Document generated on 10/10/2026 1:57 a.m.

Meta
Journal des traducteurs
Translators' Journal

Where the Wild Things Are
Translating Picture Books

Riitta Oittinen

Volume 48, Number 1-2, May 2003

Traduction pour les enfants
Translation for children

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/006962ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/006962ar

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

ISSN

0026-0452 (print)
1492-1421 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Oittinen, R. (2003). Where the Wild Things Are: Translating Picture Books. *Meta*, *48*(1-2), 128–141. https://doi.org/10.7202/006962ar

Article abstract

Translating picture books is a many-splendored thing: it includes not only the relationship between the verbal and the visual (images and other elements) but also issues like reading aloud and child images. In the following, while mainly concentrating on the visual, I will deal with the other questions as well, as they all interact and influence each other. My starting point is translating as rewriting for target-language audiences – we always need to ask the crucial question: "For whom?" Hence, while writing children's books is writing for children, translating children's literature is translating for children. (See Hunt 1990:1, 60-64 and Oittinen 2000.)

The reasons why I take such a special interest in translating picture books are twofold: cultural and national as well as individual. In Finland, we translate a lot: 70-80% of all the books published for children annually are translations. From the perspective of picture books, the number may be even higher (and 90% of the translations come from the English language; see Rättyä 2002:18-23). Moreover, being an artist and translator of picture books makes me especially keen on the visual as a translation scholar as well.

As a case study, I have chosen Maurice Sendak's classical picture book *Where the Wild Things Are* and its translations into German, Swedish and Finnish. At the background of my article is my book *Translating for Children* (2000) as well as my forthcoming book *Kuvakirja kääntäjän kädessä* on translating picture books. Due to copyright reasons, I only have picture examples from illustrations of my own.

Tous droits réservés © Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2003

This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

https://www.erudit.org/en/

Where the Wild Things Are: Translating Picture Books

RIITTA OITTINEN
University of Tampere, Tampere, Finland
riitta.oittinen@uta.fi

RÉSUMÉ

La traduction de livres d'images implique plusieurs éléments : elle inclut non seulement la relation entre le verbal et le visuel (images et autres éléments), mais aussi la lecture à voix haute et les images pour enfants. Dans cet article, on se concentre principalement sur l'aspect visuel, mais on traite aussi les autres aspects, étant donné qu'ils interagissent les uns avec les autres. Le point de départ est la traduction en tant que réécriture pour le public de la langue-cible (la question « Pour qui ? »). Par conséquent, alors que l'écriture de livre pour enfants consiste à écrire pour les enfants, la traduction de la littérature pour enfants consiste à traduire pour les enfants. (voir Hunt 1990 :1, 60-64 et Oittinen 2000)

Les raisons pour lesquelles on accorde un intérêt particulier à la traduction de livres d'images sont doubles : culturelles et nationales ainsi qu'individuelles. En Finlande, on traduit beaucoup : 70% à 80% de tous les livres annuels publiés pour enfants sont des traductions. En ce qui concerne les livres d'images, le nombre est peut-être même plus élevé (et de plus, 90% des traductions proviennent de l'anglais ; voir Rättyä 2002 :18-23). D'ailleurs, être une artiste et une traductrice de livres d'images me rend particulièrement enthousiaste en ce qui concerne l'aspect visuel en tant que discipline de la traduction.

Comme étude de cas, nous avons choisi le livre d'images de Maurice Sendak « Where the Wild Things Are » et sa traduction en allemand, suédois et finnois. Notre livre *Translating for Children* (2000) ainsi que notre prochain livre *Kuvakirja kääntäjän kädessä* sur la traduction des livres d'images sont pris comme fond pour l'article.

ABSTRACT

Translating picture books is a many-splendored thing: it includes not only the relationship between the verbal and the visual (images and other elements) but also issues like reading aloud and child images. In the following, while mainly concentrating on the visual, I will deal with the other questions as well, as they all interact and influence each other. My starting point is translating as rewriting for target-language audiences – we always need to ask the crucial question: "For whom?" Hence, while writing children's books is writing for children, translating children's literature is translating for children. (See Hunt 1990:1, 60-64 and Oittinen 2000.)

The reasons why I take such a special interest in translating picture books are twofold: cultural and national as well as individual. In Finland, we translate a lot: 70-80% of all the books published for children annually are translations. From the perspective of picture books, the number may be even higher (and 90% of the translations come from the English language; see Rättyä 2002:18-23). Moreover, being an artist and translator of picture books makes me especially keen on the visual as a translation scholar as well.

As a case study, I have chosen Maurice Sendak's classical picture book *Where the Wild Things Are* and its translations into German, Swedish and Finnish. At the background of my article is my book *Translating for Children* (2000) as well as my forthcoming book *Kuvakirja kääntäjän kädessä* on translating picture books. Due to copyright reasons, I only have picture examples from illustrations of my own.

