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TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF ONOMASTIC REALIA (PROPER NAMES) IN TWO TRANSLATED WORKS OF D. O. FAGUNWA

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Abstract

The translation of proper names in literature is a critical aspect of the broader process of translation, a conduit for conveying cultural meanings, symbols, and identities which has attracted sparse considerations in research. This study explores the translation strategies used in the rendering of proper names in D.O. Fágúnwà's works, specifically focusing on place names and person names, as analyzed through Vinay and Darbelnet's translation procedures and Nyström's onomastic theory. By examining the translation of Yoruba proper names in Fágúnwà's texts, this study investigates the delicate balance translators must maintain between preserving the cultural, symbolic, and linguistic integrity of the source text while making the translated names comprehensible to the target audience. The study highlights various strategies, including borrowing, adaptation, literal translation, and modulation, and their relevance in a Yoruba-English context. Through detailed examples, the research demonstrates how each strategy works to either retain or transform cultural significance, ensuring that the essence of the original text is conveyed to an English-speaking audience. By applying the theoretical frameworks of Vinay and Darbelnet and

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Nyström, the study provides valuable insights into the complexities of translating proper names in literary works and emphasizes the critical role of these names in cross-cultural communication and identity. The findings suggest that the translator's choices are central to both the preservation of cultural richness and the accessibility of the text, with implications for further research in translation studies and onomastics.

Introduction

Onomastics, the study of names and naming conventions, is a specialized branch of linguistics that delves into the origins, meanings, and functions of names. Derived from the Greek word onoma, meaning "name," this field encompasses a wide array of disciplines, including linguistics, history, anthropology, sociology, and geography, which highlights the multifaceted nature of names and their deep significance in human societies. Onomastics broadly refers to the scientific study of names and includes an analysis of proper names - such as personal names (anthroponyms), place names (toponyms), celestial names (astronyms), and animal names (zoonyms) - while exploring their etymology, cultural relevance, and socio-linguistic roles. Scholars in this field examine how names operate within different contexts and communities, revealing valuable insights into identity, culture, and historical narratives.

Notable contributions to the development of onomastics include Pulgram's seminal work 'Theory of Names' (1954), which established foundational principles for the study of names. Contemporary scholars, such as Coates in *A Historical Introduction to English Onomastics* (2006) and Hanks in *Dictionary of American Family Names* (2003), have expanded our understanding of the linguistic and cultural dimensions of names. Coates, for example, investigates the semantic and pragmatic roles of names, while Hanks explores their sociolinguistic significance. Onomastics also interacts with other disciplines, such as sociology and anthropology, where scholars explore how names function within societal structures, and geography, which examines the spatial distribution and historical evolution of place names.

Beyond its academic significance, the study of names has practical applications in literature, history, and identity studies. In literary works, names often carry symbolic meaning and are essential for character development, plot advancement, and thematic exploration. Literary onomastics, therefore, focuses

on how names are used within narratives to reflect character traits, societal roles, and broader cultural or philosophical themes, thus enriching our interpretation of the text. Thus, onomastics provides a lens through which we can better understand the linguistic, cultural, and historical facets of human experience.

Proper Names in Literature

In literature, proper names serve as distinct identifiers, marking characters, places, or objects and differentiating them from common nouns. These names are often laden with deeper cultural, historical, or symbolic meanings that enrich the narrative (Algeo, 2000). Proper names are central to literature, offering insights into the identities and backgrounds of the entities they designate, and adding layers of meaning to a text (Obiechina, 1990).

Proper names in literature serve multiple functions. They act as markers of identity, connecting individuals to their heritage, familial lineage, and social affiliations (Algeo, 2000). In many cultures, including Yoruba culture, proper names encapsulate rich cultural narratives, reflecting familial expectations, historical events, and societal values (Mbarachi and Igwenyi, 2018). These names are not merely identifiers but carry profound symbolic significance, contributing to the thematic depth of the work and enhancing the reader's understanding of the cultural context (Obiechina, 1990).

