

**Translator's Translation Choices in Mary Hoffman's  
*MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories*' First Finnish  
Edition**

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BA Thesis

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First Finnish Edition**

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This thesis studies the translation choices made in Mary Hoffman's *MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories*' first Finnish edition, *Otavan suuri satukirja*. It aims to study whether the translator has had a domesticating or a foreignizing effect on the published children's fairy tales, and to add knowledge on the study of translated children's literature in Finland.

The material for this study consists of six tales selected from Hoffman's collection, which are analyzed through the lens of close reading. The analysis is based on the theoretical frameworks of Eugene Nida's functional equivalence and Lawrence Venuti's domestication and foreignization strategies. Nida's theory aids with studying the transfer of meaning between the source and target texts, and Venuti's strategies aid with studying the translator's choices. These strategies also aid in studying the translator's impact on the narrative of the tales. For this study, five translation technique categories have been formed, which are based on previously coined techniques.

The translator has preferred domestication techniques when translating the tales. Only one of the thirteen examples contained a possibility of foreignization, but this example is arguable. The translator's domesticating approach has formed a sense of familiarity into the tales, creating a domestic setting for the child reader. The results also support the idea that translation exists on a spectrum, as domestication and foreignization are not always clear-cut strategies.

Domestication may be preferred on a linguistic level when translating for small children. The effects of foreignized versus domesticated texts on children could be a valuable future research topic.

**Key words:** children's literature, fairy tales, translation, domestication, foreignization, functional equivalence

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## 1 Introduction

Generally, research on translation of children's literature has received less attention than research on translation of literature aimed at adults, despite the fact that children's literature has been written and translated for centuries. Translation of such texts has been greatly impacted by geo-political and social factors, as the concept of childhood and educational principles have changed throughout history. As most studies of children's literature have been based on the English-speaking children's texts, there is a need for such studies in the Finnish-speaking field.

In this thesis, I study the translator's translation choices in Mary Hoffman's *The MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories* (2000) first Finnish edition *Otavan suuri satukirja* (2001). The collection includes Hoffman's retellings of popular fairy tales and is aimed at children aged three to six years. It consists of 42 stories from which I have selected six to analyze closer. The method of analysis I use in this study is close reading. The study focuses on domestication and foreignization strategies, the translator as a persona who has the ability to change the narrative, and narrative through the translator's choices. With persona and narrative in mind, I apply Eugene Nida's functional equivalence theory to analyze how the meaning of the original tales has been translated, and Lawrence Venuti's domestication and foreignization strategies to analyze whether the translator has applied foreignizing or domesticating techniques on the translations. From the Material and Theory section, I will continue onto the Method section, and then to the analysis of the selected tales, in which examples of used domestication and foreignization techniques are introduced.

## 2 Translating Children's Literature

Children's literature is literature written for children (García de Toro 2020; Borodo & Díaz-Cintas 2025, 173). In the English speaking world, its translation has a long history (Lathey 2010, 2). Already in the 18th century, educational writers were beginning to consider the different needs of child readers compared to adult readers, and their status as a reader (id. 29). This led to translations for children to have mainly a purpose of moral education (id. 47, 78). As the whole concept of childhood has shifted due to adult requirements for its content and morals (id. 6–7), children's literature has evolved alongside the concept of childhood.

Throughout time, children's literature and its translations have been affected by the surrounding ideologies and cultural norms (Lathey 2010, 6–7). This is also seen in the terminology used when discussing children's literature. *Adaptation* as a term and concept has been associated with all creative works targeted towards children, including children's literature (Borodo & Díaz-Cintas 2025, 172). However, adaptations for children have been associated with many practices deemed negative by many, such as manipulation and censorship, which has led to proposals of new terminology (id. 172–173). One of the proposed terms is *retelling*, which has been in use since 1883, and it is a popular term in fairy tale studies (id. 175, 178). This term is popular due to its disconnection to negative connotations usually associated with adaptation, and its broad meaning, as it can either mean retelling the story itself, or reinventing the story's meaning (id. 178). *The MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories*' tales are retellings, according to the cover of the English version. While this study uses the term adaptation freely, and does not associate it with any negative connotations, Hoffman's tales are nevertheless referred to as retellings.

