

# Reflections on Readability of Children's Literature Translation

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**Abstract:** With the development of globalization and the deepening of sino-foreign cultural exchanges, young readers and their parents in China are calling for better translations of children's literature to meet the needs of children in developing language, and reading habits, opening up horizons, experiencing a foreign culture. As an essential indicator for judging the quality of translation, readability is directly related to whether children can accept the translations. Some points have been reflected here on improving the readability of children's literature translations from four levels of phonetics, lexis, sentences, and discourse according to the developmental characteristics of children and their preferences of reading.

**Keywords:** Children's literature translation, Children's characteristics, Readability.

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## 1. Readability of Children's Literature Translation

Readability, also known as accessibility, refers to the ease of a text to read and comprehend. It is an indicator of the ease or difficulty of a text. Many factors affect readability, mainly word length, sentence length, the use of simple or complex sentences, the abstraction of vocabulary, interest, the purpose of writing, and the interrelationship between contents.

We choose to translate children's literature to provide children chances of experiencing foreign countries and their cultures, which will echo and complement our traditional culture through reading. The translation is a bridge between different languages and cultures. The standard says that a good translation conveys the original text's meaning with fluency, literariness, and artistry, which are also what the readability of children's literature translation underlines.

Children are still at the primary level of development in terms of knowledge, comprehension, and language expression. Their attention cannot be focused for a long time, and their willpower is relatively weak. Therefore, whether creating or translating children's literature, the above factors need to be considered. To translate children's literature well, a translator should fully consider children's developmental characteristics and preferences of reading and take measures to improve the readability of text with a fluent, catchy, vivid, and interesting translation, then young readers will read without obstacles. It will be difficult for young readers to accept foreign literature if ignoring the form that matches children's developmental characteristics and preferences of reading in translation.

## 2. Way to Realize Better Readability in Children's Literature Translation

To improve the readability of children's literature translation, a translator should adapt the translation to children's developmental characteristics and appreciation interests, and use a language style that is more suitable for children to read and accept, which can be carried out in four aspects: phonetics level, lexis level, sentence level, and discourse level.

Phonetics Level

"The reading sensation of child readers is based on physiological sensation and pleasure, and the physiological level of sensibility, in turn, constitutes a fundamental level of the special characteristics of child readers." (Yuan Yi, 2006.10) Phonetics and rhythm can bring aesthetic pleasure to children, stimulate their emotions and induce them to continue reading when children and their parents read the text aloud. Therefore, it is vital to highlight the rich and pleasant rhythm of the text at the phonetics level to increase the musicality with the extensive use of superlatives, onomatopoeia, and rhyming devices when translating children's literature.

### 2.1. Lexis Level

Children's acceptance of vocabulary is limited at the early stage of vocabulary learning. Children of different ages have characteristics that match them in reading, both in terms of phraseological habits and understanding the meaning of words. Therefore, for translation, a translator should use words that describe distinctive features, such as sounds, colors, shapes, etc., and use more intonation words and exclamations to reflect vividness and interestingness. At the same time, the use of common words and monosyllabic words will make the expressions more colloquially to reduce the difficulty of comprehension.

### 2.2. Sentence Level

Understanding a sentence is a search for its meaning, which means that one establishes the meaning of a sentence through its linguistic form. However, the meaning of a sentence is not a simple superposition of all the words contained in that sentence. In normal communication, people usually are concerned with the meaning of a sentence, not its form. To translate better and make the text understood and accepted by young readers in the translation of children's literature, the principle of meaning-priority translation should be followed. Then, in order to make the sentences express the meaning more directly, it is necessary, on the one hand, to use more simple sentences in the form of expression, and the sentences should not be too long and complicated; on the other hand, by reasonably splitting, adding and deleting sentences, and adjusting the structure, so that children can better understand and accept them.

### 2.3. Discourse Level

We know that the meaning of the whole sentence is not a superposition of all the words from above. Likewise, the meaning of the whole text is not the superposition of all the sentences. Many readers get after reading the text is often the scattered information, and not many of them can grasp the general idea of the text. The perception of the overall meaning and understanding of local details are precisely the important educational role emphasized by reading, which reveals that a translator should grasp the original text at a macro level and realize the logical connection between sentences when translating children's literature. The translation can be more fluent and readable.

### 3. Conclusion

A translator plays the role of a messenger of language and culture exchange between China and foreign countries, and the role of an educator guides children to read and read for

value. Readability, an important indicator for judging the merits of a text, is particularly prominent in the translation of children's literature. It is a precondition of understanding children's developmental characteristics and appreciation interests to improve the readability of translations. Some reflections in terms of phonetics, lexis, sentence, and discourse above aim to improve the readability of a translation, and they will bring enlightenment to children's literature translation.

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