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FORMULATING A TRANSLATION MODEL FOR POSTCOLONIAL AFRICAN LITERATURE THROUGH THE STUDY OF SELECTED WORKS OF CHINUA ACHEBE, WOLE SOYINKA, EFUA SUTHERLAND AND OLA ROTIMI

Isaac Boaheng (PhD)

Lecturer in Christian Theology and Ethics, Christian Service University College, Ghana
Research Fellow, University of the Free State, South Africa
Adjunct Academic in Theology, South African Theological Seminary, South Africa
Bible Translator, Bible Society of Ghana

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ABSTRACT: Postcolonial theory focuses on addressing gaps that are encountered when dealing with literary works or contexts that are minor or peripheral. It explores ways in which dominated or colonized culture can adapt tools of the dominant discourse to fight against its political or cultural dominance. Postcolonial studies serve as a useful tool for translating texts from one language to another. One has to be conversant with the approaches used by postcolonial writers to be able to appreciate their texts and eventually translate them. This paper used the methodology of textual analysis to examine portions of the selected works of four postcolonial African writers; namely, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Efua Sutherland and Ola Rotimi, to bring out key strategies by which these writers decolonized the minds of their African audience. The main decolonizing strategies discussed include adaptation, vernacularization and pidginization. Based on the findings from the analyses, the paper proposes some translation principles for dealing with postcolonial texts. The paper contributes not only to translation studies in Africa but also contributes to the decolonization of Christianity in Africa.

KEYWORDS: Adaptation, Africa, Decolonization, Pidginization and Vernacularization

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, colonialism has become an important part of the history of many nations, whether the colonizers or the colonized. The development of many nations has been influenced greatly by colonization. The impacts of colonization on nations are varied depending on the method by which colonization took place—whether the indirect rule system, the divide and rule or the apartheid form. Colonization is always characterized by the interaction between two cultures with one dominating the other. Here, culture is considered as social, ethnic, or age group patterns of learned and shared behaviors that are peculiar to a particular society. Culture is shared as one generation passes down traditional beliefs and practices to another generation and it becomes a routine to that new generation. Interactions with other communities may lead to changes in the culture of a people; therefore, culture is dynamic, not static.

Colonialism was achieved through an inculcation of cultural superiority, military and technological power, and such assumed superiority of the colonial masters was often "explained by the European colonizers' fantasized descent from Greece and Rome" (Goff, 2014, p. 123). Colonial masters usually took over the natives and then condemned and branded their culture, tradition, language, religion and art forms as primitive and barbaric. In most cases, colonizers failed to appreciate that each culture is God-given and therefore has dignity and value, which must be respected and valued. Therefore, Wolf (2000, p.127) rightly asserts that "Colonialism involved territorial, economic, political and cultural subjugation, appropriation and exploitation of another country and people, with the aim of establishing one's dominance in the world."

In his *On the Postcolony*, Achilles Mbembe (2001) brings out various ways in which the African experience has been (mis)represented in Western political and cultural discourse. He then seeks to upturn Western theoretical approaches that claim to have a perfect understanding of and solution to Africa's socio-political and economic challenges. Mbembe examines how Westerners perceive African society as primitive and resistant to the enlightenment and progress that Western civilization represents. First, Mbembe (2001) observes that Western discourses usually reduce Africans to a people whose cultural experience can only be understood through a negative interpretation of the tradition and values that animate the African society. Again, Africans are considered as people whose culture operates outside the walls of human civility. Furthermore, Western discourses consider African values that seem to be at par with those of the West as having "lesser value, little importance, and poor quality" (Mbembe, 2001, p. 1). In addition, Western discourses about Africa employ a framework that promotes the European conspiracy theories about Africa and Africans and relegate African society and cultures to the backseat of global civilization and development. Consequently, African history, culture and linguistic traditions are described in terms of chaos, disorganization, barbarism and brutality that characterize the animal kingdom (Mbembe, 2001). The Western world further considers African societies as characterized by facticity and arbitrariness. Facticity means that since things have been the way they are from time immemorial, there is no need to find justification for them than the mere fact of their being there (Mbembe, 2001). Arbitrariness means, in the society, order and time are denoted by myth and fable rather than reason or open argument (Mbembe, 2001). Moreover, African societies are considered as living under the burden of charms, spells, and prodigies.

