

## Review Essays

# Literary Translation Techniques in Pamela Smith's Translation of Akinwumi Işola's *Ogún Ọmọdé* to *Treasury of Childhood Memories*

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### Abstract

Literary translation is a veritable tool to mitigate the endangerment and imminent extinction of African indigenous languages and literature. Professor Pamela Smith has taken up the challenge to translate *Ogún Ọmọdé* written by Professor Akinwumi Işola into *Treasury of Childhood Memories* among many others. Yorùbá literary critics, translation experts, and linguists are yet to scrutinize the literary translation techniques in the translated text. This study, therefore, examined the literary techniques adopted by the translator in the Target Language (TL). The study employed a qualitative research design with a close reading and content analysis of both the Second Language (SL) and Target Language (TL) texts using the Hutardo' (2002, 498) model of literary techniques for data analysis. The findings of the study showed that: the translator adopted many literary techniques that make the TL fascinating and pleasurable to readers, but the following techniques were more predominant, these are modulation; compression; elision/omission; linguistic amplification; borrowing, calque; compensation; adaptation; and particularization. The essay concluded that the translator's high level of bilingual and bicultural

competence and the literary translation techniques adopted make the contents of the source text easily transposed and rendered in impeccable English language in the TL.

Keywords: Akinwumi Isola, Literary translation, Translation, techniques, *Treasury of Childhood Memories*, *Ogún Omódé*.

## Introduction

The contributions of Professor Pamela Olubunmi Smith to the development and internationalization of Yorùbá literary works in this age of globalization cannot be overestimated. She is a prolific guru of literary translation who uses her intellectual resources not only to project the good image of Yorùbá cultural heritage through the translation of Yorùbá classical novels, drama, and poetry but also an encourager of African creative writers in indigenous languages. She has brought Yorùbá classical novelists and playwrights such as D.O. Fagúnwà, Adébayo Fálétí, and Akinwùmí Işòlá to the international limelight. She translated the literary works of Akinwumi Isola into the English language: *Efúnṣetán Aniwírà*, *Ìyálóde Ìbádàn* and *Tinúbú*, *Ìyálóde Ègbá: Two Yorùbá Historical Dramas* (2006); *Treasury of Childhood Memories* (2016) and *The Brass-Bells Drum* (2021). She also translated Adébáyo Fálétí's *Omo Olókùn Eşin* as *The Freedom Fight* in 2010. The literary works translated into English fostered the advancement of the spoken language of the Yorùbá and spreads it to the nooks and crannies of the world. When the people of different races are exposed to Yorùbá cultural heritage through our literature, there will be mutual respect, trust, and understanding instead of the usual ignorance and disrespect to African people and their cultural values. Cultural exchange between nations is one way to learn and respect the civilizations of each nation. The translation of Yorùbá creative works by Professor Pamela Smith is also a demonstration of her commitment, devotion, perseverance, and unflinching search for excellence which manifest greatly in the works of the writers whose books were translated.

Adeyemi (2018, 290) asserted that translation has become a veritable venture in the global cultural economy even though English has remained the most translated language worldwide, but one of the least translated. Gronin (2003, 2) confirmed that more than three-quarters of the world's economic production is accounted for by the speakers of six languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese), commanding the capital of many foreign publishers. The translation of African-language literature into English attracts relatively small investment, if any, or little notice. The scarcity of translated texts from indigenous languages to other languages and other languages to indigenous languages creates a barrier to the free flow of ideas and

inhibits intercultural communication. Therefore, the translation of Yorùbá literary works of one of the foremost creative writers in Yoruba language into English is timely, appropriate, and a great honor to the Yorùbá civilization and Yorùbá literary heroes. A close reading of the translated novels and drama texts shows a high level of sophistication and competence in Pamela Smith's use of the English language and knowledge of Yorùbá culture. She is on a high level if placed on the scale of bilingualism competence. According to Oyeleye, (1995, 364), scale of bilingualism categorizes the literary translators according to their knowledge of the written and or spoken medium of the source language and the target language. The scale is divided into the lower zone, the middle, and the upper zone. The lower zone contains translators whose knowledge of the source and target languages is minimal with low academic background. The middle zone contains translators with a first degree in either of the language of a master's degree in languages, while the upper zone is the maximal zone of the scale of bilingualism. Translators in this category are language and literary experts. Here the translators' control of the registers of the SL and TL is impeccable. If we adopt this scale of bilingualism to classify Professor Pamela Smith, she operates in the upper zone. She combines an equivalent linguistic experience with equivalent linguistic competence in the manner of her translations. Even though the point of scale of bi-culturalism and bilingualism of the translator is on the high side, and the translated works have been in existence for some years, Yorùbá literary critics and translation experts are yet to assess the literary techniques used by the translator in the translated texts.