In African cultures, particularly in Yoruba traditions, names are deeply intertwined with identity and cultural transmission. Names serve as vehicles for preserving and passing down cultural values, histories, and societal roles. They reflect the social context and personal attributes of the named individual, thereby shaping their narrative role. As such, in literary works, proper names do more than distinguish characters—they serve as symbolic markers that help to explore the social, cultural, and philosophical themes of the story (Mbarachi and Igwenyi, 2018).

The symbolic significance of names is evident in the works of authors such as D.O. Fagunwa, whose narratives are rich with cultural references and mythological symbolism. Fagunwa's use of proper names—particularly in reference to deities, spirits, and moral lessons—reflects his deep engagement with Yoruba cosmology and oral traditions (Abimbola, 2006). These names not only add a layer of mythological depth to his works but also function to educate readers about the values and belief systems integral to Yoruba culture.

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Statement of the Problem

Translation studies have long highlighted the challenges involved in translating culturally loaded proper names, particularly in literary works. Scholars such as Hermans (1988) have discussed the semiotic significance of names in translation, emphasizing the delicate balance translators must maintain between preserving the original cultural meaning and adapting names for the target audience. Berman (2000) has explored the ethical implications of such decisions, noting that the translation of culturally embedded names requires careful consideration of both the source and target languages.

In African literature, particularly in postcolonial texts, scholars like Bandia (2008) and Gyasi (1999) have analyzed the complexities of translating culturally specific elements, including names. They argue that the translation process should retain the cultural integrity of the original text while making it accessible to a wider audience. However, these studies often focus on general translation strategies rather than specific case studies or authors.

Although existing research on D.O. Fagunwa's translated works - such as Olofinsao (2018), Adeyefa (2021), and Adeyefa (2022) - has explored various aspects of symbolism and translation strategies, none provide a comprehensive analysis of the specific strategies used to translate the complex proper names in Fagunwa's works. This study aims to fill that gap by focusing on the translation strategies and the symbolism of proper names in two of Fagunwa's translated novels, *The Forest of a Thousand Daemons* and *The Mysteries of God*. It will employ Vinay and Darbelnet's translation procedures alongside Nyström's onomastic theory to explore how these names have been rendered in translation and to what extent their symbolic meanings have been preserved or altered.

Aim and Objectives

The translation of proper names in literary texts presents a unique challenge, as these names often carry cultural, historical, and symbolic significance that extends beyond simple identification. This study seeks to investigate the translation strategies used for proper names and their embedded symbolism in two of Fagunwa's translated works. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify and categorize the proper names in The Forest of a Thousand Daemons and The Mysteries of God.
2. To examine the translation strategies applied to these proper names.
3. To analyze the symbolic meanings embedded in these names.

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Research Questions

1. What categories of proper names are found in the two selected Fagunwa texts?
2. What translation strategies have been employed in the rendering of these names?
3. What symbolic meanings are conveyed through these proper names?

Justification of the Study

The translation of proper names in literary works presents numerous challenges, particularly in texts laden with cultural symbolism, as is the case with Fagunwa's writings. His works are rich in names that carry deep cultural, historical, and symbolic connotations, making their translation particularly complex. Despite the extensive literature on translation strategies, there is a gap in focused studies that examine the specific challenges and strategies involved in translating proper names in Fagunwa's works.

This study is crucial for several reasons. First, proper names in Fagunwa's narratives are not mere identifiers but integral carriers of cultural and historical meanings. Their translation demands a nuanced approach to ensure that their cultural and symbolic significance is not lost. Second, the findings of this study will shed light on the relationship between linguistic choices and cultural preservation, offering an in-depth analysis of the translation process. Finally, by integrating established translation theories with onomastic analysis, this study will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of translation strategies and enhance scholarly discourse in translation studies.

Significance of the Study

This study will significantly contribute to the field of translation studies by emphasizing the role of proper names as carriers of cultural and symbolic meaning. The findings will provide valuable insights into how translators navigate the delicate balance between remaining faithful to the source text and adapting to the cultural needs of the target audience. This is especially important in postcolonial literature, where preserving cultural identity is vital.

