

Original Research Article

The Translation of Cultural Referents in African Feminist Discourse

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Abstract

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This corpus-based research investigated the problem of translating cultural referents from an African feminist context into English. It was based on the premise that due to the inherent differences in the two cultures, the translation exists in a space of deviation. Hence, cultural referents in Calixthe Beyala's (2000) *Comment cuisiner son mari à l'africaine* were identified and classified under Santamaria's (2010:522) five ideological categories, namely history, social structure, cultural institutions, social universe and material culture. Thereafter, the strategies for translating them were identified and the space of existence of the translations was investigated. Toury's (1985) Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) and Lazar's (2005) Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis were applied for data collection and analyses to identify, describe, and explain 20 excerpts which embed cultural referents (five from each ideological category). For literary analyses, post-structuralist, formalist, biographical and sociological criticism were applied. Deconstruction, manipulation and communicative/functional translation theories were amenable to the research, while post-modern and cultural theories were applied for feminist analyses. The findings revealed that the translator mostly used hijacking and oblique translation to render cultural referents from French into English. The translations produced by these strategies were judged, according to Von Flotow's (1998) criteria, to determine if they were shoddy, inaccessible/elitist or theoretically incongruent/hypocritical translations. The conclusion arrived at was that the rendering of cultural referents in the target text was, indeed, a complete deviation due to loss or gain, untranslatability, the problem of equivalence, issues with decoding and recoding as well as lapses attributable to the fundamental linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target languages. This confirmed the assumption that the translation of cultural referents in the novel exists as a heterotopia of deviation. It was, therefore, recommended that to adequately render cultural referents in feminist discourse, precedence should be given to the text-in-situation, that is, extralinguistic elements that condition text interpretation and reformulation, that are conditioned by cultural and linguistic differences between the author and translator.

Keywords: Cultural Referent, Descriptive Translation Studies, Feminist Discourse, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, Heterotopia of Deviation, Translation

INTRODUCTION

Culture and language both constitute identity as its core components. Hence, since language, culture and identity are inextricably linked, no discourse can exist in a void, without a language, an identity, or a culture. as

natural language is at the centre of culture, language is, thus, the "heart within the body of culture" (Basnett, 1980:13-14). This primordial link between language, culture and identity is particularly overt in the African

feminist text, where the linguistic choices of writers are strongly influenced by their indigenous languages, identities, beliefs, mores, and folkways. This is particularly so, because most African feminist writers are required to express, in European languages, thoughts and ideas that are conceived in their indigenous African languages. As such, translators who set out to translate these authors for speakers of other languages find themselves at the meeting point of a new language, an alien culture, identity, and ideology as well. Hence, the issue of transmitting both the linguistic as well as the cultural, ideological, and personal idiosyncratic choices of the author of an aesthetic African text is central in ongoing debates in literary translation.

In fact, it is due to this symbiotic relationship between African writers and their cultures that the African novel is fraught with culturally marked pragmatic and lexical items (cultural referents) which authors include in feminist literature to preserve their cultural identity. Hence, for translators to successfully translate cultural referents in African literary texts, they must understand this synergy between source text authors and their cultures, which is expressed using cultural referents or culture-bound words/expressions in the source language (Tanyitiku, 2023).

Translation difficulties that exist both at linguistic and cultural levels of discourse result from the absence of correspondence between two cultures, and the issues resulting, thereof, to convey the semantic meaning of a source language cultural referent into the target language. Problems at the linguistic level are accounted for by differences in the source and target languages, while those at the cultural level result from an absence of what he calls common "situational features" in both languages (Catford, 1965: 94). Indeed, the ability of a translator to adequately convey meaning from one language into another is relative. To them, meaning does not only depend on the source language, but on the communicative purpose of the target text. Hence, translation is not absolute, given that any source text can be made to serve a given purpose to the target language community (Hatim & Munday, 2004: 15).

In fact, due to this increasing trend towards cultural relevance in the translation of African feminist fiction, scholars have proposed several strategies for resolving the problem of adequately rendering cultural referents during the translation of aesthetic texts. One of these strategies is by completely hijacking the source text and recreating a different text for the new set of receptors of the target language culture. This space of recreating a text during translation is what is considered in this study as a heterotopia of deviation (Foucault, 1984).

The Problem

The main issue of this study is the problem of translating

cultural referents in feminist literature. By using excerpts from Calixthe Beyala's *Comment cuisiner son mari à l'africaine* and its English translation *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*, the aim of this research is to answer a few questions: what are the ideological categories of cultural referents in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*? What are the translation strategies applied to render cultural referents in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*? How effective are they? Have these strategies used for rendering cultural referents in the corpus rendered its translation a heterotopia of deviation?

To answer the above questions, the study sets out to meet four objectives, namely, to:

- Identify and classify cultural referents in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*.
- Classify the strategies for translating cultural referents in the corpus.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies, and
- Investigate if the translation of cultural referents into English has made the target text a heterotopia of deviation.

The key concepts of this study are thus operationalised in the following paragraphs.

Key Concepts

Seven concepts, namely: translation, cultural referents, feminist literature, feminist discourse, African feminism, heterotopia and translation strategies are defined below as they are applied to this study.

Translation

Translation has existed for as long as humans who speak different languages have needed to communicate with each other and break linguistic barriers. It is in this light that many scholars have defined translation, based on their views on the concept, as a process, a product or an activity. Hence, translation is considered as a process through which meaning, ideas, signs and emotions are rendered across languages aesthetically, accurately, clearly, and naturally. Translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language (Catford, 1965:20). This text-oriented definition qualifies translation as a "replacement" which suggests freedom in translation. Another definition regards translation as an activity that takes place at the linguistic level, by perceiving the practice as "*le passage d'une langue A à une langue B, pour exprimer une réalité X*" [movement from language A to language B to express a similar reality, X] (Vinay and Darbelnet 1973: 20). By this definition, the activity entails faithful linguistic transfer, to the detriment of the communicative dimension of translation. According

to this definition, also, all translation is interlingual, whereas there also exists intralingual translation as well as inter-semiotic translation, which consider that translation is also semiotic or non-verbal. In fact, although translation is central in linguistics, it is a part of semiotics, which studies sign systems of structures, sign processes and sign functions (Hawkes, 1977 cited by Basnett, 2002:22). This definition, thus, expands the area of activity of translation to include signs and symbols.

Furthermore, translation has been defined as a reproduction in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, firstly in terms of meaning and, secondly, in terms of style (Nida & Taber, 1982:12). This definition holds that the translation process should consider both meaning and style, for although it is necessary to render meaning, the author's style must also be replicated in accordance with the target language culture and poetics. However, this is not usually an easy task for translators who must render texts fraught with authors' idiosyncrasies, in manners which require that their creative geniuses should be pushed to the limits, to ensure that emotions, effects, the spirit or the letter of the source text is replicated in the target language. This definition is the most suitable for literary texts, which must be reproduced in the "closest natural equivalent" of the source text author's language and style. Style is an inherent part of literary translation, for without it, the source language message will be lost in translation.

Lastly, is the translation process that consists of decoding source language meaning into the receptor language (Larson, 1984:3). Here, meaning is prioritised over everything else. Therefore, it should remain constant during translation, while form can undergo changes. This definition holds true for pragmatic texts, which give precedence to what is said over how it is said. It is not a suitable definition of translation of a feminist literary text, whose form and content are needed to activate the translator's meaning deposits. Therefore, Nida and Taber's (1982:12) definition of translation is retained for this study since it emphasises on the importance of translating the text-in-situation or contextual meaning (sense), as well as style.

Cultural Referent

A cultural referent is a phenomenon which, though relevant to a particular culture, may not be to another and, therefore, exists in a particular form or function in only one of the two cultures being compared (Katan 2004). Cultural referents, or what is referred to as equivalent-lacking concepts, are 'unfindable' or culturally loaded source language concepts or expressions, which are absent from the target language and culture (Dagut, 1978: 42; cited by Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997:196). Equivalent-lacking words could be associated

with cultural referents, although cultural referents have a narrower meaning than the term equivalent-lacking words. Equivalent-lacking words include, along with cultural referents, neologisms, (newly coined forms), dialect words, slang, taboo-words, foreign language terms and expressions, proper names, misspellings, archaisms, etc.

Newmark (1988) classifies cultural referents under ecology (lexical items which denote flora, fauna, winds, plains); social culture (words that define work and leisure); and material culture or artefacts (food, clothes, houses, etc.). Furthermore, he simplifies this classification into food and drink, institutions and social functions. All these classifications share a common characteristic: strong elements of local colour. That is why translators could easily find themselves at a disadvantage when they must translate cultural referents. It is by considering this assertion that Newmark (1998:11) declares that: "the more specific a language becomes, the more it becomes embedded in cultural features, and, therefore, creates translation problems."

Classification of Cultural Referents

Cultural referents are objects which have a distinctive social capital and can influence the expressive value that is assigned to individuals who are associated with these objects. They reflect a speaker's personality or enable referents to be associated with a social representation. Cultural referents refer to lexical items that are absent in the target culture or deviate from lexical equivalents in denotative or connotative meaning in the target culture (Santamaria, 2010:516-528). Cultural referents are also called realia. Hence, Santamaria classifies six main ideological categories of cultural referents that materialise under the commodities itemised on the following Table 1.

Based on the table above, social meaning deposits refer to inferences that can be drawn about speakers based on how they communicate (Hall-Lew et al., 2021). They provide contextual elements for interpreting cultural referents. Social and affective meaning (connotative meaning) is also made in the source text through the activation of the translator's social meaning deposits.

Also, environments related to the production of meaning refer to the way meaning is attached to source language cultural referents, exactly the way the source text author intended to convey it, the way these cultural referents are interpreted as they were intended to be interpreted, be it through signs, symbols, language, gestures facial expressions, verbal stereotypes, etc.