Language imperialism came through the conscientization of a people to gradually shift from their language for socio-economic and political purposes/benefits. The language of the Empire

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(the colonial power) was imposed in every aspect of African daily life. The formal education which the colonizers introduced ended up suppressing the indigenous languages. Africans were made to think that their languages had nothing good to offer them. Most (post)colonial Nigerians, for example, started a statement by saying, "As Shakespeare said...." Others used Latin and Greek expressions like *ad infinitum* instead of "without end," *et cetera* instead of "and so on," *quid pro quo*, "a priori," *per se* and "by or in itself or themselves" (most times out of context) to show how educated or progressive they were (Bandia, 2014, p. 119). In those days, European languages gave access to better jobs, opportunities and lives. Consequently, colonized blacks had to learn their colonial masters' language and take foreign names in their quest for acceptance.[1] In French colonies, only French-speaking indigenes were recognized by their colonial masters. The African natives, therefore, had no other choice than to embrace the French language and education. The same can be said about English, Spanish and Portuguese colonies.

In reaction to this situation, some Africans emerged who sought to create an emancipatory platform to facilitate the promotion of Africa by showcasing the beauty, philosophy and poesy intrinsic to sub-Saharan African cultures (Mbembe, 2001). One of such writers is Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian novelist, poet, and critic. Achebe is considered as the most dominant figure in modern African literature. He gained worldwide attention after the publication of his first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), the first postcolonial novel written by an African. In addition, Achebe wrote many books which played significant roles in dismantling the unsavory legacies of colonialism and exposing the socio-political and cultural realities of contemporary Africa. Akinwande Oluwole Babatunde Soyinka (popularly known as Wole Soyinka) is another postcolonial African writer. He was born into a Yoruba family in Abeokuta (Nigeria) and became a famous playwright, novelist, poet, and essayist in the English language. Ghana's Efua Theodora Sutherland was a playwright, director, dramatist, children's author, poet and cultural activist. Her works such as *Foriwa* (1962), *Edufa* (1967), and *The Marriage of Anansewa* (1975) made her one of the outstanding Ghanaian postcolonial writers. Olawale Gladstone Emmanuel Rotimi (best known as Ola Rotimi) was one of Nigeria's key playwrights and theatre directors. Some of his plays are *To Stir the God of Iron* (produced 1963) and *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* (produced 1966; published 1977). The paper focuses on selected works of these four prominent postcolonial African scholars.

Postcolonial Literature and the Decolonization of the African Mind

Postcolonial studies (postcolonialism) is an academic discipline that focuses on methods that present cultural and linguistic legacies in postcolonial texts. The difficulty in specifying when colonialism in general actually ends makes it difficult to define what postcolonial period represents. Moreover, colonialism may go beyond the politically determined Independence Day on which a nation breaks away from foreign rule. It is in this light that Gilbert and Tompkins (2000) define postcolonialism as "an engagement with, and contestation of, colonialism's discourses, power structure, and social hierarchies" (Gilbert & Tompkins, 2000, p. 230). This definition suggests a relationship between the colonized and the colonizer. Colonialism extends beyond a nation's political life to affect its language, education, religion, artistic sensibilities, and others. Therefore, postcolonial theory must "respond to more than the

[1] Christianity also encouraged Christian converts to take foreign ("Christian") names at their baptism.

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merely chronological construction of post-independence, and to more than just discursive experience of imperialism" (Gilbert & Tompkins, 2000, p.230).

