

My Mother Cooked Me; My Father Ate Me: the treatment of taboos in English translations of the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1823-2005)

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ABSTRACT

The principal aim of this thesis is to examine the interventions by the translators of the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*KHM*), in order to determine how translators' choices – and mainly their textual interventions – have changed with time and to present possible factors which give rise to such interventions. The thesis also aims to produce a historical analysis of various translations of the *KHM* into the English language from the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The *KHM* were initially written not only for children, but also for the use of adult and scholarly audiences and the duality of the Grimms' target audience has given rise to serious debate as to whether the translations of the *KHM* have followed this dual addressee pattern or should be classified as children's literature, adult literature or both.

Against this background the thesis explores more than 70 different *KHM* tales and the approaches taken in their different translations throughout the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It concentrates on the choices made by the English-language translators of the *KHM* and special attention is given to the translators' target text interventions, omissions and alterations primarily associated with taboo elements present in the German source text, with the main textual examples being derived from religious, violent, cannibalistic, scatological, bodily and sexual allusions, which received special treatment in translation.

The thesis employs a comparative translation approach and compares different translations of specific examples from the same tales, as well as juxtaposing the source and target texts. It analyses the findings within the context of existing target-oriented, descriptive translation theories and also takes into consideration different historical periods, something which will have a wider application in the field of translating tales for children and adults. The comparative analysis is limited to the different German versions of the *KHM* and to their translations into English.

KEYWORDS: children's books, children's literature, comparative translation, dual addressee, fairy tales, folk tales, German, Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, taboos, translation.

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