Furthermore, the propagation of meaning deals with the ways institutions inform communication and facilitate meaning, while cultural manifestations of given groups have to do with symbols, language, norms, values, objects and words that carry the meaning of cultural referents that can only be understood by people who

Table 1. Santamaria's (2010:522) Classification of Cultural Referents

Ideological Category	Commodities
Ecology	Personal experience of the environment
History	Social meaning deposits
Social Structure	Environments related to the production of meaning
Cultural Institutions	Propagation of meaning
Social Universe	Manifestations of social meaning
Material Culture	Cultural manifestations of given groups

share the same culture.

In this study, the commodities of cultural referents studied are elements that embody social meaning deposits, environments related to the production of meaning, textual elements that are responsible for the propagation of meaning and those which are cultural manifestations of the author's ethnic origins. Ecology or personal experience of the environment is not studied in this research. Hence, it has not been defined here.

Cultural referents cannot be discussed in translation studies without first establishing the connection of language as an element of culture. In some cultures, texts produced in another language and culture refer to persons, objects and institutions not readily understood by other cultures, which may result in cultural gaps in translation. Cultural distance results from inconsistency between respective source and target text readers' perception of reality, an impediment to translating cultural referents. Thus, the idea that one needs to possess shared knowledge with the source text author to effectively translate cultural referents has become the cornerstone of translation theory (Katan 2004), while Santamaria (2010) argues that translating cultural referents poses challenges for translators, since these referents create semantic gaps when translators decode and recode culturally loaded expressions for some target cultures.

Moreover, due to a disparity in the cultural world views of the author and translator, translating across cultural barriers is fraught with difficulties in matching the translator's interpretation of the source text to the author's intention. The result is fuzziness in meaning of translated cultural referents that may be especially used by the author with a specific function in mind. Aurobindo (1972, quoting Gopinathan, 2006) holds that translating cultural cues is essentially a problem of the knower (the author), of knowledge (the message) and of the known (the source text).

Central Issues in Rendering Cultural Referents

Based on the foregoing, several central issues are identified in the rendering of cultural referents which are classified under five issues, namely, loss and gain, untranslatability, the problem of equivalence, decoding

and recoding, as well as linguistic and cultural difference. They are explained in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, loss or gain occurs because the source and target languages are not always similar. This categorisation is used to describe translations that are approximate renderings, which incur either a semantic loss or a gain (Basnett, 2002:38).

Untranslatability, which can be linguistic or cultural, also occurs. The former occurs due to differences between the source and the target language, while the latter occurs due to lack of relevant situational features between the source and target cultures (Catford, 1965).

Moreover, the problem of equivalence occurs where there is no stylistic equivalence for a source language cultural referent in the target language. This lack of a functionally equivalent source language cultural element with an expressive identity, which conveys an invariable meaning in the target language, constrains translation (Popovic, 1976).

Also, decoding and recoding constrain translation where the analysis, transference, and restructuring of a cultural referent from the source language to the target language takes place where there are complex relations between the source and target language cultural referent (Basnett, 2002:24).

Lastly, linguistic and cultural differences engender difficulties in the rendering of cultural referents from one language into another because language cannot exist out of a cultural context, while a cultural context cannot exist without a language. Hence, what is analysed is the text-in-situation, which englobes all extra-linguistic elements that are involved in translation, which arise due to cultural difference (Basnett 2002).

Strategies for Rendering Cultural Referents

In fact, to circumvent the difficulties discussed above, some strategies are proposed for translating cultural referents. Katan (2004:73-180) proposes four strategies for translating cultural referents: generalisation to deal with non-equivalence especially in propositional meaning; deletion, distortion, foregrounding and translation shifts. Gopinathan (2006:236) posits that cultural referents can be translated through transcreation to retain the logical relationship between the original and the translated text.

Some transcreation strategies are elaboration, interpolation, explaining the cultural value of the original text, image change, image recreation, translative explanation, elucidation, and analogy. Also, a new cultural term unknown to target text readers can be rendered familiar through an existing term (e.g., “mustard seed” in the Holy Bible is rendered into Kenyang, an indigenous Cameroonian language, as “pepper seed,” while the central biblical image, “Lamb of God” is translated in the Inuit Bible as the “Seal of God,” etc.). Lastly, Reiss and Vermeer (2013) propose the linguistically creative translation approach, where new labels are designed to carry alien notions across cultural barriers or render source text culture-bound terms, concepts and lexical items which are not native to the target culture, while Landers (2001:79) claims that the best way of dealing with opaque items in the source culture is not to translate them, but to incorporate a brief interpolation, in form of italics and glossaries, in the target text to explain these cultural referents to its receptors.

Notwithstanding the above strategies proposed for translating cultural referents, the translator’s primary focus should be to produce a text that is culturally relevant to the target reader, although this might require manipulation, which will in turn impact the interpretive experience of the target language audience. Hence, the requirement is to prioritise the purpose or function of the text to the target culture, so that the translation will be acceptable and coherent with the receiver’s expectations, while still being relevant to the source text. In this regard, therefore, strategies such as cultural transposition (the transfer of the context of a source text to the context of the target text culture), oblique translations (which do not express something directly), transcription, translation by cultural substitution, the use of footnotes, glossaries and explanations, borrowing or calque, invariance, adaptation, extrapolation, etc. are relevant for translating cultural referents.

Feminist Literature

Feminist literature is a “conscious, gender-related writing of women and/or for women,” which means it is a form of writing with women at its centre, which denotes the “conception of writing with the aims of women’s movements and political concerns” (Wolf, 2006:129-142). Furthermore, feminist literature is fictional or nonfictional narratives which support feminist goals, whose aim is to define, institute and advocate for equitable civil, political, economic and social rights for women (Tuttle, 1986:184). One of the major features of feminist literature is that it identifies female protagonists’ roles as unequal vis-à-vis the roles of their male counterparts, especially in terms of their status, privilege, and power (Holts and Cameron, 2010). Furthermore, feminist literature emphasises the

detrimental and undesirable effects of these gender role differentials on women, men, families, communities, and societies. Feminist literature is based on the principles of feminism. It focuses on women’s advocacy to be accepted as equals with men and change the way they are perceived in society. In fact, it is literature that seeks to encourage the society to redefine women differently from the way they are perceived in their traditional roles, reexamine women’s thought processes, and understand their desires. Not all feminist literature is written by women (Cixous, 1976).

Discourse

Foucault (1977) posits that discourse signifies more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. To him, therefore, discourse:

... refers to ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges [sic] and relations between them ... (Foucault, 1977:153-154).

Furthermore, discourse is an “enouncement” which denotes an abstract construct that assigns meaning to an utterance through semiotic ascription to enable communication between and among objects, subjects, and statements (Foucault 1969). Discourses refer to a “cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices which are found within given fields of social action. They are socially constituted and relate to a macro-topic” (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 271-280). Discourse, from both definitions, is a body of oral/written text meant to communicate specific data, information, and/or knowledge. There are internal relations in the content of a given discourse, as well as external relations among different discourses (inter-discursivity). Hence, in line with the philosophy of inter-discursivity, no discourse exists in a void, for discourses are connected to other discourses to create meanings (denotation and connotation) of the concepts (statements) used to negotiate ideological agendas.

Feminist Discourse

Feminist discourse is contained in literary works, essays, editorials, conversations between individuals, advertising, promotional messages and books that discuss and explain theories, historical developments, political movements, and business practices that display elements of feminism and feminist language (Määttä, 2014:63-64). Feminist discourse can discuss liberal, radical, or socialist themes in either normative or descriptive tone, language or implied action. All feminist discourses have one thing in common: it seeks to influence a change in the way women are portrayed in society. It can be upheld in either normative or descriptive

language. Normative feminist discourse makes statements and outlines potential solutions to sexism (e.g.: women and men should have equal opportunities in employment), while descriptive feminist discourse describes reasons why women are underprivileged in society.

African Feminism

The origin of African feminism (womanism) can be traced from the era of Black feminism in the USA in the 1970s (Hooks, 2000). The first person to use the term in her writing was the African American poet, playwright and novelist, Alice Walker (1983:397). Walker is one of the early precursors of the Black feminist movement. African feminism is a Black coloration of the term feminism. That is why, to use Walker's (1983) exact words: "womanism is to feminism what purple is to lavender." African feminism raises awareness about social issues such as racial discrimination, class segregation, gender inequality, homophobia, ethnicity, sexuality, migration and minority issues, which are all dynamics of women's experiences that were neglected by the traditional feminist discourses of the 1960s, before African feminism emerged.

While mainstream feminist discourse has long left the private realm to a more advanced meso-level or macro-level where it dwells on issues of gender empowerment, gender mainstreaming, equality, equal rights and equal pay for equal work done, African feminist rhetoric is still at the micro-domestic sphere, where it advocates for fairness in interpersonal gender relations, equal treatment between people from different races, equity for women in their traditional childbearing/rearing roles vis-à-vis their partners, the fight against domestic and/or gender-based violence, incest, and rape, all of which are ills that particularly plague African women.

To conclude, African feminism is shaped by African women's resistance to Western hegemony. It reflects a melting pot of diverse discourses and is based on heterogeneous experiences and points of departure. African feminism is animated by debates about essentialism and the female body. It is heterosexual, pro-natal, concerned with bread, butter, culture, and power. Afrocentric feminism portrays African women as self-reliant and knowledgeable. It makes the important connection between knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment. Furthermore, it describes African women's experiences as blood mothers, other mothers, and community mothers, while underscoring women's role in group survival and rejecting the ideology of patriarchal domination. African feminists recognise three levels of women's oppression, namely at the level of personal biography, at group or community level and at systemic or socio-institutional level.