In the past 20 years, there has been growing interest in the translation of children's literature (Fornalczyk-Lipska 2022). Despite the growing interest in this interdisciplinary field, children's literature is still a marginal research topic in literature and translation studies on the global scale. Recurrent topics on children's literature have focused on cultural context adaptation, that is, domestication and foreignization, multiple reader addressee, ideological manipulation, and the relationship between text and a visual medium (García de Toro 2020). In Finland, children's literature and its translation has been researched through the lens of cultural context adaptation (e.g. Sipinen 2014), domestication and foreignization (e.g. Kallio 2015), and the relationship between text and image has also been a researched topic (e.g. Heimari 2019). While domestication and foreignization have been studied before in the

Finnish field of children's translation, the research is still marginal compared to studies of other types of literature. Furthermore, fairy tales as a genre is not common in Finnish research, as most studies have focused on other types of children's literature. This thesis aims to add onto the research of translating fairy tales.

### 3 Material and Theory

This section focuses on the selected materials, and the theoretical background. It introduces Hoffman's books and the author herself, accompanied by the translator of the Finnish edition. The selected tales will be named and their previous versions discussed for a better understanding of the tales' background. From the material the section continues onto the theoretical framework. I discuss Eugene Nida and his theory of functional equivalence, Lawrence Venuti and his strategies of domestication and foreignization, and the differences between Nida and Venuti's ideologies regarding translation.

#### 3.1 The MacMillan Tales and Its Translation

The material for this study consists of Mary Hoffman's *The MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories* (2000) and its first Finnish edition, *Otavan suuri satukirja* (2001). The illustrated books are intended for children aged three to six years and they are meant to be read together with a parent. They include Hoffman's retellings of 42 popular fairy tales from which I have selected six to analyze closer. The books contain stories with different themes. They include, for example, animals, moral teachings, transformations, heroes and heroines, magic, and giants. The translator for the Finnish edition is Pirkko Biström, who is an experienced literary translator. Alongside children's literature, she has translated many genres according to a search on Vaski web library. The translated works contain thrillers, mysteries, young adult novels, and romance novels since 1988.

Mary Hoffman, born 1945, is an English author and has published over a hundred books written for children and teenagers (Amazon & ISFDB). She is well known for her picture books and her *Stravaganza* fantasy series, and her work has been translated to 30 languages (Amazon). In the introduction of *The MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories*, she explains that she strived to retell popular fairy tales to make them more age-appropriate (Hoffman 2000, no page number). She found some of the original tales' endings to be "unnecessarily cruel and violent", which encouraged her to take the liberty to tone them down (ibid.). She also notes that she does not condone censorship in fairy tales, and she has included the original endings in the source material (ibid.). However, in the English edition, the source material and the bibliography have been removed for an unknown reason, yet they are marked in the table of contents. In the Finnish edition, they can be found on the page marked in the

table of contents. The source material also includes a mention of the rendition Hoffman has used as the basis for the retelling or whether she has written it from memory.

The analyzed fairy tales examined in this study are *The Three Little Pigs / Kolme pientä porsasta*, *Jack and the Beanstalk / Jaakko ja pavunvarsi*, *Rapunzel / Persiljainen*, *The Wolf and Seven Little Kids / Susi ja seitsemän pientä kiliä*, *Little Red Riding Hood / Punahilkka*, and *The Musicians of Bremen / Bremenin laulajat*. They are either original English fairy tales or based on the renditions of the Grimm brothers.

English fairy tales from the selected ones are *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Three Little Pigs*. The former originates from the 1700s, and Hoffman's version is based on Benjamin Tabart's *The History of Jack and the Bean-Stalk* from *The Classic Fairy Tales* by Iona and Peter Opie (Hoffman 2001, 354). *Jack and the Beanstalk* is one of the most studied folktales, and it has many versions throughout the world from Europe to Asia (McCormick & White 2011a, 727–728). The latter of the English fairy tales, *Three Little Pigs*, was first published in *English Forests and Forest Trees, Historical, Legendary, and Descriptive* (1853), but its plot and characters were different compared to the version from James Orchard Halliwell's *Nursery Rhymes of England* (1886), which is the tale we know today (Tearle n.d.). For example, in the first published version, the wolf was a fox and the pigs were pixies, alongside other small differences (ibid.).

*The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids*, *Rapunzel*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, and *The Musicians of Bremen* are by the Grimm brothers (Hoffman 2001, 354–356). The Grimm brothers' project was to record German folktales into a collection, which would be expanded and revised many times (McCormick & White 2011a, 642). The brothers often omitted suggestions of violent content, such as cannibalism and pointless evil deeds, and ameliorated parts of the tales, such as giving names to unnamed characters and motives to evil actions (id., 470). *The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids* is a story with a moral teaching to not trust strangers, which appears in the *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (1812). It may have originated in the first century, and alongside distribution in Europe, the tale has also appeared in the Middle East (Boyle 2013). *Rapunzel* has many versions across the world, but the rendition published by Grimm brothers in 1812 is the best-known version (McCormick & White 2011b, 1057). Compared to Hoffman's retelling, Grimms' version has Rapunzel be taken by the witch when she is 12-years-old and she also has children with the prince at the end of the story (id., 1057–1058). In Hoffman's

retelling, Rapunzel is taken as a baby, and the ending is a classic happy ever after, with only a marriage mentioned.

