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STRATEGIES OF ADAPTATION OF *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* BY LEWIS CARROL IN POLISH ILLUSTRATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

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In one of the most important books about fairy tales in the history of literary studies, Pierre Péju wrote that a fairy tale was never intended solely for the youngest readers, because it touches the dark core of childhood in an adult [1, p. 62]. The most popular example of children's literature that has been and still is read by an adult audience is Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. The author of one of the Polish translations of *Alice in Wonderland* remarked: «This is probably the only case in the history of literature where one text contains two completely different books: one for children and the other for very adults» [2, p. 9]. However, reflecting the ambiguity of reading in adaptation (into another language or medium) turned out to be a huge challenge for translators and illustrators. The enormity of word games, parodies of the texts of Victorian culture, irony in relation to the British realities of the time posed by the translators the question: does the translation of *Alice...* also require a certain cultural adaptation? An unambiguous answer to this question never appeared among Polish translators, which resulted in several completely different translations, intended for different readers. The illustrators, on the other hand, faced the question: in what aesthetics is *Alice in Wonderland* to be visualized, to whose eye it should correspond: a child or an adult reader? As in the case of adaptations, the discussion resulted in a multitude of different implementations made by illustrators. In my work, I would like to look at the strategies of translating *Alice in Wonderland*, trying to outline a certain relationship between the choices made by translators and illustrators.

Antoni Marianowicz and Maciej Słomczyński – Polish translators whose editions have achieved the greatest number of re-editions – set completely different goals for themselves in their translations. In the preface, Maciej Słomczyński explains that he tried to introduce *Alice in Wonderland* to an adult reader. Antoni Marianowicz, on the other hand, translated *Alice...* for a

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Polish child. Due to the difference in potential audience, the strategies of these translations also differ significantly. The key criterion is relevance to the original.

The difference in the translation strategies is already visible in the names of the characters. Classic English names appear in the translation of Maciej Słomczyński in the original version. Antoni Marianowicz changes the English names to those known to Polish children: Elsie, Lacy, Tillie become Kasia, Jaś and Basia – rhyming in the convention of a Slavic fairy tale. Alicja's catkin, Dina, stays with her original name in Słomczyński's translation, while in Marianowicz's she even changes her gender, because the combination of the Polish masculine noun cat with the female name Dina is not natural for a Polish child. Jacek The Cat is more recognizable in the Polish child's consciousness than the cat Dina. It is similar with the character Gryphon, which Słomczyński literally translates as *Gryf*, and in Marianowicz's case is transformed into a *Smok* (eng.: Dragon), a character better known to Polish children from fairy tales and legends. While the change of the Griffin to the Dragon seems to be justified and does not disturb the order, the change from Dodo to Gołąb (eng.: Pigeon) introduced by Marianowicz is risky. Researchers believe that the Dodo is an author's caricature of himself, namely transforming his own name into Do-do as a result of stuttering. And although this information is not intended for a child-reader and, according to Marianowicz's concept, it can be ignored, the Pigeon – although the Dodo comes from the pigeon family – is not a suitable replacement. In Polish culture, the pigeon has completely different connotations than the Dodo in British culture. In *Alice... Dodo* has a certain obsolescence, which harmonizes perfectly with the fact that it is an animal from the past. The Pigeon, associated with the Christian symbol of holiness (because of the lack of difference between pigeon and dove in Polish), does not reflect the original character of Carroll.