The Concept of Heterotopia

Space is the domain of power from where resistance emerges, because power distance is the most pronounced within spaces (Foucault, 1984). In other words, he considers space and power to be the same. In fact, Foucault claims that spaces can be qualified as heterotopias, which point to cultural, institutional, and discursive spaces, and heterochronia, which pertain to spaces of irregular behaviour. Foucault (1984) conceived the concept of heterotopia to describe cultural, institutional, and discursive spaces of "difference" that are disturbing, intense, incompatible, contradictory, or transforming. Heterotopias are spaces that exist within other spaces which seem similar yet fundamentally different. Foucault (1984) holds that, in addition to socio-cultural spaces where humans congregate, texts are also typical heterotopias. Hence, all spaces that exist parallel to utopia (where good resides) and dystopia (where bad resides) are heterotopias (where difference resides). Heterotopias are an escape from dictatorship, and a space of subjectivity, affirmation, voice, and difference, where members have very little which connects them. Furthermore, in heterotopias, there are more layers of meaning or more associations to other places than immediately meet the eye. In relation to all other spaces, the two functions of heterotopias are that they exist as a space of illusion which will expose real spaces, and a space of compensation because they create real spaces that are different. Heterotopias of deviation (Foucault 1984:180), therefore, are places of difference, where people are not compelled to adhere to normative behaviour. Heterotopias exist in discourse. They are discursive spaces where rules are broken to create a new discourse which is transformative and contradictory.

Translation Strategies

Lörscher (1991) and Chesterman (1997) believe that a translation strategy is a procedure or sequence of actions, which is goal-oriented, problem-centred, potentially conscious, requires making coordinated decisions and involves text manipulation. There are two main types of translation strategies, namely micro and macro strategies. Micro translation strategies are "potentially conscious plans for solving a translation problem" (Krings, 1986:268). Hence, micro translation strategies involve making decisions to solve problems, since the chosen strategy influences the outcome. In other words, micro translation strategies are decisions taken by the translator to handle specific problems within the text, while macro strategies refer to decisions made by a translator, which are influenced by external factors (Jääskeläinen 1993:116). For translation to be effective and acceptable, micro strategies should be

consistent with the chosen macro strategy and specific activities: they should be in line with the translator's problem-solving and decision-making role.

The two categories of translation strategies, macro/global strategies and micro/local strategies, condition translation. The macro strategies are adopted by/with the client, while micro strategies are exclusively adopted by the translator. The choice of macro translation strategy is thus based on informed decisions (norms) by both the translator and/or the client. Hence, within the framework of decision making, translation norms are parameters within which the translator operates to produce translation that meets approved standards and requirements. It is based on the relationship between norms and quality in translation that it is required of translators, to select a global strategy and the local strategies that are relevant to it from the initial point of the translation process (Tanyitiku, 2021).

According to Venuti (2001, quoting Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958), there are two main micro translation strategies: faithful translation and oblique translation. Faithful translation refers to the process through which the translator reproduces the exact contextual meaning of the source language within existing target language grammatical constraints that guarantee the transfer of source language cultural referents. When faithful translation is hindered by lexical and syntactic differences between the two languages involved, the translator resorts to oblique translation. Oblique translation refers to translation strategies applied when the structural or conceptual elements of the source language cannot be directly translated without altering the meaning or style of the target language. Oblique translation has 7 sub-strategies. The first sub-strategy of oblique translation is borrowing, used when there are meta-linguistic differences between the source and target languages. It requires the translator to transfer source language terms into the target text without them undergoing any modification. The second is calque, which requires borrowing an expression by literally translating it into the target language. The third, literal translation, refers to the rendering of a source language utterance by its appropriate idiomatic or grammatical equivalent in the target language. The fourth, transposition, requires substituting one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message. The fifth, modulation denotes a change in point of view (e.g., speech act). The sixth is equivalence, which means rendering source text situation by different stylistic and structural target language methods. The last is adaptation, which refers to when a situational equivalence is used due to cultural differences, when a source language concept is missing from the target culture (Tanyitiku and Nyamboli, 2023).

Faithful translation and dynamic equivalence are major micro translation strategies that are applied to aesthetic texts. Faithful translation is applied when the precise source text-in-situation is reproduced in the target

language. The constraints of the target language structure are respected, and the source language cultural referents are preserved and accurately transferred. Equivalence pertains to the desirable result of translation. It refers to translation that produces the same effect on the target readers as the original text produced on the source text readers (Nida 1964:237-239). Translating by equivalence is when a source language expression is replaced with a target language expression which may not be "accurate" but will serve the same purpose for the target reader. Equivalence can be dynamic or functional.

Chesterman (1997) talks about pragmatic strategies. They include cultural filtering, explicitness change, information change and trans-editing. Cultural filtering refers to translation by capturing nuances and differences in rules of behaviour, communication, rhetorical elements, and expectation norms which are culturally shared in the source and target text speech communities. This requires that the translator should study presupposed cultural differences inherent in the two language communities before any intervention. Explicitness change is used when information of the source text may be added to make the text explicit or deleted to make it less explicit. Information change is like explicitness change, although the changed information is not implicit in the source language text. Trans-editing refers to extensive editing of the original text, when necessary, by changing how the source text information and wording are organised.

To conclude, Vlahov and Florin (2004:63) propose a simpler schema for translating cultural referents: adaptation or free translation (when a source language term is replaced with another target language term with a familiar connotation which is accessible to the target language reader); borrowing (source language word or expression is used without modification) calque (breaking down an expression into individual elements and translating each element word-for-word); paraphrase (replacing a SL word with a group of words in the TL); and translator's notes, footnotes or endnotes (which are metatexts added by the translator to explain additional elements). The reasons for resorting to the above strategies to translate cultural referents is either extra-linguistic (lack of a similar concept in the target culture); lexical (lack of a corresponding one-word referents in the target language); or stylistic (difference in connotations).

Feminist Approaches to Translation

Feminist approaches to translation are used by translators to modify, defer and displace the source text to appropriate and use it for their own purposes or intentions. Feminist texts are translated using the feminist translation strategy of hijacking for text manipulation. During translation, a text is hijacked by applying some sub-strategies which are, firstly, supplementing, which

requires interventionist moves on the part of the translator to compensate losses. It is sometimes referred to as textual exhibitionism. Another strategy of hijacking is transference, which is also called borrowing, transliteration or transcription (Harvey 2003:5). Also, there is refraction, a strategy applied by adjusting texts to certain poetics or to a certain ideology to the extent that translations are no longer transparent reflections, but distorted versions of their originals. Rewriting the text means the translator resorts to a range of intra or interlingual processes to shape images of the source text, its author and culture, to create alternative, localised images for the target culture. Compensation occurs when loss of meaning in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part (Newmark 1988a: 80-120). Modulation is used when the source language message is produced in the target language text in conformity with the current norms of the target language, where the source and the target language could be unrelated in terms of perspective (Newmark 1988a: 89-20). Deletion refers to when redundant stretches of language are obliterated. Addition is used when cultural, linguistic, or technical information is added by the translator to enhance the target text. The most common type of addition is grammatical, where tools of cohesion (contradiction, contrast, results) are added for improved relations between sentences. Lastly, naturalisation is used when a source language word is first adapted to the normal pronunciation, then to the morphology of the target language (Newmark 1988b).

Von Flotow's Critique of Feminist Approaches to Translation

Changes in feminist translation studies have engendered complexity and diversity of feminist translation. Hence, these changes have motivated translators of feminist works to develop translation strategies which operate in "dis-unity," as explained in the following sections (Von Flotow, 1998:3-12).

Firstly, feminist translators produce theoretically incoherent and hypocritical translations. This refers to renderings of cultural referents that are criticised as being incorrect because the translator assumes the right to intervene in the text, be it to mitigate offensive language, subvert offensive images, obliterate misogyny or machismo, or make explicit source text rhetoric that is implicitly stated (Von Flotow, 1998:6).

Moreover, their feminist approaches to translation result in shoddy mainstream "*translatese*" (Spivak, 1992:180) of Third World women's literature, a term that refers to "theoretically incongruent" translations of cultural referents through which the source text author's style is misappropriated and misrepresented. Through textual exhibitionism, translators, in the guise of attempting to make the texts "accessible" to readers from other

fundamentally different cultures, obliterate Third World women writers' cultures by stripping the target text of the source text author's stylistic signature and giving it a new (ridiculously exotic) signature (Von Flotow, 1998:5).

She concludes that most translations carried out using these approaches are qualified as inaccessible and elitist translation, since they basically distort the source language to produce complex deconstructed forms, associations, and wordplay in the target text, to cause target readers marvel at the "linguistic virtuosity" of the translator. These distorted translations can appeal only to a few academic elites for whom they have a different value but leave other mainstream readers at a loss (Von Flotow 1998:6).

Theoretical Framework

Literary, translation and feminist theories, which are all amenable to this multidisciplinary study, are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Literary Criticism Frameworks

Source and target text analyses, which aim at to identifying and categorising cultural referents, are carried out through literary criticism. Gynocriticism, as well as biographical, formalist and sociological criticism frameworks underpin this study, which is grounded on a critique of the language used, firstly by the writer, and then, by the translator to render cultural referents.

The politics of feminism constitutes the theoretical base of gynocriticism (Cameron, 1992). In other words, it pertains to the application of feminist principles to critical discourse analysis with the view to critique the language of a literary creation. Through gynocritical analyses, "the feminist lens" is applied to this study to scrutinise the source and target texts and examine how cultural referents which portray women differently from men are expressed (Grant, 1993:100). Gynocriticism is applied to examine the rendering of cultural referents that embody the hierarchy of power structures within the source and target texts, and how power is wielded differently by males and females. Gynocriticism, also known as feminist literary criticism, is applied to the source and target texts to foreground and categorise cultural referents and identify how they have been translated into English.