MOTS-CLÉS/KEYWORDS

illustration, picture book, iconotext, indexical relationship, Sendak

> At any given time, in any given place, there will be a set of conditions … that will ensure that a word uttered in that place and at that time will have a meaning different than it would have under any other conditions (Bakhtin 1990:428).

TRANSLATING: REREADING AND REWRITING

I am looking at translation as rereading and rewriting: every time a book is translated, it takes on a new language, a new culture, and new target-language readers. As the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin points out, a word is always born in a dialogue, where the word, like a work of art, meets and relates to other words or works of art (Bakhtin 1990:447). Translation may very well be called this kind of a multivoiced situation, where illustrators, authors, translators, publishers, and different readers meet and influence each other. In the constant interaction, every act of understanding adds to the thing to be understood.

One way or the other, translating is always a combination of a whole and its parts. Translators usually start with a whole idea of the book to be translated, before they proceed any further and make any decisions about translating the details. With every detail, translators need to consider how it goes together with the rest of the story. Translating always has an aim and a function, which influence the interpretation of the single parts of the totality. Being influenced by the individual and the cultural, every translation is unique and unrepeatable.

Moreover, translators are influenced by their own selves (translator's ideology, such as child image) and the norms and poetics prevailing in the society, which all influence the translator's choice of strategies (Lefevere 1992:1-25). Translators aim their words at someone and for some purpose and adapt their text according to the imagined future function of the translated text. This function includes not just reading silently and looking at the pictures, but also reading aloud, which is usually performed by grown-ups. Further, it is important to remember that children's literature and its translations also have a dual audience: it is the adults who write, illustrate, translate, sell, buy, and choose books for children. (See, e.g., Wall 1991:13.)

Adapting for a purpose might also be described as domestication, as the American translation scholar Lawrence Venuti calls it. For him, domestication accommodates itself to target cultural and linguistic values: through domestication, we adapt the text according to its future readers, culture, society, norms, and power relations. (See Venuti 1995 and Paloposki & Oittinen 2000. See also Robinson 1997b:116-117 and Chesterman 1997:28.) Translators may also choose otherwise and foreignize by maintaining traces of the original text, depicting cultural differences and a foreign origin. And yet, translation can never fully avoid being partly domestication, as the verbal text will always be translated into a new language, for new target-language readers with different backgrounds from those of the readers of the original. Hence the key words in translation are text and context. On the one hand, translators are always influenced by ideologies, norms, and the expectations of the target-language readers; on the other hand, a translation process is always influenced by the details of the text to be translated, such as the illustrations in a book.

PICTURE BOOK: THE VERBAL AND THE VISUAL

Defining a picture book is no easy task. Today a picture book can be anything: a toybook, a pop-up book, an illustrated story with emphasis on the visual, or a story told with pictures only. Sometimes a picture book is a combination of fact and fiction, like Jules Bass and Debbie Harter's two books about Herb, the vegetarian dragon, which I recently translated into Finnish. The second of the books, *Cooking with Herb*, is a genuine cookbook and yet it looks and works like a picture book telling stories and showing pictures about dragons and other fantastic creatures with vivid colors and lots of humor.

As David Lewis, the British scholar on picture books, points out, picture books may tell a story, tell several stories at the same time, or tell no story whatsoever (Lewis 2001:4-5). Picture books also break boundaries, like combining the possible and the impossible (such as different perspectives in one picture) or different styles and techniques of writing and illustrating (such as those of comics). Disregarding literary norms, picture books often go to the extreme and the excess and include fragmentation, decanonization, irony, and hybridization. They may also tempt the reader to perform and participate (like turning the pages and reading aloud; see Lewis 2001:87-101).

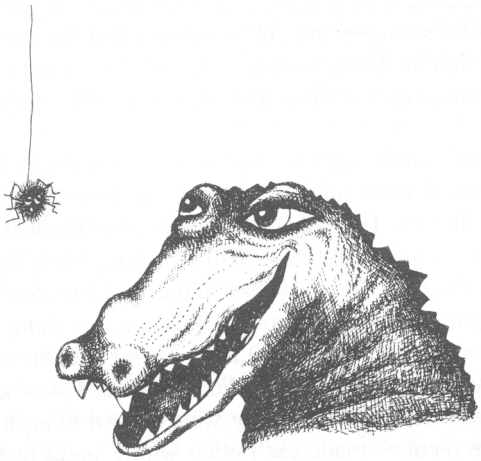
What picture books have in common is their versatility and the various relationships of the verbal and the visual. Sometimes it is the visual that takes on and tells the story; sometimes the verbal takes over. And it is always the reader of the picture book that fills in the gaps and creates a new story on the basis of the verbal and visual. As a whole, a picture book is a text, a totality or inconotext, where the verbal and the visual are woven into one entity. It is this unique relationship of the verbal and the visual that translators need to be aware of.

