RESEARCH ARTICLE

A DESCRIPTIVE APPROACH TO TRANSLATING SATIRICAL IRONY IN CAMEROONIAN STAND-UP COMEDY

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ABSTRACT

This article sets out to i) identify and characterise satirical irony in Cameroonian stand-up comedy, ii) classify it, iii) determine related translatability constraints, iv) attempt its translation, and finally v) make an inventory of translation theories and strategies that are usable for the translation of this type of irony. From twenty (20) carefully analysed excerpts using the Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) model, qualitative and quantitative research methods, as well as literary criticism and translation theories, an eleven-point grid, as demonstrated through the analysis of an excerpt from Dave K. Moktoï's *Pour le libéralisme alimentaire auto-ventré*, findings show that satirical irony in Cameroonian stand-up comedy can be identified through unexpectedness, exaggeration, lexical opposition, internal opposition and text analysis. It can be classified under situational and verbal irony. Two major translation constraints - objective interpretation of source text and faithful rendering of the author's style have been identified. Also, the Semantic, Skopos, and Communicative theories, backed by the Relevance theory and Sociological approach are usable. Finally, translation strategies such as transposition, free translation, equivalence and literal translation are also usable. In all. being exploratory in nature, it is recommended that this endeavour be experimented in different literary contexts.

Key words: Translatability, Satire, Irony, Stand-up comedy, Cameroonian

1. Introduction

Literary translators face the difficulty of striking a balance between objectivity and subjectivity. This entails transferring the message without shifting it and preserving the author's style which defines the subjectivity of the text and which requires a careful analysis of linguistic features such as grammar, syntax, punctuation, etc. The preservation of style from source to target text is usually made difficult by literary language whose main characteristic is its heavy dependence on the possibilities of evocation. Meaning is thus based on potential significances and connotations which may deviate from ordinary language (Moneva, 2001 p. 215). This situation can be accounted for by the fact that the language of literature is essentially a combination of rhetoric devices such as simile, metaphor and (satirical) irony - the focus of this article.

Whereas in written texts, the reader may have time to pause and reflect in order to comprehend irony, in the specific case of stand-ups, there is little or no time between when the audience hears the irony and when they are expected to react. As if the double (opposing) meaning conundrum does not pose enough interpretation and translation problems, irony is further compounded by time factor in drama in general, and stand-ups in particular, given that drama is mostly performed, and speech by its very nature is short-lived.

From the ensuing, this article thus envisages to: a) identify and characterise the satirical irony of these two authors; b) classify the satirical irony; c) determine related translatability constraints; d) attempt translation(s) of the satirical irony identified in these sketches; and e) make an inventory of the usable translation theories and strategies.

However, before delving into these main articulations, it is germane to conceptually, contextually, and theoretically delimit the discussion. Conceptually, *(un)translatability, satirical, irony*, *stand-up comedy* and *Cameroon* are the key concepts that delimit this discussion. Contextually, this article is situated within the scope of the rising interest of stand-up comedy in literary translation studies in Cameroon in particular and Africa in general. Theoretically, the Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) model and a host of translation theories and strategies will be used in the analysis.

2.   Conceptual foregrounding

The key concepts that weave together this discussion - (un)translatability, satire, irony and stand-up comedy - have been foregrounded below.

a)   *Ttranslatability:* Shuttleworth & Cowie (1997 p.179-80) define translatability as a "term used – along with its opposite "untranslatability – to discuss the extent to which it is possible to translate either individual words and phrases or entire texts from one language to another". This age-old concept of *(un)translatability* has been sufficiently discussed – Firth, 1951; Mounin, 1963; Catford, 1965; Söll, 1971; Gregory, 1980; Newmark, 1988; Hatim & Mason, 1990; Bassnett, 1991; etc.), in view of the "transfer of meaning or truth from one language to another "*without any essential harm being done*" (emphasis mine), (Derrida, 1982/1985:120).

The thesis of (un)translatability arose from the tension between two basic arguments. Firstly, the indisputable fact that different languages do not "mesh together" in that the unique configurations of grammar, vocabulary and metaphor which one finds in each language inevitably have some bearing on the types of meaning that can be comfortably expressed in that language. Secondly, that in spite of this consideration, translation still paradoxically occurs, often with an ostensibly high degree of success (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997:179-80). Söll (1971 p.26) states that «la traduisibilité trouve ses limites là où commence l'ignorance des choses» [translatability strikes its limits when ignorance sets in], (my translation). It is thus in attempt to push the limits of ignorance that this exercise is undertaken.

b)   *Satire:* Some salient views on satire considered to be relevant to this discussion follow below:

–   Firstly, Akingbe (2014) considers satire as the use of humour or exaggeration to critique society.