In addition, biographical criticism is also applied to analyse data about the historical and/or macro context of *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*, the author's and translator's personal histories and how they condition the expression, understanding and rendering of cultural referents in the source and target texts. It provides a critical understanding of the author's style, her background as well as the socio-historical context in

which the work was conceived. Biographical criticism is important because history and past experiences shape the production of literature, and thus play an important role in literary appreciation to identify cultural referents.

Also, formalist criticism is applied to analyse the plot, characters, setting, diction, etc. of *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*, to identify cultural referents therein, without recourse to the history or sociology of the author. Literary texts have formal aspects that distinguish them clearly from other types of texts and make it possible for literature to be successfully divided into genres. The features of the source and target texts, such as stylistic devices, contrasts, resemblances, structures, archetypal characters, etc. are analysed using this framework. The framework is also used to analyse the aesthetic experience as unique, powerful, and significant, because the form of a literary work is a fundamental part of its meaning (Agyekum, 2013:212). Thus, this criticism is applied for source and target texts analyses, while paying attention to their form, language and detail, all primary factors to a discussion of the text's aesthetic quality, themes, and functions (Schogt, 1998). Hence, Formalist criticism is used to analyse cultural referents in the source and target texts, and how the author and translator deploy linguistic resources to make meaning.

Lastly, sociological criticism is applied to the original corpus and its translation to analyse the presence of social factors, and the role they play in its creation. These social factors are not reflected in the text but rather produced therein, given that the literary text is social in nature (Gemgembre, 1996: 53). Indeed, sociological criticism is applied to this research to investigate social reality and the socio-historical factors which affect its understanding. Moreover, sociological criticism is applied to the corpus to investigate the role played by socio-cultural factors in both the production and consumption of the source text and its translation. The social context and the literary polysystem of the author and target text readers, the extra-textual and institutional factors that constrain the creation and literary appreciation of both texts are analysed through sociological criticism.

Translation Approaches

Three approaches to translation, namely, the Deconstruction Approach, Manipulation Approach and the Functional and Communicative Approach (*Skopos Theory*), are applied to this study, in the manner elucidated below.

The Deconstruction Approach

The Deconstruction Approach is applied to this study, given that identifying, describing and explaining cultural

referents in a feminist text are based on ideological factors. This is because pragmatic tools of gendered discourse (which are not necessarily linguistic) were used to express views about complex issues relating to gender inequality, subjectivity, difference, women's rights, the silenced voice, lowered gaze, or muted voice, etc., when writing *Comment cuisiner son mari à l'africaine* and translating it into English. Deconstruction is, therefore, applied to this study to analyse both the context and meaning of cultural referents in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way* as entities that are inseparable from the text, since there is nothing more outside the text that will affect its meaning, or broker understanding of the text out of its context (Derrida, 1976:158). Same as meaning does not exist out of context, authors cannot function out of their culture as isolated entities. Deconstruction is applied to translation to analyse the source and target texts with the knowledge that the limit of meaning is not decidable or absolute, given that context offers a structural opening between meanings. Meaning here refers to an effect of language, not a prior presence which is merely expressed in language. In other words, one cannot understand what something is, but what it is not. In fact, to understand the meaning of something through what it is not, people need "traces" from their past experiences. "Traces" here refer to prior knowledge that relates to events other than those that are being contemplated (prior knowledge or past experiences or history), or the mark of a past element that is relevant to interpret the present (Davis, 2001).

Deconstruction justifies the translator's licence to "abuse" the source text because of the privilege of extreme freedom which he exercised in interpreting cultural referents in the target text, which gave him the freedom to submit the text to excessive extra-textual criticism based on the macro contextual and meta-textual information he possessed about the text and its author (Arrojo, 2012: 96-110).

The Manipulation Approach

The Manipulation Approach to translation, conceived by Hermans (1985), is applied to investigate translation as a process of literary maneuvering, whereby texts are rewritten across linguistic boundaries in a very clearly defined cultural and historical context (Lefevere, 1992). Manipulation is applied to *How to Cook your Husband the African Way* to analyse various extra-textual factors that came into play in the translation, to debunk the view that the primary objective of the translation exercise was to produce a neutral, objective, and equivalent target text. It justifies the belief that transition is compromise when it is constrained by historical-ideological factors (context), literary factors (source and target text literary traditions) and linguistic factors (the features of their working languages). Moreover, the approach justifies the

assertion that since they exist between two cultures and two literatures, translators have the leeway to reconstruct the image of the source language text for its consumption by target language readers. Hence, the Manipulation Approach is relevant to this study to investigate ideological and cultural constraints which worked in favour of the translation strategies, to integrate the translation in its cultural environment in a more consistent manner and to add a necessary ideological dimension to the translation of cultural referents in the corpus.

The Communicative-Functional Approach or Skopos Theory

The Communicative-Functional Approach to translation, which was conceived by Nord (1997) and extrapolated and developed by Reiß and Vermeer (2013), is applied to this study to investigate translation firstly in the given communicative context of its production and secondly, as a means of communication between identified stakeholders.

Advocates of the *Skopos* Theory posit that the translator as an intercultural mediator should bear in mind the aims of the communicators, their needs, the function of the translation and how target readers will use the target text. It is based on this that Gentzler (2001) claims that translation is a form of action or a communicative interaction. The goal of translation is not just producing a text that would be acknowledged as equivalent to the original, but to produce one that would be a contribution to the activities of its end users. Hence, a client who hires a translator has goals which should be considered; while the target audience has expectations that need to be addressed. It is thus after identifying the needs and expectations of the target audience that the translation can understand and formulate the translation goal.

As such, to analyse *How to Cook your Husband the African Way* and the factors that influenced its translation, this approach is applied to examine the linguistic aspects of the translation, the attributes of the pair of languages as well as the texts themselves. Also, it is useful to examine the human aspects of the translation. It lays particular emphasis on the needs and expectations of the source text author and the target text readers who consumed the translated texts. In fact, the Communicative-Functional Approach is applied here to investigate the quality of translation, and to consider translation as a communicative situation within an imaginary/supposed, though realistic environment within which it was carried out.

Feminist Theories

The feminist theories applied to this research are Postmodern Theory and Cultural Theory.

Postmodern Feminist Theory

The theory challenges the assumptions of modernism and questions the assumption that knowledge, justice, and beauty can be judged by universal standards (Parpart, 1993: 439). The theory argues that these “metanarratives” and “privileged discourses” fail to explain all reality and are only interested in silencing competing discourses. As such, Postmodern feminist theorists insist that postmodern criticism should avoid the quest for universals, circumvent universal theoretical formulations, and become more pragmatic, ad hoc, contextual, and local (Lyotard, 1984 as cited by Parpart, 1993: 440). Furthermore, Postmodern Feminist Theory rejects universal, simplified definitions of social phenomena in literary texts and argues that these definitions “essentialise” reality and fail to reveal the complexity of life as a lived experience.

Postmodern Theory investigates how identity and difference are constructed between men and women within the corpus. Thus, the theory is applied here, also, for a critical deconstruction of the translated text to uncover a new, more fundamental understanding of the way difference is constructed and used in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*. Hence, in tune with Prakash (1992:172), Postmodern Feminist Theory is applied to this research for a closer scrutiny of odd turns of phrase, silences, unguarded details, and contradictions in the source and target texts that re overlooked by traditional notions of meaning, identity, and author’s intention.

Cultural Theory

The theory is applied to investigate the way readers consume and respond differently to literary texts because they are influenced by different factors, including their cultures. Social inequality marginalisation in the corpus are analysed through the application of Cultural Theory (Hall, 1994). The theory is applied to investigate how power operates through discourse within different cultures depicted in the source text and its translation. Cultural Theory informs this study, whose aim is to investigate the way culture influences the author’s expression and translator’s interpretation of cultural referents in *Comment cuisiner son mari à l’africaine*. Cultural Theory is applied to *How to Cook your Husband the African Way* investigate the way gender and power relations are manifested among people from different cultures. In summary, it investigates the author and translator as products of their cultures and cements the assertion that to understand and interpret a text and its translation, the reader must first understand the socio-cultural context under which the author and translator operate (the macro-cultural context), as well as that within the text (micro-cultural context).

METHODOLOGY

The methodology spells out the research design and the micro-textual data analysis framework of this study.

Research Design

This study, apart from being a descriptive, corpus-based qualitative research, is also interpretative, because it uses vivid description to illustrate, support or challenge the theoretical assumptions which underpin the research. It is also analytical research because it involves explanation.

Descriptive Research Procedure

The descriptive research procedure applied to this study is Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), which emphasises on the description of literary translation by answering the question about “how” (strategies) and “why” (constraints). The underlying assumption of DTS is that ideologies could give rise to new target texts and sway the translator’s decisions. Toury (1985) developed a general systematic descriptive branch of translation, Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS). Since the framework studies translation as a cultural and historical phenomenon, it is relevant for exploring the context of translation and its conditioning factors. DTS, therefore, offers the framework for target text-oriented analyses which is used here to investigate what conditioned *How to Cook your husband the African Way* to be translated the way it was. The four-tier methodology of DTS is used, although the last step, reformulation, is left out, because it is not applicable to this research. This corpus-based study leans on the ideas of DTS to focus on translation as a process as well as a product, and to investigate how linguistic and cultural factors are incorporated in the translation of *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*. Hence, Toury’s (1985) DTS is used for comparative source and target text analyses for identification, description and explanation of source and target text cultural referents.

