

Women in Children's and Young Adults' Literature and Its Translation. Female Characters in *Manolito Gafotas* and *Kika Superbruja*

Abstract: The superiority of men over women, as well as the parental model consisting only of a man and a woman, and the failure to educate in terms of equality and diversity, are issues that have been latent in our society since time immemorial. However, it is important to note how publishers can determine the way in which female characters should be developed through the translation of literary works with children and young readers as targets. Since this literature contributes to children's education and provides the first contact with adult experiences, it seems pertinent to analyze the importance of this kind of manipulation during the translational process. This manipulation is requested by different institutions and powerful groups, and its aim is to perpetuate a heteronormative discourse in the translation of female characters within this literary genre.

Keywords: *translation, manipulation, children's literature, female characters, heteronormativity, education*

1. Introduction

The existence of a hegemonic discourse whose objective is to legitimize the traditional roles of femininity and masculinity is a pervasive phenomenon from an early age. This phenomenon can be perceived as a systematic and standardized custom at school and it is reinforced by a multitude of literary works for children and young readers. The presentation of female characters, whether main or secondary ones, in children's and young adults' literature, can help us to understand both the mentality of a society and the conventions which drive it. Therefore, we intend to analyze the traits of the female characters of *Manolito Gafotas*, by the Spanish writer Elvira Lindo, and *Kika Superbruja*, by the German author KNISTER. Our subject of study will thus be these female characters, women or girls, in main, secondary or occasional roles, analysing them firstly in their original language. On the basis of this analysis, we will study whether their traits are maintained when translated into another language – German and English in the case of *Manolito Gafotas*; and Spanish in the case of *Kika Superbruja*. If this is not the case, our aim will be to examine how their personality, functions or transgressive characteristics are changed in favor of a feminine role closer to the classic gender marks established by heteropatriarchy. This work aims to be a first and schematic approach to a gender-oriented analysis that we intend to develop by examining translations of Children's and Young Adults' Literature works.

The Spanish *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española (DRAE)*¹ defines 'machismo' as an "attitude of arrogance of men with respect to women", a definition that does not contemplate the true extension – and seriousness – that the term entails. For this reason, over the years, various social and academic movements as well as social media have insisted that "Machismo is not innate, machismo is learned"² and have described it as a set of acquired attitudes and behaviours, as well as social practices and beliefs, aimed at justifying and promoting the maintenance of behaviours traditionally perceived as

¹ This is the most important linguistic authority in the Spanish language, available online at: <https://dle.rae.es/?w=diccionario>.

² María Jesús Ibáñez, "El machismo no es innato, el machismo se aprende" (2017), <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20171124/educacion-machismo-violencia-mujeres-se-aprende-6447037>, accessed 3 October 2018.

heterosexually male and discriminatory against women. Luciana Guerra³ speaks about a heteronormative order constructed from a binary sexual system in which a hierarchy dominated by the masculine is set, dismissing all the feminine as inferior. That is why Guerra argues that this system restricts the definition of human to male and female categories. At the same time, the system upholds the ‘attraction to the opposite sex’, leading to the discrimination of every dissident sexual orientation as well as any identity included in the LGTBI+ collective. However, the main question remains: how is this reflected in children’s and young adults’ literature?

Lemus Montaña⁴ defines children’s and young adults’ literature as a “literature aimed at non-adult readers, children of any age, from pre-readers to teenagers”. However, this definition not only seems inaccurate, but also encompasses a very broad audience, regardless of their age, needs or background. In fact, as Inmaculada Mendoza states,⁵ we cannot consider the literature created for children up to five years old as having any similarity with that aimed at a somewhat older audience. She refers to the model proposed by Joseph Appleyard in terms of the age group of the reader, their reading skills, as well as their tastes and interests: early childhood or reader-player, second childhood or prepubescent reader, adolescence or reader-thinker.⁶ In short, it is a readership with specific characteristics: a limited knowledge of the adult world, a far from extensive lexical domain, a more open-minded vision of the world, that is to say, a facility to accept all kinds of roles with ease.⁷

Furthermore, it is important to mention not only the readership to whom this type of literature is addressed, but also the objective it pursues. In this regard, Juan Cervera⁸ considers that children’s and young people’s literature plays a fundamental role in the development of the reader. This literature is not presented as a set of contents to be learned, but rather as a series of experiences that enables them to learn about the world as part of an integral education, meeting the child’s intimate needs. Therefore, we could speak of children’s and young adults’ literature as a tool with didactic purposes whose development is produced by the interaction of literary, social and educational systems.⁹

Marisa Fernández López¹⁰ affirms that children’s and young adults’ literature is, or at least has been for a long time, a peripheral field subjected to a strong censorship on the part of adults. Within this control there are numerous examples of textual modifications which are normally legitimised by reasons such as the absence of aesthetic values in the text, the negative influence the text can exercise on the readers (political, religious or moral criteria), the formative aim of children’s and young adults’ literature (didacticism), and even “the commercial need to update the text in order to increase sales”.¹¹

Therefore, we strongly believe that children’s and young adults’ literature is a genre with an idiosyncrasy that differentiates it from mass literature and that may be subject to manipulations prior to its publication in its original language (SL). These manipulations are produced by various factors claiming to adapt the work to make it more acceptable to the target group.