Moreover, this research will bridge the gap between translation theory and practice by illustrating how theoretical frameworks can be applied to practical translation challenges. It will also open new avenues for research by integrating

onomastic theory into translation studies, potentially influencing future studies on the translation of proper names across cultures.

Finally, this study will provide practical recommendations for translators working with culturally rich texts, offering guidelines for translating names in a way that preserves their symbolic and cultural integrity. It will be valuable for both future translators of Fagunwa's works and scholars in African literature and translation studies.

Review of Previous Studies

The translation of culturally rich names, especially in African literature, has been a subject of considerable academic interest. Olofinsao (2018) examined the role of symbolism in Fágúnwà's translated novels, highlighting the profound cultural and symbolic meanings embedded in the names within the texts. His analysis underscored the literary significance of symbolism as a pivotal element in sustaining the enduring relevance and cross-cultural appeal of Fágúnwà's works. Olofinsao argued that a translation approach that respects the cultural context and symbolic weight of names is essential for maintaining the integrity of the original text.

In a related study, Adeyefa (2022) offered a postcolonial perspective on African onomastics, particularly focusing on the translation of Yoruba names in Fágúnwà's works from their original Yoruba into European languages, such as French and English. Adeyefa explored the impact of translation on the cultural and symbolic meanings of these names, emphasizing the necessity for translators to preserve the cultural essence of names. His work drew attention to the intricate relationship between language, culture, and translation, advocating for a translation methodology that retains the original cultural connotations of names to maintain the richness of the source text.

While Olofinsao looked into the importance of symbolism in Fágúnwà's novels, Adeyefa concentrated on the techniques required for translating African names into European languages. Both scholars contributed valuable insights into the challenges faced in translating culturally dense names and the strategies needed to retain their cultural significance.

Panoramic views and works on naming arts and naming sciences

Ikromjonovna (2013) examines the theory of onomastics and its study in world linguistics. Onomastics, derived from the Greek "onomastike" (the art of naming),

is a branch of linguistics that explores nouns, their origins, changes, and classifications. It is divided into subfields, including *anthroponymy* (names of people), *toponymy* (geographical names), *theonymy* (gods and deities), *zoonymy* (animal names), *cosmonymy* (names of outer space regions), and *astroponymy* (celestial bodies). The article also distinguishes between realonyms (names of existing objects) and myphonims (names of imaginary objects), and categorizes onomastics into various types such as literary, dialectal, common, poetic, modern, historical, theoretical, and practical.

The field of onomastics, according to *Carsenat* (2013), has various applications, including in data mining, where it plays a key role in tasks such as named-entity recognition and identifying the origins of names. It is also widely used in historical research, especially for understanding ethnic minorities within populations and for prosopography, the study of individuals' biographies within historical contexts.

Mitzlaff and Stumme's (2013) paper, titled "Onomastics 2.0 - The Power of Social Co-Occurrences," explores the evolving role of onomastics in the digital age. Published on arXiv (arXiv:1303.0484 [cs.IR]), the paper focuses on how the study of proper names—traditionally grounded in historical and linguistic analysis—has gained new significance through the power of social co-occurrences. The authors highlight the integration of onomastics with modern technologies, particularly in data analysis and information retrieval, demonstrating how the interconnectedness of names in social and digital networks can reveal valuable insights into their meaning, distribution, and usage.

In his (2017) article, "How Criminal Were the Irish? Bias in the Detection of London Currency Crime, 1797-1821," published in *The London Journal* (Vol. 43, pp. 36–52), Adam Crymble examines the role of bias in the detection of currency crimes in London during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The paper explores how ethnic and national stereotypes, particularly those surrounding the Irish community, influenced the way criminal activity was perceived and prosecuted. Crymble analyzes the impact of these biases on law enforcement practices and the historical understanding of crime during this period.

In their 2023 work *Place Names: Approaches and Perspectives in Toponymy and Toponomastics*, Francesco Perono Cacciafoco and Francesco Cavallaro explore various methodologies and perspectives within the fields of toponymy (the study of place names) and toponomastics (the broader study of names and their meanings). The book offers a comprehensive analysis of how place names shape our understanding of geography, culture, and history, examining both traditional

and contemporary approaches to the study of toponyms. The authors highlight the significance of place names in reflecting linguistic, social, and historical developments across different regions and time periods.

