DO YOU READ WHAT I READ?
A CASE STUDY IN THE TRANSLATION OF DUAL-READERSHIP FICTION

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the components that are involved in the translation of a text that are interpretable by two distinct readerships. It examines:

- theory that provides an understanding of dual-readership texts for children and adults;
- examples of dual-readership texts, their translations, and analyses of these;
- *Bled* by Daniel Danis and my English translation as a test case of a contemporary dual-readership source text and translation.

The ultimate goal of this thesis is to shed light on what could be a new sub-domain of translation studies, namely, research on dual-readership translation. My translation of *Bled* provides insight into my own interpretation of dual-readership translation, namely, focusing on what is desirable and what is achievable in the translation of this type of text.

Résumé

Cette thèse analyse les éléments clés de la traduction des textes pouvant être interprétés par deux lectorats distincts. Plus précisément, elle se propose d'examiner :

- la théorie qui porte sur les textes pouvant être interprétés par les enfants *et* par les adultes;
- certains exemples pertinents de tels textes et leurs traductions, ainsi que leur analyse;
- la pièce *Bled* de Daniel Danis et ma traduction anglaise en tant qu'exemples contemporains de textes de départ et d'arrivée pouvant être interprétés par un double lectorat.

L'objectif fondamental de cette thèse est de jeter un éclairage sur un sous-domaine potentiel de la traductologie, soit l'étude de la traduction des textes interprétables par un double lectorat. Ma traduction de *Bled* fournit un aperçu de ma propre lecture critique de la traduction des textes pouvant être interprétés *et* par les enfants *et* par les adultes, en insistant particulièrement sur ce qui est souhaitable de faire ressortir—et ce qui peut effectivement être atteint—dans le cadre de la traduction de ce type de texte.

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Table of Contents

Background

Near the end of the 2009 Winter Semester, I was on the verge of completing my first year of coursework in the Masters program in Translation at the University of Ottawa. Since one of the program requirements was to complete a major research paper, I decided to pursue applied research option of a commented translation. I therefore needed to find a French-language source text (of at least 5,000 words) from which to work. Around that time, I met with Professor Marc Charron to discuss a potential source text for my research paper. Professor Charron suggested a newly published text entitled *Bled*, authored by the playwright Daniel Danis. I was intrigued by Professor Charron's idea and decided to take his suggestion. Professor Charron and Professor Luise von Flotow, who would become my thesis supervisor and co-supervisor respectively, read the text to analyze it for themselves while I did the same thing.

At the beginning of June 2009, I met with Professor von Flotow and told her of my interpretations of the text. When I told her that I considered it a children's text, she remarked that while that is true, there were certain allusions within the text to subjects that child readers probably would not detect. I realized that she had made a good point and returned to the text to locate the material that Professor von Flotow had mentioned and I did locate it. I found within the text subtle allusions to Christianity, materialism, environmentalism, class struggles and anthropogenic reliance on technology. I therefore decided to translate the text under the assumption that it could be interpreted by an adult readership in one way and by a child readership in another way[1]. I thereby discovered that, in that sense, that *Bled* could fall under the category of "dual-readership" texts for children and adults. While the notion of

[1] In the Appendix, I have included the text *Bled* by Daniel Danis only for comparison purposes with my own translation within an academic context.

dual-readership literature is relatively new, it is nonetheless possible to consider texts from generations past, especially those texts that were previously thought to be only for children or only for adults, to determine whether they have the potential to reach a dual readership of children and adults. In order to translate *Bled* under the premise that it has the potential to reach a dual readership of children and adults, I needed to look at existing research on dual-readership translation[2]. As it turned out, not very much research existed on that subject. However, there was slightly more research done on dual-readership writing. By consulting research done on the latter, it would be possible to reach conclusions about dual-readership translation. I also needed to look at pertinent dual-readership texts, the characteristics that made them dual-readership texts and the translations of those texts. The translations could then be analysed to determine how the dual-readership content of the source text was or was not maintained in the target text.

I also assumed, for the purpose of the endeavour, that the age range of the average child reader would be between 8 and 13, while the average age of the adult reader would be at least 20. This assumption, to me, means that the average child reader will already have acquired several years of elementary schooling while the average adult reader will at or beyond the end of formal schooling and embarking on a new chapter in their lives.

[2] By this point in time, I had decided to abandon the commented translation and instead focus on the theoretical research option of a thesis.

DES*—An English translation of the French text *Bled

Cast of Characters

Des (short for *Des*mond), *young boy, aged 10. His name is symbolic,* **as** *it refers to* the *"**des**-titute" family of which he is* the *youngest child and to "**des**-tiny", since he will* be the *determining factor of his family's fate.*

Les, *Des's alter ego.*

Cory, *Des's sidekick (derived from the Latin word for heart*, "cor"*).*

Des is an English translation and adaptation of the 2008 French text by Daniel Danis entitled *Bled,* which itself is a modern-day version of the 1697 French tale *Le Petit Poucet* by Charles Perrault.

In *Des*, a family is on the verge of being evicted. It assigns the youngest son, the namesake of the story, to find a new home for the whole family. The child sets out on his mission alone, with his only link to the rest of the world being a mobile phone, which he stole from one of his brothers. All alone, he wanders along and befriends those with whom he converses (through texting) and travels. He speaks loudly to disrupt the silence, overcomes his fear and finds the path to his new home.

Chapter 1

Daybreak.

Des walks along a carpet or automated walkway.
He's carrying a portable phone equipped with a camera. Behind him, there is a big screen on which images from his phone or the day's journey are televised.

Somewhere onstage, there could be miniature suburban houses.

1. Des.
Hello there!
Hello my six big bros!
It's me—your kid brother!

Time for a snapshot!

Look! Wow!
My hair flows like a river
and thick clouds are coming!
with a wind that makes me shiver
I should soar into the silky sky.

I begin to sing a song.

That's funny
and now I smell wild strawberries.

Chapter 2

2. Des.
When I heard Mom and Dad shout:
Des! Des! Come over here!
Once again, we're getting kicked out.

I asked, because of my six brothers, Mom?

No, said Dad, because of poverty.
Poverty that we've known for so long.

3. Mom said:
They're evicting us with insults
"Out, out with you!
You lousy locusts!

Dad's talking to you, go now

Have a seat on the table.
Between our seven boys
we've picked you to find us a new address
That's right, one where your parents
and your brothers can escape this distress.

Why me?
I'm just a tyke!
Ask the eldest, he has a motorbike.

4. Take a look at your six brothers, Des.
They're always jostling
always scheming
always bickering
always stealing

But mom, I'm so small
and my body is so weak

Mom looked and said
Des, just find us a home that's chic.

5. You're sending me off with nothing to eat?
not even a pair of shoes for my feet?
You're just going to send me out
without a worry, without a doubt?

Mom set me straight
Don't be a baby, Des
this cannot wait

Dad, vicious beasts
will make me into their feast
Why can't you go?

His voice went low and he yelled
Be forewarned Des, you must go and roam
until you find us a decent home.

Now go! Get out there!
Come on, hop to it!
Go out there and make good, quick.

My family is one of a kind
They're not just out of a home
They're out of their minds!

Chapter 3

6. Des.
On I go! On I go!
Hey! My six brothers!
It's me—your kid brother!

Listen up, would you please?

When I left, you were there to tease
Leaning against a post:
—Well if it isn't Des, the little monster
—You were gone and we had our hands full
—Karma's found you, because since you showed up
—Life sure hasn't been a breeze.

7. You're a bad luck charm, you little monster
-Here, take this scone
You can scatter the crumbs
To find your way back home
And if the birds eat them up
then you'll just be out of luck!
Ha! Ha! Ha!

8. –Ha! Ha! My six brothers.
While they were yucking it up
I slipped my hand into
my eldest brother's pocket
To swipe his high-tech gadget

I'm a sly one
because I can say
this videophone will show me the way

He takes a photo with the mobile phone

Photo for the road!

You let me go like a strand of yarn
so this monster will go and seek
a home that's a run-down barn
one that truly reeks
And if I die under a grey sky
I'll show you a crimson place
and you'll live like trolls
with green and grey spots on your face.

Ha ha ha! What can you expect!
On I go—no sense staying
where I can't get any respect.

I press here, on the phone button
and my message is carried away.

Des closes his mobile phone. He continues to walk and walk and take more photos of the path.

Another Photo for the road!

9. Even under a sky of dread
with a wind of a thousand moods
I press on thanks to my steel-toe treads
and my wooden shoes.

Off I go, Off I go!

Chapter 4

Des comes to the end of the path and arrives in a neighbourhood.

10. Des.
On I go, on I go
This is a nice-looking spot
houses and apartments in every lot
Who gets to live in the shade of trees?
Hello? It's houses as far as I can see!

On I go…
And if we could afford it,
would we be as cozy as a mouse?
Is there a lumber yard around here,
where I can buy wood to build my house?

Hello! Hello there!
I live high above ground
in a sky-rise apartment
without a tree to be found

He walks spritely, head focused

Hello! Hello!
My name is what it is
Because my grandfather used to roam
due to the war

and his rustic home
where they threw him out
He told Mom and Dad
that I was a two-legged promise
the promise to come back to our **des**-titution
so call him Des

One photo for the road!

The mobile phone receives a text message from one of his older brothers

Des! Bring back my phone you rotten little brat!

Ugh!
With my hoarse voice:
Why don't you ask Dad
why he's not the one
who's having all this "fun"?

Tell him I'll look for
a house that can't be bought or sold
just an abandoned house
that stinks like rotten eggs
One that's for the dregs.
P.S.—Tell Dad I swiped his hat.

Des closes the mobile phone.

Chapter 5

Night falls. Des stumbles. A shadow exudes from his body. A strange sound grabs his attention.

11. Des.
Wait, it's a night move
never seen before
I'll lean against the only tree in the street.

Behind the tree, a shadow watches him. It's Les, a werewolf-like lumberjack. An owl hoots.

12. Des.
There! There!

A hatchet chops in the night. Les cuts off the branch where the unknowing owl was resting. Des steps back. The branch breaks off the tree and falls to the ground. Les grabs the owl.

13. Les.
Don't move birdie

or I'll pluck your feathers for my pillow

14. Des.
Poor horned owl.

15. Les.
No you brat, it's not a horned owl, it's just an owl!
Who's there?

16. Des.
He's staring at me with those eyes
Like two fiery stars
It's blinding me!

Les puts the hatchet blade to his teeth like he would file a tin-plate and makes a grinding noise.

Go on, go on.
Des, I say to myself, don't stay here.
He'll slit your throat from ear to ear!
And eat your little heart.

The lumberjack jumped down
Over the tree branch.

17. Les.
Not to gloat, but I will cut your throat

18. Des.
Des, stay calm
Just stay on track
Like an ATV and don't look back.

Come on Des, let's take a ride!
Take this corner here
Hide here, I tell myself again.

He stopped along the shoulder
And plucks it live
He removes its eyes with his claws
Opens his mouth and swallows them
Then he runs off, chomping on the bones

In the distance, there is an echo.

19. Les.
It's "owl", you brat!

Chapter 6

20. Les.
And there, there, there
I'm all alone, and lost!

The voices of two vagabonds become audible,

On the edge of the harbour.
Under the bridge.
Under our beggars bells
Shut your traps!
Let us sleep now.
And you, you vagabond
Cover up, go to sleep
and I don't want to hear a peep!

21. Des.
My God! That horrible stench
could damn near blow a roof off.

Des makes a makeshift shanty with his coat. He takes his cell phone.

My chest hurts.
Feels like my heart is going to escape

22. Hello! My six brothers! I say:
Come find me right away!

A text appears on his phone.

"May the werewolves devour you!"

I'm all alone in this place

23. Ever since I was a baby
They've said I have a backwards face

Sometimes I would eat strange things
During the night
and then wake up and throw up.

Des vomits. He looks on the ground. With his hand, he picks up an object that looks like a pebble.

Torch bearer, come here to me.

A lamppost leans his way.

My head is spinning like a top
I may have coughed up a lung
But I feel like spring has sprung!

Small mournful cries

You moan like a mutt
Stop whining, I'm hungry too you know
Don't cry of sorrow
Eat one of your hands today
Leave the other for tomorrow
Where are you going?

Small mournful cries

It's too sketchy near this harbour
Let us go to sleep under my hood

Des tucks himself and turns off the lamppost

Quit fidgeting Cory,
You're keeping me awake
Must sleep, plenty of work tomorrow
Got to find a good home
One where the air is clear

Not a peep. Now go to sleep.

Des falls asleep. The lamppost follows Cory who flies into the night sky using his coat like a spaceship. Sidereal message comes in static on the portable phone.

Hello, Earth, hello. This is a spaceship.
We're looking for land in a friendly place.
Hello, Earth. This is Cory.

The heart takes shape in Des's emptiness.

Chapter 7

The next morning, Des awakens and cannot find his heart.

24. Des.
Cory, Cory!
Ladies and Gentlemen of the Wilcomb Harbour
My heart is missing!

A vagrant jokes:
"This morning it was gobbled up in a doughnut!"

After walking and looking, he finds it

You were looking for me?
Look, it's me, you're home.
Remember this-
Don't leave me for more than a second.

25. Cory.
Don't save me. Boom, boom.
Stronger than me, I'm restless.
Boom, boom!

26. You're a mean runaway!
I'll stick you to my leg.

Can you picture that?
A boy walks through the unknown
Without his little heart?
Guess I'll have to get smart!

He laughs

So on I go! On I go!
Onward towards the houses.

He takes photos while walking.

27. Our home should be a shrine
Harboured like a gift from above
We could arrive at the front door
Of a warm house
Mom would at our side,
With a smile on her face
She'd open the door and say
What a perfectly wonderful place!

He wanders around.

I could eat a piece of fruit,
One that's flying, floating, fruity…

28. Shut your trap Des!
Eat your…and keep the other one for…

He bites his hand.

Ah! Look—the marketplace

Sometimes I would go with Mom
And wait until closing
The merchants were gone,
So we'd go about gathering food
Fruits and vegetables
Pieces of old meat
Chicken thighs
They didn't always smell great
But we'd season it, cook it
and then fill our plates

There I found a piece of bread
And a musical fruit

Des eats and lets out a groan along with audible heartbeats.

Chapter 8

He takes out his mobile phone. For a little while, we see the path that Des is following.

29. Des.
Photo for the road!
Hello my brothers!
You won't be happy to know
That I'm still on the go!

My head is like an antenna!
Beep, beep, bzzzzzzzz beep beep, quick, quick, quick!
On I go! On I go!

30. Everything's working!
The walk goes on
I walk and I'm free
As I should be

Off I go, see you next time!

Hop! Message to my brothers six
Sent by the waves in the sky

He puts the phone away and resumes walking.

31. Here we go!
Another photo for the road!

I walk down the merchant street
Passing by boutique after boutique

Clothes and more clothes
They make too many pants and T-shirts.
Too many dresses and skirts
There will never be enough people on Earth
To wear all of these outfits
These clothes makers are nitwits.

There should be comfortable homes here
For families big and small
Cool when the weather's hot
And warm when the weather's not.

He walks.

Photo for the road! Photo of the homes!

32. Now this house is quite the creation!
Who lives here, a mason?
Nah, it's not brick—it's imitation.
It may be ornate, but it's not straight.
Nah, I'm not impressed with this estate.

Houses left and right.
Nah, it's not much of a sight
Looks like this place is on the skids.
Nah, it's not a good place for kids.
A whole house made of steel?
Nah, as usual, there's just no appeal.

Why aren't there trees on these lawns?
In these poor areas, they're lacking.

Hello there! I'm looking for gastronomical home
That cooks peace in a crock-pot of joy.

Chapter 9

The portable phone rings. Des answers it.

Hello there!
What, I owe you money?
I didn't even buy a jar of honey.
Who? No, I'm Des, the seventh.
Fine…you call back…I won't answer.
…and leave a message with my brother, the first.
O.K.

The telephone rings and we see the message from an unrecognizable and mean voice intended for the first brother.

33. Des.
Threats, again with the threats!
We live in a world without etiquette.
On our heads rain heavyset threats,
but you can bet that I won't fret.

34. Les.
Easy now, Des—remain a calm monster.

The noise of traffic on the highway is audible.

35. Des.
No!
Sometimes I wish I was made of stone
so I could smash everything.

And there, there,
way over there
along the highway, I…

He begins to hit and break what he finds under his hand.

And I, I, I…

He grumbles like Les. He gives up, exhausted.

Poof!

36. I've got no more strength.
This anger and these threats
eat away at my brain.
and then my head is empty.
I don't want to think anything
or do anything.

We hear small groans.

37. Oops!
Are you crying, Les?
Because of the mean monster?
That's ok, pour your tears
into this unbreakable glass bottle
Let us rest over there.

In my fatigue, I find myself
in a house made of plants.

Hello? Anyone in there?
Don't bother yourselves,
I'm just doing a number 2
in your greenhouse,
then I'll be on my way.

Chapter 10

Des is seated in the greenhouse.

38. My grandmother offered me this lacrymaria.

Over here, over here.
In this small vase
in the shape of teardrops
I make tears from crystal.

39. After a while, my grief dries out
at the bottom of the bottle.

See, they would say:
Snow crystal
pollen of sadness
blooming gloom
and tears of joy too.

See, Les, the crystals melt
with the bits of your tears.

40. Every time that I feel sorrow
every time there's chaos in my family
every time that I'm able
I go out for a walk
I pour teardrops
into my lacrymaria.
and then
I think of happier things
and then
I return calmer.

He puts himself in a strange position.

And then, then one day

I made a discovery
When I walk, I think faster
sentences fly around
inside my head
My thoughts carry on
I invent new worlds.

41. Les.
Des, you must use your noggin' when you go joggin'!

42. Des.
You could say my IQ is in my shoes!

43. Les.
If your head's in your shoes,
does that mean your feet smell and your nose runs?

Des laughs while his feet go back.

44. Des.
I have the crazy foot!

A little boy inside the house cries:

Daddy, daddy, come here
and see the hobo in the greenhouse.
he has stinky feet!

45. Des.
My country is under my hat.
So tell me, boy,
is life inside your house good?

The little boy answers:

Uh, uh, I-I-I don't know!
G-g-go away! Mom! Dad!

Des makes off in a hurry with a flower in hand.

46. Les.
When disorder holds back your thoughts
walk outside, Des
When sorrow numbs your muscles,
Walk, Des.
Along the path of your thoughts.

47. Des.
Photo for the road!

And one there! One there! One there!

A scent of flowers
fill my head
and my mouth
so that I may speak pretty words

Tomorrow, I will find
a spectacular wood house for my family.

Onward, onward, my voice comes alive
I sing like the birds.

A song.

Chapter 11

48. Les.
Go, ooooooooooooon I go!
On I go!

Des, your heart is beating wildly
Your happy song is drawing
The animal with the hatchet,
who's coming this way.
He walks with heavy, loud steps
Run, Des; don't stay.

Les throws dark objects in Des's direction.

Listen, Des, he's blitzing your head
with dark nights.

49. Des.
I'll hop away to escape.
Slowed by my heart on my ankle:
Phew! Retreat, retreat!

50. Les.
Hide yourself on that old riot street.

51. Des.
I play on that scorched car.

Cory, stop fighting.
I'm jumping into the fire's abyss.

52. Cory.
The animal smells everything.
He's coming for you.

53. Des.
I take out my lacrymaria.

If the creature comes at me
I'll throw blinding salt into his crystal eyes.
His face will freeze over
like a northern lake in winter.

May he never approach me!
Ah! No, I have escaped, Cory.
I see nothing.

54. Cory.
In the grass next to the scorched tire

55. Des.
Hear the crackling of the scrapheap
and there, there, I come!

Des disappears.

56. Cory.
And you're leaving me behind?

In the distance.

57. Des.
I'm shocked to pass as heartless

58. Les.
The white light of the moon
shines on the sharp shank
It crops up across the land

59. Cory.
It's going to get me! Ah! Ah!

60. Les.
Cabbage-patch cry-baby!
Stop fidgeting

or I'll roast you on a spit!

61. Cory.
Des!

62. Les.
Want me to chop your aorta into mincemeat?
Or maybe…your heart! And…your mouth?

You'll tell the frightened Des
not to look for happiness or a peaceful abode
Fear and death are the human code

Ha! Chew on that!
I stink like expired goods
Ah, a hint of perfume from the woods

The fact is that I, Les
Can let you in on a little secret
…I'm starving!!
Ah! Take it!
Here is a little heart

Hm. Would've been better with ketchup

Quit it, you're swaying! Stop or I'm not staying.

Les moves in all directions.

63. Sickening, sickening!
You disgust me.
I think I'm going to wretch!

Les spits out the heart, which looks like a snake.

The night wind spreads out the leaves.
The moon fixes its gaze upon little Des.
If he shows himself again,
I'll poke him in the eyes,
like that.

Les hacks at the heart and then returns. Cory suffocates and bleeds.

64. Des.
The night wolf has injured you
with one mighty cut.

65. Cory.

I'm bleeding.

66. Des.
I was afraid
I should've faced the beast
A little crystal to sooth your skin
Sorry, for what it's worth.

67. Cory.
Yeah, it's fine, for what it's worth.

We hear sounds in the night.
Des uses the light of his mobile phone in the dark.

68. Des.
Come, huddle up
in this hot and humid ditch
My Cory after nine hours
it is late, so go to sleep

Gynaeciums mark the corners of our house
Frog songs hover over us
and soothe us into deep sleep

Chapter 12

His heart now healed, Des resumes his walk with gusto.

69. Des.
And there! There! There!
Photo for the road!

From one star to the next
I won't stop my world-search
for the ultimate house
Doors, full of doors
Blue door, white door
wooden door, steel door
Doors, always doors
and with you in the fore, I get mad to the core
as we wander, from door to door

Unfolding behind him are screenshots.

70. Photo of the way in hopes of another day!
Turn here to head north
Head off to the left at the highway

follow the highway to the tunnel

Photo of the way in hopes of another day!

How hungry are you?
I'm so hungry
I could eat an old shoe.

But why am I always so hungry?

71. Cory.
Who's talking there?

72. Des.
My empty mouth.

73. Cory.
Not that empty, your mouth is full of words.

74. Des.
Yes, but words just blow in, they float

75. Cory.
Swallow the words or they'll clog your throat.

Des takes a gulp of air.

76. Des.
Smooth talker!
You can feel it right down to your toes!

77. Cory.
I play you a tune to massage your ears
no longer hear your inner sphere
Go, dance to the music, have no fear!

Des dances, his heart grows.

78. Des.
I take to the air
and my feet leave the ground.
And there, there, there!
Onward, onward.
I'm flying from the words and their sounds.

Des is suspended in the air.

79. Cory.

Cory and the airborne animal!

80. Des.
Ah! An apple that's just floating by?
Is this for me?
Nah, it's a mango. Thank you grand sky!

He seems to be eating imaginary things.

Ah! A plate of macaroni and cheese.
Also for me?
Thanks again for the courtesy!
Thanks be to my sight
for finding these images in flight.

81. Why do I always cry when I eat?
Maybe one day there'll be enough food
for everyone on earth, that would be a feat.

Ah! My brain and my belly are full!
This *monster* must remember
to find a home for his family members.

While in the air, the portable rings, he looks at the screen and a text appears:

All the screens are hereby deactivated.
End of the street.

A supersonic plane comes in very close to Des.

Ah! Ok, end of the street.
Ah! Here, a landing pad beneath my feet.

He takes the landing.

Chapter 13

82. Des.
And there! There!
I sail and I soar
How many roads have I walked down?
My shoes are already expired
and my feet are on fire.

He takes off his shoes.

Look, perfect timing for rain

and there, there, under my captain's boots

He finds himself wearing water-logged boots.
He poses and records himself with the videophone.
The phone rings.

