

Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of Cover Design in Korean Translations of Chinese Children's Picture Books

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ABSTRACT

With the increasing international dissemination of Chinese children's literature, the cross-cultural adaptation of cover design has become a crucial factor influencing reader reception. Based on Roland Barthes' semiotic theory and the framework of multimodal discourse analysis, this study examines the cultural adaptation mechanisms in the cover designs of contemporary Chinese children's picture books translated into Korean. Through a comparative analysis of the visual (color, imagery) and linguistic (title, typography) elements in ten Chinese picture books and their Korean translations, the study finds that localization strategies—such as the reinterpretation of traditional cultural symbols and adjustments in child-oriented color schemes—facilitate cross-cultural transmission. Core cultural elements are preserved within the target language context while being enhanced through multimodal coordination (text-image interaction, color symbolism) to foster reader engagement. This study provides a systematic analytical model for the transformation of visual semiotics in children's literature translation and reveals the implicit translational function of cover design as a cultural medium, offering new perspectives and practical guidance for cultural adaptation in future translation strategies.

Keywords: Children's picture books, Chinese-Korean translation, cover design, semiotics, multimodality.

INTRODUCTION

Translation serves as a crucial bridge connecting the source and target cultural spheres, facilitating not only linguistic conversion but also the transmission of cultural values (Venuti, 1995). Ideally, the cover design of a translated work would remain consistent with that of the original to maintain the unity and recognizability of the book. However, in practice, translated book covers are often adapted to align with the cultural, ideological, and aesthetic preferences of the target audience. This process, known as localization, involves the adaptive reconstruction of visual symbols to bridge cultural differences and enhance reader engagement (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

This phenomenon is particularly evident in the translation of children's picture books, which are characterized by a highly multimodal nature. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) assert, the interaction of images, colors, and text forms a "grammar of meaning." The cover, as the "first interface" of a book, integrates various elements such as illustration, format, and genre, making it the most visually striking and engaging part of the work. Gérard Genette's (1997) concept of "paratext" further underscores the importance of book covers within the

overall structure of a publication, encompassing essential information such as the title and author's name, as well as supplementary content like prefaces and illustrations (Macksey, 1997). With the rise of online book sales, cover design has become increasingly significant in book marketing (Park, 2012), reflecting not only technological advancements but also evolving societal aesthetics and cultural demands (Drucker, 2020).

This study employs a combined approach of qualitative content analysis and semiotic deconstruction. The sample selection follows strict criteria: First, all original Chinese picture books were selected from the "China Children's Book List" between 2015 and 2022 to ensure originality and representativeness. Second, the corresponding Korean translations were chosen from the bestselling children's picture books on Kyobo Bookstore, South Korea's largest bookstore chain, to ensure the books' reception and influence in the target market.

Drawing upon Roland Barthes' semiotic theory (Barthes, 1972) and the multimodal discourse analysis framework (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), this study conducts a comparative analysis of 20 Chinese and Korean picture book covers, addressing the following core questions: 1) How can semiotic analysis reveal cultural transmission

and adaptation in the cover design of Chinese children's picture books translated into Korean? 2)Within the framework of multimodal translation, how can visual elements and text be effectively integrated to enhance cross-cultural communication? 3)In the translation of children's literature, how does cover design function as a tool for cultural transmission, increasing reader interest and market appeal in the target culture?

This research aims to uncover the translation pathways and reconstruction strategies of Chinese traditional cultural symbols in Korean-translated book covers, analyze the impact mechanisms of multimodal design elements on target audience reception, and explore the cultural transmission function of cover design as an implicit translation practice.

I.Semiotics and Multimodal Translation

2.1 Barthes' Semiotic Theory

Semiotics, as a discipline that explores how meaning is constructed through sign systems, provides a solid theoretical foundation for analyzing book cover design. Roland Barthes' semiotic framework centers on the binary structure of the *signifier* and the *signified*. This dual-layered model highlights how signs convey meaning through both denotation (literal meaning) and connotation (cultural or emotional associations) (Eco, 1976). In the context of book cover design, this theory offers distinct analytical value.

First, a book cover constitutes a complex sign system that integrates not only textual elements but also visual features such as imagery, color, and layout (Chandler, 2007). For example, traditional Chinese symbols like the color red, dragon motifs, and lanterns denote festive cultural themes (denotation), while simultaneously connoting deeper values such as auspiciousness and celebration. This dual-layered meaning structure enables cover designs to generate mythical effects, subtly influencing readers' cultural perceptions and emotional responses (van Leeuwen, 2005).

Second, Barthes' theory of secondary signification systems is particularly suited for examining cover designs in cross-cultural contexts. A book cover does more than reflect the book's content—it constructs distinct sociocultural meanings by aligning with the cultural identity and emotional expectations of its intended audience (Peirce, 1931). This process of meaning-making is especially critical in the cross-cultural dissemination of children's picture books.

2.2 The Paradigm of Multimodal Translation Theory

Multimodal translation theory broadens the traditional scope of translation studies by emphasizing the interaction between verbal and non-verbal modes—such as image, color, and layout—within the translation process (O'Halloran, 1999). In

the study of cover design, this theoretical lens is of particular significance.

Firstly, the multimodal perspective reveals the cooperative mechanisms among different sign systems in cover design. As Baldry and Thibault (2006) point out, effective multimodal analysis involves examining how these systems collaboratively construct meaning. In cross-cultural translation, such synergy is crucial—cover designs must preserve the thematic essence of the source text while adapting to the aesthetic preferences and market expectations of the target culture (O'Sullivan, 2013).

Secondly, this theory emphasizes the interactivity of semiotic modes (Djonov & Zhao, 2023). A hallmark of children's literature lies in its reliance on both textual and visual modes to convey meaning. In the translation of Chinese children's literature, visual symbols often embody core cultural values, while verbal elements require adaptive transformation based on the target context. Designers must carefully coordinate these two systems to achieve creative cultural transfer (Lathey, 2015). As inherently multimodal texts, children's books benefit from the analytical lenses of "representational meaning," "interactive meaning," and "compositional meaning," as proposed by multimodal discourse analysis (Peng, 2022). Such coordination not only reflects cultural adaptation but also demonstrates the translator's deep insight into divergent cultural mindsets (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2001).

2.3 Research Methodology and Implementation

This study selects ten representative Chinese children's books in translation that have gained substantial recognition in international markets. A three-stage analytical framework is employed:

The first stage focuses on cases where original design elements are preserved, examining the translatability and continuity of cultural symbols across cultures.

The second stage investigates cases with modified textual elements, exploring how linguistic signs are adapted in the translation process.

The third stage analyzes cases of complete redesign, aiming to reveal deeper strategies of cultural adaptation. To support this analysis, the study builds a dual-layered analytical framework: one part draws from Barthes' semiotic theory to interpret the denotative and connotative meanings of design elements; the other applies multimodal analysis to examine how visual and textual signs work together to produce meaning. Special attention is given to the process of "myth-making"—how the combination of signs in cover design generates culturally resonant meanings within the target readership.

II.A Semiotic Analysis of the Korean-Translated Covers of Chinese Children's Picture Books

3.1 Analysis of the Cross-Cultural Continuity of Cultural Symbols

An examination of the cases illustrated in Figures 1–6 reveals that some Korean-translated picture book covers retain the core elements of the original designs. This design strategy is primarily evident in two categories of works:

The first category comprises picture books with traditional cultural themes. Representative examples include *Tiger Head Hat* and *Shadow Grandpa* (written by Bao Dongni, illustrated by Huang Jie, 2018), whose covers fully preserve the visual semiotic system symbolizing Chinese culture. This is manifested in: The faithful representation of traditional clothing elements (e.g., the *tiger head hat*); The visual reproduction of folk activities (e.g., shadow puppetry); The continued use of China-specific color schemes (e.g., festive red).

