

Cultural Discourse in African Poetry: Output by Human Translators and Machine Translation Systems

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ABSTRACT

The article reports on how two European translators (Etienne Galle and André Bordeaux), two General machine translation (GMT) systems (DeepL and Amazon Translate) and a Custom-built Microsoft Azure translator engine render the Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) in two anthologies of an African Author, Wole Soyinka, into French. The study seeks to fill a knowledge gap, namely the question of whether and to what extent existing Neural Machine Translation systems that are trained preponderantly with texts produced in Western contexts take CSIs in texts written by authors from a non-Western cultural background into account. Following Aixelá's (1996) model for identifying and categorising CSIs, CSIs were first noted in the corpora's human, DeepL and Amazon Translate French translation versions. A Custom Translation Engine (CTE) was thereafter built and trained on Microsoft Azure with parallel data of about 14,000 English/ French African poetry sentences. CSIs were again noted after the CTE translated the anthologies. 25 CSIs were identified in the human and machine French translations of the two anthologies studied; more than two-thirds of this number are proper nouns, and the rest are common expressions. The results showed that most CSIs identified in the translation by CTE were lexically and orthographically similar to those identified in the human translation (HT). The results also indicated that CTE's output of CSIs was less monotonous than that of GMT systems.

Keywords: African Poetry, CSIs, Human Translation, Machine Translation, Custom Translation Engine

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INTRODUCTION

African writers have continually communicated their African ideas in European languages. This can be traced back to the colonial period of African history. Indeed, this period must be addressed. While Paul Bandia noted, “Translation is indispensable to postcolonial writing” (Inggs & Wehrmeyer, 2021, p. 23), Stanley Ebede believes that “The role of poetry in society can never be over-emphasised, neither will its study and interpretation be exhausted” (2017, p. 277).

Before colonialism, African poetry was mainly in oral form, spoken in the people's languages; this “oral character of written poetry is generally strong because of the vocal nature of its transmission, being essentially composed to be read aloud” (Ojaide, 1996, p. 303). According to Ojaide, “the post-independence generation of Awoonor, Okigbo, Clark, and Soyinka was indebted to the oral tradition” (1996, p. 305).

Aixelá (1996) discussed societies' familiarity with importation from the Anglo-Saxon pole. It is true that with increased contact and familiarity with the importing culture, translators will be involved in less manipulation during the transference process. However, Baker (2018) proposed that there will sometimes be a problem of non-equivalence at the word level, and at this point, we can guess that the translator has encountered such a problem with the appearance of CSIs.

The author of this article has chosen *Cycles sombres* and *Idanre: poème* (the French translations of *Early Poems* and *Idanre and Other Poems*) as the corpora in which to identify and describe the translation of CSIs by man (Etienne Galle and André Bordeaux), GMT systems (DeepL, Amazon Translate), and Custom-built translation engine. The Research seeks to answer four questions: (1) How did the European translators render CSIs in Wole Soyinka's poetry? (2) How will MT systems render CSIs in Wole Soyinka's poetry? (3) Will the HT of CSIs differ from MT? and to what extent? (4) Will the output of CSIs differ from the HT if a CTE translates the corpora? And to what extent?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CSIs IN NEWS MAGAZINE

Works on treating CSIs abound. Olk (2013) devised a framework for translating CSIs from a comprehensive quantitative angle. He is concerned that selective approaches focused on particular lexical fields or individual CRs may give undue weight to some items or lexical fields while ignoring others; the main issues in the analysis of CR translations lie in the intuitive and subjective process of identifying CSIs. Three groups of participants (British students, German students and professional translators) were asked to translate English text for publication in a German news magazine; the groups were believed to approach the task differently, which would become apparent and measurable in the quantitative analysis. After analysing the procedures the participants had applied, seven translation procedures were established. Olk noted that in classifying the CSIs, issues of subjectivity and overlapping categories, though inevitable, generally only partially validated the classification. Using the professional translators' approach as a tentative yardstick, he perceived the British students' translation of CSIs as too exotic for regular target culture readers and even though the professional translators' approach was overall the most target-culture oriented, the highest proportion of ‘neutral explanations’ was found in the group of German students. Olk's research, though a framework for the quantitative analysis of CSIs, was limited to translating news from English to German.

