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The Challenges Experienced by Students of the University of Eswatini and National University of Lesotho When Translating Kinship Terms between English, Siswati and Sesotho

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Abstract

The majority of level three translation students at the University of Eswatini and National University of Lesotho have difficulties translating some kinship terms between English and the African languages of Siswati and Sesotho due to differences in kinship systems. This qualitative study attempts to establish the reasons for student difficulties in translating kinship terms. The study employs communicative and comparative approaches in which data were collected through document analysis of student works at the two institutions. The students were all mother tongue speakers. Target texts were analysed in the three languages and compared to their source texts. Further, Siswati and Sesotho target texts were compared. The study's main finding was that problems in translating kinship terms amongst students were caused by their ignorance of the English kinship system and that they tended to impose their system on English. The study also found that differences in the kinship systems also create problems of equivalence for the learners. On the comparative data, the study established that both Siswati and Sesotho students were mostly unsuccessful in the translation of some kinship terms due to their linguistic differences.

Keywords

Translation, Kinship Terms, Equivalence, Source Text, Target Text, Linguistic Differences

1. Introduction

English, Siswati and Sesotho belong to different language families, with English

belonging to the Endo-European languages while Siswati and Sesotho are subjects of the Bantu languages which belong to Bantoic, which in turn belongs to the Benue-Congo, which is one of the six subjects of the Niger-Congo B based on Greenberg (Greenberg, 1970) and Webb and Webb and Kembo-Sure's (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000) classification of languages of Africa. When it comes to the classification of Bantu languages, Siswati and Sesotho belong to the South Eastern Zone of Bantu languages based on Doke's classification (Miti, 2006). Though Siswati and Sesotho are Bantu languages, they belong to different groups with Siswati being part of the Nguni group with isiZulu, isiXhosa and isiNdebele as sister languages while Sesotho is part of the Sotho-Tswana group with Setswana, Silozi, Sepedi (Northern-Sotho), Kgalagadi, Lovedu and Phalaborwa as sister languages (Miti, 2006). Siswati is spoken in Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, Mpumalanga and some urban areas of South Africa whereas Sesotho is spoken in Lesotho, Free State and some parts of urban areas of South Africa. English is regarded as the second official language in both Eswatini and Lesotho. As a result, translations are carried out between these languages. Based on this information, it is clear that English and the two Bantu languages are not related. Some linguistic and cultural aspects of these three languages are different. For instance, they all have kinship systems which seem similar on the surface but when one pays attention to them one discovers that they have different cultural meanings.

According to Bullon (Bullon, 2000), Velioti-Georgopoulos (Velioti-Georgopoulos, 2006) and Dykstra (Dykstra, 2009), kinship refers to a family relationship. This relationship between people develops as a result of common origin (descent from a common ancestor) or marriage ties. Each member of a family has a name that describes his/her relationship to other members of the family and those names are referred to as kinship terms. Kinship terms are therefore regarded as the words which are used to describe the relationships that people have with one another. Rosman and Rubel (Rosman & Rubel, 2003: 269) state that "Kinship terminology is a system of classification. The principles by which it is organized frame experience. The kinship terminology plays a crucial role in understanding how a kinship system is organized". The statement implies that each society has its own kinship system which may be organized differently from those of the other societies. The relationship terms that are commonly used for people who who are descendants of the from the same ancestor are grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandson, granddaughter, uncle, aunt, cousin, nephew and niece (Nogle, 1974). Those that have been developed due to marriage ties are father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law. Though these terms are found in many languages, translating them is not easy in some languages due to cultural differences and perceptions.

Translation is intended to help people whose languages and cultures are different as well as those who share the same language but have different levels of education to communicate and understand each other. It is therefore important

for translators to have knowledge of the languages and cultures of the societies they are translating documents from and conveying to. According to Mafela (Mafela, 2012: p. 266) "a lack of knowledge of the culture of other societies could result in great miscommunication between language groups". That is, if a translator is not competent enough in the languages involved, one is likely to produce translations which are likely to mislead the target group. One of the challenges translators sometimes face is the translation of kinship terms in African languages. If translators are not careful, they may misinform the target audience simply because they may not be aware that kinship systems differ from those of their own language (Mafela, 2012). This shows that languages differ as the source language (SL) and target language (TL) may have cultural and linguistic differences. Wangia and Ayieko (Wangia & Ayieko, 2016) concur that kinship terms are culturally and socially tied to the society's structure and values which have developed over the years. This implies that kinship terms are likely to differ from society to society. In addition, Mafela (Mafela, 2012) stipulates that kinship systems carry important social information about a culture but translating cultural meaning of kinship terms can be challenging since it requires deep knowledge of the society in question. He further states that it is through kinship terminology that people are able to appreciate the intergroup relations in a society. This suggests that it is important to consult native speakers of a language when translating kinship terms to ensure that their meanings are accurately conveyed. Knowing the structure of kinship relationships is valuable when translating kinship terms (Rosman & Rubel, 2003). English, Siswati and Sesotho like other languages have names used to describe family relations. However, the majority of students of the University of Eswatini (UNESWA) and National University of Lesotho (NUL) seem to experience challenges when translating kinship terms between English, Siswati and Sesotho. This was observed in the translation works of level three students who were doing a course in translation studies. The study utilized students' works which were translated from English into Siswati and Siswati into English; and English into Sesotho and Sesotho into English. Backtranslations were also used in both cases. All the students were mother-tongue speakers. That is, UNESWA students were all EmaSwati while NUL ones were Basotho. The study attempts to establish the reasons for student difficulties in translating kinship terms. The study has potential to make students aware that kinship systems of their languages are different from those of English and to look for alternative methods of translating them rather than imposing their systems into English or sticking to the equivalents which may be wrong. Again, the study will assist teachers, lecturers and other language experts develop new terms which can be used for kinship terms that do not have equivalents.

