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TRANSLATING FAGUNWA: DECODING AND RECODING METAPHOR

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Abstract

There are existing studies on D.O Fágúnwà's novels from different perspectives, such as tradition, religion, myth and morality. On the contrary, his translated works have not been given much attention. This study therefore content-analyses codification of metaphor in Fagunwa's *Ògbójú Qdẹ̀ níńú Igbó Irúnmalẹ̀* (2005) translated into French by Oláoyè Abióyè as *Le Preux Chasseur dans la Forêt Infestée de Démons* (1989). It adopts the combination of Bassnett's decoding and recoding in translation process and Newmark's approach to translating metaphor. Bassnett posits that the translator operates on criteria that transcend pure mechanical re-rendering and a process of decoding and recoding is on stage. The idea of a code unit is isolated, interpreted and recoded with the TL sign unit which carries the notional image. The study examines 25 metaphoric expressions extracted from Fagunwa's aforementioned novel from both Yoruba and French versions respectively. Metaphor is brought to the fore, beyond literal or figurative perspectives, as an indispensable element of the semiotic system with which writers generate secondary semantic extension from primary reference thereby expressing socio-cultural values, beliefs and traditions in a profound yet concise manner. The paper thus concludes that the process of decoding and recoding African metaphors exposes the translator to several hurdles most especially when it (translation) involves languages of alien cultures like French. Abioye is justified in his systemic reproduction of some metaphoric elements from the Source Text Culture to the Target Text context.

Keywords: Metaphor, decoding, recoding, Fágúnwà, Abióyè

Introduction

The greatest thing of all by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is one thing that cannot be learned from others and it is also a sign of original genius, since a good metaphor implies the intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilar - Aristotle

Nigerian literary works written in English and translated into other European languages have immensely contributed to world literature and are rewarding Nigerian literary texts' translators (Africans and non-Africans). For example, almost every play of Soyinka has been translated into French. Elizabeth Javier translated 5; Éliane Utudjian Saint-André 3; while Etienne Galle translated 2 to mention a few. Obviously,

they are projecting the socio-cultural values of Nigerians to the international scene. The translation of Nigerian literary texts written in indigenous languages into foreign languages is a new dimension of literary transformation in the Nigerian literary context which has not received much attention.

A few scholars have helped in the translation of Nigerian indigenous literatures into foreign languages. In spite of the paucity of studies on this aspect, the available ones are obviously paving way for researchers to explore linguistic, cultural, and societal comparisons in novel perspectives. The assertion of Tunde Ajiboye (1993) noted by Adeleke (2005:123) further

streamlines this point on translators of indigenous literary texts:

The translators of indigenous texts are mostly motivated by their quest for intellectualism, the desire, to find an additional windows for expressing and exhibiting African indigenous culture, a chance to deliver 'home' wisdom on foreign soil and also to provide a comparative model, through translation of their 'way' and our 'ways'.

In the same vein, major works on translation have focused on fidelity, faithfulness and translatability, among others. The appraisal of translators' contribution in connection with indigenous literary translation studies has not been at the forefront of modern translation scholars. Meanwhile, there are some scholars who have done well in the translation of indigenous literary texts whose efforts should be commended. Notably, D.O. Fagunwa's¹ novel *Ogboju Ode Ninu Igbó Irunmale* (First published in 1950), originally written in Yoruba has been translated first into English as *The Forest of a Thousand Demons: A Hunter's Saga* (1982) by Wole Soyinka and later into French as *Le Preux chasseur dans la forêt infestée de démons* (1989) by Olaoye Abioye², which has been selected for analysis in this study. Other novels of Fagunwa had also been translated into French, English, German and Arabic. Wole Soyinka translated *Igbó Olodumare* (1949) as *The Forest of Olodumare* (1982); Dapo Adeniyi translated *Ìrìnkèrindò nínú Igbó Elégbèje* (1954) as *Expedition to the Mount of Thought (The Third Saga)* (1994); Olu Obafemi translated *Àdìitù Elédùmarè* (1961) as *The Mysteries of God* (2012); all from Yorùbá into English respectively. Olaoye Abioye translated the other four novels of Fagunwa into French. Aside *Ìrèké-Onibùdò* published in 1949, the other three texts are not yet published. He translated *Ìrèké-Onibùdò* (1949) as *La Fortune Sourit aux Audacieux* (1992); *Igbó Olódùmarè* (1949) as *La Forêt de l'Omnipotent*; *Ìrìnkèrindò Nínú Igbó Elégbèje* (1954) as *Parcours interminables dans la Forêt*

d'Elégbèje and *Àdìitù Olódùmarè* (1961) as *Mystères Divins*, respectively.

Indigenous translators' effort should be acknowledged. Although, the number of indigenous translated texts may be lesser than that of French translated into English and vice versa; nevertheless, the fact remains that there are indigenous texts translated into European languages. Other examples of indigenous translated works include Oladejo Okediji's Yorùbá play *Rerè run* (1973) translated as, *Catastrophe au rendez-vous* (2003) by Tunde Ajiboye and F.C Ogbalu's *Mbediogu* (1975) originally written in Igbo translated into French as *Mbediogu-la-torture* (1990) by Enock Ajunwa among others. All the cited works above are translated by Nigerian scholars. This attests to the fact that, there are indigenous texts translated by indigenous scholars into other languages.