CSIs IN NOVELS

Daghoughi and Hashemian (2016), in a descriptive-interpretive analysis of source and target texts, used Newmark's (1988) classification of CSIs to analyse the English translation of the novel *By the Pen* (initially written in Persian). Functional equivalence was the most frequently used strategy in translating the CSIs, and modulation and paraphrase were the least frequently used.

Kuleli (2020) to determine CSIs in the Turkish novel *Baba Evi* by Orhan Kemal and find out the translation strategies used in the translation of CSIs in the English translation of the book titled *My Father's House* to exemplify and present potential translation strategies for professional and prospective literary translators Newmark's (2010) categorisation of CSIs. The translation analysis showed that foreignisation strategies were dominantly used in translating CSIs in the novel, while domestication strategies were used infrequently. Besides foreignisation and domestication strategies, the translator preferred translating 59 source CSIs through universal and neutral signs, favouring neither foreignisation nor domestication strategies. Therefore, literary translators could benefit from foreignisation and domestication translation strategies rather than adopting only one in the translation of CSIs. Kuleli's work mirrors the current research since it subscribes to the same model by Aixelá on which this research is anchored, but it defers in corpus choice and language pair.

Stephanie Schwerter (2019) illustrated how cultural errors are made in literary translation by analysing the English, Spanish, German and Russian translations of two extracts from Anna Gavaldà's famous French novel, *Junior*. She used the second extract from the source text to illustrate the difficulty in translating sentences rendered in vulgar language and titles of nobility. A vulgar expression in a line in the paragraph reads « elle pète plus haut que son cul », which the translator into English rendered as "...she farts higher than her ass". Schwerter believes the English translation could have been a similar vulgar line like "She thinks that her shit does not stink". Schwerter concluded that cultural errors are produced when the translator does not fully understand or even know the cultural tone or implications of the source text or lacks sufficient knowledge of how to render the cultural context of the source text in the target language. Though Schwerter's research corpus was not poetry but short stories and does not particularly mention CSIs, it is relevant in that it alludes to the fact that cultural errors sometimes show up in the rendering of CSIs.

CSIs IN FOOD MENUS

Amenador & Wang (2024) studied the strategies and factors in the Translation of CSIs in Chinese-English Food Menu Corpus. They identified which procedures prevail in translating CSIs and determined what factors impinge on selecting specific procedures. Results of their study indicated that neutralising strategy is employed more than foreignising and domesticating strategies. The unit of analysis in their study is the word, phrase, and sometimes whole dish name. Correlations between some factors and procedures were moderately strong as their values were above 50 out of the ideal value (100). However, other correlations were weak and, therefore, require further investigation. In the end, "brand" (24 instances) and false relationship (16 cases) appear to be prerequisites for retention. Literary Translation is likely to occur when the source CSIs are polysemous (29 stances) in nature, and "description" is most likely to happen when source text CSI is used metonymically/metaphorically (56 instances), even though this number may be biased by the frequency of reoccurrence of some single CSI ("裙边"[19 times]).

None of the works on CSIs reviewed above has concurrently analysed the outcome of CSIs in Poetry by human translators and machine translation systems. The current research describes how Western human translators and general and custom-built machine translation systems output CSIs in African poetry. From the literature reviewed, theoretical options to analyse CSIs revolved around Newmark's, Venuti's and Aixelá's approaches. Although Olk (2013) suggests that certain current approaches focus on specific lexical fields in the analysis of CSIs, Aixelá's approach, according to Davies (2003), remains one of the most clearly expounded and is therefore adopted as the model for the current study.

