



Shortsighted translations: Censorship in the three Manolito Gafotas books translated into American English

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**SHORTSIGHTED TRANSLATIONS:
CENSORSHIP IN THE THREE *MANOLITO GAFOTAS* BOOKS
TRANSLATED INTO AMERICAN ENGLISH
TRADUCCIONES CORTAS DE VISTA: LA CENSURA EN LOS TRES LIBROS
DE *MANOLITO GAFOTAS* TRADUCIDOS AL INGLÉS AMERICANO**

Pilar Alderete Diez y Owen Harrington Fernández

Resumen

En este artículo exploramos el tema de la identidad del narrador infantil a través del análisis descriptivo de las traducciones del castellano al inglés americano de *Manolito Gafotas*. Particularmente, este trabajo intenta ilustrar cómo las traducciones de los tres libros traducidos hasta la fecha han censurado la identidad de *Manolito* desde un punto de vista político y social. Presentaremos ejemplos en los que la traducción ha modificado el personaje de los tres primeros libros de la serie y comentaremos los efectos que estos cambios pueden tener sobre la identidad del narrador. También ofreceremos ejemplos de los subtítulos o guion de doblaje de las películas disponibles en inglés para ofrecer un tercer término de comparación y demostrar que las estrategias de construcción de la voz del personaje infantil en literatura en traducción son una herramienta fundamental que los traductores y otras fuerzas editoras en el mercado de esta literatura deberían tener en cuenta a la hora de publicar sus trabajos.

Palabras clave

Corrección política, narrador, censura, expurgación, identidad.

Abstract

In this article, we explore the issue of the child narrator's identity through the descriptive analysis of the translations from Spanish into American English of *Manolito Gafotas*. Particularly, this article illustrates how the three translations have censored *Manolito's* identity from a sociopolitical point of view. We will discuss examples representative of the type of translation shifts that modify the identity of the narrator. We will also identify

examples in the subtitles and dubbing scripts of the films available in English as a *tertium comparationis* to raise awareness of the importance of allowing a source character's voice to resonate with target readers, and how translators and other editorial apparatuses ought to prioritize characterization strategies.

Key words

Political correctness, narrator, censorship, expurgation, identity.

1. Introduction

The relevance of children's and young adult fiction has gained momentum, resulting in an increase in the study of children's literature in translation. Despite current approaches to children's literature, which frame texts with a double aim - as texts for bliss/delight as well as for pleasure/learning - publishing norms continue to be guided by archaic conventions. Stories are supposed to include fantasy, be simple and happy, and the child reader should find positive role models that teach valuable lessons (Nodelman & Reimer, 2002: 86). What is most worrying about these conventions is that they imply that we, the purchasing adults, have a limited understanding of what it is to be a child. We tend to believe that children do not understand as perfectly as we do, that they are egocentric, imaginative, innocent, wild and emotionally more vulnerable because they are not fully formed and their gender determines their actions, likes and dislikes (ibid: 87). These general assumptions may be at the root of the translating approaches found in our case study.

Manolito Gafotas is a series of children's novels by Elvira Lindo. They narrate the adventures of a small spectacled child who lives in Carabanchel Alto, a working-class neighbourhood in Madrid, with his family and friends. There are eight books in the series, published between 1994 and 2002. The books are narrated in the first person by the eponymous Manolito, who was originally created for the programme 'Mira la radio' which aired in 1988 in Radio Nacional de España and later in 'A vivir que son dos días', a *Cadena SER* programme presented by Fernando Delgado (Oropesa, 2003: 17). Since then, the books have been successful in Spanish-speaking countries and, as a result, have

been translated to many languages. There have also been two film adaptations and a TV series. In fact, the films – the first subtitled and the second one dubbed - predate the American translations. The first *Manolito Gafotas* book was translated by Joanne Moriarty. This translation was commissioned by the agent Laura Dail, who presented it to the publishing company, Marshall Cavendish. The other two books, translated by Caroline Travalia, also form part of our case study.

The preliminary research carried out on the first three translations of the ‘*Manolito Gafotas*’ revealed that the text had undergone a degree of manipulation and some content had been censored and omitted entirely in translation. As Elvira has noted:

Tuve más problemas en otros países, porque lo políticamente correcto y las consideraciones pedagógicas ya marcaban la literatura infantil (...) En Estados Unidos la censura fue atroz. Censuraron hasta dibujos de Urberuaga. (...) Esta intromisión continua en la vida íntima del niño me parece que no le ayuda a hacerse un adulto’. (Babelia, 2017)

The reality is that, as children, we are corrected constantly. We live in a culture that encourages learning by correction and by modelling. Political or social correction is just one way in which we apply these methods. However, any political or moral correction in translation can be seen as engaging in ‘cultural politics, as it focuses on representations, values and identities’ (Fairclough, 2003: 17). In this sense, changing language is a matter of changing culture, at least partly (ibid: 18). Our comparative analysis of source and target text segments will demonstrate that ‘changes in discourse are not merely relabelling but shifts to different spheres of values’ (ibid: 23) that affect the identity of the children portrayed in the series, especially *Manolito*’s identity.

