

# **(G)ALICIA IN WONDERLAND: SOME INSIGHTS**

**MARÍA DEL CARMEN MILLÁN-VARELA**

**University of Middlesex**

## **Introduction**

The aim of this paper is to approach the existing 1984 Galician translation of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, in order to reveal its position within the Galician cultural system. Starting from a conception of translation as a socio-cultural activity whose purpose is to satisfy some type of need felt in the target culture (Toury, 1995; Venuti, 1998), we will reveal the ambiguous power of translation in the Galician context, bringing "the other" closer but also unveiling the own "self", i.e. (target) socio-linguistic situation, debates on identity, and domestic agendas in general. In the case under study, this ambiguity can best be observed when studying the "paratext" (Genette, 1987) which accompanies the main body of the text, as well as when analysing the translation of cultural references. (This topic is also explored in Millán-Varela, 1998). In this sense, I will argue that the "ambiguity" (Shavit, 1980) inherent to Carroll's text is also present in the Galician *Alice*, and possibly in all the translations included in the "Xabarín" series, because of the socio-cultural characteristics of the Galician context and the role performed by this series within it. As a result the close relationship which

exists between translation activities and their context, particularly in the case of peripheral contexts such as Galician, will be emphasised.

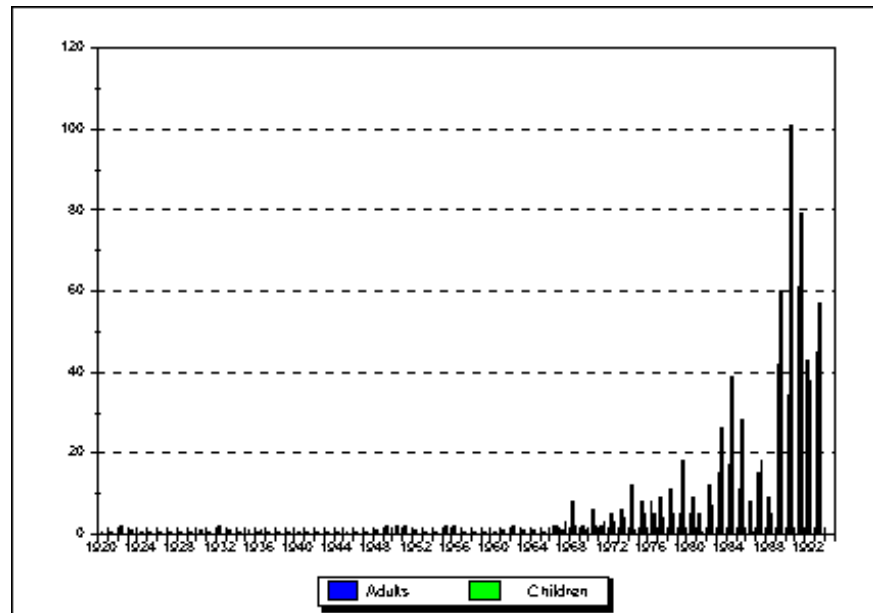
### **Alice in G(alicia)n Land**

As González Millán (1996) and Figueroa (1988) point out, any study dealing with Galician cultural life needs to specify the socio-cultural conditions which affect and determine it. Therefore, we will offer a quick review of the main socio-cultural factors which are likely to shape translation activities in the Galician context, particularly, the socio-linguistic situation of Galician, and how this situation has been affecting and determining the dynamics of Galician cultural life.

The 1980s was the period of recovery of linguistic rights for Galician, a process which ran parallel to the political institutionalisation of Galicia as a “Comunidade Autónoma” within the Spanish State in 1981. This change in the political conception of Galicia brought about changes in the social status of the language. After centuries of marginalisation, Galician, considered as the most representative sign of Galician identity, was recognised, for the first time, as the “national” language of Galicia (“a lingua propia de Galicia”) and considered as one of the two official languages, alongside Spanish. In 1983, the *Lei de normalización do galego* was approved. This law committed the Galician Government to protect, develop and promote the use of Galician in all areas. As a result of this, Galician became the language used by the Galician Government (“Xunta de Galicia”) and its Administration, and, thus (ambiguously) associated with “power”. Galician was also included as a compulsory subject of study at school; also in 1984, the Galician Radio and Television Company (CRTVG) was created. Needless to say, the effects of the Galician television and radio on the process of normalisation of Galician, have been enormous (Dobao, 1990), particularly contributing the spread of the standard norm, not to mention, the effects on a social level, as regards overcoming social prejudices about the use of Galician.

The consequences of the normalisation process were mainly felt in the publishing world. As Cabrera points out, the Galician publishing world “afrota por vez primeira procesos de profesionalización, competitividade, planificación e reestruturación propios dunha sociedade moderna” (Cabrera, 1993: 78). Due to the new needs of Galician society, particularly after the incorporation of Galician as a compulsory subject at school, there was a high demand for books in Galician, particularly children’s and teenage books, as well as reference and didactic material, areas in which the Galician system found itself deficient. These new social needs had direct consequences for the development of the Galician system of translations during this period. Translations were urgently required in order to satisfy the demand for texts in Galician. If we consider the production of translations into Galician during this decade (see graph below), we observe that those targeted at children and teenagers constitute over 80% of the translation production, a percentage

which shows the central position that this subsystem occupies within the Galician context.