Postcolonial African writers made conscious efforts to decolonize the African mind in other to promote African identity, culture and development. The following section examines key strategies used by Achebe, Soyinka, Sutherland and Rotimi toward decolonizing the African mind in the postcolonial period. The key strategies considered are adaptation, vernacularization and pidginization.

Adaptation

Postcolonial literature usually results from the blending of local and foreign ideas. Postcolonial African literature blends some Western elements with indigenous ones (including African proverbs, idioms, music and dance) to produce a hybrid which can be regarded as authentic in its own right. The process that yields the hybrid sometimes involves recharacterization, modification, and adaptation from Greco-Roman literature. African adaptations draw heavily on indigenous ritual forms, suggesting that Africans and classical societies (like Greeks) place much emphasis on religious cultic traditions. For example, in Rotimi's *The Gods Are Not to Blame* (which is the African version of *Oedipus Tyrannus*), the author replaces the Delphic oracle with the Yoruba system of *Ifa* divination. Rotimi also effectively blends elements of the classical literary tradition with elements of the Yoruba oral tradition (such as proverbs, riddles, songs, incantations and black magic) to produce the Yoruba version of *Oedipus Tyrannus*.

One finds the use of proverbs when the people of Kutuje come to king Odewale's palace and, distressed by the plague that had visited the community, the Second Citizen asks, "When rain falls on the leopard, does it wash off its spots? Has the richness of kingly life washed off the love of our king for his people?" (Rotimi, 1985, p. 10). The first proverb (in the form of rhetorical question) is meant to draw king Odewale's attention to the fact that no matter what happens, they are his subjects and so he must care for them. The second proverb suggests that the king has become so preoccupied with extravagant kingly life that he no longer cares about the plight of his subjects. The African belief in black magic is also shown as both Odewale and Adetusa charm each other with witchcraft in their fight in the garden at Ede. There is a depiction of Ogun (the Yoruba chief deity) at whose shrine oracles are given. The play also includes dance which is an important aspect of African religious practices. For example, the people dance around Odewale, paying homage for his military exploits; this act empowers them to defeat their foes, the people of Ikolu.

Similarly, in adapting Euripides' Greek play *Alcestis* into the Ghanaian context, Sutherland (in *Edufa*) makes several artistic changes. Wetmore (2001, p. 122) observes as follows: "...Euripides's play provides a strong framework for Sutherland, who is less interested in the 'public and private faces of death' and the oppression of women than in the individual character's choices." Again, Sutherland contextualizes *Alcestis* into the Ghanaian setting by drawing on African rituals and symbolisms. For example, the Admetus-figure (Edufa in Sutherland's play) consults a diviner for a charm to achieve longevity. This longevity was to be achieved through the vicarious death of another person for him, rather than being gifted with that possibility by a deity. In African traditional setup, vicarious death is common whereby one person dies for the safety of another person or the whole community.

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Sutherland skillfully infuses classical aspects with elements from the African (Akan) oral tradition through the use of symbolism. Symbols used in the play include the sun, owl, Ampoma's waist beads, which are all common symbols in African societies. The play depicts the Sun as a great creature. For example, the sign of the Sun is drawn on the doorstep; Ampoma also implores to talk with her husband, *Edufa* "a little longer in the Sun", the Sun shines on the world (Sutherland, 1979, p. 102, 104, 105). Sutherland's use of the Sun draws on the African primal worldview which considers the Sun as a giver of life, power, strength and energy. In the play, the presence of the Sun symbolizes life and its absence in Ampoma's bedroom symbolizes her lack of life and imminent death in place of her husband, Edufa. Also, the owl that Sutherland uses in her play symbolizes imminent misfortune, ill-health, and even death. In Sutherland's play, Sam keeps an owl which is hooted at Edufa's home to symbolize Ampoma's imminent death and misfortunes that were to visit Edufa's household. In Africa, waist beads symbolize womanhood; therefore, putting them around Edufa's neck amounts to mockery of Edufa's lack of true manhood, which is Edufa's fear of imminent death which makes him no different from a woman.