Another aspect of the Translation Studies in the Nigerian context which has not been critically investigated is the comparative studies of indigenous Nigerian texts and European translated versions on one hand and different versions of the same indigenous translated texts (i.e. French and English) on the other hand. This is probably because most of these indigenous literatures use exoteric expressions; and they are expressed in a complex and subtle representation in translation processes. A translator is, therefore, confronted with the difficulty of translating culturally infused author(s). This is one of the major challenges of the translator of Fagunwa's works. One of the culturally infused difficulties faced by Fagunwa's translators is the peculiarity of his style. Fagunwa's novels are characterised by metaphor of everyday life. The transfer of these metaphorical strophes into French deserves a critical investigation.

It is against the foregoing, therefore, that this study investigates metaphorical codification system implied in the translation of *Le preux chasseur dans la Forêt Infestée de Démons* which is the French version of *Ògbójú ọ̀ḍẹ̀ nínú Igbó Irunmọ̀lẹ̀* (Henceforth *Le preux chasseur* and *Ògbójú ọ̀ḍẹ̀* respectively). It examines the translation of tactical use of metaphors by

Fagunwa. This is in order to richly reveal the significant inputs of the translator in the process of translating cultural and linguistic codes of a people's heritage.

Fagunwa's Novels and Translation

Fagunwa's novels are generally believed to be culturally transcendent. Bamgbose (2007) comments on semantic complexity of Fagunwa's novels; which on one hand, obviously affect its translational re-expression and its centrality to translation adequacy on the other hand. This is because interpretation is dependent on comprehension and there could not be an adequate interpretation without proper comprehension. He avows that:

Fagunwa's novels are to be interpreted more than one level. On the supernatural level, they are stories of adventure...at the deeper level: the journey is an allegory of life's journey with its attendant problems and difficulties. It is only through an understanding of this deeper level that we can attain the full meaning of the novels. ((2007:89)

Translators, as a result, are expected to comprehend, deverbilise and re-express with the consciousness of the entire levels employed by the source text's author. In the same vein, Gbadegesin O.A (2014:121) asserts that *le langage de Fagunwa se caractérise de la rhétorique. L'on pourrait établir cette impression à travers sa passion pour les mots, les expressions hyperboliques et les discours déclamatoires*. That is, the language of Fagunwa is characterised by rhetoric and that one can establish this impression from his passion for words, hyperbolic expressions and declamatory discourse. Bamgbose (2007:115) also alludes to Fagunwa's literary style when he stresses that:

Fagunwa's style is marked by the use of the following features: simile and metaphor drawn from everyday life, ideophones, proverbs, sequence of short sentences, expressive

imagery, repetition, humour, and negative description"

Among the literary figures which Bamgbose uses to describe Fagunwa's work is metaphor, in which he also reiterates its distinctiveness and plausibility. He maintains that the use of simile or metaphor drawn from everyday life is one of the unique features of Fagunwa's style. He creates a visual and arresting image, while at the same time showing his infinite capacity for acute observation. This is a task that Fagunwa's translators have to contend with in translation process.

The complexity of metaphor in literary translation process cannot be overstressed. In fact, Peter Newmark (1997) observes the significance and challenges of metaphor in translation practice that:

...the translation theorist is concerned with certain particular problems: metaphor; synonyms; proper names; institutional and cultural terms grammatical, lexical, and referential ambiguity; cliché, quotations; cultural; focus, overlap and instance, idiolect; neologism; poetry; jargon, of these problems, metaphor is the most important (189).

For this reason, the view of scholars differs on the translation of metaphor to the extent that some even submit to metaphoric untranslatability. For instance, Dagut (1976:22) submits that metaphor is not translatable, while Mason (1982:149) claims that it can be translated, as well as every other word. The assertion of Peter Newmark (1998:58) explicates the latter when he avers that metaphor can be translated, nonetheless there are inter-linguistic and inter-cultural bounds guiding its realisation. Therefore, it becomes imperative to observe the process of translating metaphor as propounded by theorists.

Decoding and Recoding Metaphor

It has been argued that every reading is an interpretation and every interpretation is a decoding of the text. Lefevere (2002:9) posits that "texts have to be seen as complex signifying systems and the task of the

translator is to decode and re-encode whichever of those systems is accessible". In translation, therefore, the task of a translator is to advance literary recreation where he/she has to decode signs with the ultimate aim of recoding for a target audience. Eugene Nida (2002:46) submits that "the product (of translation) is the result of a complex system of decoding and encoding on the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic levels..." Nida's translation model of decoding and encoding processes espoused by Susan Bassnett as decoding and recoding (2002) is of great importance in understanding the cognitive process of metaphorical translation analysis. According to Bassnett, the translator operates on criteria that transcend pure linguistic and a process of decoding and recoding is on stage. She claims that Nida's model of translation process illustrates the stages involved in decoding and recoding processes. It is the responsibility of a translator to consider the interpretation of the SLⁱⁱⁱ verbal sign units and carefully select a TL unit to encode a roughly similar verbal sign.