[Sources: Vilariño Pintos, D. & Pardo Gómez M.V. (1981); Alvarez García, I. (1989); Alvarez García, I. (1994)]

As can be observed in the graph above, the first books for children in Galician did not appear until the postwar period. During the 1960s and 1970s, probably as a direct consequence of the 1975 *Decreto de Bilingüismo* which allowed Galician to be taught at school, the subsystem of children’s literature became reinforced by the appearance of numerous translations carried out by prominent figures of the Galician literary world, such as Xohana Torres’ translations from Catalan and adaptations of popular texts. We might also single out Carlos Casares’ 1972 translation of *Le Petit Prince* (*O Principiño*) by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and Salvador García-Bodaño’s 1979 translations. These comprise a series of children’s books written by M. A. Pacheco and J. L. García Sánchez and published in 1979 by Altea. However, the genre did not become consolidated until the 1980s (Blanco, 1991: 195), coinciding with the “boom” of Galician translation in general. This development could be considered as part of the process of “globalisation” which characterises the Galician publishing world during this period (Cabrera, 1993; González-Millán, 1994; 1997). The production becomes diversified, the number of editions increases considerably, as well as the number of reprints and re-editions, reaching figures never contemplated before. Social demand and economic profitability appear, therefore, as the main factors which have tipped the balance towards translation for children in Galicia to the detriment of translations for “adults”.

Parallel to the increasing numbers of translations for children, we note the existence of another element of institutional intervention which contributed to the process of consolidation of children's literature in translation, as well as revealing its central position within the system of Galician translation: the appearance of translation awards. In the case of translation prizes and contests, the main economic sources are the Galician Government (The "Ramón Cabanillas" translation award) and the Spanish Ministry of Culture. It should be pointed out that the presence of these types of "prizes" has already been criticised as being a form of Governmental control, a strategy to hide the real problems present in Galician culture and society (González-Millán, 1994: 33). As regards translation awards, the majority of these have been allocated to translations for children and teenagers. In 1985, the winner of the translation prize awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Culture was, precisely, the Galician translation *Alicia no País das Maravillas*, translated by Teresa Barro and Pérez Barreiro. This award was highly significant, considering that the Galician translation had to compete with translations into all the languages of the Spanish State. Therefore, it added to the "canonization" of this work within the translation system, together with the added increase of the social prestige of the Galician language. In 1988 and 1989, the winners of this same prize were also Galician translations of children's/teenage books, namely Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio*, translated as *As aventuras de Pinocchio* by A. Santamarina and J.M.G. Le Clezio's *Mondo e outres histories*, translated by R. Villanueva and V. Arias as *Mondo e Outras historias*. The latter translation also won the "Ramón Cabanillas" prize that same year. Between 1989 and 1992, the winners of the "Ramón Cabanillas" were translations for teenagers, whereas in 1993, the awarded translations had a more academic character, namely *A Casa da Bufarda*, from Anton Chekhov's short story *Dom s mezoninom* ("The House with the Mansard"); and *Poesía Bucólica Latina* from various authors. In 1994, the winners were representatives of two very different genres, the translation of Dante's *Vita Nuova* and of Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, translated as *O Derradeiro Mohicano*. The fact that the majority of the awards were translations targeted at a young audience reveals the strong position that this type of translation occupies within the Galician context. This opinion is confirmed if we take into account that most of the best sellers in the Galician market belong to this same category. One might consider, for example, the number of re-editions of titles such as *O Libro da Selva* (*The Jungle Book*), 11 editions between 1982 and 1996; *A Pantasma de Canterville* (*The Canterville Ghost*), 8 editions between 1983 and 1996 and *Alicia no País das Maravillas* (*Alice in Wonderland*), 6 editions between 1984 and 1997. This situation clashes with the marginality of translations of a more academic type, or those conceived as texts "for adults".

The above best sellers belong to the translation series "Xabarán", published by Edicións Xerais de Galicia. We must refer to the crucial role played by this publishing house within the process of development of the

Galician publishing world during the 1980s. It was created in 1979, the year when they published the first “Maths” book in Galician, and the *Diccionario básico da lingua galega*. They have also published different collections which focus on a variety of topics: Galician literature, travel guides, essays on economics, politics, history and, of course, translations. Amongst the latter, the translation series “Xabarán”, created in 1982, stands out as one of the most popular and best-selling series in the Galician market. A total of fifty-six titles have been published in this series, and some of its titles have also been awarded translation prizes, as is the case of translations of universal classics such as *Alice in Wonderland* and Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Xabarán appeared as the first collection which paid attention to the “classics” in children’s literature and engaged in placing them in the Galician system. Thus, the first seven titles included translations of universal classics, namely Oscar Wilde’s *The Ghost of Canterville and other stories* (*The Young King, The Selfish Giant, The Nightingale and the Rose, The Happy Prince, Lord Arthur Savile’s Crime*), Herman Melville’s *Billy Budd*, Jack London’s *The Call of the Wild*, Alphonse Daudet’s *Les lettres de mon moulin*, Jules Verne’s *Around The World in 80 Days*, Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* and Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. The corresponding Galician titles are: *A Pantasma de Canterville, Billy Budd, A chamada da selva, Cartas desde o meu muiño, A volta ó mundo en 80 días, A illa do tesouro* and *Alicia no país das marabillas*.

The social role of the Xabarán series, as well as that of translation and children’s literature in general, was not only to incorporate the Galician language into the school system but also to contribute to the broader process of linguistic normalisation, as well as consolidating the use of the standard norm for written Galician. It must be remembered that the process of linguistic standardisation of Galician is a complex and controversial issue. The Galician linguistic world is divided into two main sectors: those who support the “official” Galician norm, considered as standard and promoted by the Galician Government, and those who defend an alternative orthographic norm, non-official, which is denominated “lusista” or “reintegracionista”, because of their tendency towards assimilation (both in linguistic and political terms) with Portuguese, in contrast with more “pro-Castilian” bias of the official norm. This conflict over the linguistic representation of Galician is a reflection of existing debates over the conception of Galicia(n).