Stylistic innovations in children’s literature have focused on presenting children as multidimensional characters with a range of behaviours. A first-person narration, for example, can allow characters to express themselves freely. *Lindo* flouts established norms of children’s literature by characterizing *Manolito* as an uninhibited and outspoken child, only to have him consciously silenced and neutralised in translation, following the normative tendencies described by Oittinen (2000). *Manolito*’s discourse, which shapes the series, has been described as colloquial, dynamic, expressive and unapologetic (Chierichetti, 2004; Colomer, 2002). The translator, seen in this case as an intermediary between the source text (and source culture) and the target readership, assumes the role

of gatekeeper whose role is to ensure that the morals of the target audience are respected. In the US versions of *Manolito Gafotas*, this meant manipulating and censoring content so that the story would discursively conform to the target sphere of values, to the disappointment of Elvira Lindo:

Una vez vinieron unas tiparracas de las Universidad americanas especialistas en literatura infantil a decirme que yo era escatológica. Pues claro. Los especialistas en literatura para niños querrán que los libros estén diseñados como las judías para que no produzcan gases (Salstad, 2003: 2)

The concerns of these academics reflect the conservative nature of the translation of children's literature. There has been a reluctance to apply the term 'censorship' to these individual acts of manipulation as the term carries historical baggage. For instance, Craig (2001: 66) discusses censorship in relation to 'the specific prohibitions of the Orden Ministerial of the 9th of February 1961 governing film censorship, which align with those the regime had previously imposed on children's literature'. Craig cites suicide, homicide, divorce, adultery, sexual relations, prostitution, abortion and birth control methods, drug addiction, alcoholism, detailed crimes, brutality, cruelty, religious offences and state offences (Gübern, 1981: 195). Craig's study of children's literature in translation highlights that religion and sexuality (Craig, 2001: 56), social behaviour (ibid: 60), irony (ibid: 63), foreignness (ibid: 63) and premature love (ibid: 169) were purged from children's literature as per the regulations of the censorship policies under Franco's regime. Interestingly, most of these taboos have been consciously rewritten or cut in Manolito's translations to avoid offending the audience.

2. Sociopolitical Correctness in the Translations of Manolito Gafotas' Series

In this section, we analyse representative examples of a translation strategy which has been guided by socio-political correctness. It is important to remember that our study focuses on the construction of children characters and how these are modified in translation, and that the controversy that arises from these modifications results in changes of representations, values and most importantly, identities. This may be a matter of cultural politics (Fairclough, 2003: 17):

Seeing cultures as signifying systems [...] helps clarify the relationship between culture and language: cultures exist as languages, [...] (and in their inculcation as identities, as genres and styles) (ibid: 18).

Fairclough identifies the following analytically different elements: activities, subjects (endowed with representations, knowledge, beliefs, values, purposes, attitudes), social relations, instruments, objects, time and place (ibid: 22). We will refer to these categories for the classification of our examples.

The way in which Manolito's stream of consciousness has been modified to agree with the translators' (or publishing company's) readers is the focus of this analysis, for it illustrates how a child is (not) supposed to behave verbally or morally, according to published American culture, an incongruence which can be explained with translation norms in children's literature (Shavit, 1981 and Toury ,1995). Children's literature is more marginalized than other literatures and thus governed by more rigid norms (Ben-Ari, 1992: 222). In fact, the translation of children's literature is an arena where two normative systems – the source and the target culture – collide, and it is the translator that chooses to prioritize either the text, the author or the receivers, which includes readers, editors, publishers, distributors, illustrators and critics (Ben-Ari, 1992 and Coillie and Verschueren, 2006: 86). Educational norms play a central role in the translation of children's literature, purifying the TT in alignment with other cultural values. This points to translation strategies that promote cleansing inappropriate elements, especially unacceptable behaviour which young readers might imitate. O'Sullivan (2005: 82) hypothesises a series of such interventions: changes of characterization and conduct, toning down references to physical functions, correcting the creative use of language (including deliberate misspellings), neutralizing registers that do not conform to the stylistic norms of children's literature in the target culture, often in the translation of varieties of humour.

