

## How Words and Pictures Work in the Translation of Maurice Sendak's Picture Books

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### Abstract

Chinese versions of foreign picture books have been for decades a staple segment of the children's book market in Taiwan, but academic interest in translating picture books for children has only started to emerge in recent years. A picture book, unlike common literary works characterized by verbal language, is best understood in light of the interaction between the words and pictures in the book. A translator of a picture book is thus faced with a challenging and significant task, that is, the task of deciding whether the visual can be translated or whether the visual should be referred back to when translating. By looking at the translation theories developed by Liang Lin and other scholars in Taiwan, we suggest in the first part of the paper that the prevailing concept in children's literature in Taiwan, i.e., *the art of plain language*, was underlined by the common assumptions toward childhood, and that word-and-picture interactions should be considered in the translation of a picture book. In the second part of the paper, we follow Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott's categorization of word-and-picture interactions in picture books and examine Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*, *In the Night Kitchen*, and *Outside Over There*. In addition, we concentrate on the relationship between words and pictures and how that relationship influences translators' strategies. Through a comparative analysis of both the English and Chinese versions of Sendak's books, we indicate the noticeable changes in the word-and-picture interaction in the translated picture books. Those changes imply that the Chinese-language translations *per se* are *different* versions from their source texts, and that a translated picture book inevitably embodies a translator's assumptions toward children as well as a translator's understanding of the word-and-picture relationship in picture books.

Key words: picture book, Maurice Sendak, children's literature in translation

The term picture book covers a wide variety of children's books, ranging from Mother Goose books and toy books for very young children to picture books with plots that satisfy more experienced, older children. When giving a working definition of picture books, Perry Nodelman states clearly,

“Picture books—books intended for young children which communicate information or tell stories through a series of many pictures combined with relatively slight texts or no texts at all—are unlike any other form of verbal or visual art. Both the pictures and the texts in these books are different from and communicate differently from pictures and texts in other circumstances” (1988: vii).

It is worth noting that one characteristic many picture books have in common is the use of the pictorial text to present all or most of the content of a book. The pictorial text is integral to the story line, enhancing the actions, settings, and characterizations (Norton 1995: 235). In a well-written picture book, however, the verbal text and the pictorial text complement each other, so children cannot deduce the whole story merely by reading the verbal text or by viewing the pictures alone (Stephens 1992; Evans 1998; Sipe 1998; Mallan 1999; Lewis 2001). In quality picture books, the words and the illustrations work together to tell a story or present content, and the full meaning of the book is created by the interaction of the author's words and the artist's pictures (Nodelman and Reimer 2003). Picture books can be seen as a literary genre different from literary works which feature only verbal language.

For decades translations of foreign-language children's literature have been a staple segment of the children's book market in Taiwan (Lin 1989; Hung 1994, 2004). Most children's books in Taiwan have been translated from foreign languages, adapted from folk tales, or rewritten from old publications. From the end of World War II to the twenty-first century, this phenomenon has stayed unchanged. More than half of picture books published in Taiwan to date are translated from their foreign-language versions. The picture book market in Taiwan has long been dominated by foreign picture books, mainly award winners from the US, UK, and Japan. The total number of original books is no higher than twenty percent (Hung 2004). There may be two major reasons for this phenomenon. For parents and educators in Taiwan, picture books are important resources to develop young children's Chinese proficiency and thus remain the *prima donna* of the children's reading materials. And for the publishers, translated picture books require lower publishing costs in the way of translation and provide a greater opportunity for co-publishing. Less resources are spent on translators and the number of copies printed increases, thus making it a more economical venture for publishers to publish translated picture books than originally-created picture books. For example, the Mandarin Daily News Association introduced a handful of Caldecott winners in Chinese translation “to develop children's literacy and to popularize Mandarin or

Chinese since the mid-sixties” (Bradbury and Liu 241). Other publishers like Hsin Yi Foundation, Han Sheng, and Grimm Press also joined in publishing a wide variety of translated picture books for the young readers.