In her 2009 work *The Anthropology of Names and Naming*, Gabriele Bruck explores the cultural, social, and psychological dimensions of names and the act of naming. The book examines how names function not only as identifiers but also as carriers of meaning, reflecting power dynamics, social structures, and cultural practices across different societies. Bruck delves into the anthropological significance of naming traditions, addressing how names are assigned, used, and altered, and how they shape and are shaped by individual and collective identities.

In their 1987 work *Names in Literature: Essays from Literary Onomastics Studies*, Grace Alvarez-Altman and Frederick M. Burelbach compile a collection of essays that examine the significance of names in literature through the lens of onomastics. The book explores how authors use names to deepen character development, enhance narrative themes, and reflect cultural and social contexts. The essays offer insights into the roles that names play in literary works, illustrating how naming practices contribute to the interpretation and understanding of texts across various genres and periods.

In their 2017 work *Socio-onomastics: The Pragmatics of Names*, Terhi Ainiala and Jan-Ola Östman explore the intersection of social dynamics and the study of names. The book focuses on the pragmatic aspects of onomastics, examining how names function within social contexts and how they convey meaning beyond their basic identification role. The authors delve into the social, cultural, and communicative functions of names, analyzing how they are used in everyday interactions, influenced by societal norms, and reflect broader social structures and relationships.

Idowu Odebode's (2016) article provides an ethnographic analysis of onomastics in Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, filling a gap in onomastic studies of Soyinka's work. Odebode argues that Soyinka uses names not just as identifiers but as cultural and thematic devices, reflecting socio-cultural backgrounds and enhancing the play's exploration of death and scapegoatism. He highlights that names shape characters' identities and contribute to themes of sacrifice, tradition, and colonial tension. The article emphasizes the role of the conversation genre in embedding deeper meaning in names, with naming serving as both communication and power. Odebode draws on theoretical frameworks to argue that Soyinka's naming strategies are key to the play's meaning, offering insight

into how names convey cultural values and identity. Overall, the article underscores the importance of onomastics in shaping the play's themes and characters, providing a deeper understanding of Soyinka's narrative.

Theoretical Framework

The translation of names in literature, particularly those laden with cultural and symbolic meaning, presents unique challenges for translators. This study integrates the translation procedures outlined by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) with Nyström's (2016) onomastic theory to address these challenges.

Vinay and Darbelnet's Translation Procedures

In their influential work *Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation* (1995), Vinay and Darbelnet introduced a systematic approach to translation, presenting two primary strategies: direct translation and oblique translation. Direct translation includes borrowing, calque, and literal translation, while oblique translation encompasses transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation. These strategies provide a framework for navigating the linguistic and cultural nuances inherent in name translation.

Nyström's Onomastic Theory

Nyström's (2016) onomastic theory focuses on the dual function of names as identifiers and carriers of cultural significance. According to Nyström, while names primarily serve as referential markers, their meanings are shaped by the cultural and historical context in which they are used. Therefore, the translation of names requires careful consideration of both their referential function and the cultural context they carry.

When combined with Vinay and Darbelnet's translation procedures, Nyström's theory provides a valuable tool for evaluating the socio-cultural and referential implications of names. For instance, when a name is borrowed directly into the target language, it preserves its cultural resonance. However, strategies like calque or literal translation may require the translator to balance the preservation of a name's cultural significance with the need to convey its meaning to the target audience. By integrating these theoretical frameworks, translators can more effectively navigate the complexities of translating names, ensuring that both their cultural and referential integrity are maintained.

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In summary, the integration of Vinay and Darbelnet's procedures with Nyström's onomastic theory offers a comprehensive approach to the challenges of name translation. This combined framework ensures that both the linguistic and cultural aspects of names are preserved, facilitating a more accurate and culturally sensitive translation process.