Translation of Kinship Terms in African Languages

Scholars. (Wangia & Ayieko 2016; Prinsloo 2014; Prinsloo & Bosch 2012; Mafela 2012) indicated that translating kinship terms in African languages is challeng-

ing to lexicographers and translators.

Wangia and Ayieko (Wangia and Ayieko, 2016); Prinsloo (Prinsloo, 2014); Prinsloo and Bosch (Prinsloo & Bosch, 2012) dealt with the presentations of kinship terms in dictionaries. Wangia and Ayieko (Wangia and Ayieko, 2016) considered the translation of kinship terms in selected bilingual dictionaries in Kenya and their implications. They posit that the majority of Kenyan kinship terms cannot be easily transferred into other Kenyan languages or English because they are not found in those languages. As a result, that creates translation difficulties and misinterpretations.

Prinsloo (Prinsloo, 2014) studied the lexicographic treatment of kinship terms in an English/Sepedi-Setswana-Sesotho Dictionary with an amalgamated lemma list. The study established that the three Sotho languages have kinship terms which are represented by single words, derived terms and phrases that express kinship relations. The study concluded that lemmatisation and treatment of kinship terms for a bi-directional dictionary between English and the Sotho languages caused great challenges to the lexicographer.

Prinsloo and Bosch (Prinsloo & Bosch, 2012) undertook a study on kinship terminology in English-Zulu/Northern Sotho Dictionaries. The study highlighted some differences between the kinship terminology structures in Bantu languages like Sotho and Siswati, and that of English which result in challenges of translation. According to literature, the terminology in Bantu languages distinguishes between individuals based on age, often based on the speaker's gender, uses the same term for individuals belonging to different generations, and includes many terms that do not distinguish gender.

Mafela (Mafela, 2012) on the other hand, investigated translator's challenges in translating some Tshivenda kinship terms into languages that use a different system such as English. The study revealed that some Tshivenḓa kinship terms do not distinguish between genders. That is, there is only one kinship term that signifies both male and female. The study stresses that such terms are hard to translate into English, unless the gender is made explicit or optional in the context. Again, the study established that in certain instances Tshivenḓa does not have equivalents for English kinship terms and requires the translator to clarify them through explanation. The study concluded that this can lead to intercultural miscommunication. The study recommended that translators should learn other people's languages in order to avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding.

2. Research Methodology

This qualitative study employs the communicative and comparative approaches in which data were collected through document analysis of level three students' works at the University of Eswatini and the National University of Lesotho. The students were all mother tongue speakers of Siswati and Sesotho. Target texts were analysed in the three languages and compared to their source texts. That is, the study utilized students' works which were translated from English into Sis-

wati and Siswati into English; and English into Sesotho and Sesotho into English. Backtranslations were also used in both cases. Further, Siswati and Sesotho target texts were compared.

3. Findings and Discussion

Kinship terms are indicated differently according to social groups. The following Table shows kinship names in English, Siswati and Sesotho.

When one looks at the terms presented in Table 1 above, one realises that in all the languages under discussion languages, the majority of kinship terms are gender specific as in the following English-Siswati words: grandfather (*mkhulu*),

Table 1. Kinship terms in English, Siswati and Sesotho.