*Little Red Riding Hood* is originally by the French Charles Perrault from 1697, but Hoffman's retelling is based on the Grimms' version because she did not consider Perrault's ending as happy (Hoffman 2001, 355). Perrault's version of the tale is the first printed version, and his adaptation had a strong moral warning as he was concerned of the moral dangers of the world (McCormick & White 2011a, 803). The earlier, oral versions of the story usually contained a werewolf instead of a wolf, and explicit cannibalism, violence, and sexual innuendos, which were deleted from Perrault's version due to a more sophisticated middle-class audience (id., 805). In Perrault's version, Little Red Riding Hood is also made out to be helpless against the wolf, compared to the earlier versions where she escapes the wolf by using her wits (ibid.). The Grimm brothers' version of the tale was most likely based on one of the many adaptations of Perrault's story, but they included the happy ending, in which Little Red Riding Hood is saved, to the story (ibid.). The last tale is *The Musicians of Bremen*, which first appeared in the second edition of the *Grimm's Fairy Tales* in 1819. The sources for this tale's background are scarce, which indicates a need for more research on this particular tale.

### 3.2 Theoretical Background

The approach for this qualitative study is based on two theories which are used in translation studies. Eugene Nida's theory of *dynamic or functional equivalence* is applied to study the transfer of meaning in the translations, and Lawrence Venuti's *domestication and foreignization strategies* are applied to study whether the translator has foreignized or domesticated the tales.

Eugene Nida, an American linguist and Bible translator, is thought to be one of the founders of modern translation theory (Gao 2023). He first introduced his theory of equivalence in *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) and it has its roots in Bible translation. Nida splits equivalence into formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence (Nida 1964, 159–160). The latter was later renamed to functional equivalence (Lu 2023). Nida claims that the focus of dynamic translation is the response of the translation's receptor rather than the form of the message (Nida 1964, 159–160). According to Nida, it is important for the receiver of the target text to react to it in a similar manner as the receiver of the source text reacted to the text (ibid.). In simpler terms, the person who reads or otherwise receives the translated text should have a similar reaction to it as the person reading the original text. This sameness of the

reactions to the texts is called dynamic equivalence. The other aspect of Nida's theory is formal equivalence, which can be defined as structural equivalence (ibid.). In formal equivalence, the translator tries to replicate the source text's form and content into the target text (ibid.).

Nida's theory of equivalence has been influential in the field of translation. It has been especially influential in China since it was first introduced there in the 1980s (Gao 2023; Li & Deng 2019). Due to its influential position, functional equivalence has been treated as the only adaptable translation theory in China for a long time (Li & Deng 2019). However, Nida's theory has received criticism for many reasons, for example due to the fact that equivalence may be impossible to achieve in some cases and that Nida's theory is only applicable in certain translations, making it not apt as a general translation theory (Lu 2023; Li & Deng 2019).

Lawrence Venuti is an American translator and theorist. He first mentions domestication and foreignization in his book *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995). Venuti's domestication and foreignization strategies have to do with ethical choices that translators make during the translation process (Venuti 1995, 17–20). He views foreignization as resistance against ethnocentrism and racism, while domestication is viewed as a violent act against the source culture by dispersing the linguistic and cultural differences between the dominant target culture and the source culture (ibid.). In more neutral terms, Venuti defines domestication as rewriting the source text to fit into the target culture's norms (Venuti 1998, 82). Venuti was not the first one to write about the domestication strategy in translation, but he was the one to give it its current name and modern sense. Others who have written about it have been Wollstonecraft, a feminist writer in the 1700s, who used the term naturalization, and Klingberg, who used the term cultural context adaptation (Lathey 2010, 76). While Venuti does not give foreignization a clear definition, he views it as exposing the reader to the source culture's norms and ideologies in the text.

It is important to note that this study only uses aspects of both Nida and Venuti's theories, as applying both completely in this study would be null. Venuti is one of Nida's most famous critics, and he criticizes Nida's theory and his application of domestication in *The Translator's Invisibility* (Venuti 2002, 21–23). Alongside Venuti and Nida's opposing views on domestication, Venuti's research on domestication of texts involved only the Anglophone receiver, and he did not research children's literature. Additionally, in a broader sense his

theory is counter-hegemonic and he has a preference for foreignization, which I consider to not be adaptable to this study due to the fact that the source text is from the UK and the target text is in Finnish. His domestication and foreignization strategies are valuable for understanding the translator's choices and whether the translator/translation leans towards cultural adaptation, that is, domestication, or cultural preservation, that is, foreignization.