The second category includes creative and imaginative works, such as *The Scariest Day* (written and illustrated by Tom Niu, 2013), *Rain Dew Ma* (written by Cao Wenxuan, illustrated by Suzy Lee, 2016), *Three Friends* (written by Liu Haiqi, illustrated by Luo Ling, 2021), *Whose Socks?* (written and illustrated by Sun Jun, 2020), and *I Really Want to Eat Durian* (written and illustrated by Liu Xugong, 2020). The cover designs of these books maintain the original artistic style, primarily due to the following characteristics: Abstract and stylized visual expression; Universally appealing children's aesthetic elements; A color composition with minimal cultural specificity.

A semiotic analysis indicates that the ability of traditional cultural symbols (as seen in the first category) to transcend cultural boundaries is rooted in three key factors: The visual distinctiveness of the symbols, which enhances cultural appeal; Children's natural affinity for image-based symbols, facilitating intuitive comprehension; The shared cultural heritage of traditional elements within the East Asian cultural sphere, which fosters recognition and acceptance.

From a multimodal perspective, the effectiveness of such cover designs lies in: Image-based symbols playing the dominant role in cultural transmission; Textual symbols being limited to linguistic conversion (i.e., the translation of the book title into Korean); Color-based symbols maintaining consistency in emotional expression.

This design strategy not only preserves the cultural authenticity of the original work but also ensures cross-cultural dissemination through a child-friendly visual language.

Example 1. A Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of Tiger Head Hat



Figure 1. Original Chinese Edition of Tiger Head Hat (2018)



Figure 2. Korean-Translated Edition Tiger Head Hat (2019)

Semiotic Extraction

In the cover design of *Tiger Head Hat*, the combination of image and text is a crucial process of symbolic construction. The cover depicts an image of a smiling child wearing a Tiger Head Hat, which not only carries an immediate denotative meaning (denotative meaning: child, hat, smile) but also imbues a deeper connotative meaning through cultural symbols (connotative meaning: traditional festivals, luck, courage). According to Barthes' semiotic model, the cover image creates deeper cultural significance through the combination of the "signifier" (the child and Tiger Head Hat in the image) and the "signified" (representing traditional culture, luck, festive atmosphere, etc.). This symbol not only conveys the basic plot of children's literature but also plants the cultural background in the reader's cognition through traditional Chinese cultural elements (such as the Tiger Head Hat).

From Barthes' "myth" theory perspective, the cover design evokes curiosity and emotional resonance towards Chinese traditional culture through the visual impact of the image and the symbolic meaning of the pattern. The Tiger Head Hat, as a symbol of Chinese traditional culture, conveys the essence of native culture while forming a specific cultural myth, influencing the target reader's understanding and acceptance of the work.

Multimodal Comparison:

From the perspective of multimodal translation, the linguistic and non-linguistic symbols (such as images and colors) in the cover design work together to construct meaning. The red background of the cover and the black title design not only highlight the celebratory and festive atmosphere of Chinese culture but also enhance the visual appeal of the cover through contrast. These visual elements, through non-linguistic symbols, convey a joyful, warm, and energetic emotional atmosphere, allowing readers to experience the story's ambiance on a visual level.

The red background in the cover design is an auspicious color in Chinese culture, often associated with celebrations, good fortune, and happiness. The black title contrasts sharply with the red, further enhancing the visibility of the title. This color scheme plays an important role in multimodal translation. It not only retains the cultural characteristics of the original but also attracts readers' attention through design that aligns with the target culture's aesthetic preferences.

In the Korean translation <호랑이 모자> *Tiger Head Hat* (2019), the cover design is almost unchanged, retaining the core visual elements of the original. This design strategy shows that the translator and designer ensured the faithful transmission of the original's cultural symbols (such as the Tiger Head Hat and red background) and emotional atmosphere, effectively appealing to Korean readers learning Chinese. Through this cross-cultural cover design, the cover serves not only as an external display of the book's content but also as a vital carrier of cultural exchange.

Cultural Adaptation Evaluation:

According to the multimodal translation framework, the cover design not only conveys the original's theme and emotion but also successfully reproduces the original's cultural connotation in the target culture through cultural adaptation. The cover design of *Tiger Head Hat* cleverly reflects the combination of traditional Chinese culture and children's imagination through the interplay of visual and linguistic elements. The red background and the Tiger Head Hat image reinforce the symbolic meaning of Chinese traditional culture while also providing rich cultural information and emotional resonance for the target culture (Korea). In the Korean edition's cover design, although the overall layout and color scheme remain consistent, the adjustment of the Korean title and the cultural adaptation of symbols further enhance the target culture's sense of identification. Especially for Korean child readers, the cultural symbols of the original are preserved through the cover design, ensuring that the translation maintains consistency in cultural transmission while achieving greater cultural adaptability and communicative effectiveness.

Conclusion: Combining semiotics and multimodal translation theory, the cover design of *Tiger Head Hat* not only presents

Chinese traditional cultural elements visually but also conveys specific social and emotional values through the cultural connotation of the symbols. The clever combination of colors, images, and textual elements in the cover design not only enhances the work's appeal but also promotes cross-cultural communication and understanding. This analysis further proves the essential role of cover design in the translation process, serving as both a carrier of cultural transmission and a key factor influencing the acceptance of the target culture's readers.

Example 2. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *Shadow Grandpa*

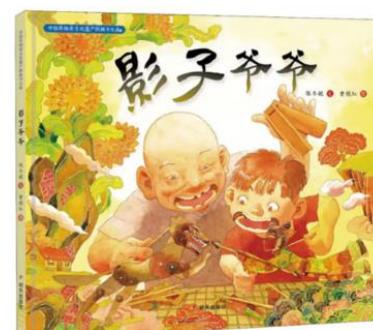


Figure 3. Chinese Original Edition *Shadow Grandpa* (2018)



Figure 4. Korean Translated Edition *Shadow Grandpa* (2019)

Semiotic Extraction:

The cover design of *Shadow Grandpa* skillfully integrates visual and textual elements to convey the book's core themes—traditional culture and familial affection. Within the semiotic framework, the "signifiers" of the cover include warm tones, lively flowers, the benevolent old man figure, and the image of the young boy named Dòu Zi. These symbols, through their denotative meanings (denotation), convey the basic elements of children's literature: warm family emotions, the inheritance of traditional culture, and the cultivation of intergenerational

relationships.

From the connotative perspective, the flowers, the lively boy, and the elderly figure not only symbolize the transmission of familial love and culture but also subtly promote and pay homage to the traditional Chinese art of shadow puppetry. The flowers may hint at the Chinese cultural reverence for nature, while the "*Shadow Grandpa*" figure represents the preservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. This design enriches the cover with deeper cultural and emotional layers through the richness of visual symbols and delicate emotional expression.

According to Barthes' "myth" theory, the cover of *Shadow Grandpa* is not just a book cover; it creates a cultural "myth" by using the image and cultural symbols to invoke a sense of recognition and interest in traditional culture through shadow puppetry. The symbolic function of the cover lies in its ability to incorporate this cultural element in a simple yet vivid manner, creating a cultural memory and emotional connection with the reader.

Multimodal Comparison:

From the perspective of multimodal translation, the cover design of *Shadow Grandpa* successfully conveys the book's layered meanings through the interaction of image and text. The warm color scheme, detailed illustrations, and simple title design help the visual elements communicate the emotional atmosphere of the book while highlighting the core cultural themes. The interaction between the flowers, the boy, and the elderly figure not only depicts a warm family atmosphere but also showcases the transmission of traditional culture. This visual design complements the textual elements, reinforcing the cultural transmission.

The choice of font for the title is also crucial. The title 《影子爷爷》*Shadow Grandpa* is presented in a simple and approachable font, making the title both visually prominent and warm. According to O'Halloran's (1999) multimodal translation theory, the combination of text and image here is highly effective. It ensures the recognition of the title while conveying the core content of the book, which revolves around intergenerational transmission and the integration of Chinese traditional culture.