English	Siswati	Sesotho
Grandfather	Mkhulu	Ntate-moholo
Grandmother	Gogo	Nkhono
Father	Babe	Ntate
Mother	Make	'M'e/mme
Son	Indvodzana	Mora
Daughter	Indvodzakati	Morali
Brother	Umnaketfu, bhuti	Khaitseli, moholoane/abuti (elder brother), moena (younger brother), more (speaker should be male referring to his brother)
Sister	Dzadzewetfu, sisi	Khaitseli, moholoane/ausi (elder sister), moena (younger sister)
Grandson	Umtukulu	Setloholo
Granddaughter	Umtukulu	Setloholo
Uncle	Malume (the word is restricted to mother's brother only)	Malome (mother's brother)
	Babelomkhulu (father's elder brother)	Ntate-moholo (father's elder brother)
	Babelomncane (father's younger brother)	Rangoane (father's younger brother)
Aunt	Babekati/Anti (refers to father's sister)	Rakhali - (father's sister)
	Makelomkhulu (mother's elder sister)	Nkhono (mother's elder sister)
	Makelomncane (mother's younger sister)	Mmangoane (mother's younger sister)
	Malumekati (wife of one's mother' brother)	Malome (wife of one's mother' brother)

Continued

Cousin	Umzala/Mzala (restricted to one's mother's brother's child and father's sister's child only)	Motsoala (restricted to one's mother's brother's child and father's sister's child only)
Nephew	Umshana (speaker should be male referring to his sister's child)	• Mochana (speaker should be male referring to his sister's child) • Ngoana oa more (speaker should be male referring to his brother's child • Ngoana oa khaitseli (speaker should be female referring to her brother's child) • Ngoana oa ngoaneso; ngoana oa nnake (speaker should be elder sister referring to her younger sister's child)
Niece	Umshana (speaker should be male referring to his sister's child)	• Mochana (speaker should be male referring to his sister's child) • Ngoana oa more (speaker should be male referring to his brother's child • Ngoana oa khaitseli (speaker should be female referring to her brother's child) • Ngoana oa ngoaneso; ngoana oa nnake (speaker should be elder sister referring to her younger sister's child)
Father-in-law	Babetala	Ntate-matsale (of the husband); mohoe (of the wife)
Mother-in-law	Maketala	Mme-matsale (of the husband); mohoehali (of the wife)
Son-in-law	Umkhwenyana	Mokhoenyana (daughter's husband)
Daughter-in-law	Makoti	Ngoetsi/makoti (son's wife)
Brother-in-law	Sbali (speaker should be male or female referring to their sister's husband) Skoni (speaker should be male referring to his brother's wife)	Soare (speaker should be male referring to sister's husband/wife's brother)
Sister-in-law	Skoni (speaker should be male or female referring to their brother's wife	Molamo (speaker should be female referring to husband's sister/brother's wife)

grandmother (*gogo*), father (*babe*), mother (*make*), son (*indvodzana*), daughter (*indvodzakati*), brother (*umnaketfu*), sister (*dzadzewetfu*), uncle (*malume*; *babelomkhulu*; *babelomncane*) and aunt (*babekati/anti*; *makelomkhulu*; *makelomncane*; *malumekati*). The following do not distinguish between gender: cousin (*umzala/mzala*), grandson (*umtukulu*), granddaughter (*umtukulu*), nephew (*umshana*) and niece (*umshana*). Marriage ties relationship terms can be classified into two groups. For instance, father-in-law (*babetala*), mother-in-law (*maketala*), son-in-law (*umkhwenyana*), and daughter-in-law (*makoti*) distinguish between gender, while brother-in-law and sister-in-law (*sbali*) do not make such a distinction.

Similarly, Sesotho consists of kinship terms which are gender specific and those which are not. Words which distinguish between gender are the following: grandfather (*ntate-moholo*), grandmother (*nkhono*) father (*ntate*), mother (*'m'e/mme*), son (*mora*), daughter (*morali*), brother (*abuti*—elder brother), more (general for brother, i.e. includes older or younger), sister (*ausi*—elder sister), uncle (*malome*; *ntate-moholo*; *rangoane*) and aunt (*rakhali*; *nkhono*; *mmangoane*). Those which do not distinguish between gender include: grandson (*setloholo*), granddaughter (*setloholo*), nephew (*mochana*—father's sister' child), niece (*mochana*—father's sister' child), cousin (*motsoala*—one's mother's brother's child or father's sister's child). The Sesotho words: (*khaitseli*) which is used for either one's brother or sister, (*moholoane*) referring to the elder one and (*moena*) meaning the younger one, are general. They do not distinguish between gender. The words *moholoane* and *moena* indicate age differences without specifying gender as is the case with *abuti* and *ausi* which show both gender and age differences. This means the Sesotho words for brother and sister consist of names distinguishing between gender and those that do not. The names *abuti* and *ausi* are always used in front of a first name as in *abuti Thabo* or *ausi Lerato* but the younger ones are just called by their names.