–   In addition, Wa Thiong'o avers that:

Satire takes for its province a whole society, and for its purpose, criticism. The satirist sets himself certain standards and criticizes society when and where it departs from these norms. He invites us to assume his standards and share the moral indignation which moves him to pour derision and ridicule on society's failings. He corrects through painful, sometimes malicious, laughter (Wa Thiong'o, 1972 p. 55).

–   Finally, Olaniyan buttresses by adding that since the whole society is satire's constituency, it

focuses its lens on our failings as a community of people, and magnifies one or several of such our sores for critical inspection, using as its surgical tools such sharp weapons as scorn, derision, ridicule, bitter irony and laughter. But the appropriate set of standards-against which our failings can be determined-to form the baseline of satire has often times been the point of departure between satirists and between the satirist and his critic (Olaniyan, 1988 p. 48).

c)   *Irony:* Though irony has received much scholarly attention (Brooks 1971; Parlevliet, 2007; Erdogan, 2010; Bryant, 2012 etc.), it remains a complex and elusive device, owing to its highly rhetorical nature which

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renders its interpretation, language and style problematic (Chakhachiro, 2011 p.5). However, the following techniques can be used to capture irony:

- *Unexpectedness:* essential for any ironic situation or scenario to be realised, and achievable through the use of verbs that are (almost) opposite to the main subject of discussion (Lucariello, 2007).
- *Lexical opposition:* Lexical opposition is the use of (a) word(s) that are semantically opposite to the one(s) that was/were supposed to be used judging by the prevailing circumstances.
- *Rhetorical questions:* a question asked for effect or to make a statement rather than to elicit information (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2011). Rhetorical questions reveal the speaker's attitude towards his/her statement. The attitude is always one of pretence (that is, the speaker feigns ignorance) which is one of the chief characteristics of irony.
- *Text analysis:* This identification technique (useful especially for long passages) entails pausing the tape to reflect and determine whether a particular portion of the performance is ironic or not.
- In written texts more than in oral ones, certain clues such as emoticons and smileys can also be very useful for identification.

On the whole, the following complementary definitions of irony are retained. Firstly, it is "a type of indirect speech in which a speaker produces an explicit evaluative utterance that implicates an unstated, opposing evaluation" (Bryant 2012). Secondly, and away from this essentially verbal type of irony, Muecke (1970) posits that irony is saying something in a way that activates an endless series of "subversive interpretations". Finally, Turner (1973) thinks irony is a variation in intention with no corresponding indication in the grammatical form of the language.

d) **Stand-up (comedy):** Though relatively young, stand-up comedy is witnessing a remarkable rise in "popularity within the last ten years" (McIlvnny, Mettovaara & Tapio, 1992 p.143/1993), having evolved from traditional drama into a one-man-on-stage acts where there is no curtain separating the audience from the performer. The interaction between the comedian and his audience is more physical in [stand-up acts] than in the case of traditional drama (Wanchia, 2012). Eyoh (1988 p.123) reports that a Cameroonian popular theatre genre (*masse*-centred, development-oriented and different from "serious" cerebral-type plays) encouraged by stand-up comedians emerged in the late 1970s.

Double (2014) posits that three conditions qualify any theatrical act as stand-up:

- Personality: It puts a person on display in front of an audience, whether that person is an exaggeratedly comic character or a version of the performer's own self.
- Direct Communication: It involves direct communication between performer and audience. It is an intense relationship, with energy flowing back and forth between stage and auditorium. It's like a conversation made up of jokes, laughter and sometimes less pleasant responses.
- Present tense: It happens in the present tense, in the here and now. It acknowledges the performance situation and incorporates events in the venue into the act (Double, 2014 p.19). Stand-up comedy is thus *the here and now*. More specifically:

- The relationship between the stand-up artist and the audience is characterised, amongst others, by *spontaneity* on the part of the performer and *immediate response* from the audience.
    - Stand-up requires very little or *no stage props* - can be staged even at the market square.
    - It also treats *themes of basic human interest* such as theft, corruption, poverty.
    - Finally, one of the fundamental demarcating variables of stand-ups is funniness/ "deeply significant form of humorous expression" (Mintz, 1985 p.2).

