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Rurangwa, Narcisse

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TRANSLATING RWANDAN FOLKTALES INTO ENGLISH:

A CULTURE-BASED ANALYSIS

Narcisse RURANGWA

A Masters 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 in Translation

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Abstract

The purpose of this research report is to examine Rwandan folktales from a cultural point of view and discuss how they could be translated into English by taking into account cultural aspects that are typical of Rwandan culture. It also aims at discussing some strategies which translators can use in order to solve culture-related problems while translating Rwandan folktales into the English language for an international audience in general and for children in particular.

To lay a theoretical foundation to this study, an overview of folklore, culture and the relationship between language, culture and translation is given. Theories underlying cultural translation and underlying children's literature and its translation are also discussed. Although the study aims at analysing Rwandan folktales in general, it focuses on four folktales. These are analysed and culture-bound problems that a translator may encounter when translating them are brought to the fore. In addition, one of them is translated as an illustration and a discussion of strategies used to address culture-bound problems is provided.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this Masters Research Report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Translation at the University of the Witwatersrand, School of Literature and Languages Studies. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Narcisse RURANGWA

The _____ day of _____ 2005

Dedication

To

Christella,
M.Victoire,
Sandrine,
Richard
and
Basilice.

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Abbreviations

SC : Source culture

ST : Source text

TC : Target culture

TT : Target text