Siswati and Sesotho seem to have unique kinship term systems which are somehow different from those of the English language. This is seen in their different distinctions in the meanings of the kinship terms uncle and aunt. In English, the word uncle encompasses "a brother of one's father or mother, or husband of one's aunt" (Hornby, 1995: p. 1295), while aunt embraces "a sister of one's father or mother or the wife of one's uncle" (Hornby, 1995: p. 67). In both Siswati and Sesotho, however, there is a name for each specific person mentioned in the English definitions of these two words. For instance, in Siswati kinship terms: *malume* is restricted to mother's brother only, *babelomkhulu* for father's elder brother and *babelomncane* for father's younger brother, while *sbali* is used to refer to the husband of one's aunt. The same thing applies with the term aunt, which has the following specific names: *babekati/anti* for father's sister, *make lomkhulu* for mother's elder sister, *make lomncane* for mother's younger sister, and *malumekati* for wife of one's mother's brother. Sesotho just like Siswati has the following terms for uncle: *malome* for mother's brother, *ntate-moholo* for father's elder brother and *rangoane* for father's younger brother, and for aunt it has *rakhali* to refer to father's sister, *nkhono* for mother's

elder sister, *mmangoane* for mother's younger sister and *malome* for wife of one's mother' brother. The wife of one's uncle in Sesotho is determined by who the uncle in question is (i.e. one's mother's brother or father's brother) plus whether or not the uncle is the elder or younger brother to the parent of the speaker. For example, the wife of one's mother's brother is called *malome* just like her husband while *nkhono* is used for the elder one and *mmangoane* for younger one as earlier mentioned.

These distinctions in meanings of uncle and aunt seem to pose challenges to students of the two African languages under study. The majority of level three translation students of UNESWA and NUL have difficulties when translating these kinship terms between English, Siswati and Sesotho. This was evident in their translations as seen in Tables 2-5.

3.1. Translations between English, Siswati and Sesotho

The first part of this section looks at translations from English into Siswati and Siswati into English while the second one focuses on translations from English into Sesotho and Sesotho into English.

3.1.1. Translations between English and Siswati

The following Tables indicate translations of English into Siswati as indicated in Table 2 and Siswati into English in Table 3 below.

The translations provided in Table 2 below were found in the majority of students' works. The students translated uncle as *malume* which in Siswati means mother's brother. Based on the translations provided, the other people that are included in the definition of English uncle are not considered in this case. Uncle according to these students strictly refers to mother's brother and nobody else. Similarly, the translation of aunt seemed to have been limited to father's sister only because the words *anti* and *babekati* are used to refer to her alone. The translations of these two terms prove beyond doubt that uncle and aunt are used strictly to refer to mother' brother and father's sister according to the students' perspective.

Again, the equivalent of niece as *umntfwana wasisi* meaning "sister's child", gives the impression that the speaker should be female. This is because the other word *umshana* for niece and nephew is used by males when referring to their sister's child (plural being *bashana*) only. Here, we see differences in interpersonal

Table 2. Translations from English to Siswati and back to English.

Source Text - English	Target Text - Siswati	Back translation
Uncle	Malume	Uncle
Niece	Umntfwana wasisi, umshana	Niece
Nephew	Umshana	Nephew
Aunt	Anti/babekati	Aunt

perspective. Based on this, it is clear that some meanings included in the English words niece and nephew are not applicable in Siswati context as they used one element of the meaning. This shows that the choice of terms in Siswati mainly depends on who the speaker is. As a result, if the students do not know who the speaker is, their translations are likely to be inaccurate.

Furthermore, when looking at Table 3 below, one observes that *intfombatana yabhuti* meaning brother's daughter was translated as "daughter" and *umfana wabhuti lomncane* referring to younger brother's son was changed into "son". Here, we see cultural influences where the other siblings consider their brother's children as their own daughters and sons rather than being nieces or nephews. All these indicate that there are differences in cultural meanings and interpersonal perspectives between English and Siswati, and these ultimately result in wrong translations as students tended to impose their own system in English. This hinders proper communication and limits the translator to act as a mediator between two cultural groups. Translators must have the ability to mediate between two cultures since intercultural competence is inherent in communicative translation (Olk, 2009). The use of certain names in some African languages, such as Siswati, is restricted to specific people, which can be challenging for learners who need to know the speaker's identity to provide the appropriate target language equivalent. For example, mother's brother and his wife are the only people who call his sister's children (*bashana* (plural) *umshana*) for niece/nephew. This means that father's brother's children and mother's sister's children are regarded as the sons/daughters of the father's brother and mother's sister. Based on this, the terms niece and nephew do not apply to these children as the meanings of these words seem to be slightly different from those of English. This presents translation challenges to students as it is difficult to differentiate between children of the same parents and children of the parents' siblings. According to Mafela (Mafela, 2012), accurate translations of kinship terms cannot be achieved by simply making reference to their nearest equivalent in the target language. This may produce inaccurate information, especially when the languages in question are not related. The following Table 3 presents translations from Siswati into English.

