

Abstract

Today, children's books are published in higher numbers than ever before. Their translations into dozens of different languages enable popular stories and their characters to travel around the whole world. Entering new cultures, stories suddenly expose culture-specific elements that are unfamiliar to a new audience.

This thesis will look at the German and Icelandic translations of Enid Blyton's *Five on a Treasure Island* and J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* with special regard to the culture-specific references. Dealing with source texts from a different historical background and their translation into different target cultures, the findings could provide evidence for what is considered an adequate translation in a certain target culture for a certain period. For this, I will use a categorization system developed by translation theorist Eirlys E. Davies, which determines whether a translation decision is motivated by fidelity to the source text or towards creating a target-oriented text.

In my analysis of the strategies applied, I find that both the Icelandic and German translations of the Blyton text are motivated by target-orientation. But trying to eliminate source culture references, the outcome frequently results in incoherent text passages. More than fifty years later, both translators of Rowling's text aim for preserving source culture-specific items by applying strategies that make them accessible to the target reader. This indicates that Davies' categorization is not only a valuable tool for evaluating the translation of culture-specific items but also a helpful guideline for translators which strategies to apply in order to create a successful text.