Maurice Sendak (1928-) is one of the prominent picture book artists that have been introduced to Taiwan through the Chinese version. Best known for his book *Where the Wild Things Are*, awarded the Caldecott Medal in 1964, Sendak has been translated into Chinese since 1987. Selma Lanes indicates that Sendak's books “employ a good deal of background crosshatching”, and “the foreground figures are painted in clear, soft watercolor tints reminiscent of comic-strip art of the 1930s” (Lanes 117). It may be Sendak's admiration of Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886) that leads him to create his own style and to improvise in his illustration (Lanes 110-111). The jury's citation of the Swedish government's Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for Literature in 2003 further confirmed his talent and importance in the picture book genre.

“Maurice Sendak is the modern picture book's portal figure. He's unparalleled in developing the picture books unique possibilities of narrating—to the joy of constant new picture-book illustrators. Furthermore, he is one of the most courageous researchers of the most secret recesses of childhood—to the delight of constant new readers (qtd. in Kushner 6).”

For his exploration into the complexity of childhood with picture books, Sendak is even praised as the Picasso of children's literature (Sendak 2008).

This paper will center on “the unique possibilities of narrating” in three of Maurice Sendak's picture books, *Where the Wilds Things Are*, *In the Night Kitchen*, and *Outside over There*. The Chinese versions of those books were published respectively in 1987, and 1996. They remain popular, like their English counterparts, in the market of children's books. Through a comparative analysis of both the English and Chinese versions of the titles above, we hope to throw light upon the narrative art of Sendak's books when they are presented in different languages.

As mentioned earlier, picture books are a special genre in which pictorial and verbal texts tell the story at the same time. If a picture book is best understood in light of the interaction between words and pictures in the book, it follows that a translator of a picture book is faced with a challenging and significant task, that is, the task of deciding whether the visual can be translated or whether the visual should be referred back to when translating. A translated book is usually defined as one originally written in its source language and then translated into a target language. In the case of Sendak, a translated book is one originally written in English and subsequently translated into Chinese and published by a Taiwanese publisher. If translation is a change of two languages at the micro level of the text, questions of language are important for the translators when they translate English into Chinese. Besides the verbal text, do translators consider the verbal-and-pictorial dynamic in the translated picture books?

This will be important questions to explore when we consider both the English and Chinese versions of Sendak's books. Let's look at the recent discussion over the translation of children's literature before we examine versions of Sendak's books.

## Translation of Children's Books in Taiwan

Chinese versions of foreign picture books have long been the most important reading material for young children, but academic interest in translating for children has only started to emerge in the recent years. Instead of reading children's books from pedagogical, psychological or linguistic perspectives, literary scholars have begun to accord serious attention to the literary qualities of the books in the last decade. They are investigating and re-evaluate the translation theories which have been applied to translated children's books.

When translated children's books are considered, Liang Lin is definitely a pioneer in promoting what he calls *the art of plain language*. In Lin's view, "children use language differently from adults. Children name and describe things in everyday life, and they tend to use simpler and easier words" (23). Assuming that children's literature is written for children, Lin maintains that children's book should be written in words children can follow and understand. His views towards children and picture books have strongly influenced many translators, and most commentators on the translation of children's literature inevitably mention the use of plain language as a criterion.

Now Lin's art of plain language is seen as being underlined by his assumptions toward childhood. Ku (2008) and Chen (2008) have examined his translated works, arguing that Lin's assumptions about children influence the books he translated. Lin's concept of plain language, Chen argues, caters to children and underestimates children's ability to appreciate literature. She believes that the concept of children is constructed by adults, questioning whether children are really like what adults think they are—simple, helpless, and weak. Considering translation as a transformation, moving from source language culture to target language culture, Ku goes further to discuss Lin's theory and translation practice by analyzing his translation of *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* (1903) and *The Tailor of Gloucester* (1903) written by Beatrix Potter. She is convinced that translators usually abandon or highlight some components to fit the literary criteria in the source language culture while in the process of translating texts (23). In the translation of *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin*, Ku suggests, Lin transforms the relationship between Old Mr. Brown and Squirrel Nutkin, changing it from a superior-to-inferior relationship into an elder-to-youth relationship, and "politeness" also became the major theme (16). She also notes that Lin's translation may result in the loss of the information that Potter tried to convey. According to Ku,

Lin's translation embodies his own translation theory in order to fulfill the needs of the potential readers, children.