3. Physical violence

This problematic cultural activity is translated with 'to chew out', 'to give a lecture' or omitted entirely, substituting a physical reprimand with a verbal reprimand. This change redefines Manolito's relationship with his family. Physical punishment is banned in many countries, but Spain was a latecomer to these reforms, completely banning physical domestic abuse against children in 2007. However, replacing the physical reference with a verbal expression of violence results in substantial changes in the main character's

identity and his relationships with others. The modification of this recurrent element in the series has been widely referenced, (see Cámara Aguilera, 2016; Floresse 2016; Heslien, 2014; Pérez, 2010; Salstad, 2003 and Spenser and Jenkins, 2013). In *Manolito Gafotas* (MG, from now on):

Source Text	Target Text
1. la colleja (10, 17, 57, 60...)	1. Omitted
2. me llama así cuando está a punto de soltarme una galleta o colleja (10)	2. chews me out (6)
3. cabeza, que está estudiando (12)	3. my mom chewed me out (65)
4. mi madre me echó la bronca (87)	4. she chews you out (70)
5. me da la colleja correspondiente (92)	5. I could already hear the lecture from my mom (89)
6. Ya estaba sintiendo la colleja que me iba a dar mi madre (116)	6. when my mom returned to the third floor, she gave the corresponding lecture (99)
7. Cuando mi madre llego al tercero, me dio la correspondiente colleja (129)	7. I'd choose a short lecture at the top of her lungs a thousand times over a long one (99)
8. Prefiero mil veces una colleja a las broncas de viva voz (130)	

Table 1

Conversely, every instance of physical violence is necessarily kept in the film because the visual representation of the physical reprimand restricted the options available to the translators. The first film is an adaptation which includes scenes from *Manolito Gafotas* and from *Pobre Manolito*, and new scenes scripted by Miguel Albadalejo with Elvira Lindo. It is subtitled in American English and it uses a more liberal strategy when it comes to taboo topics and issues. It is interesting to note that in the nine years between the production of the film and the publication of the translation of the first book, the translation strategies used by both translators were not informed by these films but followed the mandate of more conservative editorial values. In *Pobre Manolito* (PM, from now on):

Source Text	Target Text
1. la colleja	1. chews me out (6)
2. No veas la bronca que me cayó el otro día (15)	2. Did I get chewed out the other day (7)?
	3. I felt like I do when I get chewed out (22)

3. Me estaba doliendo ese momento como si me hubieran dado una colleja (35)	4. My mom chews him out real bad (43)
4. Mi madre primero le da una colleja (61)	5. A shiver all the way up my spine (117). Omitted
5. Un escalofrío que me llega hasta ese lugar donde mi madre deposita sus collejas: la nuca. (159)	6. My mom came in to hand out lectures. She was so upset she was waiving her hands, and she accidentally whacked my grandpa in the head (120)
6. Mi madre vino a repartir collejas. Estaba tan emocionada que una fue a parar a la nuca de mi abuelo (161)	7. The moment of the lectures had passed (145)
7. El terrible momento de las collejas ya se había pasado (195)	

Table 2

We can only speculate, but it would seem that Manolito's second film, under the title of 'Mola Ser Jefe' (2001) would have had a wider audience, seeing as it was subtitled and dubbed into American English. There are some differences between the subtitles and the dubbed script, but most important to our study is the tolerance for the spheres of values represented in the original text compared to the translated texts. There is a higher tendency in the translations towards expurgation in the dubbing script and a more tolerant approach in the subtitles. In the second film, new expressions for physical violence are introduced, such as 'repartiendo cates', subtitled as 'slapping', or 'que nos curran', subtitled as 'thump us', or 'que te arreo un guantazo', subtitled as 'I'll belt you one'. In *Cómo Molo* (CM, from now on):

Source Text	Target Text
1. Una colleja de efecto retardado (11) (142-3)	1. A delayed -reaction lecture (5) (104)
2. Si las collejas de mi madre superaban en maestría a la suya (14)	2. If my mom's lectures exceed his mom's in terms of skill and sophistication (7)
3. Estamos saliendo a una media de cinco collejas al día y tres helados. Primero nos pega y luego se arrepiente. (27)	3. First she yells at us, and then she feels bad so she buys us ice creams. We're up to an average of five lectures and five ice creams a day. (17)
4. Un manchurrón = una colleja (105)	4. Super stains in my apartment are punishable by a lecture (76)
5. Futuras collejas (106)	5. Future lectures (76)
6. Le dio dos collejas (134)	6. She gave him two lectures (98)

Table 3

Both translators have been loyal to each other – or to an external editor that we have not been able to identify, keeping the same recurrent substitution and reference to a verbal reprimand (Travalia, 2008).