From the ensuing, stand-up may be defined and understood here as a theatrical act involving a person performing in front of an audience in the present, in order to create laughter.

2.   On translating the satirical irony of Cameroonian stand-up comedy

In a bid to translate the satirical irony of Cameroonian stand-up comedy, a few crucial issues must be taken into consideration. These are the *literary, drama, popular, immediacy and spontaneity,* and *stand-up*, all explained below.

a)   *Firstly, the fact that stand-up comedy is literary*

African and Cameroonian literary peculiarity is that which is steeped in African ideas, philosophy, folklore and imagery (Okara, 1973). Literary peculiarity is characterised by traits like the *author's vision, connotative language use*, *focus on style*, *multiple interpretations*, and *timelessness* (Delisle, 1980:29-31). Translating the literary should thus include considerations for *language, culture, translator's invisibility, context* and *linguistic competence.*

- Language: Ghazala (2014 p.3) contends that the language of literature is "deviant or 'estranged' from ordinary, everyday non-literary language and thus difficult to easily interpret and translate.

- Culture: Singh & Bhandari (2013) hold that words in a literary text are dependent on the culture and context that produced them and that cultures are basically different. The lack of cultural equivalence between languages results in a concept called untranslatability - "A situation in which the linguistic elements of the original cannot be replaced adequately in structural, linear, functional or semantic terms in consequence of a lack of denotation or connotation" (Basnett, 2002 p.39).

- Translator's invisibility: Literature is a product of an individual's psychology, imaginations and visions. It is thus "impossible for the translator to visualise the author's intent and relive the experience and emotions of the author at the instant of creation" (Singh & Bhandari, 2013 p.43). Consequently, most translations are tinged with the translator's intent, experiences and emotions, leading to whether a translation can be free from what Venuti (2004) calls the translator's invisibility. Kratz aptly describes this translation problem thus:

I guess I consider myself in a kind of collaboration with the author … certainly my ego and personality are involved in translating and yet I have to try to stay faithful to the basic text in such a way that my own personality doesn't show (Kratz, 1986 p.24).

- Context: Boase-Beier & Holman (1998 p.1-12) declare that the literary text translator's job is constrained by the need to preserve illusion, literary tradition, censorship and linguistic characteristics of its medium. These social and contextual, poetic and conventional or linguistic and formal parameters help to shape the original into consideration.

- Linguistic competence: Still in the same vein, the literary text translator must be a brilliant intellectual and proficient bilingual artist who

has the onerous task of measuring both the communicative value and deep sense of the source text and further replace it by a TT in the receptor language that as far as possible has an approximate value to that of the ST. This means identifying and distinguishing culture-bound, structure-bound and time-bound i.e. norm-related elements in the ST an express them adequately in the TL (Ade Ojo, 1986 p.293).

b)   *Secondly, the fact that stand-up comedy is drama*

Drama/theatre (un)translatability hinges on a consideration of how constraints of the socio-cultural system (patronage, social conditions, economics and institutional manipulations) select and shape translation work. "The praxis of theatre translation is thus governed by the codes of both the internal and external cultural and social networks which act as links between the theatrical subsystem and the larger cultural and social systems" (Aaltonen, 2000:32-33).

- In the first place, as Bassnett (1991) points out, the translator is torn between *translating the drama text for reading or for performance,* since 'readable' plays are less complicated than 'actable' ones.

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– On a second count, there are *different drama cultures* in the world and moving from one to another usually demands some structural, semantic, ideological etc. shifts which do not augur well with the target language population.

– Finally, *contextual orientation* is very important in determining which approach and style to be adopted by the translator. There are essentially two approaches in literary translation: *source-text oriented* and *target-text oriented approaches*. However, for Suh (2009 p. 90) the semiotic approach which shifts the emphasis from context to theme, straddles the source, and target text approaches. He writes:

> The semiotic approach could be considered a sort of bridge between the two conflicting trends in that while some researchers consider that in the final analyses, the decision whether to adapt or not is determined by ideological, political or artistic considerations, theatre semioticians are of the opinion that such a decision ought not to be based purely on the above factors but rather on the result of a systematic and objective analyses to determine and explain the importance and incidence of the "foreignness" as a sign and, where and how it is manifested.