Onward, onward
I was just thinking about them.

83. Hello! My six brothers.
A photo for you!

Hello? Hello? Who? What?
You're crying too much, Miss.
My eldest brother isn't here.
I'm the baby of the family.
I sto…borrowed his phone.

You're his flame?
Don't cry for him; he's to blame.
He's always like that.
Doesn't have the good heart he should.
so even if he tried to love
it wouldn't do any good.

Don't pay him any attention,
he has no good intentions

84. Hello? Oops, I lost the connection?
Beep…beep…beep…Hello?
Damn! I'm looking for a h-o-u-s-e.

It's raining cats and dogs.

I'll jump here
and then to seven other spots
with the help of my new boots
and now I touch ground!
Thanks, riverboat!

Let us hide under the foliage
to seek shelter from…
strange, it stopped raining.

Chapter 14

At the edge of the forest

85. Les.
The sun shines into the forest
and breathes new life
from the ground to the treetops
at the edge of the trees
a hunger takes over me.

86. Des.
With my boots on,
I enter the forest door

I step forward
onto a green spongy carpet
and water-coloured leaves

87. Les.
Where are my feet?
For crying out loud! It's still night?

88. Des.
Who's hiding behind
that forest canvas?

There it is again.
Something's pulling at my heartstring

You, keep at it
Or I'll eat out your organs

89. Les.
I pull and pull on the string
Des falls and slides along the ground
I lead him through the quiet forest.

90. Cory.
Why is he stopping?
Des, summon your strength.

Des gets his serious voice.

91. Des.
Yes my hearty captain,
I've got my voice back.

92. Cory.
I see everything with my night vision.

Careful, the lumberjack will try to attack.

93. Des.
My voice isn't afraid.

94. Cory.
He has a taste for your kind
He'll gobble you up.

95. Des.
Let him come right now
I'll toss out words that'll make him ill

mat, vat, rat, spat and vat again.

96. Cory.
He's fixed on you, run Des.
Run, run now, Des.

97. Des.
No, I'm going towards him.
I'm going to confront him.

No longer will I just stand by
I'm the world's monster!
Mouth wide open
I will swallow that beast.

98. The lumberjack jumps on me
I bite his ear
he tries to gouge out my eyes
I fall backwards.
He rolls then gets back up.
He fixes his gaze on me.
I give myself a boost.
I leap to a tree trunk.
I bore into the air with a mighty kick.
into his Ogre face.
The lumberjack falls and shrinks
like a wet sweater in the sink

I bend down and pick him up
by his briefs.

99. Cory.
Les became so small so quickly
he's no taller than a thumb.

100. Les.
What's going on?
Is it day or night?
Make up your mind, sky!

101. Des.
Now you're at the mercy of the monster
who could devour you like a peanut

102. Les.
If you let me live,
I'll give you my wood house.
Let go of me, and I'll show you.

Des follows Les through the forest.
They come to a small wooden house.

103. Des.
This house is yours?
Don't make me laugh.
I couldn't even fit
my cat in that.

104. Les.
Your wild imagination
can make it bigger as you please.
I'm only giving it to you
if I can live there too.

105. Des.
What? You'll be inside too?

106. Les.
Yes, I'm part of the furniture, in a way.
I'm disagreeable…sometimes agreeable for laundry!

107. Des.
You're a funny one, you are!
So at night, then what?
You're going to take out your hatchet again?
Why did you scare me wherever I went?

108. Les.
Tsk. I'm a little monster, like you!
When I'm sadness or fear in your head
I take out the hatchet!

109. Des.
And you built a nice home?

110. Les.
Well no. Like everyone else,
I wanted a comfortable home.

111. Des.
Come here, my little heart.
You're going to live in our new home
Go in and tell me if you feel at peace
You get a room all to yourself.
One of the spoils of life.

Les, this is my little heart.

112. Les.
Des, I know this heart by heart,
It's mine too you know!

Des pushes the house, but it does not move.

113. Des.
It's too heavy.

114. Les.
Climb aboard your house
and put your legs into motion

115. Des.
On I go, on I go!
We're off? We're off!

Giddy-up house!
Giddy-up, giddy-up house!

He flies away with the house.

As I fly, I see the photos of my journey.
photos of my journey!

A soft wind warms my face.

The golden sun appears and blinds me.
I go towards it.

Chapter 15

Des flies through the sky, seated on his house.

116. Des.
Hello family!
Your youngest son is back
and look what he's found!

Look into the sky, my brothers.
I'm flying on the wonderful house.

He's crazy. A crazy brat.
Bring it down! My brothers call.
the house he brought is too small.

It only looks small because
I'm so high in the sky.

117. Watch out, I'm coming down.
The closer I come, the bigger the house gets.
I nestle it between two trees.
That'll be fine and dandy.

There, I almost did a country-wide search
only to find it near the forest birch.

My eldest brother takes his phone back
and then gives my head a mighty whack.
I tell him: Call back your sweetheart
and pay your debts, you old fart!

118. Thank you, my brave little Des, says mom.
My son, says dad, with this family treasure
we can return to our **Des**-titution.

Dad, our Des is here, right here.

When everyone went into our new home
the cupboards were teeming with food
and the fridge was stocked full.

In the house, they get out a crock-pot, and foodstuffs and prepare a meal.

I opened the home's doors
of an incredible richness
A golden glow permeates the place

119. Let us make the most of this housewarming
and fill our stomachs once more

He begins to eat the members of his family
who are now food figurines.

Come along, my six brothers.
You too, mom and dad

Take shelter in my head
and Let us live together

Chapter 16

120. Des.
My family lives in my pupils
My heart sleeps in my tranquil chest
and under my bushy hair
now lives peacefully
Les, the monster

I sleep up in the attic,
close to the sky

I live in my head
I live with the words

I live in my heart
and with images I throw to the wind

I live in my shoes.
I walk the earth, I walk the earth.

Introduction

A relatively uncharted sub-domain of translation studies is dual-readership translation. One may assume that there is only ever one readership in the process of translating a text from one language into another, and one would be partially correct in making that assumption. The focus on one target readership is fundamental in translation; the translator assesses the needs of the client or the end user (single readership) of the translation and attempts to convey the essence of the source-text content in the target text. However, upon closer examination, one can see that certain texts are interpretable on two levels, by two readerships. Texts of this kind, like texts of other kinds, need to be translated in order for the author to reach a wider readership; this need opens up a new series of questions pertaining to translation studies. Furthermore, this subgenre of translation is certainly more intricate than 'single-readership' translation, as it involves the consideration of the knowledge and expectations of two diverse target readerships.

Before we continue, it would be appropriate to define what the term "dual-readership texts" means within the context of this thesis. Dual-readership texts have a double-faceted interpretation to two different readership groups. The focus here will be on dual-readership texts, with child readers and adult readers being the two different groups. This focus is applicable to my own translation into English of a French-language text that, in my view, has a double-faceted interpretation. The reason for this is as follows: Child readers can draw enjoyment from these dual-readership texts for different reasons than those of adults who read the same texts. While there is no way to determine the exactness of this premise and while there are certainly cases to the contrary, we do know, from the way in which most people tend to learn formally, that the refinement of their perception of what they read

progresses as they grow older. Furthermore, it can be assumed that the adults reading these texts have done so before as children, so they can compare the enjoyment they drew from the texts as children to the enjoyment that they draw from the texts as adults and see how their comprehension and perception of those texts has evolved. They may find that their tastes have become more refined and that their recognition of the extratextual allusions (whether they are to history, literature, language, people or politics) contained within the texts has progressed. Furthermore, while there will be an adult-level of interpretation in addition to a child-level of interpretation of these texts, it can be assumed that the adult will understand both levels of interpretation. There are in fact many texts of this kind and *Bled*, the text that is the focus of this thesis, happens to be one of them.

Just as it requires a keen awareness of writing in order to translate effectively for one readership, it also requires a keen awareness of *dual-readership*[3] writing to translate effectively for a dual readership. Few well-known authors have written texts that are interpretable by a dual readership, and even fewer have known great success in writing dual-readership texts (e.g. Robert Louis Stevenson and Lewis Carroll). Of course, authors may not always *intend* to write for a dual readership. It may be revealed only *after* they are published that certain texts, originally believed to be interpretable by one readership, can in fact be interpreted by a dual readership. This sub-domain of translation seemed worthy of exploration because the personal endeavour of mine that involved the translation of *Bled*. It later became evident to me that the text in question could actually be interpreted by a dual readership of children and adults. The author may not have intended it to be that way, but an examination of the presentation of themes covered in the text revealed that it could be

[3] Within this thesis, the term "dual(-)readership" will be used predominantly, even though the similar term "dual(-)audience" appears in the sources consulted in Chapter 2.

interpreted by a dual readership. Since the basis of dual interpretation lies at the textual level of the play, then the elements of the text should be considered for the translation of dual-readership texts.

Of course, it became evident that the endeavour had enabled me to take on another role besides translator and that was the role of translation researcher. Not only is there an interest in translating the text itself, but also a realization that the translation of certain texts, which are interpretable by a dual readership, poses certain problems for the translator that have not yet been closely analyzed. If there are strategies for writing for dual readerships, it is plausible that there should also be strategies for translating for dual readerships. Certain questions therefore arise: what happens when there are two target readerships (an explicit one *and* an implicit one) to take into consideration? What strategy does translator deploy? One possibility is the following: First, we need to consider what has already been said about dual-readership translation. The answer? Not very much. Second, we need to find out what has been said about dual-readership *writing*. The answer, as it turns out, is quite a lot. So what has been said critically about dual-readership writing? Where do the critics' analyses converge? Where do their analyses diverge? What issues do writers of dual-readership texts need to confront when they write? To the aim here is to examine these issues in detail with the purpose of discovering the answers to the questions above. Once it is clear what the answers are, it should then be possible to discuss the translations of other dual-readership texts, which decisions the translators made, why they made them and why they did or did not achieve the transmission of the dual-readership effect into the target text. Therefore, the ultimate goal will be the analysis of what is achievable in the translations of dual-readership texts and the reason *why* it is achievable. Moreover, research on translation can provide clues about what to consider in translating content intended for children. Unlike single-readership

translation, dual-readership translation should take many questions into account: Is the dual-readership aim intentional on the part of the author? Which readership is implicit and which is explicit? Does the source text include elements that have different subjective interpretations in the target language? Could adults of the target language and target culture be less open-minded to exposing their children to “risqué” material than their counterparts of the source language and source culture? Could they be more open-minded? These questions may not be easy to answer, yet it is my contention that they *are* answerable. It is in the interest of translators and translation researchers that questions like these be answerable.

1 *Bled*: A Modern-Day *Le Petit Poucet* by Daniel Danis

Bled as a Source Text

The crux of this thesis is *Bled*, a play published in 2008 by Quebec playwright Daniel Danis. Danis adapted *Bled* from *Le Petit Poucet*, the renowned 1697 tale published by the French author Charles Perrault. My experience with *Bled* began with the intent of translating a contemporary French-language text into English. Since *Bled* was a newly published contemporary text that had yet to be translated from French into English, it seemed like a suitable source text from which to work. Following the translation of the text, it became evident there was a potential for the content to be interpreted in two different ways by two different readerships (namely, a child readership and an adult readership). In terms of the translation of the *Bled*, there was also an opportunity to examine how similar texts (that is, **dual-readership** texts) are translated and how they *could* be translated.

Bled begins with the narrator (Bled himself) calling to his brothers and describing the weather. He is then summoned by his parents, who reveal to him that the family is going to be evicted. When he asks why, Bled's parents explain to him that it is due to their poverty. They then try to convince Bled to save the family by going out into the world and finding a new home for them. Bled is very reluctant to oblige, citing his vulnerability. He tells them to ask the eldest brother to go instead, but the parents remain steadfast and say that Bled's six brothers are too irresponsible to be entrusted with the crucial task.

Equipped with only the cell phone that he stole from his eldest brother, Bled embarks on his journey. Like *Petit Poucet* in Charles Perrault's tale, Bled tracks his route. However, he does so by taking photos of the path with the cell phone instead of dropping pebbles as Petit Poucet does. As he carries on, Bled finds himself in strange new neighbourhoods. Some

of the neighbourhoods are affluent, some of them are indigent. Bled remarks on these stark differences between the working-class lifestyles and the upper-class lifestyles and relates them back to his memories of his own family's hard times. He speaks loudly to "disrupt the silence"[4] and he sends the occasional text message back to his family. During his journey, we see a splitting of his personality into two more entities: *Ti-Cœur*, who aims to inspire him and *Shed*, who aims to frighten him. The ending of the story is more metaphysical than real, as he sometimes speaks in metaphors and appears to be hallucinating.

About the Author

Daniel Danis was born in Hawkesbury, Ontario in 1962 and was raised in the province of Quebec, in the cities of Abitibi and Quebec City. At age 18, he moved to Haiti to work as a non-denominational missionary[5]. After returning to Canada, Danis studied dance and drama. He began his career as a playwright in 1993 when he published *Celle-là* (translated by Linda Gaboriau and published under the title *That Woman*). That play earned him several awards, including le Prix de la critique de Montréal, the Governor General's Award and the *Prix de la meilleure création de langue française du Syndicat Professionnel de la Critique Dramatique et Musicale de Paris*. Since 1993, he has published several more plays (including *Bled*), for which he has received national and international recognition:

Les Nuages de terre;
Le Pont de pierres et la Peau d'images;
Le Chant du dire-dire;
Le Langue-à-langue des chiens de roche;
Mille anonymes;
e, un roman-dit;

[4] This is my translation of the phrase *rompre le silence*, which appears in the description on the back cover of *Bled*.
[5] "Daniel Danis—Livres, citations, photos et vidéos". *Babelio*. n.d. Web. 26 January 2011 <http://www.babelio.com/auteur/Daniel-Danis/48067/>

9 vues;
Terre océane;
Kiwi: *Sous un ciel de chamaille*; and
Bled.[6]

Danis' plays deal with three elements of the human condition: inner nature, suffering and desire. They have been translated into English, Finnish, German, Italian, Scots Gaelic, Spanish and Welsh. Danis' plays have been performed across North America and Europe alike and he is currently one of the most performed Quebec playwrights overseas. In 2000, he was named *Chevalier des arts et des lettres* by the Republic of France. Danis now resides in Quebec City, Quebec.[7,8]

A Brief Overview of *Bled*

Bled was published in the autumn of 2008. It was performed on stage for the first time on January 29, 2009 in Buchelay, France, for a dual readership as indicated in the paperback version:

> *Création le 29 janvier 2009 au Centre des arts et loisirs de Buchelay dans le cadre d'Odyssées en Yvelines, biennale de création théâtrale pour l'enfance et l'adolescence, avec le concours du Conseil générale des Yvelines.*[9]
>
> [Translation]
> Performed on January 29, 2009 at *the Centre des arts et loisirs de Buchelay* in the context of *Odyssées en Yvelines*, as a biennial theatrical performance for children and adolescents, in collaboration with the *Conseil générale des Yvelines*.

Bled has also been performed in Sartrouville, France, where Daniel Danis himself directed the performance. Here, Danis describes the reasoning behind his portrayal of his play:

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[6] "Daniel Danis". *Auteurs.Contemporain.Info*. n.d. Web. 28 January 2011. <http://auteurs.contemporain.info/daniel-danis/>
[7] "9 Vues" *Les Éditions du Passage*. 2010. Web. 26 January 2011. <http://www.editionsdupassage.com/livres/beau-livre/7/9-vues/>
[8] "Compagnie Daniel Danis—Recherche et développement à travers le théâtre". *Daniel Danis*. 28 May 2010. Web. 22 August 2011. <http://www.danieldanis.org/>
[9] This quotation appears on what would be page 46 of *Bled* (two pages after page 44), although the page on which the passage appears is not numbered.

> *J'ai tenté de miser sur la force de l'imagination du petit garçon, comme si de là venait la source magique de sa démarche…On entend la voix de l'humain qui parle, ses inflexions; on voit parfois sur la scène des maladresses. Ces moments magiques produits par le corps et la voix, soutenus par la technologie, sont exceptionnels d'intensité. La scène est un lieu de porosité entre la réalité et l'imaginaire. La représentation appartient au temps réel du spectateur, installé dans un fauteuil devant lequel se déploie un imaginaire autre. C'est un accès irremplaçable à l'expérience du sacré.*[10]
>
> [Translation]
> I tried to build upon the strength of the young boy's imagination, as if his imagination was the magical source of his outlook…We hear the voice of the human being speak, its inflections, and we sometimes see gaffs on the stage. These magical moments produced by the body and voice, supported by technology, are remarkable in their intensity. The stage is a place of limbo between reality and imagination. The representation belongs to the real time of the spectator, who rests in an armchair, before which the imaginary "Other" shows itself. It is an invaluable insight into the experience of the sacrosanct.

This insight from the director and author certainly conveys the abundance of possibilities with the child's wild imagination, but it is interesting to note as well how Danis mentions the voice of the *humain* and not of the *enfant*; such a word expands the age range of the *destinataires* of the play beyond children.

The Textual Elements of *Bled*

As mentioned earlier, Danis adapted the story of *Bled* after Charles Perrault's 1697 tale *Le Petit Poucet*. While *Le Petit Poucet* may seem to be a fairy tale intended for children, within the text itself there are subtle allusions and hints that could be perceived solely by an adult readership. *Bled* also alludes to topics like that adults could probably detect but that children could probably not detect. These topics include Christianity, poverty, homelessness, personal isolation due to technology and literature. There is also clever word play that may only be detectable only by adults. It may seem as though children are the explicit readership of *Bled*, yet my contention is that adults could read the text on a level that may not be comprehensible by the child readers/viewers and, as a result, the adults could be the implicit

[10] « Dossier de diffusion: Bled—Daniel Danis ». *Théâtre de Sartrouville et des Yvelines*. 2009. Web. 24 July 2010. <www.theatre-sartrouville.com/uploads/pdf/dossierdiff-bled.pdf/>

readership. As mentioned previously, there are a few reasons for this: certain words and phrases have double meanings, certain situations can be viewed on an adult level of comprehension (i.e. in juxtaposition to historical society or contemporary society) and some passages are written in a style that may exceed the child readers' comprehension while reaching the adult readers's comprehension. Consequently, the child readers may only understand these passages on one level while adult readers could understand them on two levels.

There are textual traces of Christianity in the play—allusions and hints that educated adults could detect and that children would probably not detect. The first one occurs in *Panonceau* 2 (In *Bled*, Danis uses the word *Panonceau* instead of *Chapitre*). Bled is summoned by his parents so that they can explain to him why they are being evicted from their home. Bled's mother, in describing the dire situation, says that they are being evicted and assailed with insults, as Danis indicates in Chapter 1 of *Bled*:

> *On nous déloge sous les insultes :*
> *Dehors, dehors*
> *La crasse et les cafards !*[11] (10)

Translated literally, *crasse* and *cafards* mean "filth" and "roaches" respectively, but in French, the word *cafards* can have a religious undertone. *Les cafards* is very close to the French *sauterelles* (locusts), which were one of the Plagues of Egypt mentioned in Exodus, the second book of the Old Testament in the Bible. Here is the French-language version of that passage from Exodus, Chapter 10, Verses 12–15 (I have bolded the occurrences of *sauterelles*):

> *L'Éternel dit à Moïse : Étends ta main sur le pays d'Égypte, et que les* ***sauterelles*** *montent sur le pays d'Égypte; qu'elles dévorent toute l'herbe de la terre, tout ce que la grêle a laissé.*

[11] In this thesis, for the cases where the English translation does not immediately follow the foreign-language quotation, the translation in question will appear in Chapters 3 and 4 (Chapter 3 for quotations from *Le Petit Poucet*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Le Petit Prince*, and Chapter 4 for quotations from *Bled*).

> *Moïse étendit sa verge sur le pays d'Égypte; et l'Éternel fit souffler un vent d'orient sur le pays toute cette journée et toute la nuit. Quand ce fut le matin, le vent d'orient avait apporté les* ***sauterelles****. Les* ***sauterelles*** *montèrent sur le pays d'Égypte, et se posèrent dans toute l'étendue de l'Égypte; elles étaient en si grande quantité qu'il n'y avait jamais eu et qu'il n'y aura jamais rien de semblable...Elles couvrirent la surface de toute la terre, et la terre fut dans l'obscurité; elles dévorèrent toute l'herbe de la terre et tout le fruit des arbres, tout ce que la grêle avait laissé; et il ne resta aucune verdure aux arbres ni à l'herbe des champs, dans tout le pays d'Égypte*[12].

It is quite possible that Danis formulated the aforementioned scene in *Panonceau* 2 with a reference to this biblical passage. Adult readers may be able to perceive this biblical reference while the child readers may read the words only for what they are within the context of the story. Even if this arrangement was not Danis' intent and even if some adults would not be able to perceive this level of comprehension, there is a potential within the text for there to be two different ways of understanding this excerpt.

Another possible reference to Christianity occurs in *Panonceau* 3, when Bled describes himself as *un petit malin*:

> *Je suis un petit malin*
> *car dans la video*
> *le chemin de demain sera dans ma main.* (Danis 12)

This excerpt not seem like anything significant, since *malin* can mean a "clever" or "crafty person", but there is a second connotation that actually goes deeper than the first one. According to François de Salignac de La Mothe and Chad Helms in *Fénelon: Selected Writings*, a *malin* can also be a biblical reference to *le Diable* (The Devil) or an « *Ange déchu* » (320); *Ange déchu* is a "fallen angel" in English. In other words, the connotation is something similar to an outcast. In *Dictionnaire universel de la langue française*, Charles Nodier and Victor Verger define *malin* as « *L'esprit malin, le diable; le Malin est plus malveillant, plus malfaisant; il cherche à nuire.* » (58) ([Translation] The evil spirit, the

[12] Louis Segond, *La Sainte Bible, Ancien Testament: traduction nouvelle d'après le texte Hébreu, Volume 1* (A. Cherbuliez, 1874), p. 110.

Devil; the Fallen Angel is more malicious, more nefarious; he seeks to do harm.[13]) Like an outcast, Bled has been expulsed from his home. Child readers would most likely miss this religious reference, while adults may be able to detect it.

Another allusion to Christianity occurs in *Panonceau* 11, where Bled says the following:

> *Les quenouilles nous emmaisonnent*
> *le chant des grenouilles nous toiture*
> *et nous ensommeille pour de vrai*. (Danis, 20)

What could stand out in this excerpt to adult readers is the word *quenouille*. While the word can mean simply "bedpost", it is also the centrepiece of the Christian holiday *La fête de la quenouille*: known to Anglophones as "St. Distaff's Day". This holiday has been celebrated traditionally on the 7th of January.[14] Furthermore, the word has also been used as a term synonymous with the word "women". In English, one of the equivalents of *quenouille* can also refer to a woman and that word is "spinster", as Sir Spencer Walpole indicates in *A History of England from the Conclusion of the Great War in 1815, Volume 1*:

> In the middle of the eighteenth century, then, a piece of cotton cloth, in the true sense of the term, had never been made in England. The so-called cotton goods were all made in the cottages of the weavers. The yarn was carded by hand; it was spun by hand; it was worked into a cloth by a hand-loom. The weaver was usually the head of the family; his wife and unmarried daughters spun the yarn for him. Spinning was the ordinary occupation of every girl, and the distaff was, for countless centuries, the ordinary occupation of every woman. The occupation was so universal that the distaff was occasionally used a synonym for woman. 'Le royaume de France ne tombe point en *quenouille*.'
>
> "See my royal master murdered,
> His crown usurped, a *distaff* in the throne."
>
> To this day every unmarried girl is commonly described as a 'spinster.' (56)

It is improbable that child readers of either English or French would recognize this religious and historical connection.

