Transnarrativity in the Recreation of a Fictional World:

A Case Study of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince*

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Discussions on the establishment of translational equivalence have been anchored on linguistic conversion and sociocultural factors; nonetheless, translating a story as a process of narrativization offers a different perspective in understanding the dynamic nature of equivalence. The nomadic assemblage of linguistic equivalents is conditioned by the "narrativity" of the story. Narrativity opens up potential trajectories that allow the translator to perform a series of modifications and modulations, aiming to reproduce what Derrida calls a "relevant translation", and any inappropriate choice of diction may result in the interior distortion of story meaning. The irreducibility of translatorial discursive intervention entails that the narrativity of the story is negotiated and fabricated by the translator and the art of story retelling through interlingual translation depends on the quality and effect of "transnarrativity". This paper, taking the Chinese translation of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince* as an example, argues that the linguistic mellowness and thematic adorability of the transnarration are grounded in what Deleuze and Guattari call the "affective and perceptive" connectives among the text, the translator and the target reader. The affective and perceptive responses captured in the transnarrativity of the story are subject to the establishment and assemblage of equivalent relations manifested in a rhizomatic transformation or a nexus of potentially nomadic linguistic collisions.

Keywords: transnarrativity, affective-perceptive, children's literature, postmodern, Deleuze & Guattari

I Introduction

When performing translation practice or conducting research on children's literature, people often ask "how can the story be remade pleasantly readable for children?" The immediate answer to such a question would be the art of story retelling. The art of story retelling involves a spectrum of factors, including the techniques of storytelling, the weaving of idiosyncratic imagination into the narrative, the discursive dynamicity, the emotional and cognitive engagement and the manner of the voice. All of these linguistic and aesthetic factors are folded into the notion "transnarrativity".

It is necessary to justify and elaborate on the new proposed term "transnarrativity". The term "transnarrativity" is a compound word made of "translation" and "narrativity". According to David Herman (2009), "narrativity" means "what makes a narrative a narrative". In addition, "narrativity designates the quality

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of being narrative, the set of properties characterizing narratives and distinguishing them from non-narratives. It also designates the set of optional features that make narratives more prototypically narrative like, more immediately identified, processed, and interpreted as narratives" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 387).

"Transnarrativity" is different from "narrativity". The notion of "transnarration" (Wang, 2015) entails the irreducible translatorial discursive presence (Hermans 1996; 2007) in the translated narrative that intervenes the voice, perspective and focalization of the story. The translator's discursive presence can be found in different diegetic levels of the story, and in turn, it constitutes a unique type of narration, i.e. a narration embedded with translational features. Thus, "transnarrativity" is the interlingual narrativisation process based on the translatorial affective—perceptive dimensions of human experientiality. Put succinctly, "transnarrativity" means the way the translator makes an effort to tell a good story in another language. A good story is reliable and readable. The aim of transnarrating the story is to make the story easily comprehensible and relevant, the language fascinating and the thematic and structural feature socioculturally appealing. Derrida's (2001) argument on the idea of a "relevant translation" is to deconstruct the "translatability" and "untranslatability" duality. In terms of "transnarrativity", a relevant translated narrative is a target text that is designated to be a quality story. There can be myriads of ways to construct the same story because its meaning is indeterminate, but any reconstruction of the story, as long as it is transnarratable, then is an acceptable story. In the light of "transnarrativity", "untranslatability" always summons the possibility of "translatability", thus any story can be translated and narrated in its own way. The components of the original story are deterritorialized from its construction and through a series of modifications and modulations on both levels of the story and discourse[1], a new story world is reterritorialised[2]. In terms of translation ethics, the translator bears the responsibility of retelling the story in a lively manner, and at the same time, s/he should not only reduce the ratio of translationese to a minimum but also ensures that the creative force should not exceed the liminality of the story itself. On the one hand, the translator has to preserve the credibility of the authorship; and on the other hand, s/he has to think in terms of the logos-ethos-pathos dimensions of the storyworld reconstruction[3].