METHODOLOGY

The research article describes how CSIs are rendered by human translators (Etienne Galle and André Bordeaux), two MT systems (DeepL and Amazon Translate) and a custom-built Microsoft Azure translation engine in two of Wole Soyinka's anthologies: *Early Poems* and *Idanre and Other Poems*. The methodology will involve data collection and analysis, and Aixelá's (1996) model for identifying and categorising CSIs is used because data collection and analysis can be crafted from the model.

DATA COLLECTION

This involves identifying the CSIs. To identify the CSIs in the human and machine translations, Aixelá's (1996) definition of CSIs was taken into account:

A result of a conflict arising from any linguistically represented reference in a source text which, when transferred to a target language, poses a translation problem due to the nonexistence or to the different value whether determined by ideology, usage, frequency, etc.) of the given item in the target language culture (Aixelá, 1996, p. 57).

And also that

There is a common tendency to identify CSIs with those items especially linked to the most arbitrary area of each linguistic system - its local institutions, streets, historical figures, place names, personal names, periodicals, works of art, etc. - which will typically present a translation problem in other languages. (Aixelá, 1996, p. 57).

Thus, following the definition of CSI and the criteria for its identification above, this research has included other CSIs not included in Aixelá's list, such as African ancestral figures, cults, food, and traditional greetings. These are significant elements of Soyinka's poetry being studied. A custom translation engine was built on Microsoft Azure using data from 14,000 sentences of strictly African poetry, not including the poetry under investigation, to identify the CSIs.

DATA ANALYSIS

To categorise the CSIs, Aixelá's model distinguishes

“Two basic categories from the translator's point of view: proper nouns and common expressions (for want of a better term, the world of objects, institutions, habits, and opinions restricted to each culture and that cannot be included in the field of proper names)” (1996, p. 59).

First, proper nouns, apart from Aixelá’s, will be defined to distinguish the two categories clearly. According to the Oxford Dictionary of Current English, “a word (other than a pronoun) that refers to a person, place or thing.” (Oxford University Press, 2006). To have a smooth analysis later, it becomes necessary to synthesise Collins's definition of proper nouns with Aixelá’s definition of CSIs and the two categories he distinguished, taking into account the particularity of African ancestral figures, cults and traditional greetings in the poetry under investigation. The categorisation below is the template for analysing the CSIs in this research.

PROPER NOUNS

CSIs in this category include names of people, places, things, tribes, historical figures, African ancestral figures/ deities, and cults; these CSIs will generally begin with a capital letter.

COMMON EXPRESSIONS

CSIs in this category will comprise collective nouns (band, team, troop, choir, etc), traditional greetings and “the world of objects, institutions, habits, and opinions...that cannot be included in the field of proper names” (Aixelá, 1996, p. 59), such as food.

It was observed that the human translators and MT systems translated certain source cultural nuances differently in different instances; thus, to avoid confusion, CSIs produced from the same source word are placed in the same cell. For example, “Iron One” (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 68, 70, 74, Soyinka, 1967, p. 78) in the source text was rendered as “Dieu du Fer” (Soyinka, 1982, pp. 25, 27, 32) and “Ogoun” (Soyinka, 1982, p. 32) respectively in different instances by André Bordeaux, the human translator concerned.

The analysis is done by categorising proper nouns and common expressions. NA (non-applicable) means the human translator or MT system was not involved with the particular CSI.

OVERVIEW OF CSIs IN THE HUMAN AND MACHINE TRANSLATIONS

25 CSIs were identified in the Human and machine translations together.

Table 1a

CSIs in HT

Source word	Human Translation	
	Etienne Galle	André Bordeaux
My impi (Soyinka, 1976, p. 11)	Mes impi (Soyinka 2019, p. 160)	NA
Bean-cake (Soyinka, 1998, p. 133) x 2	Gâteau de fèves (Soyinka 2019, p. 77) x 2	NA
Kaffir (Soyinka, 1976, p. 20)	Cafre (Soyinka 2019, p. 171)	NA
Sigidi (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 9, 11, 19, 22)	Sigidi (Soyinka, 2019, pp. 157, 160, 169, 173)	NA
Bayete (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 10-14, 16)	Bayete (Soyinka, 2019, pp. 158, 160-163)	NA
Ogun (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 9, 11, 19, 22)	Ogun (Soyinka, 2019, 158, 160, 170, 173-178)	NA
(Soyinka, 1967, pp. 61, 63, 64, 65, 67-72, 74, 75, 80, 83, 85)	NA	Ogoun (Soyinka, 1982, 17, 19-23, 27, 28, 32, 34, 39, 40)