The “boom” in children’s literature in Galician therefore responded to an ideological commitment on the part of the publishing houses. However, we also perceive that the main impulse behind this trend was not only ideological but also economic: a guaranteed market and the assured profitability of these products. Furthermore, as Cabrera also points out, the “boom” of translations into Galician during the eighties responds not only to the desire to import foreign works with a normalising purpose in mind but also to the need to satisfy the deficiencies present in the Galician publishing world, whose production was still unable to satisfy the demand. Taking the

above information into account, we can conclude that translation activities in a peripheral context, such as Galician, appear to be highly determined by their context and, therefore, strongly related to questions of ideology and identity, as well as being inevitably subjected to economic constraints and market criteria. Here we will explore the extent of this contextual determination of translation, focusing in particular on the “self-reflecting” power of translation (also in Brisset, 1989), that is, the power of translation to reflect and reveal the conflicts inherent to the context to which the target text belongs. Through the translated text, we will be approaching not only the complexity of Alice’s world of wonders but also the intricacies of the G(alicia)n context.

### **Through the cover**

The 1984 *Alicia no país das maravillas* is the only complete translation into Galician of this work. An abridged version for young children was published by Edicións Sálvora in 1995 under the title *Alicia no país das maravillas*. As mentioned above, Alicia was one of the first titles published in the “Xabarín” series and, although not as popular as Jack London’s *A chamada da selva*, the success of this translation is shown by the six reprints it has had since its first publication. In most books, the front cover and blurb provide us with preliminary information regarding the type of audience at which the text is aimed as well as information about the agents of the translation, their preconceptions about the source text and the readers’ expectations. Xabarín books usually contain written and visual information in both the front and back covers. The collection has a characteristic blue colour and its own logo, a small wild hog (“xabarín”), which appears on the back cover and inside pages, although in recent editions it has been included on the front cover. This logo, as well as the colour of the format, helps to identify the translation series and to connect all the books included within it. The front cover usually contains illustrations in colour, a feature which is usually associated with children’s books, whereas the illustrations inside the book are always in black and white. In the case of Alice, the illustrations are taken from the drawings designed by Tenniel for the original source text. In contrast, the 1995 abridged version for children does not include Tenniel’s drawings but more modern illustrations in colour. As regards the illustration on the front cover, we find the representation of a young girl, presumably Alice/Alicia, dressed in Victorian costume, standing next to some playing cards and animals which will be appearing later on in the text. Therefore, the illustration on the cover, as also observed by Kovala (1996), serves a double purpose here: it follows the format of the “Xabarín” series and it anticipates some of the main features of the story. From the type of illustrations chosen, we already observe a tendency towards preserving the original features of the source text, that is, its remoteness in both time and space.

As for the written information printed on the cover, we can distinguish between the front cover and the blurb, at the back. In the front cover and



right below the illustration, we find the name of the author in small letters, hence deviating from the expected orthographic conventions, followed by the Galician title, all in capital letters, and finally, at the bottom of the page, the name and logo of the publisher. There is no mention of the translators on the front cover. However, it is interesting to find the name of the source authors written in small letters, a feature which could be interpreted as a wish to “diminish” their presence without failing to acknowledge their “authorial rights”. Apart from the type of letter used, the title also contains some orthographic features which, from a diachronic perspective, show that the translation belongs to a period in which the Galician language experienced a series of changes, as a result of the process of standardisation. Thus, if we compare the title of the 1984 translation with that of the 1995 children’s adaptation, we find that it remains the same in both versions, except for an orthographic change: *Alicia no país das maravillas* (1984) vs. *Alicia no país das marabillas* (1995). “Marabillas” is considered as the “correct” Galician form. As the titles of the two versions already show, there is a strong relationship between translation and context.

The back cover also contains interesting information. At the top of the page we can see the logo of the translation series and, right underneath, the name of the series (“Xabarín”). Further down, there are two different sections of text which constitute what is commonly denominated as “blurb”. In the middle of the page and widely indented, the first paragraph tries to “advertise” the book in question, *Alicia no país das maravillas*, by stressing the various qualities of the source text, namely its position as a “classic”, its entertaining qualities and its success amongst both children and adults. In this way, the reader is informed about the genesis of the book, its originality and success amongst children. Thus, “esta obra de orixinalidade estarrecente que lle fixo exclamar a un meniño de seis anos ‘¡tiña que haber sesenta mil libros coma este!’, é unha grande ‘outra cousa’ da literatura.” Additionally, a brief summary of Alice’s different adventures is offered (here the source text is portrayed as a “dream”), as well as mentioning the continuing influence of this book on British everyday life and emphasising the status of the source text as a “classic”. At the end of this section, we find a very interesting and unusual reference, very rarely found in this series, or in any Galician translation series. It is an explicit reference to the fact that this book is a translation and, additionally, that this translation is possibly the “best translation” ever of Alice, which appears also portrayed as “the most difficult book to translate”: “velaquí, seguramente, a mellor traducción do libro máis difícil de traducir”. Such a comment adds to the prestige of both the translation series and the translators, which will also be increased by various translation awards, as already mentioned in the previous section. Finally, at the bottom of the page, a biographical note on the author, Lewis Carroll, is included. Emphasis here is placed on three elements: his wish to remain anonymous, his varied interests and his being the creator of “nonsense” literature.

The format of the series, therefore, presents a mixture of information which is sending different messages to the reader. The visual information, i.e. the illustration, the logo, as well as the publishing house's (Xerais) own advertising, identify both the book and the "Xabarín" series as being addressed to a "young" audience. However, the written information included on the back cover, i.e. the details concerning the genre, status and cultural reception of the source text, seems to be aimed at a different type of audience, one who will be more concerned with the "quality" and the status of the source text within its own cultural system. There is an "ambiguity" already present here on the cover which will also be reinforced by the presence of a whole body of footnotes and endnotes accompanying the main text, as will be discussed in the next section.

