Culture-Specific Items in the Chichewa Translation of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

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Abstract

The article analyses 'Chipasupasu' a Chichewa translation of Achebe's 'Things Fall Apart' to determine the strategies adopted in translating culture-specific items (CSIs) into Chichewa. Specifically, it seeks to address the following questions: what treatment – foreignisation or domestication – is given to individual CSIs in the translation?; which translation strategy is dominant in the translated text? and what is the nature of the meanings that resulted from the translation process, following the use of the dominating strategy? Data comprised extracts from the two novels and these were tabulated and analysed to identify translation strategies used in the translation of each CSI. The analysis was carried out considering Venuti's (1995) domestication and foreignisation model, which states that the former is target-culture oriented and seeks to achieve a natural translation in the target language while the latter is source-culture oriented and ensures that a translated text is literal and faithful to the original text. As the findings show, the translator used foreignisation as his main tool for handling CSIs, in some cases he had no other option, while in other cases he did it deliberately; this tendency made foreignisation a dominant strategy in the translation, as its occurrence is 75 per cent as compared with that of domestication; as a result of this dominance, some of the results are plausible, while others are confusing and fail to communicate. Indeed, the preference of one strategy over the other depends on the translator and the ultimate function of the translation. This article however concludes that this translation would remain source-culture oriented for the translator and easy to understand for the target reader if the choice of foreignisation was accompanied by another tool, such as, the use of explanations in form of footnotes.

Keywords: culture-specific items; domestication; foreignisation; source text; target text; translation strategies; translation techniques

Introduction

Translation serves as a bridge between linguistic and cultural barriers by fostering communication between individuals from different cultural groups. As Gerding-Salas (2000) points out, a translator plays an important role of a bilingual cross-cultural transmitter of culture and truths by attempting to interpret concepts and speech in a variety of texts. Since each cultural group owns certain realities peculiar to it, translators may use various strategies to render them into another language. However, this activity never goes without challenges. Translating culture-specific items (CSIs) dwells on a heavy task of solving culture-related problems owing to the distance between the cultural background of the original text and that of the reader of the translated text.

Described as a true classic of literature in Africa and beyond, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is based on the Nigerian Igbo cultural context and it is very rich in Igbo culture concepts, including proper nouns, names of foodstuffs and ecological elements, titles, songs and proverbs. Translating this kind of text into any language, therefore, requires a selection of effective translation strategies because cultural aspects may have an impact on how the target reader identifies with the original story and its characters. The present study, therefore, seeks to examine Benedicto Wokomaatani Malunga's *Chipasupasu* (2004), a *Chichewa* translation of Things Fall Apart, to determine the manner in which the translator handled CSIs when translating them into Chichewa, a language commonly spoken in Malawi and some parts of Southern Africa. The analysis is guided by Venuti's (1995) ideas of foreignisation and domestication.

1.0 Translation and Culture

Translation is an act of communication across cultures (Hirsch, Jr, 1967; Kaul, 2007; Chilala, 2012). Culture is a way of life and its various aspects that are common to one community but unknown to another community. As Zimmermann (2017, p. 3) points out, 'culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things.' A translation process involves two different languages, which are carriers of their respective cultures. Therefore, Faiq (2004) defines culture as beliefs and values adopted and shared by a social group and the position taken by producers and receivers of texts, including translators, during the mediation process. Since communication is only successful when delivered from the audience's perspective, the culture of the audience is a key factor in the process (Kaul, 2007; Woolcott and Unwin,1983).

Culture is embedded in literature and each literary genre hinges on a particular cultural context. For many decades now, African literature has been deeply rooted in the local culture since, usually, literary texts contain cultural elements associated with the culture of the author. Thus, as observed by Akakuru and Chima (2006), Ahmadou Kourouma's works are founded on the Malinké culture from Ivory Coast, those of Ferdinand Oyono are based on the Béti culture from Cameroon and those of Chinua Achebe are rooted in the Igbo culture from Nigeria. Thus African writers of literary works build their works on a duality of traditions: the Western and the African, since they have to appropriate the colonial language and also draw from their own writing tradition (Chilala 2016, 2019).