c)   ***Thirdly, the fact that stand-up comedy is 'popular' (theatre)***

The translation of the satirical irony of stand-up comedy automatically calls into play consideration of the 'popular'. Real or potential resistance to the translatability of the 'popular' genre has been hinted, examined and endorsed not only by African scholars (Ade Ajo, 1986 p.295; Okpewho, 1992:182-294; Bandia, 1993 p.103; Suh, 2008), but also by a host of other extra-African scholars (Delabastita, 1997:10; Vandaele, 2002 p.150) and the authoritative International Federation for the Theatre (www.firt-iftr.org/.../38-popular-entertainments), in respect of some of the sub-genre's traits - *orality, spontaneity, creativity, paralinguistic artistry, linguistic hybridisation, punning/wordplaying (and tongue-twisters),* and *humouring* - which culminate in the general phenomenon of *linguistic open-endedness* and *productivity*. These issues (Wanchia, 2012) pose the following translatability constraints:

– **The 'orality' in stand-up comedy:** Difficulties related to the translatability of orality are signalled by Azevedo (1998) thus:

> Translators… do not necessarily have at their disposal a dialect that approximates, let alone replicates the connotations of the original. As a result, they may have to represent orality through the creation of an approximate, perhaps ad hoc literary dialect, and in so doing they will risk masking, misrepresenting, or obliterating the sociolinguistic variables inherent in the original. If an attempt is not made, however, something vital will be missing from the translation. Nonstandard speech is not just an alternate, optional way of saying the same thing: rather it marks the characters using it and affects their mutual relationships in a way that standard language cannot replicate (Azevedo, 1998 p.42).

Opkewho (1992:394) strongly asserts that both Europeans and Africans alike have difficulties translating African oral popular art thus:

> many Europeans who studied African oral literature and culture from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century were laboring under a prejudice as well as a misconception … reflected in rather cavalier ways in which they translated the piece of oral literature or sought to give them a respectability which, it was thought they lacked. The result of this was that some European collectors, in their translations of …. encountered in African communities, tried to force them into schemes of versification that made music to Europeans but were characteristically un-African.

Even African writers, translators and scholars failed as they tried to be so "fashionable" that in the end, their translations sounded just as un-African as the ones the Europeans did, leading to a questioning of the authenticity of the translation.

– **The 'creative' in stand-up comedy:** Darah (1982 p.91, in Okpewho, 1992 p. 32) buttress and reinforce Okpewho to posit that "The principal stylistic tools of this job are metaphor, allusion, analogy**,** and other kinds of ***oblique imagery*** designed to make it reasonably clear who the subjects are even when fake names are used" (Okpewho, 1992 p.32), (emphasis mine)*.* These features seen as *figurative language,*

jointly resist translation by virtue of their intrinsic *oblique* character, as appreciated against the background of the following:

It is precisely this density of linguistic and cultural factors in figurative language which proves so challenging in the passage from one language to another: it is not by chance that some scholars (Dagut 1976; Broeck 1981) locate figurative language at the limits of translatability, if not beyond. Translators have the task of adapting the world-view which has produced these instances of figurative language into the cultural paradigm and thus beliefs and values of the target-culture, and to do so while preserving that combination of force and levity which is a prerogative of figurative language (http://www.lingue.unibo.it/tradurrefigure).

- **The 'paralinguistic' in stand-up comedy:** El-Shiyab (1996 p.212) states that "in translating theatrical texts, extra emphasis is given to paralinguistic features in these texts as plays are to be understood as if they were performed". In the same vein, Bassnett avers that:

  If the written text is merely a blueprint, a unit in a complex of sign systems including paralinguistic and kinetic signs, and if it contains some secret gestic codes that need to be realised in performance, then how can the translator be expected not only to decode those secret signs in the source language, but also to re-encode them in the target language? **(**Bassnett, 1990 p.72; 1991; 1998 p. 92).

- **The 'punning' in stand-up comedy:** Egan (1994 p.2) posits that "being practically untranslatable…puns effectively scotch the myth of universality". On the same issue, Sider (1983 p.176, in Veisbergs, 1997 p.163) states that "neither formulae nor systems can be of help, as the translation of wordplay gives life to a new wordplay in the other language. Everything depends on sudden inspiration". On grounds of language asymmetry, Alexieva (1997 p.140) says that on basis of

  the complex interdependence between language and our way of thinking we may suggest that one of the basic difficulties in pun translation lies [sic] in the fact that there exists interlingual asymmetry on top of the intralingual asymmetry.

