

Paddington bear in French translation:

cultural stereotypes, food references and humour

By Helen Therese Frank (University of Melbourne, Australia)

Abstract & Keywords

English:

This study focuses on one of the classic characters of English children's literature, Paddington Bear, to determine the nature and pattern of strategies in the translation of English culture for a French readership. The new French translation of *Paddington Helps Out* (1960) = *Paddington se débrouille tout seul* (2002) is intended for young readers and consists of two of the original seven chapters, with further titles in the French series devoted to the remaining chapters. While there is an expectation for a shorter translation to reflect strategies of manipulation in the form of summary and deletion, there is also the assumption that changes are driven by cultural preferences and presuppositions. Character traits and food references provide choice contexts for observing the expression and interpretation of cultural difference. The playful yet subtle discourse of 'Englishness' identified in the original text permeates Paddington's character, such that his outlook and behaviour reflect a set of images traditionally associated with English culture. The food context provides an inventory of food items and behaviours that in the translation process further challenge images and portrayals of cultural identity. The findings reveal that not only are the food items translated literally, but also the translation has fewer food references than the original, suggesting no attempt to render the text more 'French' by increasing the quantity and nature of the references. Paddington's stereotypically English personality traits are however less emphasised in translation, thus reducing the bear's cultural specificity, but there is no evidence of the translator attempting to make Paddington 'French'.

Keywords: literary translation, traduzione letteraria, english children's literature, french translation, french children's literature, paddington bear fictional character, cultural stereotypes, food in literature, humour

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The iconic Paddington Bear celebrated his fiftieth anniversary in children's books in 2008, and his popularity has rarely diminished in English-speaking countries since his creator, Michael Bond, introduced the bear in duffle coat and hat to readers in *A Bear Called Paddington* (1958). Books about animals are a commercially successful genre, whether classified explicitly as animal stories or as another genre featuring animals as protagonists. The universal appeal of animal stories sees the genre well represented in translation, and includes characters such as Paddington, who represent the subset of anthropomorphised creatures. Not only does Paddington take on human characteristics, but he also projects a way of thinking and behaving that is culturally specific. In his acquired environment, he serves as a choice example of a fictional character who reflects essential aspects of English culture in his clothing, endearing bumbling nature and subtle witty remarks. A further expression of 'Englishness' is evident in his mannerisms and responses to situations involving food. Focusing therefore on behaviour and food in fiction as cultural signs, the present study identifies the strategies involved in negotiating images of English cultural identity for French readers.

Children's books

Children's books are regarded as fundamentally different from books for adults due to the positioning of the reader, the level of textual sophistication and the depth of subject matter. In producing a text for children, writers work from a specific concept of the child and childhood and deliberately employ strategies that emphasise the 'childness' of the text and help the reader to engage with the subject of the narrative (Hollindale 1997: 46). The highly coded nature of children's literature sees genre acting as the link between internal normative literary constraints and external constraints of the book market, with genre creating certain expectations in young readers and providing conventions for interpretation (Stephens 1992). Classification by genre is simply one means by which the book market can indicate to readers the way to approach a text, as an awareness of the genre of a text creates certain expectations in readers. Market mechanisms also transform cultural practices into consumerist tendencies, selling images and ideologies that influence and respond to children's attitudes and beliefs (Kohl 1995; Zipes 2002). Translations of children's books are implicated in the commercial process by virtue of the fact that they are a major player in the international book trade.

The selection of books for overseas markets shows an established pattern whereby 'safe' selections reflect a preference for works that have been commercially successful in the source culture. Children's 'classics', 'phenomenal' books and works by popular authors tend to feature universal themes, appealing characters and generic conventions that increase the likelihood of cross-cultural success. Universal themes identified by Booker (2004) as quest, voyage, destruction of evil, rags to riches, comedy, tragedy and rebirth have strong links to basic myths and archetypes. This explains why characters from children's literature encountered in the early years of reading, such as Noddy, Pooh Bear, Babar, Pinocchio, Martine, the Famous Five, Peter Rabbit and Paddington Bear, become ingrained in the human psyche and arouse strong sentiments of nostalgia (Hunt 1994). This raises the interesting issue of the popularity and representation of fictional characters across cultures and, specifically, in translation. While it is anticipated that fictional characters will replicate their success in other cultures and have a similar effect on readers, it is possible that the translator's concern for acceptability in the target culture can override the unique features of the original work. The concern with shaping the reception of the text underscores the framework of cultural intertextuality in translating fiction for children.