Concerning the nature of African literary texts, some African scholars argue that African literature originally written in any European language is a translation (Diallo, 2008; Oyeleye, 1995, cited in Oyali, 2017). They assert that the European language reflects some elements of the indigenous language of the culture being portrayed (Oyali, 2017). As Akakuru and Chima (2006) observe, in the works of Kourouma, Oyono, Achebe and Tutuola, written in European languages, it is common to find intrusions of small sections of local languages that express tales, proverbs or African sayings, and these are sometimes transliterated, implying that

there occurred a translation from the local language into the European language. In this regard, then, *Things Fall Apart* is a translation. This argument is plausible since most African novelists writing in European languages know an indigenous language as their mother tongue and it can be claimed that such writers first conceive an idea in their local language before writing it down or 'translating' it into the European language. However, this paper subscribes to the general view of translation and considers *Things Fall Apart* an original text, written in English.

When the European language reflects some indigenous language elements, translation - the transfer of meaning from one culture into another - poses challenges to the translator. Schleiermacher asserts that it is impossible to translate artistic texts since the source text language is culture-bound and the target language can never fully correspond with it (Munday, 2001; Soori, 2015). This is so because unmatched cultural elements are difficult to handle (Ivir, 2003). Thus, translating literary texts tends to be a difficult task of solving problems of culture.

In an attempt to simplify the task, translation scholars have been preoccupied with equivalence as a key strategy for translating CSIs from one language into another. As Kenny (2000) points out, proponents of equivalence-based theories define equivalence, a central point in translation but also a controversial one, as a relationship between two texts - a source text (ST) and a target text (TT) - and it is this relationship that allows the TT to be considered a translation of the ST, in the first place. In other words, it is a situation in which one term acts as a representative of another, such that the two can replace each other. A key contributor towards this idea has been Nida with his formal and dynamic equivalence.

Formal equivalence concerns the form and content of the message. In this approach, the translator is concerned with the message in the target language (TL) to match as closely as possible the various elements in the source language (SL). Thus, the message of the TL is highly based on the structure of the original text in order to determine accuracy and correctness. However, this technique would require many footnotes to make the text fully comprehensible (Munday, 2001). Dynamic equivalence, on the contrary, makes use of the principle of equivalent effect. This means that a translation that attempts to achieve dynamic equivalence is not concerned with matching the TL message with the SL message, but with producing exactly the same effect on the reader of the target-language text as was produced on the reader of the original text. According to Munday (2001: 42), 'This receptor-oriented approach considers adaptations, of grammar, of lexicon, and of cultural references to be essential to achieve naturalness; the TT should not show interference from the SL.' However, the present study reveals that relying solely on equivalence does not work with all language pairs because when two languages are based on and are expressing remote cultures, as is the case with Nigerian and Malawian cultures, it is not easy to produce 'exactly the same effect.'

Domestication and foreignisation strategies are appropriate for translating between two remote cultures. As Young (2010, cited in Sharifabad *et al.,* 2013) argues, domestication and foreignisation are more concerned with two cultures and provide both linguistic and cultural guidance for translators in translating culture-bound source texts. In domestication, cultural-specific items, including names of foodstuffs are adapted to the culture of the reader of the translation. In foreignisation,

on the contrary, the foreignness of the original-language text is retained by ensuring the literality and faithfulness of the translated text in relation to the source text. Basically, relying on either of the two depends on the function of the target text. Venuti (2001, cited in Sharifabad *et al.,* 2013), a key proponent, states that the translator should adopt either a 'naturalising' method to achieve the reader-oriented strategy, or an 'alienating' method to achieve the writer-oriented strategy. The present study applies these strategies not only to investigate whether the translator tends to domesticate culture-specific items or foreignise them, but also to assess the resultant meanings.