### **Introducing the text**

The introductory section to a "Xabarín" text usually gives information about the source text, the author (a picture is normally included), his context and, sometimes, some type of indication about the translators' approach. In this case, we find information about the status of *Alice* as a "classic" in the Anglo-Saxon world, about Carroll and Dodgson, about Victorian times, about *Alice's* originality, a mention of *Through the Looking Glass* and a note on the illustrations. It is interesting to point out that the introduction to the Galician translation of *Alice* also contains a section dedicated to the translations of this particular work. Here we find information about the first reactions to the "untranslatability" of this work, mainly due to the amount of wordplay and cultural references, as well as Carroll's personal concern and continuous intervention in both the process of finding the right translator and then in the actual translating process. There is a brief reference to the history of translations, the first ones being the French and the German (1869) and later on the Swedish (1870) and the Italian (1871). *Alice* did not reach the Iberian languages until 1922, in a "simplified adaptation" by Rivadeneyra. In 1923, Josep Carner made the first translation into Catalan and Juan Gutiérrez Gili the first one into Castilian. There is also reference to the 1931 translation into Brazilian Portuguese by Monteiro Lobato and to the Portuguese one by Morais which has no date and could have been the first one in Portugal. There is a concern, therefore, with presenting the context of the source text but also introducing the reader to the whole *Alice* family and possibly insert the Galician translation within that tradition.

There is very little information in this text about the Galician translators' approach. A brief mention to their approach appears included in the discussion of the genesis of the first translations of *Alice*, appearing particularly concerned with being "faithful" to the source author, with the quality of the translated text, identifying translation with musical interpretation, with "fidelidade creadora" versus "servilismo [e] idolatría da letra morta" (21). In contrast with other translators of this work, they mention that they have



tried to follow Carroll's suggestions for the translation of this work, particularly as regards the translation of verse and wordplay. Thus:

Nós coidamos, así e todo, que a obra perdía demais sen eles [verses] e fixemos por darlles voz galega, indicando en nota cal é o orixinal que parodian. Algúns deses orixinais son aínda ben populares en Inglaterra, outros xa non, así que o argumento de falla de familiaridade valería tamén moitas veces para o lector inglés de hoxe. (22)

The Galician translators disagree with the omission of culture-bound references and dismiss the common excuse of “lack of familiarity” on the grounds that most of these references also happen to be unfamiliar to contemporary English readers. Instead, the translators opt for literal translation supplemented by an explanatory note so that the reader can understand the origin of the parody or wordplay present in the source text. Due to the amount of detailed information incorporated in the form of notes (both footnotes and endnotes), together with the introduction, the Galician translation of *Alice in Wonderland* becomes a careful and interesting edition of the source text, a type of book which is not exclusively targeted to a young audience, as the cover might suggest, but which could also be appealing to a more demanding type of reader, just like Carroll's text.

### **Down to footnotes**

The addition of footnotes and endnotes is required in order to help the reader unveil the complex structure of Carroll's text, its multi-layered meanings, mainly due to the frequent use of wordplay, as well as his parody and satire of Victorian texts (Gardner, 1970). As Kovala points out:

what is interesting about the paratexts of translation is not their position around the text, which is often in complete accord with the conventions of the target culture, but their special role as mediators between the text and the reader and their potential influence on the reader's reading and reception of the works in question. (Kovala, 1996: 120)

In the Galician translation, we should therefore distinguish between footnotes and endnotes, the former being the manifestation of the translators' (“visible”) presence, their direct intrusion in the text, the latter being information derived from secondary sources and aimed at facilitating a deeper understanding of the source text. Here we will focus on the study of footnotes because of their socio-cultural relevance. The footnotes included in the Galician translation share a common characteristic, they all have an explanatory function but with two different purposes: firstly, to bring the source text and context closer to the Galician reader while maintaining their own “foreignness” and, secondly, to reveal information about the target context.

### **Approaching the source text and context**

The translators use footnotes to “bridge the gap” between the cultures involved in the translation process, to explain cultural information which may

clash with the target readers' own cultural expectations and background. Thus, when the Hatter ("o Sombreiro") suggests that Alice may need a hair cut, she feels offended and reprimands him for making personal comments: "Non se fan comentarios persoais –dixo Alicia algo severa– ; non é delicado" (98), a reproach which reveals that his behaviour is not socially "acceptable". Thus, the translators explain: "Facer comentarios sobre o aspecto e características das personas con que se fala, o seu vestido, etcétera, era, e segue sendo, sumamente descortés en Inglaterra, a non ser respondendo a preguntas ou pedindo antes licencia". The translators feel the need to indicate that Alice's reaction needs to be understood within the behavioural norms which characterise, not only Alice's Victorian context, but also contemporary "England". Similarly, they also inform the reader about the conventions of the target context regarding "social behaviour". Thus, to Carroll's comment: "Alice said very politely, feeling quite pleased to have got into a conversation" (53), the translators add: "Alicia sabe que facer conversa é unha obriga, e que non é de boa educación ficar amuada nun tanto ollando para o chan ou para o aire. Non é linguadeira, pero tampouco insociable" (87).

