A Study on Translation Strategies for Violations of the Politeness Principle in Children's Literature Dialogue: A Case Study of the Korean Translation of The Story of Foolish Wolf

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the original The Story of Foolish Wolf and its Korean translation, adopting Geoffrey Leech's Politeness Principle as the theoretical framework to explore translation strategies for violations of politeness in children's literature dialogue. Existing research has largely focused on linguistic style, cultural elements, and narrative strategies in children's literature translation, while the pragmatic features of politeness violations in character dialogues and their cross-cultural adaptation remain underexplored. Taking a pragmatics-based approach, this study analyzes the specific strategies employed in the Korean translation to handle "impolite" utterances, including tone adjustment, emotional intensification, and cultural adaptation. It reveals how translators balance fidelity to the original work with target language children's linguistic habits and aesthetic expectations while preserving humor and character individuality. The findings suggest that violations of the Politeness Principle in children's literature translation are not merely instances of pragmatic deviation but rather a deliberate retranslation practice aimed at achieving cross-cultural adaptation and ensuring reader acceptance. This study broadens the scope of children's literature translation research by shifting from linguistic style analysis to a pragmatic strategy perspective, highlighting the complexity of dialogue translation and offering practical guidance for translators working with children's literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's literature refers to literary works specifically created for children, encompassing various genres such as fairy tales, fables, children's novels, and poetry, characterized by a distinct child's perspective and age-appropriate language style (Wang Quangen, 2010). In recent years, as an integral part of literary translation studies, children's literature translation has received increasing scholarly attention. Dialogue, which constitutes the most substantial portion of children's literature, best exemplifies the differences between children's literature translation and other types of literary translation (Liu Siyang, 2014). Beyond revealing character traits and conflicts, dialogue serves as a crucial means of conveying background information, building suspense, and advancing the plot (Li Xueyang & Zhang Xicha, 2007). Compared to descriptive language, character dialogue better aligns with children's reading preferences, stimulating their interest and aiding in comprehension.

However, children's linguistic habits differ significantly from those of adults. Their speech tends to be more direct and emotionally expressive, often leading to violations of the Politeness Principle in dialogue. Moreover, children's language frequently features repetition, onomatopoeia, and exaggerated expressions to enhance engagement and expressiveness. Therefore, a key challenge in children's literature translation is how to faithfully render the original text while ensuring that the translated dialogue aligns with the cognitive level and cultural background of the target-language children.

This study selects The Story of Foolish Wolf as its research subject for the following reasons. First, The Story of Foolish Wolf, written by Cao Wenxuan, is a classic children's literary work with significant influence in China. It has also been translated into Korean, Japanese, and other languages, serving as an important text in Sino-Korean children's literature exchange. This provides a solid textual foundation for exploring linguistic adaptation strategies in the cross-cultural transmission of children's literature. Second, the character of Foolish Wolf, with his naïve and humorous personality, frequently violates the Politeness Principle in speech, reflecting children's unique cognitive patterns and linguistic styles. His confrontational and contradictory expressions constitute typical cases of politeness violations in children's literature dialogue, offering rich linguistic data for analyzing translation strategies in cross-cultural contexts. Third, the Korean translation <뻔랑은 너무너무 엉뚱해> has gained widespread popularity in South Korea, illustrating how Korean translators adjust Foolish Wolf's speech to align with Korean children's aesthetic preferences and cultural norms. This provides a vivid practical case for examining cross-cultural adaptation strategies in handling politeness violations. Lastly, existing studies on children's literature translation have primarily focused on linguistic style and cultural elements, with insufficient exploration of the pragmatic characteristics of politeness violations in character dialogues and their adaptation in the target-language text. Choosing The Story of Foolish Wolf, a work prominently featuring politeness violations, not only fills this theoretical gap but also expands the research scope of children's literature translation.

Against this backdrop, this study explores the linguistic adaptation strategies employed in the Korean translation of The Story of Foolish Wolf, focusing on the uniqueness of character dialogues in children's literature. Using Kim Sun-hwa's Korean translation as the primary research text, the study seeks to address the following key research questions:

1. How does the translator modify dialogues that violate the Politeness Principle to maintain the humor and character individuality of the original while ensuring alignment with Korean children's linguistic habits and cultural understanding?
2. What are the differences in the forms of politeness violations and their cultural adaptations between the original The Story of Foolish Wolf and its Korean translation? How do these differences influence target readers' perceptions of character identities and the presentation of humor?
3. What linguistic strategies (e.g., tone adjustment, lexical refinement, cultural adaptation) are employed in the Korean translation to handle dialogues violating the Politeness Principle? How do these strategies facilitate target-language children's comprehension and reception of the text?

By analyzing the specific strategies used in the Korean translation to handle "impolite" utterances, this study aims to reveal how translators recreate humor and conflict in the original while optimizing politeness expressions to align with Korean children's aesthetic expectations. It contributes new theoretical perspectives and practical insights to children's literature translation research.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Pragmatic Significance of Dialogue in Novels

Literary translation refers to the cross-cultural activity of converting literary works from one language into another. Its primary goal is to faithfully convey the artistic style, cultural connotations, and aesthetic values of the original work (Bassnett, 2002). Unlike the translation of informational texts, literary translation places greater emphasis on emotions, imagery, narrative rhythm, and the creative use of language (Lefevere, 1992).

Dialogue is one of the most effective techniques for shaping characters in novels. Through dialogue, the author can vividly present a character's personality, thoughts, and emotions, as well as subtly reflect their psychological activities. Moreover, dialogue helps to reveal a character's identity and social status (Ji Xiaobin & Shen Yingli, 2007). Compared to other forms of descriptive language, dialogue is often more capable of capturing the linguistic characteristics of a particular locale (Even-Zohar, 1992).

Although the dialogues in novels are typically fictional and do not occur in real-life situations, they generally follow logical principles of real-world conversations. In realistic novels, in particular, authors aim to evoke readers' resonance and create an

immersive experience by closely mimicking real-life dialogues. Within the fictional world constructed by the author, each character assumes a specific social role and interacts with others accordingly. Thus, the dialogues in novels adhere to the nature and characteristics of real-life communication and carry significant pragmatic implications. Well-crafted dialogue enhances the overall literary work, making it unique and compelling—it can be considered the very soul of the novel.