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[13] Unless otherwise indicated, all English translations of foreign-language quotations in this thesis are my own.
[14] "January 7". *Hillman's Hyperlinked and Searchable Chambers' of Book of Days*. n.d. Web. 29 January 2011. <http://www.thebookofdays.com/months/jan/7.htm/>

As a final example of the allusions to Christianity in *Bled*, we can consider this quotation from Bled in *Panonceau* 7:

> *M'sieurs et mesdames du canal de Saint-Abri*
> *Mon p'tit cœur s'est égaré.* (Danis, 20)

Beyond the French word *Saint* ("Saint" or "Holy" in English) is the fact that *Abri* is actually a French word for "shelter", "cover", or "haven". It therefore seems plausible that the name of the canal could have a connotation of a place to which people can go to feel safe, even if they are *sans abris* (homeless people). This too could be a dual-readership excerpt, since it is interpretable differently by children and adults: children may simply interpret the passage as Bled telling the people around him about his missing heart so that they can help him recover it. Conversely, adults may see that the juxtaposition of the words *Saint* and *Abri* is perfectly apt for the context of the passage due to the fact that it the word by its definition complements the surrounding people: *les sans abris*.

Danis also alludes to the social condition of the modern world (in much the same way that Perrault alluded to France in the 1690s in *Le Petit Poucet*). In *Panonceau* 7, on his journey, Bled recounts the routine trips that he would make to the market with his mother, only after all the merchants had left. Destitute as they were, he and his mother could only pick from the scraps (fruit, vegetables and meat) deemed unsatisfactory by the merchants and their customers. This situation can be easily interpreted extratextually to comment on the hard times of the working class (i.e. a commentary on modern society). Danis then, in *Panonceau* 8, contrasts this dismal economic condition with Bled walking past clothing store after clothing store, each one filled with merchandise. Bled remarks that there are not enough people in the world to wear all the clothes these manufacturers are producing.

> *Il n'y aura jamais assez d'humains sur terre*
> *pour porter tous ces vêtements.*
> *Ils sont fous, les gens du vêtement.* (Danis, 23)

Danis appears to be drawing attention to the hard times of families such as Bled's while juxtaposing it with the mass production of material goods. Child readers may read the excerpt only within the context of the story, whereas adult readers may be able to read it within the context of the story *in addition to* interpreting it as a possible commentary on modern society.

During the entire play, all dialogue is disseminated through Bled himself. All communications that he sends to and receives from his family are delivered by means of the cell phone that he stole from his eldest brother. Here, Bled seems to demonstrate his dependence on technology by mimicking the sound of a transmitter:

> *J'ai la tête comme un satellite. Bip, bip, bip, ommmmmm, bip, bip, bip, ooooooommmm, vite, vite, vite.* (Danis, 22)

By this point in the story, Bled is aware of his reliance on the cell phone. The fact that he likens himself to a satellite demonstrates how conscious he is of his isolation while speaking to the societal preoccupation with social media as a means of communication and neglecting face-to-face communication. The onomatopoeia he verbalizes to mimic a satellite could capture the interest of the child readers while the adult readers could recognize something they may have seen in modern society: a child dependent upon a technological device to keep his/her lines of communication open.

In *Panonceau* 6, Bled says the following:

> *Lampadaire, approche-toi que je voie.* (Danis, 18)

Lampadaire is another word for *réverbère* (lamp-post) and, interestingly enough, this could be an allusion to dual-readership text from an earlier generation: *Le Petit Prince*. Here is a quotation from the *Le Petit Prince* by Antoine de Saint Exupéry that includes the word *réverbère* juxtaposed with the word *allumeurs*. The resulting English translation of *allumeurs*

de réverbères is “lamplighter” (I have bolded the occurrence of *allumeurs de réverbères* and “lamplighters”):

> *Quand on veut faire de l'esprit, il arrive que l’on mente un peu. Je n’ai pas été très honnête en vous parlant des* ***allumeurs de réverbères****. Je risque de donner une fausse idée de notre planète à ceux qui ne la connaissent pas. Les hommes occupent très peu de place sur la terre. Si les deux milliards d’habitants qui peuplent la terre se tenaient debout et un peu serrés, comme pour un meeting, ils logeraient aisément sur une place publique de vingt milles de long sur vingt milles de large. On pourrait entasser l’humanité sur le moindre petit îlot du Pacifique.* (50)

And here is the translation of that passage from *The Little Prince,* the English version of *Le Petit Prince,* by Katherine Woods:

> When one wishes to play the wit, he sometimes wanders a little from the truth. I have not been altogether honest in what I have told you about the **lamplighters**. And I realize that I run the risk of giving a false idea of our planet to those who do not know it. Men occupy a very small place upon the Earth. If the two billion inhabitants who people its surface were all to stand upright and somewhat crowded together, as they do for some big public assembly, they could easily be put into one public square twenty miles long and twenty miles wide. All humanity could be piled up on a small Pacific islet. (60)

So in the quotation above by Bled, Danis may be making a reference to a book that most child readers may not detect, but one that adults probably can. *Réverbère* is the tiny planet that rotates so quickly that the lamplighter has to turn the lamp on and off continuously. However, the French word *lampadaire* is also a religious word referring to « *Officier qui portait des flambeaux pendant la messe devant l’empereur et l’impératrice d’Orient.* »[15] ([Translation] Officer who carried the torches during the Mass before the Emperor and Empress of the Orient.) Once again, there is the potential that only adults would catch on to these references.

An example of the word play within *Bled*, let us consider this excerpt from *Panonceau* 2:

> *C’est pathétique de vivre*
> *avec une famille de sans logi-que !* (Danis 11)

[15] « LAMPADAIRE : Définition de LAMPADAIRE ». *Centre national de ressources textuelles et lexicales.* 2009. Web. 29 January 2011. <http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/academie8/lampadaire/>

It is spoken by the protagonist Bled, who is reacting to his parents' insistence that *he* be the one to find the family a new home as they are being evicted. What is noteworthy within this excerpt is the dual nature of the word *logi-que*. While only the word *logique* is used, the fact that is split into two segments by a hyphen renders the first syllable a homonym of *logis*, the French word for "shelter". In this way, Bled is using a form of one word to refer to two notions. That is to say, not only is he expressing his displeasure of the fact that they are being illogical, but he is also expressing his displeasure of the fact that they are homeless. While adult readers would probably perceive the dual nature of *logi-que* in this context, it is less likely that child readers would do the same.

The examples above demonstrate not only a potential dual reception of *Bled*, but also a challenge for any translator wishing to translate *Bled* into their target language for a dual readership. Chapter 2 will examine, among other things, the existing theory on writing for a dual readership as well as dual-readership texts that are interpretable by children *and* adults. Although not much research has been carried out on dual-readership translation, theory of dual-readership writing may be able to shed light on the sub-domain of dual-readership translation.

2 Dual-Readership Texts: Theory and Examples

Introduction

Following the review of the theory that exists on texts for a dual-readership of children and adults, this chapter will focus on examples of such texts. It should be noted that there are conceivably a great number works of fiction that are interpretable by a dual-readership (of children and adults) and so not all of them can be treated in detail in this thesis. Therefore, the following subchapters cover what could be considered pertinent dual-readership works of fiction in this context, so that their revelations about dual-readership fiction can be examined. Thereafter, it can be determined why translators of those texts maintained or did not maintain the dual-readership nature of the source text.

Dual-Readership of children and Adults: Theory

As we saw in the introduction, dual-readership texts are simply texts that speak to two heterogeneous readerships. In this thesis, our concern is dual-readership texts for children and **adults** and, therefore, the focus will be on texts that demonstrate that particular characteristic. For the texts that will be examined, dual-readership is not achieved in just one way. Some texts may simultaneously speak to children and adults, offering them the same content that means something different to each readership. While simultaneous enjoyment of a dual readership is rare, it is nonetheless potentially achievable and so the focus here will be on this type of dual-readership text as well as the second kind. This second kind involves texts that speak to children and adult readers, though **not** simultaneously; certain passages in these texts can exceed the comprehension of the child readers and genuinely entertain the adults, while other passages in these same texts can speak specifically to children. For this

type of dual-readership text, the child readers are entertained by imagining a fantastical world while being educated (perhaps unknowingly) about life and its mysteries. Adults are entertained, not only by temporarily escaping their own lives, but also by detecting the subtle hints that the text has to offer and that point to significant societal issues and historical facts. Fairy tales, for example, can be considered dual-readership texts because they offer children a fantastical escape yet contain moral lessons that adults can see are practical to learn at any age. Fairy tales not only provide embedded adult themes, but they also open adult minds to a non-linear, fantasy world that they may have forgotten in the course of their arrival into adulthood. It is therefore becoming clear that dual-readership translations for children and adults are entertaining for each respective readership. In *Kid Culture: Kids and Adults and Popular Culture,* Kathleen McDonnell explains how the tradition in industrialized societies is such that people tend to embrace a way of thinking involving logic, information and reason as they become adults, even if they spent their childhood in a fairytale state of mind. This insight is significant in demonstrating that the dual-readership translation for children and adults may require the adult readers to re-embrace their sense of adventurism to immerse themselves in stories and thereby enjoy them:

> Adults in modern industrial societies live (or like to think we do) in a world of facts, information, rationality. Meanwhile our children dwell alongside us in a land most of us have left behind, a pagan culture where they keep alive many of the oral, iconic and mythic traditions of pre-industrial, pre-Christian societies (36).

McDonnell's point is important because it shows how the discarding of the daydream world of fairy tales and novels need not be seen solely as a sign of maturation, but also as a detachment from the world of childhood.

Reading and enjoying fairy tales continue to be traditions that are passed on from one generation to the next. Fairy tales are texts that appeal to both children and adults alike, namely dual-readership texts, and it is interesting to examine why each readership is drawn

to the text. It can be said with some certainty that adults who read fairy tales do so nostalgically to lose themselves in the fantastical world with which they were intimately familiar during their childhood. For them, such an action can ease the tensions that they experience in the modern, fast-paced world. Similarly, they may be re-reading the texts to identify the subtle, implicit messages that they probably did not perceive as young children. Children, for their part, read fairy tales to escape their own daily obligations as well, yet what they are exposed to (perhaps unknowingly) are life lessons and morals.

It is plausible that stories that are interpretable by both children and adults are equally pleasing to both readerships, even if they are pleasing to each readership for different reasons. The children's learning and development are nurtured while the adults are attracted to the commentary on society at large that only they can detect. Gunilla Anderman, Margaret Rogers and Peter Newmark reveal the implicit dual-readership address of children's literature in *Word, Text, Translation*: *Liber Amicorum for Peter Newmark*: "Firstly, books of this kind (while categorized by their primary target audience, i.e. child readers) in fact address two audiences: children, who want to be entertained and possibly informed, and adults, who have quite different tastes and literary expectations." (209) What Anderman, Rogers and Newmark elucidate here is that there is a mutual attraction to these kinds of books, even if the reason for their appeal to children differs from the reason for their appeal to adults. Therefore, children are entertained while they learn valuable life lessons that nurture their personal learning and development, while adults are presented with complex themes in a funny or ironic way. Moreover, both readerships are entertained. The content intended for children lies in what is explicitly said, while the content for the adults lies in what is implicitly said. In other words, the adults does not need to assess every detail of a passage to understand it; they should be able to grasp immediately what is being said. In the

following quote, Anderman, Rogers and Newmark specify what the reasons could be for the children's attraction and the adults' attraction to the texts in the first place:

> Secondly, while it is true that some works of children's literature appeal essentially only to the primary audience, many are what Shavit (1986: 63–91) calls ambivalent texts such as *Alice in Wonderland*, which can be read by a child on a conventional, literal level or interpreted by an adult on a more sophisticated or satirical level as well. (210)

As Anderman, Rogers and Newmark emphasize, with respect to the dual address of children's literature, there could even be a satirical aspect to the work that, while undetected by child reader, would be readily comprehended and thereby enjoyed by the adult reader. When one considers dual-readership texts, one encounters the potential predicament that the child reader's comprehension may be exceeded while the adult reader's comprehension may not be. However, from the examples taken from *Bled*, it seems that content can be produced that is both explicitly for children and implicitly for adults. In *Children's Literature*, Peter Hunt refers to this fact: "Dual address....is rare and difficult, presupposing as it does that a child narratee is addressed and an adult reader simultaneously satisfied." (14). One of the reasons for the rarity and difficulty in achieving a dual address is that for the author to appeal to the adult, he/she may have to use language or make allusions that children would not understand. Such a situation is inevitable in the writing of dual-readership texts. However, in *Fundamental Concepts of Children's Literature Research: Literary and Sociological Approaches*, Hans-Heino Ewers explains that, while there may be times when the child does not understand, there must still be something attractive for them in the work:

> A work of children's literature can therefore exceed the child's comprehension, but must nevertheless contain something for child readers. In other words, it must be inscribed with children's reading if children are to be among its readers. Such a work consequently contains two implied (actual) readers, although one of them, the implied *child reader* does not have all the qualities required of the abstract reader, while the implied *adult* reader tends to coincide with the abstract reader (46).

This point is important because it lets us know that true, real-time enjoyment by both readerships is sometimes unachievable, especially if some content in the text could exceed the children's comprehension.

We have therefore established that there are at least two ways to reach a dual readership (specifically, children and adults) in a fictional work. The first one is reaching both readerships simultaneously while the second one is reaching them at different times through different means. The second way involves drawing both together on the same plane of addressee by enabling the two readerships to have a mutual enjoyment of the same literature.

With respect to the translation of such texts, the dissociation mentioned in the previous paragraph means that the translator may have to be less noticeable than the source-text author. The translator may have to find a balance between understanding the dual nature of the source text without this balance being discernible in the translation itself. That is to say, translators can probably draw from their own life experiences, whether from childhood or adulthood, but inserting those experiences into the target text could alter the original meaning of the source text. The resulting translation may still be comprehensible, but subjectively tainted as well. Ewers covers this subject by discussing people's motives for **not** wanting to market their dual-readership text to a dual readership. A book or film could contain strong political statements that are hidden behind flowery imagery or prose that is ostensibly intended only for children. This literary facade would be the case particularly in nations where political dissent is met with fierce, authoritative reprisal:

> What could incite the originators and senders of a bisemic children's literary message not to use a twofold address appropriate to their twofold message? This could be one of the games of concealment that are frequently found in literary life. It could also be one of the tactics used when smuggling ideas past possible censorship: For example, children's books with concealed political ideas attempt to evade possible censorship by seeming to have no addressees, but children. (48)

This point is relevant not only to dual-readership writing, but also to dual-readership translation. As for possible censorship of children's literature, an understanding of dual-readership translation requires the wisdom that there is a variation in the degrees to which different languages and cultures will expose their children to potentially controversial content. A thorough comprehension of what is appropriate for children in the source text and what is appropriate for children in target text may enable the translator to know whether he/she is exposing the child readership to too much (or too little, for that matter). For example, a translation of a dual-readership text may omit certain explicit material that appears in the source text and that is deemed too illicit (by the target culture) for children. In *Comparative Children's Literature,* Emer O'Sullivan makes reference to a popular example from the 20th century:

> When scholars or critics identify 'changes', 'adaptations' or 'manipulations' in translations of children's literature, they often rightly describe and analyze them in terms of the differing social, educational or literary norms prevailing in the source and target languages, cultures and literatures at that given time [...]. A rich source of such observations are the many translations of Astrid Lingdren's *Pippi Långstrump* (1945), which gave a good indication of what was perceived by the target cultures, at the time of translation, to be unacceptable for child readers. (104)

Pippi Långstrump is the original Swedish version of the story, which is known to Anglophones as *Pippi Longstocking*. This is a poignant example of the issue here: translators of that particular text had to contend with topics covered in the source text that, while not inappropriate for young Swedish readers, were inappropriate for child readers of the foreign-language translations of the source text. Alternatively, the translation of the dual-readership text may include more explicit material if the target culture imposes less censorship of children's literature/film. However, children are not the only readership of which the translator has to be aware. Adults of certain languages and cultures may be more offended or less offended by literary material that deals with religious beliefs.

As Bruno Bettelheim explains in *Psychanalyse des contes de fées*, adults want to instil in children the belief that man is fundamentally good, but children *know* that man is not always good: « *Nous désirons que nos enfants croient que l'homme est foncièrement bon. Mais les enfants savent qu'ils ne sont pas toujours bons (…)* » (18) ([Translation] We want our children to believe that people are fundamentally good. But children *know* that they are not always good […].) This excerpt is important because it displays the way in which dual-readership texts **do** speak to two readerships (in this case, adults and children) by presenting the human condition as it is to both readerships. For gruesome stories like *Le Petit Poucet*, reality is presented as reality; children learn about what poverty really is, what it can lead people to do and how to avoid it. Adults would be able to see the parallels between the conditions of the story and the conditions in society at large. In the next quotation below, Bettelheim also explains the importance of fairy tales not only to children's enjoyment, but to their learning. Children can be entertained as they read the fairy tale and also learn about life's significant issues in a comprehensible way:

> *Les contes de fées ont pour caractéristique de poser des problèmes existentiels en termes brefs et précis. L'enfant peut ainsi affronter ces problèmes dans leur forme essentielle, alors qu'une intrigue plus élaborée lui compliquerait les choses. Le conte de fées simplifie toutes les situations.* (19)
>
> [Translation]
> One of the characteristics of fairy tales is their presentation of existential issues in brief and precise terms. The child can thereby face these issues in their existential form, whereas a more elaborate plot would complicate everything. The fairy tale simplifies all situations.

This quotation can show how these kinds of texts enable children to understand the essentials of that issue and learn their importance. Similarly, adults may be reminded of the importance of these fundamental issues, even if it is in a manner that is different from what they are used to. Moreover, even if these issues are presented in a style that exceeds the child's normal comprehension level and that is relatively easy for adults to understand, they nonetheless

enlighten the children about the realities of the world without concealing them behind a facade of complete positivism, as Bettelheim explains here:

> *Cependant, la majorité des parents croit que l'enfant doit être mis à l'abri de ce qui le trouble le plus : ses angoisses informes et sans nom, ses fantasmes chaotiques, colériques et même violents. Beaucoup pensent que seules la réalité consciente et des images généreuses devraient être présentées aux enfants, pour qu'ils ne soient exposés qu'au côté ensoleillé des choses. Mais ce régime à sens unique ne peut nourrir l'esprit qu'à sens unique, et la vie réelle n'est pas que soleil* ...(11)
>
> [Translation]
> However, most parents believe that children must be sheltered from that which harms them the most: their shapeless and indescribable anguish, their chaotic, sickening and even violent fantasies. Many people think that only mindful reality and generous imagery should be presented to children, so that they are not exposed to the dark side of things. But this one-dimensional approach can only nourish the mind in one way and real life is not always so cheery …

As we have already seen, dual-readership fairy tales, and fairy tales in general, entertain children while teaching them about morals and life lessons. Yet there was an evolution among some authors of fairy tales that led to texts that questioned authority and the environment in which children lived. This new way of educating children aimed to benefit child readers, and was perhaps controversial to those who preferred to indoctrinate children by means of literature. Jack Zipes explains this phenomenon in *Why Fairy Tales Stick*:

> ...many others began to experiment with the fairy tale in a manner that would make child readers question the world around them. Their tales did not offer prescriptions for good housekeeping and clean living. Instead, they suggested that conventional living could lead to the imprisonment of the soul and mind, and they offered "utopian" alternatives. (87)

What Zipes is saying here is that some writers of dual-readership children's literature realized that they could use the medium of writing to shape children for the "better" and get them to look past the traditional habits that human beings tend to adopt and to be inquisitive and independent instead of unquestioning and conformist. This very point then leads to the case made by Perry Nodelman, who also talks about how adults have an immense influence on the inclusion of content in children's books. Nodelman believes that the very nature of children's literature indicates a handling by adults to expunge content that could be

unsuitable for children. In other words, it involves censorship, as Nodelman explains in *The Hidden Adult: Defining Children's Literature*:

> Its [children's literature's] very existence as a genre implies an act of censorship. It also implies a dependence on the "adult" content it presumes to mark off and leave out, as well as a dual audience, consisting of those who cannot perceive it as a genre and those with the knowledge of other kinds of literature who can.. (132)

This perspective forces us to consider the reason why censorship even occurs. Are the adults concerned genuinely for the children, or are they simply afraid of the consequences they envision? We do not know, naturally. However, dual-readership works, with their ability to embed grandiose themes into texts explicitly tailored for children, can succeed in superseding the censors and in giving the child readers more credit than they are usually afforded by opening up their minds to forbidden subjects (if the children can even detect them, for that matter). Nodelman is not alone in holding this view. Emer O'Sullivan explains, in her article "The Fate of the Dual Addressee in the Translation of Children's Literature", that the adult agent involved in the cycle of children's books (whether they are parents of the children who would be reading the texts, writers of the texts themselves, publishers, teachers and so on): "Ostensibly addressed to child readers, it [children's literature] is written by adults, published by adults, reviewed and recommended by adults. Adult librarians administer children's books, teachers use and encourage the use of them, they are purchased by parents, uncles, aunts etc." (109) Regardless of the fact that children are the principal recipients of dual-readership texts, only adults have the final say as to what can be printed in children's literature. Again, through O'Sullivan's insights, it becomes clear that children's books always risk being censored by the secondary readers: adults. O'Sullivan's insights on the translation of dual-readership children's literature are the most relevant in this regard:

> The norms prevalent in and governing the target system, to which translations must conform if they are to be accepted in that system, and the general status accorded to children's literature (as reflected, for example, in whether adults expect to enjoy it in their own right)

> have thus been revealed to be key factors in deciding the fate of the dual addressee in the translation of children's literature. (119)

This is a profound revelation for the issue here. We already know that translators aim to understand the source-text content precisely and to ensure that the essence of that content is transferred into the target text. However, O'Sullivan's point above indicates that the translator should also compromise that accurate, faithful transference with the appropriate and acceptable style of expression in the target text. Since these norms can vary depending on the target language and target culture, censorship is an issue that the translator of a dual-readership text may have to face; he/she may be translating from a language of a culture with which he/she may have to negotiate differences in permissiveness, morality, etc. between the source culture and target culture. The translator may have to decide if the dual-readership nature of the source text is achievable in the translation. However, another question is worth asking: Why does censorship matter at all? The answer may lie in **subjective interpretation** and **objective interpretation**. Objective interpretation is defined as "Utterances whose meaning is to be elucidated in terms of reporting or describing actual or possible facts or states of affairs have objective interpretation."[16] In other words, **objective interpretation** does not change between languages. Human beings may have different tongues, but their senses do not lie. For example, if an Anglophone sees a rose, he/she will see a flower with red petals. Similarly, as an example, if a Hispanophone sees a rose (or a *rosa*, as he/she would call it), he/she would still see a flower with red petals. Nothing changes except the signifier that is assigned to the element in reality. Subjective interpretation is defined in contrast to objective interpretation:

> Words have subjective interpretation insofar as their meaning is to be elucidated in terms of the expression of feelings or attitudes (not 'opinions') in the hearer and / or the evocation of

[16] "Glossary of Technical Terms". *University of Aberdeen*. 30 January 2007. Web. 29 January 2011. <https://abdn.ac.uk/philosophy/guide/glossary.shtml/>

> feelings or attitudes in the person addressed. In so far as an utterance has subjective interpretation, it has no TRUTH-VALUE, but it may be sincere or insincere.[17]

In conclusion, we should consider *why* dual-readership texts attract children and adults before we consider *which* dual-readership texts they are attracted to. Texts that are *perceived* as being intended for a dual readership tend to be children's books. That is to say, it is more likely that authors of children's books can attract adult readers than it is that authors of *adults*' books can attract child readers—it is difficult to imagine Stephen King or Tom Clancy attracting child readers due to content in their texts being interpreted by them on a child-readership level. We already know why children are attracted to children's books; they read them for entertainment. Adults who read them may certainly do so to monitor the content that their child is absorbing, but perhaps also to re-experience their own childhood, to escape the hustle and bustle of their own daily lives, and to detect the subtle hints in the text to extra-textual elements that they could not comprehend when they were children themselves. While the dual-readership work may, at certain moments, be incomprehensible for children, it should be sufficient for a dual readership of adults and children if it contains at least some content that children can understand.