Children's books and translation

It is first important to appreciate that for monolingual speakers, and in monocultural societies, language barriers are overcome primarily via translation. Cultural transmission through textual representation is not just words and descriptions in another language; it is the essence of one culture interpreted and portrayed by another. Translation plays a distinctive role in mediating between cultures, ideologies and languages, and translated books educate people by exposing readers to similarities and differences amongst cultures (Nord 1997). Anchored in their source culture, books implicitly resist cultural and linguistic transplantation, and serve to socialize readers into the dominant or prevailing culture (Oittinen 2000). Translators overcome such resistance through adaptation for specific purposes and readers, a common process in the negotiation of 'the

foreignness' of another culture (Venuti 1995). The stronger process of 'purification' will be present if the values and images projected in the source work do not comply with those of the target culture (Fernández López 2000). Substantial adaptation and purification can lead to translations that fail to replicate the success of the original works, as in the case of early translations of popular titles by the authors Lewis Carroll and Astrid Lindgren (Heldner 1993; Leclercq 1995; O'Sullivan 2001). It is precisely the drive for acceptance in the target culture that influences the decisions made by translators in favour of strategies that 'domesticate' the text for young readers (Touy 1995).

The role of the translator as a communicator between languages and cultures is governed by a variety of norms that include didactic, pedagogical, technical and ethical norms (Desmidt 2006). Translation as rewriting involves recodification, transfer of meaning and tailoring of the text to reflect what is routine or habit in the target language, a process both expected and easily tolerated in children's literature. The actual strategies employed will be guided by the translator's frame of reference, the intended function of the text and the cultural values of the receiving culture. For the translator of the Paddington books, any preference for domesticating strategies or for strategies that neutralise the cultural dimension of the text will directly affect the representation of the unique features of Paddington's manner and behaviour. Consideration of the format and paratext of the new French edition will help to elucidate features that pre-empt the translating strategies of the text proper.

Editions

Paddington Helps Out (1960) is the third book in the series recounting Paddington bear's adventures and contains seven individually titled chapters, simple sketched illustrations by Peggy Fortnum, and a cover of grey green boards with Paddington printed in green on the front panel. Flammarion published the first French translation of the title in 1979, retaining the illustrations by Fortnum and combining the title with *Paddington Abroad*, as *Les aventures de Paddington (2): Paddington à la rescousse. Paddington à l'étranger* [1]. The new French edition, *Paddington se débrouille tout seul* (2002), comes with a new publisher (Hachette jeunesse), a new translator (Sophie Dalle), a new illustrator (Anne Jolly), colour illustrations, and reduced content, as the title contains only two of the seven chapters, "A visit to the cinema" = "Paddington au cinéma", and "Something nasty in the kitchen" = "Un problème à la cuisine". Apart from the reduced content, several features confirm the intended readership in France as younger than the readership for the original English and French editions. Most tellingly, the French title belongs to the popular and highly successful series *Ma première bibliothèque rose*, where the smaller format, large font, short stories, simple vocabulary and copious illustrations cater for young readers. The translation of the Paddington title features 40 coloured half or full-page illustrations on alternating pages (20 in each story) with Paddington appearing in 24 illustrations in total, whereas the English edition contains 11 simple black-and-white sketches, with Paddington appearing in nine. Interestingly, the classic *Noddy* books have been reproduced in France as *Oui-Oui* in the same French series, with sales of the French titles surpassing in recent times those of the iconic Gallic elephant, *Babar* [2].

The very fact that Paddington has been retranslated and redrawn suggests that the French publisher has responded to a perceived need in the French book market by recreating the classic Paddington series in a new format of smaller colourful books. It is interesting therefore to speculate on what kind of bear Paddington has become in the shortened French translation. With the new French translation, the translator has the choice to present Paddington bear to French readers consistent with the English version, or to accentuate or downplay aspects of his character and behaviour. In focusing on character traits and food behaviours, the aim is to determine whether Paddington has become less culturally specific in French translation.

The food context

One of the ways translating strategies are illustrated is in the theme of food, where Paddington enjoys the pleasure of gratifying his instincts by eating, drinking and being merry. Studies by Santich (2000) and Brand (2006) confirm that food fulfils an essential function in literature in revealing personality traits, and demonstrating behaviours, attitudes and traditions consistent with national stereotypes. Paddington's 'Englishness' in food settings are analysed in translation for evidence of culture-specific appropriation of the text and systematic manipulation of English food referents that go beyond normative solutions. In a study of the English translation of *Babar the elephant's travels in America* (Frank 2008), it was shown that *Babar's* physical uprooting caused considerable cultural displacement. His habitual happy disposition, discretion and restrained manner suffered as a result of his encounter with modernity, the built environment and progress. Incidences involving food showed that *Babar's* characteristic restraint and moderation became interspersed with the occasional regressive behaviour in the form of overindulgence in food and drink. If a bourgeois French elephant can fall short of the mark when abroad, what is the situation with a displaced and unkempt Peruvian bear now living with a middle-class English family?