The verbal and the visual may have several functions. The words and the pictures (as well as other visual elements) in a story may support each other and tell just about the same things: through congruency, illustrations show the activity described, doubling or paralleling what is said in words. Illustrations may also go in opposite directions and stand in contradiction: through deviation, they counterpoint or veer away from the story told in words. (Schwarcz 1982:14-16) In *Translating for Children*, I present an example from the Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes and the poem "Little Miss Muffet" (Opie 1985:51 in Oittinen 2000:106-107):

> Little Miss Muffet
> Sat on a tuffet,
> Eating her curds and whey;
> There came a big spider,
> Who sat down beside her
> And frightened Miss Muffet away.

In his illustration, Fedor Rojankovsky shows the activity visually and beautifully depicts Miss Muffet, who is scared of a huge spider. In my visual version of the scene the roles have changed and Miss Muffet is frightening enough to scare the spider.

While my picture stands in contradiction to the story told by words, the reader may find the situation awkward and certainly refuses to believe in the story told neither verbally nor visually.



In addition, words and pictures may tell things simultaneously, side by side, or they may take turns. Whatever the relationship, the illustration of a story always adds to the narration by giving extra information, such as cannot be given by words: details about setting in time, place, culture, society as well as characters and their relationships. The illustration of a story gives a background and places the characters in homes and milieux. As a whole, illustrations are never quite straightforward but always elaborate, complement, and amplify the verbal narration. In other words, as Lewis points out, the relationship of the verbal and the visual is that of interanimation, flexibility, and complexity. (Lewis 2001:31-45)

When we, for example, look at the innumerable illustrations of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, we can see how every illustrator creates a different wonderland with different characters along with the verbal narration by Carroll. This influences not just the relationships of the characters but the whole narration. Moreover, illustrations may also domesticate and foreignize. While in many of the British illustrated versions, the Gryphon, the Mock Turtle, and Alice are situated in a British landscape at the seaside, in my version I have placed the characters in a more Scandinavian landscape with spruce trees at the background:

Even the relationship of the characters varies from illustration to illustration. For example, in Helen Oxenbury's illustration of the same scene Alice is having fun with her new friends, The Gryphon and the Mock Turtle, but in John Tenniel's version and mine Alice is more beware and even scared of the strange characters.

The verbal and the visual might also be described in semiotic terms. A picture in a picture book is an icon referring to something in the real (or unreal) world. A word in a book is based on an agreement: we need to learn how to call, e.g., a cat in different languages, such as *katt* in Swedish and *kissa* in Finnish. (See, e.g., Berger 1998:34, 35; Peirce 2001:415-440.) There is also an indexical relationship between the two: in a picture book, the verbal, like words, is referring to the visual, like illustrations and other elements (borders, frames, and other decorations), and the other way around. The indexical relationship varies from book to book and page to page, which is fundamental in understanding a picture book and its narration.

Even reading aloud, a central issue in picture books and their translation, is influenced by the visual appearance of the book. Through elements like typography, such as patterned and personified letters in different sizes and shapes, the illustrator may give the aloud-reader hints or even instructions about how to use one's voice and perform the text. An excellent example of this is Jon Stone and Mike Smoll's picture book *The Monster at the End of this Book* (1971; see Tuominen, unpub.) telling about Grover, a well-known character from *Sesame Street*, who is admonished not to go on with his reading as there's a monster waiting on the last page. The illustrator's use of small and capitalized letters as well as punctuation almost force the aloud-reader to perform the text in a certain way, shouting or whispering.

The book is also a good example of picture books as theatrical texts to be performed. The Swedish scholar Ulla Rhedin compares reading a picture book and attending a theater show: the aloud-reader "acts" the text for the child and the illustration in a book is close to set design in the theater. Picture books are also compared with the film: turning a page is like a cut in a movie.

TRANSLATING PICTURE BOOKS

Words or images cannot be divorced from their contexts but are situated in time and place: in new situations they continually take on new meanings. When a book in translation is illustrated, the pictures bring along a new point of view. The visual is the context of the words, and the other way around: when translating picture books, it is this totality of the verbal and the visual that is translated.

The visual even has an impact on translating books to be read aloud. Through punctuation, like using commas and full stops, as well as sentence and word length, the translator gives visual hints to the aloud-reader when to stop and when to make haste. At periods and commas, the aloud-reader may stop to breathe in. (See Oittinen 2000:32-37 and Dollerup in this issue.) In case of books to be read aloud, like children's picture books usually, the translator is supposed to make the aloud-reader's task as easy as possible. The text to be read aloud must roll on the aloud-reader's tongue; the verbal text also needs to collaborate with the visual and the turnings of the pages.