We know that some of the first dual-readership (children and adults) texts were fairy tales. They were an escape for children, who were actually being educated (unbeknownst to them) in reading them, because they alluded to life lessons and morals by which one ideally should live. Adults could probably detect these allusions as incorporating the real world into the story, whereas the child readers would be largely unaware of their extra-textual significance. Children and adults have shared the fairy tale for centuries as a mutually enriching activity. Children read them for what is said while adults can ascertain what is not

[17] *Ibid.*

said, but what may be implied by the author. This is the implicit reader/explicit reader relationship. Each culture and each language have their own child-adult distance, whatever the reason(s) may be. There is no indication of uniformity between cultures as they pertain to exposing children to adult material. The point here is that some cultures may fear exposing their children to adult-oriented material due to the potential negative effects it can have on their upbringing or their behaviour. Meanwhile, other cultures may be more lenient and less likely to censor the content to which their children are exposed. Moreover, cultures that do censor their content out of fear of harm to the children would expect that the children could detect and understand the adult material. Other cultures would not expect their children to detect the material or understand it and, even if they did understand it, the expectation could be that no great harm could come to the children. To summarize, the differences between the child and adult mean that the translator may have another constraint to deal with.

What about cultural differences and linguistic differences? These can be considered through a consideration of subjective interpretation. As we saw above, subjective interpretation is culturally and, therefore, linguistically dependent. Whether the dual-readership nature of the source text is intentional or not on the part of the author, the translator is still faced with translating a dual-readership text. Whether their arrangement is intentional or unintentional, texts with a dual readership put the onus on the translator to consider more than just the words on the page, but for *whom* they were written, what they mean to the source culture, what they could mean to the target culture, what the best way to convey them is, and what the imposed linguistic constraints are.

Le Petit Poucet

A renowned writer of texts that have come to be considered dual-readership texts was Charles Perrault. Among his texts is his 1697 story *Le Petit Poucet* (published in his collection *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye* or *Mother Goose's Tales*), known to Anglophone readers as *Hop O'My Thumb*. Other stories accredited to Perrault include *La Barbe Bleue*, *La Belle au bois dormant*, *Les Fées*, *Le Petit Chaperon rouge*, *Le Maître chat ou le Chat botté*, *Cendrillon ou la petite pantoufle de verre, Riquet à la houppe, Les souhaits ridicules* and *Peau D'Âne*.

Although the case can be made that the stories in *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye* are interpretable by both child readers and adult readers, it is actually unclear whether Perrault himself actually intended for them to be that way, since the fact that he was the genuine author of *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye* remains in dispute. Zohar Shavit explains in *The Poetics of Children's Literature*:

> *Les Contes* aroused controversy from the very beginning, not only because the stories officially addressed children (and at the same time were sophisticated and ironical), but mainly because they were not signed by Perrault. *Les Contes* was attributed to his son, Pierre Darmancour, who was seventeen at the time of its writing and nineteen at the time of publication. (10)

This quotation demonstrates the fact that, not only do we not know Perrault's intended readership for *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye*, but we also do not even know whether he was the genuine author. Shavit goes on to explain a possible reason for the ambiguous identity of the author:

> The answer might lie partly in Perrault's high social status which required that he, as a distinguished member of the French Academy, could not take official responsibility for texts considered more appropriate for children or women to write. By attributing authorship to his son, Perrault indicated that the text was intended for children, as writing for children was considered more "natural" to children and women, according to the general custom of the times. But even more important than the need or desire to play with the question of attribution was the fact that Perrault's game was only part of a more common game underlying the acceptability of fairy tales as an upper-class source of amusement. Highbrows enjoyed the

> duality of the writer in the same way they enjoyed the duality of the reader, hence forcing Perrault to maintain this duality continuously. (12)

As we can see from the above quotation, it was a fact that the stories for which it was certain that Perrault was the author were intended for adults, since he was a member of the Académie Française. Even if Perrault was in fact the real author, is also clear from the above quotation that we may not have to know whether he intended for there to be a dual readership of the collection of stories, since the stories had an appeal to a dual readership anyway. Here, Shavit explains that the incentive of the author (whoever it actually was) for writing for a dual readership may not even be an issue because the very presentation of each story ensured that it was possible for them to appeal to a dual readership of children and adults:

> Whatever was the real motivation of Perrault's work, most scholars seem to agree about one thing-that Perrault did change the original folktales a great deal and adjusted them to the taste of his "salon" audience. Yet Perrault's manipulation of the writer's identity alone was not enough to maintain the duality of the text. The text must also provide unmistakable evidence as to its "real" reader, the adult, and at the same time maintain the game between its two implied audiences. This was achieved mainly through the ambiguous structures of the text and through its satirical and ironical tone. (13)

Shavit's revelations are certainly worthy of attention. They demonstrate the fact that one should not assume that Perrault *intended* to write *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye* for a dual readership of children and adults, since he may not even have been the true author. What could make the stories in *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye* appealing to a dual readership is the way in which they are constructed, a fact which Shavit herself points to. This fact could therefore be a reminder of something important; without any indication from the author as to his or her intent of the readership, all we can do is assume what the author's intention *could* have been. Therefore, perhaps we should not be as concerned with the possible *intentions* of the authors of dual-readership texts as we are with the characteristics *within* those texts that make them alluring to a dual readership.

Consider this quotation from the back cover of the 2009 collection of translations by Christopher Betts, which describes the appeal of *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye*:

> Charles Perrault's versions gave classic status to the humble fairy tale, and it is in his telling that the stories of Little Red Riding-Hood, Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella and the rest have been passed down from the seventeenth century to the present day. Perrault's tales were enjoyed in the salons of Louis IV as much as they were loved in the nursery, and it is their wit, humour, and lively detail that capture the imagination of adult and child alike. They transmute into vivid fantasies the hidden fears and conflicts by which children are affected: fears of abandonment, or worse, conflicts with siblings and parents, and the trials of growing up.[18]

This excerpt demonstrates the dual appeal that the tales have had and continue to have. It is testament to continual enjoyment of the tales by both adults and children alike, regardless of where the tales are read, who is reading them and in what language they are being read.

Le Petit Poucet is a story about the youngest of sons of an impoverished woodcutter and his wife. Faced with the grave notion that they may not be able to feed their children, they reluctantly decide to cast the seven of them into the woods. Petit Poucet, who had heard his parents discuss their plan the night before, took little white pebbles to drop behind him so that he and his brothers could find their way back home. Although the parents are happy to see their children, they again decide to abandon them. However, this time, they take measures to ensure that Petit Poucet is unable to gather pebbles. Once again, the seven sons are cast off into the woods. They come to a cabin in the woods and seek shelter there, but the woman of the cabin tries to deter them from wanting to come in, explaining to them that her husband is a child-eating ogre. Petit Poucet explains that they would rather be eaten by the Ogre than the ravenous wolves in the woods and so she lets them in. After the Ogre discovers the children in his cabin, his wife is able to talk him into not eating them until the following day. In the meantime, the seven sons exchange their golden crowns with the seven daughters' nightcaps to avoid being eaten by the Ogre during the night. The next day, when the Ogre

[18] Charles Perrault and Christopher Betts, *The Complete Fairy Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), description on the back cover.

realizes that he has accidentally slit his own daughters' throats, he becomes enraged and pursues the boys with the help of his all-powerful, seven-league boots. In the course of his pursuit, he stops to rest. Petit Poucet, hiding with his six brothers out of the Ogre's view, steals the boots while he is sleeping. Petit Poucet then tells his brothers to return home and he uses the boots to arrive at the Ogre's cabin. There, he tells the wife that the Ogre was captured and that the captors demanded a ransom. The Ogre, Petit Poucet tells the wife, has sent him to collect the Ogre's fortune to take back and hand over to the captors. The wife believes Petit Poucet's story and gives him the family fortune. Petit Poucet is thereby able to return home much wealthier than he was when he had left.

It is certainly possible to see that the *Le Petit Poucet* has the potential to reach a dual readership of children and adults. It is also important to note that although the text does have this dual-readership potential, there is no way of knowing how many French adults were capable of reading the text at the time that it was published. For example, an estimate by Sylvia Neely in *A Concise History of the French Revolution* places the literacy level among French adults prior to the French Revolution at approximately 37% (20). In any case, the important point here is that when we discuss the dual-readership characteristic of *Le Petit Poucet*, we cannot say with certainty that the *aim* of *Le Petit Poucet* the story to reach a dual-readership. Furthermore, even if we knew that that was the intent of the author, we have no way of knowing that it *did* reach a dual readership circa 1700. We can only operate on the premise that there exists a possibility for both child and adult readers to read the text and give it two different interpretations.

Not only was *Le Petit Poucet* inspirational for child readers due to the child protagonist's triumph over his adversary (the Ogre) to save his impoverished family and educational due to the moral included at the end of the story, but it also appealed to adults

because of the allusions to previously written stories (such as mythological tales) and its extratextual commentary on contemporary France. While the child reader is inspired by the story of Petit Poucet's triumph over the Ogre, the adult reader can perceive the allusions to ancient Greek mythology. Petit Poucet is courageous and clever in his victory over the much stronger Ogre, similar to David in his victory over Goliath in the Old Testament of the Bible[19]. Similarly, Petit Poucet's exit from the forest by way of the trail of pebbles appears to be modelled after Theseus' exit from the Labyrinth by way of a ball of string given to him by Adriadne[20]. As Petit Poucet defeats the Ogre, so too does Theseus defeat the Minotaur. When Petit Poucet escapes, he does so by using his seven-league boots—a reference to Hermes' sandals[21].

Le Petit Poucet as a whole can be seen as a commentary on what was happening in France at the time. In her research, *Die Hexe in ausgewählten Märchen der Brüder Grimm* [the witch in selected tales by the Brothers Grimm], Denise Hofmann has also noted the parallels between history and Perrault's fiction:

> *Die Entstehung von Perraults Märchen lässt sich auf historische Begebenheiten zurückführen. Im 17. Jahrhundert herrschten in Frankreich existenzbedrohende Zustände. Dass das Land von der Pest und Hungersnöten gebeutelt war, wirkte sich auf die Märchen aus, die er schrieb. In „le petit poucet" hat die Familie mit der Hungersnot zu kämpfen und weil nicht genügend Essen für alle zur Verfügung steht, werden die Kinder von zu Hause fort geschickt.* (32)
>
> [Translation]
> The origin of Perrault's fairy tales can be traced back to historical events. During the 17th century, France was beset by hostile conditions. The country was shaken by pestilence and famine, and this condition affected the fairy tales that he [Perrault] wrote. In *Le Petit Poucet*, the family must struggle against famine and the children are sent away by their parents due to a shortage of food.)

[19] Donald Haase, *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales: Q–Z* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2008), p. 969.
[20] Donald Haase, *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2008), p. 439.
[21] Iona Archibald Opie and Peter Opie, *The Classic Fairy Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 129.

We can hereby conclude that *Le Petit Poucet* was more than merely a children's story in the sense of being purely fantasy—the story is actually derived from details of the conditions of the time when it was written. Hofmann concludes that there is a dual intent (as far as readership is concerned) for both children and adults in *Le Petit Poucet*:

> *Perrault schrieb seine Märchensammlung jedoch zunächst nicht für Kinder sondern sah als Rezipienten vor allem Erwachsene, die erheitert werden sollten. Aber auch Perraults Märchen waren volkstümliche Überlieferungen, waren Warn-geschichten mit Warn-gestalten. (*32)
>
> [Translation]
> Perrault wrote his first collection of fairy tales not so much for children as for adults, who were to be entertained as well. However, Perrault's folk tales were also stories of caution about the dangers that were forming.

Here are some examples of dual-readership excerpts found in *Le Petit Poucet*. The first one is from the third paragraph. In describing the youngest child (Petit Poucet) of the impoverished family, Perrault uses the word *esprit*:

> *Ils étaient fort pauvres, et leurs sept enfants les incommodaient beaucoup, parce qu'aucun d'eux ne pouvait encore gagner sa vie. Ce qui les chagrinait encore, c'est que le plus jeune était fort délicat et ne disait mot : prenant pour bêtise ce qui était une marque de la bonté de son esprit. (*Perrault and de Merville 73)

Now, this usage of *esprit* may not seem very noteworthy, but, as Philip Lewis explains in *Seeing Through the Mother Goose Tales: Visual Turns in the Writings of Charles Perrault*, the French word *esprit* can have more than one interpretation:

> …variously translatable as mind, spirit, soul, wit, intelligence—it is already the locus of a formidable compromise formation. On the one hand, the term points to the consummate strategic intelligence of Perrault's savvy heroes, who acquire the eloquence and mastery of the honnête homme, the perfect gentleman whose art of living is subject to codification and whose reasoned outlook privileges scientific understanding; this dominant rational spirit clearly falls within the perspective of sublime style, rhetoric, poetics, eloquence. Yet this very same spirit or "spirituel" also reserves within itself a subordinate, but ineradicable space for a still unassimilable force, for spontaneity, inspiration, mystery, folly, and chance…(37)

If we consider Lewis' point, it appears that Perrault strategically chose to use the word *esprit* to prompt two understandings of the word itself. Beyond the obvious translation equivalents that come to mind like the ones that Lewis mentions, there is also the attached connotation of the whimsicalness that Lewis talks about. Therefore, one can deduce that Perrault's wording

can reach a dual readership with the child-level readership, which may interpret only the former connotation from the word, and the adult-level readership, which may interpret the former **and** the latter connotations from the word.

The second excerpt occurs in the fourth paragraph, early in the text when the narrator is describing the atmosphere of desperation that Petit Poucet's family was living in: « *Il vint une année très fâcheuse, et la famine fut si grande que ces pauvres gens résolurent de se défaire de leurs enfants.* » (Perrault and de Merville 73) In this passage, one can interpret *année* on a child's level of comprehension in that the year in question **in the story** was very *fâcheuse* (in other words, "harsh" or "rough"). However, on an adult's level of comprehension, one can see the parallel between the story and **historical fact**. Countless French middle-class families found themselves in poverty and facing malnutrition by the end of the 17th century and, as we will see in Chapter 3, some parents were so distraught in the midst of their misfortune that they actually did things that could be considered unthinkable.[22]

The third example of dual-readership content from *Le Petit Poucet* occurs after Petit Poucet and his six brothers have been captured by the Ogre. Upon awakening the next morning, the Ogre tells his wife (the Ogress): « *L'Ogre, s'étant éveillé, dit à sa femme: —Va-t'en là-haut habiller ces petits drôles d'hier au soir. L'Ogresse fut fort étonnée de la bonté de son mari, ne se doutant point de la manière qu'il entendait qu'elle les habillât, et croyant qu'il lui ordonnait de les aller vêtir...* » (Perrault and de Merville 84–85). Now, on a basic level of comprehension, one could interpret this command as the Ogre simply asking his wife to put clothes on the boys. However, *habiller* in this context can also mean to prepare meat to be cut up for cooking. Therefore, there are two ways of interpreting this passage: 1) that the Ogre meant he wanted the boys dressed in their clothes, or 2) that he meant he wanted them

[22] See Éric Tourrette's second quotation on Page 84 of Chapter 3 for a more detailed description.

cut them up for cooking. The first way of interpreting the passage would probably be understood by the child readers, whereas it is probable that the adult readers could understand the second meaning of the passage, since they would have a higher level of understanding of French than their child counterparts as well as an understanding of what ogres in stories can do to those whom they capture.

In this excerpt, which occurs at the end of the story, the narrator describes how Petit Poucet shares his newly found wealth with his family: « *Il mit toute sa famille à son aise. Il acheta des offices de nouvelle création pour son père et pour ses frères; et par là il les établit tous, et fit parfaitement bien sa cour en même temps* » (Perrault and de Merville 89). While one may interpret this excerpt solely as a description of how Petit Poucet shares his new wealth with his family members, there is another level of interpretation, as Arvède Barine explains in her article « Les Contes de Perrault »:

> *Le Petit-Poucet est aussi un de ces parvenus qui montèrent à l'assaut des places sous Louis XIV, encouragés par le roi, et envahirent jusqu'aux charges de cour, à la grande indignation de Saint-Simon. À peine enrichi, il s'occupe de décrasser toute sa famille : — « Il acheta des offices de nouvelle création pour son père et pour ses frères; et par là il les établit tous, et fit parfaitement bien sa cour en même temps. » — L'histoire ne dit pas ce qu'il fit pour lui-même, mais il est à croire qu'il ne s'oublia point. Petit Poucet a dû finir dans la peau d'un fermier général, peut-être d'un intendant de province. Il a marié sa fille à quelque marquis ruiné, et ses petits-fils ont eu le cordon bleu.* (668)
>
> [Translation]
> Petit Poucet is also one of those social climbers who ascended the ranks to assume a position under Louis XIV and made his presence known to the officers at court, to the great indignation of Saint-Simon. Barely better off, he sees to upgrading his family's status: [English translation to follow in Chapter 3]. The story does not say that he did this for himself, but it can be assumed that he would not have forgotten about himself. Petit Poucet had to end up as a common farmer, perhaps a provincial steward. He married his daughter away to a ruined marquis, and his grandsons assumed the Cordon Bleu.

As Barine points out, the excerpt is an allusion to events that were unfolding in France at the time when *Le Petit Poucet* was written. Petit Poucet's sharing of good fortune is actually indicative of what happened during the reign of Louis XIV and during the time of Claude

Henri de Rouvroy de Saint-Simon[23]. While child readers would probably miss this reference, adults may be able to make the connection between the excerpt and historical events.

In light of the above, one can conclude that *Le Petit Poucet* is more than a simple fairy tale. It can also be interpreted as a depiction of a poor, seventeenth-century French family and it is thereby open to interpretation by more than just a child readership. Adults could read the story and make the connections to the harsh conditions of France's working class at that time. Furthermore, the allusions to past myths and tales from ancient Western fiction would be grasped by the adult readers and not the children. Naturally, all these features that render *Le Petit Poucet* a dual-readership text manifest themselves in the text. The textual elements that make *Le Petit Poucet* a dual-readership text will be examined in Chapter 3.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

In 1865, Lewis Carroll published *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. It is the story of a young girl who chases a white rabbit down a hole only to find herself in an unfamiliar world of distorted dimensions with a cat and caterpillar that talk, potions that make you shrink and grow, tea parties with eccentric characters, and an impatient, short-tempered Queen of Hearts. It was a text that was explicitly intended for children, with its child protagonist and the colourful atmosphere in which the protagonist finds herself. However, as we will see below, there are parts of the text that are interpretable in two different ways by children and adults. The main focus of the dual-readership content pertains to the way in which this content manifests itself in the **text** of the story. Let us consider these examples.

[23] Claire Eliane Engel, *Les Chevaliers de Malte* (Paris: Les presses contemporaines, 1972) p. 158.

The first one is from Chapter VI (The Pig and the Pepper), when Alice meets the Cheshire Cat and the cat vanishes, much to Alice's surprise:

> Alice waited a little, half expecting to see it again, but it did not appear, and after a minute or two she walked on in the direction in which the March Hare was said to live. "I've seen hatters before,' she said to herself; "the March Hare will be much the most interesting, and perhaps as this is May it will not be raving mad—at least not so mad as it was in March." As she said this, she looked up, and there was the Cat again, sitting on a branch of a tree. (92)

In this first example, the hidden adult reference is an allusion to the belief that male hares act bizarrely during mating season (early spring, which of course includes the month of March). While the commonly used idiom could have come from around the end of the 15th Century in the poem *Blowbol's Test*[24], philosopher Desiderius Erasmus also made reference to hares in this context. However, Erasmus' formulation was slightly different than the idiom, as Martin Gardner points out in *The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass*:

> Two British scientists, Anthony Holley and Paul Greenwood, reported (in *Nature*, June 7, 1984) on extensive observations that fail to support a folk belief that male hares go into a frenzy during the March rutting season. The main behavior of hares throughout their entire eight-month breeding season consists in males chasing females, then getting into boxing matches with them. March is no different from any other month. It was Erasmus who wrote "Mad as a marsh hare." The scientists think "marsh" got corrupted to "March" in later decades. (141)

This observation by the scientists is important because it challenges the validity of a phrase that most people repeat generation after generation without really considering whether it is accurate or not. In reality, the whole notion is based on a misunderstanding of the observation that Erasmus had written. There is no truth to the assumption that hares behave bizarrely during their mating month of March, yet the myth was so pervasive over generations that it became ingrained in the psyche of people who used the phrase, including Carroll himself. However, even though the belief turned out to be fallacious, the phrase "Mad as a March Hare" is nonetheless a fundamental example of an excerpt from *Alice's*

[24] John Heywood, *Proverbs, Epigrams, Miscellanies, Volume 2* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1966), p. 383.

Adventures in Wonderland that has a profundity that goes beyond the standard definition. It is doubtful that child readers would understand that fallacious reference to the mating of hares. There is another example worth considering. In this passage, Alice is asking the Griffon about drawing:

> "What was *that* like?" said Alice. "Well, I cannot show it you, myself," the Mock Turtle said: "I'm too stiff. And the Gryphon never learnt it." "Hadn't time," said the Gryphon: "I went to the Classical master, though. He was an old crab, *he* was." "I never went to him," the Mock Turtle said with a sigh. "He taught Laughing and Grief, they used to say." (Dodgson 145)

In this passage, the child reader may interpret "Laughing" and "Grief" merely as unusual and funny words to describe academic courses in Wonderland. However, the adult reader would probably see the similarity in the "La-" and "Gree-" prefix sounds to the classical languages of Latin and Greek and thereby see Carroll's sardonic opinion of these languages (he might have found Latin to be a joke and Greek to be an ordeal). Lastly, there is an excerpt that is a continuation of the conversation about schooling:

> "And how many hours a day did you do lessons?" said Alice, in a hurry to change the subject.
> "Ten hours the first day," said the Mock Turtle: "nine the next, and so on."
> "What a curious plan!" exclaimed Alice. "That's the reason they're called **lessons**," the Gryphon remarked: "because they **lessen** from day to day." This was quite a new idea to Alice, and she thought it over a little before she made her next remark. "Then the eleventh day must have been a holiday?" "Of course it was," said the Mock Turtle. "And how did you manage on the twelfth?" Alice went on eagerly. "That's enough about lessons," the Gryphon interrupted in a very decided tone. "Tell her something about the games now." (Dodgson 145-146)

Once again, Carroll has played with convenient English-language homonyms *lesson* and *lessen*. Both the child readers and the adult readers can find this quotation funny. The maintenance of the dual-readership nature depends on the maintenance of the humour. Gardner mentions how there is more than to this excerpt than one may think:

> Alice's excellent question rightly puzzles the Gryphon because it introduces the possibility of mysterious negative numbers (a concept that also puzzled early mathematicians), which seem to have no application to hours of lessons in the "curious" educational scheme. On the twelfth day and succeeding days did the pupils start teaching their teacher? (152)

What Gardner is pointing out here is that, in addition to the word play of “lesson” and “lessen”, the notion of negative numbers is covered indirectly in Alice’s conversation with the Gryphon. If the lessons indeed kept “lessening”, they would eventually become negative numbers. Here, Carroll cleverly placed a conundrum that the Gryphon would be hard-pressed to answer. Child readers may simply interpret the Gryphon’s refusal to answer Alice’s question as a sign of impatience whereas adults may be able to read between the lines and see the mathematical problem that would unfold as a result of the “lessons” “lessening” by one hour each day.