The inclusion of references to food and eating and the purpose these references serve are useful indicators of underlying assumptions about the value of food in English and French culture. The renowned Bayeux tapestry recounting the story of the Norman invasion of England in 1066 contains panels depicting foods and food occasions that help to distinguish Norman food practices from those of the English (Panels 109-112). Norman food is shown as meat, eggs, nuts, fruit and grain cooked on fires, with one resplendent scene showing William the Conqueror seated at table with his men and half-brother, Bishop Odo, enjoying a banquet of spit-roasted meats, vegetables, cakes and wine (Bridgeford 2005). The importance of the food occasion is therefore reinforced in Norman custom. In order therefore to analyse the phenomenon of food in the Paddington stories as a cultural sign, the total references to food, eating and health in the original English edition and the new French edition are counted. The food references are categorised according to the amount of time characters spend interacting with food in terms of thought, purchase, preparation, serving, consumption and enjoyment. What may seem 'odd' foods or 'unusual' combinations of food to the target readership simply reflect practices that are unfamiliar in French culture, and the expectation is for the translator to explain the 'foreign' practices or to replace them with equivalents in French culture. Apart from serving a humorous or didactic function, the decisions made by the translator can render the text less 'English', more 'French', or neutral.

There is no doubt that Paddington spends a considerable amount of time thinking about food, especially the foods he likes. Not only is the thought of food a positive stimulus that is met with anticipation, but also its consumption brings a great sense of pleasure. Paddington's food choices reflect an overabundance of sugary, high-calorie items, such that his diet would be criticised by today's standards as poorly balanced. Given his short and rotund features, nutritionists would warn him of the dangers of diabetes and heart disease and would advise him to reduce severely the intake of so many 'comfort' foods. But Paddington is a bear, and can therefore break rules and perform in ways consistent with creatures depicted in similar anthropomorphic tales. As a book published in 1960, the food references represent items purchased or served as treats, with the author maximising the indulgence factor for the readership. Because that essentially is the story of Paddington; he is an indulged bear, and often an overindulged one at that. Paddington is such a likeable bear that people make concessions for him, giving in to his subtle requests and charm. Several examples confirm this, beginning with his treats at the cinema in the first story, "A Visit to the Cinema" = "Paddington au cinéma".

The first story

In the story of Paddington at the cinema, there are 25 references to food, eating and health in English, and 18 in French. There is consistency in the English and French texts in the most frequent references being to "ice-cream" = "des glaces" and "nougat" = "du caramel". The very presence of this number of items indicates that food, eating and health references serve an important function in the narrative relative to the action.

The initial observation on Paddington's relationship to food in the first story in English is that his food manners leave room for improvement. An inventory of his poor manners in general includes smelling of riverweed in a public place; blocking patrons' views of the screen with his large hat and refusing to take it off when requested; dropping ice-cream onto people's hats; losing his sticky nougat; standing on his seat; booing and cheering during the cowboy film; disappearing without telling the Brown family where he is going; and entering the private dressing room of the organist. Within a framework of satisfying his interest in new things and as a bear with "a purposeful expression on his face" (p. 68), his manners are usually excused on the grounds that his intentions are good. His interest in the cinema is sparked by curiosity; his offer to turn the pages of the

music score is driven by his sensitivity to Mr Brown's disappointment at the cancelled organ recital; and he is so absorbed in the film that he remains totally oblivious to his leaking ice-cream and to the whereabouts of his nougat. If he were not such a jolly good bear, it could otherwise be argued that Paddington uses his persuasive manner to get his own way. He manages to coerce people into taking him to the cinema, to buy him treats, to replace lost treats, to ignore protocol, to enter areas designated as off-limits, to persuade a musician to perform with his help, and to avoid disciplinary action. This side of Paddington's character sits in juxtaposition to his bumbling nature, as his ineptitude is inversely proportional to his capacity to manipulate in the nicest way possible. Not only is he a bear "who liked getting his money's worth" (p. 60), but also he likes to feel important in the presence of people, especially amongst those who treat him with condescension or mild disdain. He is never presented as greedy or miserly, but as a bear with considerable determination.

At the level of detail, life in an English household shows up specific food behaviours and mannerisms in the English text. When having tea in the afternoon before going to the cinema, the Browns eat as a family, but there is no mention of the room or the seating arrangement. Paddington helps himself to a crumpet, a marked food item in English culture and a food strongly associated with the bear's food preferences. The fact that he helps himself at table suggests that members of the Brown household are allowed to select food and serve themselves. Discussion at table centres on Paddington's subtle request to be taken to the cinema, and he is the source of very convincing information that the program on offer is ideal for his first visit. In preparation for going to the cinema and in the interests of personal hygiene, the housekeeper sends Paddington to "wash the crumpet stains off his whiskers" (p. 62), although there is calculated irony in the fact that all members of the Brown family change their clothes while Paddington remains in his fishy smelling clothes.