2.0 Statement of the Problem

Writing in English, Achebe presents Igbo cultural realities so well that, among other commentators, *The Times Literary Supplement* from London considers *Things Fall Apart* one that 'genuinely succeeds in presenting tribal life from the inside'. One would, therefore, expect that the *Chichewa* translation aimed at transferring successfully those realities into the target language in order to achieve communication. During the process, the translator might have faced the challenge of determining the appropriate way of handling the cultural realities, considering the remoteness of the two involved cultures. He needed to decide on an approach to be given priority, that is, rendering CSIs in line with either the culture of the source language community (foreignising) or the culture of the target language community (domesticating). The approach adopted in Malunga's *Chipasupasu* and the nature of the meanings produced thereafter remain to be discovered.

3.0 Research Questions

The research problem is operationalised by the following questions:
(a) what treatment – foreignisation or domestication – is given to CSIs in the translation?
(b) which translation strategy – foreignisation or domestication – is dominant in translating CSIs?
(c) what is the nature of the meanings that resulted from the translation process?

4.0 Research Objectives

To respond to these questions the study aims at:
(a) identifying the treatment – foreignisation or domestication – given to CSIs in the translation;
(b) identifying the dominant strategy – foreignisation or domestication – in translating CSIs;
(c) assessing the nature of the meanings that resulted from the translation process.

5.0 Delimitation

This study analyses CSIs from Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and the manner in which they were translated into Chichewa in Malunga's *Chipasupasu*. The CSIs include proper nouns, names of foodstuffs, terms of address, proverbs, onomatopoeia, repetitions and songs.

6.0 Review of Related Literature

6.1. *Literary Translation*

Literary translation is different from translation in general as it involves cross-cultural communication through literary rather than non-literary texts. According to Jones (2009) known features that are attributed to literary texts include the following: they are written, though they may also be spoken; they have canonicity or high social prestige; they fulfill an affective or aesthetic rather than transactional or informational function, seeking to provoke emotions or entertain rather than influence or inform; they have no real-world truth-value, that is, they are judged as fictional, whether fact-based or not; they feature words, images with ambiguous or indeterminable meanings; and they are characterised by 'poetic' language use. Therefore, literary translation consists in handling texts that manifest these characteristics.

As Chaal (2019) observes, literary texts manifest many linguistic features as well as social and cultural aspects of human lives. Hence, literary translation is one of the major bridges of communication across cultures. However, translating literary texts poses many problems for the translator who should be bilingual and bi-cultural and even multicultural. Translators should, therefore, take into consideration sociolinguistics aspects of language and discourse and should be aware of the way these aspects are manifested in each culture. Thus, when translating a literary text, a deliberate effort is needed to pay more attention to the aesthetics and cultural components of the source text.

When these components are not neglected, the quality of the translation and its comprehension may be achieved. Hassan (2011) points out that a good literary translation is concerned with transferring the propositional content of the source language text, but also its other pragmatic features since those features can improve the quality of the translation and enhance the understanding of the text. Literary translation should, therefore, be considered more than a process of replacing words and expressions from the source text by equivalents from the target text. In other words, a 'literary translation must reflect the imaginative, intellectual and intuitive writing of the author. In fact, literature is distinguished by its aesthetics' (ibid, p. 2). Thus, in spite of the fact that literary translation is demanding and challenging, the literariness of the text remains at the core of the process.

Mekouo (2016) observes that translation criticism of African literary texts generally dwells on the way cultural elements of the source culture are handled during translation. Apart from aesthetics, African literature is deeply rooted in the local culture, hence, the translation activity of African works has sparked interest in many scholars, seeking to understand how things are done. In her study of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and its two French translations, it is established that the first translation, *Le Monde S'effondre*, faced lots of criticism on the way African, in particular Igbo, cultural elements were translated and this was the main reason that prompted the birth of the second translation, *Tout S'effondre*, which was indeed an improvement of the previous translation, in terms of cultural elements. Thus, understanding culture-specific items is key to knowing how to treat them during translation.