Sutherland, in the search for an authentic Ghanaian theatre, draws from Akan folklore tradition (*Anansesem*), a narrative drama in which the storyteller narrates the story and sometimes steps into the act of character playing. She uses key features of *Anansesem* such as storyteller, *mmoguo* (intermittent singing and dancing), and the players. She also uses an all-female chorus, who perform the cleansing rite, a feature she might have borrowed from her Akan-Fante background. The introduction of this rite makes the play authentic. By the use of these and other African symbols and elements which are absent in Euripides' Alcestis, Sutherland adapts the classical literature to suit the African context.

Soyinka, on his part, modifies Euripides' play, *The Bacchae*, by adding a sub-title, "A Communion Rite" to obtain his title *The Bacchae of Euripides: A Communion Rite*. The original version of the play draws on the Greek practice of sacrificing a scapegoat to the gods in order to achieve fertility and bumper harvest in the land. Soyinka adjusts his version to include elements of sacrifice and communion to firmly root his play in the African primal worldview. Like other writers of adaptation, Soyinka modifies the characters in the original play which he adapts for his community. For example, the god Dionysus in Soyinka's play is made to look a little moderate, and at some point, a Christ-figure. Soyinka also modifies the life and character of Agave, Pentheus' mother. Whereas in in Euripides' play, Agave's life deteriorates after becoming sane and realizing that she had murdered her own son, in Soyinka' version, Agave' realization of her former Bacchic madness makes her submissive. Thus, Soyinka's Agave looks more reformed than Euripides'. Soyinka's play is characterized by factors such as Ogun, early contact with Western and Christian education, communal rites, rituals and festivals.

The foregoing discourse underlines that in the process of adapting the structures, plots and characters of the classical literary tradition in their drama texts, African postcolonial playwrights usually modified the original text (eg. Greek text) to suit their African audience. Postcolonial African writers refigured Greek and Roman literature in the contexts of their own classical and in postcolonial traditions and contexts. In doing so, they explored their own cultural contexts using classical referents. as a way of exploring their own cultural identities and those of their societies. Postcolonial literature therefore brings native literary techniques to the attention of an international audience.

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Vernacularization

Language is one of the main factors that contributed to the decolonization process. Language has been one of the most effective and powerful weapons of colonization. The political tactics of colonizers succeeded in throwing African vernacular languages to the periphery, while colonial language occupied the center. African postcolonial theorists and scholars have thoroughly debated whether African writers should write in their local languages or in the colonizer's language. Different African scholars in the fields of philosophy of language and postcolonial studies have expressed great interest in the election of language because language relates to questions of identity, nationalism and (anti)colonial discourse(s). A key point in the debate has been whether or not Africans who write in European languages can be considered "authentic" African writers. Some people argue that African philosophy, experience, belief and identity are expressed in African languages, and therefore the works of those who write in foreign languages do not carry African values and so these writers do not qualified to be regarded as African writers. Others contend that the appropriation of a foreign language to express a local idea in a fashion that best suits the needs of the local people is authentically African (Kunene, 1992).

Achebe wrote repeatedly about his use of English language and his relationship with it. He accepted what he termed the "fatalistic logic of the unassailable position of English in our literature" (Thiong'o, 1986, p. 9). Achebe stresses his "adaptionists" position—that is, his view that English in Africa is a historical fact and a tool in their own hands— when he says, "Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it" (Achebe, 1975, p. 62).[2] He seized the English language and used it as a tool for expression and sharing of experiences to suit his own expressive needs. Soyinka also supported Achebe's position on use of language. Soyinka preferred to write in the "imperialist" language, though in an African style. His coined style of English easily identifies him among Africans in general and the Yoruba people of Nigeria in particular. He sometimes infuses aspects of the Nigerian pidgin language into his works as a way of indigenizing the Western language to suit his African audience.