Sometimes it is clearly mentioned in a book that it is supposed to be read aloud, like in Hugh Lupton and Sophie Fatus's *The Story Tree. Tales to Read Aloud*, one of

the books I translated quite recently. The style of writing is full of repetition, alliteration, and addressing the reader/listener. The story "The Sweetest Song" begins like this:

> **ONCE UPON A TIME Little Daughter was picking flowers. Once upon a time Little Daughter was picking flowers** on the far side of the fence. **Her papa had told her not to. Her mama had told her not to.** But her papa and mama weren't watching and Little Daughter had seen a beautiful yellow flower nodding in the breeze just beyond the fence. (My bolding)

The illustrator has a similar, repetitive style, and the Little Daughter and the Wolf she meets on her way simultaneously appear several times on each page. As a whole, the author's, publisher's, and illustrator's message certainly influenced the rhythm, punctuation, and overall style of my translation:

> **OLIPA KERRAN Pieni Tytär, joka poimi kukkia. Olipa kerran Pieni Tytär, joka poimi kukkia** liki aitaa kaukana kotitalostaan. **Isä oli häntä kieltänyt. Ja äiti oli häntä kieltänyt.** Mutta isä ja äiti eivät aina ehtineet katsoa Pienen Tyttären perään, ja tytär oli juuri nähnyt kauniin keltaisen kukan, joka nyökytteli lempeässä tuulessa aivan aidan toisella puolella. (My bolding)

Like in "The Sweetest Song," illustrations may help the translator by giving hints, e.g., by showing how things look like exactly. With the knowledge about the details, it is easier for the translator to describe, what the characters do and how they sound. If, for instance, the illustrator shows how many petticoats a princess has while she is running, it is easier for the translator to visualize the situation and describe what kind of sounds she makes. When I was translating Lee Kingman's *The Secret Journey of the Silver Reindeer* with some of my students, Lynd Ward's illustrations were of great help when making the decision of which verb to use when describing the sound of the reindeer's hooves.

Yet illustrations more generally do the opposite and make the translator's task very difficult, if not impossible: due to co-prints, it is only the texts in words (in black print) that can be altered, the illustrations must be left untouched. Co-prints are taken to reduce high printing costs and mainly concern minor languages and cultures, such as Finnish. At first the translations into different languages are printed at the same time by an international publisher; then the books are released by the national publishers. (Oittinen 2003, forthcoming) Taking co-prints also influences the book publishing business on a more general level – and not always in a positive way. The practice of taking co-prints implies that several countries want to have the same book(s) translated and that only such books are chosen that "travel" easily from one culture and language to another. (See for similar views Stan 1997.) When choosing picture books for translation, it is the story told by both the words and the images that counts: if either of them seems too culture-specific to the target-language publisher or assumed audience, the book will not be chosen.

When I was translating *My First Five Years*, the New-Zealander Anne Geddes's book for the parents of first-born babies, I had a problem with the visual: Geddes depicted a toothfairy both in the verbal and the visual, but the tradition of toothfairies is not very common in Finland. Yet I had to keep the example in the Finnish version as well, because the Finnish translation was to be published as a co-print and the illustrator had depicted a toothfairy on the page. I needed to motivate

the picture somehow, which is why we have a toothfairy in the Finnish version as well.

The order of doing things also influences the books in translation, like in the case of one of the Finnish translations of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. This translation by Kirsi Kunnas and Eeva-Liisa Manner first appeared along with John Tenniel's and later with Anthony Browne's illustrations. Both of the versions were published by the same company. As the company already had the rights for the translation by Kunnas and Manner, they wanted to use the existing translation and asked the translators to check the verbal to go together with the visual. Yet some scenes proved to be problematic, especially those that the translators had domesticated for Finnish child readers and where they had left out culture-specific details.

For instance, the translators had omitted some allusions to British culture, which was not a problem as long as the then illustrator, John Tenniel, did not depict them. At one point, the translators had omitted a reference to Shakespeare, which proved to be a problem because of the new illustration by Anthony Browne.