In children's literature, dialogue frequently occurs between children. Such dialogues not only reflect children's unique linguistic characteristics but also hold significant pragmatic value. These exchanges are often direct, vivid, and emotionally expressive, reflecting children's cognitive styles and communicative habits. Linguistically, child characters tend to use simple sentence structures, repetitive expressions, and imaginative vocabulary to convey emotions and intentions. Furthermore, their dialogues may incorporate humor, exaggeration, and other rhetorical devices to enhance the story's appeal. Therefore, studying dialogue in children's literature contributes to a deeper understanding of children's language development while providing new perspectives for exploring translation strategies in cross-cultural contexts.

2.2 Characteristics of Children's Literature

Wang Quangen defines children's literature as "a type of literature distinct from adult literature, created exclusively for minors, thereby constructing a linguistic world that children can emotionally engage with and appreciate" (Wang Quangen, 2006). This definition highlights that children's literature is specifically crafted for young readers, necessitating a thorough understanding of their linguistic habits and psychological world to create compelling works.

A fundamental aspect of understanding children's literature is recognizing the uniqueness of childhood and the differences between children and adults. In children's literature, authors must acknowledge and reflect these differences, particularly in language use. Children's literature portrays a "childlike world," which necessitates a corresponding "childlike language" (Huang Ying, 2011). Due to cognitive and developmental limitations, children require language that is simple, authentic, and easy to understand. As such, children's literature must employ words and sentence structures that align with the comprehension abilities of the target age group. As Chen Xuejia (1934) stated, authors should adopt a writing style that resembles "the way children speak."

2.3 The Politeness Principle

The Politeness Principle is an essential guideline in verbal communication, ensuring smooth interpersonal interactions. However, in real-world social interactions, individuals may intentionally violate politeness norms due to contextual, social, and communicative factors, thereby creating specific pragmatic effects (Zhou Kunmei, 2024). Dang Huiling and Tang Lijun (2021) note that scholars such as Brown, Levinson, and Leech further explored the Politeness Principle from rhetorical and stylistic perspectives. Their research suggests that what appears to be a violation of politeness norms may actually represent a higher-level expression of politeness.

In *Principles of Pragmatics*, Leech (1983) posits that politeness is not merely an extension of the Cooperative Principle but an indispensable component of pragmatics. He categorizes the Politeness Principle into six maxims:

Table 1: Leech's Six Maxims of Politeness

Category	Description
Tact Maxim	Minimize harm to others while maximizing benefits for them.
Generosity Maxim	Minimize benefits to oneself while maximizing benefits to others.
Approbation	Minimize dispraise of others while maximizing praise.
Modesty Maxim	Minimize self-praise while maximizing self-criticism.
Agreement Maxim	Minimize disagreement while maximizing agreement.
Sympathy Maxim	Minimize discord while maximizing empathy.

In everyday communication, people frequently encounter instances of politeness maxim violations, which enrich social interactions. Novel characters, like real individuals, do not always strictly adhere to politeness principles. Authors may deliberately construct dialogues where characters deviate from politeness norms to enhance characterization or create a specific atmosphere. This has become a common literary technique.

In children's literature, dialogues primarily occur between children. Due to their cognitive immaturity, children are often unaware of social conventions regarding "face-saving" and tend to speak in a straightforward and candid manner, directly expressing their true thoughts. For example, in *The Foolish Wolf's Story*, the protagonist's blunt and tactless remarks frequently violate the Agreement Maxim, creating humorous and endearing moments that enhance the storytelling. Such instances demonstrate how politeness principle violations in children's literature serve to develop character personalities, enrich narratives, and present unique challenges for translators seeking to adapt these interactions across cultures.

3. TYPES AND MANIFESTATIONS OF POLITENESS PRINCIPLE VIOLATIONS IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE DIALOGUE

3.1 Violation of the Tact Maxim

The Tact Maxim requires speakers to minimize harm to the listener and avoid direct or offensive expressions. Foolish Wolf's behavior clearly violates this maxim. In the Korean translation, the translator employs strategies such as tone adjustment and action reinforcement to skillfully handle this violation.

Example 1: Foolish Wolf Confronting the Teacher in Class

ST: Foolish Wolf sat among his friends, listening to the teacher. This lesson was not about addition yet; it was about learning words. *Oh no, when will they finally teach addition at school? If the pears are left for too long, they will rot!* Foolish Wolf became restless. At that moment, the teacher wrote the word "apple" on the blackboard with red chalk and told the students, "This is 'apple.'"

"Apple? That's not an apple at all! An apple is round, red, and sweet," Foolish Wolf stood up and said.

"Yes, Foolish Wolf is right. We've all eaten apples," the other students chimed in.

TT: Foolish Wolf also sat among the children, listening to the lesson. The first class was not math but language. *When will the school finally teach addition? If the pears are left for too long, they will become mushy.* Foolish Wolf could no longer sit still.

At that moment, the teacher wrote the word "apple" on the blackboard with red chalk and told the students, "This is an apple."

"An apple, you say? That's not an apple?!" Foolish Wolf suddenly stood up and said.

"An apple is round and red."

"That's right! Foolish Wolf is correct. We have all eaten apples, so we know what they look like."

In Example 1, Foolish Wolf's act of openly contradicting the teacher in class demonstrates a violation of the Tact Maxim. In the source text, Foolish Wolf directly refutes the teacher's definition of "apple" (*"That's not an apple at all!"*), and his blunt speech, coupled with his impulsive action (*suddenly standing up*), reflects children's egocentric thinking and lack of social etiquette.

The Korean translation retains the straightforward tone of the original text (*"That's not an apple?!"*), while reinforcing the action description (*"suddenly stood up"*), effectively conveying the character's naïve personality. However, this approach also presents challenges in terms of cultural adaptation. Korean educational culture emphasizes respect for teachers, and an explicit confrontation like this might create cognitive dissonance for Korean readers.

To address this, the translator adopts a strategy of **implicit compromise** by adding the phrase *"you say"* ("라고요" in Korean), which slightly softens the direct opposition and maintains a surface-level respect for the teacher's authority while preserving Foolish Wolf's stubborn nature. This modification strikes a balance between cultural norms and character authenticity, allowing Korean readers to appreciate Foolish Wolf's innocent humor without perceiving the scene as overly rude.