Contrary to Achebe's and Soyinka's view, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan writer argued that any literature created and documented in a non-African language is not qualified to be regarded as an African literature. His anti-imperialist posture and his promotion of Kenyan/African literary and cultural heritage is founded on three experiences (Thiong'o, 1986). The first was that the education system in Kenya, like in most decolonizing nations, was dominated by literature from the imperial center, a situation which catalyzed Western imperialism. Secondly, the Euro-American influences on the Kenyan/African film industry resulted in a nationwide yearning for foreign styles and content to the detriment of local ones. Thirdly, the influence of Western interests in the local mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, and television) companies was so huge that the local communities were shortchanged in this ideological battle of wits for the attention of the natives. These factors made Thiong'o develop an anti-imperialist posture.

[2] As discussed later in this paper, Achebe's use of English involved some kind of adjustment that resulted in what he referred to as "a new English" that suits the African environment.

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Thiong'o rejected colonial/imperial languages on several occasions, and campaigned for the use of African indigenous languages for all forms of literary expression. In his view, the only way to retain an African literary identity is to write in African languages. In other words, the only way African writers fight against wider imperialist domination by the colonizers is to use African languages in their literary works. He denounced the English language and the values associated with it and chose to write in his mother tongue, Gikuyu dialect. His turning point is evident in the following quote: "This book Decolonizing the Mind is my farewell to English as a vehicle for any of my writings. From now on it is Gikuyu and Kiswahili all the way. However, I hope that through the age-old medium of translation I shall be able to continue dialogue with all" (Thiong'o, 1986). Thus, Thiong'o prefers writing in the African native language and then translating it into colonial languages to reach more audience if need be. Though many scholars have contributed to the debate, there is still a lack of consensus regarding the legitimate language for postcolonial African scholarship.

Postcolonial texts are characterized by vernacularization, that is, the transplantation of African words and expressions into European language texts with the purpose of giving the text a distinct local flavor (Bandia, 2014). The transplantation (interpolation or intercalation) of indigenous words and expressions into European language text may be necessitated by the lack of European language equivalents of these terms and expressions in the African language in question. The vernacularization of Euro-African texts "calls attention to the inherent multilingualism of postcolonial society and suggests a linguistic hierarchy that is made evident in the literary heteroglossia practiced by postcolonial writers" (Bandia, 2014, p. 109).

Achebe's use of Igbo linguistic traditions (like proverbs, myths, forms of speech, many Igbo untranslated terms) to complement the English language in *Things Fall Apart* illustrates the vernacularization of Euro-African texts. The setting of this novel is in the outskirts of Nigeria in a small fictional village Umuofia (in Igbo land), just before the arrival of European missionaries into their land. The arrival of the missionaries brought unprecedented sudden cultural changes (in areas such as religion, traditional gender roles and relations, family structure, and commerce, among others) that threatened the socio-political institutions of Umuofia. Achebe's novel is meant to analyze the effects of European colonization on Igbo culture and then educate his readers about the value of African culture. Some Igbo expressions used in the novel include: *ogene* (a musical instrument; a kind of gong), *agadinwayi* (old woman), *ogbanje* (a child who repeatedly dies and returns to its mother to be reborn), *obi ndichie of umofia* (the elders of the village), *tufia* (a curse or oath), *achi* (tree), *Oji odu achu ijij-o-o!* (The one that uses its tail to drive flies away), *nne* (mother), *ekwensu* (devil or satan), *efulefu* (a foolish man) and *nna ayi* (our father) (Achebe, 1958).

Postcolonial writers vernacularized in such a way not to distort the syntactic characteristics and grammatical structures of the receiving European language. In most cases, the meaning of the transported word can be deduced from the context. The following examples taken from Achebe's *Arrow of God* highlight this point: (i). "... He checked the remaining ones again and went back to his *obi*, shutting the door of the barn carefully after him" and (ii). "Men of Umuaro, why do you think our fathers told us this story? They told it because they wanted to teach us that no matter how strong or great a man was, he should never challenge his *chi*" (Achebe, 1974, p. 3, 27). In the first sentence Achebe has transplanted the Igbo term *obi* in a way that fits the grammatical and syntactical structure of the English language. A contextual analysis of the word *obi* especially in relation to the accompanying expression "shutting the door" reveals that *obi* is an abode. In the traditional Igbo setting, *obi* refers to one of many

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buildings that make up a family compound. The second sentence also features the Igbo word *chi* in a way that agrees well with the English syntax and structure. According to Igbo socio-religious worldview, the word *chi* may refer to an individual god, fate, destiny or spirit. A careful reader can deduce this meaning.