Sometimes, this "bridging the gap" is not only due to intercultural differences between the two contexts involved but due to the remoteness (both in time and place) and/or complexity of the source text. In this case the translators are also acting as "editors" and their information comes from secondary sources, which appear mentioned at the end, similar to those appearing in annotated editions of *Alice* for English readers. This is the case, for example, of the expression "A cat may look at a king" (literally translated as "Un gato pode ollar para un rei" (118)). The explanation provided in a footnote informs the reader that it refers to an old English proverb ("Vello proverbio inglés"). In the 1998 Penguin edition of *Alice*, the footnote also includes its earliest appearance, namely J. Haywood's *Dialogue of Proverbs* (1546) and other sources. Similarly, the reference to "Mock-Turtle Soup", literally translated as "Sopa de Tartaruga de Imitación", needed explanation both in the English edition and in the Galician translation. In both cases we find similar information, although much more summarised in the Galician text, namely that (imitation/mock) turtle soup was made from calf's head, and this was what probably inspired Carroll to create this character. Hence Tenniel's drawing of a turtle with a calf's head. Thus: "A sopa de tartaruga (de imitación) facíase con cabeza de becerra. Desa 'Mock Turtle Soup' tirou Carroll o personifica-la 'tartaruga de imitación' (Mock Turtle). Así se explica tamén a ilustración da criatura" (125). The Penguin 1998 edition quotes the OED and adds important information to relate the "calf's head" to the "turtle", the reason being that the soup was "dressed with sauces and condiments so as to resemble turtle" (316). This footnote serves us as an exemplification of the complexity inherent to the source text, and the difficulty in translating cultural references both at a linguistic and cultural

level. It also shows the translators' procedure, preferring literal translation supplemented by footnotes and endnotes.

Footnotes are also used in order to explain puns originally present in the source text. Wordplay is considered as one of the main elements whereby Carroll's text acquires its ambiguous status (Shavit, 1980; Weissbrod, 1996). Unlike the English source text, the Galician text does not seem to acquire its ambiguous status because of the presence of this phenomenon but because of the translators' conscious and "visible" intervention in the text by means of "editorial techniques" in order to explain the original meaning of a wordplay which has been lost in the Galician translation. According to Delabastita (1996: 134) these "editorial techniques" usually accompany the translation of puns, namely "explanatory footnotes or endnotes, comments provided in translators' forewords, the 'anthological' presentation of different, supposedly complementary solutions to one and the same source-text problem, and so forth". Franco Aixelá (1996: 62) also points out that this procedure is traditionally used in Spain "to offer data about famous people and to explain puns, which are usually termed 'untranslatable'".

One example of this type are the comments added to the expression "Carreira electoral" (52), an anachronistic translation for "Caucus-race", "caucus" being a term which also required explanation in the source text. The translators explain the original meaning of "caucus-race" in a footnote and justify their translation option, on the grounds of Carroll's satirical use of this reference. The Galician text interprets and disambiguates the source text reference, thus becoming far more explicit than the source text. Another example is the well known wordplay on "Time". In this case we find both intragloss and extragloss techniques. Thus the play on the double meaning of the expression "to beat time" appears explained within the Galician text:

"(...) but I know I have to beat time when I learn music." (62)

"(...) pero na clase de música teño que bate-lo compás para medi-lo tempo." (63)

However, further down on the text, a footnote is added. In this case, the translators opted for the translation of the semantic content and then adding a footnote to compensate for the loss of effect and/or ensure that the reader understands the double meaning present in the source text:

"Well, I'd hardly finished the first verse", said the Hatter, "when the Queen had bawled out 'He's murdering the time! Off with his head!'" (64)

"-Bo, pois xa logo levaba eu rematado o primeiro verso –dixo o Sombreiro-cando vai a Raiña e vocifera: '¡Está matando o tempo!' ¡Que o descabecen!" (103)

In the Galician text the wordplay on "murdering the time" is resolved by translating the content literally, "¡Está matando o tempo!". By means of a footnote an alternative translation is provided and the double meaning inherent to the source text revealed. Thus, the footnote reads as follows: "Ou 'asasinando o compás', levando mal o compás". Here the verb "kill" is

replaced with “assassinate” and the reference to “tempo” with “compás”, to make the musical reference more explicit.

Another example of translation of wordplay can be found in the case of the pun based on the double meaning of the English verb “draw” (“to extract” and “to outline”):

(...) “And so these three little sisters—they were learning to draw, you know—”  
“What did they draw?” said Alice, quite forgetting her promise.  
“Treacle”, said the Dormouse, without considering at all, this time. (66)

The pun is reproduced in the Galician translation by means of a wordplay on the verb “sacar” one of the literal meanings of “draw” (‘extract’, ‘take out’), and a forced periphrasis based on this verb “sacar debuxos”:

(...) Pois logo as tres irmáns que estaban aprendendo a sacar debuxos, sacaron...  
—¿O qué sacaron? —dixo Alicia, que esquecera xa que dera a palabra de estar calada.  
—Melaza —dixo o Leirón, desta vez sen pararse a pensalo. (105)

However, in this case no footnote or explanation was added. A similar approach is observed in the trial scene, in the case of the pun based on the polysemic meaning of “fit” in English:

“Then again—‘before she had this fit’—you never had fits, my dear, I think?”  
he said to the Queen. (...)  
“Then the words don’t fit you”, said the King, looking round the court with a smile. (107)

Here the pun is simplified and translated by a wordplay on the meanings of “modelo”: “trocar modelo” (to change outfit) vs. “servir de modelo” (to take as a model). As a result, the semantic meaning is changed:

(...) E despois di tamén aquí “antes que ela trocase o modelo”. E ti nunca trocáche-lo modelo, ¿non é certo, cara esposa? —díxolle á Raíña.  
(...)  
—Entón —dixo o Rei, sorrindo e ollando todo arredor da sala —esas palabras non che serven de modelo. (161-162)

We can observe a different type of attitude towards the translation of wordplay in this text. The presence of footnotes reveals the existence of a compromise between “foreignising” and “domesticating” techniques, between the wish to be faithful to Carroll’s “spirit” and the need to create a “Galician” text.