Additionally, the Korean translation enhances the comedic effect by using **repetitive sentence structures** (*"round and red"*) and **exaggerated action descriptions**, preserving the humor of the original text, which stems from the cognitive mismatch between the written word "apple" and the actual fruit.

From a theoretical perspective, the translator's strategy exemplifies the **flexible application of cultural adaptation** in children's literature translation. Rather than completely erasing the conflict or fully transplanting the directness of the original, the translator achieves **cross-cultural equilibrium** through localized adjustments. This approach retains the humor of the source text while ensuring the translation aligns with Korean children's cultural expectations.

This example illustrates how politeness principle violations manifest in children's literature dialogues, particularly in cases where the Tact Maxim is breached. The Korean translation handles this violation through **tone adjustment and action reinforcement**, preserving Foolish Wolf's naïve traits while mitigating cultural conflicts through an **implicit compromise strategy**. This

demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural adaptation and enhances the target audience's acceptance of both the character's personality and the story's humor.

3.2 Violation of the Generosity Maxim

The Generosity Maxim requires speakers to minimize self-benefit and maximize benefit to others. Foolish Wolf's actions clearly violate this principle. In the Korean translation, the translator skillfully handles this violation through language reinforcement and motivation implication strategies.

Example 2: Foolish Wolf Decides to Make Ice Cream Alone Without Consulting Friends

ST: Foolish Wolf decided to surprise his friends. He smiled and said,

"Wash your hands and sit at the table. I'll treat everyone to big ice creams!"

"Wow, ice cream in winter! That's amazing!" The friends quickly washed their hands and sat down.

Foolish Wolf busily worked alone in the kitchen.

"Where's the ice cream?" Smart Rabbit couldn't resist peeking into the kitchen.

"Out! Out! You'll see in a moment!" Foolish Wolf pushed Smart Rabbit's head out of the kitchen and slammed the door shut with a *bang*.

TT: Foolish Wolf decided to share this joy with his friends.

"Wash your hands and sit down. I'll give you some ice cream."

"Wow, eating ice cream in winter! That's exciting!" Everyone hurriedly washed their hands and gathered at the table.

Foolish Wolf busily moved around the kitchen.

"Where's the ice cream?" Unable to wait, Tosil peeked into the kitchen.

"Out! Quickly! Just a moment!" Foolish Wolf pushed Tosil's head out of the kitchen and shut the door with a *bang*.

In Example 2, Foolish Wolf's unilateral decision to make ice cream and his blunt rejection of his friends' involvement vividly illustrate a violation of the Generosity Maxim in children's dialogue. According to Leech's politeness principles, the Generosity Maxim requires speakers to minimize their own benefit and maximize that of others. However, Foolish Wolf acts in the opposite way: he decides on his own to make ice cream, uses commanding language (*"Out! Out!"*), and even forcefully shuts the door, completely ignoring his friends' participation and feelings. Although his actions stem from good intentions—to create a surprise—the self-centered approach makes him appear less generous, reflecting children's immaturity in empathy and social etiquette.

In the Korean translation, the translator faces the challenge of handling this violation of the Generosity Maxim. In Korean culture, where harmony and sharing are emphasized, Foolish Wolf's autocratic and rude behavior might be perceived as impolite. To address this, the translator employs a "language reinforcement + motivation implication" strategy: 1.Language Reinforcement: The translator strengthens Foolish Wolf's stubborn personality by intensifying his tone (*"Out! Quickly!"* – *"나가! 빨리!"*), and adding onomatopoeia (*"bang"* – 쾅), preserving the conflict and humor of the original scene. 2.Motivation Implication: The translator softens Foolish Wolf's self-centered behavior by adding a narrative justification: *"He decided to share this joy with his friends"* (이 기쁨을 나눠 주기로 했다). This subtle addition frames Foolish Wolf's action as well-intentioned, preventing Korean readers from perceiving his behavior as entirely selfish while maintaining his naive personality.

This cross-cultural adaptation highlights the translator's flexibility. Instead of eliminating Foolish Wolf's authoritative behavior, the translator reframes it as innocent mischief, shifting the humor from rudeness to naive blunders. Additionally, Foolish Wolf's repeated reassurance (*"Just a moment!"* – 잠깐이면 돼!) emphasizes his eagerness to share, making his self-centeredness more acceptable to Korean readers.

From the perspective of the Generosity Maxim, this translation strategy effectively adapts the violation in a cross-cultural context. The translator does not erase Foolish Wolf's assertiveness but instead balances it through selective modifications, humor reinforcement, and positive framing. This ensures that the character's personality remains intact while making the story culturally appropriate and engaging for Korean children. Such a strategy serves as a valuable reference for translating violations of politeness principles in children's literature, demonstrating how translators can navigate cultural expectations without losing the essence of the original text.

3.3 Violation of the Praise Maxim

The praise maxim requires speakers to minimize belittling others and maximize praise for others. The mischievous monkey's behavior clearly violates this maxim, while the translator skillfully handles this violation in the Korean translation through linguistic mitigation and non-verbal compensation strategies.

Example 3: Denying a peer's creativity and lack of encouragement.

ST: It was their first time building a snowman. "No matter where we put it, it must have small eyes, and these two green beans will be perfect for that," said the chubby pig. Because his own eyes were small, he thought small eyes were the prettiest in the world. "Of course, big eyes are prettier. Let's use the red buttons I brought; they'll definitely look beautiful," said the clever rabbit. The mischievous monkey gave the clever rabbit an unfriendly glare, pouted, and said, "Why don't we just build a snow rabbit instead!"

TT: The friends who had never made a snowman before were unsure about what to do and hesitated. "No matter where we put them, the eyes should be small and two of them, so we should use these small green beans," said the pig. The pig, who had small eyes, believed that small eyes were the most beautiful in the world. "No, big eyes are prettier! Let's use the red buttons I brought; they'll look really good," said the chubby one as they offered the red buttons. The monkey, not liking something, glared at the chubby one and pouted. "Why don't we just make a snow rabbit instead!"