6.2 *Culture-Specific Items (CSIs)*

Culture and language are inseparable for language is learnt together with its culture. Cultural elements or cultural words or culture-specific items (CSIs) can be described as terms that originate and are used in one culture (source culture) and do not have equivalents in another culture (target culture). Aixelà (1996, cited in Mekouo, 2016, p. 34) defines CSIs as:

Those textually actualised items whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text, whenever this problem is a product of the non-existence of the referred item or of its different intertextual status in the cultural system of the readers of the target text.

These items may include foodstuff, customs, proverbs or idioms. They may all lead to translation difficulties, owing to the fact that they do not exist in the target cultural system. As Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoohi (2010) observe, this difference is reflected in the amount of vocabulary which is available to talk about a particular topic, as some languages may have limited vocabulary pertaining to an aspect. This is true with the case of *Things Fall Apart* because most of the CSIs described in it are unavailable in the Malawian culture. This might have posed challenges to the Chichewa translator.

Scholars came up with ways of categorising CSIs to simplify the identification of the elements. Newmark (1988, cited in Draghmeh, 2016), describing cultural elements as 'foreign cultural words,' categorises them as follows:
(a) Ecology: flora, fauna, hills, winds, plains;
(b) Material culture: food, clothes, houses and towns, transport
(c) Social culture: work and leisure;
(d) Organisations, customs, activities, procedures (political, administrative, religious);
(e) Gestures and habits.

For his part, Noble (1999, cited in Mekouo, 2016) defines cultural elements as allusions for places, habitats, clothes, food and everything that we call realia. He adds that they refer to religious, social and political institutions and codes of behaviour in a social group. He further categorises the realia into three:
(a) Explicit referents: food, habitat, religious, social and political institutions;
(b) Social codes: all forms of communication in social relations, such as, the use of second-person pronoun 'You' for respect;
(c) Implicit referents: link between the text and its cultural context, such as, history, etc.

As noted, the categorisation follows each scholar's perspective of CSIs. However, to analyse CSIs from *Things Fall Apart*, this study, adopts some of Newmark's categories, such as ecology and material culture. Furthermore, it combines the category of organisations with Noble's category of social code to come up with social referents. Finally, considering that the source text contains lots of proper nouns, proverbs and songs, aspects not included in both Newmark's and Noble's categorisation, the researcher came up with two more classes to achieve a thorough analysis of the work, namely, proper nouns and orality.

6.3 Translation Techniques

Translation techniques are decisions taken by the translator in the course of a translation process in order to handle cultural problems. Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995, cited in Abdel-Hafiz, 2004) model is based on two strategies: direct translation and oblique translation. The former seeks to transpose the source language message element by element and comprises three procedures: borrowing, calque and literal translation. Borrowing permits the SL word to be 'directly transferred to the TL' (Munday, 2001). The second strategy, oblique translation, seeks to transpose stylistic effects by changing the syntactic order, and has four procedures: transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. In the absence of equivalence in the TL, adaptation can be used. This procedure involves changing the cultural reference when a situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture.

Ivir (2003, p. 188) proposes seven translation techniques, which he describes as 'procedures for the translation of unmatched elements of culture'. He claims that this list of procedures and their various combinations make it relatively easy to solve the problem of cultural differences in languages. These procedures are as follows: borrowing, which involves importing SL expressions into the TL due to lack of an equivalent term in the TL; definition, which means defining a new term or concept, explaining it in detail in the TT; literal translation, which is about rendering a concept word for word; substitution, which aims at exchanging an element in the SL with an equivalent or easily known element in the TL; lexical creation, which occurs when a translator produces a new vocabulary that can easily be recognised by TL readers; omission, which refers to a situation when a concept found in ST is not conveyed in TT; and addition, which involves including some words in the TL to clarify a source language element.