Delabastita (1997 p.10 in Marinetti, 2005 p.36) also, talks of the 'incontestable fact that wordplay tends to resist some kind of translation'. Finally, Marinetti (2005 p.36) posits that "by extension punning and wordplay, are 'by definition untranslatable. Only creative transposition is possible'" (Jakobson, 1992 p.151).

- **The 'linguistic hybridisation' in stand-up comedy:** With respect to hybridsation-related translation difficulties, Nida (1976 p. 55) posits that the problem lies with finding in a foreign language a dialect with approximately the same status and connotations for rarely is the dialect match fully successful, given that the values associated with a particular dialect are often highly specific; they are either horizontal (geographical) or vertical (socioeconomic) dialects that authors/translators rarely consistently represent all the details of the said dialects.

- **The 'humour' in stand-up comedy:** Attardo (1994) and Antonopoulou (2002 p.195-220) have raised the issue of humour's potential resistance to translation. In the same vein, Vandaele (2002 p.150), on four counts, posits that from a practice perspective humour may resist translation for any or all of the four outstanding elements/reasons, with far-reaching implications. They are the fact that:

i) Humour is a meaning effect, with an undeniable, exteriorised manifestation – laughter or smiling, opposed to the meaning of other texts which is sometimes less-compelling in terms of perception;

ii) Based on research, the comprehension and appreciation of humour on the one hand, and its production, on the other, are two distinct skills. An individual (the translator inclusive) may well be sensitive to humour and be yet unable to successfully produce it, because it is more talent-related than teaching/learning-related;

iii) The appreciation of humour varies with individuals – what is humorous for one person, for instance, may just be supposedly comic/'bad joke', and therefore not really funny enough for another, and

iv) The rhetorical effects of humour may be so overwhelming that they blur the specifics of the humorous creation – strong emotions may hinder analytic rationalisation.

d)   Finally, the fact that stand-up comedy is immediate and spontaneous

According to Aaltonen (2000 p.41), "In the theatre, orality, immediacy and communality unavoidably introduce a new dimension to the translation of texts". This means that *personality* (exaggerated comic character on

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display in front of an audience), *direct communication* (direct communication between performer and audience - like a conversation made up of jokes, laughter and sometimes less pleasant responses), *present tense* which acknowledges the performance situation of the here and now *(immediacy)* that incorporates events of the venue into the act. (Double, 2014 p.19) must be considered.

Spontaneity engenders *semantic extension (*Mollanazar, 2010 p.7, in Motallebzadeh & 2011 p.3; Alexieva, 1997 p.139), *polysemy* (Alexieva, 1997 p.141; Delabastita, 1997 p.5); *ambiguity* (Qing-Liang, 2007 p.1/166, in Motallebzadeh &Yazdi 2011 p.3) and *vagueness* (Tuggy, 1993) which all show much resistance to translation (Alexieva, 1997 p.139; Tuggy, 1993).

5.   Perspectives to translating the satirical irony of stand-up comedy

Translating satirical irony poses a number of problems because irony is a device that relies heavily on "possibilities of evocation" [and therefore, its meaning is] "based on potential significances and connotations which may depart from ordinary language" (Morneva, 2001). For this reason, the translator's task is laden with guesswork and speculation. The translator is a bridge between the source language that produced the irony and the target audience that will receive it. Therefore, in reconstructing the irony, the translator must second-guess the intended meaning while speculating the audience's reaction.

To do this, the translator must look beyond the linguistic elements of the utterances and start considering other options such as semantic, cognitive or even a cultural approach in which case s/he must be cautious because "all cultures [do not] have similar understandings and uses of irony" (Barbe, 1995 p.7). The closer the cultures are geographically and historically, the higher the possibility of them sharing the understandings and uses of irony. This is in keeping with Martin (1983) who posits that irony and humour are inseparably linked to the context of their production. He states that the one very important pre-condition for irony or humour to be understood is that the speaker and listener share the same context. It is equally important for the speaker and the listener to be on a par as far as background information is concerned, for the background is so important in determining whether a statement or situation is intended to be understood as ironical or not (Barbe, 1995).