4. Substance abuse

Manolito lives in a lower-class neighbourhood adjacent to a prison. Drugs are part of his physical environment. The objects, activities and subjects related to drugs are consistently censored or substituted with more palatable tropes. The replacement of these objects or activities in translation results in a shift in the fictive environment of the novel, and the ubiquity of the drugs discourse in the ST disappears in the TT. Carabanchel Alto, manipulated by the norms of the target culture, becomes a different neighbourhood. In MG:

Source Text	Target Text
1. Drogadictos (19)	1. Criminals (11)
2. porque un día se encontró una jeringuilla en la tierra (86)	2. Since one time she found a large knife on the ground there (65)

Table 4

In the film, reference to drugs are allowed to remain and the petty criminal figure features throughout the film. He is also portrayed as related to Yihad's brother, who is spending some time in the nearby prison. In CM:

Source Text	Target Text
Como las drogas y los pendientes en las orejas (151)	Like cell phones and tattoos. (111)

Table 5

There are copious references to cigarettes and alcohol in the STs, especially with regards to the habits of Manolito's father and grandfather. Evidently, these references were not consistent with the reality of the receiving culture, and have thus been censored. The references to Manolito's grandfather's fondness for anisette have been substituted for a

fondness for Coca-Cola, a substitution which shifts the discursive construction of this characters identities and grounds it in a sphere of values which is incongruent with his discursive representation in the originals. It also impacts on how we interpret Grandpa’s erratic behaviour, easily understood as caused by alcohol in the ST, but are less easily explained as the result of drinking too much Coca-Cola in the TT.

The elimination of references to alcoholism or any destructive addiction is reinforced with the elimination of the accompanying illustrations. In PM:

Source Text	Target Text
<p>1. Mi padre me dio una charla de hombre a hombre y me dijo que el día que quisiera fumar que lo hiciera delante de él y dentro de los muros de mi casa, sin que me viera nadie (83)</p>	<p>1. My dad gave me a man-to-man talk and he said the day I wanted to smoke that I should do it in my own apartment that I bought with my own money. Oh brother (59)</p>
<p>2. (yo) daba una calada a un puro enorme que tenía en la mano (86) Cuando termino de insultarnos, abrió la caja y fue sacando panderetas, un tabor y una botella de anís del mono (123)</p>	<p>2. I took a puff on this enormous candy cigar I was holding (61) When she finished insulting us, she opened the box and took out tambourines, a drum, and a glass bottle. (88)</p>
<p>3. A mí me dio la botella de anís del mono porque la dije que, como es el anís que bebe mi abuelo, la todo todos los días con la música del telediario. Mentira podrida: no la toco para hacer música, la toco para hacerle a mi abuelo un coctel que se llama palomita. Son cuatro partes de anís y dos gotas de agua. Las dos gotas de agua las echamos para que mi madre se quede más tranquila, porque ella dice que no la gustan los viejos borrachuzos. (123)</p>	<p>3. She gave me this funky glass bottle that was all sculpted and stuff, because I told her that coke is my grandpa’s favourite drink, and I play music with the empty bottle every day when the song comes on at the beginning of the news. That’s rotten lie: I don’t use it to play music; I use it to make a tower for my Viking men to climb. (88). Omitted</p>
<p>4. Yo solté la botella de anís del mono del susto y la botella se rompió (125)</p>	<p>4. And I dropped the bottle and the bottle broke (91)</p>
<p>5. Aquella tarde mi abuelo tuvo que beberse cuatro palomitas para acabar su botella y que yo la pudiera llevar a la escuela. Mi abuelo hace cualquier cosa</p>	<p>5. That afternoon my grandpa had to drink four cokes so I could take the bottles to school (I wanted three for back up). My grandpa will do anything for me. He had to drink behind my mom’s back, well aware of the fact that sooner or later he would be discovered, because my mom</p>

<p>por mí. Se las tuvo que beber a espaldas de mi madre y sabiendo que más tarde o más temprano sería descubierto, porque mi madre le mide con el metro de la costura lo que ha caído en el día. (125)</p>	<p>always counts how much coke is left at the end of the day (90)</p>
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Table 6

In the film, there are several examples of Manolito’s father and grandfather’s fondness for a drink, where the term ‘spritzer’ replaces *tinto de verano*. In the last example in the table, we can also see how the reference to smoking is kept but the section that is omitted shifts the relationship between Manolito and his father to a different set of values. The change in the illustration at the beginning of the chapter and the elimination of a picture (PM, 82) in the translation is a good example of how the translators of the American English texts struggled with certain tropes, which feature in the Spanish version, but were deemed inappropriate for the US context.

5. Physicality and Prudery

O’Sullivan (2005: 85) underlines that ‘laughter in humorous children’s literature is reference to anything to do with the body and its functions’. The most significant feature in the following examples is the absence of the reference to the fact that Manolito and his grandfather share a bed because of the lack of space in their apartment. The translator cuts out this elements of their relationship, presumably because it would be too obscene for an American readership. However, the illustration depicting this very scene contradicts the motivations behind the textual expurgation, motivated by a willingness to cleanse the text to appease the adult reader, at the expense of sacrificing an important humorous element. In MG, the following examples illustrate the substitution for a morally correct term that would be more acceptable.