Ngoran (2017) views a translation technique as a tool for operationalising a global translation strategy. He attempts to distinguish between a translation technique and a translation strategy by stating that 'a translation strategy is a pre-translation decision that is taken by the translator before engaging in the actual translation, while a translation technique or procedure is a practical method by which a translation strategy is operationalised' (ibid.: 35). In other words, a translation technique is used in an attempt to achieve a particular pre-selected translation approach or strategy. This is why some translators talk about foreignising techniques to mean techniques that lead to the 'foreignisation' of a particular text. In a bid to relate translation strategies to translation techniques, Ngoran (2017) asserts that techniques, such as literal translation, borrowing and calque are often used to achieve foreignisation. On the other hand, transposition, modulation, omission, cultural equivalence and adaptation are used to operationalise domestication. For the purpose of the present study, Ngoran's distinction of technique and strategy is adopted.

6.4. *Domestication and Foreignisation*

The debate over domestication and foreignisation has been influenced by and later developed from the long-time controversy about literal and free translation methods (Dongfeng, 2002, cited in Sharifabad *et al.,* 2013). Nevertheless, literal and liberal translation techniques have been adopted to tackle the linguistic form of a language,

while domestication and foreignisation go beyond linguistic boundaries; they are more concerned with the two involved cultures. Practically, domestication seeks to replace the source culture with the target culture and foreignisation preserves the differences in both linguistic presentation and cultural connotation of the source culture (Young, 2010, cited in Sharifabad *et al.,* 2013). In domestication, cultural elements are adapted to the culture of the target audience, while foreignisation retains the foreignness of the original-language text by ensuring the literality and faithfulness of the translation in relation to the source text.

Lawrence Venuti, a proponent of this model, derived the two terms, 'domestication' and 'foreignisation', following Schleiermacher's 1813 lecture, *On the Different Methods of Translating,* in which he argues that:

> there are only two. Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him [the author] or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him [the reader] (Lefevere, 1992, cited in Draghmeh, 2016, p. 28).

The former scenario refers to foreignisation, while the latter refers to domestication. Schleiermacher himself preferred foreignisation since he stipulated that a better choice is to 'move the reader towards the writer' (Munday, 2001, p. 28). All in all, domestication and foreignisation came into existence to answer the question of how to bridge the gap that develops between the writer of a source-text, written in a language that is very culture-bound, and the writer of the target-text (ibid.). Nevertheless, priority can be given to either foreignisation or domestication or one can take a compromise of the two, depending on the purpose and function of the translation product.

The two approaches can be summarised as follows:
(a) Domestication: uses naturalisation, modulation, functional equivalent; is ethno-centric; highly communicative; functional / more fluent; follows target word-order;
(b) Foreignisation: is loyal to the form of source language; ethno-deviant; lowly communicative; linguistic or less fluent; follows source word-order.

The present study applies these strategies to investigate whether the translator tends to domesticate culture-specific items or foreignise them and also to assess the nature of the produced meanings.

7.0 Methodology

7.1 *Model for Analysis*

The study is guided by the model of domestication and foreignisation by Venuti (1995, cited in Munday, 2001). This model was selected because of its ability to tackle both cultures involved in a translating process. CSIs were extracted from the source text and put into five main categories. The categorisation was drawn from Newmark's and Noble's ideas about culture and cultural elements and also from the type of data collected for this study. The categories are:
(a) Ecology: flora, fauna, plains, hills;
(b) Material culture: food, clothes, houses and towns, transport;

(c) Social referents: terms of address, appellations, titles;
(d) Proper nouns: names of people, places, objects, cultural events;
(e) Orality: proverbs, onomatopoeia, repetitions, songs.

The analysis also focused on the techniques that were used by the translator to render each CSI. To classify the techniques as 'domesticating' or 'foreignising', the researcher based on the understanding that the former is TL-oriented while the latter is SL-oriented. Hence, the taxonomy of transfer strategies, by Pedersen (2007), was used to guide the classification. In this model, techniques of addition, borrowing, literal translation and calque are SL-oriented, while the techniques of substitution and omission are TL-oriented.