2. Translation and manipulation of children’s and young people’s literature

³ Luciana Guerra, “Familia y heteronormatividad”, *Revista Argentina de Estudios de Juventud*, 1 (2009).

⁴ Ismael Lemus Montaña, “Grado de adaptación en las traducciones de *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*”. *Tejuelo: Didáctica de la Lengua y la Literatura*, 4 (2008), 33-54, 34.

⁵ Inmaculada Mendoza, *La traducción al español de Judy Moody, de Megan McDonald. Revisión del tratamiento de los cultuemas y los nombres propios desde la traductología actual*. Doctoral Thesis (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 2014), 56.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷ Gillian Lathey, *Translating Children’s Literature* (London: Routledge, 2015).

⁸ Juan Cervera, “La literatura infantil. Los límites de la didáctica”, *Monteolivete*, 6 (1989).

⁹ See Zohar Shavit, *Poetics of Children’s Literature* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 123.

¹⁰ See Marisa Fernández López, “Comportamientos censores en literatura infantil y juveniltraducciones del inglés en la España franquista”, in Rosa Rabadán, ed., *Traducción y censura, inglés-español 1939-1985. Estudio preliminar* (Léon: Universidad, 2000), 227-254.

¹¹ “La necesidad comercial de actualizar el texto para incrementar las ventas”, translation by the authors. See Marisa Fernández López, “Canon y periferia en literatura infantil y juvenil. Manipulación del medio visual”, in Lourdes Lorenzo et al., eds., *Contribuciones al estudio de la traducción de literatura infantil y juvenil* (Valencia: Dossat, 2002), 13.

Mendoza¹² proposes that most of the research dedicated to the translation of children’s and young adults’ literature includes the debate about the existence or not of this mode of translation as a particular speciality with its own identity, different from the translation of mass literature. So, while Riitta Kuivasmäki¹³ firmly denies that children’s and young adults’ literature is a genre: “Children’s literature is not a genre. As literature for children and adults encompasses many of the same genres, it seems wrong to deal with children’s literature as a separate genre”, Barbara Wall¹⁴ defines this kind of literature as “the genre of writing for children”. Oittinen¹⁵ affirms that “Children’s literature can be seen either as literature produced and intended for children or as literature read by children”, and adds that “Children’s literature can also be considered an issue of intentionality: if the original author has intended or directed her/his book to be read by children, it is a children’s book”. Likewise, Göte Klingberg¹⁶ said in 1972 that children’s and young adults’ literature is “literature produced specifically for children”, while in 1999 Wall¹⁷ made the following distinction: “If a story is written for children, then it is for children, even though it may also be for adults. If a story is not written for children, then it does not form part of the genre of writing for children, even if the author, or publisher, hopes it will appeal to children”.

However, it is also true that in this type of translation, the translator may take a series of liberties with regard to the original text, and even manipulate it, as indicated by Shavit,¹⁸ in order to adapt it to the target culture. While it is true that the simplest form of manipulation would be the removal of certain elements or even of whole paragraphs, the translator cannot always perform this elimination since it could alter the development of the plot. Similarly, the result might not be acceptable due to other factors within the work, such as images, so the translators are forced to find a strategy that allows them to adapt the work to the target culture, so “when it is possible to delete undesirable scenes without damaging the basic plot or characterizations, translators will not hesitate to do so”.¹⁹

According to Reiss, what differentiates the translation of children’s and young adults’ literature from the translation of mass literature is the asymmetry in the translation process: “Erwachsene schreiben für Kinder und Jugendliche; Erwachsene übersetzen das von Erwachsenen Geschriebene für Kinder und Jugendliche” [Adults write for children and young adults; Adults translate what adults write for children and young adults].²⁰ According to Mendoza, this phenomenon implies that this literature is translated for children only secondarily, since the adult of the SL will take a series of experiences, knowledge and linguistic changes still unknown to the readers, and the translator, also an adult, will adapt, or modify and manipulate it to the culture of the target reader:

A diferencia de lo que sucede en la literatura para adultos, en función de los principios pedagógicos y morales que predominan en la sociedad receptora, las instancias mediadoras, esto es, las instituciones y autoridades culturales y educativas implicadas en los procesos de traducción, venta, promoción y compra de estos libros los editores, los bibliotecarios, los libreros, los educadores, los críticos y jurados literarios, los psicopedagogos, los orientadores, los padres y tutores, etc. ejercen una presión importante sobre el traductor de LI, ya sea de forma directa o indirecta. Como consecuencia de la influencia que todos estos

¹² Mendoza, *La traducción al español de Judy Moody, de Megan McDonald*, 55.