Source Text	Target Text
1. Susana Bragas Sucias	1. The One and Only Susana and The one and only Susana Dirty Underpants (64)
2. (abuelo) No me da ni para comprarme un braguero (28)	2. (grandpa) His pension doesn't cover the cost of an Ace bandage (20)
3. Un médico te da una torta en el culo (40)	3. a doctor smacks you on your rear end (29)
4. La sita Espe daba cabezadas, como hace mi abuelo después de comer, porque esta de la próstata. Le pregunta a la sita Espe si daba cabezadas porque estaba de la próstata. (44)	4. While I was reading, I sometimes got the impression that miss Espe was nodding off, like my grandpa does after eating. I asked miss Espe if she was nodding off because she had a bad prostate. (32)
5. Cuando mi madre dice por abajo se refiere al culo (104)	5. When she says "down below" she is referring to my rear end (79)

Table 7

It is remarkable that the first example needs to translate the item avoided in the second instance because otherwise the reader would not understand Manolito's explanation for such an irreverent nickname. In the first film, Susana is referred to as 'Dirty Pants' or 'Dirty Drawers' and there are many references to her dirty undergarments. In the last example, to translate the ST word *culo*, the option of 'rear-end' sounds unnatural for a child. In the last example, the translator avoids the repetition. The use of these medical terms is a feature in Manolito's speech as he tries to sound more verbose and repetition is his way of making sure the audience picks up on this element of his vernacular. In PM, scatological references are abundant, but they are 'cleansed' in the translation:]

Source Text	Target Text
1. Y encima con cachondeito (15)	1. On top of it all, now you're trying to be cute, huh? (7)
2. Manolito, pásate conmigo a la cama a calentarme los pies (37)	2. Manolito, warm up my feet (29)
3. Que no me lo despego ni para mear (99)	3. I can't even get rid of to go to the bathroom (71)
4. A mí siempre me toca comerme el marrón de cuidar al imbécil (69)	4. It sucks taking care of the bozo (48)
5. Caca líquida (74)	5. Poop (52)

6. Un cruce de chuchos que se encontraron en la calle (156)	6. A cross between mutts that were found in the street (116)
7. Mientras me levantaba, sentí que un poco (pero muy poco) de pis me manchaba los pantalones. (173)	7. I thought about not saying anything (129)

Table 8

In example number 6, the translation mutes the meaning of the reflexive pronoun ‘se’ and translates it as a passive construction. Contradictorily, Caroline Travalia translates ‘yo la tenía frita’ (112) as ‘I was being a pain in the rump’ (81), when there was no need for a physical reference. She could have been using compensation strategies in this case, by relocating the physical reference in a different part of Manolito’s speech, its metaphorical use more palatable than the literal meaning in the examples discussed above. Regardless, the compensation is ineffective as it still substitutes a taboo term with a euphemism. In the first few minutes of the first film, the word ‘pilila’ features early, dubbed as ‘wiener’ but subtitled as ‘willy’, and in the second film, there are various scatological references that are respected.

In CM, the translator is very visible by instructing children readers about the effect of sunbathing with the use of the word ‘sick’. We include this example here because it makes reference to the physical activity of getting tanned. However, the changes in this part of the text can be interpreted as having the didactic purpose of deterring children from exposing themselves and raising awareness of the dangers of sun exposure.

Source Text	Target Text
1. Estaba más delgado porque en el hospital le habían contagiado una terrible colitis (63).	1. Omitted
2. Porque teniendo colitis, ya se sabe, detrás del efecto sonoro viene la realidad completamente cruda (64).	2. Omitted
3. Me he puesto súper moreno, tío, En Carcagente, te pones cinco minutos al sol y ya estás negro. Y tu tío, estás negro. (119)	3. I got so much sun, I almost got sick. How about you? (86)
4. La caca del nene (100)	4. Omitted
	5. The presents of his godsons (104)

5. La caca de sus ahijados. (142)	
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Table 9

The illustration of a painting of naked women in a museum is completely omitted from the first book too. Conversely, in the first film, there is a scene in which we see Manolito and his brother urinate in the toilet and Manolito and his father are depicted naked in a motel room when they go on a road trip.

References to sexual attraction of any sort are deleted. We can assume that the omission of an entire page of the first book – page 102 – is motivated by this very issue. Manolito sharing his bed with adults – in this case his uncle’s Swedish girlfriend – and the reference to Manolito’s attraction towards her are omitted in the translation, as well as the issue that Manolito wets his pants because he dreamt about mermaids that night.