Here is another example of a dual-readership theme at work (from Chapter 9: The Mock Turtle’s Story): “‘Thinking again?’ the Duchess asked, with another dig of her sharp little chin. ‘I’ve a right to think,’ said Alice sharply, for she was beginning to feel a little worried. ‘Just about as much right,’ said the Duchess, ‘as pigs have to fly;’” (Dodgson 135) This particular passage may very well exceed the comprehension of child readers, but there is the potential that adults would see the absurdity in the Duchess’ statement as a function of her indirect way of saying that Alice has **no** right. In English, it is not difficult to come up with analogies featuring two components that could not be more unsuited for one another like pigs and flying. The purpose of these analogies seems to be the likening of their absurdity to the absurdity being discussed in a particular situation (e.g. like a fish and a bicycle.). As adults, we understand that Carroll is demonstrating the Duchess’ wit indirectly by employing a similar analogy. Child readers may be confused as to the ‘pig’ analogy, but adults probably would not.

Like *Le Petit Poucet,* Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland features a child protagonist who must defeat a foe. She enters a fantastical world that attracts the attention of child readers while bearing indications of adult destination. It therefore appears that, as with

Charles Perrault, Lewis Carroll intended to assign his text to a dual readership of children and adults. Of course, it is not merely dual-readership themes we are interested in, but the language through which the dual-readership nature of the text manifests itself. The next chapter will treat the subject of intentional dual readership writing and its origin. Thereafter, several translated version of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* will be examined to assess the maintenance/non-maintenance of the dual-readership effect in translation and the reasons for this.

Le Petit Prince

One of the best-known modern books intended for both children and adults appeared in the mid-20th century: *Le Petit Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. In *Transcending Boundaries: Writing for a Dual Audience of Children and Adults*, Sandra L. Beckett describes how explicitly the author made it clear that this book was intended for a dual readership: "A classic dual-audience text, *Le Petit Prince* is the number one bestseller for children in France and an international favourite with readers of all ages. St. Exupéry's double dedication to 'Léon Werth' and 'to Léon Werth when he was a little boy,' suggests an implied dual audience." (34) This is an important point because it validates the premise that *Le Petit Prince* is in fact a dual-readership text. It is a great read for children not only because it features a child protagonist, but also because it presents the world as seen through the eyes of a child. It is a great read for adults because it challenges them to set aside temporarily their materialistic ways and embrace the essence of what they encounter (as they did when they were children themselves). Examples include the adult seeing a straight line with a filled-in gap as a mere hat, while the child sees it as a snake that has consumed an elephant, the business man who counts stars and claims ownership over them and the Turkish

astronomer who discovers the B612 planet, but is dismissed by the scientific community. He is only believed when he appears in Western clothes.

Not only are these perfect examples of dual-readership content, but they are also dual-readership excerpts that reach both adult and child simultaneously because they teach children the value of seeing beyond the exterior into the heart of someone or something while reminding adults of the truth that may be overlooked at times in their society. The genius of the novel is its contribution to the development of child readers, showing them that they can question what they perceive. Its contribution to adult readers is that it shows them the value in occasionally acting with their hearts.

Here are three quotations that exemplify the nature of *Le Petit Prince*'s dual-readership scope: The first quotation is from Chapter VII, when le Petit Prince is explaining to the narrator the importance of finding happiness in the littlest of things: « *Si quelqu'un aime une fleur qui n'existe qu'à un exemplaire dans les millions et les millions d'étoiles, ça suffit pour qu'il soit heureux quand il les regarde.* » (Saint Exupéry 21) Although we know that this story is suited aesthetically for children, a passage like this one reminds us that there is a profundity to the dialogue that perhaps goes beyond the average child's comprehension and speaks to adults as well. This quotation could be about recognizing the value in scarcity over abundance. It is possible that Saint Exupéry intended for children to read this passage and learn something about the world, even if they did not understand the passage initially. Adults, on the other hand, could read the passage and be reminded about an important life lesson.

The second quotation is from Chapter IX, when the flower is telling le Petit Prince not to worry about what will happen to it due to the wind and the pests. « *Il faut bien que je supporte deux ou trois chenilles si je veux connaître les papillons.* » (Saint Exupéry 28) This

quotation, like the first one, is a maxim that teaches children something while reminding adults of something they probably already learned and have neglected in their later life. This maxim seems to be implying that not everyone or everything that you encounter will be pleasant in life, but sometimes you have to put up with the unpleasantness in order to experience and appreciate the pleasantness.

The third quotation is from Chapter XXI, when the fox is telling le Petit Prince about people's priorities and the consequences of those priorities. « *Les hommes n'ont plus le temps de rien connaître. Ils achètent des choses toutes faites chez les marchands. Mais comme il n'existe point de marchands d'amis, les hommes n'ont plus d'amis.* » (Saint Exupéry 62) This passage seems to insinuate that people seem to have evolved into a state of working only to make money in order purchase and consume. The simple art of interacting with people and making new friends is considered not as important as consumerism. In this way, Saint-Exupéry's personal opinion seems to be showing through as much as the Petit Prince's opinion. *Le Petit Prince* was written in 1943, before the end of World War II and at the beginning of the mass production era in the industrial world. The mass production of weapons and munitions transferred over to the mass production of consumer items that we see continue today. We have no way of knowing if this is Saint-Exupéry's implication, but there is certainly the potential for a dual interpretation of this passage. Children, not being as well versed in the ways of the world as adults, may learn something about society and there is the potential that adults would be *reminded* of the way in which people tend to prioritize what is important and what consequences it has on the human condition (society in general). Translations of all three of these passages will be examined in Chapter 3 to see whether the translator maintained or did not maintain the dual-readership effect.

In conclusion, the aforementioned texts can serve as insightful examples of dual-readership texts that are interpretable by both children and adults. Woven into each one are adult-directed themes that are hidden behind the wording within the text. Like *Bled*, they can appeal to this dual readership of children and adults because they feature child protagonists and because there are adult references (historical, comedic, etc.) that only they could detect. Whether they were intentionally created that way or not, the translator cannot overlook their significance and the need to address their translatability. As said before, the focus should not be on obtaining the dual-readership translation in all circumstances. Rather, it should be on how the translator translates a dual-readership text with the knowledge that it is a dual-readership text, what restraints are imposed on him/her, how he/she chooses to deal with them *and* the final translation.

3 Translations of Dual-Readership Texts

Le Petit Poucet

All the texts mentioned in the introduction are wonderful examples of dual-readership texts: texts for children and adults. The first text in translation to be examined is *Le Petit Poucet* by Charles Perrault. The first English translation was carried out in 1729 by Robert Samber. There have been many subsequent translations of *Le Petit Poucet* over the centuries and each one has its own translator who in turn has his/her own beliefs and contentions as to what the English translation of Charles Perrault's original French version should be. Therefore, the present chapter will focus on two English translations of *Le Petit Poucet* so that a comprehensive overview of the translators and their translations can be provided. There are so many English versions of *Le Petit Poucet* that it would be unimaginably laborious to dissect every one of them within this thesis. Therefore, two recent English translations have been selected for analysis: the first is by Christopher Betts and was published in 2009. The second is by the aforementioned Maria Tatar and was published in 2002. The reason why they have both been included in this thesis is because they each exhibit (more so than other English translations encountered during my research) a fundamental recognition on the part of the translator of the potential for a dual readership in the source text *and* that same potential for the target text.

Christopher Betts' *The Complete Fairy Tales*, published in 2009, is a collection of translations by Christopher Betts of Perrault's renowned fairy tales, which naturally included a translation of *Le Petit Poucet*, which Betts chose to entitle as *Hop O'My thumb*. Betts is a former senior lecturer in French Studies at the University of Warwick. He has also translated *Lettres persanes* by Charles de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu and Jean Jacques

Rousseau's *Contrat social*. Included in Betts' collection of translations are also an introduction, a note on the text and translation, a chronology of Charles Perrault, two appendices and explanatory notes. Betts goes to great lengths to justify the choices he makes and his efforts to do so are not wasted. He makes a convincing case for his translations, as his choices are well considered.

Betts describes the value of the tales to both child readers and adult readers alike:

> And seen in another perspective, that of adults recalling their childhood, this volume contains tales that many of us have known and loved for decades, concerning ourselves with meaning sufficiently in order to enjoy the narrative, as the child does, and no more;, but if you look again at what you may remember as pleasurable entertainment, you will find that the content of the tales is problematic, to put it mildly. They are full of savagery, deceit, and sexual implications which are more or less evident…It is comprehensible that readers ask what such stories signify, for both child and adult. (ix)

In plain English, Betts explains his understanding of the meaning for the intended recipients. However, it is not only his recognition of the dual intent of the tale, but also his realization that adults who had read the story as children can read the tale again from a different angle and, therefore, with a different understanding than they had as children.

Betts also has astutely observed that the moral in the story reaches not only a child readership, but also an adult readership because it demonstrates the virtuous characteristics that children, **as well as** adults, should aspire to embody: "The obvious message, put openly in the Morals, is that attractiveness and kindness for girls, and intelligence and bravery for boys, are valuable qualities. Since we like to believe that we possess them, the message is likely to prove acceptable." (xxvii) In fact, whether they have been justified or not, these values have been instilled into children of Western tradition for centuries, so in truth, Perrault was more than merely illustrating the achievements of storybook characters. He was also demonstrating the tradition that was passed down from one generation to the next in terms of children's behaviour. Here is the moral of the story as it appeared in Perrault's *Contes:*

MORALITÉ

On ne s'afflige point d'avoir beaucoup d'enfants,
Quand ils sont tous beaux, bien faits et bien grands,
Et d'un extérieur qui brille;
Mais si l'un d'eux est faible, ou ne dit mot,
On le méprise, on le raille, on le pille :
Quelquefois, cependant, c'est ce petit marmot
Qui fera le bonheur de toute la famille. (89)

As with all stories that conclude with morals (i.e. *Aesop's Fables*), Perrault's *Contes* teach children important lessons while reminding adults of these important lessons as well. As we have seen earlier, this is a fundamental characteristic of dual-readership texts. Therefore, a sign of a good translation of a dual-readership text is the preservation of this characteristic, regardless of how it was achieved by the translator.

Betts' intuitiveness to the context of the *Le Petit Poucet* is apparent through his research into the social conditions of seventeenth-century France: "When Perrault published the *Contes*, the possibility of being eaten was not pure fantasy, since widespread famine had recently occurred, which must have made the implications in *Hop O'My Thumb* worse than they probably appear now."(xxxiv) This insightful research is similar to Denise Hofmann's research that we saw in Chapter 2. Betts' research enabled him to consider the immediate world beyond the story and how it came to be. Betts lists a few characteristics of texts intended for both children and adults: 1) that they are nostalgic of the adults' own childhoods while also portraying the harsh reality of the times past or present (in this case, of times past) through adult-oriented themes like violence and 2) that they are adventurous and exciting for the child readers. As for Betts' translation, it complies well with the dual-readership (children and adults) theme in the original French.

Betts also discusses a topic mentioned earlier in this thesis: alteration of the target text (the English translation of *Le Petit Poucet*) content to comply with the decency standards

of the target language. In particular, he focuses on an engraving that was published in the original French version, but not the translated English version:

> He [Gustave Doré] produced forty-one engravings for Hetzel's edition, *Les contes de Perrault* (1867), from which the selection in this edition is taken. The Opies (*The Classic Fairy Tales*, 134) note that the 'masterly, but horrific' plate of the Ogre in *Hop O'My Thumb*, when about to cut his daughters' throats, was omitted from the English edition. (xliv)

The reason for the absence of this engraving from the English version could be indicative of the French culture's willingness to expose children to images that would be considered "inappropriate" by the English culture. In the interest of eliminating "inappropriateness", George Cruikshank's English adaptation in 1853 had generated controversy due to the way in which Cruikshank cleansed the content of the target text in differentiating it from the source text. As Casie Hermansson indicates in *Bluebeard: A Reader's Guide to the English Tradition*, one of Cruikshank's contemporaries, Charles Dickens, criticized Cruikshank for failing to respect the Fairy Tale as it was originally written:

> Charles Dickens' essay "Frauds on the Fairies," published in *Household Words* (1853), argued for allowing fairy tales to thrive unmolested: "In an utilitarian age, of all other times, it is a matter of grave importance that Fairy tales should be respected" (57). He argued against his friend George Cruikshank who had altered the fairy tale "Hop O'My Thumb" to reflect "Total Abstinence, Prohibition of the Sale of spirituous liquors, Free Trade, and Popular Education." (117)

The importance of Dickens's disapproval with Cruikshank's altering of the content of Perrault's fairy tale lies in the overall issue of translating for children and adults. Firstly, the fact that Cruikshank and Dickens were artists who disagreed so starkly meant that there was norm (with respect to sensitivity of decency or indecency) for translators and illustrators to follow when translating dual-readership texts into another language. It could very well be that Charles Perrault felt that the underlying messages in *Le Petit Poucet* for adults would not be detected by the Francophone child readers or that the child readers would not be adversely influenced even if they could detect them. Cruikshank's insistence on removing anything he deemed potentially offensive for children therefore indicates a different approach in the

presentation of adult themes in a fairytale (to be read by children) in England compared with France in the mid-nineteenth century. This case is an indicator that cultural differences and social differences between speakers of different languages will affect the portrayal of adult themes in children's stories (especially fairy tales). As Zohar Shavit explains in *Poetics of Children's Literature*, Cruikshank was not the only one holding a view that censorship of *Tom Thumb* and *Hop O'My thumb* was necessary to make it suitable for child readers. "While Mogridge consciously tried to adopt traditional chapbooks as the medium for his own religious and moral teaching, in his books he preached against 'idle fictions' and 'fleeting joys'; he even condemned 'Tom Thumb' as corrupting for children." (171) This fervent opposition by speakers of the target-text language to the content of the translation (and, thereby, the source text) represents an essential issue for translators of dual-readership texts, since cultures differ as to what they consider offensive/inoffensive, moral/immoral, safe/harmful for their children. We already know that, in every culture, children are curious and impressionable, so translators may need to consider this difference when they translate dual-readership source texts similar to *Le Petit Poucet* that can be read by adults **and** children of the target-text language.

Maria Tatar's translation of *Le Petit Poucet* was included in a collection of translations that Tatar did of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm that is entitled *The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales*. In her introduction to the publication, she elaborates on what the book intends to do and why it is so important that it aim to do so. In point of fact, they are dual readership texts because they **do** speak to two readerships: children and adults.

> *The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales* seeks to reclaim a powerful cultural legacy, creating a storytelling archive for children and adults. While the fairy tales have been drawn from a variety of cultures, they constitute a canon that has gained nearly universal currency in the Western world and that has remained remarkably stable over the centuries. (vi)

Tatar's observation here of the fairy tales' longevity is supported by the tradition that accompanies the fairy tales themselves: that both child and adult can share the enjoyment of reading them, with the parent reading to the child. She also explains that she included the annotations to provide the child and adult readers the opportunity to reflect upon what they have read and envision what may happen next. The child and adult may have different interpretations of the stories, but they can nonetheless exchange ideas about them. That is another point that Tatar makes:

> The annotations to the stories are intended to enrich the reading experience, providing cues for points in the story where adult and child can contemplate alternative possibilities, improvise new directions, or imagine different endings. These notes draw attention to moments at which adult and child can engage with issues raised, sometimes simply indulging in the pleasures of the narrative, but sometimes also thinking about the values endorsed in the story and questioning whether the plot has to take the particular turn that it does in the printed version. (xi)

In addition to explaining that the fairy tales are important because they serve to educate, entertain and fascinate the child readers, Tatar explains here that the other component of the dual readership, the adults, has something different to take from the fairy tales. This is a valid point and one that we have visited earlier because adults are reminded of the **historical context** attached to the tales that they may have forgotten or may not have realized existed when they read them as children: "This volume collects the stories that we all think we know—even when we are unable to retell them—providing also the texts and historical contexts that we often do not have firmly in mind."(xii) This point is noteworthy because it reminds us of the value of the classic dual-readership text (the fairy tale), namely, that these texts can be enjoyed simultaneously by both children and adults. Moreover, they can also be enjoyed by adults for a second time in their lives as they discover the hidden clues to advanced subjects (history, class struggles, word play, satire and sexual innuendo).

Tatar has footnoted the segments of the fairy tales that speak to more than one readership, especially those that are Perrault's adaptations of previous stories. For example, in the murder of the Ogre's daughters lies another allusion to an ancient tale, this one being the Latin tale of Hyginus, as Maria Tatar explains: "In a collection of second-century Latin myths, by Hyginus, an exchange of clothing leads to the murder of the wrong children." (263) This turn of events is eerily similar to what unfolds in the plot of *Le Petit Poucet* (the Ogre mistakenly slitting the throat of his daughters while believing he had slit the throats of the sevens sons).

Tatar also discusses the approach used by Perrault in rendering the story of *Le Petit Poucet*:

> At times, Perrault seems undecided about whether to move in the mode of fairy-tale and melodrama or social satire. Tom Thumb, despite his betrayal of the Ogre's wife and her hospitality and his theft of the Ogre's possession, remains a charming rogue. The coda to the tale relating his fate after the conquest of the Ogre reveals Perrault's deep cynicism about the social codes of the era in which he lived. (254)

It appears that Tatar believes that the raw harshness in which Tom Thumb (*Le Petit Poucet)* and his family find themselves is analogous to the social situation in France at the time of the publication of *Les Contes de ma mère l'Oye*. In that respect, it could be perceived as more than a mere fairy tale; rather, it could be interpreted as a commentary on the atmosphere in France at the time, and could be understood readily by adult readers. Furthermore, the size of the family bears a close resemblance to the standard for lower class French families circa 1700: "Tom Thumb's mother bears children in nearly biblical proportions. Large families were common in seventeenth-century France, especially since the rate of infant mortality was so high." (254) The mention of the husband's dispatching of his wife to the butcher is an indication of desperation since, in Perrault's day, few families as poor as Tom Thumb's had the money to eat meat regularly. Tatar explains: "Peasants living in seventeenth-century

France often subsisted on porridge, gruels, and stews, rarely having the opportunity to eat meat, which was considered a real luxury." (257) This is an another astute observation by Tatar because it demonstrates that the passage had an implicit connection to actual events that were taking place in France at the time that *Le Petit Poucet* was written. Therefore, the passage can have two interpretations: one for child readers, who would read it and become quite shocked at the family's desperation and the other for the adult readers, who would probably see the situation as emblematic of what went on in France among the lower classes during the 1690s.

Let us now look at the translations by both translators of each excerpt, starting with Betts'. For the purposes of comparison, four excerpts of dual-readership content have been selected to see how each translator approached the task of translating it. The questions are: did the translators who worked on *Le Petit Poucet* notice the dual-meanings and did they attempt to formulate their translations of the excerpts to convey this dual-readership characteristic? Did the translator take this information into account? Let us find out. Here is the first excerpt:

> *Ils étaient fort pauvres, et leurs sept enfants les incommodaient beaucoup, parce qu'aucun d'eux ne pouvait encore gagner sa vie. Ce qui les chagrinait encore, c'est que le plus jeune était fort délicat et ne disait mot : prenant pour bêtise ce qui était une marque de la bonté de son esprit.* (Perrault and de Merville 73)

And here is Betts' translation in *The Complete Fairy Tales*:

> They were very poor, and the seven children were a great burden, since none of them was old enough to earn his living. What grieved them even more was that their youngest son was very delicate, and hardly ever spoke a word, which they took to show his stupidity, although it was a sign of intelligence. (151)

In Betts' translation above, there is no indication that he was aware of the fact that *esprit* could be rendered as a kind of whimsicalness or any of the examples provided by Lewis, since his translation of *esprit* is simply "intelligence". Perhaps Betts realized what Lewis had

realized and tried to translate it in a dual-readership nature, but could not convey it in English. Or perhaps he did not even take a notice of the multiple connotations of *esprit* in the first place.

Here is the second excerpt: « *Il vint une année très fâcheuse, et la famine fut si grande que ces pauvres gens résolurent de se défaire de leurs enfants.* » (Perrault and de Merville 73) Let us have a look at the Betts' translation: "There came a year when times were very hard, and the shortage of food was so severe that the wretched couple resolved to get rid of their children." (151) Here, not only does Betts capture the essence of what Perrault had written in the original French, in that it conveys particularly arduous circumstances with which the story characters were faced, but he also worded his translation differently than one might have expected. Instead of simply using "famine", which is the technical English equivalent of the French *famine*, he used "shortage of food". Famine can indicate a widespread hunger or malnutrition, which would capture the essence of the French word *famine*, but to specify the condition and opt for "shortage of food", seems to indicate that Betts researched the historical context attached to this passage as well. Indeed, as we see from his footnotes, that is just what he did:

> 151 *times were very hard*: famine was not uncommon throughout the seventeenth century in France, and the years 1693 and 1694 had been particularly bad. Perrault had written a poem, *Le Triomphe de Sainte-Geneviève* (1694), in honor of the patron saint of Paris, who was credited with ending the famine. (204)

This is a significant find because the events mentioned happened very close to the time that Perrault wrote *Le Petit Poucet*. Betts may have also discovered, in the course of his research, these facts about France in 1693 and 1694, as it would explain why the wording of his translation is quite historically accurate. Here is the first fact, pointed to by Éric Tourrette in *Charles Perrault « Contes »*: « *Trente ans plus tard encore, selon quelque sinistre*

météorologique catastrophique entraînent des récoltes désastreuses. » (14) ([Translation] Thirty years later, a cataclysmic weather event resulted in terrible crop failure.) Here is the second fact:

> *Un habitant d'Orléans témoigne: en 1693, « on n'entendait que des cris lugubres de pauvres enfants abandonnés par leurs parents, qui criaient jour et nuit qu'on leur donnât du pain. » Ce n'est pas de la littérature : c'est le simple et terrible poids du réel.* (Tourrette 14)
>
> [Translation]
> A citizen of Orleans recounts that, in 1693, "you could only hear the despondent cries of poor children abandoned by their parents. The children cried all day and night to be given bread." This is not literature; it is the simple and terrible burden of reality.

The author's points here are evident: there was a devastating crop yield in the 1690s and the abandonment by impoverished parents of their children was not (just) literature, it was an undeniable truth. Therefore, when Betts uses "shortage of food", he is stating what the situation is in the story as well as acknowledging the historical parallel to the context in which the French text was written. Furthermore, since Betts accounts for this historical context in his translation, his translation has two levels of interpretation (one on a child level of comprehension and the other on an adult level of comprehension), as does the original French.

Here is the third example of dual-readership content from *Le Petit Poucet*.

> *L'Ogre, s'étant éveillé, dit à sa femme: —Va-t'en là-haut habiller ces petits drôles d'hier au soir. L'Ogresse fut fort étonnée de la bonté de son mari, ne se doutant point de la manière qu'il entendait qu'elle les habillât, et croyant qu'il lui ordonnait de les aller vêtir... (*Perrault and de Merville 84)

Now, here is Betts' translation of that excerpt:

> When the Ogre woke up, he told his wife: 'Go upstairs and dress those lads from last night.' The Ogress was very surprised by such kindness from her husband, not suspecting that he meant her to get them ready for cutting up;* she thought that he was telling her to put their clothes on. (161)

While the Ogre did not explicitly ask the Ogress to cut up the meat of the children, he still meant to convey that notion by enunciating the both connotations for *habiller* simultaneously. Not only does Betts accurately convey the meaning of the original excerpt

and carry over the terminological detail that would probably go unnoticed by the child readers of English[25], but he also translates the second occurrence of *habiller* as "cutting up", a decision that makes the text convey the genuine, horrific intention of the Ogre. Betts himself points out the dual meaning of "dress" in his second footnote for his translation: "161 *dress…ready for cutting up*: French habiller has the same variety of meanings as 'dress'." (204) Of course, it helps that Perrault himself elaborates on both connotations of *habiller* by explaining the Ogress' confusion in regards to the Ogre's request. Nonetheless, Betts' footnote in effect helps the reader (particularly the child reader) to see both connotations of the word "dress" and the importance of the distinction between them (especially with the knowledge of what the Ogress has found).

