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The translation of children's literature: a comparative study of the translated of Nal'ibali (Here is a story) children's stories from English into Xitsonga

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Abstract

Xitsonga is one of the marginalized languages in South Africa regardless of its official status. A few of its speakers, Vatsonga, can write and read. Majority of us, more especially the elderly people, cannot read or write because we lack a reading culture. This is a legacy left for us by our ancestors. Consequently, writers do not write in Xitsonga, not even for children. The populace relies on translation to eradicate this culture instead of producing children's books originally in Xitsonga. Almost most of the children's books available to Vatsonga children are translations from English. In response to this, private organisations endorsed by the Department of Education such as *Nal'ibali* calls for the translation of children's books from English into South African languages. Consequently, translators of children's books face translation problems at different language levels and are mitigated through the use translation strategies. Therefore, this study's interest is in the exploration of translation problems in children's literature and those faced by *Nal'ibali* translators when translating the selected children's stories of this study. Additionally, to also ascertain and explore translation strategies in children's literature and those that were employed by *Nal'ibali* translators when translating these stories. Moreover, amongst other translation problems and strategies highlighted by other notable scholars such as Judith Inggs, this study notes Mona Baker's taxonomy of translation problems and strategies at the word level. This study also explores power relations in translation and how it influences translation in children's literature. In the translation of children's literature, power plays a significant role as children's literature has dual readership. Power is used to control what should be translated and how it should be translated. Those with the most power hierarchically are the publishers. Their choices are influenced by demand and costs as they are driven by a commitment to profit over other benefits of translating children's books.