TRANSLATING AURALITY: HOW FRENCH READERS RE-SCRIPT LA CHASSE À L'OURS (WE'RE GOING ON A BEAR HUNT) *FOR PERFORMANCE*

*Maureen **Hosay**, University of Antwerp and Ghent University,*
Maureen.Hosay@uantwerpen.be

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Abstract: Picture books are highly multimodal products, combining textual, visual, aural – and sometimes even tactile and olfactory – modes. In spite of the richness of such combinations, most scholarly attention has been devoted to interplays between visual and textual modes as their most salient meaning-making resources (see Sipe 1998; 2012; Nikolajeva & Scott 2000; Painter 2013; Nodelman 1990; Hamer et al. 2017). However, picture books are connected to sounds in a variety of ways (e.g. song adaptations, rhythmic structure, sound books). In this article, I explore their read-aloud quality which, though "latent" (Boria et al. 2020), is an essential part of their production and reception. Indeed, Catalina Millán-Scheiding identifies musicality as one of the four core dimensions of children's rhymes (2021). More specifically, I focus on picture books' read-aloud quality in translation, and its consequences on performances for an audience. The picture book that I examine – Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury's *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (1989) – is based on a folk song and has retained its musical qualities. Through an investigation of YouTube read-aloud videos in French, I analyse how the translation strategies employed at the textual level (e.g. rhythms, rhymes, linguistic choices, register) affect the aural quality of the picture book and its subsequent performances. From the outset, French performances demonstrate greater diversity than English ones, which have been shaped by Rosen's performance. I will interpret those findings using a model for analysis of translated picture book texts based on Millán-Scheiding's (2021) and Cay Dollerup's (1999; 2003) models.

Key words: children's literature, aurality, translation, performances

1. Introduction

When perusing the children's book section of a bookstore, it does not take long to notice the connection between children's literature and sound: numerous picturebooks enhance the audience's reading experience through sound buttons or CDs, audiobooks and eBooks

generally feature sounds and music, and textured baby books aim to create sounds through touch. The picturebook discussed in this article, Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury's *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (1989), is tied to sound and music through its origin as a scout camp song that emerged in the US in the 1970s (Tims 2012).

As a picturebook, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (*Bear Hunt* hereafter) is the story of four children, a baby, and their dog going on an adventure across the countryside in search for a bear. On their way, they face a series of natural obstacles (e.g. long grass, a cold river, a snowstorm). Oxenbury's double spread illustrations alternate between black and white charcoal drawings – when the children face an obstacle – and watercolour paintings – when they go through it. While the former contain the bulk of the text, the latter only display onomatopoeias, a core feature of the picturebook's read-aloud quality.

Before he was advised by his editor to turn it into a picturebook, Rosen integrated the song into his school performances. The initial medium (song) of the *Bear Hunt* and its genre (folk) as well as its performative context (scout camps) prompt a certain kind of performance, one that is lively and upbeat, sung by a group – adults and children alike – during outdoors activities. Those qualities have been maintained by Rosen in his shows and YouTube performances, as well as in the numerous recorded versions of the song by different artists (e.g. Linda Goss 1976; Alison McMorland 1977; Mike and Michelle Jackson 1992; Greg and Steve 2000). There is, therefore, a relatively established way of performing the English *Bear Hunt* song and picturebook.

The picturebook's success led to translation in many languages, including French. The translation process of picturebooks not only involves paying attention to the relationship between the text and the illustrations, but also being aware of their read-aloud quality (Oittinen 2018, 463). Though it is latent, i.e. "potentially available whenever we encounter a sequence of written words" (Tomalin 2020, 137), it is one of its core components, one that is, as Seán Golden argues, as important as meaning (Golden qtd. in Oittinen et al. 2017, 71). As Riitta Oittinen puts it: "An illustrated text, like a picture book, is not just a combination of words and illustrations; it has both sound and rhythm, which can also be heard, as picture books are often read aloud to children" (Oittinen 2000, 109). This complexifies the task of the picturebook translator, who has to juggle several dimensions during the translation process in order to provide a product that reads aloud well. To do so, Oittinen et al. stress that "[t]ranslators of picturebooks should be aware of the different potentials of expression, such as tone, intonation, tempo, and pauses,

and contribute in every way possible to the aloud-reader's enjoyment of the story" (Oittinen et al. 2017, 69).

