done,” said Little Red Riding Hood to her mother and shook her hand.”)

The most common strategy in Polish translations is to adapt the text to a specifically understood fairy tale convention (a specific dramatization and poetization of the text). Good examples are the translations by Cecylia Niewiadomska (popular in many Polish textbooks). One simple sentence of the original text, characterized by plain language and precise plot: “Da fühlte der König Mitleiden, und als er sah wie es so gar schön war, sprach er „willst du mit mir fahren?“⁵¹ (“The King felt compassion and when he saw how beautiful she was, he said: - Are going with me?”), can be compared to its much longer translation by Cecylia

Niewiadomska:

Król patrzył na dziewczynę, świeżą jak pączek róży, na jej załzawione oczy, zakrwawione ręce, na klejnoty, co z ust jej za każdym razem padały i podobała mu się bardziej, niż wszystkie księżniczki i królowny, jakie znał dotąd.

- Czy masz rodziców, śliczne dziewczę? – spytał.

- Mam ojca i macochę – odrzekła nieśmiało – ale ojciec po świecie pracy szuka, a macocha...

Nie chciała się uskarżać, więc nic nie powiedziała, ale młody król spojrział na jej pokrwawione ręce i domyślił się wszystkiego.

- Czy chcesz pojechać do mnie i zostać moją żoną? – odezwał się po chwili namysłu. – Widzę, że pracowita jesteś i dobra, a piękniejszej darmo bym szukał po świecie.⁵²

The king looked at the girl, fresh as a daisy, at her eyes full of tears, at her bleeding hands, at the jewels which fell out of her lips any time she spoke a word, and he loved her more than all the princesses and queens he had ever known before. - Do you have parents, beautiful girl? - he asked. - I have a father and a stepmother - she said shyly - but my father is looking for work somewhere in the world and my stepmother... she did not want to complain so she said nothing but the young king looked at her bleeding hands and knew everything. - Do you want to go to my place and be my wife? – he asked after a moment. - I can see that you are diligent and good and I will never find a more beautiful girl.

Niewiadomska’s translations illustrate the processes of accumulating epithets, increasing suspense and adding “fairy-like” elements: the girl is fresh as a daisy, her hands are bleeding, and jewels fall out of her lips. Also the king does not just ask: “Are you going with me?” No, first he asks if she has got parents and then he asks if she wants to marry him.

Another strategy of adapting the text to a child audience consists in using diminutives. Hence, a specific linguistic convention emerges: a bear is turned into a little bear, a dog into a doggie, a mother into a mummy. More significantly, this leads to the infantilization of the presented world. Little Red Riding Hood prepares a little bunch of flowers (“bukieci” instead of “bukiet”) for her grandmother; grandmother’s bed is trimmed with little curtains (“firaneczki” instead of “zasłony”) and grandmother herself lives in a little house (“domek”), a little half an hour away from the village (“pół godzinki”). As a result, the fairy tale becomes “babified,” acquires a childish character, its reception is simplified and disambiguated. Fairy tales by no means have to be addressed solely to the child recipient. In fact, it is the reader who should decide whether Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel or Cinderella are little girls or young women.

“Gattung Grimm” in Polish

All these changes show that most Polish translations of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales published so far and read at school cannot qualify as translations proper:

Those surface elements of the Polish translations which depart from the original Grimm tales – e.g. the entirely arbitrary layout of the text, addition or omission of individual expressions, parts of sentences as well as whole passages, setting the external text structure off balance – lead to other transformations in the remaining layers of the work. [...] The multilayered transfer of the cultural tradition of the original is neglected by the Polish translators and shifts towards a static actualization of a one-dimensional reality and towards a reduction of symbols representing the unconscious and surreal content.⁵³

The sheer amount of changes present in almost every Polish translation allows us to conclude that Polish readers, literary scholars or teachers often do not realize that in their reading practice (for example at school) they do not use the texts of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales, but rather their modified and distorted Polish copies.⁵⁴ As a consequence, Polish children do not get to know the “Gattung Grimm” but its exact opposite.