Although translations and illustrations are difficult to compare with each other because they have different functions, similar strategies can be found in adapting a piece into another language or medium. The seemingly insignificant issue of Dodo and Pigeon becomes one of the important exponents of the translation strategy. For the illustration as well as for the translation, relevance to the original is an important formality. Some researchers, such as Stefan Szuman, believe that illustration consists in expressing and concretizing the text in an artistic way [3, p. 100]. In this approach, the illustration is to follow the pattern of the literary text, fully correspond to it and does not allow any discrepancies between the literary and visual content. This is the case with the series of original illustrations for *Alice in Wonderland* made by Lewis Carroll. John Tenniel's graphics, based

on Carroll's illustrations, are considered classic illustrations of *Alice in Wonderland*. Tenniel's illustrations were as universal and appealing to readers of all ages as the content of Carroll's book. However, a different approach to illustrations is more widespread among researchers, according to which the task of illustrations is to explain, supplement, interpret or supplement a text, to evoke certain emotional states that enhance the work's effect [4, p. 99]. This approach allows us to move away from the original text towards interpretation. Each element of such an illustration is at the same time noteworthy as a work of its own and as part of the whole that is made up of the text with the illustration. Later illustrations of *Alice...*, as well as literary translations, were often oriented towards the reader of a specific age category and emphasized specific elements of this work.

The replacement of Dodo with Pigeon, with the youngest reader in mind, also appears in Aleksandra Dybczak's illustrations. Replacing one animal with another accounts for the primary purpose of the illustration, but is reinforced by other elements indicating that it is children's illustrations. Dybczak's monochrome illustrations are much softer than Tenniel's drawings, the illustrator chooses a delicate line, avoids excess chiaroscuro, her pictures are flatter and the shapes are less rigid. All the characters of Dybczak are more emotional, their faces are easily recognizable as surprise, irritation, interest or joy. It may seem that Dybczak's illustrations are more primitive, which is why they are more suitable for children, but the artist consciously gives up some elements of the classic illustration of *Alice in Wonderland* and changes them to others, gentler and more accessible to children. Dodo is also absent from one of the most popular Polish series of illustrations by Olga Siemaszko. Siemaszko's illustrations resemble children's drawings, they are primitive in terms of shapes, chiaroscuro and details. Contrary to Dybczak, Siemaszko's characters are less emotional, but the artist communicates emotions through colors. A realistic Dodo is also missing in Gosia Mosz's illustrations. However, in her illustrations, the Dodo is not changed into the Pigeon. Mosz does not show the Dodo in its realistic form, however, apart from parrots and a duck, there are two unusual birds, the recognition of which may be problematic for the reader. Such a procedure strengthens the versatility of the illustrations – they fit both a translation closer to the original and a translation adapted for children.

The illustrating strategies of Aleksandra Dybczak and Olga Siemaszko resemble Antoni Marianowicz's translation: in these translations there is a common goal – to bring the work to younger readers. It cannot be ignored that both the translator and the illustrators interpret the work in a certain way: they present *Alice in Wonderland* only as a fairy tale for children. The difference in interpretation appears on the color level: all of Siemaszko's illustrations

contain cold colors, are blurry and calm, while all of Dybczak's colored illustrations are bright, warm, and discolored. The artists suggest two different representations of a children's book: dreamlike, calm, and fairy-tale and crazy. Gosia Mosz, on the other hand, tries to combine the work's dreaminess with its fairy-tale nature. Using the intricate shapes of the background, the artist creates a surreal mood of slumber and illusion, and bright warm colors and round shapes of characters help create a friendly atmosphere of a fairy tale.

Illustrations support the perception of the recipient and vary depending on the potential reader. Both the translations and the later illustrations strengthen a certain feature of *Alice in Wonderland* which the author of the adaptation considers more important: fabulousness in Marianowicz's translation and Mosz and Dybczak's illustrations, Siemaszko's delicate childlike onirism. Gentle Polish illustrations seem to be a confrontation for well-known gloomy illustrations by Dali or Steadman. Each translator or illustrator of *Alice in Wonderland* had to adapt this work in a different way, changing the viewer's perception. Famous Polish interdisciplinary researcher Seweryna Wyslouch has written, that the illustrator acts like an interpreter – he aims to discover the meaning of the work, to emphasize what is important. He also decodes the text, specifies it, creating whole series of drawings which – in the case of a well-known work – often fulfill a life independent of the works [4, p. 103]. Striving for absolute neutrality and relevance to the original is ineffective both in translations and in illustrations, when the original is so ambiguous.

References:

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