6. Conflict with linguistic norms

Misspellings and other forms of language ‘misbehaviour’ are also a favourite source of humour in children’s literature (O’Sullivan, 2005: 87). This important shift in the translation is the logical consequence of all the other modifications, narrated in the first-person by Manolito. In this case, the modifications have an impact at the level of identity from source culture to target culture. The first instance in which we identified the intention of the translator to modify Manolito’s identity was the omission of the author’s note at the end of the first book in the series:

Espero que los lectores disculpen los errores gramaticales y otras incorrecciones que aparecen en el libro. Tanto los editores como yo hemos querido ser fieles a la voz del personaje. Puede que, con unos años más dentro del sistema educativo, Manolito supere estos fallos. De momento, entendemos que conforman su personalidad literaria (190).

This note is omitted again in the second book (201) and in the third book (172).

6.1 Linguistic variation: *Laismo, Leismo and Loismo*

For this study we have not included all the examples of ‘ungrammatical’ structures that Manolito produces. However, it is important to take into consideration that throughout the different books, Manolito uses forms of ungrammatical Spanish, namely *laismo*, *leismo* and *loismo*. *Laismo* is the most prominent in his speech, defined as the use of the direct object personal pronoun ‘la’ or ‘las’ as indirect object pronouns (le, les) when referring to feminine subjects. Manolito alternates between the correct form and the ungrammatical use of ‘la’. To illustrate with just one instance of this ungrammatical use of la: *A mi madre no la gusta que hablemos de la muerte* (MG, 13). Every instance of this linguistic variation is omitted from the ST.

6.2 Number correction

Another interesting area where there has been changes in the translation of PM is the area of numbers or years. In the first example, we can see that Manolito is portrayed as two years older. In the second example, the reference to the year in which this book was published is modified by a deictic reference. In the third example, Bernabé, his neighbour comes back home an hour later than in the TT. The first change, especially, is objectionable because the differences between an eight and a ten-year-old are considerable, at least in the source culture that the translators, at least in principle, set out to preserve.

Source Text	Target Text
1. en los ocho años – (9)	1. in the ten years – (3)
2. 1995 (30)	2. January of this year (19)
3. – a las 9.05 (61)	3. – 8.05 (44)

Table 10

This shift in character representation, from an eight-year-old in the Spanish version to a ten-year-old in the English American version, is the clearest indication that the Spanish original does not conform to the sphere of values that defines the discursive representation

of children in literature. That is, despite the extensive expurgation of the text, the translators and publishers still found it necessary to increase the age of the eponymous character by two years – not to make him more relatable to readers in the US, but to avoid condoning implicitly Manolito’s behaviour, which, according to the diluted text that is available in the US, is unbecoming of an eight-year-old.

6.3 Stylistic norms

The adaptation of linguistic registers is the most salient feature in the analysis of the three translations which have been published so far. The source culture, and as a consequence, the source text, is more liberal in the way they use the following references than the target culture. These changes are necessary from the point of view of adaptation to the target culture norms of children’s literature, but their effects are significant, changing the register and modifying the intersubjective formulation of characters’ identities in the readers’ imaginations. We have not included all these cultural references, as we have focused on politically problematic words or groups of words, leaving out the changes in references to food or less political items aside (see Cámara Aguilera, 2016 for a full discussion on these aspects).

7. National/Political References

The first example, the nickname of one of Manolito’s classmates, El Yihad, is likely to be problematic because of the prominence in the media this foreign word has acquired in the last few years. However, the Spanish books have kept the reference in the many editions that have been published, whereas the American version opts for an obscure reference. In any case, the translators have opted for the modification or omission of any reference to real nations and nationalities for other references to old extinct or fictional nations and animals. In MG:

Source Text	Target Text
1. El Yihad	1. Ozzy
2. Comparado conmigo el genio de Aladino vivía como un príncipe chino (91)	2. Compared to me, Aladdin's genie lived like a prince (69)
3. Ando como un chino (83)	3. I walk like a penguin (62)
4. A no ser que España fuera invadida por japoneses (96)	4. Unless Spain was invaded by Martians (73)
5. Parecían tambores africanos (98)	5. were like drums (75)
6. No se lo esperaban ni los chinos de Rusia (155)	6. could not have been expected, even by the Martians on earth (120)
7. Vi unos sobres que tienen indios (172)	7. then I saw some bags that had Viking warriors (132)
8. A veces decide hacerse la sueca (181)	8. sometimes she decides to wait (138)