In addition to assumptions toward childhood, translation theories that have commonly been applied to children's books are also discussed and examined. Translation is normally assumed as an act to convey the form and meaning of the original as accurately as possible. However, the common assumption of language equivalence is obviously not theoretically adequate to handle the translation of a picture book, in which types of language, like verbal language, visual language, including visual images and media, and artifacts as well, require attention and translation. If a translator does not take the pictures and the word-and-picture relationships into account, mistranslation may occur. A lack of caution may cause the translator to miss some information in picture books. In the Chinese version of *Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs* written by Randall Jarrell and illustrated by Ekholm Burkert, for example, the translator did not pay attention to the picture, and therefore mistranslated the scene by changing it from "a queen sat and sewed a hat" into "a queen sat and sewed clothes" (Chen 2003).<sup>2</sup>

Despite the fact that commentators have begun to notice the word-and-picture relationship in picture books, some of the studies remain focused on the equivalence between the source text and the target text. Lu (2000) discussed translation of picture books by using modern translation theories, Nida's dynamic equivalence theory and functional equivalence as a theoretical framework, and argued that translation of picture books should not only translate words, but must also think about the synthesis of texts, pictures, sounds and rhymes, the format of picture books, and printing (208). Here, the idea of equivalence is applied to not only the word level, but also non-word level, even including the printing. Lu further argued that "although visual texts do not need translating, they should be analyzed to make sure what the register and spirit should be used in the verbal texts" (208). In other words, the visual texts play an important part in a picture book, and if the visual texts are not included in the process of translation, misinterpretations will occur and translations will be poor.

In order to open up more possibilities other than equivalence theory for exploring the complicated word-and-picture interactions in picture books, Yang (2008) goes one step further to discuss the word-and-picture interactions in translated picture books. She has examined two different Chinese versions of Chris Van Allsburg's *Jumanji*, concentrating on the relationship between words and pictures, and how that relationship influences translators' strategies and specific solutions. In addition to the translation of the verbal text, Yang has drawn our attention toward the underlying fact that a translation can inevitably embody a translator's assumptions toward childhood as well as a translator's understanding of the word-and-picture relationship in a

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<sup>2</sup> The word "a hat" is not shown in the picture book. Yet, it could be detected by reading the picture. However, the translator did not notice that and mistranslated it as "sew clothes".

picture book. This paper is to examine the word-and-picture interactions in both English and Chinese versions of Maurice Sendak's books on the basis of the arguments made in recent translation studies in children's literature.

## **A Comparative Analysis of Versions of Sendak's Books**

In order to obtain a basic concept of the word-and-picture relationship in translated picture books, the classification scheme proposed by Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott in "*The Dynamics of Picturebook Communication*" (2001) is employed here. Nikolajeva and Scott discriminate between types of word-and-picture interaction by analyzing hundreds of picture books, providing the reader with useful terms to describe a wide spectrum of word-image relationships in picture books. Translated picture books are categorized into such categories as symmetry, enhancement, complementary, and counterpoint. First of all, symmetrical interaction is that "words and pictures tell the same story, essentially repeating information in different forms of communication" (225). Secondly, enhancing interaction is that "pictures amplify more fully the meaning of the words, or the words expand the picture so that different information in the two modes of communication produces a more complex dynamic" (225). Thirdly, when enhancing interaction becomes very significant, the dynamic becomes "truly complementary" (225-226). Fourthly, "a counterpointing dynamic may develop where words and images collaborate to communicate meanings beyond the scope of either one alone" (226).<sup>3</sup>

Although the categories are not wholly watertight, this scheme of categorization offers a preliminary distinction between types of word-and-picture interaction. Nikolajeva and Scott, as David Lewis has indicated, "not only discriminate between types of interaction, but also explore the way they intersect with narrative features such as character, setting and point of view" (39). To refine Nikolajeva and Scott's categorization for a study of translated picture books, a comparative analysis is done with both the English version and the Chinese translation from a social semiotic approach. Samples drawn from Sendak's picture books and their Chinese translations are scrutinized to see how social or literary meaning is created through words, images and their interaction. Special focus is placed on how pedagogical interaction with the reader is created, and how child images are constructed in translated picture books.