Achebe's use of vernacularization was meant to draw the reader's attention to the source culture. According to Bandia (2014, p. 113), "The untranslated vernacular word calls attention to itself, rendering the text occasionally inaccessible, hence forcing the non-native reader to engage in a reading process that involves a fair measure of translating and that recognizes the autonomy and authenticity of the postcolonial novel." The untranslated vernacular, therefore, compels the reader to engage the source language and culture critically.

Linguistic Pidginization

Ordinarily speaking, a *lingua franca* is a language that evolves through interactions and becomes a medium of communication between two parties. Such a language functions as a compromised medium of communication. Through interactions with others, Africans have developed a new *lingua franca* that has been modified to suit African society. Achebe wrote "I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its central home but altered to suit the African surroundings" (Achebe, 1975, p. 62). Achebe's quote well captures the situation in almost all African societies and sets the tone for discussions on linguistic dominance of the English language. As noted earlier, the colonization of Africa not only led to foreign control over economic, political and social lives of Africans but it also led to cultural and linguistic invasions whereby Africans were forced to abandon their mother tongues and adopt English, French, Portuguese, Arabic or other languages of their colonial masters.

Achebe's assertion that English (and by extension other colonial languages) can carry the weight of one's own African experience is debatable. Translators will notice that it is impossible to achieve complete translatability between two languages of distinct socio-cultural and linguistic traditions. Transferring a message from one linguistic tradition into another definitely involves some degree of distortions. Nonetheless, Achebe makes a very significant point by noting that the English language which was forced on Africans has experienced some sort of Africanization that has led to the emergence of a new English that suits the African context. The Africanization of the English language has resulted in the pidginization and hybridization of English by Africans (both home and in the diaspora) and other people. This phenomenon has eventually led to the emergence and development of varieties of English including creoles, pidgins, patois, "black" English, "African" Englishes and "Indian" Englishes (Mojola, 2018, p. 66).

Pidgin English must be distinguished from the English language in West Africa if one is to have an unambiguous understanding of the nature and use of Pidgin in African literary works (Bandia, 2014). Bandia (2014, p. 122) defines West African Pidgin English as "a hybrid language that has evolved from a pidgin to what is today a creole spoken as a mother tongue or first language by some people born of inter-ethnic marriages and by many displaced urban dwellers in Africa." Mufwene (2004, p. xiii) is of the view that "creole vernaculars are new language varieties which originated in the appropriation of non-standard varieties of Western European languages by populations that were not (fully) of European descent in seventeenth-to-nineteenth century European (sub)-tropical colonies." Creole vernaculars diverge so

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drastically from the indigenized standard varieties of European languages used in the (ex-)colonies and from one another. Factors that determine the kind of creole vernaculars developed include the local language into which the colonial language is introduced, the particular variety of the colonial language that the new speakers have been exposed to, the modes of transmission (for example, whether naturalistic or guided learning) and the colonization strategy (whether trade, settlement or exploitation colonization).