In Table 3, we note that, *babetala lomkhulu* is supposed to mean father-in-law's elder brother, however, it was translated as "father-in-law" by some students while others translated it as "elder-father-in-law/senior father-in-law". Culturally, father's brothers (both older and younger) are regarded as fathers to their brother's children. It is therefore assumed that students were influenced by that consideration hence they have translations such as "elder-father-in-law/senior father-in-law" for *babetala lomkhulu* meaning father-in-law's elder brother, which are phrases that are unknown in the target language. The researchers believe that those who translated *babetala lumkhulu* as "father-in-law" also had the same perception, however, that offered totally different meaning to the one provided in the source text. The target group is therefore provided with false information which may result in miscommunication.

Table 3. Translations from Siswati to English and back to Siswati.

Source Text - Siswati	Target Text - English	Back translation
Babetala lomkhulu	Father-in-law; elder-father-in-law/senior father-in-law	Babetala, Babetala lomkhulu
Intfombatana yabhuti	Daughter	Intfombatana yami
Bhuti wamake	Uncle	Malume
Bhuti wababe	Father	Babe
Umfana wabhuti lomncane	Son	Umfana wami
Make lomcane	Younger mother	Make lomncane
Umntfwana wamalume	Cousin	Umntfwana wamalume

Again, some target language equivalents presented in Table 3 above reflect the cultural perspective of the students. Some learners translated *bhuti wababe* referring to father's brother as "father" and the translation of *make lomncane* meaning mother's younger sister was also translated as "younger mother". These translations show shifts in meanings of these words. According to Wangia and Ayieko (Wangia & Ayieko, 2016) the culturally bound kinship terms in some African languages which act as source languages cannot simply be transferred into English by using a word or phrase which is thought to be the English equivalent in the translation process. Here, the students appeared to be unaware that English and Siswati cultures and perspectives were different. Their definitions or understanding of the words uncle and aunt are slightly different from those of English. Newmark (Newmark, 1995, p. 94) states that cultural concepts are likely to pose translational problems if there is "cultural 'gap' or 'distance' between the source and target languages". This means that translating cultural terms can be difficult when the languages have vastly different cultures. The students here seemed to impose their culture into the English language and as a result, they misled the target audience and caused misunderstanding.

Generally, one got the impression that translating from English into Siswati was much better than translating Siswati kinship terms into English when focusing on the meanings of the terms. Students could provide any word that came into their mind when changing English into Siswati. As a result, they could provide appropriate translations by chance or offer an inaccurate one. However, when they translated Siswati words into English, they tended to impose their culture into English hence, they came up with phrases such as younger mother or elder father-in-law for example. This suggests that students should acquire an understanding of English culture. Kim (Kim, 1992) states that knowing other people's cultures can help societies avoid miscommunication when mingling with people of different cultural groups in a social environment. This knowledge can improve communication with specific cultural groups. It is therefore significant for

societies with different cultures to understand the systems of other societies.

3.1.2. Translations between English and Sesotho

The NUL students just like the UNESWA ones, seemed to experience the same challenges when it comes to translating uncle and aunt as their language is also making different distinctions in their meanings than English. Table 4 below shows the translations of students from English to Sesotho.

When one looks at Table 4, one sees that the majority of students provided the same Target Language (TL) equivalents for most words except aunt and cousin. Unlike UNESWA students who restricted the definition of aunt to father's sister *anti/babekati*, there were various translations for aunt by NUL students. Some learners translated it as *rakhali* meaning father's sister; others as *mmangoane* the word for mother's younger sister; *ausi oa mme oa ka ea moholo*) can be understood to mean one's mother's elder sister who is the first born; and *ausi oa mme oa ka ea monyenyane* which can be literally translated as mother's elder sister who is younger. The various versions are assumed to be the result of not knowing the specific aunt the source text was referring to as Sesotho like Siswati has specific names for the different aunts. *Rakhali* and *mmangoane* could be correct if one knows who this aunt is. This implies that the choice of some Sesotho kinship terms is mainly determined by knowing who the speaker is talking about. Without that knowledge translating kinship terms is likely to be difficult. Mafela (Mafela, 2012) states that it is difficult to translate kinship terms when the target language uses a different system of terminology since the structure of kinship terminology differs from one cultural group to another. Rosman and Rubel (Rosman and Rubel, 2003) concur with Mafela and further stipulate that the principles of the culture

Table 4. Translations from English to Sesotho and back to English.