In the Korean edition <그림자 할아버지>(*Shadow Grandpa*) (2019), the translator not only retains the basic design of the original but also makes adjustments in the font design and the content of the illustrations. The Korean title <그림자 할아버지> directly translates to "Shadow Grandpa," maintaining consistency with the original. Moreover, shadow puppetry patterns were incorporated into the cover design, a key move in cultural adaptation. By doing so, the translated version not only preserves the core cultural element (shadow puppetry) but also adds visual symbols that cater to the aesthetic and cultural needs of Korean readers, thus

enhancing cultural resonance with the target audience.

Cultural Adaptation Evaluation:

The cover design of *Shadow Grandpa* faithfully presents the core elements of traditional Chinese culture while ensuring cultural adaptation for dissemination across different cultural backgrounds. In the Korean edition, the adjustments made in the cover design enhance the adaptability of the cultural symbols, ensuring that Korean readers can understand and emotionally connect with the book. This cross-cultural design not only highlights the artistic value of shadow puppetry but also strengthens the emotional connection between generations, allowing readers from different cultural backgrounds to experience the same emotional impact.

From the perspective of dissemination efficacy, the combination of color, illustrations, and cultural symbols in the cover design effectively captures the attention of readers from different cultural contexts in a globalized publishing environment. In the Korean market, the cover design not only meets the aesthetic demands of Korean children but also successfully conveys the unique charm of Chinese traditional culture through cultural adaptation. Both the original and translated editions showcase high artistic value and cultural dissemination effectiveness.

Conclusion: The cover design of *Shadow Grandpa*, through the integration of semiotic and multimodal translation, not only effectively conveys the book's cultural connotations but also establishes a connection with readers on both visual and emotional levels. Whether in the original Chinese version or the Korean translation, the design reflects the profound foundation of Chinese traditional culture and, through appropriate cultural adaptation, ensures successful dissemination in the target culture. This analysis further emphasizes the importance of cover design in children's literature translation, highlighting its cultural adaptability and dissemination efficacy. The cover is not merely the external packaging of the book but also an important tool for cultural exchange and emotional transmission.

Example 3. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *Yulu Ma*



Figure 5. Chinese Original Edition *Rain Dew and Hemp* (2016)

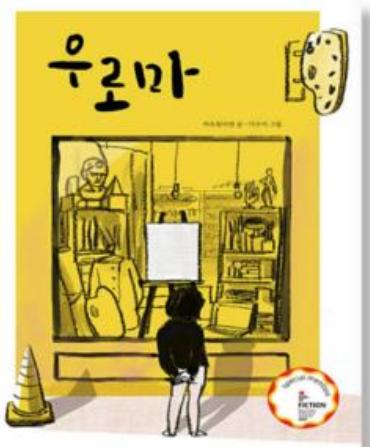


Figure 6. Korean Translated Edition *Rain Dew and Hemp* (2020)

Semiotic Extraction:

The cover design of *Rain Dew and Hemp* communicates the core emotions and themes of the book through a vivid yellow background, the central image of a young boy, and the evocative outdoor scene. From a semiotic perspective, the "signifiers" in the cover design include the yellow background, the boy's back, and the outdoor scene. The denotative meanings of these symbols are very straightforward: the yellow symbolizes vitality and warmth, the boy's back conveys the themes of growth and exploration, and the scene outside the window suggests the unknown and future exploration.

From a connotative perspective, these symbols carry deeper emotional meanings. Yellow, as the primary color tone, not only evokes warmth and positivity but also connects with light and hope, thus conveying the themes of growth and adventure in the book. The boy's back facing the audience while gazing outside represents his curiosity and exploration of the unknown world. This visual symbol skillfully evokes readers' resonance with the common themes of growth, learning, and

emotional development, which are central to children's literature.

Barthes' "myth" theory can also be applied here. The cover uses a symbolic system that tightly links the themes of growth and exploration with cultural emotions, creating a cultural "myth."

Through the boy's journey of exploration and the depiction of the outdoor scene, the cover conveys a cultural narrative about life, growth, and the unknown world. The cultural intent behind these symbols generates interest and emotional resonance with the reader.

Multimodal Comparison:

From the perspective of multimodal translation, the cover design of *Rain Dew and Hemp* cleverly integrates visual and linguistic symbols to convey the book's themes and emotions. In the design, the yellow background not only serves as a visual focal point to capture the reader's attention but also reinforces the book's themes of warmth and hope through the symbolic meaning of the color. The posture of the boy, facing away from the viewer, and the design of the outdoor scene, through visual symbols, depict the situation of exploration and the process of growth.

In the Korean version, a small stamp is added to the lower-right corner of the cover, indicating that the book is a bestseller. This small stamp, as a non-verbal symbol, not only strengthens the visual effect of the cover design but also attracts the attention of potential readers by suggesting the book's popularity in the market. This design aligns with the Korean cultural emphasis on bestsellers and enhances the cover's appeal in the target market.

Cultural Adaptation Evaluation:

The cover design of *Rain Dew and Hemp* successfully conveys the book's core emotions and cultural background through detailed cultural adaptation. The yellow background, the boy's silhouette, and the outdoor scene all convey the emotional themes of growth and exploration. These themes not only align with the characteristics of children's literature in the Chinese cultural context but are also effectively reinterpreted through multimodal translation strategies in the Korean version.

The addition of the bestseller stamp in the Korean edition further enhances its marketability and appeal. This gesture not only conforms to Korean cultural preferences but also strengthens the book's cultural dissemination by using symbolic elements to engage the target audience.

Conclusion: The cover design of *Rain Dew and Hemp* skillfully integrates visual elements, text, and cultural symbols, successfully conveying the emotional themes and cultural connotations of the book. Through the

combination of colors, images, and typography, the cover design not only attracts the reader's attention but also effectively evokes emotional resonance. Moreover, the cultural adaptation design in the Korean version further increases the target culture's identification with the book and enhances readers' interest, thus boosting the book's effectiveness in cross-cultural markets.

Example 4. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *Whose Socks*



Figure 7. Chinese Original *Whose Socks* (2020)



Figure 8. Korean Translation *Whose Socks?* (2023)

Semiotic Extraction:

The cover design of *Whose Socks* features various semiotic elements that work together to communicate the book's core themes and emotions. The signifiers (Signifier) in the cover design include the little black cat in the center, the yellow socks, the sneakers, and the surrounding black-and-white foot illustrations. Each visual element plays a different symbolic role in conveying the denotative and connotative meanings of the book. **Denotative Meaning:** The little black cat, wearing

shorts and sneakers and holding the yellow socks, directly communicates the book's theme—an interaction between a kitten and socks. The yellow socks, as the visual focal point, immediately draw the reader's attention.

Connotative Meaning: The yellow socks stand out as a bright visual element, breaking up the black-and-white color scheme and symbolizing liveliness, energy, and playfulness. Meanwhile, the black cat's cute and playful posture conveys the themes of curiosity and fun, often found in children's literature. The black-and-white foot illustrations add depth to the image, hinting at various characters and events in the story.

Applying Barthes' semiotic theory, the cover constructs a layered symbolic system that combines simple signs (cat, socks) with cultural backgrounds (children's play and exploration). This combination creates a deeper "myth"—a narrative of exploration, growth, and curiosity, which resonates with the themes of children's literature. These signs not only convey the specific storyline but also enhance cultural and emotional resonance through symbolic elements such as colors and patterns.