Micro-textual Data Analysis Framework

For the micro textual (qualitative) analysis, firstly, Lazar’s (2005) Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) is applied to the source and target texts to identify and foreground shared indicators of cultural referents therein. Secondly, the first three steps of Toury’s (1985) DTS are applied to the utterances to analyse the translation strategies used and the effects of these on the translation of cultural referents into the target language. In summary, the analysis below is done at three levels, namely

identification of cultural referent, description of element of interest and explanation of the translation strategy.

Corpus-based Analysis of the Translation of Cultural Referents in *How to Cook Your Husband the African Way*

The corpus-based analysis entails a synopsis of the novel and the micro-textual analysis of the translation of cultural referents in *Comment cuisiner son mari à l’africaine* and its English translation, *How to Cook Your Husband the African Way*.

Synopsis of *Comment cuisiner son mari à l’africaine*

Beyala, in *Comment cuisiner son mari à l’africaine*, chronicles the adventures of Ms Aïssatou, a denizen of the Bastille slum in Paris. The heroine falls in love with her handsome neighbour, Bolobolo, an epicurean and aging Casanova, who still lives with his demented mother. Aïssatou, in line with the African adage which goes that “the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach,” sets out to lure her love interest with tropical flavours of “spicy boa,” “porcupine cooked with wild mango nuts,” “ngombo with paprika,” “crocodile in *tchobi* sauce,” “ndomba,” “shrimp *attieke*,” “saka-saka” “dole with meat” “pèpèsoup,” as well as an aphrodisiac ginger drink. Faced with Aïssatou’s resolve to use the sweet/savoury tastes of indigenous African soul food to cast a gastronomic spell on her love interest, Bolobolo is powerless to resist these sensuous feasts. At the end, he falls head-over-heels in love with Aïssatou, who is on mission to “cook” her man with exotic African spices and cuisine. Thanks to the succulent tastes of ancient cuisine from Mother Africa, Aïssatou succeeds in luring her love interest away from both his mother and mistress.

Comment cuisiner son mari à l’africaine as a Feminist Text

Comment cuisiner son mari à l’africaine focuses on issues involving women who spent their entire lives in subservience. Hence, it paints a graphic picture of gender-based violence and women’s sexual exploitation to expose their wretched subjugation. Female characters in the novel live an abject life under their domineering male nemeses in a typical shantytown, where there is the feminisation of poverty, prostitution, and the brutal exploitation of women in the ghetto. As an African feminist work, Beyala emphasises on the importance of the domestic realm in nurturing identity and self-worth, in the presence of the cultural exploitation of her female characters. Furthermore, in addition to portraying Aïssatou as the archetypal symbol of African

womanhood, Beyala combines the identity of her African central character with that of her immigrant companion to create a hybrid maternal/womanist voice that is silenced by patriarchy in the phallogocentric Western society. Also, Bolobolo's philandering ways and his having a child out of wedlock portray him as an archetype of masculine privilege vis-à-vis his wife's immediate forgiveness of his transgression, which illustrates the plight of African womanhood in the face of adultery. In another way, it could also be interpreted as condemnation of the African woman's conspiracy of silence within the conjugal family, which compounds women's marginalisation and subjugation.

The English version, *How to Cook your Husband the African Way* was translated by David Cohen for an English audience, given his recurrent use of insertions that are relevant to British culture, literature, and dialects (Cockney).

Micro-textual Analysis

The micro-textual analysis is carried by applying Toury's (1985) DTS and Lazar's (2005) FCDA for source and target text comparison. The elements of interest are grouped under cultural referents which carry social meaning deposits, environments related to the production of meaning, cultural referents responsible for the propagation of meaning and cultural referents which are manifestations of the source text author's culture. Thereafter, the central issues relating to the translation of cultural referents are identified (see 2.2.1).

Also, the strategies for translating cultural referents in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way* are identified, and the outcomes of these strategies are categorised, according to Von Flotow's nomenclature, either as theoretically incorrect and hypocritical translation, shoddy mainstream "translatese" of Third World women's literature or elitist translation (cf. 2.7.2).

Below is the micro-textual analysis of 20 source text excerpts that embody cultural referents, as well as their target language translations.

Micro-Textual Analysis of the Translation of Social Meaning Deposits in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*

Excerpt 1 Identification

Source Text: *Si j'étais sa femme, je serais restée à la maison à l'attendre tandis qu'il s'en serait allé courir de douces rêveries. Mais pourquoi dans le partage des rôles les femmes doivent-elles garder le foyer, cuisiner, allumer les lampes, repeser tout en surveillant les*

devoirs des enfants jusqu'à ce que mort s'ensuive?(34)

Target Text: Who decreed what men should do and women should do, the separation of roles? Why do women have to look after the house, cook, light the lamps, make sure the kids have done their homework till death do them part from their duties, **while men go out on the booze and razzle?** (26).

Description: The source language utterance "...il s'ensera it allé courir de douces rêveries," which literally means "... he would have gone off to dream sweet dreams" is completely not rendered, although it is hijacked by rewriting as "while men go out on the booze and razzle." "Booze and razzle" are colloquial expressions that mean to drink and enjoy themselves. Also, the utterance "repeser tout," which means "to ponder," is completely deleted from the target text.

Explanation: The translation strategy is hijacking by supplementing, while the central issue is the problem of equivalence. Also, omission leads to loss of the source language expressive meaning of the cultural referent. The rendering is thus a hypocritical translation because the translator arrogates the right to intervene in the text, which places the rendering in a space of difference.

Excerpt 2 Identification

Source Text: *Moi qui vous raconte cette tranche de ma vie, j'ai quitté mon pays pour apprendre à connaître le monde, parce qu'il y a un temps pour se perdre et un temps pour se retrouver, un temps pour partir et un temps pour regagner ses origines.*

Je suis noire, le soleil pourrait vous confirmer, mais l'exil a bouleversé mes repères (11).

Target Text: Let me tell you about myself. As I'm sharing this slice of my life with you – **you see I can't avoid food images, a slice of cake, a slice of ham, a slice of life.**

I left my country because there is a time to lose oneself and a time to find oneself, a time to leave and a time to find one's roots.

My roots are black. **I'm a black woman but being away from my roots has confused me** (7).

Description: The source language utterance "pour apprendre à connaître le monde," which literally means "to seek to discover the world" is completely obliterated. The translator subverts this source language cultural referent to make the text accessible to the target text reader by deleting the source text utterance "le soleil pourrait vous confirmer," which means "the sun can confirm this to you." Moreover, the text is again hijacked into the target language culture through the insertion of the explanation "you see I can't avoid food images, a slice of cake, a slice of ham, a slice of life," which engenders a complete visibility change and replaces the author with the translator.

Explanation: The strategy used is hijacking. To supplement the source language image for the target text reader, the translator reshapes the source language image to suit the target audience. Hence, the translator produces an elitist translation, which creates new cultural referents that embody images that are completely incompatible with the source language cultural referents. In conclusion, the translator's strategy takes the source language cultural referent into a completely new cultural space, such that the new space in which the rendering exists is a heterotopia of complete deviation.

Excerpt 3 Identification

Source Text: *La télévision malgré son clinquant se rebiffe. Les voix qui d'habitude déferlent de l'écran semblent se trainer péniblement. Les vestes des animateurs flamboient sans m'accrocher aux étoiles. Mon cœur est aux antipodes de ces dorures. Mon esprit se positionne en véritable fossoyeur de ma personnalité : jusqu'où aller et quand s'arrêter ? (53)*

Target Text: The TV drones. The voices on the screen seem to drag. **TV presenters try to glitter, show off their charm, cleverness, the usual media dazzle razzle, but they certainly don't lift me to the stars.** Instead, I go down, dig deep down into my personality, excavate, analyse, agonise ... (40)

Description: The source text utterance "*La télévision malgré son clinquant se rebiffe*" which in English means "Television, for all its glitz and glamour, is rebelling" is translated as simply as "The TV drones." The rendering is a complete hijack by deletion, which engenders a mistranslation, because the semantic meaning of "*se rebiffer*" is "to balk at," while its contextual meaning is "to rebel." In addition, the complete utterance, "*Mon cœur est aux antipodes de ces dorures*" is hijacked by its deletion from the target text. Also, the utterance "*Mon esprit se positionne en véritable fossoyeur de ma personnalité : jusqu'où aller et quand s'arrêter ?*" which can be rendered as "My mind positions itself as the destroyer of my personality: how far should I go and when do I stop?" is manipulated and rather rendered as "Instead I go down, dig deep down into my personality, excavate, analyse, agonise ..."

Explanation: The central issue of this rendering comes about due to difficulties faced by the translator in decoding and recoding. That is, he fails to analyse, transfer and restructure the source text utterance because of the complex style and diction of the author. The text is hijacked and the deletion of source text cultural referents in these utterances leads to a serious loss in the target text of the cultural referents, which completely defers the author's intention.

Excerpt 4 Identification

Source Text: *Je retrouve cette solitude que j'aime et qui me pèse. Jusqu'à quand vivrai-je seule ? Jusqu'à ce que je me rouille et tombe en poussière ? A l'extérieur la nuit hurle. C'est un charivari du diable et c'est beau, cette vie la nuit. J'ai le cœur lourd mais personne n'est là pour se rendre compte à quoi j'aspire (34).*

Target Text: **I'm alone again, I like solitude but it also weighs on me.** How long am I going to live alone? Till I rust and crumble into dust. **The grave's a fine and private place but none I think do there embrace, as Andrew Marvell, the English poet said.** Outside the night's loud, a cacophony of traffic, men, women, cats. It's the devil's charivari. The word's French. A charivari is a village fete where the community serenaded newlyweds by pounding on pots and pans. Very romantic.

The night is beautiful. As is life. But my heart's heavy and I've got no one to share my hopes with (25).