In the cinema, his attention is totally absorbed by the screen advertisement for ice-cream, whereupon he ignores the conversation and starts to lick his lips. Mr Brown's annoyance at the advertising is not sufficient to stop him from giving in to the marketing imperative, as he directs his son to buy "six tubs and some nougat or something" (p. 65) for his family group. The illustrious bear has not even requested the food verbally, as the licking gesture is a sufficient cue to elicit the desired response from Mr Brown, suggesting not only an entitlement to sweet treats, but also particularly in a leisure context. On being handed his refreshments, Paddington confirms the positive feeling associated with the anticipated foods, "I think I'm going to enjoy myself" (p. 65), reinforcing the food-pleasure link. On another indulgent occasion, Mr Brown offers to buy Paddington some more nougat to replace the nougat that the bear has lost. Paddington savours his ice-cream, taking a spoonful at a time, but predictably manages to drop lumps on to the heads of the patrons sitting in the seats below. He also manages to lose the nougat, which unfortunately becomes embedded beneath Mr Brown. Paddington does not use direct wording to thank Mr Brown for taking him to the cinema or for buying him ice-cream and nougat, but his positive responses indicate enjoyment and satisfaction. The best descriptors for his food behaviour are expectation, indulgence, ignorance and carelessness.

At this point it is worth noting that the Paddington series in English places emphasis on the bear's wit, subtle thought processes and tongue-in-cheek sense of humour, reflecting traits that are perceived positively in English culture. These traits are deliberately accentuated by the author but are largely omitted in French, a finding that can be justified given the target audience as young French readers. However, there is a serious side to the loss of Bond's trademark humour as it is arguably the most defining aspect of the author's style and the reason for his enduring popularity. Examples of omissions in French are "the boot's on the other paw" (p. 71), "I don't really play anything except the comb and paper and I'm not very good at that because I get my whiskers caught in the comb" (p. 73), "bun money" (p. 60) (Paddington's precious pocket money), "giving the attendant a hard stare" (p. 59), and wordplays on "indisposed" (used correctly as an adverb and incorrectly by Paddington as an adjective), and on "I beg your pardon" (p. 61-62), used as a euphemism for an "A" rated film and as an expression of disbelief or condescension, depending on the context. These omissions account for the shortened text and simplification of meanings. In the process of translating Paddington, the translator has reduced his English specificity by playing down or omitting the bear's characteristic traits. In other words, Paddington reflects a type of humour that is reassuringly English, and his transformation into a bear for French readers sees the loss of most of what makes him a cultural icon. Paddington's ruses, idiosyncrasies, body language and subtle manipulative ways are for the most part absent from the translation.

The French version does however retain most of the food references with only minor differences in the content or the recounting of food incidences. The family is said to be eating dinner together, and again there is no mention of the room or the seating arrangement. The less familiar "crumpet" (p. 61) in French culture is replaced by "une part de gâteau" (p. 8) [a slice of cake], and the fact that Paddington helps himself to a second slice indicates that the translator has retained the references to the bear helping himself to a liked food item. Discussion at table focuses on his interest in going to the cinema and he serves similarly as the chief advisor for all information on the program. Personal hygiene consists of being directed by Mrs Bird to wash his whiskers before going out, but the entire 'pay-back' episode of subtle words and gestures in the cinema foyer is omitted. In the cinema, Mr Brown orders "six cornets" (p. 19) [six ice-cream cones], the common way to serve ice-cream in France; Paddington is given a caramel ice-cream in a cone; there is no other treat; and Paddington licks his ice-cream slowly. An illustration confirms the practice employed in French cinemas for the selling of ice-cream, namely a person (female in this version) carrying a rectangular wicker basket around their neck. Where Paddington's anticipation of food's capacity to please and edify is similarly expressed, Mr Brown's annoyance at the advertising for ice-cream is omitted. Given the absence of the purchase of nougat in the French version, the 'lost' item becomes the semi-consumed scoop of ice-cream that subsequently drops on patrons' hats in the seats below the balcony. The loss of his scoop of ice-cream is met with a similar replacement response by the family's housekeeper, Mrs Bird, who offers to buy him another one soon. There is also consistency in Mrs Bird's remonstration with the cinema manager over the potential damage to property associated with the selling of sticky sweets in the cinema. Apart from the substitution of a couple of French food items, the difference between the English and French versions is the absence of the 'pay-back' episode and the reference to food advertising.

Food advertising and health messages

Cinemas have long had a tradition of screening advertisements before the main film. It has also become the norm for high-density food items to be available for purchase, such as popcorn, sweets, ice-creams and soft drinks. Two incidences reveal attitudes to food advertising and to food availability in specific environments. Mr Brown expresses his annoyance at advertisements for ice-cream, but proceeds to respond to the marketing imperative by purchasing an ice-cream for Paddington and his entire family group. As the provider and head of the household, Mr Brown has purchasing power and makes food decisions. His behaviour also suggests that the food context determines certain behaviours, such that there is a conditioned stimulus-response process in going to the cinema and being rewarded with a treat. When the housekeeper takes the cinema manager to task over the latter's annoyance with nougat being on his best seats, "Then you shouldn't sell it [nougat] ... it's asking for trouble" (p. 73) = "Vous ne devriez pas vendre de confiseries" (p. 36), her challenge is based on the practicality of making sticky items available to patrons rather than consisting of a statement of the quality of the offerings. The implicit health message in the story in both languages is that sugary treats are the norm in a recreational setting. The French text stops at one sugary item though, rather than two.