In this article, I approach the translation of picturebook text as a multidimensional process. I first analyse the strategies employed by the French translator of *La chasse à l'ours* by close reading a portion of the text, then compare with the English version to identify which dimension(s) of the text come through in translation and what kind of performance it scripts for the audience (Bernstein 2011). Then, I turn toYouTube read-aloud videos of *La chasse à l'ours* to gain insights into how French audience members perform the translated text, and the ways in which they "rescript" it to be suited for a performance by choosing to prioritize different dimensions of the text.

2. Picturebook text as a multidimensional script for performance

While empirical research is necessary to uncover how a given work is actually read-aloud and performed by an audience, the work itself already provides information – what Annalisa Sezzi aptly calls "stage directions" (Sezzi 2020, 215). In this article, picturebooks are regarded as "scriptive things," i.e. "item[s] of material culture that prompt[] meaningful bodily behaviors" (Bernstein 2011, 71) and that "reveal a script for a performance" (71-72). Crucially, Robin Bernstein highlights that those scripts are *proposed* to the audience, not imposed to them (72).

Drawing on the works of Cay Dollerup (1999; 2003) Catalina Millán-Scheiding (2021); Marcus Tomalin (2020), and Sezzi (2020), I distinguish five dimensions of picturebook text:

1. linguistic (vocabulary, word order, sentence structures);
2. poetic (verse forms, rhythm, rhymes);
3. narrative (elements of the plot and order of those elements);
4. performative (elements of play, performance);
5. visual (design, typography).

Those five dimensions are interconnected and a change to one has consequences for the others, hence the relevance of this model to study the translation of picturebook texts. For instance, capitalised words (visual) suggests a louder voice (performative); a word choice (linguistic) can affect the story (narrative); the sentence length (linguistic) may change the meter (poetic); the choice of an onomatopoeia in translation (linguistic) affects its pronunciation (performative).

Within the scope of this article, "to perform" is understood as "to entertain people by dancing, singing, acting, or playing music"

(Cambridge Dictionary). There is no one way to "read" a picturebook aloud, and it often involves more than reading (aloud) altogether (e.g. rhythmic reading, singing, making gestures and facial expressions, acting out scenes, voicing characters). I will, therefore, use the terms "performance" and "performing" as umbrella terms to refer to any combinations of the abovementioned activities that occur during the reading-aloud of the picturebook. As will be shown, the readers from the sample used in this analysis can all be said to "perform" the picturebook, albeit in a variety of ways.

3. *La chasse à l'ours*

In this section, I apply the model detailed in part 2 to identify which dimensions of the French text have been prioritized in translation and which have not, and to what effect. Table 1 offers a side-by-side comparison of the first scene from the picturebook in English and French (the grass). For ease of reference, the numbers on the left will be used in further discussions of specific lines. Additionally, lines 1-4 and 7-10 will respectively be referred to as the first part of the chorus and the second part of the chorus, as they are repeated without change throughout the entire story. I call "verse" lines 5-6, which change with each obstacle.

	English	**French**[1]	**Back translation**
1	We're going on a bear hunt.	Nous allons à la chasse à l'ours.	We are going on the bear hunt.
2	We're going to catch a big one.	Nous allons en prendre un très gros.	We are going to take a very big one.
3	What a beautiful day!	La vie est belle !	Life is beautiful!
4	We're not scared.	Nous n'avons peur de rien.	We are not scared of anything.
5	Oh-oh! Grass!	Oh, une prairie !	Oh, a meadow!

[1] The French picturebook has two translations (Lauriot-Prévost 1989 and Duval 1997). Unless mentioned otherwise, I refer to the first one, as it is the one used by all performers but one. In fact, the second translation did not remain in print for long. Following requests from readers, the publishing house responsible for it bought the rights to the first translation and has only been publishing that one ever since.