Multimodal Comparison:

From a multimodal translation perspective, the cover design of *Whose Socks* successfully combines visual, color, and textual elements to convey the book's themes and emotions. **Color Use:** The cover uses a black-and-white color scheme as the base, creating a clean and simple visual atmosphere. The addition of the yellow socks adds vibrancy, breaking the monotony and giving the design a lively, playful tone. This color contrast not only captures the reader's attention but also enhances the visual impact of the design. **Text Layout:** The title "Whose Socks" is displayed in a simple, clear font at the top of the cover, creating a visual link with the yellow socks. This combination of text and imagery highlights the book's central theme—searching for socks—while reinforcing the overall design with its minimalist font and strategic placement.

In the Korean translation, the title <누구 양말이에요?> *Whose Socks?* retains the question mark, further stimulating the reader's curiosity. The question mark, as a visual symbol, encourages readers to ponder the book's central question, enhancing their interest in the story. Additionally, a stamp indicating that the book is a *Bologna Ragazzi Award* winner is added in the bottom corner of the cover. This design not only emphasizes the book's prestigious honor but also increases the cover's authority and appeal. This design strategy plays a key role in multimodal translation, ensuring that the translated version preserves the visual appeal of the original while adapting cultural symbols to enhance the emotional resonance and interest of the target readers.

Cultural Adaptation Evaluation:

The cultural adaptability of the cover design of *Whose Socks* is reflected in its effective use of visual symbols and textual layout to meet the aesthetic and communicative needs of different cultures. **Cultural Adaptability:** In the Korean version, the translated title maintains the original theme while enhancing the sense of suspense and exploration with the addition of the question mark. This aligns with Korean readers' expectations for children's stories that involve curiosity and discovery. Additionally, the design of the yellow socks and black-and-white footprints is consistent with the original, ensuring the effective transfer of cultural symbols.

Communication Effectiveness: Besides the linguistic changes, the inclusion of the Bologna Ragazzi Award stamp elevates the book's market value and cultural authority. This design not only enhances the visual appeal of the cover but also strengthens the book's recognition and trust among readers in the target market. Through this cultural adaptation, *Whose Socks* successfully attracts readers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion: Combining semiotics and multimodal translation theory, the cover design of *Whose Socks* cleverly integrates images, colors, and text to effectively convey the book's core themes and emotions. Within the semiotic framework, the cover not only communicates the book's basic information through images and color but also constructs connotative meanings, filling the cover with emotions of exploration, curiosity, and playfulness. The multimodal translation ensures that the adapted version maintains its appeal across cultural contexts, enhancing its communication effectiveness and engaging readers in both the original Chinese and translated Korean versions.

3.2 Changes in Linguistic Elements on Covers

In analyzing the covers of Chinese children's literature works, where the image elements remain unchanged but the title of the work is modified, we can explore, through the lenses of semiotics and multimodal translation theory, how this change affects the cultural adaptability and communicative effectiveness of the cover design.

Example 5. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of 99 Red Beans Go Traveling

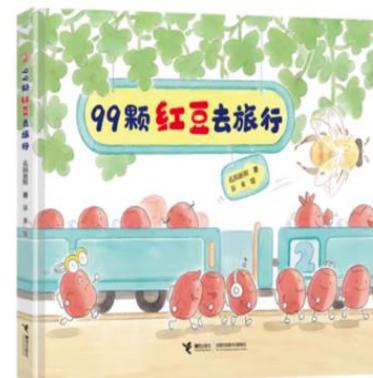


Figure 9: Chinese Original 99 Red Beans Go Traveling (2022)

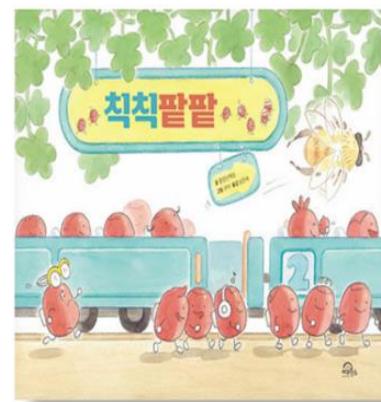


Figure 10: Korean Translation Chikchik Patpat (2023)

Symbol Extraction

The cover design of *99 Red Beans Go Traveling* uses a combination of colors, images, and layout to cleverly convey the book's theme and emotions. The cover uses soft tones, with the bright red bean pattern as the visual focal point, attracting the reader's attention through the striking contrast between the red beans and the background. The signifiers in the cover design include the bright red beans, the small train, and other elements. The denotative meaning is the literal visual information presented, such as the red beans, small train, and the theme of travel. From a connotative perspective, the bright red beans are not only symbolic of the book's theme but also represent vitality, adventure, and playfulness. Red, in children's literature, is often used to convey joy, enthusiasm, and warmth. The appearance of the small train reinforces the "travel" theme of the story, while also suggesting elements of exploration and adventure. These symbols not only convey denotative meanings that are easily understood by young readers, but also add emotional connotations through the combination of colors and images, sparking curiosity and a spirit of adventure in the reader.

According to Barthes' semiotic theory, these symbols in

the cover design collectively form a cultural "myth" — conveying the emotions and cultural connotations of the book, such as children's curiosity, the spirit of adventure, and the exploration of the growth process.

Multimodal Comparison

From the perspective of multimodal translation, the cover design of *99 Red Beans Go Traveling* successfully conveys the theme and style of the picture book through a careful combination of images, colors, and text layout. The cover creates a warm and imaginative scene with soft tones and bright red beans, laying the foundation for the content's appeal and the children's reading interest.

The Korean translation title, <칙칙풀풀> Chikchik Patpat, uses onomatopoeia to mimic the sound of a train, enhancing the fun and childlike nature of the title. This linguistic shift not only conveys the "travel" theme but also evokes associations with the story, making readers more interested.

It is important to note that the Korean translation title is not a direct translation of *99 Red Beans Go Traveling*, but instead uses the onomatopoeic word 칙칙 to mimic the sound of the train, adding fun and sonic quality to the title. This translation strategy not only fits the lighthearted atmosphere of children's literature but also makes it easier for the target culture readers to resonate with it. From the multimodal translation theory, the image elements (such as the small train and red beans) on the cover have been largely unchanged, while the linguistic changes (such as the onomatopoeic title) enhance the interaction and emotional connection between the cover and the target language culture. The onomatopoeic word 칙칙 makes the combination of language and visuals more lively and reflects the target culture's aesthetic needs and interest in children's literature.

Cultural Adaptation Evaluation

From the perspective of cultural adaptation, the cover design of *99 Red Beans Go Traveling* successfully meets the demands of readers from different cultural backgrounds by keeping the image elements consistent while adjusting the linguistic elements.

The Korean translation, by adopting the onomatopoeic word 칙칙, combines the cover design with the linguistic habits and aesthetic needs of Korean culture, enhancing its appeal in the Korean market. This adjustment of the linguistic element strengthens the cover's cultural adaptation in both visual and linguistic aspects.

Although the image and basic design remain unchanged, the linguistic change in the title makes the book more attractive in Korean culture. This linguistic adaptation strategy ensures that the target readers can feel the emotions and themes of the original work, while also giving the translation uniqueness and appeal in the target cultural market. The Korean version's cover not only retains the original visual symbols but also

adjusts the language to better align with Korean cultural expectations for children's books.

Conclusion: By combining semiotic and multimodal translation analysis, we can see that the cover design of *99 Red Beans Go Traveling* achieves cultural adaptation through linguistic transformation while retaining visual elements. The cover design, through the clever combination of colors, images, and language, successfully conveys the book's theme — a story of travel, adventure, and growth.

At the same time, the linguistic transformation in the Korean translation enhances the appeal and reading interest for the target culture, making the cover design more adaptable and attractive in cross-cultural communication.