¹³ Riitta Oittinen, *Translating for Children* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2000), 65.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 61-62.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹⁸ Shavit, *Poetics of Children’s Literature*, 112.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁰ Katerina Reiss, “Zur Übersetzung von Kinder- und Jugendbüchern. Theorie und Praxis”, *Lebende Sprachen*, 27.1 (1982), 7-13, 7-8.

factores y agentes ejercen sobre el proceso, el traductor se verá obligado a añadir, omitir o adaptar determinados fragmentos textuales.²¹

2.1. *Male chauvinism and manipulation in the translation of children’s and young adults’ literature*

Bearing in mind that there are various authorities and institutions, as well as powerful groups that can influence the translation process, we should focus on our topic: machismo and heteronormativity as ideological manipulation in the translation of this literary genre. As Juan Marco Vaggione pointed out, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and its allied sectors stand out among the promoters of a hegemonic male chauvinist system and a single conception of the family. For the Church, defending the family is a way of defending culture, threatened by demands from feminist movements and by sexual diversity. It should not be forgotten that in the *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the collaboration of men and women in the Church and in the world*, prepared by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2004, it criticized the “radical feminism of recent years because it induces women to believe that in order to be themselves, they have to become antagonists of men, leading to an extreme rivalry between sexes, in which the identity and the role of one are assumed to undermine the other”.²²

Belén Lozano²³ talks about how children’s and young adults’ literature in Spain has been strongly linked to didactic and moralizing purposes. If we add the fact that certain publishers belong to groups influenced by political movements or by the Church – as is the case in point – we can observe the objective of our present study: that the idea of preserving conventional values leads publishers and professionals related to these sectors to manipulate fragments, even entire chapters, of SL works during the translational process in order to preserve that defence of culture and avoid the “feminist threat”.²⁴

3. *Hexe Lilli* and its female characters

Hexe Lilli, written by the German author KNISTER, with works aimed at first readers as well as a reading audience from 8 years old, tells the story of a young girl who, by chance, discovers she is a witch, and from that point on, she begins to have a series of adventures that will lead her to learn as much as the reader. The translation into Spanish was carried out by the translator Rosa Pilar Blanco and it was published by Bruño, a publisher linked to the Catholic Church, under the title *Kika Superbruja*.

²¹ “Unlike what happens in adult literature, depending on pedagogical and moral principles that predominate in the receiving society, the mediating authorities, that is, the cultural and educational institutions involved in the translation, sale, promotion and purchase of children’s and young adults’ literature (editors, librarians, booksellers, educators, critics and literary juries, educational psychologists, counsellors, parents and tutors) exert significant pressure on children’s and young adults’ literature translators, either directly or indirectly. As a result of the influence that all these factors and agents exert on the process, the translator may be forced to add, omit or adapt certain textual fragments”, translation by the authors. See Mendoza, *La traducción al español de Judy Moody, de Megan McDonald*, 70.

²² Juan Marco Vaggione, “Las familias más allá de la heteronormatividad”, in Cristina Motta and Macarena Sáez, eds., *La mirada de los jueces. Género y sexualidades en la jurisprudencia latinoamericana* (Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores, 2008), 13-87, 14.

²³ Belén Lozano, “La traducción de la literatura infantojuvenil en lengua alemana en España. El caso de *Kika Superbruja*”, in Heike van Lawick and Brigitte Jirku, eds., *Übersetzung als Performanz. Translation und Translationswissenschaft in Performativem Licht* (Wien, Berlin: Lit-Verlag, 2012), 225.

²⁴ Nuria Pérez Vicente et al., eds., *Manolito por el mundo. Análisis intercultural de las traducciones al inglés, francés, alemán e italiano* (Sevilla: Asociación Cultural Benilde). For example, some aspects are censored in the English version, with the consent of Elvira Lindo, because they are considered politically incorrect and unacceptable to the American public.

As we have commented elsewhere,²⁵ the fact that Lilli – Kika in Spanish – is a girl, is due, according to the author,²⁶ to the interest of promoting the female character as independent, strong and capable of solving any challenge she may have in a logical way, without any help other than her own intelligence and that of her friends. Accordingly, the protagonist, in the original version, is accompanied by her brother and her mother, a single mother who is able to support her family on her own, without needing a male figure to help her. Likewise, we can see throughout the work that the figures of authority and responsibility of Lilli’s friends are their mothers, and never any male character. This decision has not been respected in the Spanish translation since the translator decided to add a paternal character in the TL, as well as to make another series of changes that will be analyzed below.

3.1. ‘Kika Superbruja’ and the magic of inventing characters

The work under scrutiny is the third volume of the saga *Hexe Lilli und der Zirkuszauber*, published in 1996 by the German publisher Arena, and translated into Spanish as *Kika Superbruja and the magic of the circus* in 1999 by the aforementioned publishing house, Bruño.

As we can read on the back cover of the Spanish version, “in this adventure, Kika attends a circus performance. Her magic arts will enable her to teach the knife thrower a lesson, and to make the tricks of the wizard Abraxis appear really ... magical!” However, we can see how there have been a series of changes and manipulations throughout the translation of the text into Spanish that lead us to consider the aim of this translation to preserve a heteronormative model with a moralizing purpose (unfortunately, there is no English translation of the text that we can show):

Und was noch schöner ist, Lillis Mutter hat heute Morgen Eintrittskarten für die große Sondervorstellung am Sonntag gekauft.