Nida's research was mostly done on Bible translations, and he did not specifically study translations of children's literature. However, Nida did write about a decoding ability and its different sub-groups, for whom a translator should tailor the translation for (Nida 1964, 164–171). Minimal decoders, that is, the decoders who can not understand complex words and structures in the text, are children (*ibid.*). Nida's functional equivalence is helpful for analyzing meaning transfer between the English source text and the Finnish target text. Due to tension between Nida and Venuti's approaches to translation (*c.f.* Shureteh 2015), this study implements them by overlooking the ideological standpoints, and focuses only on the selected aspects, which are Nida's transfer of meaning and Venuti's domestication and foreignization strategies, which are applied to study the translator's choices in the translation.

## 4 Method

This section focuses on the close reading method and how it is applied in this study, and the selection process of the analyzed tales. The categories for the applied translation techniques are introduced and discussed alongside previously coined techniques and other aspects of the texts which could have an effect on the produced meaning. This section lays the foundation for the analysis section.

### 4.1 Close Reading

The method used in this study is close reading. The roots of close reading are in New Criticism (Lentricchia & DuBois 2003, 2). New Criticism is the applied name for the effort to focus critical attention on literature (Searle 2005). It stems from the Anglo American world, and its basis was formed when the poet William Epton introduced many techniques of close reading in *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) (ibid.). In the context of New Criticism, close reading is defined as “practical criticism”, in which the text is treated as a standalone piece of literature (Searle 2005).

Brummett’s (2019) *Techniques of Close Reading* is the basis for understanding close reading and its different techniques in this study. Close reading includes three main techniques for analyzing texts: narrative, genre, and persona (Brummett 2019, 4). Narrative is the form of the text which tells a story, while genre is a recurring situational and stylistic choice (ibid.). Persona is a role that someone plays in connection to a text, for example the reader (ibid.). All of these include a few subcategories of the main techniques, which can be analyzed on their own. Narrative includes coherence and sequence, tension and resolution, and alignment and opposition (ibid.). Genre includes style, substance, and situation (Brummett 2019, 57), and persona includes subject position, first persona, second persona, and third persona (Brummett 2019, 59–61). Brummett describes the first persona as “the role, image, or character of the one who created the text, the person or entity speaking to you through the text” (Brummett 2019, 60). In this study, the first persona, the translator, is in focus.

The foundation for this study’s analysis is based on the narrative and the first persona, which is the translator. The translator plays a role when translating a text, and that role is either someone who adapts or preserves cultural elements. This study does not aim to analyze the translator as a person, but rather as someone who has the ability to change the narrative. From

a narrative's perspective, the translator's translation choices can change the narrative of the text, and therefore change the meaning of the text.

#### **4.2 The Categorization of the Material and Previously Coined Techniques**

The fairy tales are not analyzed one by one, but rather together with domestication and foreignization techniques in mind. The tales were picked in a random manner from the original English book. This made the selection process faster, compared to the alternative process where all of the tales were read beforehand, and then a few of them would be selected for this study. Even though the selected tales were supposed to have versatile topics, there is a preference for animal stories as four from the six tales have animal themes. After the tales were selected, I read them thoroughly and wrote notes about each of them. The notes included the domestication and foreignization techniques used by the translator. Next, I categorized all similar techniques under one category to make later analysis clearer. In total, five categories could be formed from the found techniques. These categories are *omission of phrases*, *linguistic substitution*, *cultural adaptation*, *domestication of names and settings* and *foreignization of names and settings*.

The techniques have been coined from the categorization of the analyzed material before starting the writing process of this thesis, but they are not by any means different from previously coined techniques used in domestication and foreignization studies. Previously mentioned Klingberg classified different types of adaptations, that is, domestication techniques, found in the translations of children's literature (García de Toro 2020). He discusses these adaptations in his book *Children's Fiction in the Hands of the Translators* (1986), but due to geographical disadvantages of borrowing the book and with no open sources, the discussion of these categories is limited to secondary sources. The classes are *cultural context adaptation*, *language adaptation*, *modernization*, *purification*, and *abridgement* (García de Toro 2020). Language adaptation does not appear in any open sources, making it difficult to define. Cultural context adaptation is a term for all the adjustments made in the target text to make it suit the target audience's frame of reference (Alvstad 2010). It includes culture-specific references to, for example, names, flora and fauna, and historical background (ibid.). Therefore, cultural context adaptation is quite similar to domestication and cultural adaptation, which is used in this study. Modernization, alongside purification, is a method of dialogical approach (Kwok 2016). Modernization is a term for when the source text is translated to be more up to date in the target text by changing or

omitting the content (ibid.). Purification is done from political, cultural, or religious reasons, and it includes omissions and alterations of the text (ibid.). Lastly, abridgement is the act of shortening and/or simplifying the text to fit the target audience's level of perception (Borodo & Díaz-Cintas 2025, 174). Abridgement can also include other adaptation categories, such as modernization and purification (ibid.). Next, the categories coined for this study will be explained.