Abibimañ (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 5, 10, 22)	Abibimañ (Soyinka, 2019, 149, 154, 159)	NA
Idanre (Soyinka, 1976, p. 10)	Idanré (Soyinka, 2019, p. 158)	NA
(Soyinka, 1967, pp. 68, 69, 72, 81, 82)	NA	Idanre [Soyinka, 1982, pp. 25(x3), 28, 37, 38(x2), 39]
Esu (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 70 & 78)	NA	Esu (Soyinka, 1982, pp. 27 & 34)
Mfekane (Soyinka, 1976, p. 19)	mfékané (Soyinka 2019, p. 169)	NA
Shaka (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 9, 10, 11-17)	Chaka (Soyinka 2019, pp. 157, 158, 161-168, 177, 178)	NA
Mzilikazi (Soyinka, 1976, p. 12)	Mzilikazi (Soyinka 2019, p. 162)	NA
Soshangani (Soyinka, 1976, p. 12)	Soshangani (Soyinka 2019, p. 162)	NA
Lobengula (Soyinka, 1976, p. 12)	Lobengula (Soyinka 2019, p. 162)	NA
amaZulu (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 12, 14, 16, 17)	amaZoulous (Soyinka, 2019, pp. 162, 164, 165, 177, 178)	NA
Sango (Soyinka, 1967, p. 61)	NA	Chango (Soyinka, 1982, p. 17) Shango (Soyinka, 1982, p. 27)
Sango (Soyinka, 1967, p. 70)		
Atunda (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 81, 83)	NA	Atunda (Soyinka, 1982, pp. 37, 38)
ogboni (Soyinka, 1967, p. 67)	NA	ogboni (Soyinka, 1982, p. 22)
Ajantala (Soyinka, 1967, p. 67)	NA	Ajantala (Soyinka, 1982, p. 22)
Orisa-nla (Soyinka, 1967, p. 70)	NA	Orisa-nla (Soyinka, 1982, p. 27)
Orunmila (Soyinka, 1967, p. 70, 83)	NA	Orunmila (Soyinka, 1982, pp. 27, 38)
Ifa (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 70, 83)	NA	Ifa (Soyinka, 1982, pp. 27, 38)
Ire (Soyinka, 1967, p. 71)	NA	Ire (Soyinka, 1982, pp. 27, 28)
Oya (Soyinka, 1967, p. 67)	NA	Oya (Soyinka, 1982, p. 22)
Iron One (Soyinka, 1967, p. 61)	NA	Fer en personne (Soyinka, 1982, p. 17)
Iron One (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 68, 70, 74)	NA	dieu du fer, (Soyinka, 1982, pp. 25, 27, 32)
Iron One (Soyinka, 1967, p. 78)	NA	Ogoun (Soyinka, 1982, p. 32)

Table 1b

Categorization of CSIs in HT

Proper Nouns	Common expressions
Cafre	gâteau de fèves
Abibimañ	Sigidi
Idanré, Idanre	Mes impi
amaZoulou	ogboni
Esu	Bayete
Ogun, Ogoun	mfékané
Chaka	
Mzilikazi	
Soshangani	
Lobengula	
Chango, Shango	
Atunda	
Ajantala	
Orisa-nla	
Orunmila	