Source Text - English	Target Text - Sesotho	Back translation
Aunt	Rakhali, mmangoane, ausi oa mme oa ka ea moholo, ausi oa mme oa ka ea monyenyane	Aunt, mother's younger sister, mother's sister*, mother's sister*
Brother	Abuti	Brother
Sister	Ausi	Sister
Cousin	Motsoala, ausi oa ka/ abuti oa ka, ngoaneso	Cousin, my sister/brother, my sibling
Grandfather	Ntate-moholo	Grandfather
Grandmother	Nkhono	Grandmother
Niece	Mochana	Niece
Nephew	Mochana	Nephew
Uncle	Malome	Uncle

of the source language may differ from those of the target language and translators must deal with them in the process of translation. The phrases *ausi oa mme oa ka ea moholo* and *ausi oa mme oa ka ea monyenyane* do not convey the intended message. It is clear that the students understood *ausi* to be the equivalent of sister yet in their language, the word is used to mean elder sister and not the younger one. The phrases maybe understood by Sesotho native speakers, but English speakers are given incorrect information which is not clear since one cannot talk about elder sister who is younger in English. Students seem to be transferring their Sesotho understanding into English without paying attention to the English structures and meanings as the words elder and younger are opposites in English and cannot be used to describe the same person. This might lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication. Kincaid (Kincaid, 1979), emphasises that communication should be considered as a process which allows individuals or groups to share information in order to reach a mutual understanding of each other.

The translations of aunt above appear to have been influenced by students' tendency to translate sister and brother as *ausi* and *abuti*. This can possibly provide inadequate translations since the words refer specifically to elder sister and brother but not younger ones. This shows that one needs to know the age of the referent before choosing the equivalent unless one decides to utilize the general words *khaitseli* referring to either one's brother or sister or *ngoana oa bo* meaning his/her sibling.

The translation of cousin also revealed cultural differences between English and Sesotho. In Sesotho, just like in Siswati, the word *motsoala* is restricted to one's mother's brother's child and father's sister's child only. Once, someone claims that s/he is *motsoala* to someone else, it is understood that one belongs to either of the two. Other cousins mentioned in the English definition are regarded as siblings to the speaker, that is why some students came up with translations like: *ausi oa ka/abuti oa ka* meaning my elder sister/my elder brother while others used the general word *ngoaneso*, meaning my sibling. This is likely to affect communication negatively, particularly, when one does not know who the person in question is or does not know the Sesotho culture or may get wrong interpretation because if one says one is her brother it is believed that they belong to the same parents. Hence, in normal conversations, Basotho always accompany such words with explanations. For instance, one may say "*ke abuti/moena oa ka—ngoana oa rangoane*" meaning "he is my elder brother/younger brother—from my father's younger brother". This proves that even Basotho cannot understand the relationship if explanation is not given.

Again, just like in Siswati, the words uncle, nephew and niece appeared to be restricted to mother's brother, father's sister's son and father's sister's daughter respectively. This is based on the translations of uncle as *malome*, nephew as *mochana* and niece as *mochana* in Table 4 above and Table 5 below. In Sesotho, the only person who is called *malome* is mother's brother and *mochana* is father's sister's son or father's sister's daughter only. It seems students thought

that the word uncle refers to mother's brother and not any other relative since the other people that are included in the definition of uncle in English are left out. Though nephew and niece were limited to *mochana*, there are other phrases that are used to explain the relationship one has with a particular nephew or niece. However, they are used only when one is introducing the nephew/niece in question and are determined by whether the speaker is male or female. In this case, the meanings are determined by who the speaker is. For example, one's brother may introduce either a nephew or niece as *ngoana oa more* which is a general phrase for brother's child or if he wants to be specific, he could say *mora oa more* for brother's son or *morali oa more* for brother's daughter. Females normally call the brother's child *ngoana oa khaitseli/ngoana oa ngoaneso* meaning brother's child or one's sibling's child. For the sister's child they say *ngoana oa ngoaneso/ngoana oa nnake* meaning one's sibling's child, though *ngoana oa nnake* is mostly used by elder sisters to refer to the younger sister's child. These phrases are mainly used to distinguish one's child from that of the other siblings and this does not necessarily mean that those nephews and nieces are not culturally considered their children. Based on this information, students could have used a general phrase *ngoana oa ngoan'abo* meaning his/her sibling's child if the speaker is unknown to avoid mistranslating the message. In Sesotho and Siswati, use of certain kinship names are determined by who the speaker is, his/her age and gender as Prinsloo and Bosch (Prinsloo & Bosch, 2012) stipulate that the use of kinship terms among Bantu speakers are determined by various elements beyond language including the relationship between the speaker and listener, age, gender and social context. The following Table 5 indicates students' translations from Sesotho - English.

Table 5. Translations from Sesotho to English and back to Sesotho.