In this paper, the author uses the student group translation of Wilde's *The Happy Prince* as an example to illustrate the de/reterritoriralisation process at the micro level of the narrative text, and in turn, describes the nature of transnarrativity and its relations to translational dynamicity that conditions the transcreation of the fictional world.

II Metadiscourse in Group Translation

A translation class of 70 students was divided into 20 groups and each group consisted of 3 to 4 members. Their translation task was to translate Wilde's *The Happy Prince* into Chinese for children aged between 7 and 12 years old. The target language was told not to be concise and simple; quite the opposite, it should be rich, vivid and full of detailed descriptions. In order for them to indulge themselves in the fictional world and provide them

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[1] "Story-discourse distinction" (Shen, 2002).

[2] The notion "de/reterritorialisation" is derived from Deleuze & Guattari's philosophy of "becoming". "Translational dynamicity" from the perspective of Deleuzian's "de/reterritorialisation" is also discussed by the author of this paper (Wang, 2015, 2017, pp. 11-18).

[3] Douglas Robinson (2011) used the Aristotelian concepts of "logo, pathos and ethos" to discuss the circulation of somatic responses within the target group in the process of translation.

with a sort of exemplar, a metadiscursive translation of the first four paragraphs was provided to show them the style and manner of the target text. In addition, adequate psychosomatic descriptions of the background and about the content of the story are pre-told to the students before they actually began their translation activity. The hermeneutic circle of the students was designated with an actual purpose and charged with intensive affective—perceptive knowledge that circulated within each group. A sense of competition was also built up between groups. Copying from each other is strictly forbidden; rather one of the important criterions of evaluation is to look into the unique creativeness of the translation. Idiosyncrasies should be revealed on the linguistic level, textual level and narrative level. Consideration of the linguistic, cultural and ethical norms of the target culture must also be considered when translating. Besides, the vocality of the narration including the voice of the narrator, the dialogic interactions and the rhythmic effects are also constituent elements of the transnarration. In a word, the translation should focalize on the transnarrativity of the story.

Below is the translation of the first four paragraphs given to the students serving as a metadiscourse:

Table 1

Extracts from The Happy Prince

Source Text	Target Text
[ST1] High above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold, for eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby glowed on his sword-hilt. (Wilde, 1999, p.271)	[TT1] 在城市上空，快乐王子的雕像高高伫立在一根高柱之上。雕像从头到脚贴满了薄金，他的一双眼睛是蓝宝石做成的，在他的剑柄上镶嵌着一颗硕大的红宝石，光彩夺目、闪闪发光。
[ST2] He was very much admired indeed. 'He is as beautiful as a weathercock,' remarked one of the Town Councillors who wished to gain a reputation for having artistic tastes; 'only not quite so useful,' he added, fearing lest people should think him unpractical, which he really was not. (Wilde, 1999, p.271)	[TT2] 他这个人还是倍受欢迎的。有一位具有艺术才华的市参议员称赞道: "他如同定风针一样漂亮"。"但是他却没有定风针那样有用"，他又补充道，因为他怕别人会把他看作一个不务实际的人，其实他并非不务实际。
[ST3] 'Why can't you be like the Happy Prince?' asked a sensible mother of her little boy who was crying for the moon. 'The Happy Prince never dreams of crying for anything.' 'I am glad there is someone in the world who is quite happy,' muttered a disappointed man as he gazed at the wonderful statue. (Wilde, 1999, p.271)	[TT3] "你怎么就不能像快乐王子那样呢？"一位明事理的母亲责备着她的儿子，小家伙正吵着闹着要她把月亮摘下来，"快乐王子从来不会吵闹着要任何东西。" "世上还有这样快乐的人，真好。"失意的人盯着美丽的塑像，咕哝了一句。
[ST4] 'He looks just like an angel,' said the Charity Children as they came out of the cathedral in their bright scarlet cloaks and their clean white pinafores. (Wilde, 1999, p.271)	[TT4] "他看起来跟天使一样。"福利院的孩子们感叹到。他们围着洁白的围裙，披着猩红色的斗篷，刚走出大教堂。