6	Long wavy grass.	On dirait la mer.	It looks like the sea.
7	We can't go over it.	On ne peut pas passer dessus.	We cannot go over it.
8	We can't go under it.	On ne peut pas passer dessous.	We cannot go under it.
9	Oh, no!	Allons-y !	Let's go!
10	We've got to go through it!	Il n'y a plus qu'à la traverser !	All that is left to do is go through it!

Table 1: The first double spread of the Bear Hunt *in English (left), French (middle) and back translated English (right)*

When comparing the English and French texts, it appears that the French translation contains more words and more syllables, and proportionally more two-syllable and three-syllable words (e.g. "allons," "passer," "dessus," "allons-y," "traverser"). Table 2 provides an overview of the number of words, syllables, and the distribution of words based on syllable numbers in the selected passage:

	Words	**Syllables**	**1 syllable**	**2 syllables**	**3 syllables**
English	41	47	35 (86%)	5 (12%)	1 (2%)
French	49	54	38 (78%)	9 (18%)	2 (4%)

Table 2: Word and syllable count, and syllable distribution in the first double spread of the Bear Hunt *in English and French*

Though the English version does not have a rhyming pattern per se, most lines end on the same or similar sounds: hunt – one; day – scared; grass – grass; it – it – it. This is not the case of the French version. However, it should be noted that certain word choices in the French version do contribute to a rhythmic reading: "peut pas passer" ["cannot go"] and "dessus … dessous" ["over … under"] (l. 7-8) present alliterations and convey the repetitiveness present in the English text, though in a different way.

Generally, however, word choices are likely to make it harder to sing the text: the repetition of the "l" creates a tongue twister in "Nous allons à la…" (l. 1). The sentences "nous n'avons peur de rien" (l. 4) and "Il n'y a plus qu'à la traverser" (l. 10) are quite wordy. The [ɛ] sound in "belle" ["beautiful"] (l. 3) is long, therefore inviting a slower reading rhythm and undermining the potential for an upbeat and fast-paced performance on that line and the one that follows. Though something similar happens in the English version, the effect is different. In English,

the line “We’re not scared” (l. 4) is the last one before the introduction of the verse (l. 5-6). In contrast to the other three (l. 1-3), which contain between six and seven syllables, that one only has three. In his performances, Rosen drags on the words, putting some emphasis on the “not.” While this disrupts the fast pace of the first part of the chorus, it does so at the very end. Narratively, this draws attention to the idea of fearlessness, while also leaving some space and time for the opposite to be implied through intonation (are they as brave as they claim?). In the French version, the pace slowing down on one line before last, dealing with how beautiful life is (l. 3), puts the emphasis on the more contemplative dimension of the chorus, and may consequently slow down the last line before the verse (l. 4).

The obstacle in this first verse is “une prairie” [“a meadow”] (l. 5). Here, the French version substitutes the more concrete “long wavy grass” and its movement with a simile: we are told that the meadow “looks like the sea.” Although there is a semantic link between “wavy” and “sea,” the French version focuses on conveying an evocative and poetic mental image. This gives the text a more abstract and contemplative dimension, potentially undermining the performative potential of the movements of grass in the wind.

As a result of the translator’s choices, especially at the linguistic (word length, word choices) and poetic levels (stylistic devices, sounds), the French version offers a more complex and contemplative script to its performers. The lines tend to roll of the tongue less and do not lend themselves to an oral performance as much as the English version. The performers discussed in the next section, however, adopt different strategies to include some degree of singing in their performances.