As we have mentioned above, three of Maurice Sendak's award-winning picture

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<sup>3</sup> In Nikolajeva and Scott's *The Dynamics of Picturebook communication*, "contradictory interaction is an extreme form of counterpointing, where words and pictures seem to be in opposition to one another" (226). Besides, there are other subcategories classified by different strength, such as minimal enhancement and significant enhancement, or categories with a certain focus or function, such as ironic counterpoint and counterpoint in characterization. However, only four of the main categories are detected in Sendak's books and their translations.

books, *Where the Wild Things Are*, *In the Night Kitchen*, and *Outside over There*, are analyzed here. The three picture books are not only similar in style, but they also have a similar plot in which the child protagonist tries to deal with different emotions, such as anger, anxiety, and fear. After some disturbing emotions are aroused by a certain event, the protagonist usually falls into a fantasy, undergoes some adventure, and comes back to the real world at the end of the story. For Sendak, children are not what the adults think they are. As he has put it, children are

“more catholic in taste; they’ll tolerate ambiguities, peculiarities, and things illogical; they will take them into their unconscious and deal with them as best they can.” (qtd in Lanes 125)

As regards the readership of his books, Sendak does not think that children are the only readers of picture books. He “is often ‘infuriated and insulted’ when his books are considered mere trifles for the nursery” (Lanes 124). He has complained, saying,

“If you’ve worked as much as two or three years on a book, and put your life into it, you expect the point of view of the professionals to be somewhat larger, more expansive. You certainly hope the book will be read by people of all ages.” (Lanes 124)

Above all, Sendak values the total design of a picture book, accentuating the dynamics of word-and-picture interaction in a book. As he has put it,

“There is a juxtaposition of picture and word, a counterpoint, which never happened before. Words are left out and the picture says it. Pictures are left out and the word says it. To me, this was the invention of the picture book.” (qtd in Lanes 110)

Sendak indicates clearly that the most fascinating part of a picture book lies in various interactions between words and pictures. If translation is a change of two languages at the micro level of the text, do translators consider the verbal-and-pictorial dynamic in Sendak when translating his books into Chinese? Do the translators recast the translation of Sendak as texts for a sophisticated adult audience if adults are regarded as a group of potential readers, at least for Sendak? Are translators’ choices affected by their desire to cater to an adult views on childhood? These factors, i.e., interaction between words and pictures, readership of picture books, and a translator’s assumptions toward childhood may influence the translation of a picture book.

To facilitate a comparative analysis of the versions of Sendak’s books, the word-and-picture interactions drawn from both English and Chinese versions are sampled, marked and compared. In the present study, the translated version is expected to have the same word-and-picture interaction, because according to Sendak, the interactions are purposely designed by picture book artists. However, if the interactions are changed, it is possible that the translator adopted certain strategies to deal with the gaps while translating, such as the constraints of language, the concept of childhood, and even a consideration for readers. It is also possible that the

translator was aware of the interaction and manipulated the interaction on purpose. The samples are juxtaposed together with the literal translation and the phonetic transcription in Pinyin system in the tables. Noticeable changes in the translated picture book are then analyzed and suggestions are given for further discussion.

The Chinese version of *Where the Wild Things Are* was translated by Han Sheng Publisher. It was sold in subscription sets. As Bradbury and Liu mentioned, “the sets were impressive on several accounts. The editors’ choices were superb, the translations were excellent, and ...” (241). In first and second openings, however, the word-and-picture interaction is changed. In the first opening, Max<sup>4</sup> was nailing to the wall a rope which was tied together with clothes, and made the room a mess. In the second opening, we see that Max was chasing a dog downstairs. But the translator changed the interaction. The verbal texts in the first opening are:

The source version	The target version
The night Max wore his wolf suit and made mischief of one kind	The night Max wore his wolf jacket and at home.....  wǎnshàng , Ā-qí chuān shàng yěláng wàitào , zài jiā lǐ.....  晚上，阿奇穿上野狼外套，在家裏..... <sup>5</sup>

In the first opening of the original version, the pictorial text shows what Max looked like and what he was doing in a confined room. The picture enhances the verbal text, indicating that Max was in a white suit with a big black tail behind, and that he appeared mischievous when he was nailing with a hammer. However, in the Chinese version, the verbal text does not mention the mischief the boy was doing in the picture. And in the second opening, the verbal texts are:

The source version	The target version
and another	act extremely wildly  dà sāyě  大撒野

<sup>4</sup> In Chinese version, Max’s name changed into Ā-qí (阿奇).