In Example 3, the mischievous monkey's behavior of denying the peer's creativity ("Why don't we just build a snow rabbit instead!") is a typical violation of the praise maxim. According to Leech's politeness principle, the praise maxim encourages speakers to minimize belittling others and maximize praise. However, the mischievous monkey directly contradicts the clever rabbit's suggestion, reflecting the self-centered nature of children in cooperative settings. The blunt language ("just"/"we'd better") and negative attitude disrupt the harmony of the group interaction, clearly violating the praise maxim.

In the Korean translation, the translator faces the challenge of how to deal with this violation of the praise maxim. The negative attitude of the mischievous monkey in the original may be perceived as impolite by Korean readers, especially in a culture that emphasizes group harmony and respect for others' opinions. To address this, the translator employs a strategy of "linguistic mitigation + non-verbal compensation": First, the strong negative statement in the original is transformed into a polite rhetorical question, "차라리 눈토끼를 만들지 그러니?" ("Why don't we just build a snow rabbit, what do you think?"), which uses "차라리" (literally, "instead") to soften the tone and the rhetorical question format to minimize its confrontational nature. This retains the negative intent but conforms to the Korean conversational habit of using questions to imply disagreement. Secondly, non-verbal description is added, such as "입을 삐죽거렸다" (pouted) and "쏘아보며" (glared), shifting the focus from the language itself to visualized bodily actions. This emphasizes the mischievous monkey's rebellious personality while avoiding potential "rudeness" controversy in Korean culture, where open denial of peers could be seen as impolite.

This approach demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation. By mitigating the language, the translator turns the original "linguistic conflict" into a humorous physical comedy (like glaring and pouting), making the humorous core shift from "denying others" to "mischievous stubbornness," which is more acceptable for young readers. Moreover, by adding non-verbal compensation, the translator preserves the mischievous monkey's rebellious personality while softening the offense of its behavior. This strategy not only enhances the drama of the story but also minimizes the negative impact of the mischievous monkey's actions through humorous expression.

From the perspective of the praise maxim, the translator's strategy reflects cross-cultural adjustment to the violation. The translator does not completely eliminate the mischievous monkey's denial, but instead makes localized adjustments (such as using rhetorical questions and body language) and handles it humorously, transforming the original "denying others" into "mischievous stubbornness." This both preserves the character's personality and adapts the translation to Korean children's cultural background and reading habits. This approach demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation and provides valuable insights into handling violations of the praise maxim in the translation of children's literature.

3.4 Violation of the Humility Maxim

The humility maxim requires speakers to minimize praise of themselves and maximize self-deprecation. The behavior of the foolish wolf clearly violates this maxim, and the translator in the Korean version cleverly handles this violation through linguistic adjustments and non-verbal compensation strategies.

Example 4: Ignoring others' potential help and emphasizing self-ability.

ST: "So we planted an apple tree!" everyone said proudly while eating the big apples. However, what really made the foolish wolf happy wasn't that they had planted an apple tree, but that he finally realized that the seed he had picked up in the forest was actually an apple seed. When Dr. Elephant heard this, he ran over and asked the foolish wolf, "You grew a big tree with fruit just to find out what kind of seed you picked up?" "Yes," said the foolish wolf. "Why didn't you bring the seed to my lab and ask me? If you had just asked, you would have known right away!" "I could have figured it out by planting it in a teacup!" said the foolish wolf.

TT: "Aha, it was an apple tree!" The animal friends all shared the apples. Just thinking about how much he had grown from such a small seed made his shoulders naturally lift with pride. However, the foolish wolf was even more pleased not because he had planted the apple tree, but because he had realized that the seed he had picked up in the forest was an apple seed. Dr. Elephant heard this news and rushed over to ask the foolish wolf, "You grew a tree just to find out what kind of seed you picked up?" "Yes, that's right." "Why didn't you come to my lab and ask? You would have known right away!" "I could have figured it out by planting it in a teacup and waiting!" said the foolish wolf, scratching his head and laughing sheepishly.

In Example 4, the foolish wolf's behavior of ignoring Dr. Elephant's potential help and emphasizing his own ability is a typical violation of the humility maxim. According to Leech's politeness principle, the humility maxim requires speakers to minimize self-praise and maximize self-deprecation. However, after solving the problem independently by planting the seed, the foolish wolf responds to Dr. Elephant's question about "why not ask directly" with "I could have figured it out by waiting for the seed to grow," which neither acknowledges Dr. Elephant's expertise nor expresses gratitude. Instead, it emphasizes the wolf's success, reflecting a child's stubbornness and lack of social humility.

In the Korean translation, the translator faces the challenge of handling this violation of the humility maxim. The foolish wolf's self-centered attitude in the original might be seen as impolite by Korean readers, especially in a culture that emphasizes humility and respect for elders. To address this, the translator employs a strategy of "linguistic adjustment + non-verbal compensation": First, the translator directly translates the foolish wolf's response "찻잔에 심어 놓고 기다리면 어차피 알 수 있잖아요" ("If I plant it in a teacup and wait, I'll know anyway"), preserving the character's "naïve stubbornness." Secondly, the addition of non-verbal description, "머리를 긁적이며 헤헤 웃었다" ("scratching his head and laughing sheepishly"), transforms the original "confidently stubborn" attitude into "clumsy pride," which weakens the offensiveness of the language and enhances the character's "awkward but lovable" image.

This approach demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation. By adjusting the language, the translator retains the foolish wolf's independent problem-solving spirit, while through non-verbal compensation (such as scratching his head and laughing sheepishly), the offensiveness of his behavior is softened. This strategy not only enhances the drama of the story but also reduces the negative impact of the foolish wolf's actions through humorous expression.

From the perspective of the humility maxim, the translator's strategy reflects cross-cultural adjustment to the violation. The translator does not completely eliminate the foolish wolf's self-centered behavior, but rather uses localized adjustments (such as action descriptions) and humor to transform the original "self-centeredness" into "naïve confidence," preserving the character's personality while aligning the translation with Korean children's cultural background and reading habits. This approach not only demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation but also provides valuable insights into the translation of humility maxim violations in children's literature.