The objective of this study, therefore, was to examine the literary techniques of Professor Pamela Smith in her translation of *Ogún Ọmọdẹ* to *Treasury of Childhood Memories*. The choice of this text is purposive. The uniqueness of *Ogún Ọmọdẹ*, which is the original text, in thematic contents, plot construct, setting, narrative techniques and use of language attract readers. The translator herself asserts that *Ogún Ọmọdẹ* is 'told with his customary poetic skill and wit, his unmatched gift of the gab, his command of the opulent rhetorical resources of the Yorùbá language, the episodes sparkle like precious stones' (Pamela, 1). Not just any translator can embark on the translation of such a book. Novels are very difficult to translate, just like poetry. To translate a novel involves more than simply conveying all meaning in an appropriate style, it has to reproduce the character, subtlety, and impact of the original- the essence of what makes the work unique. I select *A Treasury of Childhood Memories* for analysis because the translator's bilingual and bi-cultural competence is equally great and unique. When a major writer meets an expert translator, the gain is always double, plus one (Olaniyan 2016,1).

## **Research Methodology**

The research methodology employed was qualitative design. Data were drawn from both the original text and the translated text. The method of collecting data is implemented by a close reading of the SL and TL texts. A content analysis of the literary techniques adopted by the translator classified and discussed the functionalist model of Hutardo (2002) for data analysis. The findings of the study showed that: the translator adopted many literary techniques that make the TL fascinating and pleasurable to readers, but the following techniques were more predominant, these are modulation; compression; elision/omission; linguistic amplification; borrowing, calque; compensation; adaptation; and particularization. The essay concluded that the translator's high level of bilingual and bicultural competence and the literary translation techniques adopted make the contents of the source text easily transposed and rendered in impeccable English language in the TL.

## **Literary Translation and its Usefulness**

Literary translation is an art involving the transposing and interpreting of creative works from one language and culture into another language. Creative indigenous works include oral and written forms such as oral and written poetry, novels, short prose, poetry, drama, and film scripts. Literary translation is working with a text in its original language to prepare a version in a new language. We can distinguish literary translation from translation in general. A literary translation reflects the author's imaginative, intellectual, and intuitive writing. There are two views about the possibility and impossibility of literary translation. In the traditional essentialist approach to literature (Lefevere 1988, 173) called 'the corpus', the author is a quasi-divine 'creator' possessing 'genius.' Believed to be the origin of the creation that is original, unique, organic, transcendental, and hence sacred. Translation then is a mere copy of the unique entity that by definition is uncopyable as the translator is not the origin of the work of art, he does not possess geniuses. For Dante (1265-1321) all poetry is untranslatable and for Frost (1974) poetry is 'that which is lost out of both prose and verse in translation.' Strong voices like Humboldt in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the two pioneers of the Relative Theory of Language, Sapir, and Whorf in the 20<sup>th</sup> century stated that language is culture-specific and an expression of culture because language is an integral part of the culture; the translator needs to be not only bilingual but also bicultural. This renders translation impossible.

On the other hand, theorists like Fitzgerald as cited in Ketkar (2015, 2) asserted that 'the live dog is better than the dead lion', and believe in freedom of translation. Nabokov (1995) believes that 'The clumsiest of literal translation

is a thousand times more useful than prettiest paraphrase.' In other words, the corpus approach is no longer tenable, it is outdated now due to the unstoppable continuation of the practice of translation and publication of great translations of literary works by eminent translators worldwide. The undeniable importance of translation in society and the availability of translated literary texts in every society are good reasons to end this debate on the impossibility of literary translation. Reinforced by the huge amount of translation that cannot be denied as it occurs daily.