Methodology

The study focuses on two translated works by Fágúnwà: *The Forest of a Thousand Daemons: A Hunter's Saga* (1982), referred to as TT1, and *The Mysteries of God* (2012), referred to as TT2. These works are translations of the original Yoruba texts *Ogboju Ode Ninu Igbo Irunmale* (2005), referred to as ST1, and 'Adiitu Olodumare' (2005), referred to as ST2. These texts were purposefully selected for the study due to their rich use of proper names.

In the first phase, the study identifies and categorizes the proper names in both texts. These names were then classified into two primary categories: place names (toponyms) and person names (anthroponyms). After categorization, the study analyzes the translation strategies employed by the translators to handle these names. The primary aim is to understand how these strategies preserve, adapt, or modify the cultural and symbolic significance of the names in the target texts.

Synopses of the Texts

1. **Soyinka's *The Forest of a Thousand Daemons: A Hunter's Saga* (*Ogboju Ode Ninu Igbo Irunmole*)**

The Forest of a Thousand Daemons: A Hunter's Saga follows the adventurous journey of Akara-Ogun, a courageous hunter who recounts the story of his life. After the death of his father, who had married a shape-shifting witch, Akara-Ogun ventures into the mystical Irunmale forest. In this otherworldly realm, he encounters various supernatural beings, such as ghommids, kobolds, and sand-elves, including a formidable creature named Agbako. As Akara-Ogun faces numerous challenges, he uses his wit and bravery to overcome each one. Along the way, he meets a series of characters, including the helpful Iranlowo (meaning "Helpmeet") and Iwapele, a woman he loves but who tragically dies. The novel is steeped in Yoruba mythology, reflecting Akara-Ogun's resilience in the face of the fantastical and the real, highlighting a blend of heroism, wit, and the Yoruba worldview.

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2. **Obafemi's *The Mysteries of God* (*Adiitu Olodumare*)**

The Mysteries of God chronicles the journey of Adiitu, a young man who embarks on a quest to alleviate his family's poverty. Within the mystical forest, he faces numerous creatures and hardships, but by chance, he befriends a lion, which leads him to a rich source of elephant tusks. As he begins selling these tusks and amasses wealth, Adiitu settles in the town of Ajedubule, where he befriends Ademeto and marries Ademeto's sister, Iyunade. The novel combines elements of realism with fantasy and explores themes of perseverance, love, and the intersection of the supernatural and the everyday. Through Adiitu's journey, Fágúnwà intricately weaves Yoruba oral traditions and Western literary influences, examining both personal transformation and cultural significance.

These two novels are not only pivotal in exploring the depth of Yoruba cultural narratives but also present significant challenges for translators, particularly when dealing with names that carry cultural, historical, and symbolic weight. Understanding the translation strategies and the symbolism behind these names is essential for preserving the integrity of the original works in a cross-cultural context.

Analysis

Interpretative Comments on Table 1: Place Names and Their Translation Strategies

Table 1 presents the translation strategies used for place names from Fágúnwà's works, focusing on both literal and adaptive approaches to conveying the cultural and symbolic significance of the names.

1. Literal Translation: Several place names, such as 'Igbo Irunmale' ('The Forest of a Thousand Daemons') and 'Oke Langbodo' ('Mount Langbodo'), retain their original meaning in the translation. This strategy is employed when the translator aims to preserve the original cultural context and geographical references of the names, allowing readers to appreciate the symbolic depth of the locations. In this case, 'Igbo Irunmale' directly translates to 'The Forest of a Thousand Daemons,' maintaining both the cultural essence and the descriptive nature of the place, rooted in Yoruba mythology. Similarly, 'Oke Langbodo' becomes 'Mount Langbodo', preserving the geographical and cultural significance of the name.
2. Modulation: The translation of 'Ěmo' as 'Filth' demonstrates the use of modulation, a strategy where the meaning is transformed to reflect a

different perspective in the target language. The original name 'Ẹmo', meaning a place of filth or disgrace, carries significant symbolic weight in Yoruba culture. Translating it as "Filth" conveys the negative connotation and emphasizes the cultural context, but it may lose some of the more nuanced understanding of the name in its original setting.