3.5 Violation of the Agreement Maxim

The agreement maxim requires speakers to minimize differences between themselves and others and maximize agreement with others' views. The behavior of the foolish wolf clearly violates this maxim, and the translator in the Korean version cleverly handles this violation through linguistic reinforcement and motivation supplementation strategies.

Example 5: Ignoring friends' objections and stubbornly sticking to his own opinion.

ST: The foolish wolf thought it was strange that his friends kept staring at him: "Why are you always looking at me?" Naughty Monkey replied, "We're waiting for you to give us ice cream!" The foolish wolf shouted, "You just ate some, why do you want more?" Everyone denied it: "We just had milk, not ice cream!" "No, it was ice cream, look at this little stick, it's from the ice cream!" The foolish wolf grabbed the stick from the cup and showed it to everyone, saying, "It's so cold, I was worried you might get a stomach ache from eating cold things, so I cooked the ice cream." "Oh my, how can you cook ice cream?" Smart Rabbit, Naughty

Monkey, and Fat Little Pig all shouted in surprise.

TT: The foolish wolf thought it was strange that his friends kept staring at him. "Why are you staring at me?" "You said you'd give us ice cream," answered the monkey. The foolish wolf shouted, "You just ate it, why are you asking for more?" "This isn't ice cream, it's milk!" "No, it's not milk, it's ice cream! Look at this stick, it was stuck in the ice cream!" The foolish wolf picked up the stick from the cup and showed it to his friends. "Since it's so cold today, I was worried you'd get a stomach ache from eating cold ice cream, so I cooked it for you." "How can you cook ice cream!?" The monkey, the rabbit, and the pig were all flabbergasted.

In Example 5, the foolish wolf's stubbornness when facing his friends' objections is a typical violation of the agreement maxim. According to Leech's politeness principle, the agreement maxim requires speakers to minimize differences between themselves and others and maximize agreement with others' views. However, the foolish wolf insists that what's in the cup is ice cream, not milk, and directly contradicts his friends by saying "No, it's not milk, it's ice cream!" He even picks up the stick as evidence, demonstrating a self-centered cognitive conflict in children. This behavior, which stubbornly clings to his own opinion and refuses to accept others' explanations, not only violates the agreement maxim's requirement to "minimize differences," but also reflects the fact that children have not yet developed mature cooperation in social interactions.

In the Korean translation, the translator faces the challenge of handling this violation of the agreement maxim. The foolish wolf's stubborn attitude in the original may be seen as impolite by Korean readers, especially in a culture that emphasizes group harmony and respect for others' opinions. To address this, the translator employs a strategy of "linguistic reinforcement + motivation supplementation": First, the translator directly translates the foolish wolf's rebuttal, "아니야 이건 우유가 아니고 아이스크림이란 말이야" ("No, this is not milk, it's ice cream!"), and strengthens his stubborn image with the action description, "나무 막대기를 들어 친구들에게 보여주었다" ("He picked up the stick and showed it to his friends"). Secondly, the translator adds an explanatory aside, "이렇게 추운 날씨에" ("Since it's so cold today"), which shifts the foolish wolf's motivation from "pure stubbornness" to "concern for his friends," retaining the character's naïve qualities while softening the negative impression of his "unreasonable" behavior.

This approach demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation. Through linguistic reinforcement, the translator retains the foolish wolf's stubborn image, while by supplementing his motivation (such as "worried his friends might get a stomach ache"), the offensiveness of his actions is softened. This strategy not only enhances the drama of the story but also weakens the negative impact of the foolish wolf's behavior through humorous expression.

From the perspective of the agreement maxim, the translator's strategy reflects cross-cultural adjustment to the violation. The translator does not completely eliminate the foolish wolf's stubborn behavior but rather uses localized adjustments (such as motivation supplementation) and humor to transform the original "stubbornness" into "concern for his friends," retaining the character's personality while aligning the translation with Korean children's cultural background and reading habits. This approach not only demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation but also provides valuable insights into the translation of agreement maxim violations in children's literature.

3.6 Violation of the Sympathy Maxim

The sympathy maxim requires speakers to minimize emotional opposition between themselves and others, and to maximize understanding and empathy for others' feelings. The behavior of the foolish wolf clearly violates this maxim, and the translator in the Korean version cleverly handles this violation through emotional reinforcement and non-verbal compensation strategies.

Example 6: The foolish wolf's "perfect cleaning" of the yard.

ST: The foolish wolf didn't think so. He was determined, no matter what, to get that leaf down. He "thud-thud-thud" ran into the school and brought a long ladder. The foolish wolf set up the ladder, climbed the tree, and finally plucked the leaf. When the teacher came to inspect, she saw that the lawn was clean, and praised the foolish wolf: "There's not a single leaf on the lawn, well done!" The foolish wolf reminded her: "Teacher, not only is there no leaf on the ground, but look, there's not a single leaf on the trees!" The teacher looked up and saw that all the trees were bare.

TT: But the foolish wolf was determined to get that leaf off. So, with a "thud-thud-thud" sound, he ran into the building, carrying the ladder. Then, he climbed up the tree with the ladder and finally took the leaf off. The teacher, who came to inspect, praised the foolish wolf for the clean lawn. "You did a great job!" Then, the foolish wolf shrugged his shoulders and said, "Not only is there no leaf on the ground, but there are none on the trees either. Take a look!" The teacher looked up and, sure enough, the trees were all

bare. Finally, the lesson began.

In Example 6, the foolish wolf's behavior, excessively pursuing "perfect cleaning" while ignoring the feelings of others, is a typical violation of the sympathy maxim. According to Leech's politeness principle, the sympathy maxim requires speakers to minimize emotional opposition with others and maximize empathy for others' feelings. However, in order to achieve his goal of "not a single leaf on the lawn," the foolish wolf not only cleared the leaves on the ground but also plucked all the leaves from the trees, leaving them bare. This behavior, while seemingly responsible, ignores the balance of the natural environment and the reasonable expectations of the teacher for neatness. The foolish wolf's excessive actions reflect a one-sided understanding of the rules and a self-centered tendency.