### Revealing the target context

Footnotes in this translated text also perform a more “didactic” role, offering information which is specific to the Galician context or about specific aspects of the Galician language. Thus, we find a footnote to explain the meaning of the word “gardafogo” (40) whose definition appears explained as follows: “o Gardafogo (fender) é unha barra de metal ou grella que se pon diante da cheminea ou lareira”. It is important to point out that such word does not exist in Galician and was “invented” by the translators in

order to bridge the gap between both contexts. Here we can appreciate the social and linguistic importance of translation as a potential vehicle for the introduction and creation of neologisms into Galician, as well as contributing to the promotion of standard Galician amongst the readers of the “Xabarín” series. This type of explanatory footnote can also reveal socio-linguistic information which brings the reader closer to the target context and offers a glimpse of its complex internal situation.

We can also comment on the footnote added to explain the meaning of a reference to an English meal (“tea”), which could initially be mistaken with the reference to “tea”, the drink. The presence of a footnote turns out to be extremely important since it reveals the existence of interpretation problems, not of the English reference, which is not mentioned, but of the Galician term itself. Thus, the main purpose of this added information is to avoid the reader’s mistaking the Galician “merenda” and the Castilian “merienda”. The translators explain: “A merenda (‘tea’) é unha comida completa, como a merenda galega rural, e non o pan e chocolate á volta da escola da familia urbana castelanizada.” (103) Thus, the footnote reveals the similarities between English and Galician as regards the English concept of “tea” and the Galician “merenda”, both referring to an early evening meal, in contrast with the Castilian concept of “merienda”, a light snack for children usually consisting of bread and chocolate. We can also perceive the existence of an added contrast between the “rural” Galician context, where the Galician language survived the pressures of Castilianisation, as well as a more traditional way of life, and the “urban” Galician context which gave up Galician and became Castilianised.

From this footnote we can deduce that the translators expect their readership to make this mistake. The reader appears constructed as a Galician non-native speaker of the language, or someone not proficient in Galician, with Spanish as their first language and therefore heavily influenced by it. Translations, as we can observe in this particular case, performed an important social role during this period, contributing to the popularisation of the newly created standard norm (we should not forget that in 1984 the *Lei de Normalización* was just taking its first steps) and aimed at the creation of a (young) readership in Galician. Therefore, we find, first of all, an explicit wish to not be identified with Spanish, in spite of the formal similarities of this word. Secondly, this explanation points to a crucial issue in the Galician context: the interference of Castilian Spanish in the Galician language, which reveals the different power relations between both languages. Finally, it underscores the social function of this translation and the whole “Xabarín” collection: to spread the standard form of modern Galician.

### **Up to the endnotes**

The Galician text also includes a long section dedicated to endnotes which, similarly to annotated editions of the source text, aim to offer a thorough understanding of the source text, possess a more erudite character than

footnotes and are destined, therefore, for a type of academic, rather than teenage, reader. The endnotes and all the information contained on the source text, author and context are based on established criticism on Carroll and his works, a list of which is included at the end of the book. This type of textual intervention definitely clashes with the original aims of this series of works in translation, which are to be read by a young audience. The endnotes usually function in the same way as the notes included in original editions of *Alice in Wonderland*, that is, the aim is to bring the reader closer to the source text by revealing Carroll's parodies, satires and manipulations of Victorian texts and references. In this case, the Galician notes also constitute a translation, and adaptation, of previous notes on the text by Gardner and other critics. Here we observe almost a meeting point between the role of an editor and that of a translator, both wishing to supply the reader with relevant information about the source text.

However, the endnotes themselves also reveal the intervention of the translators as critics, editors and mediators of Carroll's work. They use endnotes not only to refer to the complex world created by Carroll but also to the whole critical apparatus created around *Alice in Wonderland* and Carroll's work in general. Thus, we find frequent references to critics such as Martin Gardner and A. L. Taylor. The translators also use the endnotes to compare Carroll's literary experiments with later developments, such as the relationship established between the Mouse's poem (55) and the "caligrammatic form" later associated with Apollinaire, or the "undoubted" influence of the last verse in Dante's *Divine Comedy* ("l'amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle" (174)) in the Duchess' words "E o amor, o amor, o que fai rola-lo mundo!" (122). We also find the translators making critical comments which affect their translation, such as the resemblance of the source text to the Biblical book *The Song of the Songs*, although, as they indicate, this resemblance is more obvious in English than in the translation. Sometimes, the translators adopt a colloquial, almost familiar tone in the endnotes, as is the case when commenting on the "Mad Tea-Party" section where they refer to the Dormouse as "o coitado do Leirón", showing a sympathetic attitude towards him. The presence of this apparatus of endnotes transforms this translation into an "ambiguous" text (Shavit, 1981), appealing to both a young audience and an adult, more academic, reader. In this respect, the Galician translation keeps closer to the source text.

The "ambiguity" of the Galician text resides in its conception as a book, in its presentation through all the paratextual information, more than in the internal characteristics of the text, that is, wordplay, erudite references, which usually pass unnoticed.

### **Around the text: Galicianising Wonderland**

In this section, we will focus on the study of the translation of culture-bound references and the potential portrayal of the asymmetrical differences of power between the two cultures involved. As well as wordplay, intertextual



references help to create that “ambiguity” which is so characteristic of the source text. Similarly, the strategies used to transfer those references into Galician will help us reveal the techniques used, together with the translators’ ideology and underlying concept of translation. As Franco Aixela (1996) points out, cultural items only become problematic when confronted with another linguistic cultural system. Thus, he defines “culture-specific items” as:

Those textually actualised items whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text, whenever this problem is a product of the nonexistence of the referred item or of its different intertextual status in the cultural system of the readers of the target text (58)

In this way, and in very broad terms, any linguistic item which poses a problem for the target reader will be considered as a “culture-specific item”. We can consider therefore two broad categories: proper nouns and cultural references (here we will include references which are exclusive to a particular culture: habits, institutions, measurement units, etc.).