Na ja, dass meine veste Freundin Mona am Sonntag nicht mit mir gehen kann. Ihre Mutter hat es auch versucht, bevor sie Mona von der Schule abgeholt hat, aber es hat nicht geklappt.

Hoffentlich rede ter nur nicht unnötig und macht Mama damit stutzig!

Sie muss ja den Zauber wieder rückgängig machen – bevor Mama vielleicht doch was merkt.

Am Donnerstagnachmittag holt Tobias’ Mutter Leon ab.

Dann können wir ja doch alle zusammengehen, freut sich Mama und gibt Leon einen dicken Kuss.²⁷

Y, lo que es todavía mejor, esta misma mañana los padres de Kika han sacado entradas para la función de gala del domingo.

Pues... que Mónica, mi mejor amiga, no puede acompañarme al circo el domingo. Sus padres han intentado sacar entradas para ese día, pero ya estaban agotadas.

«Ojalá no hable más de la cuenta y haga sospechar a papá y mamá», piensa.

Y es que Kika tiene que anular el hechizo antes de que sus padres empiecen a sospechar de verdad.

El jueves por la tarde, los padres de Tony pasan a buscar a Dani.

¡Entonces podemos ir todos juntos! Se alegran sus padres.²⁸

These are just a few fragments collected both from the source text (ST) and from the target text. As can be clearly seen, the ST presents a single authority figure, the mother, either because it is a single-parent family, as in the case of Lilli, or because the author wanted to mention only one part of the family. This

²⁵ Antonio Lérica Muñoz, “El machismo y la heteronormatividad en la traducción al español de la literatura infantil y juvenil (LIJ)”, in Ernesto Cutillas Orgilés, ed., *Convergencia y transversalidad en humanidades. Actas de las VII jornadas de investigación de la facultad de filosofía y letras de la universidad de Alicante (Alicante, 6 and 7 April 2017)* (Alicante: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad de Alicante, 2018), 103-108.

²⁶ We had the opportunity to discuss this point with the author by phone.

²⁷ Knister, *Hexe Lilli und der Zirkuszauber* (Würzburg: Area Verlag, 1996).

²⁸ Knister, *Kika Superbruja y la magia del circo* (Madrid: Bruño, 1999).

phenomenon is common in the culture of the SL and also not unusual in the target culture, since in Spain there are a large number of single-parent families whose heads are indistinctly a father or a mother.

Thus, the Spanish publisher presents a translating strategy in which these situations not only lead to the inclusion of a non-existent paternal character, but also imply the existence of a heteronormative family composed of a man and a woman.

This decision, taken by the translator probably under the publisher’s standards, could not only be considered as a translation mistake – as it deviates from both the concept of family and the message intended by the author – but also as a perpetuation of social conventions established by a patriarchal society. It also avoids showing alternatives such as the single-parent or homoparental family, and even more importantly, prevents younger children from becoming aware of them.

Likewise, in the following examples we can observe how a traditional distribution of the roles men and women should play within the classic family model, such as that proposed by the translator and the publisher, has been introduced:

Aber bevor sie das herausfinden kann, ruft Mama aus der Küche: »Lilli, Leon! Zum Abendessen!«

Er erzählt so viel, dass Mama beide Kinder zischendurch ermahnen muss das Essen darüber nicht zu vergessen.

»Und wie steht es mit dem Tischdecken?«, fragt Mama

»Weißt du eigentlich überhaupt noch, was du willst?«, fragt Mama ratlos. »Und dann noch diese alberne Buchstabenverdreher...«

Weiter kommt Leon leider nicht, weil Mama das Zimmer betritt und die nächtliche Besprechung auf der Stelle beendet.

Pero antes de que pueda averiguarlo, mamá les llama desde la cocina:

—¡Kika, Dani! ¡A cenar!

Habla tanto que su madre tiene que decirle a Kika y a él que no se olviden de la cena.

—¿Es que hoy nadie piensa ayudarme a poner la mesa?

—pregunta papá

—¿Qué está pasando aquí? —pregunta el padre, desconcertado—. ¿A qué viene esa tontería de cambiar las letras de sitio?

Dani no puede seguir hablando porque papá ha entrado en la habitación y ha puesto fin a la conferencia nocturna

In the aforementioned examples, we can observe how the traditional roles are marked by gender work. On the one hand, we see how the figure of the mother has been maintained for tasks such as working in the kitchen or ensuring that children do not forget their dinner, while the figure that imposes order or needs help to carry out a simple domestic task becomes the father in the Spanish version.

It should be noted that sometimes in the target text the mother figure also appears scolding the children or alternates with the father figure, added to impose authority. However, to our mind, the previous examples aim indirectly to send a subliminal message to the readers in order to perpetuate conventional roles assigned to the different sexes: the mother/woman works in the kitchen while the father/man is the figure of authority.

However, the perpetuation of a traditional gender bias is not only found at the textual level but, as we will see below, it goes further and can be perceived in other aspects of the publication.

3.2. From the cover to the inner part: peritextual elements

From the first contact with the original work, the Arena publisher presents neutral colors, usually with cold and *non-sexual* tones, such as yellow or blue. The use of these colors reveals a detachment from possible gender marks, enabling the publisher to reach a wider readership, since the author wants the work to appeal to as many young people as possible, irrespective of their sex.