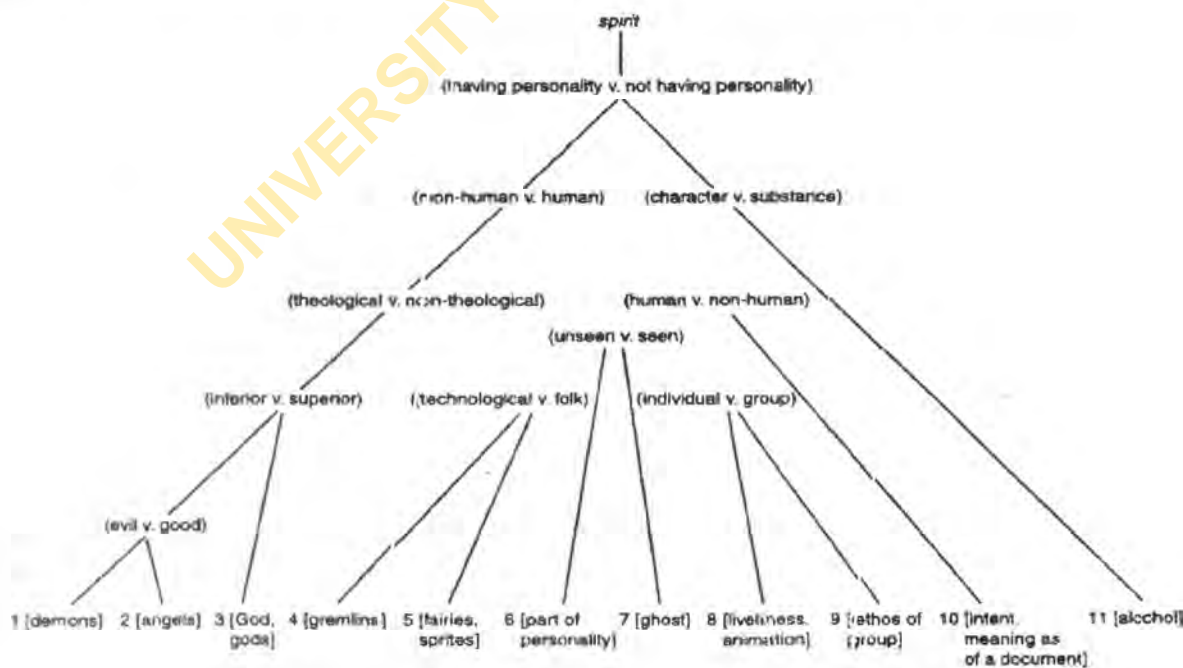
In translation, the notion of a code unit is isolated, interpreted and recoded with the TL sign unit that carries the same notion.

Ludskanow (1975) in *A Semiotic Approach to the Theory of Translation* lends credence to this when he posits that a semiotic transformation takes place during this process:

Semiotic transformations (Ts) are the replacements of the signs encoding a message by signs of another code, preserving (so far as possible in the face of entropy) invariant information with respect to a given system of reference (6)

By entropy, he means disorderliness in sign system. A translator should accept the difficulty of translating some verbal units, from the SL phrase in the TL on the linguistic level; and lack of a similar cultural contention in some instances. She cites the translation of French 'Bon appetit' into English where the exact literal translation is 'Good appetite'.

Nida argues that the translator must be conscious of several interpretations of a word and its usage in a special, structural, textual or cultural context. She diagrammatically presented the variation of the word 'spirit' in the English context.



Nida's diagram of a semantic structure of 'spirit'.Pg. 30

Bassnett (2002:29) uses an example of the use of 'spirit' in a sentence, "*The spirit of the dead child rose from the grave*". The spirit in the quoted sentence refers to 'ghost' which is No 7 on the diagram and not to any other in Nida's model. Meanwhile, in "*The spirit of the house lived on*" The spirit in this context could be No 5 (fairies, spirit), or No 7 (ghost). It can also be a metaphorical code denoting No 6 (part of personality) or 8 (liveliness, animation). In a nutshell, it is the context that determines the signification and its consequent recodification in the TT. She claims that in recoding 'Yes' and 'Hello' into French, Spanish and Italian, though it may seem simple at glance, based on the fact that all are Indo-European languages. They are primarily translated as 'oui' and 'si' in French, 'jo' in Spanish and 'si' in Italian, respectively.

However, the complexity becomes glaring in French with the option of 'oui' and 'si'. Hence, the encoded unit must be contextualized in the TL text to ascertain either 'oui' of generality tendency or 'si' which does specify affirmation in situation of contention, dissent and contradiction. It becomes more complicated with affirmative usage in conversational context, when 'Yes' has to be frequently double or 'strung' as in 'si, si, si,' or 'oui, oui, oui'. Translators (into French) should be observant of this rule when recoding the message into French. Therefore, in recoding, translator will have to employ a set of criteria so as to ascertain a suitable rendering in the TL text even though there might be reason for altering the structure in some contextual scenario. The target audience in recoding is the reader/listener. Therefore, Nida and Bassnett (2002) affirm that "The emphasis always in recoding is on the reader/listener, and the translation must tackle the SL text in such a way that the TL version will correspond to the SL version" (2002:29).

This exactly is the situation in the translation of metaphor and translators ought not to fail to convey to the target audience the emotional impact, affective value and exotic flavor that the source audience experience from the source text. Nida (2002: 33) quoted Dagut's (1972:21-33) remarks on the challenges of translating metaphor:

Since a metaphor in the SL is, by definition a new piece of performance, a semantic novelty, it can clearly have no existing equivalence in the TL: what is unique can have no counterpart. Here the translator's bilingual competence – 'le sens', as Mallarién put it 'de ce qui est dans la langue et de ce qui n'est pas' – is of help to him only in the negative sense of telling him that any equivalence in this case cannot be 'found' but will have to be 'created'. The crucial question that arises in this is whether a metaphor can strictly speaking, be translated as such, or whether it can only be 'reproduced' in some way.

From the foregoing deliberate long citation, it is clear that both Nida and Dagut attest to the difficulty of translating metaphors which is a new species of linguistic species in context and by that affecting its translatability. This is because the semantic equivalent cannot be deduced literally but through cognitive invention. Therefore, they submit to semantic production in the TT. The vagueness of "reproduction" does not ascertain the position of replacement of the source code using the target audience's language. Target audience's language which is central to the transfer of culture is not clearly examined in their postulation. However, Peter Newmark's (1998) postulation on the translation of metaphor caters for these lapses and also avows on the deviance of translating metaphor.