In this study, linguistic substitution means that the sentence structure and/or meaning has been changed to fit the target text and culture. It includes adaptation and addition of metaphors and idioms to fit the target culture. Cultural adaptation is changing something culturally specific in the source text to suit the target text. I have included translations of food items and measurements in this category, and one reference to a culturally specific verse. In this study, the category of domestication of names and settings involves character names and place names, as does the category of foreignization of names and settings. Cultural adaptation and domestication of names and settings could have been one joined category, but I have separated them into two different categories for a clearer analysis. The texts were analyzed on the phrase level, not the word level. I did not take singular words as examples, since this study examines the texts with meaning in focus. In addition, the texts are distinctly not word-to-word translations, as seen by the substitution and omission of elements in the text.

### **4.3 Features of Orality**

Alongside domestication and foreignization, another aspect in the material which is analyzed is *features of orality*. Features of orality include, for example, sound, rhythm, rhyme, and word play, and they commonly appear in children's literature (Alvstad 2010). Translators of children's literature sometimes have to choose whether to translate sound or content due to these features (ibid.). As Hoffman's books, both original and the translation, are meant to be read aloud, features of orality are an essential part of the analysis alongside domestication and foreignization choices, and meaning.

## 5 Analysis and Discussion

This section includes the results of domestication and foreignization techniques applied in *Otavan suuri satukirja* (Hoffman 2001), their analyses alongside examples, and discussion of the analyses. The analyses include what techniques the translator has used, and how the translator's choices affect the narrative, and therefore the meaning.

### 5.1 Techniques Used by the Translator

Techniques used in domestication and foreignization of the tales are introduced underneath in Table 1. These include previously discussed omission of phrases, linguistic substitution, cultural adaptation, domestication of names and settings, and foreignization of names and settings.

**Table 1** The applied translation techniques and their appearances in *Otavan suuri satukirja*

	<i>Three Little Pigs</i>	<i>The Musicians of Bremen</i>	<i>The Little Red Riding Hood</i>	<i>The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids</i>	<i>Rapunzel</i>	<i>Jack and the Beanstalk</i>	<b><i>Appearances in total</i></b>
omission of phrases	0	0	0	0	2	0	<b>2</b>
linguistic substitution	2	3	0	1	0	1	<b>7</b>
cultural adaptation	1	0	1	0	0	3	<b>5</b>
domestication of names and settings	3	0	2	0	0	1	<b>6</b>
foreignization of names and settings	0	(1)	0	0	0	0	<b>(1)</b>

Table 1 has the techniques on the far-left column, and the names of the fairy tales in the top row. It has the numerical amount of every domestication and foreignization technique applied in each of the analyzed tales, and the total number of appearances in the last cell of the top row. The translator had mostly applied linguistic substitution and domestication of names and settings. Furthermore, every text included some domestication technique, but only one had a foreignizing technique. The appearance of this foreignization technique is arguable, which is

the reason for it to be in parentheses. It is discussed in a more thorough manner in section 5.6. Next, closer analysis of previously mentioned techniques and examples will ensue.

### 5.1.1 Omission

Omission was not a frequent domestication technique, as seen in Table 1. Only one of the analyzed fairy tales had omission in the Finnish translation. In *Persiljainen*, the origin of ‘rapunzel’ is omitted twice. Example (2) also has substitution, but that will not be discussed in this section, as this section only focuses on omission. However, I thought it to be worth noting since it has an effect on the analysis. The omitted parts are marked in italics and the substitution in bold in the English versions.

- (1) She greedily ate the plant, *which was known in that country as “rapunzel”*, and the man was very relieved. (Hoffman 2000, 193–194)

Vaimo söi sen ahneesti [Ø] ja miehen mieli keveni. (Hoffman 2001, 194)

- (2) “I must have **the wild garlic**, *the rapunzel*, or I shall surely die,” she said. (Hoffman 2000, 194)

“Minun täytyy saada persiljaa, [Ø] muuten varmasti kuolen”, vaimo sanoi. (Hoffman 2001, 194)

This choice to omit a part of the text is a domesticating one. It removes the reference to a word used in another culture, which creates a domestic setting for the target audience. In the English text, the explanation is proper due to the tale’s name. However, in the Finnish edition, as wild garlic has been substituted for parsley, omitting ‘rapunzel’ is an appropriate choice for the translator as it prevents a contradiction in the text and creates narrative fluidity. This way the translator has preserved the narrative aspect of the text.