So, the German edition features a circus with blue tent and bright stars.²⁹ Although blue is usually associated with children, the objective that this edition seems to have is the inclusion of a wide readership, without differentiating between boys and girls. However, in the edition published by Bruño, the dominant color on the cover is pink, eliminating the circus elements and therefore insisting on conventional gender marks: Kika is a girl, therefore its color should be pink and its readership will presumably be girls.

On the other hand, the non-translation of the inner illustrations by the designer and illustrator of children's and young adults' literature, Birgit Rieger, is also surprising.

As mentioned above, Kika's parents get circus tickets for everyone and they are happy to attend a circus performance together (see table 1). However, the text is accompanied by the following image:



Fig. 1

It can be seen that Kika has three tickets in her hand, although there are four members of her "Spanish" family. The lack of adaptation of this image may confuse the reader, since the images serve as a support for reading and, in this case, a lack of coherence remains. Similarly, in the following fragment, in which Kika is supposedly with her "Spanish" parents and her brother attending the show, only three people appear, as in the original German version:



Fig. 2

²⁹ As we can see in the covers of the German original (<https://pictures.abebooks.com/isbn/9783401045344-de.jpg>) and the Spanish translation (<https://www.brunolibros.es/libro/personajes/kika-superbruja-y-la-magia-del-circo/>).

Again, the paternal figure – non-existent in the ST but added in the FT – does not appear in the illustration, which produces an incoherence that hinders rather than aids the reading process, which is supposedly the main function of the images in children’s and young people’s literature.

These are just some of the examples that can be perceived in this translation in the zeal of this Catholic publisher to maintain a discourse that promotes a family model consisting only of a man and a woman, instead of educating in equality and diversity.

4. The women of *Manolito Gafotas*, by Elvira Lindo, around the world

The journalist and writer Elvira Lindo published eight novels between 1994 and 2012 featuring a ten-year-old boy as protagonist -Manolito Gafotas, from the Carabanchel neighbourhood in Madrid – all with illustrations by the cartoonist Emilio Urberuaga.³⁰ The last book was published 12 years after the end of an initial series of seven, with an adult Manolito as protagonist: *Manolito Gafotas* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1994), *¡Pobre Manolito!* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1995), *¡Cómo molo! (Otra de Manolito Gafotas)* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1996), *Los trapos sucios* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1997), *Manolito on the road* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1998), *Yo y el Imbécil* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1999), *Manolito tiene un secreto* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 2000), *Mejor Manolo* (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 2012).

In all of them, four female figures play an important role, all related to the educational field: Manolito’s mother, his classmate Susana, the school psychologist and the *señor*, his teacher. Their portrayal in the German and English translations will be analyzed in the following sections.

4.1. ‘Manolito’ translated into German

Out of the eight works, only the first three have been translated into German, and published in Germany between 2000 and 2002, with the following titles: *Manolito – Opas neues Gebiss* (Hamburg: Klopp, 2000), *Manolito und die Schmutzfußbande* (Hamburg: Klopp, 2001), *Manolito – was für ein Supertyp!* (Hamburg: Klopp, 2002).

As can be seen, the German versions were published by the same publishing house from Hamburg. They are the work of the same translator, Sabine Müller-Nordhoff, and were illustrated by the same artist, Oliver Wenniges. This is also the case with the original Spanish books, all of which were published by the Alfaguara publishing house – with the exception of the last novel – and illustrated by the award-winning Spanish cartoonist, Emilio Urberuaga.³¹

On the other hand, the German covers present a very different aesthetic from that of the original novels, as can be seen at first glance in the German and English editions of the third volume.³² The German version seems to be more clearly aimed at children, while the Spanish version has an aesthetic closer to a young – even adult – readership. The sobriety and originality of the illustrations mean that the Spanish books are not subject to the aesthetic assumptions usually found in covers and illustrations of children’s and young adults’ literature anywhere in the world. We believe that this significant aesthetic

³⁰ See also Nuria Pérez Vicente et al., eds., *Manolito por el mundo*.

³¹ On the broad professional experience of this Spanish illustrator, see http://sol-e.com/bancorecursos/museo.php?letra=U&id_tabla=2176&seccion=Biografia and <http://www.lukor.com/literatura/noticias/0411/12161556.htm>, accessed 18 June 2018. See also Víctor Montoya, “Las ilustraciones en la literatura infantil”, <http://www.leemeuncuento.com.ar/ilustraciones.html>, accessed 18 June 2018; Oliver Wenniges, <http://www.oliverwenniges.de/>, accessed 18 June 2018.

³² Compare the original Spanish with the German one, https://www.todostuslibros.com/libros/como-molo_978-84-204-6452-7, <https://www.zvab.com/Manolito-super-Typ-Lindo-Elvira-Oliver/22865813174/bd#&gid=1&pid=1>, accessed 18 June 2018.

difference of the images played an important role in the failure of *Manolito Brillenschlange* (the name of the character in German) among the German-speaking readership.