The problematic section is in the third chapter of the book, "A Caucus-Race and a Long Tale." Carroll's text goes like this:

> This question the Dodo could not answer without a great deal of thought, and it stood for a long time **with one finger pressed upon its forehead,** (**the position in which you usually see Shakespeare, in the pictures of him**), while the rest waited in silence. (1981:17, my bolding)

The first Finnish translation goes like this:

> Siihen kysymykseen ei Dodo voinut vastata harkitsematta, ja se mietti ja mietti ja seisoi kauan **yhdellä jalalla ja sormi otsalla**, ja sillä aikaa toiset odottivat ääneti. (Carroll 1972:32, my bolding)

> This question the Dodo could not answer without a great deal of thought, and it stood for a long time **on one foot and with one finger pressed upon its forehead**, while the rest waited in silence. (1981:17, my backtranslation and bolding)

Yet Browne's illustration caused changes in the wording of the new edition of Kunnas and Manner's translation, as Browne, unlike Tenniel, shows Shakespeare in his illustration and actually depicts the poet "with one finger pressed upon his forehead":

> Siihen kysymykseen ei Dodo voinut vastata harkitsematta, ja se mietti ja mietti **sormi otsalla** (**asennossa jossa Shakespeare usein kuvataan**), ja sillä aikaa toiset odottivat ääneti. (Carroll 1988:32, my bolding)

This solution is now very close to the original and, indeed, mentions Shakespeare. Had the translators left their wording unchanged, the picture of Shakespeare presented by Browne would have been unmotivated. Thus there would have been an unintentional contradiction in the messages told by the verbal and the visual. In their Finnish translation, the translators combined several stories into one iconotext (Hallberg 1982:165): the verbal story told by the author, another story told by the illustrator, and the third one told by the translators.

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

Maurice Sendak is one of the best known picture book artists and authors in the world. His vast production includes classics like *Outside Over There*, *In the Nightkitchen* (see Nières in this issue), and *Where the Wild Things Are*. After the appearance of the book, many specialists like Bruno Bettelheim considered the book about the wild things too frightening for small children. Gradually, however, the book was recognized as one of the most distinguished and pioneering picture book classics. (See Lanes 1980 for the story of the book.)

The story is very simple: it tells about a boy named Max, who is behaving in such a bad manner that his mother sends him to bed without supper. In Max's room, strange things start to happen and the room turns into a wild wood. All of a sudden, Max is sailing in a boat toward the land where the wild things are. Max becomes the king of the wild things but in the end he starts missing home. He sails back again and finds his supper waiting in his room. And the supper is still quite warm.

What is special in Sendak's book is the rhythm of the storytelling. As Max starts imagining the wild world, the visual, too, starts changing from a small picture into a wide landscape that bleeds over the edges of the book. Sendak has used the book form as a story-telling device. In a similar way, he uses sentence length.

The first part of the story is told with one long sentence only: the sentence depicts the row with the mother. The second sentence tells about the transformation of the room into a wild wood and his sailing to the land of the wild things. The sentence stops when the boat stops at the shore. The third sentence is about meeting with the monsters and Max becoming their king. Then, with one short sentence, Max says that it's time for the fun: "And now," cried Max, "let the wild rumpus start!" Then follow three page openings with illustrations and no words at all. After that follow a few short sentences depicting Max longing for home and deciding to give up being a king. Then again, during one long sentence, Max leaves the monsters, sails back into his room and the end of the story. Hence the rhythm created through alternating the sentence length is very important and should be conveyed in the translations of the book as well, as the sentence length is an important part of the narration. Sentence length is also a visual factor influencing the aloud-reader's task as well as the contents and the style of the story.

It is also interesting to follow how Max gradually moves from left to right, when the story goes on. At first, Max is standing on the left, then he moves on away from home and gradually to the right. When he has reached the very right edge of the page opening, he starts moving to the left again, back home. Rhedin has discussed the directions in this book and points out that even directions in a book have a message. For example, the foreign and dangerous usually enters from the right hand side, while the homelike and safe is placed on the left-hand side. When Max leaves home, he starts moving toward the unknown and danger. While he gains more power and becomes the king of the wild things, he reaches the right hand side and becomes dangerous himself. (Rhedin 1992:199)

For my analysis, I studied three translations of the book, the German translation *Wo die Wilden Kerle Wohnen* by Claudia Schmölders, the Swedish translation *Till vildingarnas land* by Boris Persson, and the Finnish translation *Hassut hurjat hirviöt* by Heidi Järvenpää. I paid special attention to the sentence length and structure to see

how the translations function while being read aloud. In the following, I give first the English original, and then the German, Swedish and Finnish translations in the respective order. To show my point, I have also bolded the punctuation and the preceding word.

While all the three translations are easy to read aloud, there are rhythmical differences caused by their different sentence lengths. The translations are also split up into clauses and sentences in different ways. For instance, on the first and second page openings, the Finnish and German translators have added to the punctuation and split up the long sentence according to grammar, while the Swedish translation flows like the original. Moreover, in the original, Max's love for mischief is revealed right at the beginning of the story, but in the German translation it is revealed on the second page opening: "un nur Unfug im Kopf hatte." The reader, looking at the illustration, finds out about Max's bad character right away: Max chases a worried dog with a dangerously-looking fork in his hand.

