

Anne Frank's Diary – The Graphic Adaptation: From Translation to Adaptation

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This paper discusses *Anne Frank's Diary - The Graphic Adaptation* (Frank, Folman and Polonsky 2017) through the prism of relevance theory and basic Bakhtinian concepts. Based on relevance theory, Gutt (2000) introduced the concept of indirect translation, which “interpretively resembles” the source text in respects that are relevant to the target audience in its new context. Taking as our departure point the idea that this concept can be applied to adaptations as well, we use it to address the graphic adaptation of Anne Frank's diary. We show that the graphic diary interpretively resembles the original, first published in 1947, in respects that are relevant to young (and other) readers today. As in the case of indirect translation, it has been adapted to our times, first of all by turning the original written text (actually comprising more than one version) into a multimodal work. By abridging the original and adding visual elements, it meets the expectations of a new generation of readers familiar with new media. The transformation involves modification of the dimensions of time and space, which we address by means of the Bakhtinian concept of the chronotope (Bakhtin 1981). The original polyphony (Bakhtin 1984), too, has been modified since new voices, including those of the editor and illustrator, are present. The voice of Anne Frank herself, which had been partly silenced due to censorship (Lefevere 1992), was given full rein. Our focus is twofold: firstly, the adaptation itself which, in keeping with the expectation of indirect translation, is true to the original meaning despite its indirectness (Smith 2002: 112); and secondly, its relevance to the contemporary audience (“contextual effects” in the terminology of Gutt 2000: 29). The contribution of this paper lies in applying a theory which has been developed in the framework of Translation Studies to an adaptation. Thus, we tighten the links between Translation Studies and Adaptation Studies. Taking advantage of Bakhtinian concepts, we also offer tools for the analysis of multimodal texts. As one can deduce e.g. from Kaindl (2013), such texts are growingly acknowledged as relevant to Translation Studies and Adaptation Studies alike.

References

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