Table 11

The interesting thing about the contrast between Manolito's translation and films is that in the films, the names remain or are translated literally. Yihad is kept, ignoring all the problematic connotations the nickname carries and Manolito's brother is known as 'the Moron'. In the second film, 'imbécil' is dubbed as 'lunchbox'. It is also interesting to notice that in the dubbed version, Yihad is 'Ali' as opposed to his name in the subtitles, where his original name is kept. The first film was produced in 1999 and the translation was published in 2008. This film was subtitled but not dubbed so it can be assumed that it had less of an impact in American or that it was not distributed widely precisely because there are scenes that include nudity, which may an American audience may not have found adequate for children. In PM, Caroline Travalia modifies political references, and introduces tropes she deems more familiar for the target reader:

Source Text	Target Text
1. Hay más bares que chinos (33)	1. He can go elsewhere (21)
2. Que se han llegado a oír hasta Carabanchel bajo (89)	2. Know to be heard all the way in France (63)
3. Me voy a la guerra de África (165)	3. I'm going off to America (124)
4. Se preguntará toda España (27)	4. Omitted (39)

Table 12

8. Insults

The expurgation of insults or taboo language is a tendency that still prevails in Spanish children's literature in translation (Marisa Fernández López, 2000: 32). In MG:

Source Text	Target Text
1. El idiota	1. The Bozo
2. Cuatro Ojos / Gafotas	2. Four Eyes / Fat Glasses (5, only referenced once)
3. un cochino (9)	3. a dog (3)
4. me llamarán mariquita (59)	4. they will call me wimp (44)
5. a ver si vas a ser mariquita (90) (Susana)	5. maybe you are a girl (68) (Susana)
6. alias la ceporra (74)	6. alias the Stump (57)
7. Sois tan tontos que no sabéis ni copiar (115) (la sita)	7. you don't even know how to cheat (88) (miss)
8. Los hay peores (163)	8. there are worst things (125)
9. Capitán Merluza (56)	9. Captain lush (41)

Table 13

There is one instance in which Joanne Moriarty uses a more insulting word in the translation than the word used in the ST:

Source Text	Target Text
El último mono (3)	the number-one bum (4)

Table 14

In PM, the substitution for a milder version of the insult is evident in Manolito's nickname for his best friend. The third and fourth example in the table below show an interesting omission of the suggested 'insult' (portera – gossip lady), which generates a more pejorative reference to sexual professions. In other words, the elision of the insult is counterproductive.

Source Text	Target Text
1. Un cerdo traidor (10) (82) (125)	1. A dirty traitor (4) (58) (90)
2. Este niño es un latazo (74)	2. I never get a break with this kid (52)
3. Tiene usted la portería abierta (89)	3. Your door is open to business all hours of the night (64)
4. Que la portería la debía tener su madre (89)	4. His mom was the one with the night-time business (64)
5. Que inútil eres manolito (100)	5. You stink Manolito (72)
6. No lo hacemos por amistad (48)	6. Omitted
7. Aguafiestas (70)	7. Omitted
8. Calla foca (187)	8. Omitted

Table 15

10. Death

In MG, the references to death are either avoided or softened:

Source Text	Target Text
1. esta será la trenca que lleve el día de mi muerte cuando sea viejo (18)	1. that's why this will be the peacoat I wear until the day I die when I'm old. (11)
2. lo llamamos así porque solo tiene un árbol que tiene muy buena pinta para ahorcarse, del lejano oeste (50)	2. (we call it that because it only has one tree, so it looks a bit suspicious) (36)
3. esta vez me libraba por los pelos de la silla eléctrica (124)	3. I was saved by the skin of my teeth this time (95)
4. o que sale gente en le televisión muriéndose en la guerra (184)	4. Omitted (141)

Table 16

In PM:

Source Text	Target Text
1. Por si se atraganta mortalmente (67)	1. In case he chokes (47)
2. Le habían metido un tubo mortífero por la garganta para que no se ahogara mientras le estaban operando. (134)	2. Omitted
3. Peligro de muerte (163)	3. Danger (121)

4. Ya será demasiado tarde y que Paquito Medina y yo ya estaremos bajo tierra (179)	4. It will be too late for Paquito Medina and me. (33)
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Table 17

In CM:

Source Text	Target Text
1. Es un niño bastante tétrico (50)	1. He's a pretty dismal kid (33)
2. Que me cuelguen del árbol del ahorcado si mi abuelo no piensa en esos precisos instantes: cómo molo (52)	2. I would bet my piggy bank that at the moment, my grandpa is thinkin, I'm a whole lotta cool. (35)
3. Estuvimos a punto de ahogarnos de la risa en bastantes ocasiones. Tirábamos mis gafas al fondo y buceábamos para rescatarlas (57)	3. Man, did we have a whole lotta fun! We were about to drown a few times for real because we were laughing hard. We'd get on each other's shoulders and end up tipping over (38).
4. Prefiero que haga el ridículo a que se nos mate (80)	4. I'd rather look like a fool than have her kill us both – (56) (Manolito's mom is looking out the balcony)
5. Mi abuelo no se había muerto, pero tenía toda la cara. Yo creo que es inmortal (88)	5. Omitted
6. Cata haz algo que esta noche me matan (90)	6. Cata, do something! I can't take it anymore! (64)
7. Dice que cuando despiertas a una madre así se pone enferma del corazón (108)	7. She said when you wake up a mother from her <i>siesta</i> , it's a crime against humanity (79)