Where we have a simplified description of the situation in the original, the translation offers an amplified language and plot. The black-and-white vision of the world is distorted and the

moral sense of the fairy tale is not as clear as it was in the original. In the original, the schematic description of the protagonists and their mental/emotional depth allowed the child to identify easily with the good character.⁵⁵ Now, in the translations, the detailed description of appearance and inner life makes such identification difficult or even impossible. The merit of fairy tales lies not so much in creating the impression that good always triumphs and evil is always punished, but in letting the child identify easily with the positive character,⁵⁶ to experience sufferings and difficulties with this character and then to overcome them and taste the triumph.

As stated above, a fairy tale never refers to the material world of the child and uses a language of symbols and not the language of the everyday reality of the child reader. An adaptation which moves a fairy tale closer to the child's world makes the child lose his/her sense of security, and the tale, presented too realistically, becomes frightening. Children understand perfectly well that fairy tales speak to them in the language of symbols and not that of everyday reality.⁵⁷ What is more, overly realistic modern versions do not allow for what is most important, that is, for the act of working through unconscious inner pressures in fantasy.⁵⁸ In this sense, a child is less frightened by a story in which the wolf swallows the grandmother than by a modern version of the Little Red Riding Hood in which the wolf, instead of eating the grandmother, ties her up and pushes her into the wardrobe.

Punishments of villains created the foundation of a safe world in which the bad character must be punished and the good character rewarded. This is why children do not understand a censored version of Cinderella in which the wicked sisters never get punished or in which they become elevated with Cinderella's help. Such a solution may lead to a feeling of injustice and anxiety. Any adaptation that tries to 'enrich' and elaborate on the fairy tale schematic, black-and-white world, destroys the most essential value of the "Gattung Grimm." Even more damage is done if one tries to embellish a tale and add to it some of the wrongly

understood fabulousness. It turns the fairy tales – as Bruno Bettelheim says – into empty-minded entertainment: “Most children now meet fairy tales only in prettified and simplified versions which subdue their meaning and rob them of all deeper significance – versions such as those on films and TV shows, where fairy tales are turned into empty-minded entertainment.”⁵⁹

New Polish Translation of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*

Considering all the above mentioned deviations from the original, which lead to significant reductions, simplifications and modifications, Maria Krysztofiak states:

All Polish translations of the Grimm tales have been shaping Polish culture, and they cannot be erased from the consciousness of generations brought up on these texts; nevertheless, there is a need (and Polish readers have a right to it) for a complete – culturally, aesthetically and semantically undistorted – translation of the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm. Often Polish readers, literary scholars or teachers do not realize fully that in their reading practice they do not use the texts of the Grimm tales, but merely their inadequate Polish copies concocted by publishers and translators.⁶⁰

As I worked on the new Polish version of the “Children’s and Household Tales,” published in 2010, my goal was to achieve a “culturally, aesthetically and semantically undistorted” translation. This implied: 1) resistance to the pressure of the fairy tale convention alive in the aesthetic consciousness of the Polish reader, 2) caution about achieving didactic goals through translation; 3) awareness of my (adult) prejudices concerning the alleged cruelty or schematicity of the tales.

The task of every translator is to preserve the identity of the source text. This also means taking responsibility for preserving in translation the double role of these texts: both “for children” and “for the household,” as postulated by the original title: *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*. Thus, my translation of the *Large Edition* is addressed both to children and adults. It is annotated in order to supplement the reader with contextual knowledge because human communication requires not only a suitable text but also sufficient background knowledge.

Readers who are accustomed to the refined language of previous translations may find the style of the new translation quite plain or even rough at times, for instance when, instead of the orphan's moving wail in *Little Brother and Little Sister*: "Od śmierci mateczki nie zazналиśmy chwili radości,"⁶¹ (Since our dear mummy's death we have not had one happy hour), a dry statement appears: "Od kiedy zmarła matka, źle nam się wiedzie"⁶² (Since our mother died we have fared poorly).

Of course, in contrast with earlier translations, I have tried to avoid didacticism. All I had to do was follow the Grimm's text and refrain from adding didactic suggestions, diminutives or poetic descriptions which were absent from the original. So in my version of the *Little Red Riding Hood* we can read the earlier mentioned quotation "Ich will schon alles gut machen," sagte Rotkäppchen zur Mutter und gab ihr die Hand darauf,"⁶³ translated as follows: "Zrobię wszystko, jak należy – powiedział Czerwony Kapturek i potwierdził to uściskiem dłoni,"⁶⁴ (I'll do everything as it should be done, said Little Red Riding Hood to her mother and shook her hand).