The verbal in the two first page openings of the book go like this – the first…

The night Max wore his wolf suit and made mischief of one kind
An dem **Abend,** als Max seinen Wolfspelz trug
Den kvällen när Max hade tagit på sin vargdräkt levde han bus
Sinä iltana Maxilla oli susipukunsa **yllään,** ja hän teki kepposta yhtä ja toista

… and the second:

and another
und nur Unfug im Kopf **hatte,**
på alla möjliga sätt
ja **kaikenmoista.**

Here the German translator creates a different kind of dynamity by letting the reader find out about the continuation of the story by turning the page her/himself. Yet the indexical relationship of the verbal and the visual is different from that of the original and the other translations. (See also O'Sullivan 2000:280-281.)

We have another problematic point where Max's room changes into a wood. Here Sendak depicts a long, never-ending time, which goes on and on until Max enters the land where the wild things are. Max takes a boat there, and, looking at the illustration, the reader can see and almost feel the sudden stop, the boat striking against the shore of the land where the wild things are:

That very night in Max's room a forest grew
and **grew –**
and grew until his ceiling hung with vines
and the walls became the world all around
and an ocean tumbled by with a private boat for Max
and he sailed off through the night and day
and in and out of weeks
and almost over a year
to where the wild things **are.**

The German translator may not have paid attention to the syntax or rhythm at all. At least he does not seem to be aware of how the sentence structure influences the contents and reading aloud:

> Genau in der Nacht wuchs ein Wald in seinem **Zimmer –**
>
> der wuchs
>
> und wuchs, bis die Decke voll Laub hing
> und die Wände so weit wie die ganze Welt **waren.**
>
> Und plötzlich war da ein Meer mit einem **Schiff,**
> nur für **Max,**
> und er segelte **davon,** Tag und Nacht
>
> und Wochenlang
> und fast ein ganzes Jahr
> bis zu dem **Ort,**
> wo die wilden Kerle **wohnen.**

In the Swedish version, the translator has added three commas, which makes the (aloud-)reader stop several times before Max reaches the shore. In this way the words do not tell about as sudden a stop as the picture does:

> Samma kväll började det växa en skog i Max rum
>
> och växa
>
> och växa tills taket var fullt av grenar och löv
> och väggarna förvandlades till världen runtomkring
>
> och ett hav brusade fram med en egen privat båt åt Max
> och sen seglade iväg genom nätter och **dagar,**
>
> vecka ut och vecka **in,**
> nästan under ett **år,**
> långt bort till vildingarnas **land.**

In the Finnish translation the reader can feel a similar sudden stop as depicted in the picture:

> Sinä samana iltana Maxin huoneeseen kasvoi metsä
>
> ja se **kasvoi…**
>
> ja **kasvoi,** kunnes kattona olivat tuuheat puut
> ja seinät avartuivat koko maailmaksi
>
> ja meren aallot toivat Maxille ikioman veneen
> ja hän purjehti koko yön ja päivän
>
> ja monta viikkoa
> ja melkein vuoden
> hirviöiden **maahan.**

The German translation is not any more like a dream but more logical: the translator kind of explains to the reader that, all of a sudden ("Und plötzlich"), there's a sea before Max and from somewhere comes a boat for him. And yet the original text in words or pictures does not show any kind of astonishment for Max's part but he takes everything naturally, like in a dream. The Finnish and Swedish translations are more dreamlike, and they do not need any explanations, because everything is possible in a dream. The German text also stops once in a while, which makes it

very different to read aloud, compared with the original and the other two translations.

There is another, five-page-long sentence, which starts when Max enters the land of the wild things:

> And when he came to the place where the wild things are
> they roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth
> and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws
> till Max said **"BE STILL!"**
> and tamed them with the magic trick
> of staring into all their yellow eyes without blinking once
> and they were frightened and called him the most wild thing of all
> and made him king of all wild **things.**

All the three translators have cut the sentence in two, almost at the same point, which makes their texts less breathtaking. The German and Swedish translators cut their texts at "and they were frightened" ("Da bekamen sie Angst," "Då blev de rädda"), while the Finnish translator cuts her text at "staring into all their … eyes" ("Hän tuijotti silmää räpäyttämättä"). The German translation includes several commas and full stops:

> Und als er dort **ankam,** wo die wilden Kerle **wohnen,**
> brüllten sie ihr fürchterliches Brüllen
> und fletschten ihre fürchterlichen Zähne
> und rollten ihre fürchterlichen Augen
> und zeigten ihre fürchterlichen **Krallen,**
> bis Max **sagte: "Seid still!"**
> und sie zähmte mit seinem **Zaubertrick:**
> er starrte in alle ihre gelben **Augen,** ohne ein einziges Mal
> zu **zwinkern.** Da bekamen sie Angst und nannten ihn den
> wildesten Kerl von allen
> und machten ihn zum König aller wilden **Kerle.**