Ifa
Ire
Oya
Fer en personne, Dieu du fer, Ogoun

Table 2a

CSIs in MT

Source Word	Machine		Translation
	DeepL	Amazon Translate	
My impi (Soyinka, 1976, p. 11)	Mon impi	Mon impi	Mes impi
Bean-cake (Soyinka, 1998, p. 133)	Forme de haricots	Ruche de beignets	gâteau de fèves
Bean-cake (Soyinka, 1998, p. 133)	Gâteaux de haricots	Gâteau aux haricots	
Kaffir (Soyinka, 1976, p. 20)	Kaffir	Kaffir	Cafre
Sigidi (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 9, 11, 19, 22)	Sigidi	Sigidi	Sigidi (x4)
Bayete (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16)	Bayete	Bayete	Bayete (x5)
Ogun (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 9, 11, 19, 22)	Ogun	Ogun	Ogun (x4)
(Soyinka, 1967, pp. 61, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 80, 83, 85)	Ogun	Ogun	Ogoun (x16)
Abibimañ (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 5, 10, 22)	Abibimañ	Abibimañ	Abibimañ
Idanre (Soyinka, 1976, p. 10)	Idanre	Idanre	Idanre
(Soyinka, 1967, pp. 68, 69, 72, 81, 82)	Idanre	Idanre	Idanre (x8)
Esu (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 70 & 78)	Esu	Esu	Esu
Mfekane (Soyinka, 1976, p. 19)	Mfekane	Mfekane	Mfekane
Shaka (Soyinka, 1976, pp. 9, 15)	Shaka	Shaka	Chaka
Mzilikazi (Soyinka, 1976, p. 12)	Mzilikazi	Mzilikazi	Mzilikazi
Soshangani (Soyinka, 1976, p. 12)	Soshangani	Soshangani	Soshangani
Lobengula (Soyinka, 1976, p. 12)	Lobengula	Lobengula	Lobengula
amaZulu (Soyinka, 1976, p. 14)	amaZulu	amaZulu	amaZoulous
Sango (Soyinka, 1967, p. 61)	Sango	Sango	Chango
Sango (Soyinka, 1967, p. 70)	Sango	Sango	Shango
Atunda (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 81, 83)	Atunda	Atunda	Atunda
Ogboni (Soyinka, 1967, p. 67)	Ogboni	Ogboni	Ogboni
Ajantala (Soyinka, 1967, p.67)	Ajantala	Ajantala	Ajantala
Orisa-nla (Soyinka, 1967, p. 70)	Orisa-nla	Orisa-nla	Orisa-NLA

Orunmila (Soyinka, 1967, p. 70, 83)	Orunmila	Orunmila	Orunmila
Ifa (Soyinka, 1967, p. 70, 83)	Ifa	Ifa	Ifa
Ire (Soyinka, 1967, p. 71)	Ire	Ire	Ire
Oya (Soyinka, 1967, p. 67)	Oya	Oya	Oya
Iron One (Soyinka, 1967, p. 61)	le Fer Un	Iron one	Fer en personne
Iron One (Soyinka, 1967, pp. 68, 70, 74)	Iron One (x3)	Iron One (x3)	Dieu du fer (x2), Ogoun
Iron One (Soyinka, 1967, p. 78)	Iron One	Iron One	Dieu de fer

Table 2b

Categorisation of CSIs in MT

Proper Nouns			Common Expressions		
DeepL	Amazon	CTE	DeepL	Amazon	CTE
Esu	Esu	Esu	Sigidi	Sigidi	Sigidi
Sango	Sango	Sango	Bayete	Bayete	Bayete
Ogun	Ogun	Ogun	mfekane	mfekane	mfékané
Abibimañ	Abibimañ	Abibimañ	ogboni	ogboni	ogboni
Atunda	Atunda	Atunda	Forme de haricots, Gâteaux de haricots	Ruche de beignets, Gâteau aux haricots	Ruche de beignets, Gâteau aux haricots
Ajantala	Ajantala	Ajantala	Mon impi	Mon impi	Mes impi
Orinsa-nla	Orinsa-NLA	Orinsa-nla			
Kaffir	Kaffir	Kaffir			
Orunmila	Orunmila	Orunmila			
Ifa	Ifa	Ifa			
Ire	Ire	Ire			
Oya	Oya	Oya			
Le Fer Un, Iron One	Iron One	Fer en personne, Dieu du fer, Ogoun, Dieu de fer			
amaZulu	amaZulu	amaZoulous			
Mzilikazi	Mzilikazi	Mzilikazi			
Soshangani	Soshangani	Soshangani			
Lobengula	Lobengula	Lobengula			
Shaka	Shaka	Chaka			