4. Youtube performances of *La chasse à l’ours*

In this section, I examine the first chorus-verse (the grass) in seventeen YouTube performances of *La chasse à l’ours*. Those videos have been selected among all the videos of *La chasse à l’ours* available on Youtube, based on the following criteria: (1) native French speaking performer; (2) adult performer; (3) one performer; (4) no audience included in the video; (5) performance involves more than reading (singing and/or rhythmic reading). The performances have been divided into three groups based on the dimension of the text that they prioritize in their performance. Group 1 prioritizes an upbeat performance akin to (or directly inspired by) Rosen’s, resulting in some degree of adaptation to either the text or the performance; group 2 prioritizes the closeness to the French text, resulting in a significantly different melody from Rosen and the performers in group 1; group (3) prioritizes the rhythm

and performativity of the text, resulting in significant adaptations and simplifications of the text and the narrative. The performers will be referred to throughout this paper using a shortened version of their YouTube usernames. Group 1 consists of five performers: Eric Mandret (Eric), Michael Grzegorzewski (Michael), Les histoires de Monsieur Jean-Marc (Jean-Marc), Lycée Lb-français Abdel Kader (Lycée) and Alix Enfolie (Alix). Group 2 consists of eight performers, Mapad'Am (Mapad), Les Histoires de Dame HIBOUX (Dame), Nini et les ouistitis (Nini), Nicolas GARNIER (Nicolas), Juste une histoire (Histoire), Pascal Bicrel (Pascal), Claire et ses histoires (Claire) and ProvindedeLiègeTV (Province). Finally, group 3 consists of four performers: Alma Nadège (Alma), La minute des petits écrans (Minute), La maternelle magique de Sandrine (Sandrine), Martine Michèle (Martine).

4.1. Priority to the melody

All four performers in group 1 (Eric, Jean-Marc, Alix, and Lycée) sing parts of the text in an upbeat and lively manner, to a melody similar to Rosen's. While Eric adapts the text of the picturebook, Jean-Marc, Alix and Lycée remain closer to it. They nonetheless make other adaptations, namely at the linguistic and/or performative levels to be able to maintain an upbeat melody. Table 3 gives an overview of the lines sung (grey) and spoken (white) by Rosen and the five French performers.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Rosen										
Eric										
Michael										
Jean-Marc										
Alix										
Lycée										

Table 3: Distribution of singing and reading across five performances of La chasse à l'ours *compared to Rosen's.*

Rosen sings most of the text, though he drops the singing on "Oh-oh grass, long wavy grass" and "Oh, no!/We've got to go through it" to the benefit of expressiveness. For the first line, it allows him to mark a contemplative pause. This also translates the black and white double spread illustrations, in which Oxenbury portrays the children contemplating the obstacle before deciding to cross it. For the second line, it makes it possible for him to emphasize the contrast between the

children's reluctance ("Oh, no!") and their resolve ("We've got to go through it!") through intonation.

Eric sings the most lines. His consistency is likely due to his retranslation of the French text to make it closer to the English text, as well as easier to sing (linguistic, poetic and performative dimensions). Table 4, shows a comparison between the picturebook text and Eric's retranslation. The lines in bold indicate the retranslated lines[2].

	Picturebook (French)	**Eric**	**Back translation**
1	Nous allons à la chasse à l'ours.	Nous allons à la chasse à l'ours.	We are going on the bear hunt.
2	Nous allons en prendre un très gros.	Nous allons en prendre un très gros.	We are going to take a very big one.
3	La vie est belle !	**Quelle très belle journée !**	What a very beautiful day!
4	Nous n'avons peur de rien.	**On n'a pas peur.**	We are not afraid.
5	Oh, une prairie !	**Oh-oh, de grandes herbes !**	Oh-oh, tall grass!
6	On dirait la mer.	**Hautes et grasses.**	Tall and lush.
7	On ne peut pas passer dessus	On ne peut pas passer dessus.	We cannot go over it.
8	On ne peut pas passer dessous.	On ne peut pas passer dessous.	We cannot go under it.
9	Allons-y !	**Oh non !**	Oh no!
10	Il n'y a plus qu'à la traverser !	**Il faut les traverser !**	We have to cross them!

Table 4: Side-by-side comparison of the French picturebook text, Eric's retranslation and back translation

For instance, he retranslates "We've got to go through it" with "Il faut les traverser" (l. 10) and "We're not scared" by "On n'a pas peur" (l. 4) instead of the wordier "Il n'y a plus qu'à la traverser !" (l. 4) and "Nous n'avons peur de rien" (l. 10).