Description: The translator adds some explanatory notes to the source text by inserting the utterance "The grave's a fine and private place but none I think do there embrace, as Andrew Marvell, the English poet said." He also adds the explanation "The word's French. A charivari is a village fete where the community serenaded newlyweds by pounding on pots and pans. Very romantic."

Explanation: This strategy is exactly what Von Flotow (1998:5) terms "theoretically incongruent hypocritical translation," where the implicit is deliberately made explicit by the translator. The central issue here is a lack of functional equivalence between the source and target language cultural referents. Hence, the translator uses elucidation to explain the foreign target language rendering. Nevertheless, instead of this strategy conveying an invariant meaning, it creates an opaque item which makes the translation a deviation from the source text cultural referent.

Excerpt 5 Identification

Source Text: *De créer une dépendance artificielle qui exalterait leur sentiment de puissance et leur donnerait l'impression de me protéger? En suis-je seulement capable? (54)*

Target Text: **And forget the witchy wiles.** Do I have energy to play body language tricks which 1001 self-help books tout? **Come on girls, look down in the humble position so that men think you're weak, delicate and need Mr Big whose balls fluff up with pride? Strong man looks after weak lass (40).**

Description: The whole target language excerpt is an addition by rewriting that has nothing in common with the source text utterance. Moreover, the image of “Mr Big Balls,” “strong man” and “weak lass”, all contained in the rendering that goes, “... look down in the humble position so that men think you’re weak, delicate and need Mr Big whose balls fluff up with pride? Strong man looks after weak lass (40),” are all target language equivalents and new cultural referents derived through manipulation.

Explanation: The renderings are not translations of the source text cultural referents, but rather transcreations, which give rise to new images that subvert the source culture, and completely downplay its uniqueness in favour of the target culture. The text is rendered through hijacking, which makes the translator more visible. As such, the target text reflects the translator’s political intentions and creates a visibility change. The issue here is the absence of relevant situational features between the two languages, which engenders untranslatability. Hence, the outcome is theoretically incoherent and hypocritical translation while the space created is one of deviation.

Micro-Textual Analysis of the Translation of Environments Related to the Production of Meaning in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*

Excerpt 1 Identification

Source Text: *Ils halètent patte en l’air, gloussent, et quand l’un d’eux réussit à attraper l’une d’entre nous particulièrement osseuse, il l’exhibe dans les soirées.*

- *Tu connais ma nouvelle amie ? Un vrai mannequin ! Chuchote-t-il, excité et satisfait (13).*

Target Text: *Men pant with desire and, when one of them manages to ensnare one of us – a fit girl whose tits and arse fit the current fashion – they show her off at dog parties. For their friends to oggle.*

“**You know my woman, top totty. Top model,**” the man boasts, more peacock than mule now. He might as well carry a banner before him with a phallus rampant (9).

Description: The source text cultural referent “...particulièrement osseuse” is rendered as “...a fit girl whose tits and arse fit the current fashion,” “*les soirées*” is rendered as “dog parties” while “*Un vrai mannequin*” is translated as “top totty. Top model.” Also, the rendering “...the man boasts, more peacock than mule now. He might as well carry a banner before him with a phallus rampant” is a complete addition. Hence, through manipulation, the man is described in the as brute (mule) and vain (peacock), while the phallus, the most powerful symbol of male authority, is added to the target language cultural referent.

Explanation: The translation of cultural referents in the above utterances have nothing to do with the source text cultural referents. The translator resorts to rewriting to reshape source language images and to refraction to adjust source language poetics to the target language. The translation of cultural referents here is, therefore, not an accurate reflection of the source text author’s intention. The outcome of the translation strategy is what is termed “shoddy mainstream translateese” of the source text cultural referents. Since the source text is manipulated by gross modification and addition to enhance the image of the objectified woman (“top totty top model”), whose physical appearance excites the male gaze, the central issue is decoding and recoding. The text is hijacked such that the translator is made more visible, which places the rendering in a space of deviation.

Excerpts 2 Identification

Source Text: *Planche à pain égale belle femme. Je danse dans les rondes des jours froids et les pantalons livrent combat pour m’admirer. Lorsque je marche, me reins se brisent en cadences sèches, partant à gauche lorsqu’on les attend à droite, provoquant des sués d’exotisme chez les amateurs bouffeurs de sable fin. Je savoure ce succès en nettoyant le chiottes publiques (12).*

Target Text: *A beautiful woman is flat as a pancake, thin as a rake or a slice of melba toast. Melba toast snaps easily. Crickle crackle.*

I measure my life by my waist, unlike Prufock who used coffee spoons. And you could say it works. On the beach, I see it does, as sun worshippers on hot sands breath hotly when they look at my body. They sweat at the sight of me. I don’t have ripe breasts like the much sung (sic) pomegranates of the Song of Solomon and no tits à la mode. I smile in titles triumph though I also have a job cleaning toilets the beach owners provide in the forlorn hope that bathers will not piss in the sea (7-8).

Description: The utterance “*Planche à pain*” is rendered as “flat as a pancake, thin as a rake or a slice of melba toast. Melba toast snaps easily. Cricklecrackle.” The whole excerpt “*Lorsque je marche, me reins se brisent en cadences seches partant à gauche lorsqu’on les attend à droite*” is deleted from the target text. Another theoretically incongruent translation is done, through the addition of “I measure my life by my waist, *unlike Prufock who used coffee spoons,*” while “*Je savourece succès ennettoyant le chiottes publiques*” is rendered as “I smile in titless triumph though I also have a job cleaning toilets the beach owners provide in the forlorn hope that bathers will not piss in the sea.” “Prufock” is also a misspelling of the

cultural referent “Prufrock” derived from the titular character of T.S. Eliot’s *“The Love Poem of Alfred J. Prufrock,”* a poem about frustrated desires and modern disillusionment.

Explanation

The central issue is the lack of equivalent target language cultural referents that will transfer the same meaning for the target text reader. The approach used to render the cultural referents is theoretically incoherent, hence the space created is a space of deviation.

Excerpt 3 Identification

Source Text: *...je les connais toutes et pourrais vous décrire les types d’hommes qui les fréquentent. D’abord, il y a des vieux beaux. Ils vous disent qu’ils vous apprendront à coucher auprès d’un homme ; ils vous disent qu’ils vous apprendront l’art de la manière ; vous ne comprendriez rien à leur enseignement parce qu’avant d’en avoir terminé ils s’allongeront sur vous pour se sauver des ravages du temps (12).*

Target Text:

Let me describe the men who use them – **and none of them much like Solomon the harem lord, who managed to have 600 wives and still survived and appear wise (sic).**

First there are the beautiful old men who think they know all the ways of the world and of women and men. **They promise to teach you galaxy of exotic and erotic tricks. Follow me girl and I’ll show you fucking!** But you learn nothing from them because long before they stop talking, they clamber on top of you **hoping that what you English call a shag fest will shield them from the ravages of time (8).**

Description: The source text is hijacked by the translator, who adds the cultural referent “and none of them much like Solomon the harem lord, who managed to have 600 wives and still survived and appear wise (sic)” in the target text. Moreover, the implicitly and subtly stated source text rhetoric “...ils vous disent qu’ils vous apprendront l’art de la manière” is rendered explicit by translating it as “Follow me girl and I’ll show you fucking!”

Explanation: The central issue here is untranslatability, due to lack of similar situational features between the original language and the target language while the outcome is hypocritical translation. The failure of the translator to respect the norms of the activity thus engenders a space of subversion.

Excerpt 4 Identification

Source Text: *J’entre dans les tourmentations des femmes de petite taille lorsqu’elles font face à une rivale*

dont l’ombre gigantesque coupe la vue à hauteur d’homme ; dans celles d’une vieille que son mari cocufie grâce à l’élixir d’une jeune aussi fraîche qu’un printemps ; dans celles d’une inculte qui doit tenir cette tête à l’ensorcellement d’une philosophe (58).

Target Text: I suffer the torments of small women who have to cope with a rival whose shadow looms so large it makes the man blind, **the torments of old women who are being cheated as their husbands chase tail, seeking the elixir of youth between thighs of a twenty year old girl who is as fresh as the spring.** The torments of a girl who hardly reads but whose man is smitten with someone who offers philosophical wisdom (44).

Description: The source text cultural referent “...une vieille que son maricocufie grâce à l’élixir d’une jeune aussi fraîche qu’un printemps” is rendered as “old women who are being cheated as their husbands chase tail, seeking the elixir of youth between thighs of a twenty-year-old girl who is as fresh as the spring.” There is a displacement of the source language image in the translation, through the addition of two images, “chase tail” and “between the thighs” which have moved the source language cultural referent from implicit to explicit.

Explanation: The rendering is a manipulation of the source text which engenders an elitist translation with complex deconstructions of the source text images to create wordplay that will “cause readers to marvel at such linguistic virtuosity” (Von Flotow 1998:6), and recreates a space of difference where the translation will be read.

Excerpt 5 Identification

Source Text: *Moi, je suis une Nègresse blanche et la nourriture est un poison mortel pour la séduction. Je fais chanter mon corps en épluchant mes fesses, en râpant mes seins, convaincue qu’en martyrisant mon estomac les divinités de la sensualité s’échapperont de mes pores (21).*

Target Text: I am a white negro woman and food poisons my powers of seduction. I make my body sing by peeling my buttocks, **by minimising my breasts,** convinced that if I make a martyr of my stomach, **I’ll win a great prize. The pores of my trim body will exude divine sensuality (15).**

Description: By hijacking the source text, the translator triggers an emphasis change in the target text through grammatical shifts, as illustrated below: from a noun phrase “la nourriture est un poison mortel pour la séduction” to a verb phrase “food poisons my powers of seduction”; from a noun phrase “les divinités de la sensualité” to an adjectival phrase “divine sensuality”; the phrase “I’ll win a great prize” is added to the target text; and lastly, “mes pores” is extrapolated as “pores of my trim body.”