"Metadiscourse" is a term borrowed from applied linguistics and its primary conceptualization concerns the idea of 'discourse about discourse' (Adel & Mauranen, 2010). In term of translation, my understanding is that meta discourse is the keynote that explicitly guides the translator through the norm and structure of the target text. The translator self-reflexively adjusts him/herself to acclimatize to the relationship between the target text and the imagined target reading community. Herriman (2014) cites Hyland's definition (1998a, p. 3; 1998b, p. 438; 2005, pp. 63-85) by saying that "metadiscourse is a manifestation of the writer's linguistic and rhetorical presence in a

text, expressing the writer's personality, audience-sensitivity and relationship to message. It is one of the means by which writers attend to the rational, credible and affective appeals of persuasive rhetoric (logos, ethos and pathos)."

This translation project is designated for one week. After students' submission, I carefully selected three different types of translated versions for analysis. In the next section, I shall use the comparative method to compare the three different translated versions, focusing especially on the rhizomatic linguistic connections and assemblages on the micro level[4], and then use the descriptive method to elaborate on the situation of the analysis. In the final section of the paper, I will offer theoretical implications based on the overall analysis.

III A Comparative Text Analysis of Three Translated Versions

Two example passages and three translations are selected for analysis.

Table 2

Extracts from The Happy Prince

Source Text	"I have a golden bedroom," he said softly to himself as he looked round, and he prepared to go to sleep; but just as he was putting his head under his wing a large drop of waterfell on him. "What a curious thing!" he cried; "there is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful. The Reed used to like the rain, but that was merely her selfishness." (Wilde, 1999, p. 272)
Target Text 1	"我找到一间金色睡房了，"他向四周看了一下，轻轻对自己说。他准备去睡觉了，但是他刚把头伸进翅膀下，就有一大滴水落到他身上。"多奇怪的事！"他叫起来，"天空没有一片云，星星亮晶晶，但是却下雨了。北欧的天气太可怕了。芦苇一直喜欢雨，但这仅仅是为了她自己。"
Target Text 2	他向四周看了看，心里窃喜："我的卧室是金子做的。"然后就准备睡觉了。可是他刚准备把头埋进翅膀里，一大滴水砸在了他身上。"好奇怪啊！"他喊道："今晚月光明朗，星星闪耀，天空中一朵云也没有，怎么会下雨呢？北欧的天气真讨厌。那株芦苇也喜欢雨，一个自私鬼。"
Target Text 3	"我有一个黄金窝。"他四处张望着，缓声说道并准备入睡。但正当他将脑袋放到翅膀下的时候，一大颗水珠落到了他身上。"太奇怪了！"他嚷道，"天上一片儿云都没有，每颗星星都又大又亮，但是却下雨了。北欧的天气真糟糕。芦苇很喜欢雨，但那只是她自私的爱好罢了。"

In the first sentence, "I have a golden bedroom," is translated as "我找到一间金色睡房了" (TT1, literal translation: I have found a golden sleeping room); "我的卧室是金子做的。"(TT2; literal translation: My bedroom is made of gold); "我有一个黄金窝。" (TT3: literal translation: I have a golden nest).

In TT1 the verb "找到" (found) is a well-chosen collocation with the word "bedroom" because the swallow who has been flying for the whole day is trying to find a place to rest. The word "bedroom" in the source text (ST) is associated with the personification of the swallow. It reflects the mindset of the swallow, making the story livelier and offering the swallow human characteristics. Personification also allows the reader to judge the swallow's deeds with a human ethical dimension. This linguistic choice in the ST actually foreshadows that the swallow finally found his permanent home, a home where he shall rest forever. He left his swallow friends and

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[4] The notions of "rhizomatic linguistic connections" and "assemblages" are taken from the author's Ph.D. dissertation and a previously published article (Wang, 2015; 2017).

family, stayed with the happy prince and finally died in his discovery of this gradually vanishing goldenness. However, translating the English word 'bedroom' into Chinese "睡房" (TT1; sleeping room) or "卧室" (TT2; bedroom) does not share the same poetic and aesthetic value. Even if the swallow possesses human characteristics and has conversations with humans, they are still hierarchically different from each other and do not share commonalities. The demarcation is socioculturally conditioned, it sets a linguistic norm for the translation. The translation "黄金窝" (TT3; golden nest) sounds like a relevant and suitable translation because common sensually a swallow sleeps in a nest. The imagery does not arouse comprehensible ambiguities. The "nest" is a place between the feet of the statue of the happy prince. So, in relation to the swallow's size, the spatial imagery of nest is more relevant than an actual human-sized bedroom, thus, the translation "窝" (nest) should be a better choice, both in terms of conforming to the imagery construction in the children's mind, as well as shaping the affective and perceptive aspects of the linguistic norm for children.