Newmark (2002:189) does not only confirm the challenge of translating metaphor, but also states that "of these problems (of translation), metaphor is the most important". However, he mentions four types of metaphor: Fossilized, stock, recently created and original; that one has to consider the metaphor, the object it relates to, the image (vehicle) and the sense (tenor, ground) before one translate. He propounds strategies for dealing with metaphor in translation. These are: transferring the image, finding equivalent images, converting the metaphor to a simile or sense plus the simile;

finally, most frequently, converting the image to sense, which may involve analysis into several components including figurative and concrete elements. Furthermore, a translator has to consider cultural, universal and personal elements in the metaphor.”(189)

This is expatiated as follows:

- (a) Preserving the same metaphorical image in the TL
- (b) Substituting it for standard metaphor in the TL
- (c) Changing the metaphor for comparison, retaining the image in the TL
- (d) Preserving the same metaphor plus an explanation or metaphor by simile plus an explanation in the TL.
- (e) Paraphrasing the metaphor in the TL
- (f) Deletion of metaphor if redundant or serves no practical purpose.

This approach will be employed in the analysis of the under listed metaphorical expressions. In line with the assertion of Levinson (2005:148) that “any discussion of metaphor or the tropes in general, is plagued by divergent classification and terminologies”, it becomes imperative to define metaphor in the course of this study.

Defining metaphor

The discourse of metaphor can be traced to Aristotle, who argues that metaphor is an implicit comparison based on the principle of analogy. Aristotle believes that metaphor is primarily ornamental (Ortny, 1979:3; Ayeleru, 2010:18). The traditional notion of metaphor is, therefore, from the Aristotelian study of rhetorical tropes viewed as a special use of language for special purpose. This purpose lies in societal reality projecting the clarity of a contextual idea. That is the reason, probably, behinds Munoz (2000) assertion that:

The problem, however, lies not on the use of a metaphor, which might be useful to illuminate an idea, difficult to grasp but on the fact of taking literally the consequences of such a metaphor and seeing it not as a purely conceptual abstraction but as the very nature of social reality (3)

Beyond that, critics argue that metaphor is not just a stylistic device, but an integral tool of human understanding, an

inescapable aspect of human thought (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1993; Budaev, 2009:265). Metaphors are not simply literary devices, but an active ingredient in understanding, that is why Newmark avows its centrality to translation theory. In his word Newmark (1981):

...metaphor is at the centre of all problems of translation theory, semantic and linguistic...I hope that linguists will treat it less trivially than they have up to now...a reevaluation of metaphor must precede a new understanding of translation, linguistics and philosophy (96)

Ikenna (2009:24) asserts that John Searle (1993) conceives metaphor pragmatically, while Cohen (1993) employs the semantic approach. On the other hand, George Lakoff (1993:238) condemns some of the contemporary assumptions on metaphor, such as the Gluckberg and Keysars's which states that “metaphor is simply a matter of categorization”. Lakoff (1993) avers that the conception “cannot account for either everyday conceptual metaphor...or really rich poetic metaphor.” He also disapproves the nontrivial assumption that “all every day, conventional language is literal and not metaphorical” Lakoff (1993:239). In relation to translation, metaphorisation which is conceived as a mapping of features from one conceptual domain, called the source domain, to another conceptual domain, called target domain (Budaev, 2009:265) is crucial to this study as it establishes relationship between metaphor and translation through the specific mapping of signs from the source text which are transferred to the target text. Newmarks (1988) concludes that:

Usually, only the more common words have connotation but at a pitch, any word can be a metaphor, and its sense has to be teased out by matching its primary meaning against its linguistic, situational and cultural context. (106)

Given the above evidences, in this study therefore, beyond the conception of metaphor from literal or figurative perspec-

tives, we see metaphor as an indispensable element of the semiotic system with which writers generate secondary semantic extension from primary reference thereby expressing socio-cultural values, beliefs and traditions in a terse manner.

Based on our submission of metaphorical conception, we shall highlight 25

metaphorical expressions^{iv} from *Ògbójú ode* which shall be juxtaposed with the TT version- *Le preux chasseur*. The metaphoric elements will be subsumed under several group headings. Subsequently, each will possess a number with which it shall be referred to in the general analysis.