Here is the final example: « *Il mit toute sa famille à son aise. Il acheta des offices de nouvelle création pour son père et pour ses frères; et par là il les établit tous, et fit parfaitement bien sa cour en même temps.* » (Perrault and de Merville 89) And here is Betts' translation: "He gave all his family enough for them to live in comfort, and established his father and brothers in official posts that had just been created;* in this way he started them all on their careers, while improving his own position at Court in the best possible manner." (165) Not only is Betts' translation accurate, but Betts also takes into account historical events tied to the excerpt. As it turns out, these government positions could be bought, or acquired corruptly, as Betts points out in his "Explanatory Notes": "165 *posts that had just been created*: government posts were usually venal, and when the public finances were weak, creating new offices for sale was a common resource." (204) Furthermore, these are events that adults may be able to read from the excerpt, whereas children would probably

[25] It could be argued equally that child readers of the French would not notice the dual meaning of *habiller*.

read the excerpt on a rudimentary level (that is, that Petit Poucet is merely sharing his winnings with his family).

Let us now examine Tatar's translations of the excerpts. Here is her translation of the first one:

> These people were very poor. Having seven children was a great burden, because not one of them was able to earn his own living. To their great distress, the youngest was very sickly and did not speak a word. They mistook for stupidity what was in reality the sign of a kind and generous nature. (254)

Although Tatar's translation does not capture the dual meaning of the word *esprit* as Lewis sees it, it does seem to come closer than Betts' to what Lewis has in mind. She certainly came closer than Betts' translation in terms of the word *bonté*. Betts translation does not account for this word (at least, not noticeably). Now here is Tatar's translation of the second excerpt: "There came a year of misfortune, when famine was so widespread that these poor people resolved to get rid of their children" (254). Like Betts' translation, Tatar's translation captures the essence of Perrault's passage while also remaining faithful to the historical context. It thereby is a dual-readership translation in the true sense of the word (because of their maintenance of the meaning in the plot context from the original French) and their allusions to the history of the time of Perrault's day. However, there are subtle differences between Tatar's passage and Betts' passage. Firstly, Tatar more explicitly translates the introductory phrase with "year of misfortune" whereas Betts uses "year when times were very hard". Secondly, while Betts is more directly historically accurate in translating *famine* as "shortage of food", he is more judgmental by referring to the parents as "wretched couple", whereas Tartar uses "poor people", which is closer to the French *pauvres gens*. Having said that, it nonetheless appears that both translators approach the issue of the double-entendre segment of this excerpt with the aim of faithfully conveying the content from Perrault's original, while acknowledging Perrault's social indicator.

Furthermore, like Betts, Tatar also finds it necessary to insert an explanatory footnote for the choice of words in the first phrase of the sentence instead of merely carrying on and overlooking the profundity of Perrault's point. "4. *a year of misfortune*. Robert Darnton emphasized that Perrault's tales were written down in an era of plagues, famine, and wars, when life was 'nasty, brutish and short.'" (254) From this footnote, we can see why Betts translation was more accurate in the sense of describing *une famine*. Tatar bases her information on someone else's research while Betts learns about the history through direct research. Therefore, he is able to specify what kind of hard times the French working class faced and apply to how it is expressed in his translation of Perrault's *Le Petit Poucet*.

Let us now look at Tatar's translation of the third excerpt.

> When the ogre woke up, he said to his wife: "Go upstairs and dress those little rascals who were here last night." The wife was surprised by her husband's good will, never once suspecting the manner in which he was ordering her to have them dressed. She thought that he was telling her to go and put on their clothes. (265)

This translation mirrors Betts' translation almost exactly until the translation of the second occurrence of *habiller*. While Betts decided to illuminate what the other connotation of "dress" is by using "cutting up", Tatar retains the translation as "dressed" and thereby does not reveal the dual connotation until the Ogress' discovery of their slain daughters. In this way, she leaves it up to the reader to come to that conclusion.

Finally, here is Tatar's translation of the fourth excerpt:

> He saw to it that the entire family lived comfortably, buying newly created positions for his father and brothers. In this way he got them all established. In this way he got them all established at the same time that he managed to do perfectly well for himself at the court. (268)

While Tatar does not provide an explanatory note as Betts does for his translation of this excerpt, she does render the source content equally well. Moreover, she uses the word "buying", which itself has two connotations. Beyond the first, obvious connotation

(purchasing goods, etc.), "buying" can also be used pejoratively, as in the corrupt acquisition of a position or favour. While we have no way of knowing whether Tatar intended her translation to be this way, there is a definite potential for a dual interpretation of this passage, since the child readers may interpret "buying" only at the first connotation, while adults may be able to understand it on the second connotation.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

The first French translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published in 1869. The translator was Henri Bué. Carroll worked closely with Bué during the process of translating the story and it is Bué's French translation that will be examined to determine how the translator dealt with the issues of dual readership in the translation of an excerpt addressed to both children and adults, especially since it involved the English-French language pair that is also present in my translation of *Bled*. Only Bué's translation will be considered because, in my view, no other French translation carried out since 1869 has appeared to have as broad an appeal among Francophone child readers and Francophone adult readers as Bué's translation does. Therefore, it is the best French translation to examine in terms of its adherence to the dual-readership property of the source text.

Henri Bué was born in Paris in 1843 and he lived with his family in England until 1865. He would go on to teach French and German at St. Andrew's College in Bradfield, Berkshire, England, and become a colleague of Carroll's. Let us first consider the excerpt wherein Alice is waiting for the March Hare. First, here is the original English version:

> Alice waited a little, half expecting to see it again, but it did not appear, and after a minute or two she walked on in the direction in which the March Hare was said to live. "I've seen hatters before," she said to herself; "the March Hare will be much the most interesting, and perhaps as this is May it will not be raving mad—at least not so mad as it was in March." As she said this, she looked up, and there was the Cat again, sitting on a branch of a tree. (92–93)

Here is the French translation of the excerpt:

> *Alice attendit quelques instants, espérant presque le revoir, mais il ne reparut pas; et un ou deux minutes après, elle continua son chemin dans la direction où on lui avait dit que demeurait le Lièvre. « J'ai déjà vu des chapeliers, » se dit-elle; « le Lièvre sera de beaucoup le plus intéressant. » À ces mots elle leva les yeux, et voilà que le Chat était encore là assis sur une branche d'arbre. (*Bué 95)

Any reference to hares' erratic behaviour during the mating season, or even to the month of March, is lost in the French translation. Such a loss means that strictly adult-directed content that could not be picked up by the child readers has been removed, leaving excerpts that are comprehensible to children as well. Therefore, we can say that O'Sullivan's premise of the target culture determining the content of the target text (the translation of the dual-readership text) is applicable in this case as well. Consequently, the adult-oriented material in the French is lost in translation. Therefore, the English original version would have a dual readership (at least in terms of comprehension levels), whereas the French version would have just one level of comprehensibility—the child readers would interpret it the same way as the adult readers, since there is no mention of the March Hares' behaviour (i.e. the adult-oriented content).

Carroll was able to play with the old saying of "Mad as a March Hare" in such a manner as to appeal specifically to a well-informed adult readership. In the case of the French translation, the gist of "Mad as a March Hare" was not carried over. Either the translator intended to convey the gist, but was unable to or he simply disregarded it. In the case of the latter, it could have been due to a difference in *semantic* meaning between the English and the French wherein the phrase "mad as a March Hare" means something more profound than *aussi fou qu'un lièvre de mars* (the literal French translation of "mad as a March hare"). As a result, this difference in subjective interpretation in the French means that the line does not have the same adult-oriented material within it and therefore has similar

meaning for both child readers and adult readers. Of course, the fact that Bué did not translate this precisely in the dual-readership manner is inconsequential if we consider Gardner's observation in the previous chapter; hares, despite the popular opinion to the contrary, do not behave more unusually in March than they do at any other time of the year. Perhaps Bué *did* recognize the corruption of "Marsh" into "March" and thereby chose not to even bother attempting to translate that content—there is no way of knowing definitively. Regardless of the reason, the bottom line for this excerpt is that Bué's translation of it does not have the same dual-readership understanding that the English version does.

Here is the third excerpt:

> "What was *that* like?" said Alice. "Well, I cannot show it you, myself," the Mock Turtle said: "I'm too stiff. And the Gryphon never learnt it." "Hadn't time," said the Gryphon: "I went to the Classical master, though. He was an old crab, *he* was." "I never went to him," the Mock Turtle said with a sigh. "He taught Laughing and Grief, they used to say." (Dodgson 145)

Here is the French translation of the quotation:

> *« Qu'est-ce que cela? » dit Alice. « Ah! Je ne peux pas vous le montrer, moi. » dit la Fausse-Tortue, « je suis trop gênée, et le Griffon ne l'a jamais appris. »*
> *« Je n'en avais pas le temps, » dit le Griffon, « mais j'ai suivi les cours du professeur de langues mortes; c'était un vieux crabe, celui-là » « Je n'ai jamais suivi ses cours » dit la Fausse-Tortue avec un soupir; « il enseignait le Larcin et la Grève. »* (Bué 149)

In this ingenious translation, Bué does maintain the dual-readership content by adapting the phrase to a French readership. He would have realized that *rire* and *chagrin*, which are the equivalents of "laughing" and "grief", would obviously not work in the same way as they did in the English. However, he was able to use *le larcin* and *la grève*, which, although not exact French equivalents, do come close in that they too mock the classical languages of Latin (*le latin)* and Greek *(le grec)*. Therefore, the Francophone child readers could, like their English counterparts, read humour into the excerpt even if it is only for the silliness in having courses named after the French words for "looting" and "strike". On the other hand, adults, like their Anglophone counterparts, see the implicit ridicule shown for *le latin* et *le grec*.

The final excerpt is the one from Chapter 9 where Alice asks the mock turtle about daily lessons:

> "And how many hours a day did you do lessons?" said Alice, in a hurry to change the subject.
> "Ten hours the first day," said the Mock Turtle: "nine the next, and so on."
> "What a curious plan!" exclaimed Alice. "That's the reason they're called **lessons**," the Gryphon remarked: "because they **lessen** from day to day. This was quite a new idea to Alice, and she thought it over a little before she made her next remark. "Then the eleventh day must have been a holiday?" "Of course it was," said the Mock Turtle. "And how did you manage on the twelfth?" Alice went on eagerly. "That's enough about lessons," the Gryphon interrupted in a very decided tone. "Tell her something about the games now." (Dodgson 145–146)

Here is the French translation of that quotation:

> *« Combien d'heures de leçons aviez-vous par jour ? » dit Alice vivement, pour changer la conversation. « Dix heures, le premier jour, » dit la Fausse-Tortue; « neuf heures, le second, et ainsi de suite. » « Quelle singulière méthode ! » s'écria Alice. « C'est pour cela qu'on les appelle **leçons**, » dit le Griffon, « parce que nous les **laissons** là peu à peu. » C'était là pour Alice une idée toute nouvelle; elle y réfléchit un peu avant de faire une autre observation. « Alors le onzième jour devait être un jour de congé ? » « Assurément, » répondit la Fausse-Tortue. « Et comment vous arrangiez-vous le douzième jour ? » s'empressa de demander Alice. « En voilà assez sur les leçons, » dit le Griffon intervenant d'un ton très-décidé; « parlez-lui des jeux maintenant. »* (Bué 149)

The translator here had to be imaginative to come up with *leçons* and *laissons* as homonyms that mimic the meanings of *lessons* and *lessen*. With his translation, he managed to keep essentially the same phonetics as the English! The outcome is a translation that, like the source text, can be equally amusing to both child readers and adult readers. Moreover, adults reading the French could see the trouble that the Griffon would have in providing an answer that would incorporate negative numbers. Lastly, let us look at a fifth example from the book: "'Thinking again?' the Duchess asked, with another dig of her sharp little chin. 'I've a right to think,' said Alice sharply, for she was beginning to feel a little worried. 'Just about as much right,' said the Duchess, 'as pigs have to fly;'"(Dodgson 135) In his French translation, Henri Bué rendered this passage as: « *"Encore à réfléchir ?" demanda la Duchesse, avec un nouveau coup de son petit menton pointu. "J'ai bien le droit de réfléchir," dit Alice sèchement, car elle commençait à se sentir un peu ennuyée. "À peu près le même droit," dit*

la Duchesse, "que les cochons de voler, » (Bué 138) Here, the French retains the same literal meaning as the English, although one wonders why Bué did not choose *que les poules d'avoir des dents,* which is a derivative of the French proverb *quand les poules auront des dents* ("When pigs fly") and which would thereby be much more familiar to Francophone readers. After all, since there is no French proverb *quand les cochons voleront,* we may be able to assume that he wanted to remain faithful to the target text in terms of the referent or because pigs are mentioned earlier in the Chapter "The Pig and the Pepper" (*Porc et Poivre*). In any case, the translation works in that it conveys the Duchess' indirect fashion of saying that Alice does *not* have a right to think, in a way that, much like the English original, may not be comprehensible by child readers while in all likelihood being comprehensible by adult readers.

Le Petit Prince

We can also learn from the existing English translations of *Le Petit Prince,* the first of which was published by Katherine Woods in 1943. In the decades since then, many additional English translations have been published. However, just one will be taken into consideration: *A Guide for Grown-Ups: Essential Wisdom from the Collected Works of Antoine de Saint Exupéry* by Anna Marlis Burgard. The reason for this is simple: it was the only one found in the course of my research that went into substantial detail of sections of the story that could appeal to a dual readership.

In the following excerpt, Burgard explains what *Le Petit Prince* meant to Francophone children and adults and what it continues to mean to them:

> In 1943, following the publication of *The Little Prince*, Saint-Exupéry reenlisted in the French Air Corps. He disappeared over the Mediterranean in 1944, while on a reconnaissance mission. His body-like that of his beloved little prince-was never found, but the Winged

> Poet's words endure for grown-ups of all ages to read with their eyes and to feel with their hearts, in the pursuit of understanding what is essential. (ix)

Here we can see that Burgard understands that Saint-Exupéry's text was intended for readers of all ages (thereby including child readers and adult readers). This is further proof that *Le Petit Prince* has a dual readership. Moreover, the fact that Burgard recognizes the dual-readership nature of the text is the primary reason why her English translation is going to be examined instead of Katherine Woods' translation.

As we have seen earlier, for a text to appeal to a child readership, it should—among other things—be expressed in a language that the child readership can understand. Let us look at the translations. For the first one: « *Si quelqu'un aime une fleur qui n'existe qu'à un exemplaire dans les millions et les millions d'étoiles, ça suffit pour qu'il soit heureux quand il les regarde.* » (Saint Exupéry 21) And here is Burgard's translation: "If someone loves a flower of which just one example exists among all the millions and millions of stars, that's enough to make him happy when he looks at the stars." (3) There do not seem to be any issues with the French in terms of vocabulary that would contain culture-ingrained material difficult to convey in another language. The French passage itself is not complex grammatically; it is only complex in terms of the advanced topic it covers. Child readers of the English could read the passage and perhaps be astounded by the thought of the millions and millions of stars and how the Petit Prince is making a comparison with numbers so large that they are almost unfathomable. Adult readers, on the other hand, would not be astonished by such a comparison since they encounter very large numbers everyday. Moreover, they may be able to see the merit in looking to the simple things in life to find happiness. This dual-readership property, therefore, seems to have been maintained in the English translation.

Here is the second excerpt: « *Il faut bien que je supporte deux ou trois chenilles si je veux connaître les papillons.* » (Saint Exupéry 28) And here is Burgard's translation: "I need to put up with two or three caterpillars if I want to get to know the butterflies." (6) Like the original French passage, the English translation employs simple words like "caterpillars" and "butterflies", which are associated closely with *fleur* and would thereby not exceed the child readers' comprehension. In other words, the child readers could in all likelihood understand that the flower is willing to endure the caterpillars if doing so means that it will interact with the butterflies. However, the adult readers could understand that Saint-Exupéry's point applies to reality as much as it applies to fantasy (the point being that people, at times, may need to bear the brunt of adverse circumstances in order to experience the enjoyment of more favourable ones).

Here is the third and final excerpt: « *Les hommes n'ont plus le temps de rien connaître. Ils achètent des choses toutes faites chez les marchands. Mais comme il n'existe point de marchands d'amis, les hommes n'ont plus d'amis.* » (Saint Exupéry 62) And here is Burgard's translation: "People haven't time to learn anything. They buy things ready-made in stores, but since there are no stores where you can buy friends, people no longer have friends." (16) It is possible that St.-Exupéry anticipated what would happen as the world transformed from an era when human beings made things manually to an era when things were built "ready-made" and that he believed this transformation to be a negative thing. Moreover, Saint-Exupéry (by way of Petit Prince) appears to be implying that people learn by doing and making: not consuming. The English translation appears to capture this sentiment.

We have now seen how the translation of texts for a dual readership of children and adults is affected by two factors. The first factor deals with the translator's reluctance to

expose what he/she deems to be inappropriate material to the child readers. The second factor is the nature of the target culture as far as values are concerned. Clearly, these two factors fall into the point made by Emer O'Sullivan in Chapter 2 as she explains that the reception of the dual-readership text in the target language will be determined by the social and cultural habits of speakers of the target language.

4 Dual-Readership Translation of *Bled*

We can learn from the translations that have been carried out of other dual-readership texts, like the three that were examined in Chapter 3, and apply what we have learned to the test case of *Bled*. Sometimes it may not be possible for the translator to convey the meaning of certain words, sentences or passages on two levels of potential interpretation. As we already know, each language and each culture corresponding to that language has its own distinct perspective on certain subjects. The translator may have to keep this fact on his/her mind, especially for dual-readership texts where slight variations in perspective between the source language and source culture and the target language and target culture can mean that he/she may have to be creative in order to convey the dual interpretation of that particular word, sentence or passage.

As for *Bled*, it was not evident in the first reading that it was intended for a dual-readership readership. However, upon a closer reading, it became clear that there was adult-oriented material in addition to child-oriented material. The issue then became how to translate these instances of dual-readership content into English. The most glaring adult references were mentioned in Chapter 1 and my translations of these occurrences were formulated in consideration of all the theoretical factors and literary precedents that have been presented in Chapters 2 and 3. As we already know, there are textual traces of Christianity in the play: allusions and hints that educated adults could detect, but children would probably not detect.

In *Panonceau* 2, Bled's mother says that the family will be assailed with insults *la crasse et les cafards* as they are evicted.

> *On nous déloge sous les insultes :*
> *Dehors, dehors*
> *La crasse et les cafards !* (Danis 10)

This biblical reference should be translatable into the target language. Here is part of the Plague of Locusts, as presented in the Old Testament, Exodus Chapter 10, Verses 12–15 (I have bolded the occurrences of 'locusts'):

> And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the **locusts**, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail hath left. And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the **locusts**. And the **locusts** went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; before them there were no such **locusts** as they, neither after them shall be such. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt[26].

"Filth and locusts" was my first formulation. While it is a literal translation, it does not maintain the alliteration of the source text. Therefore, my solution was:

> They're evicting us with insults
> "Out, out with you!
> You lousy locusts!

This formulation could be attractive to younger readers while older readers may be able to perceive the allusion to the Bible.

We already know that the expression *un petit malin* used by Danis in *Panonceau* 3 has a second connotation, one that means the Devil (outcast):

> *Je suis un petit malin*
> *car dans la video*
> *le chemin de demain sera dans ma main.* (Danis 12)

However, this reference would not be so easily perceived by the adult readers merely with the word "outcast". The translation that seems to be the most appropriate is "fallen angel" in order to capture the religious connotation of the French word and it would surely garner notice from the Anglophone adult readers. However, my belief was that "fallen angel" would

[26] F.H. Hedge, *The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues: being the version set forth A.D. 1611 compared with the most ancient authorities and revised: printed for the universities of Oxford and Cambridge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1887), p. 49.

stand out more in the translation than *petit malin* would in the French source text because *malin* also rhymes with *chemin*, *demain* and *main*, which appear two lines later in the French text. On the other hand, it is more difficult to find words that rhyme with "angel". It appeared that the Christian reference should be abandoned and replaced with a term that conveys only Bled's mischief:

> I'm a sly one
> because I can say
> This videophone will show me the way

In *Panonceau* 11, Bled says the following:

> *Les quenouilles nous emmaisonnent*
> *le chant des grenouilles nous toiture*
> *et nous ensommeille pour de vrai. (*Danis 32)

In addition to a repeated 'eee' sound in each line, the word *quenouille* stands out to adult readers. While the word can mean simply "bedpost", it is also the focal point of the Christian holiday *La fête de la quenouille*, which is known to Anglophones as "St. Distaff's Day". This holiday has been celebrated traditionally on January 7th. Furthermore, the word has also been used to describe a woman. In English, one of the equivalents of *quenouille* can also refer to a woman and that word is "spinster". It was therefore necessary to find a word in English that is a physical thing and also symbolic of femininity. The word "gynoecium" seemed to be the most appropriate because it is literally both those things; it is a plant and it comes from the Greek word for "woman", as S.R. Mishra explains in *Understanding Plant Anatomy* "The floral parts concerned with megasporogensis constitute, collectively, the *gynoecium* (from the Greek word meaning woman and house)." (284) Therefore, this is my proposal:

> Gynoeciums mark the corners of our house
> Frog songs hover over us
> and soothe us into deep sleep

It appears doubtful to me that child readers would make the connection between the Greek prefix *gyno-* and women. Adult readers, on the other hand, would take more from it than a mere flower; they would see that the type of flower was chosen to represent femininity.

In *Panonceau* 7, Bled mentions the "Saint-Abri" canal.

> *M'sieurs et mesdames du canal de Saint-Abri*
> *Mon p'tit cœur s'est égaré.* (Danis, 20)

Since we know that *Abri* can mean "shelter", "cover" or "haven", it seemed that a suitable English translation would be:

> Ladies and Gentlemen of the Wilcomb Harbour
> My heart is missing!

In this case, the name "Wilcomb" is a derivative of the word "Welcome", which is an appropriate adjective for a "shelter", "cover" or "haven". Moreover, the word "Harbour" is a body of water, like the French word *canal*, but is also a synonym for the three English equivalents mentioned above. Therefore, the English translation should capture the dual meaning in the same way that the French excerpt does.

Further on in *Panonceau* 7, Bled says:

> *Il n'y aura jamais assez d'humains sur terre*
> *pour porter tous ces vêtements.*
> *Ils sont fous, les gens du vêtement.* (Danis 23)

In order to capture this potential duality in meaning (sign of an observant child, but it is also a social commentary), the solution was:

> There will never be enough people on Earth
> To wear all of these outfits
> These clothes makers are nitwits.

My belief is that it captures the essence of what Danis is trying to say, while speaking to two readerships in two different ways.

Bled is completely dependent on his phone to carry on conversations and so the environment of Bled is contemporary. This seems to be another hint to the intimate

attachment humans have developed with their machines. Here is one of his lines from *Panonceau* 8:

> *J'ai la tête comme un satellite. Bip, bip, bip, ommmmmm, bip, bip, bip, ooooooommmm, vite, vite, vite.* (Danis 22)

By this point in the story, Bled is aware of his dependence on technology to communicate with his family members and all those back home. His imitation of satellite sounds captures the interest of the child readers while the adult readers see a children dependent upon technology, instead of face-to-face interaction, to remain in contact with friends and relatives: something with which they may already be familiar. Here is my translation of that excerpt:

> My head is like an antenna! Beep, beep, bzzzzzzzz beep beep, quick, quick, quick!