Explanation: Translation by addition increases the presence of the translator, who domesticates the target text to create familiarity for its readers through his choice of strategy and realises a visibility change. Notwithstanding these interventionist moves on the part of the translator, the target text is, however, well-adjusted to target language poetics and mirrors the source text style and meaning. Hence, there is a gain in the rendering which does not exist in a space of difference.

Micro-Textual Analysis of the Propagation of Meaning in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*

Excerpt 1 Identification

Source Text : « *Que la plus rusée gagne !* » dis-je, sincère.

-*C'est rare de nos jours les jeunes femmes qui aiment cuisiner, dit une voix dans mon dos (106).*

Target Text: "May the most cunning win," I say sincerely. *I have pulled off a cunning stunt because I am a cunning c...*

"It's not often that women like to cook these days," says a voice behind my back (76).

Description: The utterance "*jeunes femmes*" which is literally "girls" is rendered as "women." Also, the translator adds "I have pulled off a cunning stunt because I am a cunning c..." is added to the target text, even though the utterance is quite simple and easy to decode and re-code.

Explanation: The outcome of the strategy is a hypocritical translation that is at variance with translation theory. Thus, the rendering is moved to a space of deviation.

Excerpt 2 Identification

Source Text: *Et tandis que les phares des voitures balayent les vitres, des souvenirs de ma mère sautent à ma mémoire comme des braises. Derrière nos portes claquemurées – parce que la nuit appartient aux esprits – maman débarrasse la table et empile les assiettes dans la cuisine... (21)*

Target Text: And while car headlines sweep across the windows, **my mother leaps into my mind. The English poet Craig Raine speaks of the onion memory, but memories are warmer, embers in my neurons.**

Behind closed doors – because the night belongs to the spirits – mother clears the plates up in the kitchen (14).

Description: In the translation, the source text simile "*comme des braises*," which means "like embers" is deleted, while to extrapolate the source language cultural referent, the translator inserts an awkward explanatory note: "The English poet Craig Raine speaks of the onion memory, but memories are warmer, embers in my

neurons." The foregoing cultural referent is added to the target text to compensate for the loss incurred. Also, the source language cultural referent is compensated later by the addition of "embers in my neurons."

Explanation: The central issue that conditions the translation strategy is loss. Meanwhile, the translation strategy applied is refraction, and the outcome of the strategy is a hypocritical translation that carries the cultural referent but has no meaning of effect for the target language reader. Here, textual exhibitionism moves the rendering to a space of deviation where norms are completely subverted.

Excerpt 3 Identification

Source Text: *Il est tard dans la nuit. Paris est un coupe-gorge. Dans la Rue Saint-Denis, des putes se transforment en usine à miel et illusionnent les immigrés. Les branchés se trémoussent sur la piste des Bains-Douches. C'est l'heure où une femme trompée pourrait gueuler sur sa malchance (40).*

Target Text: Late night, Paris is a cutthroat city. **In Rue St Denis the tarts strut their honey pussy and make the immigrants dream and drool.** Cool folks make for the Baths and Showers. **There are bitching hours** when a wronged woman can howl of her bad luck (30).

Description: The source text cultural referent "*des putes se transforment en usine à miel et illusionnent les immigrés*" is rendered as "the tarts strut their honey pussy and make the immigrants dream and drool." Moreover, the use of personification in the cultural referent that describes the city of Paris in the excerpt "*Paris est un coupe-gorge*" is changed to a verb phrase: "Paris is a cutthroat city," while a new target language cultural referent, "bitching hours" is added to the translation. Also, "*gueuler*" is rendered as "howl," which maintains the collocation with "bitching hour," since it is believed that female dogs (bitches) usually "howl" in protest of their loneliness when they are on heat.

Explanation: Through refraction, four new cultural referents are introduced into the target text excerpt, that is, "honey pussy," "drool," "bitching hour," and "howl." The translation is thus hijacked, and source language images are reshaped in the target text rendering. Implicit cultural referents used in the source text are transformed into the explicit and, therefore, offensive new images are created in the target language. Also, by changing the source text style from the use of personification to a noun phrase, the author's style is emasculated. Hence, it is complete deviation in the translation of cultural referents in this excerpt, which deconstructs the utterance and creates a new text.

Excerpt 4 Identification

Source Text: *La police arrête un malfaiteur et lui passe des menottes. Les marchands de primeurs oublient de*

servir les clientes pour observer la scène. Des femmes bigoutées sortent sur leurs balcons (44).

Target Text: Reality is quite dramatic. The cops have arrested some moronic tea leaf – *I won't assume my readers are familiar with that marvellous patois Cockney rhyming slang where the phone is the dog and bone, and the thief is a tea leaf* – and handcuffed him. **The greengrocers pay no attention to anyone who wants to buy fruit and veg because they're mesmerised by Law and Order doing its duty before their eyes. Women lean on their balconies (33).**

Description: The source language cultural referent expressed through the utterance "*La police arrête un malfaiteur...*" is hijacked and rewritten in English as "The cops have arrested some moronic tea leaf..." Meanwhile, the translator inserts the explanation "... I won't assume my readers are familiar with that marvellous patois Cockney rhyming slang where the phone is the dog and bone and the thief is a tea leaf," to bring his diction to the understanding of the target reader and explain that the cultural referent is expressed in Cockney. Lastly, the cultural referent "*femmes bigoutées*" is translated simply as "women."

Explanation: The central issue here is the problem of cultural distance between the source and target cultures. For instance, the loss in translation of the cultural referent that indicates that the women on their balconies are dressed in "Bigout," dresses – Bigout is a brand of expensive clothing typically worn by upper middleclass French women – leads to a complete loss in translation of the cultural referent. Hence, the outcome of the strategy is an elitist and inaccessible rendering that cannot be understood without the additional notes that explain the cultural value of the source text cultural referent. The translation does not conform with source text cultural referents. Hence, the rendering is in a space of divergence.

Excerpt 5 Identification

Source Text: « *Un homme qui vous fait ressentir de telles émotions, mérite le paradis !* » Puis, vas-y que je coupe, que j'assaisonne. « *Y a-t-il assez de sel et de poivre ?* » (26)

Target Text: A man who makes you feel like that, she used to say, **deserves the best, a slice of Heaven so better get slicing and seasoning.** Is there enough salt? Enough pepper in the pot? (20)

Description: The cultural referent "*Un homme qui vous fait ressentir de telles émotions, mérite le paradis...*," means that a woman must give a man everything – Heaven – before he can be satisfied. It is hijacked and rendered as "A man who makes you feel like that, she used to say, deserves the best, a slice of Heaven." The rendering "... *le paradis*" is reduced in the target

language to "a slice of Heaven." The rendering, in contrast to the source language cultural referent, means that a man a practical being who needs just a little – a slice – from a woman to be satisfied. The addition of "deserves the best" in the target text results in explicitness change. Also, the cultural referent "*Y a-t-il assez de sel et de poivre?*" is hijacked by compensation and rendered as "Is there enough salt? Enough pepper in the pot?" The target language cultural referent has the image of the "pot" added to it, which creates an additional image that is not in the source text.

Explanation: The translator uses textual exhibitionism to ignore the rhetoricity of the source language cultural referent and produces a target language cultural referent that strips the translation of the stylistic signature of the source text. The central issue faced is the problem of both loss and gain, while the outcome of the translation strategy is a hypocritical translation that erases source text images. Hence, the rendering of cultural referents in this excerpt is completely unorthodox.

Micro-Textual Analysis of the Translation of Cultural Manifestations of the Source Language Group in *How to Cook your Husband the African Way*

Excerpt 1 Identification

Source Text: *J'ai envie de le calmer : « Je te cuisinerai un pépé-soupe, mon amour, afin que tu jaillissent de tes artères le rouge des passions et le vert de tendresse. » J'ai envie de hurler : « Je tecuisinerai un pépé-soupe, afin de tisser entre nous un lien de paix sacré sur lequel se heurteront les scories créées par le quotidien d'une vie de couple. » (108)*

Target Text: I want to say to him 'I will cook you grandpa soup, my love, which will fire the red of your passion and the green of your tenderness and make between us a sacred place, a realm of peace, where we can shelter from the slings and arrows of daily life.' (77)

Description: The cultural referent "*pépé-soupe*" is rendered by transliteration as "grandpa soup," while the second repetition of the cultural referent "*Je tecuisinerai un pépé-soupe*" is completely deleted.

Explanation: The central issue is the absence of a functional equivalence with an expressive identity that can have the similar sense for the target text culture. The source culture food, "pepper soup," which is a kind of spicy broth made with fish or meat, does not exist in the target culture. Also, the omission of the second repetition leads to loss of emphasis intended by the author by voicing the same appeal twice. The rendering is a hypocritical translation which totally displaces the source text meaning of the cultural referent.

Excerpt 2 Source Text: *J'en ferai un amant à défaut d'un mari, me dis-je. Je vais le cuisiner dans une daurade aux piments rouges jusqu'à ce qu'il devienne mou de dedans, moelleux et fondant comme un chocolat au soleil. Qu'il en perde le sens ! Qu'il éjacule ! Qu'il crève ! J'ai une illumination soudaine...* (64)

Target Text: I teether like a woman who'se (sic) drunk. I will make him my lover even if I don't make him my husband, I say to myself. **I'll cook him sea bream with red peppers till he becomes** soft inside, runny and melts like chocolate under the sun. Let him lose his senses. **Let him come.** Let him die. Suddenly, I'm inspired... (48)

Description: The source language utterance "*Je vais le cuisiner dans une daurade aux piments rouges...*" is rendered as "I'll cook him sea bream with red peppers..." Also, "*Qu'il éjacule*" is translated as "Let him come," which moves the cultural referent from the explicit to the implicit.