In terms of the environment, the English text indicates that packaging is involved in serving ice-cream in disposable tubs, whereas the ice-cream cones in the French version are not shown with any covering. There is no mention of the (presumably) paper covering for the nougat in the English text, nor is there any verbal clause indicating unwrapping. Also absent is any reference to the means by which patrons dispose of their rubbish. The reference to Mr Brown striking a match in the cinema in order to find Paddington is justifiably omitted in the French edition on the basis of contemporary health and safety regulations, as smoking is no longer permitted in cinemas, and fire is an obvious hazard to patrons. The translation of this first story is therefore characterised by an overall reduction in descriptive content, cultural specificity and complexity, and by the threefold omission of Paddington's train of thought, subtle sense of humour and calculated, yet polite, coercive practices. The consistency of these strategies is now investigated in the second story, "Something Nasty in the Kitchen" = "Un problème à la cuisine".

In the second story, Paddington is asked to take on the responsibility of cooking for the household, as Mr and Mrs Bird are confined to bed on doctor's orders for two days. The purpose of the food references is to accentuate the theme of culinary misadventure, otherwise known as good intentions gone wrong, revealing Paddington's unfamiliarity with domestic duties. Paddington courts mild disaster wherever he goes, but remains sublimely unperturbed by the havoc created. Couched in humorous contexts, the reader soon develops the expectation that the problems created by this indomitable bear will be resolved to provide the requisite happy ending. There is a considerable inventory of over 200 food references in English, with detail given on ingredients, cooking utensils, cutlery and crockery, food ingredients, food preparation, portion sizes and food reception. The foods may therefore be assigned to the following six categories: Food items (77); Food and cooking utensils (34); Comments on taste, texture, quality, supply and preferences (40); Food actions (23); Food supply, settings and meals (24); Food safety and hygiene (12).

The reader is therefore taken into two food contexts in the second story, the market and the kitchen. Interestingly, in contrast to the leisurely, enjoyable and interactive medium of the open market, the closed food environment of the kitchen is the setting - in Paddington's case - for confusion and havoc. The French translation of this second story is again predominantly literal, with retention of a greater proportion of the narrative than in the chapter on the visit to the cinema. Most interestingly, the cover art for the French edition shows a food market. Previous research (Frank 2005) has confirmed the importance of translated covers, titles and blurbs in signalling the genre and in revealing many of the cultural preoccupations and perceptions that account for translating strategies evident in the text. Paddington is pulling a fully loaded environmentally friendly shopping trolley containing unwrapped bread and fresh vegetables (leek, cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes) as he rushes past a woman serving behind a fruit and vegetable stall. Noting that the first story in the French edition recounts his visit to the cinema and the second story his efforts in the kitchen, it is already apparent that the choice of a food context is preferred by the French publisher than references to the film context. Despite the fact that there is no explicit mention in English or French of the actual items purchased at the market or on the quality of the produce available, Paddington's subsequent cooking uses several fresh ingredients obviously purchased that day. Interestingly, the cover art and illustrations for the French edition show Paddington without footwear, thereby showing consistency with the original edition. The commodification of Paddington by marketing specialists has created the association between the bear and his 'trademark' English Wellington boots, a clothing accessory that does not feature in any of the artwork on the covers of the titles in the new French series. Within the text, Paddington does not appear in any footwear in the first or second story of the English and French editions, with his clothing consisting solely of his old hat with either a duffle coat or apron, depending on the context.

Food references in the shortened French text are predominantly literal, with an overall total of 124 references for the same six categories: Food items (47); Food and cooking utensils (16); Comments on taste, texture, quality, supply and preferences (22); Food actions (18); Food supply, settings and meals (15); Food safety and hygiene (6). Apart from the category of food actions, the remaining categories in French reflect relatively consistent correlations on a percentage basis with the categories in English. The category of food actions in French reflects a higher retention of references per category, thereby emphasising the dominance of verbal or action phrases in the translation over thoughts and emotions.

In this second story Paddington starts out well, feeling a sense of importance with his new responsibility, and heads off immediately with his environmentally friendly "shopping basket on wheels" (p. 77) = "son chariot" (p. 50) to buy provisions at the market. The open food environment of the market connotes freshness and choice, social interaction and bargaining. While the translation includes the first two benefits of shopping, the reference to bargaining is omitted. The English text is reinforcing the fact that our 'bumbling' bear has an astute side to his personality, as already signalled in the cinema story's confirmation of Paddington's capacity to get the most for his money, a trait that could be put down to English frugality. Growing up in post-war Britain, the author would have learned or assumed many of the values of people who had suffered the privations of war and for whom frugality, charity, a strong work ethic, a 'stiff upper lip' and fastidiousness became national traits. In a language of understatement, the author of the Paddington series successfully plays on the image of Englishness as defined by these traits. This form of English humorous and witty understatement is a forerunner to a style characteristic of highly successful comedy series, such as *Monty Python*, *Fawlty Towers* and *Keeping up Appearances*. The choice to omit these defining traits has been made in the translation.