7.2 *Sampling and Data Collection*

The study examined *Things Fall Apart* and its translation, *Chipasupasu*. The criterion guiding the selection of this book was that the book had to be a *Chichewa* translation of a literary text, based on Africa and written by an African. This was so because the researcher wanted to examine the translation activity between two African cultures, in light of the domestication and foreignisation strategies of translation. Only one translation, *Chipasupasu*, was found. Nevertheless, in view of the themes tackled in the review of related literature and the uniqueness of the entire research, the present study is capable enough to provide relevant information to influence the course of future translation activity among translators in Malawi and beyond.

Data collection was done by extracting terms and expressions containing cultural concepts from all the twenty-five chapters of *Things Fall Apart* and its translation. The study's corpus comprised eighty-eight key cultural elements from the original text; key because they deserve commenting more than other elements. These were classified into main categories, such as ecology (12 elements), material culture (15 elements), social referents (26 elements), proper nouns (9 elements) and orality (26 elements).

Extracts from the source text were compared with those from the translation to identify the techniques used by the translator. The techniques were, then, put into the two categories – domestication or foreignisation – based on the nature of the renditions, that is, whether they were source-oriented or target-oriented. Finally, once grouped in two, the occurrence of the translation techniques, under each strategy, was added up and their sum calculated in percentage. The results enabled the researcher to determine how much of a particular strategy, either domestication or foreignisation was used in *Chipasupasu*.

7.3 *Data Analysis*

Table 1: Occurrence of translation strategies in Malunga's *Chipasupasu*

CSIs	DOMESTICATION	FOREIGNISATION	TOTAL NUMBER OF CSIs
Ecology	5	7	12
Material culture	7	8	15
Social referents	7	19	26
Proper nouns	0	9	9
Orality	3	23	26
Total occurrences of strategy	22	66	88
Occurrence (%)	25	75	100

7.4. *Findings and Discussion*

7.4.1 *Treatment of CSIs in the Translation*

The analysis of Malunga's *Chipasupasu* reveals that 22 CSIs were translated by domestication: ecology (5), material culture (7), social referents (7), proper nouns (0), orality (3). Below are examples of domesticated CSIs by category:

(i) *Ecology:*

(a) Okonkwo's fame had grown like a bush-fire in the **harmattan**. (p. 8) / *Kubuka kwa Okonkwo kudakula ngati moto wolusa m'***chilimwe** (p. 3)

In this case, this is domestication because the source text concept is replaced by *chilimwe* (dry season), which is known in the target culture.

(ii) *Material culture:*

(b) On the third day, he asked his second wife, Ekwefi, to roast **plantains** for him (p. 44) / *Patsiku lachitatu adam'pempha mkazi wake kuti amuwotchere* **nthochi zikuluzikulu**. (p. 69).

In this example, the translation **ntchochi zikuluzikulu** (big bananas) is known to the target audience, although it does not exactly mean plantains.

(iii) *Social referents:*

(c) The *egwugwu* **house** was now a pandemonium of quavering voices. (p. 62) / *Ku dambwe kwa egwugwu kudali phokoso.* (p. 97).

In this case, the translation dambwe (dwelling for *gulewamkulu*) is already familiar to the target audience. Though not exact, it gives a picture of what the author meant.

(iv) *Orality:*

(d) If one finger brought oil, it soiled the others. (p. 87) / *Nsomba ikawola imodzi zonse zawola.* (p. 138).

Here, the Igbo proverb is replaced by an equivalent proverb, which literally means 'when one fish is rotten, all the others get rotten too', a proverb known and used in the target culture.

From these examples, it can be noted that a good number of terms and expressions chosen by the translator are not exact meanings that can replace the source text concepts, but the message is passed across: for instance, *harmattan* does not precisely mean *chilimwe*; the former is a hot, dry, windy season and occurs around January in West Africa, while the latter is mainly hot and dry, occurring around September in Southern Africa. So, these terms do not necessarily refer to the same thing. Nevertheless, the Chichewa term is likely to evoke on the reader of the translation an impact similar to the one evoked on the reader of the original novel. This is domestication: the translator's focus was on the target audience and he wanted to achieve readability and communication. Hence, CSIs were translated using domesticating techniques to provide a local representation of the foreign terms.