My belief was that Anglophone children would probably not compare their head to a satellite: an antenna, perhaps. It appears that this translation conveys the message in a twofold way similar to the French that reaches the child readers, obviously, while reaching the adult reader on a deeper level (i.e. the simile Bled uses is symptomatic of the technologically-advanced society in which we live).

Also in *Panonceau* 8, Bled is walking by houses and asks why there are no trees planted in the poor neighbourhoods.

> *Pourquoi on ne plante pas des arbres*
> *dans les quartiers pauvres ?* (Danis 23)

There may not have been any intent on Danis' part to convey a dual meaning of Bled's question, but following my translation of it, an opportunity arose in which dual-readership content could be inserted into the translation. Here was my initial, literal translation:

> Why aren't there any trees planted
> in the poor neighbourhoods?

An opportunity presented itself here to reproduce a derivative of a popular 1960s folk song (with environmentalist undertones), so this is my solution as an improvement on my initial translation:

> Why aren't there **trees on the lawns**?
> In these poor areas, they're **lacking**.

I strategically chose this translation to convey the message to adults in a way that reminds them of an old song from their past, namely, *Where Have all the Flowers Gone*, by Pete Seeger and Joe Nickerson. While the child readers would probably read nothing more into that stanza than a question from Des, adults could be reminded of *Where Have all the Flowers Gone*. Here is the first stanza from that song (I have bolded the occurrences of the words "flowers" and "passing"):

> Where have all the **flowers gone**?
> Long time **passing**
> Where have all the **flowers** gone?
> Long time ago
> Where have all **the flowers** gone?
> Girls have picked them every one
> When will they ever learn?
> When will they ever learn?[27]

Seeger adapted this English version from a Ukrainian-language folk song in 1955 and Joe Nickerson added more verses to make it a complete song in 1960. It was released in 1961. *Where Have All the Flowers Gone* became an instant hit and emblematic of the anti-war sentiment among children during the 1960s. This environmentalist perspective has been carried over from the song into my own translated excerpt. It is doubtful that children would catch this cultural reference.

Another pertinent example presented itself with this sentence in *Panonceau* 13:

> *Combien de chemins j'ai parcourus?* (Danis 36)

[27] "LYRICS—Where Have all the Flowers Gone". *The Lyrics Connection*. 2010. Web. c/o *Fall River Music Inc*., 1961. 30 January 2011. <http://www.arlo.net/resources/lyrics/flowers-gone.shtml/>

Upon reading this line, the equivalent English phrase "How many roads have I traveled?" probably comes to mind, but there is another line that may come to mind: "How many roads must a man walk down, before they can call him a man?"[28] The latter line is from the lyrics to Bob Dylan's 1963 song *Blowin' in the Wind* and could be modified to read "How many roads have I walked down?" to be similar to the literal English translation (of the French excerpt from *Bled*): "How many roads have I traveled?" It seemed like a suitable translation of the French line, since it is interpretable by children and adults in two different ways. children may interpret line as an indication that Bled is simply wondering how far he has traveled up to this point. Adults would interpret the line the way the children would, but could also interpret it in another way; they may recognize the line as a reference to a popular song from the 1960s.

In *Panonceau* 6, Bled says the following:

> *Lampadaire, approche-toi que je voie. (*Danis 18)

We already know that *lampadaire* is another word for *réverbère,* which is the name of the small planet in *Le Petit Prince*. However, as we saw in Chapter 3, *lampadaire* is the French word to denote officers who carried torches in front of the Emperor and Empress of the Orient in ancient times. The term "torch bearer" appeared to be the best solution, since it may convey this historical significance, even if it cannot simultaneously mean lamppost (as *lampadaire* does in the French):

In translating another excerpt in *Bled,* an opportunity presented itself in which an illusion to a popular novel of a previous generation: *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger could be inserted. Here is the excerpt from *Panonceau* 6 of *Bled*.

[28] Colleen Josephine Sheehy and Thomas Swiss, *Highway 61 Revisited: Bob Dylan's Road from Minnesota to the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), p. 231.

> *Ça pue le haut-le-cœur, ici!* (Danis 18)

A literal English translation could resemble something like “It stinks to high heaven in here!” However, upon my reading of it, it seemed opportune to me to fashion the translation of the excerpt after a quotation I remember from reading *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger. Here is the quotation in question, spoken by the protagonist Holden Caulfield. It is from a scene where an acquaintance of his draws the disgust of the chapel congregation:

> Old Marsalla. He damn near blew the roof off (23).

And here is my translation of the quotation from Bled, which takes into account the quotation from *The Catcher in the Rye*.

> My God! That horrible stench
> could damn near blow a roof off.

My judgment was that the passage may resonate with a certain *déjà vu* effect with adult readers, while children may be unfamiliar with the reference, since it is to a book that was published several decades ago.

As a final example, translating the following excerpt from *Panonceau* 2 proved to be a challenge:

> *C’est pathétique de vivre avec*
> *Une famille de sans logi-que !* (Danis 11)

What made it challenging was the absence of a word in English that can be split to create a syllable that is a homonym to another word (as *logique* can be). Here is my solution:

> My family is one of a kind.
> They’re not just out of a home,
> They’re out of their minds!

What is interesting about this translation is that it is faithful to the source text in conveying both the protagonist’s displeasure of his family’s illogical behaviour and of the fact that they are homeless, even though it does not do so in a clandestine way as the source text does.

Therefore, what possibly perceivable only by adult readers in the source text has become something that will certainly be perceptible by child and adult readers in the target text.

The process of translating *Bled* with a dual readership of children and adults in mind demonstrated to me the practical challenges that translators can encounter when they attempt to convey the content of dual-readership texts into the target language. The translation of a dual-readership text requires patience, knowledge of history, etymology and politics (among others).

5 Conclusion

As discussed in this thesis, several researchers have covered the notion of writing for a dual readership (especially for children and adults). Researchers seem to agree that there certainly are texts that are interpretable in two distinct ways by two distinct readerships. Where critics diverge is on the reason for this duality and on what adult readers and child readers should take away from dual-readership texts. Some critics believe that authors intentionally employ words with dual meanings, as well as innuendos and allusions in their texts to conceal their own beliefs about certain topics or people because those beliefs could be viewed negatively by critics and jeopardize the authors' livelihoods. Other critics think that some authors write for a dual readership to reach a wide readership in order to teach child readers values in an entertaining way and remind adult readers of those same values, which they may have neglected in their own lives. We also know that authors of dual-readership texts may need to assess their content to determine what could be perceptible by child readers and the reasons for this, what could be perceptible by adult readers and the reasons for this and whether they will risk exposing child readers to inappropriate content. Of course, it should be kept in mind that this notion is based on the assumption that authors of dual-readership texts intend that their texts be directed to a dual readership or that the authors are even aware of the dual-readership nature of their texts in the first place. All we can say is that we simply do not know the authors' intent and that the important issue concerns the potential for dual interpretation by readers of their texts. It seems, from the texts and from the perspectives of the critics mentioned in this thesis, that children *tend* to be the explicit readership and adults *tend* to be the implicit readership, as far as dual-readership texts are concerned. In other words, there may be more works ostensibly intended for children that

implicitly appeal to an adult readership than works ostensibly intended for adults that appeal to a child readership implicitly.

We have also seen, from the dual-readership theory and from the dual-readership texts considered in this thesis, that child readers can understand the serious topics within dual-readership texts as adult readers can understand those same topics. However, there may be instances where they cannot understand topics, due to certain aesthetic factors. Furthermore, passages that cover topics exceeding the child readers' comprehension will probably not be detected by child readers. Therefore, it is possible to make certain inferences about dual-readership texts for children and adults. We can say, based on what we have seen in this thesis, that dual-readership texts have properties that can include, but may not be necessarily limited to, the following:

1. That dual-readership texts cover topics that both child readers and adult readers can understand and from which they can draw enjoyment.

2. That dual-readership texts cover serious topics that child readers, unlike adult readers, may not be able to detect if those topics are:

   a) expressed in ways that exceed their comprehension (i.e. through word play, puns, sophisticated humour, irony, satire, similes, metaphors, allegories);

   b) expressed in words or phrases that can have dual meanings themselves;

   c) interpretable as commentary on aspects of society; or

   d) implicitly referring to events, people, works of literature or anything else that predates the lifetime of the child readers.

and:

3. That child readers will probably not detect topics that exceed their comprehension.

Under these premises, the child readers would probably not be able to read the texts on a second level of comprehension that surpasses the mere understanding of the texts as fictional

works; on this second level, the connection can be made between the texts *and* the extratextual world. In this way, adult readers, unlike child readers *can* make the connection between those texts *and* the extratextual world because they are able to detect the double-entendre contained within these texts. Moreover, child readers can detect and understand serious topics covered in dual-readership texts as adult readers can detect and understand them and they, like adult readers, can draw enjoyment from those topics if they are aesthetically laid bare. Finally, it can be assumed that dual-readership texts can also cover topics that adult readers can understand, but that also exceed child readers' comprehension.

As far as the translation of dual-readership texts is concerned, they are several items to consider. First, in regard to point 1 (on page 106), it is possible that the translation of the topics in the target text that are enjoyed mutually by child readers and adult readers may not prove to be enjoyable to child readers and adult readers of the *target* text, given the differences between the child readers of the source language and the source culture and the child readers of the target language and target culture. Another process in the translation of dual-readership texts involves what is discussed point 2.b), especially since the source text can sometimes contain elements or passages that have different subjective interpretations than their counterpart equivalents in the target text. For example, it may be clear that that a word in the source text has a dual meaning in the source language, since children and adults can interpret in two different ways. That is, children may understand the word on a basic level (the objective meaning) while adults could interpret it on a more advanced level (the subjective meaning). Conversely, it is possible that the equivalent of that word in the target language may not have the same subjective interpretation. Consequently, for the translation, there should be no difference between the children's and the adults' interpretations of the word. It is also possible that the adults of the target language and target culture could be

reluctant to expose their children to material that they would deem risqué, even if the adults of the source language and source culture are unbothered by it. The latter point is related to point 3., since child readers of the target text *may* be able to detect topics that child readers of the source text may not. A pertinent example of this phenomenon is the Swedish-language text *Pippi Långstrump*. With respect to point 2.a), it is conceivable that the translation of the *presentation* of the topics could mirror the presentation of the topics in the source text, since it is possible for child readers of the target text to miss those topics as child readers of the source text would. Furthermore, the translator of a dual-readership text may have to decide him-/herself how to translate the aesthetic of the content, as mentioned in point 2.a); the implicitly subject commentary as mentioned in point 2.c) and the references to people, publications and events that predate the lifetime of child readers, since the translator may not hold the same opinions as the source-text author and because the references to said people, publications and events may not be noteworthy even for the *adult* readers of the target text.

My contention is that the translator should be able of accounting for what the potential interpretation of the text could be and equate that interpretation with something in the source text that is as effective. In addition to the points mentioned in the previous paragraph, there are three other factors that determine the success of dual-readership retention in the target text: cultural distance between the source language and target language, linguistic difference between the source language and target language and variance in child-adult distance between both languages and difference between cultural histories. Dual-readership translation is certainly achievable, but any mismatch in these categories between both languages of the translation process could force the translator to abandon the dual-readership goal and adapt the target content in another manner. The intention of this process to be one that focused on the achievable results. One reason why people become translators could be a

belief that any information that can be encapsulated by the written word can also be conveyed in another language and even another culture. The translator may establish new boundaries, but should also respect the ones that have already been established. Otherwise, any chance of a successful dual readership can be diminished. Among the many factors that translators of dual-readership works should recognize is achievability: namely, the potential for the work to be translated into a dual-readership target text. As with most types of translation, translators of dual-readership texts should realize that they can act as the conveyers of the source material to readers of the target culture. With that realization comes the question of what to convey to the dual readership of children and adults and the way in which to convey it. It is possible that the answers to certain questions may depend on the translator and the text that he/she is translating: What is too much exposure to children? What is too little? Where does the translator draw the line between being blunt and being tactful? It may be up to the translator himself or herself to decide. What we have learned in this thesis is that one can certainly achieve the translation of a dual-readership text that emulates the source text by appealing to a dual readership, but the *how*, or the specific way in which it can be achieved depends on the translator, the source language and source culture, and the target language and target culture in question.

6 Appendix: *Bled* by Daniel Danis

Daniel Danis

BLED

D'Après Le Petit Poucet de Charles Perrault [29]

[29] See the eighth entry of the Bibliography (page 140) for the bibliographic entry. Also see the first footnote of the thesis, found on page 2.

Personnages

Bled, *jeune garçon de 7 à 10 ans. Son prénom est un mot de l'argot français emprunté à l'arabe qui signifie petit village ou hameau.*

Shed, *l'alter ego des peurs de Bled*. *En anglais* shed *signifie cabanon de jardin.*

Ti-Cœur, *accompagnateur de Bled*

Une famille qui est sur le point de se faire expulser. Elle charge le plus jeune des fils, Bled, de trouver une nouvelle demeure. L'enfant part donc en mission, seul, avec pour unique lien entre lui et les siens un téléphone mobile, volé à l'un de ses frères.

Bled est un Petit Poucet moderne, qui s'en sort à la force de ses rêves. Seul, à la rencontre du monde, il se crée des compagnons avec qui il dialogue, avec qui il chemine. Il parle fort pour rompre le silence, pour vaincre sa peur et trouver le chemin de la maison.

Panonceau 1

Début du jour.

Bled marche sur un tapis ou un plancher roulant.
Il tient un téléphone portable muni d'une caméra. Derrière lui, il pourrait y avoir une toile-écran sur laquelle les images provenant du téléphone ou du chemin parcouru seraient diffusés.

En miniature, quelque part sur la scène, il pourrait y avoir un immeuble à logements d'une cité de banlieue.

1. Bled.
D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs !
Allô ! Mes frères, six !
Allô ! Allô ! Ici, votre frérot !

Photo !

Regardez !
Les brins de cheveux de ma tête venteuse
se tortillent en broussailles.
Et les nuages tourbillonnent !
Avec un vent pareil.
je devrais m'envoler dans ce ciel crémeux.

Un chant frais sort de ma bouche.

Tiens, c'est drôle
j'ai le goût de bonnes fraises des bois bien sucrées.

Panonceau 2

2. Bled.
Quand maman et papa ont dit :
Bled ! Bled ! Viens !
On va encore être délogés d'ici.

À cause de mes frères, six, maman ?

Non, m'a dit papa, à cause de la pauvreté.
La pauvreté qui nous pourchasse tous les jours.

3. Maman a ajouté :
On nous déloge sous les insultes :
Dehors, dehors
la crasse et les cafards !

Papa te parle, allez, Bled
grimpe sur la table
Parmi nos sept garçons
on t'a choisi pour aller chercher un nouveau logis.
Oui, oui, un logis pour tes parents
Et tes autres frères, six.

Pourquoi moi, maman !
Papa, je suis bien trop jeune !
Demandez à votre aîné, il a une moto, lui.

4. Voyons, Bled, tes frères six !
Toujours à se bringuebaler d'un bord à l'autre
toujours à mettre le fou dans les cages d'escalier
toujours à vendre de la chicane
toujours à chiper ce qui n'est pas gratuit.

Maman, mon corps est si petit
et ma santé si chétive.

Maman m'a supplié :
Bled, rapporte-nous une belle demeure définitive.

5. Tu me chasses sans nourriture
sans même une couverture ?
Ton cœur de mère m'abandonne
aux dangers de chemins inconnus ?

Mama me prend la tête :
Bled, ne joue pas à l'enfant.
Il n'y a que toi qui peux le faire.

Papa, des bêtes attaqueuses
vont m'enfouir sous des neiges étouffeuses.
Mais Papa, vas-y, toi !

Sa grosse voix rouge a fait du bruit :
Je t'avertis, Bled, ne reviens pas ici
tant et aussi longtemps que tu n'as pas trouvé
une demeure pour loger ta famille.

Maintenant, vas-y !
Allez ! Allez ! Vas-y !
Va-t'en ! Surtout, fais vite, Bled.

C'est pathétique de vivre

avec une famille de sans logi-que !

Panonceau 3

6. Bled.
D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs !

Allô ! Mes frères, six !
Allô ! Allô ! Ici, votre frérot !

Vous me voyez parler ?

Quand je suis parti, vous étiez là à me narguer
appuyés sur la tour à logis :
—Salut, Bled, le petit *monster !*
—La sale tâche te revient parce que
depuis que tu es au monde
on squatte d'un bord à l'autre de la cité.

7. —T'es qu'un attrape-malheur, p'tit *monster*
—Tiens, une baguette de pain
tu jetteras les miettes
pour retrouver ton chemin.
Et si les oiseaux les bouffent
pour revenir, tu feras du pouce !
Ha ! Ha ! Ha !

8. Ha ! Ha ! Ha ! Mes frères, six.
Pendant qu'ils s'écrasaient de rire
ma main chapardeuse s'est glissée
dans la veste du frère aîné
pour chiper le bidule électro-machin.

Je suis un petit malin
car dans la vidéo
le chemin de demain sera dans ma main.

Il prend une photo avec le téléphone portable.

Photo du chemin !

Vous m'envoyez comme un déchet jetable.
alors, le *monster* va vous dénicher
toute une maison déraisonnable
toute détruite qui pue le poisson.
Et si, et si je meurs

d’un nuage gris, je vous balancerai
un logis cramoisi
et vous deviendrez des pourrissables
avec sur la peau
plein de vert de gris.

Hi ! Hi ! Hi ! C’est même pas riable !
D’ailleurs, d’ailleurs !
Bled ne salue pas ses familiers
presqu’haïssables.

Et j’appuie ici, sur le bouton du téléphone
Parti par les ondes, mon message vidéo.

Bled ferme le téléphone. Il marche encore et encore et prend des photos du chemin.

Photo du chemin !

9. Même sous ce ciel déchaîné
par un vent aux milles nuages
je colle au sol grâce à mes semelles ferrées
et à mes pieds-sabots.

Au galop ! Au galop, Bled !

Panonceau 4

Après son galop sur une route, il ralentit le pas, car il arrive dans un quartier.

10. Bled.
D’ailleurs, d’ailleurs…

Tout ici est beauté
des maisons, des logements.
y en a plein.
Qui loge ici sur ces rues pleines d’arbres ?
Allô ! Allô ! Est-ce que c’est le pays des maisons,
ici ?

D’ailleurs…
Nous aussi, si on avait de l’argent
on habiterait sous un beau toit !

Est-ce qu’il y un pays de forêts
où je pourrais bâtir une maison de bois ?

Allô ! Allô !
Moi, j'habite dans le pays des cités-ciments
dans une des tours à logis
avec, autour, presque pas d'arbres.

Il marche d'un pas rapide, tête par en avant.

Allô ! Allô !
Je porte mon nom
à cause de mon grand-père sans pays
à cause d'une vieille guerre
et de son mal du bled
d'où on l'a expulsé.
Il a dit à mes parents :
Ce petit est une promesse sur deux jambes.
la promesse d'un retour dans notre bled.
Appelez-le Bled.

Photo du chemin !

Le portable annonce un texto. Message d'un frère, des six :

Bled ! Rapporte le portable ! Petit Poucet puant !

Pouah !

Avec ma voix rauque :
Demandez plutôt à notre père à nous
pourquoi c'est pas lui qui est parti
trouver un toit pour les jours et nuits ?

Dites-lui que je vais chercher
une maison pas vendable, pas achetable.
un genre de maison abandonné
qui pue les œufs pourris
pour une famille de follerie.
Dites aussi à papa que j'ai volé son chapeau.

Bled ferme le portable.

Panonceau 5

Il fait nuit. Bled trébuche. Un ombre s'échappe de son corps. Un son étrange se fait entendre.

11. Bled.
Tiens, ça, c'est un drôle de nuit.

Jamais vu avant.
Je m’adosse sous le seul arbre de la rue.

Derrière l’arbre, une ombre l’observe. C’est Shed, un bûcheron aux traits animalisés
Un hibou hulule.

12. Bled.
Et, là, là !

Des coups de hache se font entendre, Shed bûche la branche de L’arbre sur laquelle repose le hibou médusé. Bled s’éloigne. La branche cède et tombe. Shed empoigne le hibou.

13. Shed.
Bouge pas, woiseau
que je te déplume pour mon oreiller.

14. Bled !
Ah ! Pauvre petite chouette.

15. Shed.
Pas une chouette, ça, c’est un hibou, p’tit morveux !
Hein !? Qui est là ?

16. Bled.
Ses yeux me fixent comme deux étoiles en feu.
Ça m’aveugle.

Shed passe la lame de la hache sur ses dents comme pour limer du fer blanc. Grincements.

D’ailleurs, d’ailleurs !
Bled, me dis-je, ne reste pas là.
Il veut t’égorger
et manger ton p’tit cœur en chamade.

Le bûcheron-animal saute
par-dessus la branche de l’arbre.

17. Shed.
Je vais t’arracher le cou à coups de hibou.

18. Bled.
Bled, du calme.
pose tes pieds-sabots sur le trottoir
et, comme une moto de bois, pars.

Au galop-moto ! Au galop-moto !

Prends ce virage
cache-toi ici, me dis-je encore.

Il s'est arrêté sur le rebord du trottoir.
Il la déplume vivante.
Avec ses griffes, il lui retire les yeux à vif.
Il ouvre la bouche et les avale
Là, il s'en va en croquant les os de la chouette…
eee…

Au lointain, en écho

19. Shed.
C't'un hibou, p'tit morveux !

Panonceau 6

20. Bled.
Et là, là, là !
Je suis sauf, mais suis-je où, moi-là ?

Des voix de clochards ivres se font entendre

Sur le bord du canal.
Sous l'pont.
Sur nos cloches de sans-abris.
Fermez vos gueules !
Dormons.
Et toi, p'tit clochard
couche-toi tout habillé
et fiche-nous le sommeil.

21. Bled.
Ça pue le haut-le-cœur ici !

Bled se fabrique une tente-cloche avec sa veste-capuchon qu'il a enlevée. Il prend le portable.

J'ai le cœur en mal.
Mon p'tit cœur va me sortir de la poitrine.

22. Allô ! Allô ! Mes frères, six.
Venez me chercher toute de suite !

Un texto apparaît sur l'écran du portable.

Que les cannibales lunaires te bouffent tout rond.

Je suis un p'tit Bled tout seul dans l'univers.

23. On dirait que ma bouche se tourne à l'envers
comme quand j'étais bébé.

Des fois, je mangeais des petites choses
durant la nuit
je me réveillais et je vomissais.

Bled vomit. Il regarde par terre. Avec sa main, il prend un objet qui ressemble à un caillou.

Lampadaire, approche-toi que je voie.

Un lampadaire se penche vers lui.

Ma tête tourne bizarrement.
Voyons, mais j'ai vomi mon cœur !
Pourtant, mon corps vit toujours !

Petits cris plaintifs.

P'tit cœur, tu chiales comme un chiot.
Cesse de gémir, moi aussi, j'ai faim.

Faut jamais dire : j'ai faim.
Plutôt : mange ta main, garde l'autre pour demain.
Où t'en vas-tu ?

Petits cris plaintifs.

Viens, c'est trop glauque près de ce canal.
Allons dormir dans mon capuchaud.

Bled entre dans la veste-capuchon et éteint le lampadaire.