Paddington's sense of self-preservation is again emphasised in the English text, recounted in humorous incidences where he gives the strange-tasting cabbage-infused coffee to the Browns and then "was very glad he'd decided to make cocoa for himself instead" (p. 81); and where he "stood to one side by the door" (p. 86) and politely invited his neighbour to enter the kitchen to deal with the mystery object, thereby preserving himself from potential harm. Overall good intentions and politeness once again help him to avoid many of the consequences of his actions, obliging people to assist him or simply forgive his shortcomings. A choice example in both English and French in the second story of Paddington's capacity to maintain an emotional hold over people to the point that they feel obliged to fit in with his plans and expectations is the Browns' willingness to eat foods that are not overly appealing and to eat more food than necessary just to avoid upsetting Paddington: "Well, you'd better eat them, Henry," warned Mrs Brown "...You'll never hear the last of it if you leave any" (p. 79) = "Je te conseille de manger, Henry ... Si tu en laisses une miette, il sera vexé." (p. 56). They are astute in complimenting Paddington on his culinary achievement, even though they fully know that his cooking attempt has not gone according to plan. Further delightful reflections on humorous twists to everyday occurrences retained in the translation are the lack of resemblance between Paddington's cooking and the coloured illustration in the cookery book; the recipe that goes horribly wrong; the overloaded marmalade sandwiches; the burnt new feather duster; the spelling errors on the handwritten special menu; the items listed on the menu and their lack of availability; the food scraps inadvertently stuck to the menu and mistaken for intentional decorative effect; sweeping the dust under the dining-room carpet; losing track of time in reading old newspapers rather than attending to the job at hand; running out of pots and pans; and creating a formidable mess in the kitchen.

Apart from "cabbage" becoming cauliflower ("le chou-fleur") and "the boiler" (p. 80) (the means for heating hot water) translated as "le poêle" (p. 62) [the stove], the majority of translational choices relating to food activities are literal. The more interesting difference to be noted in the translation concerns the omission of three defining traits of Paddington's personality: his addiction to sweet buns; his penchant for feeling important; and his astuteness in having a good eye for a bargain. While the translation also mentions Paddington's habit of stopping for a morning break, the omission of the reference to the bakery sees the negation of Paddington's association with his beloved sweet buns and his habitual behaviour in buying and consuming them each morning. Similarly, the confinement of Mr and Mrs Brown allows Paddington the opportunity to experience a personal sense of worth within a food context, an importance that is omitted in the French version. Finally, the deletion of the term "the cut-price grocer" (p. 79), in combination with the substitution of "meilleur [best] marmelade" (p. 56) for "special marmalade" (p. 79), once again plays down Paddington's astute purchasing power and/or his frugality.

Incidences of implicit humour are also greatly reduced in the translation of the second story. Examples of deleted passages include "the twinkle" (p. 76) in the Scottish doctor's eye as he informs the Browns of Paddington's impending new role; Mr Brown's sense of dread at the thought of Paddington looking after them, and his recommendation to his wife that she was better off not knowing too much; Paddington's keenness to try out the new feather duster that he had had his eye on for some time; his sense of relief in having decided to make cocoa for himself, thereby avoiding the unpleasant coffee; Mr Brown poking gingerly at the strange-looking coffee and being advised to eat the unwanted marmalade sandwiches to get rid of the unpleasant taste; Paddington pushing a wrapped hot bun through his neighbour's letter-box; his apology to his neighbour for being unable to raise his hat in the usual polite manner due to the hat being full of raw dumpling mixture; his menu in red ink "with a bit of everything on it" (p. 81), a *double-entendre* as it extends beyond the obvious meaning of a choice of dishes to allude also to the bits of food stuck to the menu by mistake; Mr Brown's capacity for tactless remarks explained away as being "a bit slow to grasp things at times" (p. 91); Paddington putting the blame for his poor cooking on the recipe instructions; the satire in Paddington's negative response to Mr Brown's food selection from the menu, "I'm afraid they're off" (p. 91), the reader complicit in the knowledge that Paddington has no intention of allowing the Browns to eat anything but the prepared stew and

dumplings; the irony in Mr Brown's entirely reasonable but futile effort, "No one's ordered anything yet" (p. 91); Mr Gruber's theatrics in removing a warming-pan from the wall to defend himself from the mystery object lurking in the kitchen; the common form of communication between Paddington and Mr Gruber involving the letter-box, for speaking or pushing food items through; and Mrs Brown's tongue-in-cheek comment that they "ought to think ourselves very lucky having a bear like Paddington about the house in an emergency" (p. 92), which instead becomes the complimentary statement "Nous avons de la chance d'avoir un ours comme Paddington" (p. 84) [We are fortunate to have a bear like Paddington].