Distinguished by its aesthetics, literature carries elements of literariness. The properties of literariness are not present in literary texts only; other types of text can display a few of them, but not with such a degree of intensity and richness as in literary texts and for different purposes. Adeyemi, (2018, 293) listed the characteristics of literary translation as follows:

- expressive;
- Connotative;
- Symbolic;
- focusing on both form and content;
- subjective;
- allowing multiple interpretations-timeless and universal;
- using special devices to 'heighten' communicative effect; and
- the tendency to deviate from the language norms.

The usefulness of literary translation is enormous. Bariki (2021, 48) states that the world can hardly be at its best without translation and that the world has become a big Babel of some sort. Literary translation encourages a greater understanding between communities and cultures. It increases the reader's awareness of shared human emotion and experience. Literary translation allows literature to travel all over the globe. Writers can speak out across generations and cultures. It helps us regenerate literary sources; revitalizes literature, provides valuable teaching tools for literature teachers, and develops new readers and writers. Translated books can shape our cultural perspective about other people and make us understand the changing world as it is now. Literary translation can lead to economic growth. It can develop new markets and add to the sources of wealth. A great democratizer that can allow anyone to study the best literary writers in the world. Reading translated creative works from a culture different from one's own helps readers to develop a wider understanding of the world around them.

## Literary Translation Techniques of Pamela Smith in the Translated Text

The practice of translation in Yoruba Society is virtually as old as communication through the spoken word. The history of translation in Yoruba land can be subdivided into three major eras: Pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial. In all the three eras, translation played a critical role in the political, economic, and cultural survival of the Yoruba people, (Adeyemi 2018, 290-309). Literary translation techniques are the instrument of textual analysis. They are not the only categories to analyze a translated text, variables such as coherence, cohesion, thematic progression, and contextual dimension can also be used to analyze translated texts. Techniques are the procedures to analyze and classify how translation equivalence works. Hutado (16) states that literary techniques have five basic characteristics namely: they affect the result of the translation; they are classified by comparison with the original; they affect micro-units of the text; they are by nature discursive and contextual, and they are functional. In this study, we adapt Hutado's model. He listed the following literary techniques that translators generally adopt for translating literary texts namely: borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation, compensation, concentration vs. dissolution, amplification, economy, reinforcement, condensation, exploitation, Implication, generalization, particularization, juxtaposition, grammaticalization, lexicalization, and inversion. Hakima asserts that the translation process is creative and does not follow the strict analytical rules of any of the parameters; however, knowledge of these parameters can greatly facilitate the translator's solution to the difficult translation tasks. Therefore, we limit the analysis and discussion of literary techniques evident in the translated text, especially the relevant ones. See the table below:

**Table I: Analysis of Data**

Modulation	<i>Ojú n rí lo</i> , = The riddle of the snake
Compression	<i>Mo sùn lóko</i> = Respite <i>Wón pè mí jẹrù</i> = Tuppence English
Elision/Omission	Ìgbín àti ìlákò, <i>ni wón sì fi jẹ ẹ</i> = Garnished with different kinds of snails
Linguistic Amplification	<i>Ejò lábé, şòkòtò!</i> = A snake lounging in the flare-legged pants of a sleeping old man
Borrowing	<i>Kín ní jé, mọ́ọ?</i> <i>Mọladé</i> = Dance mọ́ọ, means what? Means mọ́ọ in Mọladé

Calque	Ìdí è, nìyí tá fí máa n pé òun alára ní ògbéni Láńfúlé, = That is why we nicknamed him "Scruffy Duds Odiḃos"
Compensation	Àlò, mi léri fùrùrù gbaagbó = My story is a fantastic tale
Adaptation	Yángí nlá tó wà léti igorita mēta oko = huge rock Àáyá gbón, Ògúngbè gbón = great wits meet Ọlórún kú ọlá = God have mercy Ìrókò Olúwéré = fairy-invested-African-teak-tree

## Discussion of Data

### Modulation

Modulation refers to the technique of shaping or regulating the words of the source text in such a manner that the resulting target text conforms to the natural patterns of the target language. It helps to illustrate the difference between the literal translation and coherent meaningful translation. The idea or meaning is the same, but the phrases used in the source and target languages are different – the source language is not translated word-for-word into the target language. The modulation endows idiomaticity on the language of the target text, so much, so that the target reader is left with the illusion that he is not reading a translation, but an original text. For example:

*Şe ọmọ tí yóò jẹ Àşámú, kékeré ní tí í máa jenu şámú- şámú. Oríko a máa ro ni. Bí ọmọde kan ba n fi inú ro ohun tó ó fẹfẹ dà lẹyin-wá-ọlá, ó lè fi bẹẹ da nńkan ọhún, tàbí kó da ohun tí ó jọ ọ. A kò mọ ibi tí ori n bẹşẹ' rẹ.*

Ah but does conventional wisdom not tell us that future events often cast their shadows before them? Morning, as it were, shows the day. If a child wished upon a star long enough, is it not believed that such wish does materialize? In a sense, is that not what they call "self- fulfillment" one never knew where the feet may lead the head or the head leads the feet (P. 97).

The translator has adopted a modulation technique to solve the complication in the process of translation due to the wide lexical gaps that are more in cultural differences between English and Yoruba, and vice versa. To make the translated text natural and to produce an equivalent message in the TL, the use of the modulation technique is rewarding and instead of literal translation or word-for-word translation, free modulation as seen in the *Treasury of Childhood Memories* is a unique solution to reach the highest degree of equivalence.

### Language Compression

Another literary technique that is generously used in the translated text is language compression. Language compression is the act of reducing or compressing a text into a shorter form. When compression occurs, some parts of the original text are eliminated. For example:

*SL = iwà lile yìi ni ó jẹ kí àwọn àgbà máa kì í pé: Ó-bónibodè-şèdá-n-dá, akonko – tìrìko-ó já-níbi-tó-gbé jẹko-àná, abara-moore-je.*

*TL:* this kind of brazenness earned Iyiola the panegyric, ‘Strong-ingrate-who-would-bite-the-hand-that-feed-him (P.98).

The sentence in the original text has 30 words but after compression, it retains 20 words. The compressed sentence does not ruin any syntactic or semantic word. It is reduced to a shorter form without losing the meaning. Other examples of language compression are many in the TL:

*SL = Lùkùlùkù şode pàro; Èni tó rí tìşà tí kò sá sòbìà ló dá a*

*TL =* Those teachers had to be very pestilence that decimated the whole population

The first sentence eliminated “*Lùkùlùkù şode pàro*” in the translation because the noun phrase does not bring most of the information to be carried out to the readers. The compression of language is observed in the sub-titles of some chapters to eliminate redundant and irrelevant elements in the TL. The following examples are compressed in the translated text:

*SL = Àkókò isinmi*

*TL = The Holidays*

*SL = Mo sùn lóko*

*TL = Respite*

*SL = ilé iwé tún bèrè*



TL = School Resumes

SL = *Wòn pè mí jérù*

TL = Tuppence English

SL = *Agbòyìnbó kì í kú sílé*

TL = The loss of innocence

In the examples above, sub-headings that have three words in the original text are compressed to become one word or two words respectively without losing the meaning.

### **Elision/Omission**

Apart from linguistic or language compression, the translator also adopts the elision or omission technique. This technique is intended to shorten the expression which might affect the meaning equivalence. Meaning equivalence is necessary because translation equivalence occurs when a source language and target language are not related to some of the features or substance and redundant words are eliminated without doing damage to the meaning.

SL = *ìgbìn àti ìlákò ní wòn sì fí n jẹ ẹ.*

TL = Garnished with different kinds of snails.

Here the word 'ìlákò' is dropped in the translation and 'ìgbìn' and 'ìlákò' is translated as 'different kinds of snail.' In the SL, there are three types of snails - *ipére* (the smallest type), *ìlákò* (medium size), and *ìgbìn* (the biggest size). There are no equivalent meanings in English for *ìlákò*, thus the elision. Some items considered as non-essential are removed because their elision will improve the stylistic quality of the translated text. Examples abound in many chapters of the translated text.