In the latter part of the first sentence of the ST, "but just as he was putting his head under his wing a large drop of water fell on him", the usage of the verbs in the translations is quite dynamic. The expression "putting his head under his wing" is translated as "把头伸进翅膀下" (TT1; stretch his head under the wing); "把头埋进翅膀里" (TT2; bury his head under the wing); "将脑袋放到翅膀下" (TT3; put his head under the wing). TT3 is faithful to the source text, but as compared with TT1 & 2, it lacks a sense of liveliness. TT2 seems to be even better than TT1 because it gives a picturesque account of the sleeping gestures of the swallow. The right choice of diction also benefits the enhancement of linguistic acquisition for children. The translations of "a large drop of water fell on him", "有一大滴水落到他身上" (TT1; a large drop of water fell on him); "一大滴水砸在了他身上" (TT2; a large drop of water hit him); "大颗水珠落到了他身上" (TT3; a large water droplet fell on him) are also different in the verb usage. However, the phrases "一大滴水" (TT1 &2; a large drop of water) and "大颗水珠" (TT3; a large water droplet) are not the same in terms of linguistic aesthetic perception and imagery. The focalization effect of "一大滴水" and "大颗水珠" is different because "水珠" (water droplet) is perceived as a crystal water ball which conjures a much more vivid picture than just an ordinary drop of water.

The "water droplet" metaphorically infers to the "tears" of the happy prince. A rhetorical question would be immediately asked by the reader, "why was the happy prince crying?" A happy prince should always be happy. The narrative schemata and the development of the narrative align with the reader's cognitive inference. The curious reflection of the swallow foregrounds the intensified tension of sorrowfulness of the happy prince, as it is manifested in the narration, "there is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful."

The semantic integration, cohesion and coherence of the transnarration of these two sentences directly or indirectly affect the narrativity of the story; in a sense that the translation of these two sentences must rhizomatically link with the affective and perceptive dimensions of the built-up sorrowful tension of the emplotment. The narrativization of the translation must be inferentially logical. Any distortion, gap, rupture of the translation would loosen the natural interiority of the story progression and thus alter the narrativity of the story. See Example (1) (2) and (3):

Example (1) "天空没有一片云，星星亮晶晶，但是却下雨了。北欧的天气太可怕了。" (TT1: "literal translation: there is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are shining brightly, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful.");

Example (2) "今晚月光明朗，星星闪耀，天空中一朵云也没有，怎么会下雨呢？北欧的天气真讨厌。"

(TT2: "literal translation: Tonight, the moon is bright, stars shining, not a single cloud in the sky, how could there be rain? The climate in the north of Europe is really terrible.");

Example (3) "天上一片儿云都没有，每颗星星都又大又亮，但是却下雨了。北欧的天气真糟糕。"

(TT3: "literal translation: there is not a single cloud in the sky, every star is big and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful.")

TT2 transposes a statement into a question, reorganizes and reassembles the sentence structure to the Chinese narrating norm. At the same time, the rhetorical question asked by the swallow internally corresponds to the curiosity of the large fallen water droplet that fell at an unusual time of the day.

Besides logical reasoning, consistent echoing and focalized visuality, the translation of the vocality of the characters and the narrator demarcate different diegetic spaces. In the second example below, the reconstructions of the happy prince's voice in association with the identity construction is discussed.

