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The impact of culturalism in the translation of STDs and HIV/Aids materials

Lot, Makgopa

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ABSTRACT

The scourge of HIV/AIDS continues to worsen in the country in spite of efforts made by government and other stakeholders to combat this disease. This is reflected by the ever-increasing statistics of new cases of HIV infection that are reported every minute. This rate of infection is believed to be influenced by factors such as cultural constructions that inhibit efforts to educate the populace about the disease. The research focuses on the extent to which cultural ideologies, as reflected in figurative expressions, render the task of educating people about sexually related diseases difficult.

Translators seem to prefer figurative instead of literal language when they translate STDs and AIDS-related education materials. The preference of the former renders the message inaccessible to the average target audience. This study neither strives to conscientise and sensitise the doubting Thomases about the danger of HIV/AIDS and STDs nor does it seek a cure or treatment but a new way of communicating about these diseases. Ratzan maintains that "until a vaccine or cure for HIV infection is discovered, communication is all that we have" (1990: 257). This study deals with communication about HIV/AIDS. It is believed that the research's findings can be used to help reduce the rate of transmission of this life-threatening infectious disease.