The Swedish translation goes on more easily:

> När han kom till själva stället där vildingarna **bor,**
> då röt de sina hemska rytanden och gnisslade med sina hemska tänder
> och rullade sina hemska ögon och visade sina hemska klor
> tills Max sa **"LUGN!"**
> och tämjde dem med det gamla trollknepet
> att titta dem i alla deras gula ögon utan att **blinka.**
> Då blev de rädda och kallade honom för den vildaste vildingen
> och gjorde honom till kung över alla **vildingar.**

In the Finnish translation, there is also a mistake, probably an unintentional misprint, at the beginning of the sentence: "ja kun hän tuli hirviöiden maahan" ("And when he came to the place where the wild things are"). The previous sentence ends in a full stop, so there probably should be a capitalized letter starting the following sentence:

ja kun hän tuli hirviöiden **maahan,** ne karjuivat hänelle hirveästi
ja narskuttivat hirveitä hampaitaan
ja pyörittivät hirveitä silmiään ja paljastivat hirveät kyntensä
kunnes Max **sanoi: "OLKAA HILJAA!"**
ja kesytti hirviöt **taikatempulla.**
Hän tuijotti silmää räpäyttämättä niiden keltaisiin silmiin
ja ne pelkäsivät ja **sanoivat,** että hän oli
hirmuisin kaikista **hirviöistä,** ja ne tekivät hänestä hirviöiden
kuninkaan.

The above analysis is an example of both the verbal and the visual: the influence of the illustrations and sentence length but also the readability (reading aloud) of the text. Splitting up sentences may be due to that, while writing for child audiences, translators have wanted to follow the rules of grammar. Whatever the reason, punctuation is also a visual issue, as the Finnish children's poet and translator Kirsi Kunnas has pointed out: punctuation, like commas and periods, are signs for the aloud-readers' eyes to help them in their reading task (Kunnas in Ollikainen 1985). The sentence length and punctuation are tools of narration and tell about the content of the story; they go together with page openings and turning the pages, influencing the rhythmic totality of a picture book. Like layout, sentence length is an issue of narration and the flow of a story, which are to be considered by translators.

VISUAL LITERACY

Translating picture books is translating iconotexts consisting of the verbal and the visual. The visual here is much more than just the words and pictures, it is the whole visual appearance of the book including details like sentence structure and punctuation. The latter are also very important from the aloud-reader's angle: picture books are performed for child audiences.

Nowadays, the visual is a central issue in many other branches of translation as well, such as audiovisual translation and technical writing. Even interpreters need to interpret people's gestures and body language. Yet far too often translators are understood as dealing with the verbal only, which is the reason why visual literacy is neglected in translator training. Visual literacy is, as Pat Hughes points out (in Evans 1998:117), a cultural, "crosscurricular skill, like numeracy, IT and literacy." On the one hand, it is a skill that we need in our every-day lives, like reading traffic signs and menus in restaurants. On the other hand, it implies reading and critical analysis of art, recognizing hints given by the illustrator about time, place, culture, and characters. Visual literacy also includes being sensitive to small details and being able to interpret entities.

As professional readers, translators of picture books need to know how to read the visual in a professional manner. In practice this means that translators need to identify the type and kind of picture books they are translating as well as the indexical relationship of the verbal and the visual. They also need knowledge about visual cultural differences like the symbolism of colors and reading directions. They need to know when to domesticate and give additional information and when to leave it to the visual. Otherwise translators may either overinterpret or neglect some important details which may lead to an unintentional and unwanted inconsistency.

REFERENCES

Bakhtin, M. (1990): *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays.* Engl. trans. Caryl Emerson ja Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bass, J. (1999): *Cooking with Herb, The Vegetarian Dragon. A Cookbook for Kids.* Illust. Debbie Harter. New York: Barefoot Books.

Bass, J. (2000): *Yrtti Yrjänän reseptit. Lasten kasviskeittokirja.* Illust. Debbie Harter. Finnish trans. Riitta Oittinen. Kärkölä: Pieni Karhu.

Berger, A. A. (1998): *Seeing Is Believing. An Introduction to Visual Communication.* London, Toronto: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Carroll, L. (1981): *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass.* Illust. John Tenniel. New York: Bantam Books.

Carroll, L. (1988): *Liisan seikkailut ihmemaassa.* Finnish trans. Kirsi Kunnas ja Eeva-Liisa Manner. Illust. Anthony Browne. Karkkila: Kustannus-Mäkelä Oy.

Carroll, L. (2000): *Liisa Ihmemaassa*. Illust. Helen Oxenbury. Finnish trans. Tuomas Nevanlinna. Helsinki: Otava.