S/N	Source text metaphor	Target text metaphor
a.	Mo ti rí òkun mo ti rí osà eru omi kan kò tùn bá mí mọ (p.48)	Ayant vu, de très près, les eaux de la mer et celles des océans, je n'ai plus peur de n'importe quelle autre eau (p.76)
b.	Mo ti itorí egàn mo ní egberin ore, bí irinwó bá nbú ni irinwoa má yin ni (p.36)	Pour me protéger contre la calomnie, j'ai décidé d'être en amitiés avec huit cents personnes croyant que si quatre cents parmi elles se mettaient à me dénigrer, l'autre moitié me tiendrait en équilibre en me trouvant louable (p. 55)
c.	Kannakánná ebá odò ni yìò sì yọ ojú olóore re je (p. 93)	C'est le corbeau du bord de la rivière qui viendra t'arracher les yeux. (p. 149)
d.	A jo má n wólé tí a sì jọ má njade (p. 36)	On entraît et on sortait ensemble (p.55)
e.	Mo fi ọwọ ara mi fa iwèrèpè mọra (p. 36)	Je suis l'auteur de mon malheur (p. 55)
f.	Enítí a bá se lóre tí kò bá mọ ọ n sọ ànfáni iwájú nù ni (p. 99)	Le comportement des ingrats mérite d'être condamné (p. 159)
g.	Iwá lewà, ewà kan kò sí nìbì kan (p. 95)	Très bonne humeur vaut mieux que la beauté (p. 153)
h.	Bi didùn tí mbe ní inú aiyé bẹ ni kíkorò mbe (p. 101)	Le chemin des êtres humains est jonché d'épines et de difficultés (p. 163)
i.	...rin ni ojo tí ebi ba n pa onà o (p. 93)	De partir en voyage le jour ou la route aura soif de sang (p. 150)
j.	...jẹbete sí gbé omọ lé e lowo (p. 93)	Sa férocité céda à la résignation (p. 150)
k.	Akara-ogun a-bá-olónjekú (p. 15)	Akara-ogun, gourmand de premier rang (p.25)
l.	...bá eše mi soro (p. 16)	...prendre la fuite... (p.25)
m.	Fi ise yí silè losan gangan (p. 21)	...renoncer, à mi-chemin, à cette carrière (p. 33)
n.	Lotọ ni olódodo tí tán, nwọn kò sí sí mọ sàsà enia ni a lè gbekelé labé orun (36)	Il est bien vrai que la malhonnêteté est un délire de nos jours...les hommes droits n'existent plus. (p. 55)
o.	Èmi ni mo pe ogun tí mo rí ogun; èmi ni mo pe ọte tí mo rí ọte; èmi ni mo fi ọwọ ara mi fa iwèrèpè mọra (p. 36)	C'était moi qui avais fait entrer le fleuve dans mon lit et c'est ainsi que je suis l'auteur de mon malheur. ...j'ai noué des contacts avec le danger et avec des bandits (p.56)

S/N	Source text metaphor	Target text metaphor
p.	Mo si fi bàtà wọ èsè ará oko (p. 36)	J'ai chaussé le pied d'un paysan alors qu'il était habitué à marcher pied-nu. (p.56)
q.	Bí òní dùn ọ̀lẹ̀ le korò, bí ọ̀lẹ̀ tún korò ọ̀túnla le dàbí oyin (p. 101)	Aujourd'hui on est triste, demain on est débonnaire. La clé du monde ne se trouve point entre les mains de qui que ce soit (163).
r.	Mo fi àwọ̀n ẹ̀bùn kẹ̀kerẹ̀ wónyí ranṣẹ̀ si yin ni mẹ̀fà mẹ̀fà ...mọ̀ se ẹ̀yi láti fi han yin pe mo fi ẹ̀fà fàyín mọ̀ra (p. 100)	Je vous envoie à mon tour ces petits cadeaux six à six compte tenu de la tradition (coutume) des Yoruba de jadis, voire d'aujourd'hui pour vous témoigner mon amour (p. 160)
s.	...kí o gba orógbó jẹ́ kí o má segba obì jẹ́ (p. 102)	Qu'on offre donc à mon histoire, en signe d'appréciation, non des noix de kola mais plutôt des noix d' "Orogbo" (p. 163)
t.	...ngo da iná mọ-ọ lóri (p 8)	Tu seras fusillé tout de suite (p. 13)
u.	Jẹ̀bẹ̀tẹ̀ si gbé ọ̀mọ̀ le e lẹ̀wọ̀ (p. 93)	Son comportement fut tourné en ridicule (p. 150)
v.	Nígbà tí ìwọ̀ jẹ́ tán, tí ìwọ̀ mu tán tí o gbàgbé eniti o da ọ (p. 98)	Dans ton allégresse tu avais oublié celui qui t'avait créé. (p 158)
w.	Alákàrà ni nwọ̀n nrí tí nwọ̀n nípẹ̀ ní elékuru (p. 95)	Embedded
x.	Ìwọ̀ yi tun nbu mi laiye yi ! (p. 8)	Embedded

From the above table, it is obvious that specific cultural words have been coded in another expression at the secondary level of significations. Special investigation shall be given to some of these metaphors to reveal the decoding and recoding of cultural differences or similarities in language speech events by the translators, thereby unraveling each content and meaning. Thereafter, the specific choices employed by Abioye in the translation of these metaphorical expressions will be discussed.

Analysis

Preserving the same metaphorical image in the TL

In (a), (b), (c) and (d) above, Abioye could have adopted the images in the Target culture that best conveys the meaning of the metaphoric expression since it has been established that texts are complex signifying systems. Conversely, he directly transfers the code units of the Source Text images into the Target Text using the instrumentality of the Target language.

This is because they have been trans-coded cognitively and discovered that transferring the code units will enhance the projection of the culture of the Source Text as well as contributing to the lexis of the Target culture. The translator recodes these expressions according to the skopos of the Source Text to acquaint the Target Audience with the source culture.

For instance, we have that in (a) *Ayant vu, de très près les eaux de la mer et celles des océans, je n'ai plus peur de n'importe quelle autre eau* (Having seen from near the waters of the sea and those of the oceans, I'm not afraid of any other water) translated from "**Mo tirí òkún mo tirí ọ̀sà èrù omi kan kò tún bà mí mọ̀**". Since the code and the reverence are contextually acceptable to the French people, the translator brings back the same image in the TT language. This is also in line with Newmarks approach of reproducing the same image in the Target Text. Hence in (a) we have "òkún" as "mer", "ọ̀sà" as "océan" and "èrù" as "peur"

respectively. The translator considers some syntactic adjustments which agreed with an accepted outcome of a product of translation because the SL verbal units have a similar notion in TL context.