### **Naming Wonderland**

Contrary to the arbitrariness which occurs in real life, proper nouns are well known for their ability to be used as “characterizing devices in literary texts and so become a meaningful element in the texture of such works” (Manini, 1996:161). This type is what Hermans (1998: 11-13) denominates “loaded” proper names, namely:

those literary names seen as ‘motivated’; they range from faintly ‘suggestive’ to overtly ‘expressive’ names and nicknames and include those fictional as well as non-fictional names around which certain historical or cultural associations have accrued in the context of a particular culture.

Hence the relevance of this issue in translation. Manini (1996:164-165) considers four different categories for the study of “meaningful literary names”: intertextuality, exoticism, morphological structure and extent of characterization. The strategies used to translate proper names very much vary according to time and the norms governing the target cultural context at the time. The changing nature of norms can be appreciated in the different attitudes towards the translation of proper names: from domestication to foreignisation, as indicated by Manini (1996) for the Italian case and by Franco Aixelá (1996) for the Spanish.

The process of Galicianisation, of “giving a Galician voice” to Carroll’s text becomes particularly obvious in the case of onomastic references. Most of the proper names have been translated into names which are familiar to the Galician reader. The majority of the references have been “adapted” into Galician although we find a case that has remained intact because of their formal similarity to names which usually occur in the target context, such as Mabel (42). As regards the process of “Galicianisation” of proper nouns, we find examples of substitution by the Galician equivalent. The name

of the protagonist, for example, is “Alicia”, which although not a typical Galician name, it is familiar because of its use in the Spanish system. Similarly, Dinah is orthographically adapted as Dina (32). The most interesting examples of “onomastic translation” correspond to those which do not coincide with the ones present in the source text but represent a case of “creative adaptation”. Thus: “Pat” appears translated as “Antón” (64) and “Mary Ann” becomes “Mariana”, which results from the combination of both English names (59). It must be pointed out that this latter reference is supplemented by an endnote where the reader is informed that the name “Mary Ann” was almost a synonym for a maid in XIX century England. It is also mentioned that this could have well been one of the possible reasons that led George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) to adopt a pseudonym. Such an explanation just confirms the argument sustained here regarding the ambiguous status of this text. A similar adaptation of this type is the case of “Dorinda, Lucinda e Belinda” (104) which are the names given in the Galician text to the three daughters (Elsie, Lacie and Tillie). The names included in the Galician text keep the same ending (-inda) thus producing a rhyming effect but, unlike the source text ones, they do not carry any further connotations, as explained in the endnote.

In the case of the names given to animals, we observe that it corresponds to their generic name. Given the linguistic correspondence between both systems, the strategy used in this case is mainly literal translation: Parrulo (“Duck”), Dodó (“Dodo”, notice the presence of orthographic adaptation, accentuating the last syllable), Loriño (“Lory”) e Aguiacho (“Eaglet”) (48). Other names which result from literal translation include Coello (30), Caranguexa vella, Caranguexa nova (56), Canario (57), señora Gata (60), Señoría (64), Eiruga (71), Pombo (78), Cocho e Pimenta (83), Leirón (97). It is worth pointing out that the 1995 abridged version for children uses different names and all in small letters, thus revealing the existence of a different type of translation “norm” and conception of the text. Thus, we find “un rato, un loro, un pato, unha ra e un aguiacho” and we observe that the Dodo has been replaced by a frog.

Literal translation sometimes produces meaningless references for the target reader as in the case of “Lebre de Marzo”, therefore losing the connotations which this reference (“March Hare”) carries in the source text but being then compensated by an explanatory endnote. In the case of names which carry a double meaning in English, such as Bill, these appear translated into proper Galician names (Pancho (59)) which do not produce any wordplay.

### **Cultural references**

In the case of food references and units of measurement, we find, on the one hand, a foreignising strategy which translates the source text literally in spite of not having a clear referent in the target context. This is the case of: “doce de laranxa” (31) (‘orange marmalade’), “torta de cereixa” (36)

(‘cherry tart’), “doce de leite de ovos” (36) (‘custard’), “caramelo” (36) (‘toffee’), “melaza” (105) (‘treacle’), amongst others. On the other hand, we find the presence of food references which are very familiar to the Galician context and which enter into conflict with the previous referents. Thus, in the poem which Alice recited to the Caterpillar:

“You are old”, said the youth, “and your jaws are two weak  
For anything tougher than suet; (...)” (44)

Vas vello, e a carqueixa vai frouxa e non pode  
moer máis que papas de millo e filloas (75)

The reference to “suet” is substituted by a functional equivalent “papas de millo e filloas” (75). They are both typical Galician dishes: “papas de millo” are made with corn flour dissolved in milk; “filloas” are similar to the French “crepes” and very popular in Galicia, particularly during Carnival time. Similarly, the presence of “caldo” instead of “soup”:

“There is certainly too much pepper in that soup!” Alice said to herself, as well as she could for sneezing. (52)

–A ese caldo botáronlle pimenta de máis –dixo para si Alicia, entre un espirro e outro. (86)

“Caldo” is a typical winter dish which is always associated with Galicia. It is a type of hearty soup made with various types of meat (usually pork), potatoes, greens (Galician “grelos”) and butter beans. The result of the different strategies in the translation of food references has a contradicting effect: on the one hand, they emphasise the foreignness, or rather the “Englishness”, of the source context but, on the other hand, they domesticate it, transforming the source text into a more familiar, more “Galician” environment.

Units of measurement constitute another source of ambiguous behaviour on the part of the translators. We find foreignising strategies when including units such as: “millas” (31), “varas” (yards) in “Unha vara de alto, tres varas de altura” (44), tres “polgadas” (inches) (77). In spite of being in Galician, they represent a different type of system which emphasises the “foreignness” of the text. However, we also find familiar units such as, “cuartillos”, in “cuartillos de bágoas (40), “cuartas” in “dunha cuarta de altura” (81), “unha altura dunha cuarta” (108), “peso” (160).