3. Adaptation: 'Ile Korije-korimu' is translated as 'Household of Starvation', a notable example of adaptation. This strategy changes the original name to suit the cultural and contextual realities of the target audience. Here, the name's underlying meaning - denoting a place associated with hardship or deprivation - is preserved, but the specific Yoruba cultural context is generalized for a wider audience. This allows readers to grasp the thematic essence, even if they are unfamiliar with the Yoruba cultural reference.
5. Borrowing: In several instances, such as 'Ifehinti' and 'Ile Ope', the placenames are borrowed directly from the original text. This strategy allows the translator to maintain the integrity of the original culture and provide the reader with a sense of the authenticity of the setting. It reflects the importance of names in maintaining the cultural identity of the work, especially in cases where the names themselves carry significant symbolic or cultural weight. Borrowing preserves the original sound and meaning, making it easier for readers to encounter a piece of the original culture in its untranslated form.

Overall, the strategies employed in the translation of place names are carefully chosen to balance fidelity to the original text with the accessibility of meaning to the target audience. Literal translations preserve cultural significance, while modulation and adaptation serve to make the names more comprehensible or impactful for readers unfamiliar with the source culture.

Interpretative Comments on Table 2: Person Names and Their Translation Strategies

Table 2 focuses on the translation of person names in Fágúnwà's works, revealing the diverse strategies used to maintain the cultural depth and symbolic meaning of the names.

1. Literal Translation: The name 'Alade-igbo' is translated as 'the Crown Prince of Forests'. Here, the translator uses literal translation to retain both the referential and symbolic meaning of the name. 'Alade-igbo' refers to a royal

figure tied to the forest, a name imbued with authority and cultural significance. By translating it directly as 'the Crown Prince of Forests', the translator conveys the rank and the environment of the character, thereby preserving the essence of the original while making it intelligible to the target audience.

2. Equivalence: Several names, such as 'Iranlowo' ('Helpmeet'), 'Adanu' ('Loss'), and 'Idarudapo' ('Chaos'), are translated using equivalence. This strategy involves finding a corresponding name or term in the target language that conveys the same meaning. In the case of 'Iranlowo', the name is translated as 'Helpmeet', which effectively captures the function of the character as a helper or support figure. Equivalence allows the translator to convey not only the meaning of the name but also the character's role within the narrative. This strategy is helpful when direct translation might not evoke the same cultural or symbolic meaning for the target audience.
3. Borrowing: Several names, such as 'Iwapele', 'Ijamba', and 'Bilisi', are borrowed directly into the target text. Borrowing preserves the original phonetic and cultural elements of the name, allowing the reader to encounter a direct link to the original Yoruba text. This is particularly important for names with deep cultural or spiritual significance that might not have a straightforward equivalent in the target language. By borrowing these names, the translator ensures that the original cultural identity and symbolism are maintained.
4. Combination of Borrowing and Equivalence: The name 'Ijamba' is translated as 'Ijamba or Peril', combining borrowing with an explanatory term. This dual approach helps convey both the cultural weight of the original name and an explanation of its meaning. This strategy ensures that readers can access both the cultural significance of the name and its functional meaning in the narrative.
5. Literal Translation of Descriptive Names: Names like 'Were-orun' ('Lunatic of Heaven') are translated literally, with the meaning clearly conveyed in the translation. 'Were-orun' is a descriptive name, suggesting a person who behaves erratically, and translating it as 'Lunatic of Heaven' ensures that the reader understands the character's psychological or spiritual state. This approach allows for a faithful rendering of the character's identity, while providing the target audience with an immediate understanding of the name's connotation.

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Discussion of Findings

This section delves into the translation strategies employed in the translation of proper names, categorized according to the procedures outlined by Vinay and Darbelnet, with additional insights drawn from Nyström's onomastic theory. The aim is to understand how these strategies, such as borrowing, adaptation, literal translation, and modulation, work to preserve the cultural richness and symbolic significance of the names. By examining both the linguistic aspects of the translations and their cultural markers, this analysis reveals the delicate balance translators must strike between staying faithful to the source text and making the translated names comprehensible to the target audience.