Example 6. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *The Moon and the Fish*



Figure 11. Chinese Original *The Moon and the Fish* (2022)



Figure 12. Korean Translation *The Fish in Love* (2023)

Symbol Extraction

The cover design of *The Moon and the Fish* cleverly combines color, imagery, and layout to convey the book's themes of warmth, fantasy, and exploration. On the cover, a large yellow moon hangs in the deep blue night sky, with a smiling face that conveys warmth, friendliness, and affection. The denotative (literal) meaning of these

symbols is straightforward: the yellow moon and smile represent warmth and friendliness, while the deep blue night sky creates a tranquil, dreamlike atmosphere. From a connotative (implied) meaning perspective, the smiling yellow moon not only conveys the warm theme of the book but also evokes associations with the night sky, mystery, and dreams. The moon's symbolism can also trigger emotional resonance related to love and companionship. Meanwhile, the red fish swims freely in the water, contrasting against the deep blue background. This contrast not only enhances the visual layering but also hints at the emotional richness of the story, especially themes of freedom, exploration, and emotional expression.

According to Barthes' semiotic theory, the cover design's symbolic elements (such as the moon, the fish, and the smile) work together to create a cultural "myth," conveying the book's emotions and cultural depth, such as a child's curiosity, the spirit of adventure, and the exploration of growth.

Multimodal Comparison

From a multimodal translation perspective, the cover design successfully conveys the book's themes and emotions through the combination of image, color, and text elements. In the original Chinese cover, the design already skillfully merges the elements of the "moon" and "fish." The contrast between the yellow moon and deep blue background creates a striking visual, symbolizing warmth and mystery in the night sky and conveying a calm, exploratory emotional tone.

The Korean translation title <사랑에 빠진 물고기> *The Fish in Love* is a creative transformation compared to the original *The Moon and the Fish*. This translation avoids the stiffness that can come from literal translation by shifting the title to one that cleverly sparks curiosity in the target audience. By transforming the title to *The Fish in Love*, it creates a sense of drama and suspense, leading readers to wonder why the fish is "in love." This change not only enhances the book's appeal but also successfully piques the interest of the target culture readers.

From the perspective of multimodal translation theory, while the image elements (such as the moon and fish) on the cover remain unchanged, the title transformation redefines the relationship between the language and visual elements, enhancing the cover's interaction and emotional connection. The Korean version, through this creative transformation, better aligns with the target culture's aesthetic demands while increasing suspense and emotional expectation.

Cultural Adaptation Evaluation

The cultural adaptability of the cover design is fully evident in the translation of *The Moon and the Fish*. The original Chinese title *The Moon and the Fish* straightforwardly conveys the natural elements and emotional atmosphere of the book. The Korean translation title <사랑에 빠진 물고기> *The Fish in*

Love, by emphasizing the emotional element of "love," adds depth and cultural adaptation. This linguistic transformation makes the translation more attuned to the emotional needs of the target culture and increases emotional resonance with the readers, making it easier for them to understand and connect with the emotional world of the story. The creative shift in the title of the Korean version effectively sparks curiosity and emotional connection in the target audience, thus enhancing the book's appeal. This title transformation strategy allows *The Moon and the Fish* to retain its emotional core while better adapting to the reading habits and emotional needs of different cultural readers as it spreads globally.

Conclusion: Combining semiotics and multimodal translation analysis, we can see that the cover design of *The Moon and the Fish* successfully conveys the book's emotional themes and cultural depth through a careful combination of image and language elements. The cover's color and imagery symbols communicate warmth, friendliness, and exploration, while the Korean title <사랑에 빠진 물고기> *The Fish in Love* creatively transforms the title to avoid the stiffness of a literal translation. This transformation not only enhances suspense but also deepens emotional resonance, making the cover more engaging for the target cultural audience. Both in the original and the translated version, the cover design successfully attracts readers' attention and stimulates their curiosity about the book's content.

Example 7. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *The Fat Wife Returns to Her Parental Home*

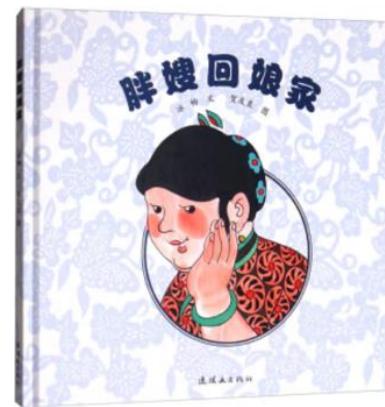


Figure 13: Chinese Original *The Fat Wife Returns to Her Parental Home* (2017)

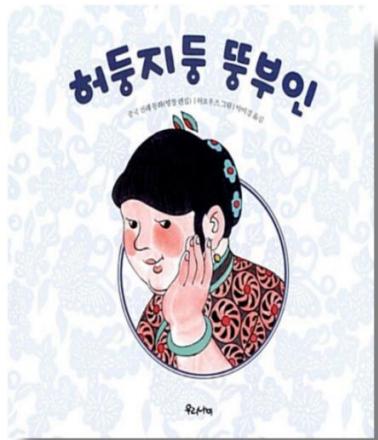


Figure 14: Korean Translation *The Fat Wife Returns to Her Parental Home*(2017)

Symbol Extraction

The cover design of *The Fat Wife Returns to Her Parental Home* cleverly combines colors, images, and layout to convey the themes of warm family emotions and the deep cultural heritage of traditional Chinese culture. The cover uses blue font to present the title, a color that often symbolizes tranquility, harmony, and elegance, giving the cover a fresh and warm feeling. In the center of the cover, a vivid illustration depicts the scene of the "fat wife" returning to her parental home. The pale blue floral patterns in the illustration complement the imagery, creating a peaceful and comfortable atmosphere, suggesting the themes of family reunion and warm familial affection.

From a semiotic perspective, the signifiers (Signifier) in the cover design include the blue font of the title, the characters in the illustration, and the floral patterns. The denotative meaning (Denotation) refers to the literal visual information conveyed by these elements, such as warm family emotions and a traditional cultural background. The connotative meaning (Connotation) is conveyed through the design of colors and images, representing deep family emotions, cultural belonging, and warm familial relationships. The combination of blue and the illustration symbolizes harmony and tranquility in Chinese culture, deeply expressing the transmission of traditional family values and cultural significance.

According to Barthes' semiotic theory, the cover design constructs a cultural "myth" through these symbols (such as the blue, flowers, and illustration). The myth conveys the themes of family reunion and cultural identity, creating a cultural scene that holds both social and emotional value.

Multimodal Comparison

From a multimodal translation perspective, the visual elements of the cover design are largely unchanged, maintaining the essence of the original work. However, the changes in language elements are especially prominent in the

Korean translation. The Korean cover makes bold adjustments in color usage and the translation of the title, presenting a new cultural adaptation effect. The overall tone of the cover becomes more subtle, giving the reader a refreshing feeling. This design not only emphasizes a softer visual appeal but also makes it easier for the target culture's readers to accept and understand.

In terms of title translation, the Korean version adopts <허둥지둥 뚱부인> *The Flustered Fat Lady*, a title full of liveliness and playfulness. 허둥지둥 (flustered) is a vivid onomatopoeic word that vividly describes the urgency and tension of the protagonist, infusing the title with a sense of dynamic energy and humor. 뚱부인 (fat lady) directly refers to the story's main character. Compared to the literal translation 뚱부인이 친정으로 간다 *The Fat Lady Goes Back to Her Parental Home*, this translation is more engaging and appealing.

From a multimodal translation theory perspective, while the image elements (such as the blue flowers and illustration) on the cover remain unchanged, the modification of the title has restructured the interaction between the linguistic and visual elements. This enhances the cover's visual and emotional interactivity. The Korean version, through this creative transformation, makes the cover more aligned with the aesthetic needs of the target language culture, while also increasing the emotional connection and curiosity in readers.