West African Pidgin English emerged through the interaction between several African languages and some European colonial languages (English, French, Portuguese) connecting a metropolitan lexicon with a local syntax. "The Pidgin language continuum" according to Bandia (2014, p. 129) "would feature a *basilect*, a minimal variety spoken by the Western educated elite, a *mesolect* spoken by semi-literate individuals (who may confuse Pidgin with Standard English), and an *acrolect* used by people with hardly any exposure to English, people who neither speak nor understand English." Again, Pidgin English is different from "Broken English" which, on a West African English continuum, falls between the basilect and the acrolect (Bandia, 2014). "Broken English" may be described as "the variety of English spoken by someone (usually semi-literate) who has only an approximate command of standard West African English" (Bandia, 2014, p. 129). "Broken English" is "bad English" but Pidgin is an autonomous language which cannot be considered as "bad English." "Broken English" emerged from trade colonization involving random and limited contact between European traders and their African counterparts such that the Africans experienced only minimal exposure to and use of the European language. The colonized African society did not have enough exposure to the colonial language, resulting in the formation of "Broken languages" (for example, Cape Verde, Sao Tomé and Réunion) (Bandia, 2014). On the other hand, Nigerian, Ghanaian, and Cameroonian Pidgin Englishes, for example, emerged when these nations were trade colonies and developed (as *lingua francas*) through the time that they became exploitation colonies in the late nineteenth century. West African Pidgin Englishes share similar linguistic features with the indigenous languages with which the European language has come into contact. African oral traditions (like repetition, onomatopoeia, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and others) also feature prominently in this pidgin/creole variety.

At the initial stages, Pidgin English was associated with uneducated or semi-literate urban dwellers from various ethnic backgrounds. However, in contemporary times, Pidgin English is used by well-educated (West) Africans. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) started its Pidgin news broadcast in August 2017 to serve its West African audience. Prominent African figures like Ghana's Former President John Dramani Mahama and Ghana's Electoral Commissioner, Mrs. Jean Mensah have both granted interviews in Pidgin English. In some contexts, Pidgin English is preferred because of its brevity. The following example, taken from Achebe's *Anthills of the Savanna* illustrates the brevity of Pidgin English as compared to a more Standard English: "You think na so we do am come reach superintendent?" (Achebe, 1987, p. 123). (Meaning, "Do you think this is how I have worked all these years and succeeded in becoming a superintendent?).

The Pidgin spoken in one country may vary depending on the local language in a given context. The Nigerian situation is explained as follows:

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> Ethnic groups in Nigeria can communicate in the language though they usually have their own additional words. For example, the Igbos added "Nna" at the beginning of some sentences to add effects to the meaning of their sentences [...] This same additional effect can be found among the Yorubas who normally added the words "Se" and "Abi" to their own dialect of Nigerian Pidgin. Such native words are often used at the start and end of an intonated sentence or question (Balogun, 2013, p. 93).

Therefore, the utterances "Nna im I dey talk" ("It is him that I am talking of") and "You hear se I come?" ("Have you heard that I have come?") depict Pidgins spoken by Igbos and Yorubas respectively.

Postcolonial West African writers usually used Pidgin English as the means of communication between characters depicted as native Africans working for the colonial administration and their white masters. Therefore, "back and forth movement between the European language of writing and Pidgin which takes place in the West African novel" must be considered as a form of "code-switching between two relatively autonomous languages, and not as a movement between the high and low varieties of the same language" (Bandia, 2014, p. 130). The following passage from Achebe's *Arrow of God* shows code switching by the semi-literate John Nwodika who uses Pidgin English to speak to his European boss, then speaks to his native people in native Igbo language and then switches back to Pidgin English for the benefit of a non-Igbo speaking African.

> "Did I not say so?" he asked the other servants after their master had been removed to hospital. "Was it for nothing I refused to follow the policemen? I told them that the Chief Priest of Umuaro is not a soup you can lick in a hurry." His voice carried a note of pride. "Our master thinks that because he is a white man our medicine cannot touch him." He switched over to English for the benefit of Clarke's steward who came in just then and who did not speak Igbo.
>
> "*I used to tellam say Blackman juju no be something wey man fit take play. But when I tellam na so so laugh im de laugh. When he finish laugh he call me John and I say Massa. He say you talk bush talk. I tellam say O-o, one day go be one day. You no see now?*" (Achebe, 1974, p. 155).[3]

The Pidgin version shows repetition ("*na so so laugh im de laugh*") which is a common feature of West African languages. Repetition is a literary feature used for emphasis. The expression "o-o" uses both repetition and onomatopoeia which the writer draws from African traditional discourse.

