

## **Transformation in the nursery: a case study.**

### **Terry Pratchett in German translation**

This paper forms part of my thesis, and will explore the challenge presented by the translation of children's nursery rhymes, specifically in the German translations of the Discworld novels of the popular British writer, Terry Pratchett.

Pratchett's works are littered with allusions and references to literature, modern culture and phenomena: for instance, email in the Discworld is "c-mail", messages sent by a type of mechanised semaphore system. Pratchett describes his use of references as "white knowledge", an almost instinctive database of cultural knowledge picked up over the course of one's life. Nursery rhymes and stories form an integral part of this "white knowledge", and, since they are used as educational tools, are deeply rooted in language and, most importantly, in culture.

This poses a challenge for translators, and especially in the case of Terry Pratchett, whose use of references is generally for comedic effect, and which are therefore more obscure than a direct reference or quotation. In order to outline the challenge to the translator, this paper analyses the references made to the counting rhyme "This Little Piggie" and the translation strategies employed by the translator, reflecting on these strategies as forms of cultural transformation, and in relation to theoretical approaches suggested by contemporary translation theory.