In his version, "What a beautiful day" becomes "Quelle très belle journée" instead of "La vie est belle" (l. 3) bringing back the more concrete and current dimension of the line. He also retranslates "Grass, long wavy grass" by "De grandes herbes/Hautes et grasses" instead of

[2] The punctuation of the performance transcriptions was made based on the French picturebook punctuation.

"Une prairie/On dirait la mer" (l. 5-6). Once again, this brings back the focus onto the more concrete obstacle and removes the metaphorical dimension. The use of the adjective "grasses" ["lush"] in French is interesting, as it makes his translation of this line end on the same *sound* as the English version: "De grande herbes/Hautes et **grasses"** ⇔ **"**Grass/Long, wavy **grass**" (l. 5-6) thus using homophones across languages and marking the connection between his version and Rosen's not only through rhythm and word choices, but also through sounds.

Michael sings only three lines out of the ten (performative dimensions), to the benefit of expressiveness. He also keeps the sea-meadow simile but takes his time to perform that passage as if he were actually seeing something in the distance (performative dimension). The main difference, however, is that he merges the first and second – lesser known – French translation of *La chasse à l'ours* (Duval 1997) (linguistic and narrative dimensions). Though Michael sings very little, it is striking that he sings the passages taken from the second translation and speaks the ones from the first. Indeed, some passages from the second translation, such as "Quelle belle journée/Rien ne nous effraie" (l. 3-4), almost rhyme, which is not the case of its equivalent in the first translation: "La vie est belle/On n'a pas peur" (poetic dimension). Table 5 shows the two French translations and Michael's version side by side. The lines in bold indicate from which version(s) his come.

	Picturebook (1989)	**Picturebook (1997)**	**Michael**
1	**Nous allons à la chasse à l'ours.**	**Nous allons à la chasse à l'ours.**	Nous allons à la chasse à l'ours.
2	Nous allons en prendre un très gros.	**Nous allons en attraper un très gros.**	Nous allons en attraper un très gros.
3	La vie est belle !	**Quelle belle journée !**	Quelle belle journée !
4	Nous n'avons peur de rien.	**Rien ne nous effraie !**	Rien ne nous effraie.
5	**Oh, une prairie !**	Euh ! de l'herbe !	Oh ! Regardez là-bas, tout au loin qu'est-ce qu'on voit ? Une prairie !
6	**On dirait la mer.**	De hautes herbes ondulantes.	Aaaah, on dirait la mer.

7	**On ne peut pas passer dessus**	Passer par-dessus ?	On ne peut pas passer dessus.
8	**On ne peut pas passer dessous.**	Passer par-dessous ?	On ne peut pas passer dessous.
9	**Allons-y !**	Impossible !	Allons-y !
10	**Il n'y a plus qu'à la traverser !**	Nous devons les traverser !	Il n'y a plus qu'à la traverser !

Table 5: Side-by-side comparison of Michael's performance and the two French translations of the picturebook

Jean-Marc, Alix, and Lycée also use an upbeat melody similar to that of Eric and Michael but stay closer to the French picturebook text. Unlike Eric and Michael, therefore, all three needed to make other types of adjustments (linguistic for Jean-Marc, performative for Alix and Lycée) to be able to sing it. Jean-Marc merges the "en" in "Nous allons en prendre un très gros" (l. 2) with the end of "allons," resulting in "all-en prendre…" and contracts "On ne peut pas…" ["we cannot"] into "On n'peut pas" ["we can't"] (l. 7-8). He also adds a long "Oooooh" before "La vie est belle" (l. 3) to start this line with a faster pace, which he sustains throughout that line and the next (l. 4). Alix only sings the first four lines, dropping the singing after slowing down his pace on "La vie est belle/Nous n'avons peur de rien" (l. 3) and not picking it back up, suggesting that both the meditative tone and longer vowel sound lend themselves better to a slower pace. Lycée drops the singing after the first two lines but picks it back up on "On ne peut pas passer dessus/On ne peut pas passer dessous" (l. 7-8). All performers except Alix sing those lines, suggesting that the alliteration and repetition prompt singing.