This last example reflects another defining aspect of the Paddington books in so far as the emphasis on Paddington as an anthropomorphic character is appreciably more pronounced in the English text. Several phrases that imbue him with human characteristics are neutralised or deleted in translation, amongst which are "He sat in the middle of the floor for several minutes getting his breath back and mopping his brow with an old dish-cloth" (p. 84) = "Il s'assit par terre au milieu de la cuisine pour se reposer quelques minutes" (p. 68) [He sat in the middle of the kitchen floor to rest a few minutes]; "Paddington felt very guilty about the coffee" (p. 81); "he had to sit on the draining-board and use the broom handle" (p. 82); "licking the spoon" (p. 84); "Paddington felt his fur begin to stand on end" (p. 85), which is also a wordplay on a familiar expression; "staggering in breathing heavily" (p. 91), and the poignancy in the appeal to the child's sense of fantasy in "I bet there aren't many bears who can say they've cooked a meal like this before" (p. 92). Associated with the anthropomorphic bent is the considerable emphasis in the English text on the character's own reflection and commentary. In contrast, the deletion in French of phrases indicating Paddington's train of thought leads to observations and emotions that are purely factual and devoid of the child's point of view.

The French illustrations for kitchen food items show the flour in a paper package, the milk in a plastic carton, and the butter in paper. The sandwiches given to the Browns are thick, uncut and oozing with marmalade. Paddington is depicted serving his painstakingly prepared stew for the Browns on a tray with two individually rolled cloth serviettes in holders, two silver knives and forks, two ceramic bowls of stew, a decanter filled (presumably) with water, and two half-filled glasses with stems. Unfortunately, but predictably, some of the water has already spilled on the tray. No condiments are mentioned in either edition, and the two illustrations in the English edition that show food items feature flour in a paper package, a wine-shaped bottle, a pot of stew, a hat filled with dumpling batter and the inevitable spillage of other ingredients on the kitchen surfaces. The charming irony in the French illustration of Mr Gruber's impeccable clothing for such messy work in the kitchen - green plaid suit and waistcoat, red tie, white shirt and black trousers - contrasts succinctly with Paddington's old coat and hat - and yet the bear wears the apron. On another occasion Paddington is shown mopping his brow while surrounded by mess, suggesting that the French illustrations reflect the subtleties of the original text more than the written translation.

Literariness

While the translator has retained the overall fluidity of the narrative, observations can be made on the use of stylistic and literary devices. Faced with cultural markers, the translator has the choice to leave them intact, to give equivalents, or to provide neutral terms. In the first story, the English cultural markers of "Rule Britannia" (p. 74) and "The Gondoliers" (p. 74) are replaced by a generic reference to "un autre air" (p. 42); "Windsor Gardens" (p. 72) is omitted; and the English slang for hat, "tifter" (p. 64), is given an equivalent in French slang, "galurin" (p. 16). Similarly, common English exclamations are replaced by French equivalents or generic phrases, such as "Good heavens" (p. 70, 74) = "Mon dieu" (p. 28), "Oh, crumbs" (p. 63) = "Oh, non!" (p. 14), "Oh, dear" (p. 65, 67, 72) = "Aïe!" (p. 18), "gosh" (p. 61) = "oh, oui" (p. 8), and some are omitted entirely, such as "Mercy me" (p. 74). In the second story, cultural markers of place are retained in French for "Portobello Road" (p. 50) and "Windsor Gardens" (p. 52); some items are replaced by a generic reference, as in "le feu" (p. 63) [the fire] for the marked "the cooker" (p. 82); and other references possibly deemed inconsequential to young readers are omitted, "just behind the nasturtiums" (p. 89). Common English exclamations are again replaced by French equivalents, such as "Mon Dieu!" (p. 74) for "Good heavens!" (p. 86), "Oh, là, là" (p. 49) for "Oh dear" (p. 77), and "C'est épatant!" (p. 79) for "How nice!" (p. 90), and some expressions are omitted, such as "By Jove!" (p. 91).

The translator does not replace the doctor's Scottish accent with an equivalent regional French accent but uses standard French. The choice to make concrete something that is left unnamed in the original is evident in the substitution of "un monstre dans la cuisine" (p. 71) [a monster in the kitchen] for "something nasty in the kitchen" (p. 85). The rhythmic and partially alliterative phrases, "il s'avança à pas prudents" (p. 72) [he approached cautiously], and "il courut dans la cuisine chercher son chariot" (p. 50) [he ran into the kitchen to look for his shopping basket] are good examples of literariness in translation. Strategies for translating imaged language consist of an equivalent term, as in "dégoulinait" (p. 72) for "hanging over" (p. 87); the reference becomes the noise itself, such as "plouf!" (p. 74) for "a loud squelching noise" (p. 87); an image is added, "il bondissait" (p. 70) for "he arrived" (p. 85); or the imaged language is less evident or deleted, as in "fell with a plop to the floor" (p. 88) = "tomba par terre" (p. 74) [fell on the ground], "peering over the fence" (p. 89) = "devant sa barrière" (p. 77) [in front of his fence], "peering round the door" (p. 85, omitted), "a soft swishing noise" (p. 85, omitted), and "the sound of a slow plop...plop... plop" (p. 85, omitted).

