SUBTITLING PRACTICES IN SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF THE SOAP OPERA GENERATIONS

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Abstract

This study represents a case study of subtitling practices in the South African television broadcasting media, with reference to the soap opera, Generations. The aim of this research is to carry out a descriptive study to establish the actual practices of subtitling in the South African television broadcasting media, using the soap opera Generations as a case study; how these practices match international, theoretical and methodological practices; and whether they have been affected by changes in legislation calling for the status and use of indigenous languages to be enhanced.

Although the research sets out to discuss the actual processes in the subtitling of Generations, it includes an analytical and evaluative component. It examines episodes of Generations for the years, 1999, 2003, 2005 and January 2006, looking at the languages spoken in these episodes, the percentage of subtitling in each episode, and the nature of subtitling in the soap opera. Finally, it assesses what progress has been made towards multilingualism, and subtitling since the two go hand-in-hand because whatever is spoken in the vernacular languages calls for subtitling. It was concluded that the level of multilingualism and, therefore, subtitling, is not yet up to the level envisaged although a lot of progress has been made.
DEPARTMENT

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

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(Violet Busisiwe Msimang)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

Declaration

Acknowledgements

*List of Abbreviations

## CHAPTER 1:

### INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the Problem

1.2. Aims of the Study

1.3. Rationale

1.4. Corpus

1.5. Contextualisation of the Problem: Legislation on Language Policy: Overview of Relevant Legislation

1.6. Background Information on *Generations*

1.7. The South African Context of *Generations*

1.8. Power Relations in the Subtitling of *Generations*

1.9. Outline of Chapters

## CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO DTS

2.1. Descriptive Translation Studies: The Descriptive Approach

2.2. Delabastita’s Application of DTS to Screen Translation

2.3. The Relevance of the Model to the Case Study

Screen Translation and Translation Theory:

2.4. Screen Translation

2.5. Translation Theory

2.5.1. The Nature of Subtitling

2.5.2. Film and Semiotics

2.5.3. Film and Dialogue
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SL = Source Language
TL = Target Language
ST = Source Text
TT = Target Text