Other directly transferred codes are observable in (b), (c) and (d) on the table. In (d), for example, *entraît et sortait ensemble* (coming in and going out) depicts the viability and intimacy with this friend in question. Abioye could have opted for another expression like *intimité* which will definitely be acceptable, but he chooses to maintain the binary system to suit Fagunwa's choice of style. Hence we have "wole" "jade" *asentraît andsortait* respectively. In the same vein, in (c) we have "*C'est le corbeau du bord de la rivière qui viendra t'arracher les yeux*" (it is the crow of the riverside that will pluck out your eyes) which is from "**Kannakánná** *èbá odò ní yó sí yò ojú olóore rẹ jẹ*". The transfer of "**Kannakánná**" (crow) as "*corbeau*" enables the translator to recode the whole unit in the Target Language. The devouring eagerness and restlessness observable in this bird whenever it sees its prey is transferred to the end result of the heartless. The entire expression which depicts a situation where a worthless person inflicts punishment on a person of high rank due to his cruelty and mercilessness is directly recoded due to the semantic correspondence and universality of this peculiarity of the crow. Fagunwa uses this to advance the consequence of the ingratitude, most especially in apparently damned situations where vengeance will be inevitable. Abioye chooses to recast the expression in French retaining the source code respectively.

By this, he injects African tradition into the French culture. This is in line with Ayeleru's (2010) observation that:

the injection of African words into African literary texts in European languages such as French and English has become more pronounced in the writing of the new generation of African writers than in the works of their precursors... (21)

This corroborates the view of Ahmad Abu-Mahfouz (2005:1) in *Translating as a blending of cultures* when he affirms that for any cultural translation to be fair, a new thing should be included. Thus, "a degree of cultural interface between two language groups... is required for translating any text" Consequently, there will be "a blending of the culture of the source language of the original text with the conceptions and culture of the Target Language, resulting in translation that is not an exact translation of the original text but that will provide a faithful cultural understanding of the text in the minds of the Target Language readers"

Homi K. Bhabha (1994:27), culture studies critic, alludes to this while demystifying the location of culture in translation. He is of the opinion that: Cultural translation is not simply an appropriation or adaptation; it is a process through which cultures are required to revise their own system and values, by departing from their habitual or 'inbred' rules of transformation.

It, therefore, follows that Abioye is justified in his systemic reproduction of some metaphoric elements in the ST culture to the TT context. It is observed that he carefully opts for reproducing strategy whenever he discovers that the ST image is not clashing with the TT culture.

Substituting for standard metaphor in the TL

In the above table (e), (f), (g), (h), to (o) are cultural signifying systems coded by Fagunwa and posed major translation hurdles for Abioye. The recodification demands full interpretation in order not to mistranslate. We have already established the fact that some verbal units are difficult to translate due to lack of similar cultural agreement at the linguistic level. Therefore, Abioye needs to make choices among the available code units in the French language in order to recode the image of the Source Text with the best of the available options.

For instance, in (e) '**mo fi owó ara mi fa iwèrèpè mọra**' translated as *je suis l'auteur de mon malheur* which literally in English is 'I am the author of my misfortune/bad luck'. Abioye employs a complete recodification of the entire metaphorical elements, having in mind the

contextual relationship of the protagonist's Akara Ogun intimacy with an unfriendly friend who finally betrays him and sells him out. The translator employs a standard French expression which presents a fairly similar image with different verbal codes. *Je suis l'auteur* (I am the author) replaced "mo fi ọwọ ara mi fa" and iwèrèpè mọra appears as *mon malheur* which are entirely different verbal codes. Even though ọwọ and *auteur*, iwèrèpè and *malheur* have different meanings, Abioye has been able to display his linguistic proficiency by transcoding and recoding not word for word but image for image in order to transfer equal impact to the target reader. However, the metaphorical picture experienced in "iwèrèpè" (a kind of itching nettle) as in the instantaneousness of its irritation on contact, cannot be compared with the image of being the author of one's malediction in the TT.

In the same vein, in (g) Abioye reproduces similar image in the TT language maintaining the metaphoric essence, which is far more acceptable and point-driven in the TT context than using the direct image from the ST language. Recoding "iwà lẹwà, ẹwà kan kò sí nìbì kan" as "*La bonne humeur vaut mieux que la beauté*" reveals that the text and context interact in the mind of Abioye before he reproduces the equivalent image. The literal translation of the above metaphorical expression would be "very good character is better than beauty". However, the word "humeur" is chosen as against "*caractère, personnalité, attribut, manière, etc*" which pretend to be better. *Humeur* in the French context is conceived beyond the English meaning of "character". It aims at a generally acceptable quality, a perfect emotional disposition enviable by all. The essence of metaphor as employed by Fagunwa is to facilitate and expound understanding. Abioye equally justifies the same.

In (i) above "ọjọ ti ebi n pa ọnà" is translated as *le jour la route aura soif du sang* (the day the road is thirsty of blood), connoting the day of inevitable road accident in either context. since "ọnà" could mean road, way, pathway, railway, lane, track, line, and even route, the choice of *route* as against *voie, chemin, trajet* etc, interprets his adequate decodification of the

source code. In the French context, *route* could interpret a frequently practicable road of which vehicles travel sometimes at high velocity. It is assumed that Abioye's translation of this code unit is a suitable Target Language equivalent image. Rather than mere translation of ọnà as *rue or chemin* which may not be accurate in this context, he opted for *route* which is of a higher significance compared to other options. Similarly, "ebi" which probably could have been *faim* which though acceptable but not as in the case of *soif*. This is due to the fact that, life sustenance is longer when there is food compared to the absence of water. Hence, the employment of thirst as against hunger is meant to encode the violence and daring of a desperate thirsty person when s/he sights water. Far more, the situation becomes more catastrophic when it has to do with blood thirst. Hence Abioye recodes *soif du sang*.