In the Korean translation, the translator faces the challenge of handling this violation of the sympathy maxim. The foolish wolf's behavior in the original may be seen as extreme or disrespectful toward nature and others, especially in a culture like Korea's, which emphasizes harmony and balance. To address this, the translator employs a strategy of "emotional reinforcement + non-verbal compensation": First, the translator uses onomatopoeia "쿵쾅쿵쾅" ("thud-thud-thud") and action description "뛰어 들어가 사다리를 메고 나왔다" ("ran inside carrying the ladder") to emphasize the dramatic and exaggerated nature of the foolish wolf's actions; secondly, the translator adds "어깨를 으쓱하며" ("shrugging his shoulders") to shift the foolish wolf's motivation from "overly obsessive" to "naïvely cute," retaining the character's personality while softening the negative impression of his actions. This approach demonstrates the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation. Through emotional reinforcement, the translator amplifies the exaggeration of the foolish wolf's actions, making the story more dramatic and humorous; while through non-verbal compensation, the translator retains the foolish wolf's naïve qualities, softening the extremity of his behavior. This strategy not only enhances the story's entertainment value but also weakens the negative impact of the foolish wolf's actions through humor.

From the perspective of the sympathy maxim, the translator's strategy reflects cross-cultural adjustment to the violation. The translator did not completely eliminate the foolish wolf's excessive behavior but instead, through localized adjustments (such as action descriptions) and humor, transformed the original "over-obsessiveness" into "naïve cuteness," maintaining the character's individuality while making the translation more aligned with Korean children's cultural background and reading habits. This approach not only highlights the translator's flexibility in cross-cultural translation but also provides valuable insights for translating violations of the sympathy maxim in children's literature.

4. POLITENESS MAXIM VIOLATIONS IN TRANSLATION STRATEGIES AND READER RECEPTION
4.1 Adding Interjections

In children's literature, interjections and onomatopoeic words play an important role in enhancing the text's appeal and making it more relatable to children's language habits. Interjections not only vividly convey the characters' emotions but also bridge the gap between the reader and the story, making it easier for children to immerse themselves in the plot. However, in cross-cultural translation, the use of interjections must be approached with caution. Especially when it comes to the politeness maxim, overuse or inappropriate interjections may send negative signals, affecting the character portrayal and reader reception.

Example 7:

ST: The foolish wolf grabbed the wooden stick in the cup to show everyone and said, "The weather is so cold, and I'm worried that eating cold things might give everyone a stomach ache, so I cooked the ice cream."

"Ah, how can you cook ice cream?" Clever Rabbit, Naughty Monkey, and Fat Little Pig all exclaimed in unison.

TT: The foolish wolf grabbed the wooden stick in the cup and showed it to his friends. "Because the weather is so cold, I worried that eating cold ice cream might give you a stomach ache, so I deliberately cooked it."

"Hey! How can you cook ice cream?" The chubby monkey and piglet were shocked.

In Example 7, the original friends' reaction "Ah, how can you cook ice cream?" is reinforced by the Korean exclamation "야!" ("Hey!" or "Yo!"), which gives the reaction a stronger tone. In the original text, "Ah" conveys a mild surprise and confusion, fitting the friendly interactions between characters; however, "야!" in Korean is often used in informal settings between familiar people and carries a connotation of reproach or impatience. This shift changes the friends' response from mere collective surprise to implicit reproach, which could mislead readers into thinking the characters lack patience or tolerance, thereby weakening the image of the foolish wolf as "naive and sincere" and the mutual assistance between friends.

From a cultural adaptation perspective, children's literature should avoid expressions that could be interpreted as "impolite," especially when the relationship between characters is not yet close. The overuse of the informal "야!" might send a negative signal to children that "direct reproach without restraint" is acceptable, deviating from the politeness maxim's requirement to "respect others' feelings." In Korean culture, politeness is highly emphasized, especially in children's literature, where gentle and friendly tones are more aligned with readers' aesthetic expectations. Therefore, the translator needs to carefully consider the politeness norms of the target language culture when handling interjections.

If the colloquial tone needs to be preserved, it can be replaced with neutral interjections such as "아이쿠!" ("Oh dear!") or "어머!" ("Oh my!"). These interjections maintain the liveliness of the text while avoiding an imbalance in emotional expression, aligning more closely with the educational and friendly nature of children's literature. For example, replacing "야!" with "어머!" softens the friends' reaction to something more in line with the gentle expressions commonly found in Korean children's literature, retaining the surprise while avoiding any negative connotations.

Additionally, it is important to consider the common use of interjections in Korean children's literature. In these works, interjections are typically used to enhance emotional expression, but words carrying reproach or impatience are less common. Therefore, the translator should refer to the local conventions of Korean children's literature to ensure the translation is both engaging and culturally appropriate.

Through such adjustments, the translator can retain the humor and character personality from the original text while avoiding potential cultural conflicts arising from the inappropriate use of interjections. This strategy not only works for *The Foolish Wolf's Story* but also provides valuable insights for translating other children's literary works.

This case, through the adjustment of interjections in the Korean translation, demonstrates the translator's strategic choices when handling violations of the politeness maxim. The study shows that adding interjections requires a balance between the liveliness of the text and adherence to the politeness maxim, avoiding overly colloquial or inappropriate interjections that may convey negative signals. This strategy not only enhances the translation's entertainment value but also makes it more acceptable to readers, offering practical insights for translators dealing with similar phenomena.

4.2 Enhancing Emotions

In children's literature, emotional expression is particularly important. Especially through exaggerated techniques to showcase character mood fluctuations, it can effectively capture children's attention and enhance the story's emotional impact. However, emotional intensification needs to be approached with caution to avoid distorting the character's image or causing discomfort to readers through excessive emotional outbursts. In cross-cultural translation, the translator must adjust the intensity of emotional expression according to the target language's cultural norms, ensuring that the translation conveys the emotional core of the original while aligning with the target audience's reception.

Example 8: Excessive Emotional Outburst Without Considering Others' Feelings

ST: The foolish wolf went to the little tree to get his tail, but the tail was gone. There was no tail either on the tree or on the ground. The tail was gone—what should he do? You have to know how much the foolish wolf loves his big tail!

"My fluffy tail!" The foolish wolf sat on the grass and cried loudly. His crying was so loud that just one cry made all the residents of the grassland and the forest immediately know that the foolish wolf's tail was missing.