But numerous problems arise when faithfulness confronts tradition: being faithful to the original does not mean ignoring an established tradition. This is why I did not dare to experiment with many of the traditional names such as the name "Kopciuszek" (*Cinderella*), even though the original name Aschenputtel carries a much deeper symbolic meaning and refers to "Asche" (ash) as a symbol of mourning and purity. The Polish name "Kopciuszek" can be associated only with the fact that the protagonist was dirty ("kopeć" means "soot").

Reactions to my new Polish translation of the *Children's and Household Tales* reflect these issues. And even though in my translator's note I tried to point out the potential disappointment of the Polish reader who might find the language of the new version of the Grimm's Fairy Tales too plain, I could not avoid negative reactions. One of the reviews (discussing the new edition of *The Wolf and Seven Little Goats*) criticizes the language of the

translation: “The author of this translation occasionally uses rhymes and these rhyming words are irritating. In my perception, the text is too simple. One often has the impression that one sentence of the translation summarizes several sentences of the original.”⁶⁵ This review shows two problems: 1) the author does not know the original and is not aware of the fact that Grimm’s Fairy Tales use a lot of (simple) rhymes (and a translation has to render them); 2) more important is that the author of the review criticizes the new translation for the simplicity of the language and content. This is a very good example of the expected “fairy tale convention” which implies long sentences and sophisticated language, and which explains why the author is disappointed with the new, rough and plain translation.

Conclusions

Only a few years have passed since my translation of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales was published in 2010, so it is still too early to determine whether Polish readers have accepted the new, uncensored version of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales. In my translation I tried to render all the features of “the Gattung Grimm” and to achieve the general purpose of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales as formulated by Bettelheim: “[Fairy tales] will give validity to important feelings, promote insights, nourish hopes, reduce anxieties – and in doing so enrich the child’s life at the moment and forever after.”⁶⁶ The question remains open as to whether my translation has fulfilled its goal.

Another question remaining is which translation of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales is offered at school. Teachers often work with texts they have known for years and are not eager to change their habits. Apart from this, many manuals contain old translations of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales because in such a case the publishing houses do not have to pay for copyright. This explains why Cecylia Niewiadomska’s translations are still widespread in Polish manuals and other school books. Media Rodzina, the publisher of the new translation intends to organize training sessions for teachers to improve their knowledge about the role of translation and

about different versions of the school cannon. Hopefully this will help teachers realize that their choice matters and may influence children's understanding of the Grimm's Fairy Tales.

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Notes

¹ Gillian Lathey, *The Role of Translators in Children's Literature. Invisible Storytellers* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 81.

² Lathey, *The Role of Translators*, p. 89.

³ “Alles ist mit wenigen bemerkten Ausnahmen (...) nach mündlicher Ueberlieferung gesammelt”, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, “Vorrede”, in *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Berlin: Realschulbuchhandlung, 1812), vol. 1, p. V.

⁴ Steffen Martus, *Die Brüder Grimm. Eine Biographie* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2013), p. 208.

⁵ Birgit Stolt, “Textsortenstilistische Beobachtungen zur ‘Gattung Grimm’” [The ‘Grimm’s Genre:’ remarks on the text Genre and style] in *Die Brüder Grimm. Erbe und Rezeption* [Brothers Grimm. Heritage and reception], ed. Astrid Stedje (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1984), p. 19.

⁶ Heinz Rölleke, *Grimms Märchen und ihre Quellen* [Grimm’s Tales and their sources] (Trier: Wvt Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2004) and *Es war einmal: Die wahren Märchen der Brüder Grimm und wer sie ihnen erzählte* [Once upon a time: The real Grimm brothers’ tales and who told them to them] (Frankfurt a. Main: Eichborn, 2011).

⁷ Martus, *Die Brüder Grimm*, p. 209.