<sup>5</sup> Here, in the column of the translated text, the first part is the English equivalent of the Chinese translated text, the second part is the pinyin of the Chinese translated text, and the third part is the Chinese translated text.



The words in the original version are supplementary, but the words in Chinese version emphasize the boy's naughtiness or misbehavior. If we look at both the pictorial and verbal texts again, the pictures show that Max did a lot of mischief, and the words in the next opening, "and another" emphasize a series of things that Max made when he was alone. However, the translated text does not point to the *sequence* of annoying tricks the boy was playing, but notes that Ā-qí acted very wildly. Here the translation does not render the sequential pranks the boy had been doing in the pictorial text. Indeed, this kind of change may be due to linguistic limitations or because the translator wants to create a unique rhythm for the Chinese version. However, the change of the interaction between words and pictures may create a subtle difference between the English and the Chinese version.

Visible changes in the word-and-picture interaction can also be detected in the other two of Sendak's book. *In the Night Kitchen*, translated by Guang-Cai Hou, describes a boy, Mickey, who heard a racket in the night. He shouted to stop it, and when he fell asleep, a series of fantastic events occurred. In the verso page of the second opening, there are two pictures juxtaposed to show that Mickey<sup>6</sup> was entering dreamland where he was naked. The verbal texts of the two versions are:

The source version	The target version
AND FELL THROUGH THE DARK, OUT OF HIS CLOTHES	SUDDENLY HE FLOATED IN THE AIR AND HIS BODY WAS NAKED.  hūrán tā piāo shàng bàn kōng , quánshēn guāngliūliū  忽然他飄上半空，全身光溜溜

In the two versions above the word-and-picture interaction seems symmetrical. However, if we go back to the recto page of the first opening, we will perceive something different. In the recto page of the first opening, Mickey was standing on his bed and shouting out toward a dark place with his body slightly leaning towards a dark place where there is a big speech bubble with the words "QUIET DOWN THERE!" inside. And in the next page, we find that Mickey's head was lower than his legs with his mouth wide open. When reading along with the texts, "AND FELL THROUGH THE DARK, OUT OF HIS CLOTHES", we see clearly that Mickey fell through the dark rather than floated in the air. Thus, if the word-and-picture interaction in original version is symmetrical, the interaction in Chinese version becomes enhancing or misleading. One common feature of the three books under

<sup>6</sup> Mickey is the name of the boy in the picture book; in Chinese version, his name is "Mǐ-qí (米奇)".

discussion is a special entrance Sendak creates to allow the protagonist to go from a realistic world into an imaginary or adventurous world. In *Where the Wild Things Are*, the forest which grows in the room is the entrance, in *Outside over There*, the window with growing sunflowers is the entrance, and the dark place is the entrance in the book of *In the Night Kitchen*, which should not be ignored or omitted even in the translated version.

The pictorial text of a picture book should not be overlooked, and unnecessary information or wordy messages should not be added to the translation, either. In the verso page of the sixteenth opening, the picture shows that Mickey stood on a milk bottle at dawn, giving the message that morning was coming. The verbal texts are:

The source version	The target version
NOW MICKEY IN THE NIGHT KITCHEN CRIED (text in the speech bubble) COCK-A-DOODLE DOO!	MICKEY CRIED OUT LOUD MORNING IS COMING. (text in the speech bubble) COCK-A-DOODLE DOO!  Mǐ-qí dàjiào yì shēng tiānliàng luò  米奇大叫一聲 天亮囉 (text in the speech bubble) “咕咕咕！”