The same approach is seen in (k) and (l) where "abolúnjẹ kú" is encoded as *gourmand de premier rang* which roughly is "first class glutton" in English, while "bá ẹsẹ mi sọrọ" in (l) is rendered as *prendre la fuite* (to run away because of impending danger). Equally "ọsángangan" in (m) encoded as *mi-chemin* (halfway) is also perfectly fixed since the code units present the image of a time an action is least expected in both linguistic setting.

Accordingly, Abioye avoids direct transfer of ST codes which could lead to undertranslation of the expression and definitely not expounding the underlying thematic intention of the ST author. The original intention of the ST author is recoded in the target language. Even though functional relationship in which the image is invested in the ST is suspended in the TT, the translator correctly replaces the similar acceptable image in the TT. He, therefore, switches to inventing a similar metaphor in the TT language which also expands its meaning. Thus, Abioye is able to convey the significant African quality of metaphoric usage within the framework of French language through the *vouloir-dire* of Fagunwa.

Preserving the same metaphor plus an explanation

From (p) to (t) Abioye recodes the SL metaphor in the TL with additional information when the situation demands for better comprehension. For instance, he reproduces the metaphoric (q) as *J'ai chaussé le pied d'un paysan alors qu'ils étaient habitués à marcher pied-nu*. (I shoed the leg of a bushman whereas he was used to walking barefooted) Abioye does not only reproduce the image in the TT, but adds *alors qu'il était habitude à marcher pied-nu* (whereas he was used to walking barefooted) in order that the target audience/reader can decode the sense of the metaphor. This is because the image depicts the ancient African man who does not care for modern materials, like shoes. It becomes very important for Abioye to support this image with sense so that the receiving audience can fully decode the profundity of the expression.

The code unit in (p) is recoded as *Comme s'il s'agissait d'une comédie l'affaire prit l'allure du sérieux*, literally rendered in English as: as if it is a comedy, the issue takes on appearance of seriousness. The "Àlàbòrùn" and "èwù" are translated as "l'affaire" and "l'allure de sérieux", respectively. However, it should be noted that the expression "bí eré, bí eré" is retained as *Comme s'il s'agissait d'une comédie* (as if it is a play) Abioye chooses "comédie" from several other options like, drama, pièce, théâtre, scene; in order to favour the rhythmic style of Fagunwa. The translator reduces the operative image in this metaphorical expression "Àlàbòrùn" and "èwù" (a general term for shirt and blouse) to "l'affaire" (issue) and "sérieux" (serious); while the invention of *Comme s'il s'agissait d'une comédie* retains the metaphorical substance. Therefore, there is a kind of metaphor for metaphor plus explanation.

The translator, unlike any other reader, is a decoder; that is, a reader, a critic and a recoder per excellence, of the work he is translating. A good translator will consider extralinguistic reality, emotional effect and the unit of meaning. He can add to the semantics of words or expression based on his understanding of the ST. The most important aim is for the target

audience/reader to understand the intent of the first author. It, therefore, follows that, *addition/deletion sometimes may not suggest infidelity but faithfulness in correcting semantic contention*. This is in consonance with Nida's claim that, the translator must be conscious of several interpretations of a word and its usage in a special, structural, textual or cultural context.

Paraphrasing the metaphor in the TL

In (u), (v) and (r) the coded expressions are reduced to paraphrase in situations when encoding in the Target language becomes difficult. Instead of deleting a valuable metaphoric code, paraphrasing can be employed even though it weakens the strength, effective-ness and emotive potency of the ST code unit

In (v) the code unit 'igbá ẹlẹyà fọ lé e lóri abawon ẹlẹyà dà sí ilára o nsejú pàkò,' evokes retributive resolution of a wicked and ungrateful person's attitude in the context of Yoruba society. Abioye succinctly presents this compound-complex metaphorical sentence in six words – *son comportement fut tourné en ridicule*, obviously converting the whole expression to sense. This does not encode the image in the source code which relates to "ori" and "ara". In fact, the French expression *honne soit qui mal y pense, il est accablé de son mépris* seems preferable in time of semantic and stylistic value, even though the metaphoric image is still undertranslated. Since the expression tends to engrave a permanent resolution that will descend on an ingrate, which both options appear unparalleled compare to the source code image.

In (u) also the highly loaded metaphorical expression shrieked by Akarogun to one of the troublesome gnome-like creatures in the forest is reduced to paraphrase. This seriously weakens the power of the ST metaphor. The expression 'ng ó dá iná mọ ọ lóri' translated as *tu seras fustillé tout de suite* shrieked by Akarogun to the gnome does not mean to tend or kindle fire on someone. Conversely, the 'fire' used connotes an act of discharging or firing of a gun. Hence, *fustillé* (gunned) reduces the force-fulness and explosive-ness of the intended source image that "da ina" represents. The translator chooses

to convert this metaphor, which obviously enriches the contextual sense of the SL, to sense in the TT. However, it is noteworthy that, Gbadegesin O.A (2014:122) submits that a deliberate choice of *fusillé* instead of *tué* is also significant. The reason is that the normalised verb-fusiller - is terse and enhanced the sense in the French context. He suggests *bombardier* which obviously will have lunched equal forcefulness and explosiveness experienced by the source audience.