Borrowing

Borrowing is the most straightforward translation strategy, where the original term or name is retained in the target text (TT) without modification. This approach is particularly useful when translating culture-specific elements that do not have direct equivalents in the target language. In literature, borrowing helps preserve the cultural flavor of the source text (ST) while introducing the target audience to unfamiliar cultural elements. For example, proper names such as *****Ifehinti*****, 'Ile Ope', and 'Ajedule' (place names), as well as 'Iwapele', 'Bilisi', and 'Tembelekun' (personal names), are examples of borrowing in Soyinka's translation of Fágúnwà's works.

Excerpt 1: Tembelekun

The character of 'Tembelekun' is retained in Soyinka's translation, highlighting the use of borrowing. In the Yoruba context, 'Tembelekun' denotes a character associated with strife, trouble, and malevolent actions. In the excerpt, Tembelekun is depicted as a cruel and monstrous figure who preys on human beings, emphasizing the sinister qualities of his name. This retains the symbolic weight of the original Yoruba name, which reflects the character's nature and role within the narrative.

Excerpt 1:

"The only thing that I detest about these employees of hell is that their bodies are sootier than the hearth, and their cruelty is worse than that of monkeys. Therefore, my husband, I greatly fear that Lamorin has fallen into the hands of

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Tembelekun, for Tembelekun eats neither yam nor maize, the human head alone is his meat-ah, what a pity." (Soyinka, 1982:66)

By maintaining 'Tembelekun' in the translation, Soyinka introduces the reader to a character whose name carries deep cultural connotations, establishing him as a figure associated with death and destruction. The use of this borrowing strategy helps preserve the symbolism inherent in the Yoruba culture.

Excerpt 2: 'Iwapele'

Another instance of borrowing is the name 'Iwapele, which retains its original form in the translation. The name 'Iwapele' in Yoruba refers to meekness or gentleness - qualities that are central to the character's identity. In the narrative, Iwapele contrasts sharply with the corruption and vice of the city she inhabits, a city described as a "veritable city of sinners." The name is not just a reflection of the character's personality but also serves as a beacon of hope and purity in a morally decayed environment.

Excerpt 2:

"My name is Iwapele and the name of this city is Filth. It is a place of suffering and contempt, a city of greed and contumely, a city of envy and of thievery, a city of fights and wrangles, a city of death and diseases – a veritable city of sinners…" (Soyinka, 1982:30-31)

The retention of 'Iwapele' in the translation underscores the character's symbolic importance, emphasizing how her actions—helping God's messengers—exempt her from the punishment that befalls the city's corrupt inhabitants. By retaining the name, Soyinka ensures that the cultural significance of 'Iwapele' as a symbol of purity is preserved.

Excerpt 3: 'Ilakose'

The town of 'Ilakose' is another example where borrowing is used to preserve the cultural significance of the name. The name 'Ilakose' refers to a particular type of small snail, and the symbolic meaning of the town, which embodies stagnation and poverty, is tightly bound to this name. By retaining Ilakose', Soyinka preserves the connection between the town's name and the impoverished, stagnant conditions of its inhabitants.

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Excerpt 3:

"They lived in a town called Ilakose. You may marvel at such a name for a town, as it reminds one of a small animal that resembles a snail…" (Obafemi, 2012:8)

In this case, the borrowed name reinforces the theme of stagnation, with the snails' small, unchanging nature symbolizing the town's inability to grow or progress.

Adaptation

Adaptation occurs when the situation described in the source text does not exist in the target culture, and the translator creates a new situation that conveys a similar meaning. This strategy ensures that the cultural context of the ST is adjusted to make sense within the target culture without losing its symbolic value.

Excerpt 4: 'Household of Starvation'

In 'Ile Korije-korimu', Fágúnwà uses a term specific to Yoruba culture, but Soyinka adapts it for the English-speaking audience as 'Household of Starvation'. This adaptation is necessary because the original term refers to a place of severe deprivation, a concept that may not have a direct cultural equivalent in the target culture. The translation reflects the meaning of the original name, highlighting the dire circumstances of the inhabitants.