Cultural Adaptation Evaluation

From a cultural adaptation perspective, the changes in color and language elements on the Korean version's cover design help the book better align with the cultural aesthetics of the Korean market. By using the onomatopoeic word 허둥지둥, the translator not only avoids the stiffness of a literal translation but also adds humor and interest to the cover. This design strategy better captures the attention of Korean readers, particularly young ones, and enhances their reading interest. The subtle tone and dynamic feeling of the title improve the cover's visual appeal and make it more suitable for the cultural preferences of the target audience. Through this cultural adaptation, the Korean version not only retains the emotional core of the original work but also enhances the appeal and emotional resonance with the target cultural readers. The linguistic and color adjustments made in the cover design have not only increased the book's marketability but also facilitated its spread and acceptance within the target culture.

Conclusion: Combining semiotic and multimodal translation analysis, the cover design of *The Fat Wife Returns to Her Parental Home* successfully conveys the warm family emotions and deep cultural heritage of

traditional Chinese culture through the clever combination of image and language elements. The colors, illustrations, and title design interact to showcase the family theme in Chinese traditional culture. The Korean version's cover, through its creative linguistic transformation and color adjustments, not only preserves the original work's cultural spirit but also enhances the appeal and emotional connection with the target culture's readers. Whether in the original or the translated version, the cover design successfully attracts readers' attention and stimulates their curiosity and desire to explore the book's content.

3.3 Changes in Both Visual and Linguistic Elements on the Picture Book Cover

In the creation and publication process of Chinese children's literature picture books, the cover design is often seen as a crucial component. From a multimodal translation perspective, both the visual and linguistic elements of the cover are not just a simple representation of the book's content but also a cross-cultural, cross-media recreation of the original spirit and style. Moreover, the text on the cover is a key component of multimodal translation. These words must not only accurately convey the original intent and style of the book but also spark curiosity and purchasing interest in readers. Therefore, translators often need a deep command of language and cross-cultural communication skills to ensure both the accuracy and attractiveness of the text translation.

Visual Image Adjustment: The cover design of picture books often attracts readers' attention through changes in images, colors, and patterns. Some picture book covers may adjust the style of images, color usage, or even add or remove certain patterns during translation to better align with the aesthetic preferences of the target culture. For example, certain cultures may prefer bright, bold colors, while others may favor softer, more refined tones. Visual adjustments are typically made without changing the original themes and emotions, to enhance its visual appeal in a new market.

Linguistic Image Adjustment: The title and text on the cover also need to be adjusted to ensure they adapt to the language habits, cultural identity, and emotional needs of the target language. Especially in multimodal translation, the translation of the title not only needs to preserve the original meaning but also consider the cultural context of the target culture. In some cases, the translator may choose a more creative translation of the title to make the language on the cover more attractive and capable of generating curiosity and emotional resonance in the target readers.

Example 8. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *Oh No! Not Again!*

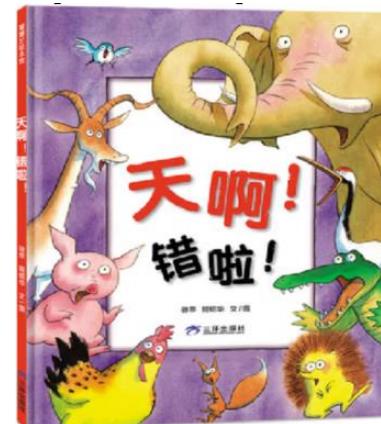


Figure 15. Chinese Original *Oh No! Not Again!* (2016)



Figure 16. Korean Translation *This is a Hat!* (2017)

Symbol Extraction

The cover design of *Oh No! Not Again!* (Chinese original) cleverly combines color, imagery, and layout to convey the warm family emotions and the deep cultural heritage of traditional Chinese culture. The cover uses purple as the main color, creating a mysterious yet lively atmosphere. Purple, as the base color of the cover, conveys an imaginative mood, blending both mystery and the liveliness typical of children's literature. The cartoon animals on the cover come to life as they stand or sit around the title, seemingly participating in a lively story. These animals, with their vivid postures and exaggerated expressions, convey the playful and lighthearted atmosphere of the story. They serve as the signifiers (Signifier), with their denotative meaning (Denotation) being the specific animal images, and their connotative meaning (Connotation) being the lively, curious, and exploratory spirit expressed through their actions.

The title "*Oh No! Not Again!*" is presented in large red font, boldly placed in the center of the cover, enhancing its visual impact. Red typically symbolizes strong emotions and alertness, which not only intensifies the shock value of the title but also gives the cover a sense of dynamism and energy, fitting for children's literature.

According to Barthes' semiotic theory, the visual elements (such as the purple color, animals, and title) on the cover collectively form a cultural "myth." This "myth" conveys the themes of growth, mistakes, and exploration, delivering a story that resonates emotionally and has cross-cultural communication potential.

Korean Translation Cover Design

The Korean translation cover retains the visual style of the original, with appropriate cultural adaptation and innovation. The cover features a lively illustration of a rabbit wearing an orange frilly hat, with long ears gently swaying and wide eyes expressing surprise and curiosity. The rabbit's image is brought to life through delicate lines and vibrant colors, conveying emotions of exploration and discovery. The rabbit, as a signifier, has a denotative meaning (Denotation) of a specific cartoon animal, and a connotative meaning (Connotation) of surprise and curiosity, symbolizing the exploration and adventure in the story.

The background, filled with life-like elements (such as trees, blue skies, clothes, and birds), creates a scene that is both grounded in reality and full of imagination, further stimulating the reader's curiosity and imagination. These elements not only make the cover more lively but also cleverly convey the core emotion of the original work: a story full of whimsical ideas and surprising encounters.

The title <ㅇ] 건 모자야!> *This is a Hat!* is presented in a simple font, directly interacting with the image of the rabbit, increasing the fun and dynamic feel of the cover design. The choice of the Korean title adds strong cultural character to the cover, and its humor stimulates the reader's interest in reading.

Multimodal Comparison

From the perspective of multimodal translation, both the original and translated covers show a close collaboration between visual and linguistic elements, successfully conveying the book's themes and emotions. The Chinese original cover uses color and image design to convey both liveliness and mystery, while the Korean version adjusts the visual and linguistic elements to increase cultural adaptation and appeal. **Color and Visual Elements:** The Korean translation cover grabs the reader's attention with bright colors and lively animal imagery. The rabbit's expression and posture not only attract children's attention but also convey the emotional themes of curiosity and surprise. Compared to the Chinese original cover, the Korean version adjusts color and character design to better align with the aesthetic preferences of the target culture. **Interaction of Text and Image:** The Korean title <ㅇ] 건 모자야!> *This is a Hat!* interacts with the image of the rabbit, enhancing the connection between the language and visual elements. This design not only sparks the curiosity of young readers but also tightly

integrates the title's language with the visual aspects. Through this clever design, the translated cover successfully captures the attention of the target cultural audience both linguistically and visually.

Cultural Adaptation and Communication Effectiveness

The cultural adaptation of the cover design is particularly evident in the Korean translation. Through adjustments in color, image, and text, the translated cover not only retains the core emotions and visual style of the original but also makes it more suitable for the cultural aesthetics of the Korean market. **Linguistic Adjustment:** The Korean title <ㅇ] 건 모자야!> *This is a Hat!* adds humor and interactivity to the original title *Oh No! Not Again!* By transforming the title into a playful and dynamic one, the translation avoids the stiffness of a literal translation and enhances the book's appeal through its lively and engaging language. This linguistic innovation ensures that the cover design is more in tune with the emotional needs and aesthetic preferences of the target culture readers. **Visual and Cultural Adaptation:** The Korean translation cover fine-tunes the visual elements (such as the rabbit and background) to ensure it aligns with the aesthetic demands of the target culture while maintaining the original's liveliness and creativity. This design not only attracts the target culture's young readers but also contributes to the book's communication effectiveness in the target market.