4.2. ‘*Manolito*’ in English

The first three volumes of the series were also translated into English:

Lindo, Elvira (2008) <i>Manolito Four-Eyes: The 1st Volume of the Great Encyclopedia of My Life</i> . Translation by Joanne Moriarty. New York: Marshall Cavendish Corporation.	Lindo, Elvira (2009) <i>Manolito Four-Eyes: The 2nd Volume of the Great Encyclopedia of My Life</i> . Translation by Caroline Travalia. New York: Marshall Cavendish Corporation.	Lindo, Elvira (2010) <i>Manolito Four-Eyes: The 3rd Volume of the Great Encyclopedia of My Life</i> . Translation by Caroline Travalia. New York: Marshall Cavendish Children's Books.
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In this case, the three volumes were published by the same publishing house, but unlike the German versions, the illustrations of the English translations are the same as the original novel in Spanish. In addition, the three volumes translated into English, unlike the German versions, are the work of two different translators, Joanne Moriarty with the first volume, and Caroline Travalia with the next two volumes. In that regard, we believe that the preservation of the original illustrations, in contrast to the German versions, contributed enormously to the success of the novel in the USA, where the English versions were published and distributed. Moreover, they were translated into American English on behalf of a US publisher. Finally, the maintenance of the illustrator is reflected in the global aesthetics of the volume in the covers.

4.3. The women of ‘*Manolito*’ in German and English

The aim of this section is to ascertain whether there is any difference in the treatment of female characters in the above-mentioned translations from Spanish into German and English.

As already stated, there are four important female characters in the life of the protagonist, *Manolito*, with roles traditionally linked to women: a suffering mother, a teacher (*la seño*), a child psychologist and a classmate. The latter, a 13-year-old girl, is regarded as an object of desire by the protagonist and her other male classmates, fuelling their fantasies. This does not mean that the Spanish novel is male chauvinist in nature or that it defends those postulates, but it parodies the society in the late eighties, in which masculine and feminine roles were still assigned a strict sexist character.

4.3.1 The women of ‘*Manolito*’ at a peritextual level: front and back covers

Here, we deal exclusively with the first volume of the series, published in Spanish in 1994 with the title of *Manolito* and translated into German in 2000 under the title *Manolito Brillenschlange. Opas neues Gebiss* (the German subtitle of the volume – the new dentures of the grandfather – refers to one of the chapters of the novel, focused on the grandfather’s dentures).

At first glance, the covers of both volumes are very different, from the ‘orthodox’ blue of the Spanish volume, which alludes to the manly character of the protagonist, to the ‘neutral’ yellow of the German version, which, like *Kika Superbruja*, seeks to avoid any male chauvinist connotations by using yellow instead of the pink of the Spanish version. In the English version, the color is orange, which is also

neutral like the yellow of the German version, and even in the Italian version, the chosen colour is green instead of blue.³³

We reproduce below the covers of the first three volumes in Spanish, German and English along with their back covers, which will be analyzed in order to point out their differences:³⁴

Manolito Gafotas es uno de los personajes más famosos del “mundo mundial”. Este chaval de Carabanchel (Alto) nos ofrece, a través de sus gafas, una visión del mundo rebosante de humor. ¡Manolito es único, magnífico, inimitable...! Junto a él, y junto a su hermano el Imbécil, su abuelo Nicolás y, por supuesto, toda la pandilla, viviremos divertidas aventuras.

Es war einmal ein wunderbarer Junge, ein Supertyp, dem keiner ein X für ein U vormachen konnte. Es gab keinen wie ihn und er nannte sich Manolito Brillenschlange. Ich weiss nicht, ob du es gemerkt hast, aber dieser Wahnsinnstyp bin ich. Meine Mutter meint, dass ich sie noch um den Verstand rede, sie meint, reden sei für mich eine Sache für Leben und Tod, aber meine Mutter sieht sowieso alles und arbeitet nur deshalb nicht beim CIA, weil die vom CIA sie noch nicht entdeckt haben. Aber ich will mit dem Tag beginnen, an dem ich geboren wurde.

Nobody knows me as Manolito García Moreno, not even Big Ears López, and he's my best friend; even though sometimes he can be a dog and a traitor (and other times, a dog traitor), he's still my best friend and he's a whole lotta cool. In Carabanchel – that's the name of my neighborhood in Madrid, in case I haven't told you – everyone knows me as Manolito Four-Eyes.

As can be seen, the descriptions of the back covers are very different among themselves; the first one focuses on highlighting what is shown on the cover; that is, it emphasizes all the important characters that surround Manolito: his grandfather, his brother El Imbécil, his friend Jihad and Susana Bragas Sucias –the only female character.

The German version highlights the other great family figure, also feminine, Manolito’s mother, the progenitor who sees and knows so much that she could almost work for the CIA.

In the case of the English back cover, which is similar to the Spanish one, it is intended to highlight the figure of the protagonist and his curious nickname. In addition, it mentions his best friend and the name of the Madrid neighbourhood where Manolito lives, using an excerpt from one of the chapters of the novel. It can also be observed how the English translator retains the humorous tone of the original and the singular speech of the protagonist, which was possibly another reason for the success of the English version in contrast with the failure of the German one, which does not maintain that peculiar trait of the speech of Manolito.