The capitalized words in the speech bubble in the picture enhance the drama of the sound Mickey made. In the Chinese version, however, the word-and-picture interaction becomes symmetrical because the verbal texts explicitly points out to the reader “it is morning time” rather than keeping the sound effect the original text has made. Is it necessary to substitute a literal translation of “morning is coming (tiānliàng luò) for the metaphor of “COCK-A-DOODLE DOO!?” The sound COCK-A-DOODLE DOO reminds the readers of “a rooster,” and motivates them to connect its sound to “morning.” If the words “morning is coming” are directly given in the verbal text, the potential readers do not need to think why Mickey said “COCK-A-DOODLE DOO”. The translation here does not render, but explains or interprets the source text for the target readers.

Though the meaning of COCK-A-DOODLE DOO both in the English and Chinese versions is almost the same, it is argued here that very young readers, who have little experience in reading and have little world knowledge, may not be able to understand the meaning of the onomatopoeic word. That is, COCK-A-DOODLE DOO may not have a clear meaning in their mind when reading it. Thus, the readers who do not know the meaning of COCK-A-DOODLE DOO have to explore the

meaning of the word. However, the addition of “MORNING IS COMING” will become a facilitating device in the Chinese version for inexperienced readers. On the contrary, adult readers may not be aware of this facilitating effect because COCK-A-DOODLE DOO is a term with the meaning as “MORNING IS COMING”.

It is definitely a challenging task for a translator to decide how the visual can be translated into the verbal or whether the visual should be referred back to when translating picture books. *Outside over There*, translated also by Guang-Cai Hou, describes a girl, Ida, who was full of anxiety and fear about the responsibility she had to take of looking after her baby sister. She even fantasized that her sister was being kidnapped by goblins and that she had to *be* like a mother to save her baby girl. In the third opening, the picture shows that while Ida was blowing a horn with concentration to calm down the crying baby, two goblins climbed into their room from the window. The verbal texts are:

The source version	The target version
Ida played her wonder horn to rock the baby still – but never watched.	<p>Little sister cried out loud, Ida blew the golden horn, trying to make her sister calm. Ida focused on blowing without noticing the goblins' coming.</p> <p>xiǎo mèimèi , kǔ yòu nào , àidá xiǎng hǒng mèimèi búyào chǎo 。 àidá zuǐgù zhe chuī , méi zhùyì lái le xiǎomóguǐ 。</p> <p>小妹妹，哭又鬧，愛達想哄妹妹不要吵。愛達只顧著吹，沒注意來了小魔鬼。</p>

Compared with the scene mentioned above, the verbal text in the original version is supplementary, indicating why and how Idea blew the wonder horn. The existence of goblins is shown in the next opening where a certain suspense is created when some unknown creatures in black cloaks come into the room from outside the window. In the Chinese version, however, the word-and-picture interaction becomes symmetrical because the translator specifies the pictorial text in which the goblins were coming. In other words, the verbal description runs parallel to the picture in which the kind of fear latent in Ida is embodied in the goblins.

It seems that symmetrical interaction is more comprehensible than other types of interactions because the pictorial texts tell the same story as the verbal texts. Thus, it is plausible that the translator changed the interaction from supplementary to

symmetrical in this case. It helps readers to detect the goblins sneaking into the room and trying to kidnap Ida's sister. In fact, the goblins had appeared in the first and second openings (and even in the endpaper), but the translator did not include the goblins into the renderings. Instead, he chose to reveal the existence of the goblins in the third opening because it was the very beginning of the goblins taking action to kidnap Ida's sister.