### **Linguistic Amplification**

Linguistics amplification is another technique that is used by the translator of *Ogún Omódé*. Right from the title, used by the translator. The translated title is *Treasury of Childhood Memories* to make it meaningful and clear to non-speakers of Yorùbá. The original text draws the title from a proverb: *Ogún*

*omòdé kì í ùré fógún odún.* The knowledge of this proverb by the translator helps her to amplify the original import of the title in the target language. Linguistic amplification is the opposite of elision or omission. Instead of compressing some items in the translated text, the translator adds new elements to the target text. She uses a paraphrase to explain a word with no equivalence in the target language. For example, in the dialogue between Olu and his mother Asunle, the mother asks her son to rebuke Atọkẹ his co-wife in the medium of English. The discussion ended with Olu's statement 'kò búru'. To make the reader understand the meaning of 'kò búru' which has no equivalence in the English language, the translator amplifies the linguistic item which is a verb phrase as follows: 'Ah, that is no problem at all, Mother; in fact, that is easy' Olu assured his mother" (P.121). The phrase 'kò búru' ordinarily means "is okay or there is no problem," but that will not be enough for full equivalent meaning, the additional elements make the translated text creative and meaningful so that readers would understand the context of the situation leading to the statement. In another example,

SL = *Ti mo fi kojá nídií igi oró n ò tilẹ̀ mò.*

TL = I did not even notice that I had gone past the notoriously frightful cactus tree (P. 201).

The addition of *notoriously frightful* is to amplify the meaning of the *igi oró* (cactus tree). It is not just an ordinary tree, but a tree believed to be infested with evil fairies that passing through it is awe-Inspiring. The linguistic amplification in the translation makes the sentence meaningful and clear enough to readers of the translated text. Here is another example:

SL = *Pé tí wọn bá ti fi òrùka gbá omọ láyá, omọ náà kò ní lè sọ̀rò mó.*

TL = the chest of a child with conjuration-ladden-rings-, the child loses his voice.

The addition of the qualifier to rings 'conjuration ladden' is deliberate. The word *òrùka* (ring) here is not a mere ring-like wedding or fashion ring but a magical ring that is not qualified in the SL, so to make it meaningful to the English reader, the translator amplifies the sentence.

SL = *Ilẹ̀ sù omọde sóko, wọn ló láyà, bí kò bá láyà òkó, ẹ̀ yóò sùn sóko ni?*

TL = A child found himself trapped on the farm after dark, and people say, "Wow, what a brave kid!" However, pray-tell, what does bravery have to do with being trapped in the dark of night? What does bravery have to do with anything as if the trapped kid had a choice whether or not he wants to be brave (p. 200).

Here, added not only to the paraphrase elements target text but also the meaningful explanation in rhetorical questions are included.

SL = *Ejò lábẹ́ ẹ̀kòkòtò!*

TL = A snake lounging in the flare-legged part of a sleeping old man.

The addition of "a sleeping old man" is to amplify the contextual meaning of the scene where a farmer slept not knowing that a big poisonous snake is hidden in his trouser. The translator supports this technique with pictures of six men trying to rescue the man from a snake bite. Linguistic application is one of the most generously used translation techniques in the *Treasury of Childhood Memories*. There is hardly any page in the text without linguistic amplification and it makes the reading fascinating. Even some of the sub-titles are amplified; for example:

SL: Eégún Ọdún = TL: Festivals of the Eégún Masquerades

SL: Àwa náà Gbéégún = TL: Tòmbòlò, A Masquerade Festival of our own

The translator adds to the words in the target language text to give complete information contained in sub-titles and to expand and clarify the meaning.

### **Borrowing**

Borrowing is a technique often used in literary translation because not all cultural words have equivalence in the target language. The technique involves using a word or an expression in the original text bracket (SL) and placing it as it is, with no modification or partial modification in the target language or text. This includes words and expressions retained by the translator that are cultural items or elements with no equivalence in the English language. Any attempt to translate such words or expressions will damage the meaning of the original text or change the intention of the writer. Pamela Smith adopts borrowing techniques to allow her to put the text clearly within a particular cultural context through the register of the Yorùbá vocabulary she uses. The

TL retains borrowed words that do not exist in the English, mostly found in the oral poems such as chain-reaction folktales as in the following example:

SL = Kín ni jẹ?  
 Mọladé  
 Kín ní jádé  
 Adéşípò  
 Kin ni jẹ pò ?  
 Pòşéré  
 Kín ní jẹ sẹéré  
 İşéré ọmọyọ  
 Kin ni jomoyọ  
 Ọmoyọ àkòkò  
 Kin ni jákòkò  
 Àkòkò ibalẹ

TL = Dance mọ́ọ means what  
 Means mọ́ọ in Mọladé  
 Then what emerged?  
 Adéşípò  
 What's po?  
 As in Pòşéré  
 What's sẹéré?  
 As in İşéré ọmọyọ  
 Ọmọyọ as what?  
 Same as in Ọmoyọ àkòkò  
 What's àkòkò  
 As in àkòkò ibalẹ (P 106).

The TL retain the following words: *Mọ́ọ*, *Adéşípò*, *po*, *pòşéré*, *sẹéré*, *işéré ọmọyọ*, *ọmoyọ akoko*, *àkòkò ibalẹ* because they are cultural words with no equivalence in the English language. Secondly, the translator does not want to lose the rhythm and poetic nature of the words. The observed adoption of the borrowing method is in the folktales with expressions that have no equivalence in the English language. Here is another example:

SL: *Ajá, Ajá o, ràn mí lẹrù*  
*Jángíní-too-fín.*

TL: Dog, Oh Dog, won't lend me a hand with this load.  
 Jangíní-too-fin. (p. 52)

The phrase '*Jàngíní-too-fín*' is borrowed from the original text and retained with no modification in the target language. So, other cultural items such as *Sansalùbó pẹ̀rẹ̀pẹ̀*, *àmalà*, *abà olóóṣà*, and *Olóbírípó*, *òbírípó* are retained in the translation to make readers enjoy the rhythm and aesthetic ornaments of the folksong. The translator retains the rhythm in the original text in the target text. The stylistic device of idiophone in the source of language that is retained in the translated text adds to the beauty of the translator's language of translation. Other cultural items such as names of characters, places, and folksongs are non-existent in the target language. They are therefore retained so that they would not change the original intention of the source language or give wrong meaning.

### Calque

Another translation method in the text is calque. The use of foreign loan word or phrase taken directly from another language and translated, word-for-word, into another language. While borrowing is, the use of the same word from a source language, calque is a form of literal translation of words from one language to create a stock phrase in the target language. There are a few examples in the *Treasury of Childhood Memories*. What I observe in the use of calque in the translated text is phonetic matching where the approximate sound of the borrowed word is matched with a similar sound, pre-existing word, or morpheme in the target language. For example:

SL: *Mo sì gbọ́ tí ẹnìkàn n kùn yunmu-yunmu-yunmu, ẹ̀gbọ̀n n ò gbọ́ ohun tí ó n sọ.*

TL: I heard a voice rumbling unintelligibly "yummm, yummmm" but I did not quite comprehend what the voice was saying (p. 58).

The words '*yummm, yummmm*' sound like '*yunmu-yunmu*' of the original text which has close imitation or a close copy of the phonetic sounds of the words. Here, the translator seeks to create the precise flavor and tone of the original text. Another example is found on page 71: *Hesikáyà Adeniji ẹ̀ni tí àpẹ̀jẹ̀ rẹ̀ n jẹ́ 'àyà-bí ẹ̀yìn'*. Hezekiah Adeniji, a.k.a Chiselled-chested or Abs-of-steel. Also, *Ògbéni Láńfúlẹ̀* is translated as 'Scruffy Duds Odibos' on page 73. These are semantic translations that are author-focused and seek to convey the exact meaning of the words. The translator uses the correct target language without following the structure of the SL because here, the structure is

less important than the meaning, she conveys the meaning with an appropriate style.

### Compensation

Another literary technique adopted by Professor Pamela Smith is Compensation. This is a standard lexical transfer operation whereby those meanings of the SL text, are lost in the TL text in some other place or by other means. It is more or less a combination of the ‘add and drop’ game and it makes translating a creative activity. In the TL, some of the translated poetic forms, words, and expressions are dropped or replaced. For example:

SL: *Àlò o, -Àlò*  
*Àlò mi léri fùrùrù gbaagbòó*  
*Ó léri, léri.*

TL: Hear, hear, a folktale to tell  
 Let’s hear it then  
 My story is a fantastic tale  
 About...?