4.3.2. *The female characters in Spanish, German and English*

As we can see below, just like the names of the male characters,³⁵ the female names with a special meaning have been translated into both languages. This is the case of Susana Bragas Sucias, whose name

³³ See here the cover, <https://www.libreriauniversitaria.it/ecco-manolito-manolito-quattrocchi-lindo/libro/9788878743250>, accessed 18 June 2018.

³⁴ See here the covers in Spanish (https://www.todostuslibros.com/libros/manolito-gafotas_978-84-204-4856-5), German (<https://www.booklooker.de/B%C3%BCher/ElviraLindo+Manolito/id/A02iczcm01ZZC?zid=79rjrqaasjt161q33mhu49r5kc>) and English (<https://www.amazon.com/Manolito-Four-Eyes-Great-Encyclopedia-Life-ebook/dp/B009DOOU82>), accessed 18 June 2018.

³⁵ We discussed this point in “The Strength of Stereotypes: The Translation of Children’s and Young Adults’ Literature from an Inclusive Perspective”, a lecture given at the last AESLA conference held in April 2018 in Cádiz.

is translated into German quite literally and successfully as Susana Schmutzbutz, whereas the English name is the politically correct Susana the One and Only.

The names of both the teacher Asunción (whose name means “Assumption”) and the child psychologist Esperanza (whose name means “Hope”) have been maintained, despite the obvious religious and ironic connotations of both names, especially the psychologist’s. It may be due to the double fact that they are not child characters, whose nicknames are much more significant, and they are not very important characters:³⁶

Madre de Manolito	Manolitos Mutter	Manolito’s mother
Otras madres	andere Mütter	Other mothers
Susana Bragas Sucias	Susana Schmutzbutz	Susana the One and the Only
<i>Sita</i> Asunción	Fräulein Asunzion	Miss Asunción
<i>Sita</i> Espe (psicóloga)	Fräulein Esperanza	Miss Esperanza

In the Spanish version, the female characters are not explained at the beginning of the novel, unlike the German translation, which makes a selection of the most important characters and, above all, those whose names have a special meaning.

Two of the main female characters of the novel are described in this fashion, with the peculiar speech of Manolito and the special sense of humor of Elvira Lindo: Susana Bragas Sucias, whose name refers to one of the obsessions of boys from some decades ago (girls’ panties, the ‘bragas’) and these panties’ strange tendency to always appear dirty at the end of the day; and Asunción, their teacher, a fundamental figure in formative years of any child, who is described as a futurologist (‘futuróloga’), who can see if a child will develop into a killer or a Nobel Prize winner, without contemplating anything in between!:

Susana Bragas Sucias

Yo le conté a mi abuelo que la Susana no respetaba nada, que aunque uno se lo hubiera pedido, se iba con cualquiera que le diera cualquier cosa ... que lo de las bragas de Susana era para llevarlo al programa “Misterios sin resolver”. Su madre, que había ido a hablar con la *sita* Asunción, decía que las bragas se le manchaban de tierra aunque llevara el chándal y que haría falta que vinieran a España científicos de todo el mundo para saber por qué unas bragas que salían blancas de casa por la mañana entro de un chándal, a la hora de comer se habían vuelto negras.

Sita Asunción

... estábamos esperando a que nos recibiera la psicóloga del colegio, a que nos recibiera uno a uno, porque a los tres juntos no nos aguanta nadie, porque de aquí o a tres años vamos a acabar siendo unos delincuentes. Eso no lo digo yo, lo dice mi *sita* Asunción, que, además de maestra es futuróloga, porque ve el futuro de todos sus alumnos. No le hace falta bola de cristal ni cartas: te hinca los ojos en la cabeza y te ve de muchos años como uno de los delincuentes más buscados de la historia o ganando un Premio Nobel. Ella no tiene término medio.

Here, we can enjoy Manolito and Elvira Lindo in their purest form, with their peculiar sense of humor and their exaggerated comparisons, which make the translation of the novel so difficult, in addition to the complicated names of the characters, especially the children.

In the German version, the names of the characters are semantically or phonetically adapted to their public. The explanation preceding the story, which does not appear in Spanish, aims to highlight, with a great sense of humor and with the special language of the author, the failings of the protagonists: the excessive imagination of Susana, which drives people crazy, and the obsession of Asunción for the possible “rehabilitation” of the children:

³⁶ See also Olga García García, “La onomástica en la traducción al alemán de Manolito Gafotas”, *Anuario de Estudios Filológicos*, 24 (2001), 153-167 and M^a del Mar Soliño Pazó “¿Es Manolito Gafotas realmente Manolito Brillenschlange?”, in Barbara Lübke et al., eds., *El Alemán en su Contexto Español. Deutsch Im Spanischen Kontext. Actas del IV Congreso de la FAGE* (Santiago: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 2004), 677-684.

Susana Schmutzbutz

Dieses Mädchen ist wie ein Orkan. Mit ihrer übersprudelnden Phantasie kann sie jeden in Teufels Küche bringen, vor allem Manolito.

