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## I Sit, I Write, I Flush!

This title, one among the popular Diary Of Amos Lee series, will be sold in China

Ho Ai Li, China Correspondent

BEIJING: Children in China can soon read all about Amos Lee, a boy who keeps a diary in the toilet.

Written in a lively style, the way a Singaporean child speaks, the series about a primary school boy who learns about competition, bullies and how to deal with his pesky sister has been sold to India, Indonesia and now China.

'She told me to write when I am doing my big business. 'Five to eight minutes max!' she said. 'I don't want you to develop piles!' And so my writing in the bathroom began,' wrote Amos about how his mother got him to start writing.

The best-selling Diary Of Amos Lee series, which includes the title I Sit, I Write, I Flush!, is among hundreds of Singapore titles that will be rolled out in China, under deals signed at the first Singapore-China Publishing Symposium in Beijing.

'There's plenty of untapped potential for content made in Singapore among Chinese readers, given our shared cultural ties and the sheer size of China's market,' said Ms Catherine Khoo, of the Singapore Book Publishers Association.

Said Amos Lee author Adeline Foo: 'We are confident it will do well in China. It did very well in India.'

China's book sales reached 1.2 trillion yuan (S\$239 billion) in 2010 and is slated to rise to 2.9 trillion yuan by 2015, according to official estimates.

There are no figures for sales of Singapore books in China. But World Scientific, which does academic publications, and the Popular Group, known for education books, are active in China, said Ms Khoo.

Under one of the pacts signed yesterday, 500 Singapore titles, from children's stories to travel and investment guides, will be made into e-books for the Chinese.

This is the first such deal for Singapore, said Mr Thomas Lim, director of interactive media, games and publishing at the Media Development Authority.

The titles sold as e-books include bilingual children's storybooks from Pan Asia Publishing, like Little Otters To The Rescue by actor Edmund Chen. The story features four otters who go on a mission to save their father.

Chinese readers are keen to learn more about Singapore, especially how the country educates children, said Mr Xie Yonglin, vice-president of Eegoo cultural industry investment company, one of the symposium's organisers.

Singapore can also help Chinese culture go global, he added.

Indeed, under one of the pacts signed, Singapore's Eonboo Publishing will localise 1,000 titles from Chinese publishers for distribution in South-east Asia.

The Asia-Pacific digital publishing market is expected to be worth more than US\$2.9 billion (S\$3.6 billion) by 2015, Mr Lim said, citing a PwC global entertainment and media outlook study.

'The growing realisation is that publishers can't afford to ignore the e-book trend,' he said.

[hoaili@sph.com.sg](mailto:hoaili@sph.com.sg)

Ms Adeline Foo, author of The Diary of Amos Lee series, and actor Edmund Chen, who wrote a children's tale, will soon be read in China. -- ST PHOTO: HO AI LI

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