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Of the 20 CSIs identified in the HT, GMT, and custom-engine translation, 13 are categorised as proper nouns, and seven are common expressions. This identification and categorisation follow Aixelá's (1996) model, synthesised with Collin's dictionary definition of proper nouns in the methodology. In this section, GMTs refer to the translation by DeepL and Amazon translate, while MTs refer to the translation by DeepL, Amazon translate, and CTE.

CSIs THAT ARE PROPER NOUNS

These include the names of people, places, tribes/ people groups, and ancestral figures/ deities; these CSIs generally begin in capital letters.

NAMES OF PERSONS

1. *Chaka* is the translation by Etienne Galle and CTE, while GMTs render it as *Shaka*. The name is a cultural nuance specific to the Zulu people: “King of the amaZulu” (Soyinka, 1976, p. 23). He can also be considered a historical figure. Because CTE has been trained, its output is similar to that of human translation; meanwhile, the untrained GMT system outputs it like the source text.
2. *Mzilikazi* is repeated in translation by the human translator and MTs. Following the orthograph conventions of the French language, where the phonetic sound [z] could be obtained from the alphabet *s*, this word could have been translated as *Msilikasi* in French.
3. *Soshangani* is repeated in the HT and by the MTs. Following the phonetic and orthographic rules in (Kamoun and Ripaud 2016, pp. 150 & 151), this translation could also be correctly translated as *Sochangani*. The *sh* and *ch* consonant combinations have the same phonetic symbol [ʃ].
4. *Lobengula* is repeated in the HT and by MTs. Even though sometimes translators leave proper names untranslated, one suggestion for the French translation of this name is *Lobengoula* with an addition of the alphabet *o* before the *u*.

NAMES OF PLACES

1. *Ire*, “a town in Ekiti” (Scheub, 2000, Kindle Location 3238), is repeated in translation by the human translator and MTs.
2. *Idanre* and *Idanré* are two renderings of the source word *Idanre*; while Etienne Galle renders *Idanré* with the French acute accent on the alphabet *e*, André Bordeaux and MTs repeat *Idanre* without an accent on the *e*.

NAMES OF TRIBES/PEOPLE GROUPS

1. *Cafre* is the translation of *Kaffir* given in the HT and by CTE. It is rendered *Kaffir* by GMTs. Because CTE has been trained with domain-specific data (Poetry), there is a tendency to output the South African-originated source word like the human translator.
2. *amaZoulous*, with *s* and the letter *o* before *u*, is the translation by Etienne Galle and CTE of *AmaZulu*. MTs repeat it as *AmaZulu*, meaning “the Zulus” (Callaway, 2022, pp.132 & 133). The orthograph begins with a small letter, and the letter *Z* is capitalised in both the source and the translations. In English, the determinant is separate from the noun *Zulus*, while in the Zulu language, the determinant **ama** is merged with the noun *Zoulous* as one word. This explains why the human translator renders it without capitalising the initial alphabet *a*. According to Kamoun & Ripaud (2016, pp.114 & 115), the **ou** vowel combination in *amaZoulous* and the *u* in *Zulus* share the same phonetic sound [u].
3. *Abibimañ* in the source text, whose origin is Ekan of Ghana, has been rendered unchanged in the HT and by MTs.