Evidence of translation strategies that can be put down to simple logic concern the reference on the menu to the stew and dumplings dish being "underlined" = "C'est le plat qui est souligné" (p. 80) [It's the dish that is underlined], where the French text corrects and replaces the italicised English typeface with underlining. The English phrase "fit for a queen" (p. 92) reflects a clever twist on a standard expression, as Queen Elizabeth II was the ruling British monarch at the time the book was written. It is not unexpected for the French text to return the English phrase to its conventional usage in "un repas de roi" (p. 84) [a meal for a king]. The frequent wordplay on "paw" in English, as in "to lend a paw around the house" (p. 78), is a characteristic feature of the particular brand of English humour throughout the Paddington series. At times the wordplay is given an equivalent translation, while on other occasions the wordplay is inserted elsewhere in the text, such as Paddington's excuse for the smudges of food on the menu, "J'en avais plein les pattes" (p. 80) [I had my paws full]. Some wordplay is simply omitted, as in the case of Mr Gruber's offer to help in the kitchen: "I can give you a hand. It must be very difficult cooking for so many people" (p. 88), to which Paddington replies "it is when you only have paws" (p. 88). It is worth noting also that the use of associative terms is characteristic of Bond's style, seen in the choice of the verb to accompany the noun in the phrase, "Mr Brown ... surveyed the mountain of food on his plate" (p. 92, my emphasis), a stylistic feature that is not present in the translation.

One final difference in the English and French editions concerns the distinction between the terms "housekeeper" and "gouvernante" to describe the role of the person employed in families. The reference to Mrs Bird as "la gouvernante" [the governess] in the blurb on the French cover emphasises a role that is not in keeping with the meaning of "housekeeper" in English. In contrast to conditions in aristocratic European households, the history of governesses in England, particularly in Victorian times, is synonymous with poverty, insignificance, powerlessness, overwork, oppression and loneliness (Brandon 2008). The governess was chiefly employed to look after children and their education, whereas the position of Mrs Bird in mid-twentieth century England places little emphasis on children's education in favour of responsibility for the day-to-day running of the household in a supportive environment. The unique difference in the Brown household is that she also has responsibility for Paddington.

Conclusion

The translation of English culture through food references and character traits reveals the nature of the strategies favoured by the translator in recreating the Paddington stories for a French readership. Apart from the varied treatment of cultural markers of place, there is complete consistency in the translating strategies throughout both stories. These strategies of deleted passages, shorter sentences, less detailed description, fewer literary devices and simplification of the meaning sit alongside more serious changes in the removal of the character's reflection, commentary, playful self-deprecation, tongue-in-cheek humour and anthropomorphic behaviour.

There is no evidence however to suggest that the translator has produced a text that promotes values consistent with 'Frenchness' or with being French. Patterns of translation technique rarely show evidence of the translator slanting the text to reflect French cultural norms and identity, or

models of behaviour that are more acceptable in French culture. There is instead a general neutralisation of culturally specific aspects of the original work. The copious colour illustrations in the French edition compensate for omissions in the written text and function on occasions as the primary source for conveying the meaning. Apart from the cover art of the French edition that features a food context, changes and omissions relating to food reflect the constraint of text length for young readers and the perceived requirement for simplification.

In contrast, Paddington's character in translation is manipulated in favour of a less culturally specific bear, with Paddington presented in French as equally messy and accident-prone but lacking the subtle humour, wit, irony and self-deprecation of the original work's expression of 'Englishness'. Incidences of implicit humour are significantly reduced, as is the considerable emphasis on the character's own reflection and commentary. The deletion in French of phrases indicating Paddington's train of thought leaves content that is purely factual and devoid of the child's point of view. The loss in translation of Bond's trademark language of understatement may well account for the appreciably less pronounced emphasis on Paddington as an anthropomorphic character. In a similar way to his rotund counterpart in Babar on the other side of the Channel, specific character traits are manipulated in translation. The Paddington portrayed in English is a different and subtler character than the Paddington of the translated version. However, the retention of his endearing clumsy behaviour, the appeal of a series of colourful books in small format, and the already well-established marketing strategies of Paddington paraphernalia will no doubt endear him to French readers for some time.

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Notes

[1] This edition (Bibliothèque du chat perché, 285 p.) is out of print and all attempts to purchase, borrow or copy with permission were unsuccessful. However, the first volume was available in French, providing the opportunity for comparison with the English editions. It is important to stress that the first French editions (vols. 1 and 2, 1979) retain the original illustrations by Peggy Fortnum. At the level of the visual text, Paddington is therefore presented to French readers in the same way as to English readers. In contrast, the illustrations in the new French editions represent Paddington in a different style and in colour.

[2] Sales of *Noddy* books are large, with an estimated 600,000 sales per annum in France alone.

About the author(s)

Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the School of Languages and Linguistics, University of Melbourne, Australia.

PhD (French), The University of Melbourne, 2003
GDip Children's Literature, DipFrench, BEd (Secondary);
Previously Secondary teacher and Academic Librarian

Email: [\[please login or register to view author's email address\]](#)

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