⁸ Hans-Heino Ewers, “>Sie nähren unmittelbar, wie der Honig, süß und sättigend, ohne irdische Schwere...< Vom unaufhaltsamen Aufstieg der Grimm’schen Märchenideals im Biedermeier,” *Das Wissenschaftsmagazin Forschung Frankfurt* (3/2012), p. 41.

⁹ Martus, *Die Brüder Grimm*, p. 212.

¹⁰ KHM 1812, vol. 1, p. 41.

¹¹ Translation by D. L. Ashliman.

¹² All German citations from the original edition of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* are from the website: <http://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Kinder-_und_Hausmärchen> (website consulted May, 16, 2013) and will be indicated subsequently as KHM with a reference to the year of the edition and to the volume and page of the original book edition.

¹³ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 68.

¹⁴ All English comparisons of the versions of 1812 and 1857 compiled and translated by D. L. Ashliman are from the website: <<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html>>. Website consulted May 16, 2013.

¹⁵ KHM 1812, vol. 1, p. 225.

¹⁶ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 251.

¹⁷ KHM 1812, vol. 1, p. 50.

¹⁸ Translation by D. L. Ashliman.

¹⁹ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 79.

²⁰ Translation by D. L. Ashliman.

²¹ KHM 18212, vol. 1, p. 1.

²² Translation by D. L. Ashliman.

²³ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 1.

²⁴ Translation by D. L. Ashliman.

²⁵ Stolt, "Textsortenstilistische Beobachtungen," p. 17.

²⁶ Dorota Simonides, "Fantastyka baśni i innych tekstów folklorystycznych w życiu dziecka" [Fantasy fairy tales and other folklore texts in a child's life], in *Baśń i dziecko* [Fairy tales and children] (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1978), pp. 118-119.

²⁷ Simonides, "Fantastyka baśni" [Fantasy fairy tales], p. 119.

²⁸ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Random House, 1976), pp. 9-10.

²⁹ Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 62.

³⁰ Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 141.

³¹ Maria Tyszkowa, "Baśń i jej recepcja przez dzieci" [Fairy tales and their reception by children], in *Baśń i dziecko* [Fairy tales and children] (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1978), pp. 138-143.

³² Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 6.

³³ “Autorzy zbioru *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* w pełni zdawali sobie sprawę z kulturotwórczych i aksjologicznych walorów opracowanych przez nich tekstów, usiłując za ich pomocą wprowadzić do świadomości zbiorowej Niemców wzorce zachowań, które już na wczesnym etapie rozwoju umożliwić miały kształtowanie tożsamości opartej na rozpoznawalnych cechach charakteru.”, Maria Krysztofiak, *Przekład literacki a translatoologia* [Literary translation and translatology] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1999), p. 149. Translation: Magdalena Buchta.

³⁴ Papers and discussions from the conference are published in *Baśń i dziecko* [Fairy tales and children] (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1978).

³⁵ “Starannie wybierałyśmy i dobierały baśnie, żeby tylko nie było w nich czegoś okropnego [...]. Na przykład macocha Królowy Śnieżki nie tańczyła aż do śmierci w rozpalonych pantofelkach, tylko umierała krótką bezbolesną śmiercią na widok szczęśliwej pasierbicy [...]. Oczywiście nie można było w tym wyborze zamieścić Jasia i Małgosi, bo sprawa palenia czarownicy to zbyt okropne.” Stefania Wortman, “Wypowiedzi. Pierwszy dzień dyskusji” [Statements. The 1st discussion day], in *Baśń i dziecko* [Fairy tales and children], p. 228. Unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent back translations are mine.

³⁶ All Polish translations of the Grimms’ Fairy Tales discussed are based on the original edition from the year 1857. It is a pity that earlier versions of the Grimms’ Fairy Tales have not been translated into Polish yet.

³⁷ Michał Borodo, “The Regime of the Adult: textual manipulations in translated, hybrid, and glocal texts for young readers,” in *Language, Culture and the Dynamics of Age*, eds. A. Duszak / U. Okulska (Berlin/New York: Mouton, 2011), p. 331.

³⁸ Borodo, “The Regime of the Adult,” p. 331.

³⁹ Borodo, “The Regime of the Adult,” p. 332.