In addition to the changes in the word-and-picture interaction, it is worth noting that the translator's assumptions toward childhood also play a significant role in the translation. In the ninth opening, the sailor papa's song is the key to saving Ida's sister. Here the picture shows that Ida was flying "backwards" in the air. The verbal texts are:

The source version	The target version
"If Ida backwards in the rain would only turn around again and catch those goblins with a tune she'd spoil their kidnap honeymoon!"	I'm not afraid of raining blow the horn and keep forward rowing Do Re Me Fa Sol La Si blow down the honeymoon, laugh and sing <sup>7</sup>  dà yǔ huā huā wǒ bú pà , chuī qǐ hào jiǎo xiàng qián huá 。 dōu ruǐ mī fā shǒu lā xī , chuī pò mì yuè xiào hā hā 。  大雨嘩嘩我不怕， 吹起號角向前划。 都蕊咪發手拉西， 吹破蜜月笑哈哈。

The source version is written from the third-person point of view, indicating that however difficult it might be, Ida was trying to save her baby sister, and pondering on her next move. The Chinese translation does not overlook the kind of internal monologue Ida was making. The translated passage is rendered from the first-person point of view, pointing out that the words were said by Ida herself. Rather than retell the fact that it was a challenging task for Ida to save her sister, the Chinese version "blow the horn and keep forward rowing (chuī qǐ hào jiǎo xiàng qián huá)" is

<sup>7</sup> My translation back to English may have lost a lot of information, and the form is also somewhat different. However, the English translation may help non-Chinese speakers to understand the difference between the original texts and the translated texts.

semantically different from the original version wherein Ida “backwards in the rain would only turn around again.” It should be noted that the verbal description is clear about *how* Ida was going to save her sister, and that the key word “backwards” should not be missed. Moreover, the translated version is adapted from a household Chinese song: “Fishing Song” (bǔyú gē). Like its source version, the target version is also song-like. However, the Chinese version does not display Ida’s dilemma and thinking, but turns them into her optimism and dream of a triumphant outcome.

If the Ida of Sendak’s version is a girl who is full of anxiety about her responsibility, the translated one turns out to be about a high-spirited girl yearning for a happy adventure. In the example above, the translator’s assumption toward childhood is distinguished from Sendak’s. For him, childhood is never as sweet or simple as adults wish it to be. In his Caldecott acceptance speech, Sendak stated cogently, “what is just as obvious—and what is too often overlooked—is the fact that from their earliest years children live on familiar terms with disrupting emotions, that fear and anxiety are an intrinsic part of their everyday lives, that they continually cope with frustration as best they can. And it is through fantasy that children achieve catharsis” (Sendak 2008). The vulnerability of children and their struggle to make entranceway to some fantasy world have also been found in the three books under discussion. In the Chinese version, however, Sendak’s vision of childhood is translated into a localized ideal of childhood which is innocent and fearless.

It is worth mentioning that the prevailing readership of picture books in Taiwan remains children; therefore, when translating a picture book, translators inevitably put themselves in children’s shoes and apply what they or other adults (especially parents) think fit children’s abilities. Consequently, it is not uncommon for translators to mitigate the complexity and difficulty of the interaction between the words and pictures in the translated version. It is also worth noting that, as mentioned earlier, the translation theories are strongly influenced by Liang Lin’s concepts of the plain language. Nevertheless, it seems that the emphasis on simpler and easier words has become even simpler and easier word-and-picture interaction to cater to the major readers—children. As a result, the translators have had to accommodate themselves to the difference between Sendak’s concept of picture books and the prevailing translation theories.

## **Concluding Remarks**

The samples drawn from Sendak’s *Where the Wild Things Are*, *Outside Over There* and *In the Night Kitchen* attest the unique language of a picture book, which contains both verbal and pictorial texts. Moreover, word-and-picture interaction

within a picture book is never fixed but dynamic. A common attitude toward picture books in general is that they are “easier” than books created for grown-ups, and that they have “pretty pictures” inside. Despite their impressions upon the common reader, pictures in the picture books as well as interactions between words and pictures are often overlooked in the process of translation, at least on a conscious level. A comparison between the English and Chinese versions of Maurice Sendak, however, has brought us to a better understanding of the unique language of a picture book, and the dynamic interactions between words and pictures.