Table 18

3.1 Taboo words and slang

The use of taboo words and slang is a defining feature of language use in Manolito's community. This language is avoided in the TT and substituted with a more formal colloquial register, or omitted entirely. In MG:

Source Text	Target Text
1. Joe con el nieto, lo que pesa (22) (un hombre)	1. the grandkid's real heavy (16) (a man)
2. Joe, que no abuelo (71)	2. omitted
3. Joe, con la Susanita, nos tiene a todos machacaos (89) (abuelo)	3. that one and only Susana has us all beat to a pulp (67) (grandpa)
4. Se jorobó (26)	4. she was out of luck (17)
5. hay personas en el mundo que tienen muy mala leche (30)	5. there are people in the world who act really stinky (21)

Table 19

Again, we find a reverse example, it sounds as if the translator, led by a unilateral obsession for correctness, misunderstood the use of the word 'descarao' in the context in which it was uttered. It does not point to its literal meaning, but it is equivalent to a colloquial version of 'for sure'.

Source Text	Target Text
Descarao (35)	jerk (25)

Table 20

In PM:

Source Text	Target Text
1. Hay tíos que... (9)	1. Some people (3)
2. Joe con la Susanita (104)	2. That Susana is something else (75)

Table 21

In the second film 'joe macho' is dubbed as 'jeeperz', as well as many other slang words which have been censored. There is also a noticeable degree of expurgation in the dubbed version of the second film, whereas subtitles seem to be slightly more literal.

3.2 Biblical references

This reference to the bible that is unique in the ST is erased from the TT, where the translator opts to use a colloquial Manolitoesque phrase instead. In CM, *Su reino no es de este mundo (17) – Who's so perfect he's out of this (world-wide) World. (9)*

3.3 Weight

The topic of weight and references to people being fat have also been altered in a conspicuous way. In MG, in the first example the explanation that introduces Manolito's logic and defines his straightforward nature of his narration is omitted. The second example was a good attempt to reformulate the joke. The third example is the title of the photograph which was omitted, as mentioned in the earlier section on physicality and prudery.

Source Text	Target Text
1. Es una tontería tener complejo de gordo si uno no está gordo (22)	1. it's ridiculous to have a fat complex (16)
2. El tipo del tordo: la cabeza pequeña y el culo gordo (77)	2. the body of a pigeon, tiny little lips and big ol' hips (58)
3. Las tres gordas (79)	3. three big broads (59)
4. Con la barriga que tiene (153)	4. with the gut he has (117)

Table 22

11. Conclusions

This article has identified examples that have undergone a series of operational norms (Ben Ari, 1992: 223) and additions to render the text palatable to an American children audience. Sometimes these strategies flout the rights of the child in namely two ways:

- The fictional character's integrity has been compromised by censoring his freedom of speech.
- The right to unbiased information of the children – young adult and adult - audience of a literary text has also been compromised.

The above analysis not only identifies the copious changes made to sensitive and taboo material from the source text, it also explains the motivations behind the modifications as a type of purification of the source cultural material, deemed inappropriate by the translators. Following Fairclough, the translations into American English change the identity of the eponymous Manolito Gafotas, as the linguistic construction of his distinctive identity in the source texts differs substantially from the narrator in the target

texts. He achieves his child voice by deviating from linguistic and register norms, in his use of depoliticized political references, insults, impoliteness, lack of prudery, references to death, horror and obesity, and taboo words, among others. His social identity is created by the relationships he has with other characters (physical violence, affection, comradery, etcetera) and his surrounding context, including drugs, crime, smoking and drinking. His candid nature and his world, inside and out of his mind, is rife with social risk indicators.

Manolito is the auto-diegetic narrator of the books. As Taberero Sala (2005) suggests, we cannot only focus on what he narrates and sees, his identity and background become relevant as they shape his discourse. Every identity trait is meaningful in the translation of Manolito as a character. As a translator, it is important to pay attention to the narrator, how much he knows, his point of view/tale, when he is telling the story and how he chooses to tell the story (Taberero Sala, 2005: 159). Manolito Four-Eyes is a purged version of Manolito Gafotas. All these elements, omitted or changed, have an enormous impact when we consider that the series of Manolito Gafotas depicts his evolution as a character and the development of his identity, emphasized by the last book in the series *Mejor Manolo*, in which Lindo highlights the differences between the child voice of Manolito and his adult personality, Manolo.

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