Embedment

Instances of embedment which obviously do not make indispensable differences to the general interpretation of the content are underscored in (x) and (y) of the table above. Thus, we have “*láyé yì í*” in (y) and “*alákàrà ní n wón ñ rí tí ñ wón ñpè ní elékùru*” in (x) respectively. The latter has been semantically embedded in *ils se trompent et se font des illusions* (p.153) (they are deceiving and deluding themselves). Meanwhile, the former does not have any negative effect on the entire sense, since the concealed expression is integrated in the overall meaning of the TT. The concealed does not have any effect on the point being expressed. It should be noted that the literary translator has the freedom of ‘altering’ whenever the situation demands and it is even erroneous to translate a culture bound text word for word and line by line.

Abioye is not out of order in his supplanting of some verbal elements, in as much as the message of the ST is preserved and rightly encoded in the target text. This is what Okolie (2000:215) reiterates quoting Lawrence Venutti’s (1965:6–7) assertion vis-à-vis deletion:

Translations of authors from one language to another are like old garments turned into new fashions; in which though the stuff be the same, yet the dye and trimming are altered and in the making here, something added, there, something cut away.

We do not only have instances of concealment but also of addition which

confirms Venutti’s position as stated above. An example of this is the last metaphorical code inserted in the penultimate paragraph of the TT i.e *Le Preux chasseur*; the expression *Je parle a la porte, mais le mur aussi doit entendre* (p.163) (I am talking to the door, but the wall also must hear). This is probably meant to announce the universality of Fagunwa’s writings; that is, those didactic narratives presented to the protagonist’s audience in the novel, can as well be profitable to whoever dares its application. Akara Ogun himself reiterates this in his conclusion before taking leave: “*Chers amis tous,voici le peu que je peux vous presenter pour le moment. Je veux que vous vous serviez de cette histoire comme une lecon morale pour ameliorer votre vie...*” (p.163) (Dear friends, here is the little I can present to you now, I want you to use this story as a moral lesson to improve your lives.)

Conclusion

This study reveals unusual manifestation of metaphor beyond literal and figurative dimension as a significant semiotic systemic element that enables both the writer and the translator to project specific socio-cultural values in a better terse way. There are several interpretations of a word and its usage; and that, each code unit is isolated, interpreted and recoded in literary translation. Besides, metaphorical users in literary writing tend to create new meanings, expressions, ideas and experiences from primary or literal words. That is, we usually unravel the metaphorical credence in our language usage vis-à-vis our cultural experience through verbal signs that are encoded in the secondary order of signification. In addition, the semantic correspondence of these signs cannot be deduced literally but through cognitive invention.

It is equally observable that the process of decoding and recoding African metaphors exposes the translator to several hurdles most especially when it involves languages of alien cultures like French. Moreover, there are levels of word meaning and there is always a distinction between the primary and the new reference in a coding situation. Abioye is justified in his systemic reproduction of some metaphoric elements

in the ST culture to the TT context. However, he carefully opts for recodification strategy of substituting, paraphrasing and subtract/addition as the case may be, whenever he discovers that the ST image is clashing with the TT culture.

Notes

¹**Fagunwa:** Daniel Olorunfemi Fagunwa, a writer whose medium of written expression is purely Yoruba language, is an indelible icon in the history of Nigeria Indigenous Literature. A rare Yoruba literary gem, born in 1903 to a middle class Christian family of Joshua Akintunde and Rachael Osunyomi at Oke-Igbo, in Ondo state of Nigeria. He attended St Luke's Kindergarten School, Oke Igbo and the renowned St Andrew's College, Oyo Nigeria (1926-1929), where he eventually became the headmaster (Nursery section) for ten good years. According to analysts, his novels rank among the best in the world like those of great world-renowned indigenous writers-Chinese Ge Xingian, Polish Westlaw Szmboska Japanese Kezamburo De, Czechoslovakian Siefer and Yugoslavian Ivo Andric all who won the Nobel Prize for Literature, written in their mother tongues

¹**Abioye:** Olaoye John Abioye, a professor of French Literature and Translation, was born in 1934 at Iroko via Ibadan in Oyo state of Nigeria. He had his first degree from the University of Ibadan in 1969 proceeded to University of Grenoble III France where he had his Masters and Doctoral degrees (Ph.D and D. Lettres) respectively. According to

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him, the dream of translating Fagunwa's five major novels was born in 1963, when he was at the Federal Advanced Teachers College Lagos studying French and English. An excerpt from his inaugural lecture (1999) completes the account: "Since then I nursed the idea that if I ever had the opportunity to do post-graduate studies, it was Fagunwa's novels that I would seek to translate, that was when in 1972 the University of Lagos granted me a 3-year study leave to University of Grenoble III France..... Hence I embarked on the translation of Ireke-Onibudo". Another scholarship awarded by TOTAL (NIGERIA) took him to France again, that was when he translated the other four novels mentioned in this work. He also translated *En attendant Godot* by Samuel Becket to *Eni ní reitì àtìsun Akàn; Manon Lescaut* by Abbe Prevost as *Eni ó rí ó bálo*; while *Le Mandat* and *Xala* by Sembene Ousmane are translated as *Sòwédowó* and *Mágún* respectively. By this, he has set an indelible mark in French/Yoruba translation.

¹Source Language is abbreviated as SL, Target Language as TL, Source Text as ST, and Target Text as TT respectively.

¹The entire French metaphorical expressions are deliberately and roughly translated *literally*. This is because, they are meant to interpret the idea of the French translation so that the non-French reader can get a clue of the translator's version and not necessarily the semantically accepted translation in the English version like that of Wole Soyinka i.e *In the forest of a thousand Deamons*.

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