Translation Principles for Dealing With Postcolonial Texts

From the foregoing discourse the following principles may be drawn for dealing with postcolonial texts. First of all, the framework for dealing with postcolonial texts recognizes that the "source" text (that is the postcolonial text) is not the original text as it is in the case of mainstream translation. In Bible translation, for instance, the source text (in Hebrew, Greek

[3] The italicized portion, the Pidgin version may be translated as follows: I used to tell him that black magic is not something one should fool around with. But each time I told him so, he would simply laugh it off. When he finished laughing, he would call out my name "John" and I would respond "Sir". He would say, "You are talking like an uncultured person". Then I would tell him, "Well, one day you will have first-hand experience of it and believe me." And that day has come.

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and Aramaic) is the original untranslated text. This cannot be said of postcolonial texts. Postcolonial texts are characterized by hybridity which makes the texts something different and something new. Therefore, right from the beginning, the "source" text is not the original text but a multilingual translation of the original text or a translation of the original text in conversation with many different linguistic traditions that interact with one other. In dealing with these "translative texts" or "already translated original", the translator needs to negotiate between the diverse languages and cultures that produced the postcolonial text.

The second principle relates to the question of whether every term in the postcolonial text must be translated or not. The translator faces the vexing problem of having to translate culture-specific terms like food, festivals and other. These terms (or words) are those that give the text its identity and therefore must be untranslated in order to preserve the identity of the text. This means that the preservation of the identity of postcolonial texts is crucial in postcolonial translations. This paper recommends leaving the terms untranslated, or giving a glossary or footnote. Translators must have a sound awareness of and commitment to postcolonial writers to be able to transpose the distinctive features of the postcolonial source texts in the translating texts.

This principle raises the question of transparency and readability. One cannot be fluent when reading an English text mixed with foreign terminologies. In the view of the author, postcolonial texts must not lose their identity for the sake of fluency, readability and transparency. One does not have to understand every word in a postcolonial text to be able to appreciate its message. Resisting elements of postcolonial texts must be allowed to remain untranslated. This is a way of allowing the text to say, for example, "I am English, not just English, but English that has emerged from several cultural experiences." While it is often counter-productive to translate resisting elements in postcolonial literature, a glossary may be added to explain these elements. The third principle then is that postcolonial translations must prioritize preservation of the identity of texts over transparency and readability.

The next principle is that of creativity and innovation. Postcolonial writers are creative writers who synthesize aspects of their culture with a dominant culture to produce vibrant literary works. In the same way, translators of postcolonial literature are free to apply new literary techniques for the receptor culture, thus broadening the literary horizons of the receptor culture. Creativity and innovation resulted in the contextualization of texts for the African context. Here, contextualization may be regarded as the creation of a wider hermeneutic environment (within which a text may be evaluated, interpreted and read anew) through the assignment of meaning to lexical items.

Finally, African postcolonial works must only be translated by those who have in-depth knowledge of the African context. This requires a great amount of research and study (especially if the translation is new to African culture). This does not necessarily mean only Africans can translate postcolonial text. The point rather is that translators of postcolonial African texts need to be well versed in African realities.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that postcolonial texts emerged from the sociopolitical opposition to the hegemonic power structure. The opposition from the colonized group is always a subversive

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part of the postcolonial text. Translators of postcolonial texts must respect this aspect and account for it in the translating text to avoid recolonizing the text. Both the postcolonial writer and the translator are addressing an intercultural audience, and are mediators of different languages. The paper has also outlined postcolonial principles of adaptation, vernacularization and pidginization through exploration of portions of the selected works of Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Efua Sutherland and Ola Rotimi. In all, the paper makes the point that in Africa's quest to decolonize the African mind, there is the need to develop and promote postcolonial studies in the African academy.

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