Conclusion: Combining semiotic and multimodal translation analysis, the cover design of *Oh No! Not Again!* successfully conveys the book's emotional themes and cultural connotations through a clever combination of image and language elements. The original cover uses vibrant cartoon animal imagery and color combinations to convey mystery and liveliness, while the Korean translation <ㅇ] 건 모자야!> adds language innovation and visual design adjustments, increasing the cover's fun and cultural adaptation. These design strategies ensure that the cover not only captures the attention of the target cultural readers but also enhances the book's market appeal and communication effectiveness.

Example 9. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *Whose Is This?*

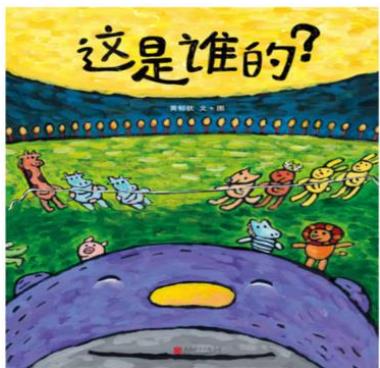


Figure 17. Chinese Original *Whose Is This?* (2016)

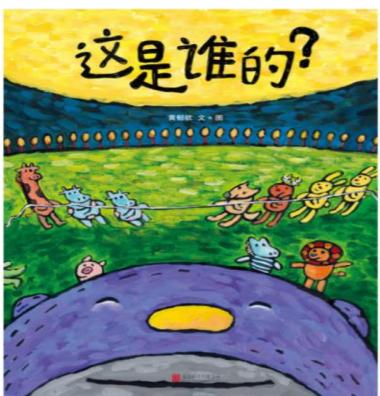


Figure 18. Korean Translation *It's It's All Mine!* (2017)

Symbol Extraction

Chinese Original Cover Design The Chinese original cover of *Whose Is This?* quickly captures the reader's attention through its vivid use of color and playful illustration design. The title, *Whose Is This?*, is presented in bold, eye-catching fonts at the top of the cover, immediately sparking the reader's curiosity. This simple yet suspenseful question on the cover hints at a fascinating adventure of discovering the ownership and understanding of objects.

Signifier and Denotation: The title *Whose Is This?* directly conveys the theme of ownership and has a strong interactive feel. The large purple bear in the center of the cover is the visual focal point. Its endearing expression and signature large nose and smile communicate warmth and friendliness. As a signifier, the bear's image denotes a simple animal representation that quickly attracts children's attention.

Connotative Meaning: The purple bear, with its friendly posture and smile, conveys themes of warmth and friendship, symbolizing care and growth in children's picture books. The bear's image evokes the connotative meanings of sharing, friendship, and growth, deepening the emotional and thematic impact of the story. According to Barthes' semiotic theory, the combination of these symbols on the cover not only conveys denotative information (such as the animal figure and the question form) but also constructs deeper connotations

through emotional symbols (like the bear's warm smile), eliciting emotional resonance from the reader.

Korean Translation Cover Design The Korean translation *나는 내 거야!* *It's It's All Mine* made bold adjustments to the cover design to better suit the aesthetic and emotional demands of the Korean market. The cover uses strong color contrasts, with a bright yellow background and a striking blue bear, creating a vibrant and dynamic feel that not only attracts visual attention but also enhances the overall liveliness and tension of the cover.

Signifier and Denotation: The Korean cover retains the bear as the central figure but exaggerates its actions and expressions. The bear has its mouth wide open and raises both arms, conveying a lively, curious, and playful atmosphere. The bear's image, through its actions and expressions, becomes the visual focal point and is closely aligned with the emotional tone and atmosphere of the title.

Connotative Meaning: The bear's image conveys the emotional connotation that matches the title "*It's All Mine!*", expressing confidence, exploration, and possessiveness, which deepens the book's themes of cognition, exploration, and ownership. The bear's emotional state arouses the target readers' (Korean children's) interest in the story's plot. From a semiotic perspective, the colors (the contrast between yellow and blue), typography (bold red and black letters), and imagery (the exaggerated bear actions) work together to convey a positive, lively, and explorative emotional tone, reinforcing the theme and appeal of the story.

Multimodal Analysis

Visual and Linguistic Combination From the perspective of multimodal translation, although the details of the cover designs differ, both the Chinese original and the Korean translation successfully convey the themes and emotions of the book through the integration of visual and linguistic elements.

Visual Effect: The Chinese original cover uses warm purple tones and vivid animal imagery to convey themes of friendship, sharing, and growth. The bear on the cover is not only the main symbol of the story but also creates a close connection with the title *Whose Is This?*. The Korean translation, on the other hand, uses an exaggerated bear image and bright colors to enhance the vibrancy and tension of the cover. Particularly, the bear's actions convey more fun and interaction, creating a strong visual and emotional contrast with the title *It's All Mine!*.

Role of Text: The Korean translation's title, *나는 내 거야!* *It's All Mine!*, uses simple red and black bold fonts to emphasize the linguistic power and playfulness, complementing the bear image and overall color scheme.

on the cover. In contrast, the Chinese original title "*Whose Is This?*" uses an interrogative form, sparking curiosity in the reader, and this questioning approach resonates with the animal imagery on the cover, creating an atmosphere of exploration and cognition.

Linguistic and Cultural Adaptation The design of the Korean translation cover has been adapted through the transformation of the language and the adjustment of visual elements, making it more aligned with the aesthetic preferences and emotional needs of Korean child readers. The transformation of the title from a question—*Whose Is This?*—into the more emotionally charged *It's All Mine!* suits children's language habits better and strengthens the connection with the emotional themes of the book. Furthermore, the bear's exaggerated expression and posture on the cover enhance emotional expression, allowing the target readers to more directly experience the emotional content of the story.

Cultural Adaptation and Communication Effectiveness of the Cover Design

The cultural adaptation of the cover design is clearly reflected in the Korean translation. By fine-tuning color, imagery, and linguistic elements, the translation not only retains the core themes of the original but also uses visual and linguistic innovations to align the cover more closely with the aesthetic and emotional demands of the target culture. The title *It's All Mine!* is more in line with the language features of Korean children and, through the integration of visual and linguistic elements, enhances the book's market appeal. This cultural adaptation ensures that the cover design not only accurately conveys the emotional and thematic content of the original work but also engages the target culture's readers, boosting the book's dissemination effectiveness in the new market.

Conclusion: Through the combined analysis of semiotics and multimodal translation, both the Chinese original cover and the Korean translation cover of *Whose Is This?* successfully convey the book's core themes and emotional depth through the interaction of visual and linguistic elements. The Chinese original cover uses vivid colors and playful imagery to convey the themes of ownership, cognitive exploration, friendship, and sharing. The bear's emotional expression and the interactive nature of the title stimulate children's curiosity and sense of exploration, creating an atmosphere of warmth and engagement. The Korean translation, with innovative design in both visual and linguistic elements, adapts the cover to better suit the cultural aesthetic and emotional needs of the Korean market. By changing the title to *<It's All Mine!>* and emphasizing the exaggerated bear image and bright colors, the Korean translation enhances the visual impact and fun factor, while also deepening emotional expression, making the cover more eye-catching and engaging.