⁴⁰ Eliza Pieciul-Karmińska, “Baśnie braci Grimm a język przekładu” [Grimm’s Fairy Tales and the language of the translation], *Polonistyka* 5/2013, p. 49.

⁴¹ Eliza Pieciul-Karmińska, “Słowo od tłumaczki. Baśnie braci Grimm na nowo” [Translator’s Foreword. Grimm’s Fairy Tales anew], in Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Baśnie dla dzieci i dla domu* (Poznań: Media Rodzina, 2010), vol. 2, p. 457.

⁴² KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 273.

⁴³ Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Baśnie*, Trans. Marcei Tarnowski, ed. Stefania Wortman (Warszawa: Nasza Księgarnia, 1985), p. 92.

⁴⁴ Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Najpiękniejsze baśnie braci Grimm*, Trans. Anna Sójka (Poznań: Podsjedlik-Raniowski, 1998), p. 16.

⁴⁵ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 140.

⁴⁶ Grimm, *Baśnie*, p. 33.

⁴⁷ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 142.

⁴⁸ Grimm, *Baśnie*, p. 35.

⁴⁹ Grimm, *Baśnie*, s. 33.

⁵⁰ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 140.

⁵¹ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 73.

⁵² Jakob i Wilhelm Grimm, *Baśnie. Wydanie z opracowaniem*, Trans. Cecylia Newiadomska (Kraków: Greg, 2007), p. 8.

⁵³ “To, co w przekładach polskich baśni Grimmów w warstwie powierzchniowej odbiega od oryginału, m. in. całkowicie dowolny układ tekstu, opuszczone bądź dodane pojedyncze określenia, fragmenty zdań i całe pasáže, powodujące zachwianie zewnętrznej organizacji tekstu, wpływa też na kolejne transformacje w pozostałych strukturach dzieła. (...) Wielopłaszczyznowe przekazywanie tradycji kultury oryginału umyka z pola widzenia polskich tłumaczy i przesuwa się w kierunku statycznego aktualizowania jednowymiarowej,

urealnionej rzeczywistości oraz redukcji symboli reprezentujących treści nieświadome i nadrealne.”, Krysztofiak, *Przekład literacki a translatologia* [Literary translation and translatology], p. 171. Translation: Magdalena Buchta.

⁵⁴ Krysztofiak, *Przekład literacki a translatologia* [Literary translation and translatology], p. 172.

⁵⁵ Simonides, “Fantastyka baśni” [Fantasy fairy tales], p. 119.

⁵⁶ Tyszkowa, “Baśń i jej recepcja” [Fairy tales and their reception], p. 144.

⁵⁷ Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 62.

⁵⁸ Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 63.

⁵⁹ Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 24.

⁶⁰ “Wszystkie istniejące w Polsce przekłady baśni Grimmów od lat odgrywają swą kulturotwórczą rolę i nie sposób ich wyeliminować ze świadomości pokoleń wychowanych na tej lekturze, niemniej jednak wydaje się konieczne, i odbiorca polski ma do tego pełne prawo, by w razie potrzeby można było sięgnąć również do pełnego, niezafałszowanego kulturowo, estetycznie i semantycznie przekładu baśni braci Grimm. Czytelnik, literaturoznawca bądź pedagog polski nie zawsze sobie w pełni uświadamia, że w swej praktyce lektorskiej nie posługuje się tekstami baśni Grimmów, a jedynie spreparowanymi przez wydawców i tłumaczy nieadekwatnymi, polskimi kopiami tych baśni.”, Krysztofiak, *Przekład poetycki a translatologia* [Literary translation and translatology], p. 174. Translation: Magdalena Buchta.

⁶¹ *Baśnie braci Grimm*, trans. Marcei Tarnowski/Emilia Bielicka (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1989), p. 68.

⁶² Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Baśnie dla dzieci i dla domu*, trans. Eliza Pieciul-Karmińska (Poznań: Media Rodzina, 2010), p. 66.

⁶³ KHM 1857, vol. 1, p. 140.

⁶⁴ Grimm, *Baśnie dla dzieci i dla domu*, p. 147.

⁶⁵ <<http://czytanki-przytulanki.blogspot.com/2012/01/wilhelm-i-jakub-grimm-o-wilku-i-siedmiu.html>>, website consulted May 16, 2013.

⁶⁶ Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 154.