Explanation: The rendering of the cultural referent "cooking a man" as "cooking for a man" is a total mistranslation of the source text cultural referent. The source text cultural referent pertains to the act of using food (which possibly contains love potions) to make a man fall in love with a woman, a practice that is common in Africa, while the target language referent points to the act of cooking food for a man. Moreover, although "to ejaculate" is figuratively referred to as "to come," the target language manipulation of the source text cultural referent through modulation leads to a loss of meaning. The author reshapes source language poetics to filter the source language cultural referent and create a new, more "acceptable" cultural referent in the target language that leaves its readers at a loss. The central issue here is linguistic and cultural difference which makes the meaning in context of both utterances difficult to decode and recode.

Excerpt 3 Identification

*J'ignore quand je suis **devenue blanche**, mais je sais que **je me décrêpe les cheveux avec du Skin Success fort** (12).*

I don't know when I **turned from ebony to ivory**, but I do know that I **smear my hair with a product called White Glow. Guess what it does?** (7)

Description: The cultural referent "*quand je suis devenue blanche*," which refers to the practice of skin bleaching by African women, is rendered as "when I turned from ebony to ivory," with an addition of "turned from ebony." Also, the cultural referent "*je me décrêpe les cheveux avec du Skin Success fort*" which means to straighten one's hair with Skin Success, a common practice by Black women, is translated as "I smear my

hair with a product called White Glow." White Glow is a skin bleaching product same as Skin Success, hence the author's intention is maintained in the target language. However, the translator also goes to intervene in the target text by adding "Guess what it does?"

Explanation: The translation of cultural referents is done through cultural substitution, which hijacks the source text meaning but incurs a gain. The outcome is an ethno-deviant target text that is riddled with semantic voids that in turn create lacunas for the target language reader's understanding. The outcome is an acceptable decoding and recoding of the source text cultural referent and the author's intention.

Excerpt 4 Identification

Source Text : *Je n'ai pas perdu mes racines au point de ne pas savoir que le **marabout** peut exiger des choses saugrenues : **des premières suées prélevées sous les aisselles** de l'ensorcelé à quatre heures du matin ; ses dents de lait ou les règles de sa mère. Je n'ignore rien de ces complications à vous envoyer errer comme un bateau fantôme* (47).

Target Text: I haven't gone so flippy that I don't know **guru guides** are liable to make weird demands – and not just for money. Gather the **sweat of your brow at 4 in the morning**. Give me your milk teeth or phial of your mother's menstrual blood. **Tongue of frog and eye of newt as Macbeth was told.** I know a good deal about complications which give you headache and send you on a wild goose chase after a phantom vessel (35 -36).

Description: The cultural referent "*Je n'ai pas perdu mes racines*" is rendered as "I haven't gone so flippy," which is not a target language functional equivalence, since the first means "to lose one's roots" while the other means "to lose one's mind." Also, the cultural "*des premières suées prélevées sous les aisselles de l'ensorcelé*" is translated as "the sweat of your brow."

Explanation: There is a displacement of the source text cultural referent which talks about sweat from the armpits of the one who is bewitched, into the target language cultural referent, which mentions sweat from the brow and makes no mention of the fact that the individual is bewitched. Culturally, in African tradition, it is believed that sweat from the armpits/genitals is more potent for casting spells than that which comes from the brows. Also, "*vous envoyer errer comme un bateau fantôme*" is translated as "send you on a wild goose chase after a phantom vessel," which is a mistranslation. The source language cultural referent is a simile, while the target language cultural referent is rendered by an idiomatic expression, "wild goose chase." However, the translator adds "after a phantom vessel," which completely waters down the rendering of the cultural referent because of the literalness of the utterance.

Excerpt 5 Identification

Source Text: *Adopter les stratagèmes de séduction africaine : suis-je capable de consacrer trois jours à me confectionner des tresses si fines qu'on les croirait tissées par une machine ? (54)*

Target Text: I could adopt Afro, seduce a man wiles. **Do I have the energy to devote three days to making my hair so thin that you'd imagine it had been styled by a combing robot? (40)**

Description: The cultural referent "*me confectionner des tresses si fines qu'on les croirait tissées par une machine*" is translated as "making my hair so thin that you'd imagine it had been styled by a combing robot." Here, the source language cultural referent "les tresses" refers to "braids" or "plaited hair," while "tisser" is the verb "to braid" or "to plait." However, due to cultural difference between the source text author and translator, the cultural referent "*tissées par une machine*" is rendered as "styled by a combing robot."

Explanation: The source language cultural referent is displaced and replaced by a new target language cultural referent, as a functional equivalent with an invariable meaning. The rendering makes the target text cultural referents accessible to its readers, because English women comb and do not braid their hair. However, it strips the cultural referent of the author's identity as an African woman. Based on the above analyses, the findings of this research are discussed below.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In fact, Beyala's novel is particularly characterised by cultural referents that prove difficult to render into the target language. Faced with this difficulty, the translator resorted to strategies which are not suitable for these cultural elements. The result is the absence from the target text of what Catford (1965) terms "relevant situational features" of the source text. This absence of important source text situational features has resulted in what Dagut (1978:45 cited by Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997:196) refers to as "semantic voids", "lacunas," "blank spaces" or "gaps" in the translated version.

From the analysis above, the author's social meaning deposits are clearly in conflict with those of the translator. Hence, the translator hijacks the source language cultural referents by supplementing, compensating for losses, and refraction strategies, which he uses to adjust source language poetics to the target language to the extent that the rendering of cultural referents is no longer accurate reflections of the source text utterances. What is produced has more losses than gains, since the cultural referents are rewritten and reshaped to converge with the target reader's expectations.

Admittedly, the translator resorted to hijacking most of the time, which caused him to manipulate, modify, defer and displace the source language cultural referents in the target text because he was conditioned by cultural constraints that hindered his decoding and recoding the text-in-situation, which was full of extra-linguistic elements that posed a barrier due to cultural and linguistic differences between the author and the translator. This goes to support Newmark's (1988:49) assertion that "the more culturally remote in time and space a text, the less is equivalent effect even conceivable unless the reader is imaginative, sensitive and steeped in the SL culture." The result is, therefore, exoticism in the target text because instead of hijacking the target text with equivalent target culture cultural referents, the translator resorted to a grave transposition of source text cultural referents into the target language. This, consequently, results in a was a completely different target text. Such a translation can only meet with resistance from the target reader, who will be further alienated from it and suffer discontinuity in understanding the cultural referents therein. Meanwhile, this issue could have been resolved if the translator had opted for couplets (a joint strategy) by searching for functional equivalents in the target culture and notes to clear source language ambiguity and enhance target language understanding.

The use of Cockney to translate some slang clearly indicates that the translator and his client had in mind an audience for this translation, which proves that at the planning phase the stakeholders selected adaptation as the global strategy. The onus was now on the translator to do a careful selection of relevant local/micro strategies that would be suitable to adaptation as a global translation approach. This, however, is not the case, for the approach used is a hodgepodge hijacking as a global strategy and its micro strategies such as supplementing, compensation, addition, refraction, etc. Such a mix points to some weaknesses on the part of the translator, insofar as his competence is concerned. The effect of these translation strategies is what produced an exotic and foreignised text that the target language reader would find hard to identify with.

Furthermore, one could still argue that the translator deliberately chose to translate source language cultural referents by the oblique translation strategy. The aim was to produce a target text that will be foreign and exotic, as a means of showcasing the local colour of the source text culture to his English audience, thereby displaying to them how totally different English cuisine and way of life are from the source culture cuisine, mores and folkways. However, this argument will not be tenable because the translator has clearly chosen the use of Cockney to render some parts of the text, which indicates he is not interested in showcasing the source language culture.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, therefore, one could say there is only marginal translatability of cultural referents between two such fundamentally different languages and cultures as the source and target cultures, despite claims by theorists that whatever is conceived in any language can always be translatable into another to serve a given purpose for the receiving culture. It is, therefore, a given that the translator's inadequacies were less from discrepancies inherent in the source and target text cultures, than from his failure to put in more in terms of the preliminary findings which should have enabled him to come up with the pre-text of the translation. For instance, in the Translator's Note, he declares: "There are also few cooking terms I had trouble with – mainly the different words for *macabo* and *messepe* and *ngombo*. The only translation for *ngombo* I can find is slave. I have now left these in the original (3)." Indeed, this confession is a clear indication that hijacking was not a deliberate choice, but rather a random alternative imposed by constraints faced by the translator. In fact, such difficulties would have been eliminated if he done any preliminary findings from people of Beyala's culture, from whom he would have had explanations which could have directly pointed to equivalent designations of staples such as *ngombo* (okra), *macabo* (taro root), *messepe* (wild basil), etc. This confession reveals that leaving these cultural referents in the original language was not as a matter of choice, but rather of weakness. Moreover, to arrive at an acceptable rendering of ethnographic cultural referents in the target language text, the translator should have aligned with a single deliberate macro strategy, complemented by several micro strategies relevant to his chosen global strategy to overcome the hurdles which conditioned his translation.

This study demonstrated that the challenge of rendering cultural referents is even greater when the translator and author are from different backgrounds and cultures. Moreover, it went further to demonstrate that although the hardest choice the translator had to make was the choice of global strategy, the hard choice was not only on whether to domesticate or hijack the translation, but also on which local strategies would complement the choice of global strategy. One could, therefore, conclude that to settle on his choices, the translator acted in congruence with Levine's (1991:83) assertion that a translated text must subvert the original if one does not only consider the losses through translation, but also what is regained once the language barrier is breached.

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