For Okara (1973 p.137), translating "almost literally from the African language native to the writer into whatever European Language he is using as his medium of expression". He adds that this is intended

> to keep as close as possible to the vernacular expressions. For from a word, a group of works, a sentence and even a name in any African language, one can glean the social norms, attitudes and values of a people. What emerges... is that a writer can use the idioms of his own language in a way that is understandable in English. If he uses the English equivalents, he would not be expressing African ideas and thoughts, but English one (Okara, 1973 p.137-138).

6.   Methodology

Procedurally, *documentary research*, *qualitative and quantitative* data analysis methods have been used. Findings are presented in percentages. This article adopted and used a grid comprising the following elements in chronological order:

a) ***Source text:*** Here, the excerpt to be translated is presented
b) ***Element of interest:*** Part of the excerpt to be analysed is highlighted.
c) ***Context of production:*** Describe context surrounding production of an ironic statement.
d) ***Author's intention:*** This part features the message that the author intends to pass across.
e) ***Identification technique:*** State the technique used to identify and capture the satirical irony.
f) ***Type of satirical irony:*** state type of satirical irony - situational or verbal?
g) ***Tertium comparationis:*** compare two texts using a single criterion
h) ***Translation constraint:*** describe any impediment to making the translation of the excerpt.
i) ***Proposed translation:*** propose a version for excerpt identified.
j) ***Method used in proposed translation:*** this comprises three elements:
  − ***Literary approach:*** this entails stating the literary criticism approach(es) used in analysing the source texts before translating
  − ***Translation strategy:*** this entails stating translation procedure used by the translator.

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- **Translation theory:** this entails stating the theory(ies) used first for the literary analysis, and then for the translation.

    k)   **Justification of approach:** it requires providing a justification of the approach used.

From this methodological backdrop, several excerpts satirical irony were selected from the works of a plethora of Cameroonian popular stand-up comedians (Antonio, Dave K. Moktoï, Essindi Mindja, Fer à Repasser, Fingon Tralala, France Bell, Grand Fallo, Jean Miché Kankan (Dieudonne Afana), Jimmy Biyong, Kouokam Narcisse, Maître Cobeau, Mamadou Jocker, Man No Lap, Michekan L'Africain, Massa Batré, Massa Kokari, Massa Moyo, Ndo Daniel, Ntufinga, Tangé Condom, Tchop Tchop, Tonton Casserole et son fils Safaria, etc), and later analysed. Foe illustration, two examples from Kouokam Narcisse and Dave K. Moktoï are presented below.

- From Kouokam Narcisse's *Déballez, je vends, je perds* (Fofié, 2007) *:*
  - i) *Vous êtes une jeune fille agissante et sans argent, euh, on ne peut tout avoir. Ne vous inquiétez pas du tout. Même le troc est envisageable sur le comptoir du professeur.*
  - ii) *Et si vous entendez l'inspecteur d'impôt crier à tue-tête 'impôt, impôt', ne craignez point. Il ne parle pas de fiscalité. Il vous demande un pot de vin. Alors, rendez-vous dans le bistrot*.

- And from Dave K. Moktoï's *Pour le libéralisme alimentaire auto-ventré* and *Grosse baleine intouchable* (Fofié, 2007) *:*
  - i) *Vous savez, je suis ici à l'autre côté de la barrière à cause du coup de tête magique du guide éclairé dont le décret m'avait imposé démocratiquement à vous comme ministre-député avant l'avènement du multipartisme persisté, pardon, sorry, précipité* (**Pour le libéralisme alimentaire auto-ventré**),
  - ii) *J'ai devenu très populaire, dans le 'Republic'. On m'appelle partout que la grosse baleine intouchable. J'ai même appris avec amusement que le grand pêcheur de baleine à défaut de pouvoir pêcher et attraper les gros cylindrés comme nous, a préféré donner sa démission au bâtisseur infatigable de la nation fatiguée. Mais il est toqué ou quoi dis donc ?* (**Grosse baleine intouchable**).