Table 3

Extracts from The Happy Prince

Source Text	"Dear little Swallow," said the Prince, "you tell me of marvellous things, but more marvellous than anything is the suffering of men and of women. There is no Mystery so great as Misery. Fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there." So the Swallow flew over the great city, and saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were sitting at the gates. He flew into dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out listlessly at the black streets. Under the archway of a bridge two little boys were lying in one another's arms to try and keep themselves warm. "How hungry we are!" they said. "You must not lie here," shouted the Watchman, and they wandered out into the rain. (Wilde, 1999, p. 275)
Target Text 1	快乐王子听到这些，对小燕子说："亲爱的小燕子，你说的这些的确都是一些稀奇古怪的事情。可是我最关心的，是住在这个城市中受苦受难的男女老少。没有什么能比他们的苦难更让我关心的了。小燕子，你去城市里面转一圈吧，然后回来把你看到的情形都告诉我！"于是小燕子就飞了出去，它看到很多富人住在漂亮的楼房里无所事事地找着乐子，可是很多乞丐却在大街上阴暗的角落里忍受着疾病和饥饿的折磨。小燕子又飞到了城市里最阴暗的地方，看见一群瘦弱的穷孩子正无力地望着街道发呆。在一座大桥下面的桥洞里，有两个孩子互相偎着取暖。他们嘴里还不停地说着："好冷啊，好饿啊！"可是不一会儿，桥上的看守就走过来大声呵斥，让他们离开这个地方。于是，两个孩子就冒着大雨缓缓地走开了。
Target Text 2	"亲爱的小燕子，"王子打断他，"谢谢你告诉我这些有趣的事，但遭受苦难的人们更值得我们关注，没有什么比痛苦本身更令人痛心了。你去城市上空转一圈好吗，回来告诉我你都看到了什么。"于是燕子向这座大城市飞去，他看见富人们正在漂亮的大房子里尽情欢乐，乞丐却只能坐在大门口。他飞进灰暗的小巷子，看见挨饿的孩子们脸色苍白，无精打采地望着黑乎乎的街道。一座桥的拱道下，两个小男孩枕着彼此的手相互取暖，"真的好饿啊！"小男孩有气无力地呻吟。看守人过来了，朝着他们大吼："到别处躺去！"两个孩子拖着步子走进雨中。
Target Text 3	"亲爱的小燕子，"王子说，"你告诉我了一些不可思议的事，但是最不可思议的是男女遭遇的苦难。没有东西跟苦难一样，苦难是一个巨大的谜。飞去我的城市吧，小燕子，然后告诉我你在那里都看到了些什么。"于是小燕子飞过巨大的城市，看到富人们在他们美丽的房子里种植着甜樱桃，与此同时，乞丐们却坐在大门外。牠飞进黑暗的小巷里，看到黑暗街道上挨饿的小孩，眼神无精打采，一脸苍白。在桥的拱廊之下，两个小男孩躺在对方的臂弯里，尝试保暖身子。"我们多么饿啊！"他们说。"你们不能躺在这。"看守人大喊，然后他们就漫步走向雨中了。

The identity construction of the character is associated with the narrative voice. What the character says and the way the character says it reveal the image of the character. The transnarrated voice is ventriloquial (Wang, 2015, p. 218; 2016, p. 183), for it referentially signifies a heterogeneous coalesced voice incorporating both the character and the translator's idiosyncratic traits. Translatorial intervention is irreducible and incommensurable; however, without any contact of the source text, the target reader is not exposed to the awareness of disparity and such opacity prompts the reader to fill the affective and perceptive gaps of narrativity indeterminacy. In turn, the target reader's rationalization of the characters is grounded in the narrativity of the story.

See Example (4) (5) and (6):

Example (4) "亲爱的小燕子，你说的这些的确都是一些稀奇古怪的事情。可是我最关心的，是住在这个城市中受苦受难的男女老少。没有什么能比他们的苦难更让我关心的了。小燕子，你去城市里面转一圈吧，然后回来把你看到的情形都告诉我！"

(TT1; literal translation: "Dear little swallow, what you've said are strange and mysterious things, but what I concern the most is the suffering of men and of women in this city. There is nothing comparable to their miserableness. Little Swallow, Fly over the city, and tell me the situation you see there!")