Excerpt 4:

"Instantly I heard Lamorin cry out loud and warn me to take to my heels; when I asked him why, he told me that this very man was called Ijamba, or Peril, and that it was he who had fathered Loss who lived in the household of Starvation." (Soyinka, 1982:61)

By adapting the name 'Ile Korije-korimu' to 'Household of Starvation', Soyinka conveys the essence of deprivation, making it comprehensible to a broader audience while maintaining its symbolic weight.

Literal Translation

Literal translation involves transferring the meaning of the source text directly into the target text, preserving both form and content. This strategy is particularly effective when the cultural and contextual meanings of the source text can be directly communicated in the target language.

Excerpt 5: **Crown Prince of Forests**

An example of literal translation is seen in the name 'Alade-igbo', which is translated as 'Crown Prince of Forests'. This translation captures both the literal meaning of the name and its symbolic significance. The name 'Alade-igbo' identifies a character of great power and authority within the forest, a symbolic leader whose power is derived from the natural world.

Excerpt 5:

"I am the Crown Prince of Forests, the bog-troll who lives in crevices of the mahogany." (Soyinka, 1982:20)

By translating 'Alade-igbo' literally, Soyinka maintains the direct connection between the character's name and his role within the narrative, reinforcing the symbolic link between leadership and the natural world.

Modulation

Modulation involves changing the point of view in the translation, which results in a shift in the message's form. This strategy helps to make the translation more idiomatic and natural, ensuring that it resonates with the target audience while retaining the intended meaning of the source text.

Excerpt 6: Filth

In the case of 'Ěmo', which is translated as 'Filth', Soyinka uses modulation to shift the focus of the translation. While 'Ěmo' in Yoruba refers to something strange or abnormal, Soyinka's translation emphasizes the city's moral decay and corruption, using the term *Filth* to highlight the moral and physical decay of the inhabitants.

Excerpt 6:

"My name is Iwapele and the name of this city is Filth. It is a place of suffering and contempt…" (Soyinka, 1982:30-31)

This shift in perspective, from the strangeness of the city to its moral filth, provides a more vivid and culturally resonant translation for the target audience.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the translation of person names in these works is multifaceted, with strategies ranging from literal translation to borrowing and equivalence. Each strategy reflects a different level of engagement with the original cultural context,

and the choice of strategy often depends on the name's function within the narrative. Literal translations retain the essence of the names, while borrowing and equivalence ensure that cultural and symbolic meanings are effectively conveyed to the target audience. The careful selection of these strategies underscores the translator's role in bridging the cultural gap between the source and target languages while preserving the integrity of the original text.

This study of D.O. Fágúnwà's translated works highlights the diverse strategies used in translating proper names, which are essential for maintaining the cultural and symbolic essence of the original texts. Through the use of borrowing, literal translation, adaptation, and modulation, Soyinka successfully navigates the complex task of preserving cultural specificity while making the text accessible to an English-speaking audience. Each translation strategy serves a distinct purpose: borrowing and literal translation retain cultural and symbolic authenticity, while adaptation and modulation ensure that the names resonate with the target culture.

By integrating Vinay and Darbelnet's translation procedures with Nyström's onomastic theory, this study provides a robust framework for understanding the translation of proper names. The findings underscore the importance of preserving the cultural and contextual significance of proper names, emphasizing the need for translators to balance fidelity to the source text with accessibility for the target audience. This research contributes to the field of translation studies by offering a detailed examination of the translation of proper names, emphasizing their critical role in cross-cultural communication and literary translation.

Future research could expand on these findings by exploring the translation of proper names in other literary works and languages, further testing the applicability of Vinay and Darbelnet's procedures and Nyström's theory. Additionally, examining the reception of translated names by target audiences could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of various translation strategies in preserving the cultural and symbolic meanings embedded in proper names. This study not only advances translation theory but also enhances our understanding of the intricate relationship between language, culture, and identity in literary translation.

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