### 5.1.2 Linguistic Substitution

Linguistic substitution in this study means that the sentence structure and/or meaning has been changed to fit the target text and culture. It includes adaptation and addition of metaphors and idioms. It was the most commonly used domestication technique in the analyzed material, as it had seven appearances in total, as seen in Table 1. This section contains four examples of linguistic substitution. Example (3) is from *Three Little Pigs* and example (4) is from *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The original English phrase and the Finnish equivalent are marked in bold.

- (3) The Wolf was very cross **to have been tricked**. (Hoffman 2000, 6)

Sutta pisti vihaksi että sitä **oli vedetty nenästä**. (Hoffman 2001, 6)

- (4) He was **the apple of her eye** but he was an idle, thoughtless fellow. (Hoffman 2000, 322)

Poika oli äitinsä **silmäterä**, mutta laiska ja ajattelematon. (Hoffman 2001, 322)

When using linguistic substitution in these examples, the translator has proceeded with meaning first. A word for word translation, that is, translating the idiom as it is formed in the source language, would have created a confusing narrative for the reader. Thus, culture-specific idioms are a better choice for the narrative. This also has a domesticating effect on the text as idiomatic expressions are heavily tied to their culture.

The next examples contain linguistic substitution and features of orality: rhythm and rhyme. Example (5) is from *The Musicians of Bremen*. The scene is of a robber informing his friends about what he thought happened to him inside of the house the animals occupied for the night. The scene before this is of the robber being attacked by the animals in the darkness.

- (5) - - “[C]ock-a-doodle-**doo!**” ... “ - - And then a judge called from up on the roof — ‘There’s nothing you can **do!**’ — so I ran away as fast as I could.” (Hoffman 2000, 15–16)

“**Kuk-ko-kie-kuu!**” ... “Ja sitten huusi tuomari katolta: ‘Napatkaa **ukko** kiinni!’ ja silloin minä pötkin pakoon minkä jaloista lähti.” (Hoffman 2001, 15)

In example (5), there is an onomatopoeia. To make the analysis of this example clearer, I have written parts of the example in bold to showcase the rhyming, which is discussed next. In the English edition, the last syllable of the onomatopoeia rhymes with what the robber in the tale is telling to his friends (‘doo’ – ‘do’). In the Finnish edition, part of the first syllable and the second syllable of the onomatopoeia rhyme with what the robber is saying (‘[]uk-ko’ – ‘ukko’). However, the rhyme is not as clear compared to the English version, as the English version rhymes the last syllable and the last word. Due to the culture specific onomatopoeia, and the change in rhyme, the translator has slightly changed the meaning of what the robber says. Even if the meaning is slightly altered, the choice does not affect the narrative in a meaningful way, yet it makes this translation choice a domesticating one as it ensures enjoyability and comprehension for the target audience.

- (6) “The wolf is gone, the wolf is drowned,

The kids he ate have all been found.

The wolf is drowned, the wolf is dead

We'll eat our supper and go to bed!” (Hoffman 2000, 44)

“Suden kanssa on tehty tili,  
on tallessa jokainen syöty kili,  
ja susi on saatu hukkumaan!

Nyt mennään syömään ja nukkumaan!” (Hoffman 2001, 44)

Meaning is also in focus in example (6). It is a short poem, which appears as a separate piece of text at the end of the tale after the goats have filled the wolf's stomach with rocks and drowned it. In the Finnish edition, the translator has changed the wording for the poem for it to be more comprehensible for the target audience. This linguistic substitution is not necessarily domestication, as it does not bring any target language related cultural elements into the text, but rather a feature of orality, as the text is most likely read aloud by a parent. However, as the choice to change the wording is to ensure the enjoyment of the target text, it can be counted as a domesticating choice, similar to the previous example. The translator's focus has been on the meaning of the poem, which is seen by the equivalence of meaning between the two poems, and orality, which is seen by the rhyming.

