

Translation of Slang in *Diaries of a Wimpy Kid* and *The Brilliant World of Tom Gates* Novels

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Abstract

Slang language is an informal language which has been used among different social groups and entered literature, too. Considering the linguistic and cultural limits in the process of slang translation, this study was done to examine the translation of slang language in two children and adult picture novels, *The Diaries of a Wimpy Kid*, and *The Brilliant World of Tom Gates*. The first novel written by Kinney exploded in popularity and was considered New York Times bestseller in 2007. It has won many national and international prizes including “Nickeldone” and “The children praised book”. The second novel, *The Brilliant World of Tom Gates*, was written by Pishon. It has won several prestigious awards, including Roald Dahl funny Prize and the Water Stones children’s Book Prize. It has also been translated into over 33 languages worldwide. This study was done to elaborate different types of slangs and translation strategies applied in the translation of slangs to show how much the translators were successful in translating slang words and how the introduced translation strategies were beneficial in translation of slang expressions. The data of this qualitative-descriptive study were collected by applying Partridge’s theory about types of slangs and Baker’s strategies for translation of slangs.

Partridge distinguishes ten different kinds of slangs: a. Cockney: It is divided into two types used by educated and uneducated people; b. Public house: It refers to group words and phrases made up for the smallness of the recorded vocabulary by nature. It is the main, genial, cheery, materialistic, but not gross nor cynical one; c. Workmen’s: Linking up with the public house is workmen’s slang which is very closed to tradesman slang used to refer to family and financial matters in workmen’s lives; d. Tradesmen: They are used between tradesmen; e. Commerce: it refers to slangs used in trade between tradesmen and customers; f. Public schools and universities: in these type students become the main source, because they are fresh, full of spirit to move forward for their future; g. Society: it is concerned with the spirit of universe, the world life; h. Art: The words and phrases of art are quickly adopted by the society; however, only few words of them are known; i. Theatre: It came to existence in the nineteenth century and is related to slangs in art; and j. Church: Slangs not only appear from people in the street or in their daily conversation, but also can be found from a holy place such as church.

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Baker provides 8 strategies for translation of slangs:

1. Translation by a more general word: The translator uses a common word in the target language which expresses the same referential meaning and the same expressive meaning as those of the slangs in the source text; 2. Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word: It consists of data that are translated using common words or phrases of dissimilar meaning, both referential and expressive; 3. Translation by cultural substitution: This strategy involves replacing a culture-specific item with a target language item, which does not have some propositional meaning but is likely to have similar impact on the target reader; 4. Translation by loan or loan word plus explanation; 5. Translation by paraphrase using a related word: This strategy consists of data that are translated using words or phrases of similar referential meaning but dissimilar expressive meaning; 6. Translation by paraphrasing using an unrelated word: Means translation using words or phrases of similar expressive meaning but dissimilar referential meaning; 7. Translation by omission: The translator can omit one word or more to make the translation suitable to the target language structure, seems natural, and suitable for the target language's culture, 8. Translation by illustration: This strategy enjoys illustrations or pictures to convey the idea from the source text to the target text. Pictures can be helpful to the translator for translating slangs appropriately.

According to Partridge's classification of slang types, there were three types of slangs of school and university (53.27%), social (44.26%) and workmen (24.45%) in the first novel. In the second novel, there were also three types of slangs, namely, social (72%), school and university (24%), and artistic slangs (4%). For translation of these slangs in the first novel, eight strategies of translation introduced by Baker were used. They were translation by more general words (62.22%), translation by more neutral/less expressive words (9.76%), cultural substitution (15.86%), translation using loan words and explanations (2.44%), paraphrasing using related words (20.44%), paraphrasing using unrelated words (18.3%), omission (9.76%) and translation by illustrations (6.1%). In the second novel, six strategies were applied. They were namely, translation by more general words (4%), translation by more neutral/less expressive words (0%), cultural substitution (30%), translation using loan words and explanations (6%), paraphrasing using related words (26%), paraphrasing using unrelated words (30%), omission (0%) and translation by illustrations (4%) were applied. In the first novel, translating by more general words was the most applied strategy and in the second novel, cultural substitution and translation by unrelated words were the most used ones. By applying translation by more general words strategy, the translator of the first novel made the meaning of slang words change and transferred them to common words, so he did not transfer the exact meaning of slangs and did not produce the same effect on the target language. On the other hand, the second translator applied the cultural substitution strategy to find proper equivalences for slangs in the target culture and in this way succeeded in transferring the exact meaning of slangs, and producing the same effect on the target language. Another finding of this study was that pictures are influential in transferring meaning of slang language to children and adult reader. According to results of this study, pictures can help the translator in conveying the meaning of slang words in children and young adult literature.

Keywords: slang, partridge, Baker's translation strategies, *Diaries of a Wimpy Kid*, *The Brilliant World of Tom Gates*