Source Text - Sesotho	Target Text - English	Back translation
Moholoane oa mme ea motsehali	Grandmother	Nkhono
Khaitseli ea mme	Uncle	Malome
Nkhono	Grandmother; mother's elder sister	Nkhono; nkhono
Moena oa ntate	Father's brother, father's younger brother	Abuti oa ntate; rangoane
Mochana	Nephew/niece	Mochana
Rakhali	Aunt	Rakhali; mangoane; ausi oa mme
Morali oa ausi (speaker is female)	My sister's child	Morali oa ausi
Abuti oa ntate	Grandfather	Ntate-moholo

Based on data presented in Table 5, it is evident that students had problems translating some Sesotho words and phrases into English. This is evident where *moholoane oa mme ea motsehali* was translated as grandmother instead of mother's elder sister; *nkhono* was translated as both grandmother and mother's elder sister; and *abuti oa ntate* was translated as grandfather other than father's elder brother. It is confusing to translate the term *nkhono* as it can mean grandmother or mother's elder sister. The same thing applies to *ntate-moholo* which refers to either grandfather or father's elder brother. These terms can be easily misinterpreted as we see that *abuti oa ntate* referring to father's elder brother was changed to grandfather in Table 5 above. The researchers believe that the terms *nkhono* and *ntate-moholo* could be equally difficult to understand to Sesotho speakers themselves as well as non-native speakers. For instance, the statement *ntate-moholo oa hae o sepetlele*, can either mean "his/her grandfather is in hospital" or "his/her father's elder brother is in hospital". As a result, the statement is not specific and is likely to be misunderstood. The statement needs to be accompanied by an explanation which can help with the clarification. These terms cause a lot of confusion when one translates Sesotho into English as it is hard to distinguish between these people. As a result, students tend to translate *ntate-moholo* who supposed to be father's elder brother as grandfather or aunt who supposed to be mother's elder sister as grandmother or the actual grandmother as mother's elder sister. Wangia and Ayieko (Wangia & Ayieko, 2016) postulate that kinship terms may pose difficulties and intercultural miscommunication when not properly interpreted.

One may conclude that NUL students were mostly challenged by translating brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, father's elder brother and mother's elder sister. These were followed by uncle, aunt, cousin, nephew and niece that appear to be limited to certain individuals. Like in Siswati, Sesotho students use one part of the meanings of these kinship terms. Based on this information, it is important to know the specific person referred to by a kinship term to avoid miscommunication. The knowledge of kinship terms in all three languages is crucial for translation students and may present challenges during translation.

3.2. Comparing Siswati and Sesotho

As previously mentioned, Siswati and Sesotho are Bantu languages. As a result, they share many similarities, yet also have differences. The following section compares the two African languages.

3.2.1. Similarities

When looking at kinship terms in Table 1 above, one may see that there are many definitions/interpretations that are shared by the two languages which differ from those of English. For instance, Siswati and Sesotho observe age differences between siblings as they have terms such as *babe lomkhulu/ntate-moholo* for father's elder brother; and *make lomncane/mmangoane* for mother's

younger sister among others. While the definition of brother in English refers to "a man or boy having the same parents as another person" (Hornby, 1995: 142), Siswati and Sesotho have terms that show that a particular brother is older or younger than the other. For example, they have phrases such as *babe lomncane* and *rangoane* to refer to one's father's younger brother. The two languages also have general words which do not indicate age differences such as *umnaketfu* for brother, *dzadzewetfu* for sister in Siswati and *khaitseli* for brother/sister in Sesotho.

Again, Siswati and Sesotho seem to make different distinctions in meanings of uncle and aunt. They have specific terms which distinguish each person from the others. For example, Siswati has *malume* for mother's brother; *babe lomkhulu* for father's elder brother; *babe lomncane* for father's younger brother; and *sbali* for one's aunt's husband. Sesotho on the other hand, has *malome* for mother's brother; *ntate-moholo* for father's elder brother; *rangoane* for father's younger brother; and *ntate-moholo*/*rangoane* for one's aunt's husband depending on whether the aunt is older/younger than one's parent. However, it was evident that students of the two languages regarded uncle to refer to mother's brother *malume*/*malome* only and no other relatives. This shows that the other siblings do not have English equivalents and as a result, translating them into English was challenging.

Furthermore, in both languages, cousin, niece and nephew are also restricted to specific people as they use one element of the meanings contained in English language. For instance, the Siswati word for cousin is *umzala*/*mzala*; Sesotho word is *motsoala* based on students' translations, which in both languages refer to one's mother's brother's child and father's sister's child. This shows that the two languages have different meanings and interpersonal perspectives to that of English when it comes to these terms.

Moreover, the two languages do not distinguish between gender for the words grandson and granddaughter as they have *umtukulu* in Siswati and *setloholo* in Sesotho; cousin *umzala* in Siswati and *motsoala* in Sesotho as well as nephew/niece as Siswati has *umshana* and Sesotho has *mochana*.

Another similarity is that of the husband's uncles. In Siswati, they are called *babetala lomkhulu* or *babetala lomncane* depending on whether the uncle is older or younger than the husband's father. In Sesotho, they are referred to as *ntate-moholo* if older and *rangoane* if younger than the husband's father.