Fräulein Asunzion

Obwohl sie glaubt, dass ihre Schüler allesamt Verbrecher sind, gibt sie die Hoffnung nicht auf, dass sie sich bessern werden.

The character of Manolito’s mother deserves a special mention. We find her thus described in her first appearance in the novel:

La madre del Orejones mola un pegote porque está divorciada y, como se siente culpable, nunca le levanta la mano al Orejones para que no se le haga más grande el trauma que le está curando la señorita Esperanza, que es la psicóloga de mi colegio. Mi madre tampoco quiere que me coja traumas pero, como no está divorciada, me da de vez en cuando una colleja, que es su especialidad. La colleja es una torta que te da una madre, o en su defecto cualquiera, en esa parte del cuerpo humano que se llama nuca. No es porque sea mi madre, pero la verdad es que es una experta como hay pocas.

Die Mutter von Segelohr geht mit ihm wirklich durch dick und dünn, weil sie geschieden ist und sich immer schuldig fühlt. Darum hebt sie auch nie die Hand gegen Segelohr, damit sein Trauma nicht noch größer wird, das Fräulein Esperanza, die Schulpsychologin, bei ihm kurieren soll. Meine Mutter will auch nicht, dass ich mir Trauma einfange, aber sie ist eben nicht geschieden und deswegen verpasst sie mir ab und zu einen Klatscher, eien Spezialität von ihr. Ein Klatscher ist eine Art Ohrfeige, die dir eine Mutter oder, falls nicht vorhanden, irgendein anderer an ihrer Stelle verpasst, und zwar auf den Teil des menschlichen Körpers, der sich Nacken nennt. Ich sage das nicht, weil sie meine Mutter ist, aber ich versichere euch, dass sie diesen Schlag beherrscht wie keine Zweite.

Big Ear’s mom is a whole lotta cool because she’s divorced and since she feels guilty, she never chews our Big Ears. She doesn’t want him to have an even bigger trauma than the one currently being cured by Miss Esperanza, our school psychologist. My mom doesn’t want me to have traumas either, but since she’s not divorced, every now and again she chews me out, which is her specialty.³⁷ It’s not because she’s my mom; the truth is, she’s expert like no other.

As can be noted, on the one hand, the German version neutralizes the language of Elvira Lindo, since it loses almost all its humorous tone and certain colloquial turns of phrase, like *mola un pegote* (meaning “it’s really cool”), which disappears in German with the expression “geht mit ihm wirklich durch dick und dünn”, while the English ‘whole lotta cool’, which features on the back cover of the volume, maintains the essence of the original. On the other hand, the English version censors as politically incorrect the point of the smacks (*collejas*), which is partly suppressed.³⁸ In the German version, it is maintained, although the *colleja*, instead a smack on the back of the neck, becomes a neutral slap (*Ohrfeige*). Both versions are correct, however, in the tone and the colloquial register of the final reflection on the degree of slapping expertise that Manolito’s mother seems to possess.

5. Conclusions

³⁷ The description of a ‘colleja’ (slap on the back of the neck) is censored by omission in the English version, with the consent of Elvira Lindo, because it is considered politically incorrect and unacceptable to the American public, especially to a child’s one.

³⁸ Elvira Lindo herself has commented how she accepted that the English translation could introduce changes of this nature in order to be politically correct (Manolito can’t give chocolate to his dog nor make fun of Chinese people, for instance). See also Joan Moriarty, “Las traductoras de Manolito Gafotas al inglés nos cuentan qué piensan de Manolito Gafotas”, <http://www.manolitogafotas.es/entrevista>, accessed 18 October 2019.

Children’s and young people’s literature seems to be more open to greater manipulation than mass literature, maybe due to its educational and moralizing nature which publishers, following their ideals and objectives, seek to strengthen.

As we have shown, throughout the Spanish adaptation of *Hexe Lilli/Kika Superbruja*, a large number of modifications can be perceived, which make us question the legitimacy of its translational process. The resulting text is not only far from the original regarding both its language and culture, but also regarding the message the author sought to convey. The translator offers us a version that could be considered as a prototext, since adding new characters, as well as changing their roles, can be seen as the real creation of a new story that has nothing to do with the one published in the SL.

On the other hand, in the case of *Manolito Gafotas* women represent traditional roles, such as teachers, child psychologists, whimsical girls who drive boys crazy, and mothers who bring up their children on their own, either taking them to the psychologist or slapping them on the back of the neck (the traditional *collejas*), so commonplace in Spanish culture. In its translations into English and German, we find that those versions respect these roles which, in the end, the author parodies as a reflection of a society as patriarchal as the Spanish one.

In short, we witness a correct use of translation when Spanish is the source language, but its use as a manipulative tool when the target language is Spanish. This leads us to question the veracity of this latter translation, as well as the possible need for a new interpretation and translation of the works under study in order to adapt them to a social reality more in line with the current situation of the target culture.

Therefore, we can conclude with the following question: if it is possible to modify certain aspects of novels such as names, characters, front covers, illustrations or back covers, why not carry out a positive manipulation to favour the breakdown of gender marks and roles traditionally laid down by heteropatriarchy?