Overall, adopting a similar melody, rhythm and pace to Rosen's version requires performers to make some adaptations. In the five performances discussed above, those adaptations involved retranslating the text (linguistic and narrative dimensions), merging the two translations (linguistic, narrative and poetic dimensions) adjusting the text to fit the rhythm (linguistic and poetic dimensions), or dropping the singing more (performative dimension). The results are upbeat performances that combine singing and a fast-paced rhythmic reading, focused on the cheerful and lively energy of the song. While three out of the four performers show the book on the screen, they do so via a slideshow. This allows them to have their hands free to either play the guitar (Eric, Michaël, and Alix) or make gestures (Jean-Marc). In doing so, they acknowledge the connection with the picturebook while prioritizing the musical dimension of the story.

4.2. Priority to the text

Unlike some performers in group 1, none of the performers in group 2 change the text of the picturebook. All but one of them show the physical book on camera during their reading, thus further emphasising the connection between their performances and the picturebook text and framing the video as a reading-aloud session. One of my hypotheses in part 3 was that the French translation made an upbeat performance more difficult due to it being generally wordier, harder to pronounce, and more abstract. Since group 2 prioritises the text, adaptations occur at the level of the melody. The performers from group 2 do not adopt the same upbeat and lively rhythm that characterises Rosen's performances. Instead, they opt for melodies that share similarities in terms of pacing (slow), pitch (high), and rhythm. Three different melodies are used across the eight performances: two original ones (Mapad, Dame, Nini, Nicolas, Histoires, Pascal; Province) and one borrowed from the popular French nursery rhyme "Il était un petit navire" ["There once was a small ship"] (Claire). The three melodies are all slower than those in group 1. While the four performers in group 1 perform the first verse-chorus in 15 to 21 seconds, the performers in group 2 do it between 22 and 40 seconds. Combined with a generally higher pitch, their performances are calm and nursery-rhyme-like instead of lively and upbeat. Table 6 indicates which passages performers sing (dark grey), which passages they read rhythmically (light grey), and which passages they read (white).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mapad										
Dame										
Nini										
Nicolas										
Histoire										
Pascal										
Claire										
Province										

Table 6: Distribution of singing, rhythmic reading, and reading across eight performances of La chasse à l'ours

In group 2, all the performers sing at least the first part of the chorus (l. 1-4) and all but one do not pick it back up at the start of the second part (l. 7). However, some performers incorporate other markers of a song in their performances. For instance, Mapad'Am repeats the

lines “La vie est belle/Nous n’avons peur de rien” (l. 3-4) twice. Claire does something similar, doubling the line “La vie est belle” and repeating “La vie est belle/la vie est belle/Nous n’avons peur de rien” (l. 3-4) twice. Other performers, such as Mapad and Nini do not sing “On ne peut pas passer dessus/On ne peut pas passer dessous” (l. 7-8) but nonetheless perform it rhythmically, once again indicating that the alliteration and repetitiveness of the line lends itself to (at least) a rhythmic reading.

The performers from this group remain faithful to the linguistic dimension of the *Bear Hunt*, which interestingly means that the connection with the adventurous aspect of the narrative is undermined. By musically reinterpreting it as a nursery-rhyme like song, they foreground its contemplative and pastoral dimensions instead.

4.3. Priority to the rhythm

The performers in group 3 (Alma, Minute, Sandrine, and Martine) focus primarily on the rhythmic potential and embodied performance of the text in a pedagogical context[3]. They do not feature the book in their performance, using their hands (and bodies) to make gestures instead. The connection with the picturebook text and illustration is also lessened by the performers in group 3 through their extensive adaptation of the text to be easy to remember and perform, even for a young audience. Their versions are simpler (vocabulary and syntax), more informal, and more repetitive. They also feature fewer obstacles (tree, river, mud and cave for Alma; river, mountain and cave for Minute; cliff, river, hole and cave for Sandrine; lake, tree, and cave for Martine). It is interesting to note that there are also more discrepancies between the obstacles from version to version, thus showing greater freedom from the source material. Since none of them feature grass or a variation thereof, I will compare the river/lake chorus-verse, which they all share. Table 7 presents the picturebook text and the transcript of the four performances side by side.