ANCESTRAL FIGURES/ DEITIES

1. *Ogoun* is the translation by André Bordeaux and CTE of the source word *Ogun* in the second anthology *Idanre and Other Poems*; GMTs render it *Ogun*. It is repeated as *Ogun* by Etienne Galle and MTs in *Cycles sombres* in the first anthology. Again, the **ou** vowel combination in *Ogoun* and the *u* in *Ogun* share the same phonetic sound [u].
2. *Fer en personne, dieu du fer, Ogoun, Le fer Un, and Dieu de fer* are the translations of *Iron One* in the HT and by MTs. While André Bordeaux and CTE render *Fer en personne, dieu du fer, Ogoun*, DeepL output *Le fer Un* and *Iron One*, Amazon translate repeated *Iron*

One. He is “the god of war and iron” (Scheub, 2000, Kindle Locations 3233-3234). The translation *Ogoun* rightly doubles as a synonym for the *Iron One*, spelt in Yoruba as “Ògún” (University Press, 2001, p. 167).

3. *Esu* is untranslated by the human translator and MTs. “Esu is an orisa (a god or spirit)” (Scheub, 2000; Kindle Locations 768), “he is greatly feared for the evil that he can do” (Scheub, 2000; Kindle Locations 768); “God of chance, disruption” (Soyinka, 1967, p. 87). Following the phonetic rules of French orthograph, this could also be translated as *Eshou*.

4. *Chango* and *Shango* are the two human translations of the source word *Sango*. Though André Bordeaux rendered the orthograph differently in the two instances, the implied meaning remains the same as “Şangó, n. the god of thunder” (University Press, 2001, p. 211). The alphabet **S** in the word *Sango*, the alphabet **Ş** in Yoruba, produces the French **ch** sound, /ʃ/ in French phonetics (Kamoun & Ripaud, 2016, pp. 150-151). GMTs render it *Sango*, while CTE renders it as *Chango* and *Shango*.

5. *The atunda* is repeated in HT and MTs. He is a “traitor...slave to the first deity” (Soyinka, 1967, p. 87). This Yoruba deity could also be rightly translated as *Atounda* in French.

6. *Ajantala* is repeated in the HT and MTs. He is the “Archetype of the rebel child...” (Soyinka, 1967, p. 87).

7. *Orisa-nla* is repeated in the HT and GMTs. However, CTE outputs it as *Orisa-NLA* with the last three alphabets in capital letters. He is described as the “Head of the deities” (Soyinka, 1967, p. 87). This word could also have been correctly translated as *Orishanla*, as the Yoruba would sometimes pronounce the alphabet **s** as [sh].

8. *Orunmila* is repeated in the HT and MTs; he is the “Sky-god, essence of wisdom” (Soyinka, 1967, p. 87), also known as the “god of divination, fate, and wisdom” (Scheub, 2000; Kindle Locations 1142-1143). This source word could also be translated as *Orounmila* with the alphabet **o** preceding the **u**.

9. *Ifa* is rendered by the human translator and in MTs. Soyinka refers to this deity as in charge of “Divination and order” (1967, p. 87). In Yoruba, it is spelt as *Ifá* (University Press, 2001, p. 107).

10. *Oya* is also repeated in the HT and MTs. It is spelt in Yoruba as *Oya*, “wife of Şango, to whom the river Niger is dedicated” (University Press, 2001, p. 189). According to Soyinka, “once the wife of Ogun, latterly of Sango” (1967, p. 86).

CSIs THAT ARE COMMON EXPRESSIONS

Collective nouns (tribe, team, troop, etc.), traditional greetings, and “the world objects, institutions, habits, and opinions...that cannot be included in the field of proper names” (Aixelá, 1996, p. 59), such as food, fall into this category.

NAMES OF FOOD

1. *Gâteau de fèves* is the translation by Etienne Galle and CTE of “Bean-cake”. DeepL and Amazon Translate translate it as *Forme de haricots*, *Gâteaux de haricots* and *Ruche de beignets*, *Gâteau aux haricots* respectively in two instances. Bean-cake, which is “Akara” (K’s Cuisine, 2000) in Yoruba, is prepared differently from *Gâteau de fèves*, even in terms of the type of beans used.