The lexical items such as *Àlò* and *fùrùrù gbaagbòó* are idiomatic expressions with no equivalent words in English, they are dropped but with compensation by using other words in the target language. *Àlò* is completely dropped and the second expression is translated as: ‘Fantastic tale’.

### Adaptation

A technique where one cultural element is replaced by another is typical of the receiving culture. In adaptation, the most important thing is the actual message rather than the words making it up. For example:

*Yangí ñlá tó wà léti ìgóríta mēta oko* = huge rock.  
*Ọlórún kú ọlá* = God have mercy.  
*Ìròkò Olúwéré* = fairy-invested-African-teak-tree.

In the examples above, it is not the words that matter but the message, the words *yangí ñlá*, *ìròkò olúwéré*, may not have equivalent words in the English language but have words that could replace them.

### Particularization

The translator also adopts a particularization technique. This is a technique of using a more precise or concrete term that is generally accepted in the original text. The word or phrase in the source text is given a precise word rather than a generalized word or phrase in the target text. For example:

SL: *ègbẹ̀ işu* = TL: dried yam (p.99)

SL: *Ó dàbò* = TL: Farewell (p.102)

SL: *rodò aṣọ* = TL: haberdashery

SL: *rugbá oṣẹ* = TL: tray of soap

SL: *ru kànkànkà* = TL: tray of sponges

SL: *tẹ̀pá òjẹ* = TL: leaning on a silver staff (p.106)

The translator uses this technique to disambiguate the words and they are precise and concrete.

### Findings of the Study

The findings of the study were that:

- i. There are many other techniques adopted by Professor Pamela Smith in her translation that make the work a masterpiece which is not included in the discussion, such examples are transposition; crossed transposition; equivalence; reinforcement; implication among others;
- ii. The literary translation techniques that are predominant in the translated text are modulation; language compression; language amplification; borrowing; calque; compensation; adaptation; and particularization.

In literary translation, one of the most important parameters is the preservation of the figurative and emotional impact on the reader, the translator has achieved this by using various stylistic and expressive words. Translation of a work of art particularly in an African language such as Yorùbá, a tonal language with paralinguistic features requires not only a thorough knowledge of the language but a to skillfully convey the images of the original text in consonance with the author. I wonder how the translator could do such a marvelous job, knowing the mind of the author of the source text. She seems to have known the mind of Akinwumi Iṣọla who happens to be a genius writer in Yorùbá medium. His use of Yorùbá language in all his novels, poems, and play texts is extraordinarily attractive and deep. The translator's language use

matches the competence level of the writer. Professor Pamela Smith belongs to what Oyeleye (1995) calls the upper zone category which is the highest echelon on the scale of bilingualism. Translators in this category are the language experts. The translator's control of the registers of the SL and TL is impeccable. She combines an equivalent linguistic experience with equivalent linguistic competence in the manner of her translation. The point of a scale of biculturalism of the translator is equally on the high side. She is very competent in the area of Yorùbá culture and one can assert that her translation of Akinwumi Işola's *Ogun Ọmọdẹ* into *Treasury of Childhood Memories* makes her an outstanding bicultural translator. As a literary translator and English language icon, Professor Pamela Smith deliberately translated the text in a refined way to preserve the cultural specifics of the text.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the major literary techniques adopted by the translator are numerous but the notable ones are modulation; language compression; elision/omission; linguistic amplification; borrowing; calque; compensation; and particularization. These literary techniques of translation allow the translator to make the contents of the source text easily transposed and rendered in impeccable English language without necessarily making a verbatim translation. However, as Baker (1992,114) rightly observes: 'Every translation has points of strength and points of weakness and every translation is open to improvement.' Even though bilingualism is attainable, it is difficult to attain perfect biculturalism. The only literal translation that I observed in the TL is *Danburubaka* translated as *Danburudaka*. The word is not a Yorùbá word but a loan word from the Hausa language. It was even translated aesthetically. Therefore, all the cultural elements which are left untranslated by the translator cannot be regarded as major weaknesses rather, they are intentionally left to preserve the SL culture-specifics from total extinction in the future.

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