Furthermore, the analysis of Malunga's translation shows that 66 CSIs were translated by foreignisation: ecology (7), material culture (8), social referents (19), proper nouns (9), orality (23). Below are examples of foreignised CSIs by category:

(v) *Ecology:*
(e) Behind them was the big and ancient **silk-cotton tree** which was sacred. (p. 33) / *Kumbuyo kwa oyimba ng'omawa kudali **chimtengo** chachikulu chamakedzana **cha thonje la silika**. Mtengowu udali wopatulika. (p. 51)*

In this example, the rendition *chimtengo…cha thonje la silika* (a big tree of silk cotton) was arrived at through literary translation, in an attempt to make it sensible to the reader, because this this kind of tree does not exist in the target culture.

(vi) *Material culture:*
(f) He could hear (…) the rhythms of the ***ekwe,*** and the ***udu,*** and the ***ogene***. (p. 5) / *Amamva m'maganizo mwake kulira kovundula magazi kwa zipangizo zoyimbira zija zotchedwa **ekwe, udu** ndi **ogene** (p. 6).*

In this case, the source text terms have been borrowed into the translation due to lack of equivalents in the target culture. This is a foreignising attempt.

(vii) *Social referents:*
(g) Unoka was an ill-fated man. He had a bad ***chi*** or personal god, and evil fortune followed him to the grave. (p. 13) / *Mulungu wake womutsogolera yemwe amatchedwanso **chi** adali oyipa. (p. 19).*

Here, the translator maintained the term 'chi' in his translation because the concept of personal gods is non-existent in the target culture.

(viii) *Proper nouns:*
(h) We also believe in Him and call Him **Chukwu**. He made all the world. (p.126) / *Nafenso timakhulupirira Mulungu ameneyu. Dzina lake timamuti **Chukwu**. Iye adalenga dziko lonse. (p. 195).*

In this case, the translator deliberately borrowed the ST term. The concept of God, Creator of all earth, is existent in the target culture, such that the translator could replace it with *Chauta* (God) or *Namalenga* (Creator), terms well-known to the target audience.

(ix) *Orality:*

(i) *Eze elina, elina! Sala. Eze ilikwa ya. Ikwaba akwa* ogholi. Ebe Danda nechi eze Ebe. Uzuzu nete egwu. Sala (p. 44) / *Eze elina, elina! Sala. Eze ilikwa ya. Ikwaba akwa ogholi. Ebe Danda nechi eze Ebe. Uzuzu nete egwu. Sala* (p. 66).

In cases where songs were written in the author's local language, the translator was challenged and simply copied and pasted them in his translation as shown in (i) above.

In these examples, it is noted that terms and expressions were translated using foreignising techniques, including borrowing and literal translation. This is so because most of the concepts are peculiar to the source text culture and uncommon in the culture of the target audience. So, in some cases, the translator translated them word for word. In other cases, he had no other option but to borrow terms from the ST as they could not easily be translated. There are also situations in which borrowing was a deliberate move by the translator, perhaps to preserve the style of the ST. Ngoran (2017) argues that borrowing is used to keep the semantic and cultural aspects of a word, features that will be lost if the word is translated or adapted. Therefore, by borrowing source text terms and rendering them word for word, the translator preserves the local colour of the original text. This is foreignisation: retaining the foreignness of the original-language text by ensuring the literality of the translated text.

7.4.2   *Dominant Translation Strategy*

Foreignisation is dominant in the translation as compared to domestication. Table 1 above shows that sixty-six of the eighty-eight key CSIs were translated using foreignising techniques, representing seventy-five per cent of the occurrence of the strategy. This means that the most frequently used translation techniques included borrowing, calque and literary translation. This is the case because the two cultures are remote and do not share many cultural aspects. As noted by Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoohi (2013), when cultures are similar, there is less difficulty in translating as both languages probably have terms that are more or less equivalent for the cultural aspects; but when the cultures are different, it is difficult to find equivalents.