Intertextuality is one of the strategies which emphasise the “foreignness” of the context in which the story is set. *Alice* is full of intertextual references which pose a great problem for translation, particularly the presence of songs and references to historical figures which are exclusive to the English context. The Galician translators, as they indicate in their introduction to the text, opted in the majority of the cases for a type of “foreignising”, source-text oriented type of translation. Thus, in the case of parodical references to children’s songs, the effect is totally lost since the resulting Galician text does not relate to any existing repertoire items in the

Galician system. As is usually the case in this translation, we find an endnote which tries to compensate for the lost effect. All the songs that Alice is asked to sing in the source text are translated literally into Galician and then explained in the form of endnotes. They do not draw on any type of model but they do keep the rhyme at the end of each line. They all represent the meaning of the source text but have no further impact on the target reader, who cannot relate these poems to any of his/her own cultural repertoire, therefore, missing all the parodic effect. Similar strategies are described in Nord (1997) in relation to the Brazilian, French, German, and Spanish translations of *Alice*.

As regards historical references, we find allusions to “Guillermo o Conquistador” (46, 50), to “Edwin e Morcar, os condes de Mercia e Northumbria” (50), “Stigand, arcebispo de Canterbury” and to “Edgardo Atheling” (50). These references are a clear indicator of the two types of translating behaviour which pervade this Galician translation, caught between bringing the references closer “Guillermo o conquistador”, “Edgardo” and preserving their “foreignness”. Sometimes, the text presents examples of inevitable internal incoherence which reveal its “hybrid” nature. Thus, when Alice thinks:

“perhaps it doesn’t understand English”, thought Alice. “I daresay it’s a French mouse, come over with William the Conqueror.” (21)

“Se cadra non entende o *inglés*”, pensou Alicia. “Seguro que é un rato francés que veu para acó con Guillermo o Conquistador” (46),

The Galician translation reveals that Alice’s own language is English, in spite of being speaking Galician in the text. Similarly, the reference to “acó” (here) means “England” and not Galicia, otherwise it would create an obvious historical inaccuracy.

Next to the foreignising effects above mentioned we also find an intertextual reference which, in spite of its anachronism, gives the text a “Galician” tone and inserts it within a Galician tradition. This is the case of the reference to “Vai vello, tío Marcos” (73) as a translation of Carroll’s parody of Southey’s well known didactic poem *The Old Man’s Comforts and How He Gained Them* which starts as “You are old, Father William”. Here an endnote provides all this cultural information about the source reference. The interesting thing here is the presence of the reference to “tío Marcos” brings the Galician audience back to *O Tío Marcos d’a Portela. Parrafeos c’o pobo galego*, a weekly journal published at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century under the direction of the journalist and writer Valentín Lamas Carvajal. This publication contains the first reflections on the Galician language and offers information about the social situation of Galician during the time of the Galician Renaissance (“Rexurdimento”), namely the diglossic attitudes and low prestige of the language, in contrast with the literary initiatives which tried to recover the prestige of the language (Hermida, 1990). Therefore, we find the presence

of a domestic element which clashes with previous historical and cultural references which emphasise the “Englishness” of the context. The effect is, therefore, contradictory and emphasises the “hybrid” nature of this text.

Another example of this type of behaviour, which tries to domesticate the context is the attempt to reproduce regional varieties of Galician. Thus, when trying to reproduce Bill’s speech in chapter four, we find a literal translation with added sociolinguistic connotations: “Iso é un brazo, Señoría (pronunciábao ‘braso’) (...)” (64). The information added in brackets warns the reader in the source text about Bill’s peculiarity in his manner of speech. In the Galician case, this information reveals that Bill’s speech belongs to a variety characterised by “seseo”, or the non pronunciation of the interdental phoneme /th/ which becomes simplified with the phoneme /s/. We find, in both cases, a conflict between pronunciation and orthographic representation in both cases. The unresolved conflict over the written representation of Galician does not, however, affect the acceptance of regional varieties at oral level.

Therefore, at a textual level, we find a similar type of “ambiguous” behaviour which that found in the conception and presentation of the translation to a Galician audience. This ambiguity places the translated text in a space which goes beyond the “boundaries” of children’s literature, a text which comes to life as a result of the struggle between “domesticating” and “foreignising” strategies, between the wish to respect the source text and the need to create a “Galician” text.

## Conclusion

To sum up, we need to point out the close relationship which exists between translation activities and the socio-cultural situation of the target context in the case of Galician. Because of the specific needs of the Galician context, we have seen how translation for children has been pushed towards the centre of the Galician system of translation. Translations of this type, and translations into Galician in general, perform a crucial social role, being a vehicle for the consolidation of the Galician standard norm, as well as contributing to a wider project: the creation of a readership in Galician. Through the analysis of the paratext which accompanies this translation, we have revealed the importance of translators’ mediation and the extent to which their “intrusion” affects the final product. Additionally, we witness an ambiguity between the original aims of the Xabarán series, the strategies for the presentation of the translation and the actual translating behaviour. Thus, the Galician translation of *Alice* appears to be explicitly targeted at a young audience, the “Xabarán” readers, but the resulting product could also be appealing to an “adult” audience. The Galician translation becomes an “ambiguous” text because of the way this translation, the “Xabarán” series, and possibly Galician children’s literature in general, have been conceived and constructed in Galicia(n). The translators not only act as “decoders” or “adapters” of the source text but they also “mediate”, edit and comment on

the source text, a role which surpasses that of the traditional “translator/ adapter for children/teenage audience”. Additionally, it has been shown how translation reveals important information about the Galician socio-cultural context and the ideological bias of its agents. In this way, this visit to Wonderland interestingly became an exploration into the very soul of the Galician world.

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