Example (5) "谢谢你告诉我这些有趣的事，但遭受苦难的人们更值得我们关注，没有什么比痛苦本身更令人痛心了。你去城市上空转一圈好吗，回来告诉我你都看到了什么。"

(TT2; literal translation: "Thanks for telling me these interesting things, but what I concern the most is the suffering of people. There is nothing more painful than painfulness itself. Fly over the city, and tell me what you see there.")

Example (6) "你告诉我了一些不可思议的事，但是最不可思议的是男女遭遇的苦难。没有东西跟苦难一样，苦难是一个巨大的谜。飞去我的城市吧，小燕子，然后告诉我你在那里都看到了些什么。"

(TT3; literal translation: "you tell me of incredible things, but more incredible than anything is the suffering of men and of women. There is nothing like misery, but misery is a grand mystery. Fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there.")

There are minor flaws in all of the three translations. Regardless of the accuracy of diction choice, the main problem is the reconstruction of a relevant vocality that can appropriately represent the identity of the happy prince. Some of the expressions sound very formal, such as "把你看到的情形都告诉我" (TT1; literal translation: tell me the situation you see there!) or "遭受苦难的人们更值得我们关注" (TT2; literal translation: what I concern the most is the suffering of people). In addition, one of the interesting phenomena is the proliferated translation of the word "marvellous". In TT1, the word "marvellous" is translated as "稀奇古怪的" (strange and mysterious). Probably, the translator attempts to focus on the connotation of something "extraordinary" or something that causes 'a great wonder'. However, the phrase "稀奇古怪的" eliminates the sense of politeness and appraisal of exceptionality or remarkableness in the interpersonal communication. Especially, it fails to reconstruct the dialogic distance between the happy prince and the swallow. The way the happy prince speaks to the swallow tells the reader something about their relationship and their power relations. It is through the aesthetic transcreation of dialogic exchange that the identity construction of the happy prince is revealed. Following this strand of thinking, we can see that in TT2, the word 'marvellous' is modulated to a lower

register as "有趣的" (interesting). This translation sounds very general and ordinary and it makes the reader feel the happy prince is not attentive to what the swallow told him and made less effort to ask the swallow to do him a favour. In TT3, one of the connotations of 'marvellous' is chosen to be an equivalent, that is "不可思议的" (incredible/unbelievable). "不可思议的" can be regarded as a metonymy of the poly-meaning layered word "marvellous", which refers to something astonishing or never heard before.

Nonetheless, it is important for us to realize why the happy prince chooses to use these words to speak to the swallow and what purpose he is trying to achieve. The translators are less aware of this interpersonal and ideational aspect of communication. In fact, the happy prince tries to say something really nice and respectfull to the swallow because he wants the swallow to perform a task in his own will. If the translation lacks a sense of appraisement to the swallow, then it is unlikely for the reader to estimate the kind-hearted sacrifice of the happy prince to save the poor people in the city.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that most students are still negotiating on the level of linguistic conversion. In the process of reterritorialisation, students may associate their choice of diction and syntactic structure with the co-text and context of the story, but they still need to make effort to deal with textual assembling with the narrative components, including the voice, perspective and focalization. They are partially aware of the idea of transnarrativity, but in the real practice of narrativization, their translation competence and experience are not adequate to deal with the possibility of connections and perform free rhizomatic assemblage.

Conclusion

One of the most important factors in the transcreation of the fictional world is the translatorial consideration of transnarrativity. In regard to interlingual conversion, the primary concern of the translator is to reassemble the fragmented information of the source text into a reasonable and readable story. Narrativisation is a process that requires the translator to map his/her affective and perceptive interpretive schema onto the rhizomatic assemblage of the target text. In such a de/reterritorialization process, transnarrativity incorporates a myriad of components, the interpretive competence of the translator, the projection of the target linguistic and sociocultural communication, the embodiment of the psychosomatic attributes of the imagined target community, the internalization of the logos-ethos-pathos dimensions of textual assembling. All in all, the art of story retelling depends heavily on the quality and effect of transnarrativity. Mastery of linguistic or sociocultural translation is far from enough to produce a beautiful piece of story. Instead, narration and transnarration constituents and entailment must be well studied and considered in the transcreation of the fictional world.

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