Cesse de gigoter, Ti-Cœur
tu m'empêches de fermer l'œil.
Faut se reposer, on a du travail demain :
Trouver une demeure maisonnable
qui sent pas trop mauvais quand même.

Dors, y est tard pis tu t'endors.

Bled s'endort.
Le lampadaire suit Ti-Cœur qui s'envole et voyage dans l'univers
Des étoiles dans une petite veste capuchon en forme de navette
Spatiale. Message sidéral avec interférences provenant du portable :

Ici, vaisseau lunaire, allô, allô, la terre, cherchons
à se poser sur une terre d'accueil.
Allô, allô, la terre, ici Ti-Cœur.

Le cœur se pose à l'écart de Bled.

Panonceau 7

Au matin, Bled se réveille et ne retrouve plus son cœur.

24. Bled.
Ti-Cœur ! Ti-Cœur !

M'sieurs dames du canal de Saint-Abri.
mon p'tit cœur s'est égaré

Un clochard rigole
C'matin, on l'a bouffé dans l'croissant !

Il marche, il cherche et le trouve.

T'as voulu te sauver de moi ?
Voyons, c'est moi, ta maison.
Oublie pas ça !
Tu ne me quittes plus d'une semelle.

25. Ti-Cœur.
Pas me sauver. Boum ! Boum !
Plus fort que moi, je suis un soubresauteur
Boum, boum !

26. Bled.
Plutôt, un fugueur !
Je t'attache à ma jambe.

T'images ça ?
un gars qui marche dans l'inconnu du monde
sans son p'tit cœur
Des plans pour que je meure !

Il rit.

Et là, là, là !
D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs
Allons, marchons vers les maisons.

Il prend des photos en marchant.

27. On devrait venir dans le monde par ciel
abrité dans une maisonnette.
On arriverait debout devant la fenêtre de la porte
d'une maison-ventre toute chaude.
On atterrirait à côté de notre maman
elle ouvrirait et dirait :
Oh ! Mais regardez donc mon bel enfant-maison.

Il déambule

Tiens, là, je mangerais bien un fruit volant
Un fruit flottant, fruitant.

28. Ferme ta gueu-eu-le, Bled !
Mange ta…et garde l'autre pour…

Il mord sa main.

Ah ! Tiens. Une place du marché !
Avec ma mère
parfois, on y va et on attend la fermeture.
Les marchands partis
on se penche pour ramasser
des fruits et des légumes
des morceaux de viande vieillie
et des cuisses de poulet
qui sentent pas toujours bon.
Une fois cuite à grands bouillons
la viande goûte nos épices piquantes
et on se remplit la panse.

Là, j'ai trouvé qu'un morceau de pain
Et un fruit prout-prout

Bled mange et émet une plainte mêlée aux battements de cœur

Panonceau 8

Il sort le téléphone mobile. Pendant un temps, on voit le chemin que Bled parcourt.

29. Bled.
Photo du chemin !

Allô ! Allô ! Mes frères, six.
Vous ne serez pas contents
je suis encore de vie !

J'ai la tête comme un satellite.

Bip, bip, bip, ommmmmm, bip, bip, bip
ooooooommmm, vite, vite, vite.

Allô ! Allô ! Ici les souliers-galop!

30. Tout va, va!
La marche avance par elle-même
je marche et tout va, va
comme il se doit

Salut, à la revoyure !

Hop ! Message à mes frères six
envoyé par les ondes du ciel.

Il range le téléphone et reprend la marche.

31. Et là, là, là !
Photo du chemin !

Je marche dans une rue marchande.
Des boutiques et des boutiques
des vêtements et des vêtements.
Ils fabriquent trop de pantalons et de ticheurtes.
Trop de jupes et trop de chemisiers.
Il n'y aura jamais assez d'humaines sur terre
pour porter tous ces vêtements.
Ils sont fous, les gens du vêtement.

On devait bâtie des maisons-vêtements
confortables
Extensibles pour les petites et grandes familles
chaudes en temps de neige
et fraîches lorsque le soleil plombe.

Il marche.

Photo de chemin ! Photo de chemin !

32. Une maison de brique toute baroque
non, c'est du stock en toc.
Une maison en roche toute croche
non, c'est moche.

Des maisons en aval et en amont
non, c'est tout sale et c'est tout rond.
Une de pic et de pioche
non, c'est pas pour des mioches.
Une maison toute forgée de fer
non, comme d'hab', ça fait pas mon affaire.

Pourquoi on ne plante pas des arbres
dans les quartiers pauvres ?

Allô ! Allô ! Je cherche une maison gourmande
qui cuisine de la paix dans une marmite de joie.

Panonceau 9

Le téléphone portable sonne. Bled répond.

Allô ! Allô !
Quoi ? Je te dois de l'argent ?
J'ai même pas de quoi acheter un grignon de pain.
Qui ? Non, moi, c'est Bled, le septième.
D'accord…tu rappelles…je répondrai pas
…et tu laisses un message à mon frère, le premier.
O.K.

Le téléphone sonne et nous parvient le message d'une voix incompréhensible et menaçante destiné au frère un.

33. Bled.
Encore, des menaces, des menaces !
On vit sous un ciel de menaces.
Il orage sur nos têtes de la menace crasse
et je rage de la menace tenace.

34. Ti-Cœur.
Attention, Bled, reste un gentil *monster*

On entend la circulation des voitures sur l'autoroute

35. Bled.

Non !
Des fois, j'ai des envies d'être dur
de tout casser

Et là, là, là !
D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs.
Sur le bord de l'autoroute, je…

Il commence à frapper ou à casser ce qu'il trouve sous la main.

Et je…

Encore je…

Et encore, je, je, je…

Il grogne comme Shed. Il s'arrête épuisé.

Pouffff !

36. J'ai plus de force.
Les rages et les menaces
ça mange le cerveau tout entier.
Après, ma tête est vide
avec, dans la bouche un goût de rien faire
même pas de penser.

On entend de petites plaintes

37. Oups !
C'est toi qui pleures, Ti-Cœur ?
À cause du violent *monster* ?
Tiens, verse tes larmes
dans cette fiole de verre incassable.
Viens qu'on se repose là.

Ma fatigue ouvre la porte
d'une grande maison presque végétale.

Allô ! Allô ! Il y a des gens en dedans.
Ne vous dérangez pas, je squatte un brin
dans la serre à fleurs.
Après, je me sauve.

Panonceau 10

Bled est assis dans la serre fleurie.

38. Bled
Ma grand-mère m'a offert ce lacrymaire.

D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs
c'est dans ce petit vase allongé
en forme de larme
que je cultive du cristal de pleurs.

39. Après un temps
mes peines sèchent au fond de la fiole.

Regarde, on dirait :
des cristaux de neige
des pollens de tristesse
des fleurs de pleurs
et même pleurs de joie aussi.

Vois, Ti-Cœur, les cristaux fondent
avec tes parcelles de larmes

40. Chaque fois que j'ai de la peine
chaque fois que c'est le chaos dans ma famille
chaque fois que je le peux
je sors marcher
je vers des gouttes de pleurs
dans mon lacrymaire
et après
je pense à toutes sortes de choses assez belles
et après
je rentre plus calme.

Il se met dans une position étrange.

Et là, là, là, un jour
j'ai fait une découverte.
Quand je marche, je pense rapidement.
Les phrases revolent partout
dans le rond de ma tête
Mes pensées marchent pour avancer plus loin.
J'invente des mondes.

41. Ti-Cœur.
Bled, c'est que tu penses avec tes pieds !!!

42. Bled.
Je dirais plutôt que j'ai le pied penseur !!!

43. Ti-Cœur.
Si tu as la tête dans les souliers
tes cheveux puent les p'tits pieds !!!

Bled rit, les deux pieds à la renverse.

44. Bled.
J'ai le pied fou !

Un petit garçon de la maison crie :

Papa, papa, viens voir un sans-pays caché dans la serre fleurie qui pue des pieds

45. Bled.
Mon pays est sous mon chapeau.
Et toi, bonhomme, dis-moi
est-ce qu'on vit bien dans ta maison ?

Le petit garçon répond :

Si je-je me pose cette ques-ques-ques-ttttion, ça me fait bégayer. So-so-so-sors de là ! Pa-pa ! Pa-pa !

Bled sort avec une fleur à la main et marche vite.

46. Ti-Cœur.
Quand le désordre étouffe tes pensées.
marche dehors, Bled.
Quand la peine engourdit tes muscles
marche Bled
sur le chemin de tes pensées.

47. Bled.
Photo du chemin !

Et là, là, là !

Odeurs des fleurs
parfumez ma tête
et ma bouche
pour que je dise de beaux mots.

Demain, pour ma famille, je vais trouver
une mirobolante maison de bois.

D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs, ma voix s'ouvre.
je chante comme les oiseaux.

Un chant.

Panonceau 11

48. Ti-Cœur
Allez, aaaaaaaauuuuuuuuuuuu galop !
Au galop !

Bled, ton cœur bat à la folie.
Ton chant de bonheur a attiré l'animal à la hache.
Il s'en vient.
Il court avec des bottes lourdes et résonnantes.
Cours, Bled.

Shed jette des objets noirs dans la direction de Bled.

Attention, Bled, il te bombarde la tête
de sombres nuits.

49. Bled.
Je me sauve à cloche pied
ralenti par mon cœur attaché à ma cheville :
Fiou ! Esquivé, esquivé !

50. Ti-Cœur
Cache-toi dans cette ancienne rue d'émeutes.

51. Bled.
Je joue à la voiture cramée,
Toi, cesse de battre, Ti-Cœur.
Je plonge dans l'oubli du feu.

52. Ti-Cœur
L'animal sent partout.
Il te cherche.

53. Bled.
Je sors mon lacrymaire.

Si la créature approche trop

je lui jette des cristaux salés qui vont l'aveugler
Sa face d'animal va glacer
Comme un lac du Nord en hiver.

Qu'il approche encore !

Ah ! Non, j'ai échappé Ti-Cœur.
Je ne vois rien.

54. Ti-Cœur
Là, là, dans l'herbe près du pneu brûlé.

55. Bled
Écoute le craquement de la ferraille.
Et là, là, et bien, je me pousse !

Bled disparaît.

56. Ti-Cœur
Et tu me laisses derrière toi ?

Au lointain.

57. Bled.
Je me fous de passer pour un sans-cœur

58. Shed.
En un éclair de lumière
la lune allume la lame de ma hache
Ça pique partout par terre.

59. Ti-Cœur
Il va me crever. Ah ! Ah!

60. Shed.
Pleurnicœur! Cesse de gigoter, sinon
je vais t'embrocher et faire un méchoui

61. Ti-Cœur
Bled !

62. Shed.
Tu veux que je te bouche l'aorte avec de l'humus

alors...ta cœur ! Euh...ta gueule ! D'accord !?

Tu diras à la trouillette de Bled

de ne pas chercher la paisible demeure
ni le bonheur
ce sont la peur et la mort
qui gouvernent à toute heure.

Hou ! Fais suer tout ça !
C'est que je pue du d'sous d'bras.
Bon, un p'tit coup de parfum des bois.

Au fait, moi, Shed
je peux te révéler un secret
...j'ai faim à mort !
Ah ! Tiens !
` Voici un p'tit Cœur

Hum! C'eût été meilleur avec de la sauce harissa.

Arrête de grouiller ! J'haïs ça danser.

Shed bouge en tous sens.

63. Merdouille de merdouille !
Tu m'écœures
Dégobille de mon bide !

Shed recrache le cœur qui ressemble à un serpent.

Le vent de nuit écarte les feuillages.
La lune pointe son œil sur le p'tit Bled.
S'il se montre encore
je le pique aux œils.
Comme ça.

Shed donne un coup de hache au cœur et s'en retourne. Ti-Cœur Suffoque et saigne.

64. Bled.
Le chien des bois.
d'une grande coupure t'a blessé.

65. Ti-Cœur
Je saigne.

66. Bled.
J'ai manqué de courage.
J'aurais dû faire face à l'animal de nuit.

Un peu de cristal pour geler ta peau.

Pardon, en tout cas.

67. Ti-Cœur.
Ouais, ça va, en tout cas.

On entend des sons de nuit.
Bled s'éclaire avec la lumière de son téléphone portable.

68. Bled.
Viens, qu'on se blotisse
dans ce fossé chaud et humide
mon Ti-Cœur après neuf heures
y est tard pis tu t'endors.

Les quenouilles nous emmaisonnent
le chant des grenouilles nous toiture
et nous ensommeille pour de vrai.

Panonceau 12

Son cœur guéri, Bled se remet en marche avec entrain.

69. Bled.
Et là, là, là !
Photo de chemin !

D'une étoile à l'autre
je n'arrête pas de marcher le monde
en quête d'une maison définitive

Des portes, plein de portes
Porte bleu, porte blanche
porte de bois, porte de fer
Des portes, toujours des portes
Et je te porte et je m'emporte
de porte en porte.

Déroulent derrière lui les images de panonceaux.

70. Photo du chemin pour le retour de demain !
tourner ici pour le nord
bifurquer à gauche au rond-point
prendre l'autoroute jusqu'au tunnel.

Photo du chemin pour le retour de demain !

Tu dois avoir faim !
J'ai moi-même encore faim.

Mais de quoi ai-je toujours faim ?

71. Ti-Cœur
Qui parle, là ?

72. Bled.
Ma bouche vide.

73. Ti-Cœur.
Pas si vide que ça, ta bouche est remplie de mots.

74. Bled.
Oui, mais les mots sont du vent

75. Ti-Cœur
Avale les mots, ça bourre le ventre.

Bled prend une goulée d'air.

76. Bled.
Bonimenteur !
Ça gargouille toujours jusqu'aux orteils.

77. Ti-Cœur.
Je te joue un air pour nourrir tes oreilles
ne plus entendre ton ventre
Allez, fais de l'air, même sous tes pieds.

Bled danse, son cœur s'élève.

78. Bled.
Je fleure l'air
et mes talons se soulèvent du sol.
Et là, là, là !
D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs
je m'envole à cause du vent des mots

Bled est suspendu dans l'air.

79. Ti-Cœur
Ti-Cœur et *monster* en mongolfière !

80. Bled.

Ah ! Un morceau de pomme qui flotte ici.

Est-ce pour moi ?

Une mangue. Merci ! Merci, Univers !

Il fait semblant de manger les victuailles imaginées.

Oh ! Un plat de légumes avec du couscous !

Est-ce encore pour moi ?
Un autre grand merci d'émoi.

Merci à ma tête entière
qui voit toutes ses images volantes.

81. Pourquoi ça me fait toujours pleurer quand je mange ?

Un jour, on aura peut-être à manger
pour tout le monde de la terre.

Ah ! Ma panse et ma pensée sont rassasiées !
D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs
il faut pas que le *monster* oublie
de ramener une demeure emmaisonnable.

Suspendu dans les airs, le portable sonne, il regarde l'écran, un texto apparaît :

À partir d'ici les panonceaux sont muets.
Fin de la route.

Un avion supersonique passe tout près de Bled.

Ah ! Bon, plus de route.
Ah ! Tiens, une péniche sous mes pieds.

Il descend sur la péniche.

Panonceau 13

82. Bled.
Et là, là, là !
Je vogue et je vague.
Combien de chemins j'ai parcourus ?
Mes souliers sont déjà tout usés.
j'ai les pieds en feu.

Il enlève ces souliers.

Tiens, la pluie arrive juste au bon moment.

Et là, là, sous mes yeux, des bottes capitaine.

Il se retrouve chaussé avec les bottes de pluie.
Il lève le bras en face de lui et pose devant l'objectif du vidéo-portable.
Le téléphone sonne.

D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs
Je pensais justement à eux.

83. Allô ! Allô ! mes frères six!
Une photo pour vous!

Allô ! Allô ! Qui ?
Quoi ? Vous pleurez trop, madame.
Mon frère aîné n'est pas là.
Je suis Bled, le cadet de la famille.
Je lui ai vol...emprunté son téléphone.

Vous êtes sa petite amie ?
Ne pleurez pas pour lui
il est toujours comme ça
il a un colère dans son cœur.
et même s'il essaie d'aimer
il n'y arrive pas.

Pardonnez-lui
Il est trop en furie.

84. Allô ! Oups, j'ai perdu la commmmunnniiication.
Bip...Bip...Bip...Allô !
Ô ! Ô ! Je cherche une mai-ai-aison-on-on.

Il pleut à boire debout.

Je saute ici
à la faveur de mes nouvelles bottes
en un bond de sept lieux.
M'y voilà, je viens de toucher terre.
Merci, bateau de fleuve !

Cachons-nous sous le feuillage du bois
là, à l'abri de la...

Curieux, il ne pleut pas.

Panonceau 14

À l'orée de la forêt.

85. Shed.
Le soleil tombe dans la forêt
ça fait lever les parfums du sol
qui s'échappent vers la cime des arbres.

À l'orée du bois
une faim de loup rôde autour de moi.

86. Bled.
Embotté, j'entre par la porte forestière.

J'avance.
sur un tapis d'humus vert phosphorescent
et sur des feuilles colorées d'automne.

87. Shed.
Où sont mes pieds que je ne vois plus ?
Bon sang ! C'est encore la nuit ?

88. Bled.
Qui se cache derrière cette toile de forêt ?

Et là, là, là
quelque chose tire sur le cordon de mon cœur

Toi, marche dessus
et je te dévore les viscères.

89. Shed.
Je tire et tire sur le cordon.
Bled tombe et son corps glisse au sol.
Je l'entraîne dans la forêt sombre.

90. Ti-Cœur
Il s'arrête, net, pourquoi ?
Bled, réveille tes forces vitales.

Bled prend sa voix grave.

91. Bled.

Oui, mon cœur-capitaine, j'élève ma voix rauque.

92. Ti-Cœur.
Je vois tout avec mes pupilles de nuit
Attention, le bûcheron va t'attaquer.

93. Bled.
Ma voix n'a pas peur.

94. Ti-Cœur.
Bled, il a faim tout comme toi.
Il va te dévorer.

95. Bled.
Qu'il vienne maintenant
Je vais lui balancer des mots qui vont lui faire mal :

Paillasson, chaudron, peloton, pain rond, encore chaudron.

96. Ti-Cœur.
Il fonce sur toi, cours, Bled.
Vite, cours, cours.

97. Bled.
Non, je me retourne envers le bûcheron.
Je l'affronte.

Je ne me laisserais plus faire
c'est moi le *monster* de la vie !
Toute gueule sortie
je vais avaler l'animal qui m'apeure.

98. Le bûcheron saute sur moi
je lui mords une Oreille.
Il essaie de m'arracher les yeux.
Je tombe à la renverse.
Il roule et se relève.
Il fonce sur moi.
Je me donne un élan
je bondis sur un tronc d'arbre
je vrille dans l'aire avec un coup de pied caoutchouc

en plein dans son croque-visage
Le bûcheron tombe et rapetisse
Comme un gilet de laine séché à l'air chaud

Je le ramasse par le fond de sa culotte.

99. Ti-Cœur.
Shed est devenu tout à coup si petit
qu'il n'est pas plus haut qu'un pouce.

100. Shed.
Qu'est ce qui se passe ?
C'est le jour ou le nuit ?
Décidez-vous, bon cieux.

101. Bled.
Maintenant, t'as affaire au *monster* de la vie
qui pourrait t'avaler comme une fraise des bois.

102. Shed.
Si tu me gardes en vie
je te donnerai ma maison en bois de forêt.
Dépose-moi, je vais te la montrer.

Bled suit Shed dans la forêt.
Ils arrivent devant une petite maisonnette de bois.

103. Bled.
Ta maison ?
Fais-moi rire
je ne pourrais même pas
y loger ma tête d'enfant.

104. Shed.
Ta tête pleine d'images l'agrandira à sa guise.
Je ne te la donne que si je peux y habiter.

105. Bled.
Quoi ? Toi, dedans !

106. Shed.
Oui. Je fais partie de mes meubles, si je puis dire.
Je suis malcommode...et parfois très commode...
de linge !

107. Bled.
Ha ! Ha ! T'es un petit comique !
La nuit, tu vas encore sortir ta hache ?
Pourquoi tu m'as fait peur partout où je suis passé ?

108. Shed.
Bah ! Je suis un p'tit *monster* comme toi, quoi !

Quand je suis la tristesse ou la peur dans la tête
je sors avec ma hache.

109. Bled.
Et tu as construit une maisonnette épeurante ?

110. Shed.
Ben ! Non. Comme tout le monde
je voulais une maison réconfortante.

111. Bled.
Viens ici, mon p'tit bled de cœur.
je vais te loger dans notre nouvelle maison.
Entre et dis-moi si tu t'y sens bien.
Tu as une chambre à toi tout seul.
Une gâterie de la vie.

À toi, Shed.
Fais connaissance de mon p'tit cœur.

112. Shed.
Voyons, Bled, je le connais par cœur
C'est le mien aussi !

Bled pousse la maison qui ne bouge pas.

113. Bled.
Elle est trop lourde.

114. Shed.
Chevauche ta demeure
et fais courir tes jambes chevalines.

115. Bled.
Et là, là, là !
D'ailleurs, d'ailleurs !
On part ? On part !

Allez, aaaaaaaauuuuuuuuuuuu galop, maison !
Au galop ! Au galop, maison !

Il s'envole avec la maisonnette.

Je vole au-dessus de mes chemins de photos.
Chemins de photos !

Un vent doux me réchauffe le visage.

Le soleil doré vient à ma rencontre et m'aveugle.
J'avance vers lui.

Panonceau 15

Dans le ciel, Bled vole assis sur la maisonnette.

116. Bled.
Allô ! Allô ! Ma famille !
Voyez le retour de l'enfant-maison !

Regardez dans le ciel, mes frères
je vole avec notre demeure emmaisonnable !

Il est fou. Un fou déraisonnable.
Attachez-le ! que disent mes frères, six.
La maison qu'il rapporte est bien trop petite.

Je suis haut dans les cieux
c'est pour ça qu'elle vous semble si petite.

117. Attention, je vais atterrir.

Plus je descends, plus la maison grossit.
Je l'abrite entre deux arbres.
ce sera plus joli et agréable.

Voilà, j'ai presque fait le tour du pays
pour la trouver au fond des bois.

Mon frère aîné m'a repris son téléphone
en me donnant une claque derrière la tête
Pense à rappeler ton amoureuse
et à payer tes dettes, vieux !

118. Merci, mon brave Bled, dit maman.
Mon fils, ajoute papas, avec c'est trésor familial
on va pouvoir retourner dans notre bled.

Papa, notre bled, c'est ici, dans ce pays-ci.

Quand on est tous entrés
dans notre nouvelle maison
les placards regorgeaient de nourriture
le réfrigérateur était plein.

J’ai ouvert les portes du foyer.
D’une richesse inouïe
des lueurs dorées jaillirent dans la maison.

De la maisonnette, il sort des denrées ainsi qu’un chaudron et prépare un repas.

119. Pendons la crémaillère de nouvelle maison
Et remplissons notre ventre.

Il commence à avaler Ti-Cœur, Shed ainsi que les membres de sa famille qui sont maintenant de petites figurines en pâte comestible.

Venez, mes frères, un, deux, trois
quatre, cinq et six.
Venez, papa et maman.

Venez tous habiter ma tête entière
et vivons bien ensemble.

Panonceau 16

120. Bled.
Mes familiers vivent dans mes pupilles
Mon cœur dort dans ma poitrine tranquille
et sous mes cheveux embroussaillés
Maintenant, loge paisible
le petit Shed, le *monster*.

Je dors dans l’entre-toit de ma maison
proche du ciel.

J’habite dans ma tête
je demeure avec les mots.

J’habite dans mon cœur
je demeure dans les images que je lance à la volée.

Je vis dans mes souliers
je marche la terre.

Je marche la terre.

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