### 5.1.3 Cultural Adaptation

Cultural adaptation is changing something culturally specific in the source text to suit the target text. It appeared five times in the analyzed material, as seen in table 1. Three of them included a food item, one a translation of a measurement (pounds changed to kilograms), and one reference to an English poem verse. Examples (7) and (8) include food items, and example (9) includes a culture specific quatrain. The food items are discussed first, and they and their Finnish equivalents have been marked in bold below. Example (7) is from *The Little Red Riding Hood* and example (8) is from *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

(7) “She hasn't been well so I have made her a dish of **custard**.” (Hoffman 2000, 24)

“Hän on sairastellut, ja olen laittanut hänelle kulhollisen **vanukasta**.” (Hoffman 2001, 24)

(8) At last the giant sat down to his supper and ate a whole pig, and a cauldron of jelly and **custard**. (Hoffman 2000, 330)

Lopulta jättiläinen istuutui illalliselle ja söi kokonaisen porsaan ja sammiollisen hyytelöä **vaniljakastikkeen** kanssa. (Hoffman 2001, 331)

Something to be noted from the food items is that ‘custard’ has been translated in two different ways in two different tales. In *Punahilkka*, ‘custard’ has been translated to ‘vanukas’

which is more akin to pudding. In *Jaakko ja pavunvarsi*, it has instead been translated to ‘vaniljakastike’, which is vanilla sauce. As there is no official Finnish translation for the British dessert, the translator has had to make a domesticating choice based on the context of the scene in the tale. The choice does not change the narrative and the meaning remains the same, because the narrative does not change even if the food item was changed to a more culturally comprehensible one.

(9) “Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum, I smell the blood of a human one!” (Hoffman 2000, 325)

“Huhuu-hohoo-hahaa, ihmisveri täällä haiskahtaa!” (Hoffman 2001, 325)

In example (9), ‘fee-fi-fo-fum’ is the first line to a historical quatrain or a couplet which has appeared in English texts since the 16th century (Wikipedia 2025). It is mostly famous for its usage in the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, in which it starts the giant’s quote when he smells Jack in his house (ibid.). Instead of retaining the original line to the abridged poem, the translator has adapted it to a laugh-like expression. Due to the age of the target audience, this domesticating choice is culturally but also linguistically a well-thought choice. The letter ‘f’ is a foreign letter in the Finnish language, and not many words include it. This can be challenging for the young audience. ‘Fee-fi-fo-fum’ is also not culturally relevant or known to the Finnish audience. However, the narrative does not change, as the intention of eating Jack behind the giant’s line remains. Regardless, this choice dissipates the equivalence of meaning to a certain extent by substituting the giant’s famous line for laughing.

#### 5.1.4 Domestication of Names and Settings

Adapting place and character names to the target audience’s culture is a common domestication technique. Domestication of names and settings was the second most frequent of the techniques used by the translator, with six appearances in total. The domesticated places and names are marked in bold in the examples below.

(10) “In **Farmer Smith’s** field,” said the wolf. (Hoffman 2000, 6)

“**Seppäsen isännän** pellossa”, sanoi susi. (Hoffman 2001, 6)

(11) “There’s a fair,” he pants, “this afternoon **at Shanklin**. I’ll come for you at three o’clock if you like.” (Hoffman 2000, 8)

“Tänään iltapäivällä on **Koipelassa** markkinat”, se ähkyi. “Jos haluat, tulen kolmelta hakemaan sinut sinne.” (Hoffman 2001, 8)

(12) The little girl loved her red cape and wore it so often that everyone called her Little Red Riding-Hood, though her name was **Biddy**. (Hoffman 2000, 23–24)

Pikkutyttö piti kovasti punaisesta hilkastaan ja käytti sitä niin usein, että kaikki sanoivat häntä Punahilkaksi, vaikka hänen oikea nimensä oli **Birgitta**. (Hoffman 2001, 23)

These domestication choices have to do with familiarity and orality. For a young target audience, who is learning to read, orality is important. ‘Koipela’ in example (11) is simple to pronounce compared to ‘Shanklin’, which has a voiceless postalveolar fricative sound [ʃ] at the start. This sound is also used in Finnish, but it is mostly reserved for foreign loan words. Thus, a domesticating choice by the translator is an understandable one for a fairy tale, as it familiarizes the reader with the tale. Even though the meaning does not necessarily have to be in focus here, the translator has kept a similar meaning in the Finnish place names. In example (10), ‘Smith’ has been translated to ‘Seppänen’, which has the word ‘smith’ in it. Example (11) and its original English term ‘Shanklin’ is similar in meaning as its Finnish equivalent ‘Koipela’, as shank means leg, and the Finnish adaptation consists of a word ‘koipi’, which also means leg. In example (12), the translator has kept the Finnish edition’s name similar to Hoffman’s retelling of the tale, while still domesticating the name to suit the Finnish audience.

#### 5.1.5 Foreignization of Names and Settings

Foreignization was not frequent at all in the tales, and it appeared only once in the analyzed material. However, the appearance could also be considered to not have a foreignizing effect. Despite this, I still included it in Table 1 for the purpose of closer analysis and discussion. This section analyzes the possibilities of ‘Bremen’ being a foreignizing approach or it being an untranslated word. The example is from *The Musicians of Bremen*, which in the Finnish edition is named *Bremenin laulajat*.