TT: But oh no! The tail was missing! It wasn't on the tree or on the ground. The foolish wolf, who loved his tail so much, didn't know what to do and just stomped his feet. "Oh, where did my tail go?" With his big and fluffy tail, the foolish wolf ended up sitting down on the grass and crying out loud. The sound was so loud that all the animals living in the grassland and the forest knew that the foolish wolf had lost his tail.

In Example 8, the foolish wolf's behavior of losing his tail and emotionally losing control typically violates the empathy maxim. According to Leech's politeness principle, the empathy maxim requires the speaker to minimize emotional opposition to others and increase consideration for others' feelings. However, after the foolish wolf discovers that his tail is gone, he immediately sits on the grass and cries loudly, with his cry so intense that it disturbs all the residents of the forest. This exaggerated emotional outburst not only disregards the peace of the surrounding animals but also magnifies personal loss to an extreme, reflecting the egocentric tendencies of children when emotional regulation skills are still immature.

In the Korean translation, the translator uses an emotional intensification strategy to highlight the foolish wolf's strong emotional

reaction to losing his tail. The original text conveys the emotional fluctuations of the foolish wolf with expressions such as "how much he loved his big tail," "cried loudly," and "all the residents knew." However, the Korean version further amplifies this emotion. For example, the Korean translation adds the exclamation "아뿔싸!" ("Oh no!"), which immediately heightens the tension in the scene. Additionally, while the original simply describes the foolish wolf crying, the Korean translation adds "발만동동 굴렸다" ("stomping his feet") and "영영 울고말았다" ("crying out loud"), making the foolish wolf's sadness not just a singular cry, but accompanied by physical actions and continuous emotional outbursts. This approach makes the character's image more vivid and the emotional expression more outward.

At the same time, the Korean translation further emphasizes the impact of the cry with "그 소리가 얼마나 컸던지" ("how loud the sound was"), highlighting the spreading effect of the cry, which makes all the animals aware of the situation, far beyond the original "just one cry." This translation strategy not only aligns with the exaggerated style typical in children's literature but also helps Korean readers more directly feel the emotional impact of the foolish wolf, enhancing the story's drama and emotional power.

From a cultural adaptation perspective, emotional expressions in Korean children's literature tend to be more outward and exaggerated, especially when depicting sadness or anger, often using physical gestures and strong interjections to increase emotional tension. Therefore, the translator chose a method consistent with Korean children's literature, maintaining the character's innocence while using exaggerated techniques to enhance the story's fun.

However, the intensification of emotions must be moderated. Excessive emotional expression might make readers feel it is unrealistic or even undermine the character's credibility. Therefore, while intensifying emotions, the translator includes an explanatory aside "꼬리를 무척 좋아하는" ("really likes his tail") to shift the foolish wolf's behavior from "simple emotional outburst" to "extreme attachment," maintaining the character's innocent traits while softening the negative impression of "disregarding others." This handling represents the translator's "dynamic balance" strategy, which neither distorts the emotional expression of the original text nor misguides readers by leading them to understand the psychological motivation behind the character's actions.

This emotional intensification not only helps enhance the effectiveness of the translation in the target language culture but also strengthens the emotional resonance during cross-cultural communication. Through this emotional intensification, the translator successfully transforms the foolish wolf's sadness into a dramatic plot, aligning with the exaggerated style of children's literature while avoiding cultural conflicts that may arise from excessive emotional outbursts.

This case demonstrates, through emotional intensification in the Korean translation, the translator's strategic choices in handling violations of the politeness principle. The study reveals that emotional intensification requires moderation to avoid excessive emotional outbursts that could distort the character's image or cause discomfort to readers. This strategy not only enhances the emotional impact of the story but also makes it easier for readers to empathize with the character's emotions, providing new insights for translators handling emotional expression scenes in children's literature.

4.3 Clarifying Implications

In children's literature translation, clarifying implications is an important strategy to ensure that target language readers can understand the story's logic and development. Since children's cognitive abilities are limited, overly obscure or complex expressions can confuse them, affecting their reading experience. Therefore, translators need to appropriately explain implied information while maintaining the original text's humor and simplicity, helping young readers better understand the story. However, these explanations must avoid being lengthy or preachy, as such an approach would detract from the lighthearted and lively style of children's literature.

Example 9: Children's literature must clarify implied information, but avoid long-winded or preachy explanations.

ST: One morning, something happened that startled the silly wolf. Just after he watered the little seedling, he heard a "crack," the flowerpot broke, the soil scattered, and a small white root poked out from the bottom of the pot. It turned out that the seedling's root had pushed through the pot. The silly wolf ran to the clever rabbit's house and told him about what had happened.

TT: Then, one early morning, an event occurred that startled Bbeollang. Just as Bbeollang was about to water the young tree, the flowerpot suddenly shattered. Soil scattered everywhere, and a white root pierced through the pot. The tree's roots had grown and broken the narrow flowerpot. Bbeollang immediately ran to Tosil's house to tell her about the incident.

In Example 9, the original text describes the process of the flowerpot breaking using simple language, but it implies the causal relationship of "the seedling's root breaking the pot." For young readers, this implied information might cause confusion and affect

their understanding of the story. In the Korean translation, the translator applies the strategy of clarifying implications to make the originally implicit information more direct and easier to understand. For example, the Korean translation clearly states the cause-and-effect logic with "나무 뿌리가 자라면서 좁은 화분이 깨진 것이다" (The tree's roots grew and broke the narrow flowerpot), eliminating any possible confusion for the target-language children.

Additionally, the Korean translation uses the onomatopoeic word "와장창" (crash) to describe the moment the flowerpot breaks, which not only adds drama to the story but also makes the scene of the breakage more vivid. Furthermore, the phrase "the soil scattered" is expanded into "사방으로 흙이 튀었고" (soil splattered everywhere), emphasizing the suddenness and visual impact of the event, making it easier for young readers to understand the cause and effect of the flowerpot breaking. This detailed yet concise treatment preserves the humor of children's literature and ensures that the target-language children do not need to make additional inferences about the story's logic, thus achieving accurate information transmission.