Chesterman, A. (1997): *Memes of Translation. The spread of ideas in translation theory.* Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Dollerup, C. (2003) (in this issue): "Translation for Reading Aloud."

Hallberg, K. (1982): "Litteraturvetenskapen och bilderbokforskningen." In *Tidskrift för litteraturvetenskap* 3-4/1982:163-168.

Hughes, P. (1998): "Exploring visual literacy across the curriculum." In Janet Evans (ed.) *What's in the Picture? Responding to Illustrations in Picture Books*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd. 1998:115-131.

Hunt, P. (1990): *Children's Literature: The Development of Criticism.* London: Routledge.

Kingman, L. (1968): *The Secret Journey of the Silver Reindeer.* Illust. Lynd Ward. New York: Doubleday.

Kingman, L. (1991): *Hopeaporojen salaisuus.* Illust. Hannu Lukkarinen. Finnish trans. Riitta Oittinen et al. Helsinki: Lasten Keskus.

Lanes, S. G. (1980): *The Art of Maurice Sendak*. New York: Abradale Press/Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

Lefevere, A. (1992): *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame.* London and New York: Routledge.

Lewis, D. (2001): *Reading Contemporary Picturebooks. Picturing Text.* London and New York: Routledge.

Lupton, H. (2001): *Tarinatie. Tarinoita silmälle ja korvalle.* Illust. Sophie Fatus. Finnish trans. Riitta Oittinen. Kärkölä: Pieni Karhu.

Lupton, H. (2001): *The Story Tree. Tales to Read Aloud.* Illust. Sophie Fatus. Bristol: Barefoot Books.

Nières Chevrel, I. (2003) (in this issue): "Traduire *In the Night Kitchen*, ou de la difficile lecture d'un album."

Oittinen, R. (1997): *Liisa, Liisa ja Alice.* Illust. Riitta Oittinen. Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Oittinen, R. (2000): *Translating for Children.* Illust. Riitta Oittinen. New York: Garland.

Oittinen, R. (2003) (forthcoming): *Kuvakirja kääntäjän kädessä.*(Translating the visual in picture books).

Ollikainen, A. (1985) (ed.): *Kuka lohduttaisi Genoveevaa? Nuorisokirjallisuuden kääntämisestä*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopiston kirjallisuuden laitos.

Opie, I. and P. (1985) *The Puffin Book of Nursery Rhymes*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Puffin Books.

O'Sullivan, E. (2000): *Kinderliterarische Komparatistik.* Heidelberg: Universitätslag C. Winter.

Paloposki, O. and R. Oittinen (2001): "The Domesticated Foreign." In Chesterman, Andrew, Natividad Gallardo and Yves Gambier (eds), Proceedings of the 1998 EST Conference in Granada, John Benjamins.

Peirce, C. S. (2001): *Johdatus tieteen logiikkaan ja muita kirjoituksia.* Finnish trans. Markus Lång. Tampere: Vastapaino.

Rättyä, Kaisu 2002 "Kirjatulva kasvanut käännöksistä." Onnimanni 2/2002:18-22.

Rhedin, U. (1992): *Bilderboken på väg mot en teori.* Stockholm: Alfabeta.

Robinson, D. (1997): *Translation and Empire. Postcolonial Theories Explained.* Manchester, UK: St. Jerome.

Schwarcz, J. H. (1982): *Ways of the Illustrator. Visual Communication in Children's Literature.* Chicago: American Library Association.

Sendak, M. (1963): *Where the Wild Things Are.* USA: Harper & Row.

Sendak, M. (1967): *Wo die Wilden Kerle Wohnen.* German trans. Claudia Schmölders. Zürich: Diogenes Verlag AG.

Sendak, M. (2001): *Till vildingarnas land.* Swedish Trans. Boris Persson. Italy: BonnierCarlsen.

Sendak, M. (no year of publ.): *Hassut hurjat hirviöt.* Finnish trans. Heidi Järvenpää. Helsinki: Weilin & Göös.

Stan, S. (1997): "A Study of International Children's Picture Books Published in the United States in 1994." Doctoral dissertation. Faculty of the graduate school of the University of Minnesota. UMI Dissertation Services. A Bell & Howell Company. Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Stone, J. (1971): *The Monster at the End of this Book.* Illust. Mike Smoll. A Sesame Street Book. New York: Golden Press/Golden Books.

Tuominen, T. (unpub.): "Kuvakirjan kääntäminen ääneen luettavaksi." Essay.

Venuti, L. (1995): *The Invisibility of the Translator. A History of Translation.* London and New York: Routledge.

Wall, B. (1991): *The Narrator's Voice. The Dilemma of Children's Fiction.* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and London: Macmillan Academic and Professional Ltd.