	Picturebook (French)	**Alma**	**La minute**	**Sandrine**	**Martine**
1	Nous allons à la chasse à l’ours.	On va à la chasse à l’ours. x3	On part à la chasse à l’ours. x3	Je pars à la chasse à l’ours. x3	Je pars à la chasse à l’ours. x3

[3] This is either mentioned explicitly by the performer or is part of the information provided by their Youtube channel.

2	Nous allons en prendre un très gros.				
3	La vie est belle !				
4	Nous n'avons peur de rien !				
5	Oh, une rivière !	Oh, mais y a un lac !	On arrive devant une grande rivière !	J'arrive devant une rivière !	J'arrive devant un lac !
6	Large et glacée.	Un très grand lac.	Elle est tellement grande qu'…		
7	On ne peut pas passer dessus**.**	On peut pas passer su'l'côté.	On n'peut pas passer par ici.	J'peux pas passer d'un côté.	J'peux pas passer par là.
8	On ne peut pas passer dessous.	On pas passer d'laut'côté.	On n'peut pas passer par là.	J'peux pas passer d'l'autre côté.	J'peux pas passer par là.
9	Allons-y !	Alors qu'est-ce qu'on fait ?			
10	Il n'y a plus qu'à la traverser !	Il faut… nager !	Alors il faut nager !	Alors ? Alors ? Je nage !	Alors ? Je nage !

Table 7: Side-by-side comparison of the French picturebook text and four simplified performances

Instead of the first part of the chorus, the four performers repeat the first line three times. That line is also simplified, from "Nous allons à la chasse à l'ours" ["We go on the bear hunt"] to "on va" ["we go"], "on part" ["we go"] or "je pars" ["I go"] (l. 1), either using the first person singular pronoun or the pronoun "on," the informal equivalent of "nous"

("we"). In both cases, the verb is singular, thus also shortening the line. The adjectives used for the river and the lake are simple or lacking: "grand," "très grande," "tellement grande" ["big," "very big," "so big"]. The last line is also simplified, from "Il n'y a plus qu'à y plonger" to a shorter, more direct and easier to pronounce instruction: "Il faut nager" ["We must swim"] and "Je nage" ["I swim"] (l. 10). Contractions are also used, making the text shorter and more informal:"su'l'côté" instead of "sur le côté" ["on the side"] (l. 7); "d'laut'coté" instead of "de l'autre côté" ["on the other side"] (l. 8); "on n'peux pas" instead of "on ne peut pas" ["we cannot"] (l. 7-8); "J'peux pas" instead of "je ne peux pas" [I cannot] (l. 7-8), "mais y a un lac" instead of "mais il y a un lac" ["but there is a lake"] (l. 5).

Notably, the group 3 performances extend to the performers' bodies. Some in group 1 (Eric, Michael, Alix) emphasised the musical dimension of the text by playing an instrument during their performances and the performers in group 2 foregrounded the connection between their performances and the picturebook by showing it on camera. In group 3, the performers use their hands to tap rhythmically on their lap and make expansive gestures that match the story. This includes extending their arms to show the size of an obstacle, leaning left and right to consider other options, wagging a finger to indicate that no other way is possible, and gesturing (swimming, walking, climbing) as they go through it. In the case of Alma and Sandrine, the pedagogical and interactive nature of their performances is reinforced by them calling on the audience for solutions. Alma asks "Alors qu'est-ce qu'on fait?" ["What do we do then?"] and Sandrine gestures with her palm up and shoulders raised, asking "Alors? Alors?" ["And so? And so?"].

In group 3, each text was adapted by its performer to be repetitive (poetic dimension), with shorter sentences and simpler vocabulary (linguistic dimension), more familiar and informal in register (linguistic dimension) and to be paired with gestures (performative dimension). Combined with rhythmic tapping and an energetic and sustained delivery rhythm, these versions emphasize the embodied performative potential of the *Bear Hunt* in a pedagogical context. In addition, they also encourage their young audience to participate (simple text, ample gestures, questions) and perform alongside them, putting them in a more active position than the performers in group 1 and 2.