(13) He knew the miller couldn’t afford to keep him as a pet so he decided to set out for the town of **Bremen** and become a musician there. (Hoffman 2000, 10)

Se tiesi, ettei myllärillä ollut varaa pitää sitä pelkästään lemmikkinä, ja päätti siksi lähteä **Bremenin** kaupunkiin laulajaksi. (Hoffman 2001, 10)

If example (13) is compared to previous examples, it differs from them notably. The translator domesticated examples (10), (11), and (12), but kept this one as it was in the English version. The translator choosing not to adapt the town of Bremen into a more culturally comprehensible one can be a stylistic choice. The tale itself is quite peculiar as the story involves singing animals, and it is meant to mostly humor the reader. Fairy tales may involve the narrative of the story happening somewhere far away, which could also explain the choice

to create a feeling of wonder for the child audience. The target audience also does not necessarily need a Finnish town name to understand the narrative better. The meaning and the narrative in the example would not change whether or not Bremen was adapted into a Finnish town. However, this argument could also be had with previous examples of domesticating place and character names. Furthermore, *The Musicians of Bremen* is a popular fairy tale in Finland. Adapting the name to a Finnish town name could have the implication of changing the narrative, which could have the effect of people not recognizing the tale.

Retaining ‘Bremen’ in the Finnish version can be a strategy of maintaining the foreign cultural identity of the tale. Historically, Bremen was a member of a trade alliance, which boosted its economic prosperity, making it an ideal place to start a new life (ICG 2024). Leaving the name of the town untranslated might also subtly remind the target audience that the tale originates from another culture outside of Finland. This would align with the concept of foreignization. Ultimately, whether example (13) is an example of foreignization depends on how one defines the foreignization strategy in relation to place names. Some might argue that retaining the original name is not enough to be considered foreignization, while others might classify it as an example because it retains a foreign cultural reference.

## 5.2 Discussion

There is clear domestication in the translator’s choices. The translator actively domesticated the text to adapt the tales to fit into the target culture’s norms and cultural knowledge, while taking the age of the target audience and the orality of the text into consideration. Despite the usage of domesticating techniques, the Finnish edition preserves the meaning and narrative structures of the original tales. Meanwhile, domestication and foreignization strategies are not always clear-cut in the text, as seen in example (13), which can create a challenging setting for studying these translation strategies.

As there is a strong preference for domesticating translation choices, the translator’s approach to translating for children of a young age can be hypothesized to be in favor of domesticating texts for children. This approach has formed a sense of familiarity into the tales, creating a domestic setting for the child reader. The child reader’s experience with the tales involves a set of Finnish cultural references and fluid reading of the text, turning *Three Little Pigs* from an English fairy tale into a tale which feels inherently Finnish to the reader.

The findings reinforce the idea that domestication ensures cultural familiarity and readability of the text. Additionally, as previously mentioned, domestication and foreignization are not always clear-cut strategies. This makes the interpretation of translation choices challenging at times, and supports the idea that translation exists on a spectrum. Thus, the translator's translation choices in Mary Hoffman's *The MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories*' first Finnish edition are inherently domesticating, but the spectrum of translation creates the possibility to analyze these choices in multiple ways.

## 6 Conclusion

The translator for the first Finnish edition of Mary Hoffman's *MacMillan Treasury of Nursery Stories* strongly favors domestication techniques to ensure familiarity and readability for child readers, highlighting the orality of the text. The appearance of a border case translation choice, example (13), suggests that translators' choices are not necessarily clear enough to define as strictly foreignization or domestication. This supports the idea of translation as a spectrum.

The findings relate to the use of domestication in children's literature, particularly in fairy tales. This study takes no stance on whether domestication as a translation strategy is better suited for children's literature than foreignization. However, domestication on a linguistic level could be preferred when translating for small children to ensure appropriate speech and language development, but this would need to be studied further to be able to make broader conclusions of the effects of domesticated children's literature on children.

Generally, more research on translated children's literature is needed, especially in the Finnish-speaking field. A possible topic for future research would be how do child readers perceive domesticated versus foreignized texts. This could provide insight into children's preferences. A study on the perception of domesticated versus foreignized texts on language development could be a multidisciplinary study, which could add to the knowledge of language teaching for young children. Lastly, a broader comparative study across multiple languages could provide insights into translation norms in children's literature. The Western translation strategy for children has often been to domesticate children's literature, which could create an interesting research setting if Western translations were compared to, for example, African translations of children's literature.

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