From a cultural adaptation perspective, Korean children's literature often favors clear and direct expression, especially when explaining cause-and-effect relationships. Such expressions typically use simple language and vivid onomatopoeia to enhance the story's readability. Thus, the translator, in handling the "flowerpot breaking" scene, chose an approach consistent with Korean children's literature traditions, preserving the original humor while helping readers better understand the story through clarifying implications.

However, clarifying implications does not mean over-explaining or giving lengthy explanations. The translator must maintain the simplicity and playfulness of the language to avoid making the story feel tedious or preachy. For example, the Korean translation uses the onomatopoeic word "와장창" (crash) and action descriptions like "사방으로 흙이 튀었고" (soil splattered everywhere), vividly presenting the scene of the flowerpot breaking while avoiding long-winded explanations, thus maintaining the story's pace and liveliness.

This translation strategy not only enhances the readability and communicative effectiveness of the text in the target culture but also ensures that the information is clear and coherent in cross-cultural communication. Through clarifying implications, the translator successfully transformed the original text's implied information into content that is easy for target-language readers to understand, preserving the fun of children's literature while avoiding comprehension barriers caused by cultural differences.

This case, by clarifying implied information in the Korean translation, demonstrates the translator's strategic choice in handling violations of the politeness principle. The study finds that clarifying implications should avoid being lengthy or preachy and maintain the light and lively style of children's literature. This strategy not only improves the readability of the translation but also makes it easier for readers to understand the story's logic, providing practical reference for translators when dealing with implied information in children's literature.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Violations of the Politeness Principle and Cultural Adaptation

This study focuses on the violations of the politeness principle in the Korean translation of Cao Wenxuan's *The Story of Silly Wolf*, examining the cultural adaptation and language adjustment strategies in the translation of children's literature between China and South Korea. Through the analysis of specific cases, the study reveals the complexity and dynamic nature of the politeness principle in the cross-cultural communication of children's literature.

The study finds that the violations of the politeness principle in the Korean translation of *The Story of Silly Wolf* are not the result of the translator's unintentional oversight, but rather an inevitable consequence of the cultural differences between China and South Korea. These violations often stem from the translator's proactive strategy to achieve cultural adaptation in the target language culture when faced with the unique linguistic expressions of the original text. In the Korean translation process, the translator adjusted certain direct, humorous, and even slightly offensive lines to align with Korean children's etiquette cognition and social norms, ensuring the acceptability and cultural compatibility of the translation. It is noteworthy that the translator did not merely eliminate cultural conflicts in the original text, but instead employed strategic rewriting and cultural adaptation to present a "rebalanced" state of the violation of the politeness principle in the target culture. This reflects the dual task in children's literature translation of maintaining the original style while considering the cultural expectations of the target language.

5.2 Comparison and Innovation

The greatest difference between this study and previous research lies in its focus on the violations of the politeness principle in children's literature translation, highlighting the core role of cultural adaptation in cross-cultural translation. In contrast, previous studies often concentrated on aspects such as readability and fun in children's literature translation, with little systematic exploration of the politeness principle—a seemingly marginal yet crucial translation phenomenon. This study fills this gap in perspective and further expands the theoretical boundaries of cultural adaptation strategies in children's literature translation.

5.3 Practical Implications

This study reveals the unique role of the violations of the politeness principle in children's literature translation and emphasizes the translator's role as a "cultural mediator" in cross-cultural communication. On a practical level, the study provides the following insights for translators: In children's literature translation, violations of the politeness principle are often closely related to cultural differences. Therefore, translators need to gain a deep understanding of the etiquette norms and children's psychology in the target culture, ensuring that the translation preserves the original style while meeting the aesthetic expectations of the target culture. Additionally, when faced with direct or offensive expressions in the original text, translators should adopt a dynamic balancing strategy, preserving the humor of the original while using techniques such as contextual reconstruction and polite expression to adapt to cultural differences.

5.4 Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study has explored the translation strategies in the Korean version of *The Story of Silly Wolf* from the perspective of the violation of the politeness principle, there are still some limitations. First, the study only selected Cap Wenxuan's *The Story of Silly Wolf* as the research subject, with a relatively limited sample size. Future research can expand the scope to include children's literature works by other authors to enhance the universality of the study. Second, this study relies more on text analysis and theoretical discussion, without incorporating the actual reception feedback from Korean child readers regarding the translation. Future studies could collect practical feedback from target-language readers through surveys or interviews to verify the connection between theoretical analysis and reader reception. Based on the above discussion, future research can deepen in the following areas: Expanding the research scope: Comparing children's literature works from different Chinese and Korean authors to reveal the broader impact of cultural differences on translation strategies; Empirical research: Investigating target-language children's acceptance of violations of the politeness principle through surveys or interviews, providing more practical evidence for translation strategies; Constructing a translation strategy model: Further refining the cultural adaptation strategies in Chinese-Korean children's literature translation and developing a systematic translation strategy model to provide a workable theoretical framework for practice.

6. CONCLUSION

This study, through the analysis of the violation of the politeness principle in the Korean translation of Cao Wenxuan's *The Story of Silly Wolf*, explores the cultural adaptation and language strategies in Chinese-Korean children's literature translation. The study finds that the violation of the politeness principle is not a translation error but a proactive translation strategy adopted by the translator during the cross-cultural translation process to align with the characteristics of the target culture and the aesthetic needs of child readers. Specifically, the adjustments in polite expressions in the Korean translation reflect the translator's deep understanding of Chinese-Korean cultural differences and, through language and cultural adaptation, make the translation more consistent with the reading habits within the South Korean cultural context.

By analyzing the Korean translation of *The Story of Silly Wolf*, this study reveals the importance of cultural adaptation in children's literature translation, especially in the translation of polite expressions. It illustrates how translators creatively transform the original while maintaining its spirit. The results of this study not only provide a new perspective for Chinese-Korean children's literature translation but also offer empirical support for the application of the politeness principle in translation theory.

This study emphasizes that violations of the politeness principle in children's literature translation are both a cultural transmission strategy and a creative response within the translation process. With the deepening of Sino-Korean cultural exchanges, future children's literature translation will face more challenges related to cultural adaptation. How to achieve cultural recreation while staying true to the original text remains an important issue to address. The research presented here offers valuable guidance for

future translation practice and provides theoretical support for strategic choices in cross-cultural translation, possessing significant academic value.

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