7.4.3   *Nature of Resulting Meanings*

The analysis reveals that some foreignising techniques made some translations have unacceptable meanings. Generally, terms translated using domestication techniques make sense as the translator put in effort to adapt CSIs to the target culture. For instance, on pages 22, 24 and 138 of the translation, some Igbo proverbs were replaced by equivalent proverbs, well-known to the target audience for the target reader to identify themselves easily with the concepts. For instance:

(j) The lizard that jumped from the high Iroko tree to the ground said he would praise himself if no one else did (p. 16) / *Pagule fumbi ndiwe mwini* (p. 24)

As for foreignising techniques, some results make sense while others do not. The study shows that some of the CSIs that were rendered word for word produced good results. For instance, many Igbo proverbs were translated literally (pages 6, 7, 8, 10, 21, 22, 23, etc) and, despite losing the proverbial colour and taste, the renditions manage to pass across the intended meaning. For example:

(k) A baby on its mother's back does not know that the way is long (p. 71) / *Mwana akakhala kumsana kwa amake sawona njira kutalika* (p. 112)

On the contrary, other renditions fail to communicate. As noted in Section 7.4.1 above, some translations may not be easy to understand because the target reader may not be familiar with the source culture concepts that have just been imported into the translation. Example 7.4.1.e is a good case. In the example, 'silk-cotton tree which was sacred' is a difficult concept and may not be easily understood by the target reader because this kind of sacred tree is unknown in his or her culture, and the translation, *chimtengo… cha thonje la silika*, is confusing. This applies to many other cases where the translations are not clear enough (pages 6, 34, 38, 51, 59, 100, etc). Either the translator was challenged with the concepts and did not know how to handle them or it was his style.

However, the researcher believes that foreignising techniques are equally useful in translation, but it is necessary to accompany resultant renditions with some notes to explain the concepts. In similar situations, many translators borrow or transliterate within the text and, then, provide explanations in form of footnotes or other forms. *Tout s'effondre* and *Todo se derrumba*, French and Spanish translations of *Things Fall Apart*, use this style to overcome this challenge. Malunga could follow suit to avoid creating confusion with uncommon CSIs. Below is an example of how this could be done:

(l) The whole village turned out on the ***ilo,*** men, women and children. (p. 33) */ Mudzi onse udasonkhana pa **ilo**. Madoda, ntchembere ndi ana onse.* (p. 51)

In this case, the translator decided to maintain the term *ilo*, which is acceptable, but to clarify it, he could add footnotes as follows:

> *ilo*: *bwalo la m'mudzi, pamene misonkhano yosiyanasiyana imachitikira* (a village square, where various assemblies take place)

Indeed, a translator is free to adopt either a method that achieves the reader-oriented strategy or one that achieves the writer-oriented strategy. Nevertheless, the translator must help the receptor audience understand the content and the intent of the source text by translating with both cultures in mind (Larson, 1984, cited in Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoohi (2013).

Conclusion

The study set out to investigate the manner in which culture-specific items were handled and the translation strategy that dominates in *Chipasupasu*. CSIs were identified and analysed to find out whether the translator relied more on domesticating techniques than foreignising ones. From the analysis, it is established that though both domestication and foreignisation strategies were employed, foreignisation is dominant. It is also revealed that many instances that were foreignised do not make sense and fail to communicate properly. In this vein, it is posited that although the foreignisation strategy enables the target reader to appreciate and learn more about the foreign culture, in this case, the Nigerian Igbo culture, it is crucial that once a reader is introduced to an unknown concept, a short explanation should follow, as a way of clarifying it. Therefore, if Malunga resorted to this approach in the cases where he used loan words, foreignisation would still dominate the translation, as he might have wished, but all translations would be understandable and more impactful.

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