TRADITIONAL GREETINGS

1. *Sigidi*, “Shaka’s war-cry. The song of the spear-blade as it bites: I have eaten!” (Soyinka, 1876, p.24) is repeated in the HT and MTs.

2. *The human translator and MT systems also repeat Bayete*, “the royal greeting for Shaka” (Soyinka, 1876, p.24).

OTHERS NOT INCLUDED IN THE WORLD OF PROPER NAMES

1. *ogboni* is repeated by André Bordeaux and MTs. Ogboni is sometimes viewed as a cult or a fraternity in Nigeria due to its religious nature: “The Ogboni worship the Earth and control its sanction” (Arewa & Stroup, 1977, p. 5). However, in the poetry being studied, “ogboni” (Soyinka, 1982, p. 22) is referred to as a person, a noun beginning with a small alphabet. The only available explanation for this is that “an Ogboni means ‘an elder’ and the cult serves as an umbrella for notable elders to have a fraternal setting” (Oyebade, 2021) in this case, *ogboni* can only be categorised as a collective or common noun since it is the standard way elders who are members of the Ogboni society are known.

2. *Impi* is repeated by Etienne Galle and MTs. However, while the human translator and CTE add the possessive plural adjective **mes** before it, GMTs instead render it with the singular possessive adjective **mon**.

3. *Mfékané*, “a crushing; total war” (Soyinka, 1976, p. 24), is the translation of *Mfekane* in the HT with the acute accent on the letter **e**. MTs render it in repetition, like the source poetry in which it is used as an interjection.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the translations of CSIs by the human translators (Etienne Galle and André Bordeaux), GMT systems (DeepL and Amazon Translate), and CTE, it was observed that 3 CSIs translated by CTE differed only in orthograph from the CSIs by HT. In comparison, 4 CSIs identified in the GMT differed lexically and orthographically from the HT of CSIs.

There are four significant instances where GMT systems differed from the HT of CSIs. Etienne Galle translated *my impi* as *mes impi*, while GMT renders it as *mon impi*. While Etienne Galle renders *amaZoulous* as the French translation of *amaZulu*, GMT systems render it as the source word *amaZulu*. While Etienne Galle rendered *Gâteaux de fèves* as the French translation of *Bean-cake*, GMT systems render it as *Gâteau de haricots*. The human translator, Etienne Galle, translates *Iron One* as *Dieu du fer*, *Ogoun*, *Fer en Personne* and *Dieu de fer*, but GMT systems mainly monotonously render it as *Iron One*.

Most times, the output of CSIs by CTE resembled the output by the human translators, but there are three instances in which CSIs output by CTE differed from the HT. For example, Etienne Galle renders *Idanré* with the French acute accent on the letter **e**, while CTE renders it without any accents. *Mfékané* is also produced by the human translator with the French acute accent on the letter **e**; CTE renders it without any accents, too. The human translator in translation repeats *Orisa-nla*, while it is rendered by CTE as *Orisa-NLA*, capitalising the three alphabets after the hyphen.

The paper contributes to Applied Translation Studies by revealing that a custom-built translation system produced CSIs similar to those in the HT. This is observed in the overview of the translation output of CSIs by CTE and GMT in Tables 1a and 2a. The research also revealed the existence of thrice more CSIs in the category of proper nouns than common expressions and more CSIs in the group of African deities.

Having answered all the research questions raised in the introduction, the research raises questions for further study, viz., to what extent will GMT systems and CTE differ from HT in rendering CSIs in the French translation of other genres of literature like prose, drama,

News/Media, etc. in other regions like Asia, America, and Australia? Will African deities also populate the category of proper nouns as CSIs in Wole Soyinka's prose and drama?

As the CTE's training data in this research was limited to 14,000 parallel sentences of strictly African poetry, further research is encouraged to re-investigate the outcome of CSI translation by CTE and the ratio of CSIs in the two categories by employing more extensive parallel data of up to 50,000 sentences of African poetry. The research can also be replicated using poetry from other regions, such as Asia, America, Australia, etc.

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