A comparative analysis of the word-and-picture interactions in versions of Sendak has also confirmed that the issue of the interaction between words and pictures is far more complicated when translating occurs. “In an original work,” Riitta Oittinen has put it well, “the author, illustrator, source-language readers, and publisher are involved in a dialogic relationship. In a translation, the dialogic constellation expands and involves a translator interpreting the text and illustrations, target-language readers with a different cultural background, a new publisher, and even, possibly, a new illustrator participating in a collaborative dialogue with the translator” (144). Taken together, the samples drawn from the Chinese version of Sendak’s books are not exactly the same as their originals. Just as the word-and-picture interaction in a picture book is dynamic, so it is changed in the translated picture book. With the change of the verbal text, the word-and-picture interaction is inevitably changed in the translated picture book. Translated picture books are printed in co-production, pictorial text components of the source text are combined with new verbal components in the target text. The Chinese-language translations *per se* are thus *different* versions from their source texts.

It must be pointed out that strictly speaking it is incorrect to assume that the translation is exactly equivalent to its source version. If such equivalence existed, the gaps or discrepancies between the translation and its original would never exist, whereas the case of Maurice Sendak contradicts any such assumption. The most that can be said, therefore, is that the relationship between the translation and its original is unique and subtle. The translation cannot be the same as its original, nor can it be totally independent from its source. The source version and its target version are not directly or immediately equivalent. In his well-known essay “The Task of the Translator,” Walter Benjamin cogently states, “Just as a tangent touches a circle lightly and at but one point — establishing, with this touch rather than with the point, the law according to which it is to continue on its straight path to infinity---a translation touches the original lightly and only at the infinitely small point of the sense, thereupon pursuing its own course according to the laws of fidelity in the freedom of linguistic flux” (*SW I*: 261). Through a comparative analysis of both the English and Chinese versions of Sendak’s books, we have indicated the noticeable changes in the word-and-picture interaction in the translated picture books. Those

changes imply that the Chinese-language translations *per se* are *different* versions from their source texts, and that a translated picture book inevitably embodies the consideration of readership, a translator's assumptions toward childhood as well as a translator's understanding of the word-and-picture relationship in a picture book.

Future studies may be able to focus on the unique feature of picture books, i.e., the interaction between words and pictures, to see whether different word-and-picture interactions of the same content yield different comprehension of a picture book for readers of different ages. If word-and-picture interaction may influence readers' comprehension, educators using picture books as materials should take the interaction into consideration when choosing quality picture books for children.

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## 比較分析莫里士·桑塔克中英文版本圖畫書裡的圖文關係

### 摘要

自二十世紀後半葉迄今，台灣的圖畫書一直是以翻譯作品為主流。但是，直到最近幾年圖畫書的翻譯才逐漸受到學術界的注意和討論。不同於傳統以文字表述為主的文學形式，圖畫書是以文字和圖畫二種語言媒介（有時甚至只有圖像語言）共同表陳講述故事。翻譯者在面對圖畫書時，應否處理或如何處理這種同時包含圖像和文字的文學藝術形式成為一個棘手卻重要的課題。本文旨在透過莫里士·桑塔克(Maurice Sendak)的中、英文版本圖畫書，了解圖畫書在翻譯後圖文關係的變化。本文首先檢視近幾年臺灣學界關於兒童翻譯圖畫書的重要觀點，主要為林良和其他學者所提出之相關翻譯理論和對兒童的預設，以期開展本土圖畫書翻譯的理論範疇。接著，本文以桑塔克的三本作品：《野獸國》、《廚房之夜狂想曲》、《在那遙遠的地方》為例，採用瑪莉亞·尼可拉亞娃(Maria Nikolajeva)和凱洛·史考特(Carole Scott)所歸納的圖文關係分類，比較分析上述三部作品，並討論英文原作與中文譯作裡圖文關係顯著改變的部份，討論其圖文關係對翻譯的影響。尼可拉亞娃和史考特的圖文關係分類則針對圖畫書的語言特質，提出具體且有效的詞彙描繪圖文關係。根據她們的分類架構，研究結果進一步證實了圖畫書本身的圖文關係並非一成不變。而且，在文字語言與圖像語言的層面，因應文字的改變，翻譯圖畫書與原文版本裡的圖文關係也隨之改變。因此，本文建議，檢視翻譯圖畫書時，應考量譯者對孩童的預設以及譯者對書中圖文關係的理解和詮釋。

關鍵詞：圖畫書 莫里士·桑塔克(Maurice Sendak) 兒童文學翻譯