5. Conclusion

Translating picturebooks is a complex task. It requires taking their textual but also visual and aural dimensions into consideration, as well

as their interplays. Even when only focusing on the text, translators are faced not with a monolith, but with five interconnected layers. A greater awareness of the multidimensional nature of picturebook text shows that different translation strategies will prioritize different dimensions, and that this will inevitably have an impact on the performative potential of the text. However, performers are not passive recipients of a script: they can, in turn, rescript it,performing the picturebook text in ways that foreground another of its dimensions. In the present case, the French translation of *La chasse à l'ours* puts less overall emphasis on the performability of the text than its English counterpart. This does not mean, however, that the text cannot be performed. The small yet revealing sample of videos analysed in this article reveals that the individual audience members resort to different strategies that will, themselves, prioritize this or that dimension of the picturebook text. The performers from group 2 mark an explicit connection between their source material and their performances by showing the picturebook to the camera, in the style of a read-aloud session. They all perform the picturebook text as is and, as a result, the *Bear Hunt* takes on a nursery rhyme-like quality, creating a generic shift from a folk song to a lullaby. The users in group 1, on the other hand, seem to have (some) knowledge of Rosen's performance and attempt to replicate it by retranslating the text or merging the two existing translations to ensure easier "singability," contracting the text, singing less and speaking more, and foregrounding the theatrical dimension of the text through expressiveness. While some still feature the book in the video, it appears as a slideshow, as the performers themselves either play an instrument or make gestures as part of their performance, thus putting more emphasising on its musical dimension than on the narrative and visual connection with the book. The performers in the third group go back to the song's roots – halfway between a story and a game. Through simplifications, they make it easier to remember and perform for a young audience. They also foreground its dynamic rhythm, replicated by the body through gestures that reflect the meaning of key moments in the story. By not featuring the book and marking a narrative departure from its text and illustrations, they prioritize the children's immersion as characters through an embodied experience of the story. Through translation, the *Bear Hunt* went from an American folk song, to a British picturebook, to a French picturebook, reinterpreted by its audience as an upbeat song, a nursery-rhyme like song, and rhythmic play-song. In framing textual translation and reading performances as equally interpretative processes, this article aimed to highlighting the dynamic

nature of children's texts, the potential for stories to shift in a multitude of directions, and the central role the audience can play in that process.

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TRADUIRE L'ORALITÉ: *LA CHASSE À L'OURS* (*WE'RE GOING ON A BEAR HUNT*) RÉINTERPRÉTÉE PAR LES LECTEURS FRANÇAIS

Les livres pour enfants sont des objetsmultimodaux, dans la mesure où leur signification est le résultat de la combinaison de ressources visuelles, textuelles et sonores. Même au niveau du texte, ils présentent une variété de dimensions connectées entre elles. Le modèle proposé dans cet article en dégage cinq : linguistique, narrative, poétique, performative et visuelle. Étant donné que la lecture à voix haute est un aspect essentiel de leur production et de leur réception, les traducteurs de livres pour enfants doivent jongler avec ces dimensions et faire des choix qui donneront inévitablement la priorité à certaines d'entre elles plutôt qu'à d'autres. Abordant les livres pour enfants en tant que « choses scriptées » (Bernstein 2011), cet article examine comment le script proposé par le livre pour enfant *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Rosen et Oxenbury 1989) est altéré par le processus de traduction vers le français. Ensuite, à travers l'analyse de dix-sept performances YouTube de *La chasse à l'ours* en français, j'analyse la façon dontles lecteurs français performent ce script, et identifie trois stratégies de performance, donnant chacune la priorité à une dimension différente du texte. Le premier groupe privilégie le rythme entraînant de la chanson, le deuxième groupe privilégie la fidélité au texte du livre, et le troisième groupe met l'accent sur la dimension rythmique du texte accompagnée de gestes. En fin de compte, cet article vise à démontrer que la traduction de textes pour enfants n'est pas seulement une pratique textuelle, mais égalementvisuelles, orales et performatives.

Mots-clés: littérature pour enfants, auralité, traduction, performances