3.2.2. Differences

Though these languages share many definitions of some kinship terms, they also differ in other situations. Siswati has a clear distinction between grandfather (*mkhulu*) and father's elder brother (*babe lomkhulu*); and grandmother (*gogo*) and mother's elder sister (*make lomkhulu*). In Sesotho, on the other hand, grandfather, father's elder brother and mother's elder sister's husband are each called *ntate-moholo* while grandmother, mother's elder sister, father's elder brother's wife and mother's senior co-wife are each called *nkhono*. According to

Mbeha (Mbeha, 2017) some Sesotho kinship terms have extended their meanings to include more family members in their reference. This is confusing when one translates the words grandfather, father's elder brother, grandmother and mother's elder sister in Sesotho. This challenges not only translation students, but Sesotho speakers as well since in both written and spoken languages, if the terms *ntate-moholo* and *nkhono* are used to people who are not sure about the specific referent, they are likely to misinterpret and the message. Mafela (Mafela, 2012) emphasises that the misinterpretation of kinship terms has the potential to result in intercultural miscommunication and misunderstandings among the speakers of the concerned languages. These words can only be clear if both the speaker/writer and the listener/reader are talking about a known individual. Likewise, translating Siswati terms *make lomkhulu* for mother's elder sister, *make lomkhulu* for father's elder brother's wife and *make lomkhulu* for mother's senior co-wife into English is hard if the translator is not aware of who *make lomkhulu* refers to. Another observation is that students have a tendency to translate the kinship terms literally rather than providing the description of the relationship, particularly, in Siswati where they provided phrases such as elder-father-in-law instead of father-in-law's elder brother, and 'younger mother' instead of saying mother's younger sister.

It was also observed that, in Siswati, mother's elder sister's husband, mother's younger sister's husband and sister's husband are each called *sbali* (by males and females) while in Sesotho mother's elder sister's husband is called *ntate-moholo*; mother's younger sister's husband is *rangoane*; and sister's husband is called *soare*. The word *soare* is only used by wife's brothers and sister's husband when calling each other. This shows that there is no Sesotho kinship term that is used by the wife's sisters to refer to their sister's husband. They can refer to him as *abuti* if the wife is older than the sisters or just call him by his name if the wife is younger than the sisters. However, there is a term *molamo* which is used by husband's sisters and the brother's wife to call each other.

Another difference is in the names used to refer to father/mother-in-laws. In Siswati, the mother of the husband is called *maketala* and his father is *babetala*. Likewise, the mother of the wife is also called *maketala* while her father is called *babetala*. This is also confusing and one might not be able to identify the referent if the translation is not accompanied by an explanation. In Sesotho, the mother of the husband is called *mme matsale* and his father is *ntate matsale*. On the other hand, mother of the wife is called *mohoehali* and the father of the wife is called *mohoe*. These words are restricted to the daughter-in-law and son-in-law.

Unlike the UNESWA students who seemed to have more challenges, particularly, when translating from Siswati into English, NUL students seemed to have encountered challenges when translating in both directions. This is based on the translations of aunt, brother, sister, cousin and lack of clarity regarding niece and nephew in Table 4 above and challenges faced when translating Sesotho words into English.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that students from the two universities were equally challenged by translating kinship terms. The distinctions in meanings and/or interpersonal perspectives are challenging to students as they seemed unaware that English kinship systems and those of their languages are different. In addition, it was evident that in Siswati and Sesotho, some meanings are determined by who the speaker is and without that knowledge one might provide wrong translation. In some cases, students tended to impose their kinship systems on English and the end products were inaccurate translations and the target audience was misinformed. This affected communication negatively. It was observed that understanding the culture of the languages involved is necessary for accurate translation of kinship terms. Both UNESWA and NUL students were mostly unsuccessful in the translation of kinship terms.

Siswati and Sesotho shared some definitions/interpretations of kinship terms which differ from those of English. They also differ in other situations. For example, Siswati has a clear distinction between grandfather *mkhulu* and father's elder brother *babe lomkhulu* while in Sesotho, grandfather and father's elder brother both called *ntate-moholo*.

5. Recommendations

The study recommends that students should be encouraged to paraphrase or describe relationships and to use general words where applicable if specific words are not available in the language. Again, Language Boards namely, Siswati Language Board and Lekhotla la Sesotho should coin kinship terms that are not in the languages. Translators should also try to find alternative methods of translating kinship terms. It is also recommended that translators should make use of an interactive electronic dictionary that uses English as the source language where possible as Prinsloo and Bosch (Prinsloo & Bosch 2012) recommended in their study. The dictionary will guide the user through a sequence of selection processes by utilizing a decision tree algorithm to reach the appropriate term.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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