Example 10. Semiotic and Multimodal Analysis of the Cover Design of *It Doesn't Matter If It Looks Like It*

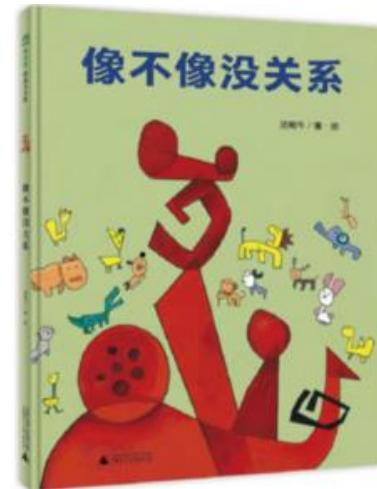


Figure 19. Chinese Original *It Doesn't Matter If It Looks Like It* (2018)

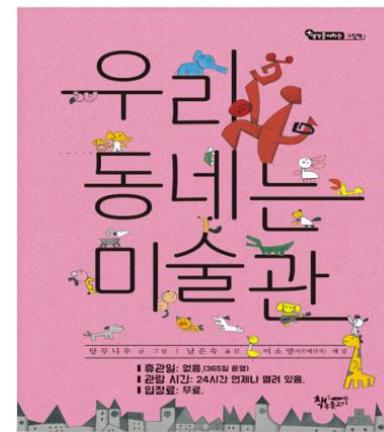


Figure 20. Korean Translation *Our Neighborhood is an Art Museum* (2019)

Semiotic Extraction

Chinese Original Cover Design

The cover design of the Chinese original uses light green tones, simple geometric patterns, and rich illustrations to convey the core idea of the book: encouraging children to try boldly, think freely, and explore. The red circular pattern in the center, with its smooth lines and simple geometric shapes, creates an abstract and appealing visual focal point. The signifier of this pattern is a simple geometric shape, while its denotation is the theme of exploration and creativity in the book—stimulating children's curiosity through shapes and colors. As for the connotation, red, being a vibrant color, typically symbolizes vitality, creativity, and passion, which aligns with the book's core message of encouraging children to express their imagination and creativity freely, as suggested by the title 《像不像没关系》. The blue-font

title placed at the top of the cover guides the reader's attention, and the contrast between the color and the font enhances the visual impact. Surrounding the title are cartoon animal illustrations, which, through their vivid, colorful images and diverse shapes, further enrich the cover's visual layers and convey a sense of friendliness, warmth, and interaction. The combination of these symbols not only communicates the theme of creation and experimentation but also creates a warm and creative atmosphere through the use of color, shape, and animal illustrations.

Korean Translation Cover Design

The cover design of the Korean translation features an innovative transformation, changing the original cover into a pink, poster-like design. This transition reflects an adaptive adjustment in cross-cultural communication while also showcasing the infinite possibilities of multimodal design. Pink, as the dominant color of the cover, evokes a warm, lively feeling, which resonates with the book's theme of encouraging free creation and bold expression.

The design centers around black line art, with the word "미술관" (art museum) surrounded by modern and playful design elements, creating a distinct visual style. The use of signifiers, such as cartoon animals and architectural patterns, combined with their denotation, presents a scene full of exploration, fun, and creativity. The cartoon animals and buildings, depicted visually, together form a rich and imaginative scene that not only enhances the cover's appeal but also sparks the reader's anticipation for the book's content.

The title <우리 동네는 미술관> *Our Neighborhood is an Art Museum* cleverly uses connotation to hint at the book's theme by metaphorically comparing the community to an art museum. This metaphorical expression not only enhances the cultural meaning of the cover but also enriches the reader's experience, making the cover convey not only the physical image information but also deeper cultural and social significance.

Multimodal Comparison

From the perspective of multimodal translation, the cover designs of the Chinese original and Korean translation show transformation and innovation in visual and linguistic elements, reflecting cultural adaptation and a recreation of the original spirit.

Visual Design Transformation: The light green, red circular pattern, and small animal illustrations in the original cover are transformed into a pink background and lively cartoon images in the Korean version, creating a visual style that is both vibrant and modern. The contrast between the pink background and the blue bear provides a fresh visual impact and a more tension-filled sensory experience.

Linguistic Innovation and Adaptation: The title in the Korean version <우리 동네는 미술관> *Our Neighborhood is an Art*

Museum is culturally more fitting than the original 《像不像没关系》. The translation not only conveys the book's core themes of exploration, creativity, and sharing to the target audience but also, through the metaphor of an "art museum," evokes associations with art, creativity, and free expression in the minds of Korean readers. This translation avoids the awkwardness of a literal translation and enhances the cover's appeal through cultural innovation.

Image and Language Fusion: The Korean translation cover's inclusion of text elements like "Open 24 Hours" and "Free Admission" alongside cartoon animals and architectural patterns builds a scene that balances reality and fantasy. The combination of image and language enriches the content of the cover, making it more interactive and engaging. Through this design, the cover not only communicates the book's basic content but also successfully captures the reader's interest, stimulating their curiosity.

Cultural Adaptation and Communicative Effectiveness of the Cover Design

The Korean translation's cover design successfully achieves cultural adaptation through innovations in color, image, and text. The warm and simple colors and patterns of the original are transformed into a more modern and lively design style, adapting to the aesthetic demands of the Korean market. The title's translation, with its metaphorical expression and creative language, enhances emotional resonance with the target cultural readers.

By combining images and language, the Korean version of the cover not only preserves the core theme and emotion of the original but also enhances the cover's market appeal and communicative effectiveness through cultural adaptation. Especially through the metaphor of comparing the community to an "art museum," this design adds depth and meaning to the book, making the translated version even more captivating and increasing its effectiveness in the target cultural market.

Conclusion: Through a combination of semiotic and multimodal analysis, it is clear that the Chinese original and Korean translation covers of 《像不像没关系》 successfully convey the book's core emotion and cultural connotation through the skillful integration of visual and linguistic elements. The original cover uses bright colors and vivid illustrations to communicate the themes of exploration and creativity, while the Korean translation, through innovations in color, image, and language, enhances the cover's appeal and better aligns with the aesthetic and emotional needs of the target culture. These design strategies not only attract the attention of the target cultural readers but also effectively enhance the book's market appeal and communicative effectiveness.

III.CONCLUSION

This study, framed within the semiotic and multimodal translation theory, provides an in-depth analysis of the cultural adaptation and communicative effectiveness of Korean-translated children's book covers from contemporary Chinese literature. The research reveals that cover design is not only a visual representation of the book's content but also a process of re-creation and transmission of cultural symbols, playing a crucial role in cultural dissemination.

Through an analysis of typical works such as 《虎头帽》*Tiger Head Hat* and 《影子爷爷》*Grandfather Shadow*, this study uncovers how cover designs, through the localization of visual and linguistic elements, elicit strong cultural identification and emotional resonance among target culture readers. In particular, the transformation of Chinese traditional cultural symbols (such as the tiger head hat and shadow puppetry) in the cover designs of Korean translations not only enhances cultural recognition but also sparks the interest of Korean readers in Chinese culture. This finding provides a new theoretical perspective and practical guidance for the study of children's literature translation.

The innovation of this paper lies in combining semiotics with multimodal translation theory to propose the unique role of cover design in cultural adaptation. It also explores the interaction between visual elements, linguistic elements, and cultural symbols in cross-cultural communication. Through the analysis of multiple case studies, this paper enriches the discussion of cultural adaptation within the field of translation studies and promotes the application of multimodal translation theory in children's literature translation. The study also emphasizes the importance of publishers and translators paying more attention to the role of cover design in cultural adaptation, ensuring that the visual symbols and language expressions better align with the aesthetic needs and emotional recognition of the target culture.

Based on these findings, the study suggests that when translating children's literature, translators should not only focus on the accuracy of text translation but also consider the aesthetic characteristics and emotional needs of the target culture by making appropriate adjustments to cover design. The cover design should enhance the market appeal of the translation through the preservation and transformation of cultural symbols, as well as adjustments to color and typography, thereby strengthening the cultural dissemination effect. Future research could further explore the acceptance of cover designs in different cultural markets, analyze the communicative effectiveness of translated book covers with market data, and even examine the new development trends of eBook cover designs in the digital age.

In summary, cover design in children's literature translation not only carries the book's visual information but also,

through the re-creation and localization of cultural symbols, fosters cross-cultural emotional resonance and cultural identity. Translators and publishers should focus on the cultural adaptability of cover designs to enhance the communicative effectiveness of translated works in target markets, thereby achieving broader cultural dissemination.

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