From these two authors, Dave K. Moktoï*'s* example i) extracted from *Pour le libéralisme alimentaire auto-ventré, is* analysed here using the proposed grid.

    i)   **Source text:**

Vous savez, je suis ici à l'autre côté de la barrière **à cause du coup de tête magique du guide éclairé dont le décret m'avait imposé démocratiquement à vous comme ministre-député avant l'avènement du multipartisme persisté, pardon, sorry, précipité.**

    ii)   **Element of interest:**

« **du guide éclairé dont le décret m'avait imposé démocratiquement à vous comme ministre-député »**

- iii) **Context of production:** The narrator recounts the circumstances surrounding his imposed democratic appointment as minister-parliamentarian.
- iv) **Author's intention:** The author ridicules the manner in which the government chooses its officials by juxtaposing democratic choice to imposition on the people.
- v) **Identification technique:** Unexpectedness: pitting *democracy* to *imposition* of the same person.
- vi) **Type of satirical irony: Situational irony:** the incongruity between the expected and what actually occurs in the situation.
- vii) **Tertium comparationis:** Produce a faithful translation bringing out the incongruity without the interference of the translator's style.
- viii) **Translation constraint:** how to produce a faithful translation that brings out the incongruity without the interference of the translator's style.
- ix) **Proposed translation**:

You know, I am on this other side of the fence thanks to the magic "head-wink" of the Enlightened Guide whose Decree democratically imposed me on you as Minister-parliamentarian before the advent of persisted, 'pardon-moi' precipitated multipartism.

x)   *Method used in proposed translation:*

− *Literary approach:*

- **Relevance theory** which is the relationship between context and interpretation.
- **Sociological approach:** study of literary work as a product of a given society.

− *Translation theory:*

- **Communicative theory:** attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original.
- **Skopos Theory:** the text is translated for the averagely educated English-speaking Cameroonian and for the purpose of creating humour.

− *Translation strategy:* **Formal equivalence:** A reliable way of effectively representing the sociocultural and sociolinguistic reality in French (European language).

xi)   *Justification of researcher's approach:* This approach enables the researcher to define the context and the author's intention (through Relevance theory and the sociological approach), compare it with the utterance and the context of production to bring out the satirical irony before proposing a translation to it.

7.   Findings

As exemplified above, and pursuant to the study's objectives, the following findings (with only indicative trends of occurrence) were made:

- **On strategies for identifying satirical irony:** Excerpts of satirical irony in Cameroonian stand-up comedy were identified essentially through the use of five strategies, namely *unexpectedness (2%), exaggeration (10%), lexical opposition (10%), internal opposition (10%)* and *text analysis (68%).*

- **On the classification of satirical irony:** Though there are traditionally three types of irony, only the *situational* and *verbal irony* were identified in the excerpts. It was revealed that verbal irony (72%) was the more frequent type of satirical irony, over situational irony (28%).

- **On translation constraints:** The endeavour to translate encountered two major constraints: namely *objective interpretation* of source text and *faithful rendering* of the author's style, with the later outweighing the former by about (80%).

- **On usable translation theories:** Three theories - Semantic theory, Skopos theory, Communicative theory and were used. Semantic theory (90%) proved to be the most effective theory, followed by the Skopos (6%) and the Communicative theory (4%).

- **On usable translation strategies:** Transposition, free translation, equivalence and literal translation were used. Literal translation strategy was the most effective (78%) in resolving the translation constraints encountered, followed by free translation (12%), equivalence (6%) and transposition (4%). Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the relevance theory and sociological approach were indispensable for the objective interpretation/recovery of the author's intention. Also, the Skopos theory was used in the overall strategy given that the texts abound with humour, thereby requiring the researcher to seek to produce a text with the same function as in the source text audience.

It is important to indicate that the above findings have been buttressed by a further independent study carried out on fifty (50) excerpts containing irony (Ngime Epie, 2016), extracted from Major Asse's *Pick Pocket* and Valery Ndongo's *O Kwatt* and *Alleluia*.

8.   Conclusion

From the above, and in keeping with the objectives of the study, it can be contended, in the first place, that strategies such as *unexpectedness, exaggeration, lexical opposition, internal opposition, text analysis* do exist that can be used to identify satirical irony in the stand-up comedy of the two artists. Secondly, that though there are traditionally three types of irony, only the *situational* and *verbal* have been identified in the corpus. Thirdly, two major translatability constraints - *objective interpretation of source text* and *faithful rendering of the author's style* were identified. Fourthly, that the *Skopos*, the *communicative* and the *Semantic* theories (and propped by Relevance theory and Sociological approach) are exploitable for the analyses and translation exercise. Finally, with regard to translation strategies, *transposition*, *free translation*, *equivalence*

and *literal translation* would prove useful in the translation of the satirical irony of Cameroonian stand-up comedy.

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