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# The limits of translatability of culture-specific and language-specific texts : the case of the translation of rundi praise poetry into english

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

# The Limits of Translatability of Culture-Specific and Language-Specific Texts : The case of the Translation of Rundi Praise Poetry into English

by

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Thesis submitted by Salvator NDABAZERUTSE
in partial fulfilment for the requirement of the degree
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# DEDICATION

To my beloved parents

who registered me at school,

To my sisters

with whom I share the family warmth,

To my nephews and nieces

for their love and encouragement,

I dedicate this work.

Salvator NDABAZERUTSE

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Salvator NDABAZERUTSE.

## KEY TO ABBREVIATION.

i.e . : that is
S,L. : source language
T.L. : target language
e,g . : example given
b.c. : before christ
lit. : Literary

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

## 1.0. General Introduction

Nowadays for more than ever before, world communication is gaining from technological progress with its impact in such areas as medecine, science, politics, and so on. From the postage mail on to the telephone, the telecel, the E-mail, the internet and the G.S.M(Global System Mobile), the world communication has achieved its milestone.

All the countries in the world have recognized the need to update their communication system. Burundi is no exception. Burundi earliest contacts wth the external world back in the nineteenth century when people from Europe, Asia, and African countries came to our country. Kirundi then was the only spoken language. It was however understood in Rwanda and some parts of Western Tanzania.

With the arrival of these outsiders came a pressing need to solve the problem of communication. The need is even stronger nowadays with translation, which is a general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (called the « Source Language ») to another (called the « target language ») whether orally or in writing.

Translation is therefore an activity of paramount importance in the modern world for the following: increase in trade and tourism, scientific progress, the political contact, the need to publish the same book in various languages,...

## 1.1. Background to the Problem

It is believed that language and culture are intertwined. Each country has its own language(s) and culture which distinguish it from all other countries in the world. Hence, as no two countries share exactly the same language no two countries share the same culture. People all over the world differ according to many aspects: language, colour, nationality, culture, ... The present study is more concerned with the cultural aspect involved in translation.

People's way of living is expressed through language, habits, poetry, traditional dances: Umuyebé, agasimbo, urwedengwe,...; i.e. through culture in general. About culture Lado (1974) asserts that « culture as we understand it here, is synonymous with « the ways of a people » » (1974:110).

However, two groups of people may have the same ways of living if they live in the same country without sharing the same culture. An example can be drawn from forein people who came to Burundi along time ago but who are still attached to their cultures. Even though they are familiar with the foreign language(s) and ways of living, they are less so with the foreign culture and the understanding of the latter through translation is rather difficult.

Therefore, our goal is to show how the translation of a source language culture (rundi culture) into a target language one( English ) present difficulties. To this effect, Lado(1974) asserts that « We cannot hope to compare two cultures unless we have more accurate understanding of each of the cultures being compared » (1974:10).

This is to say that the translator of a given culture-specific text into another language must be linguistically competent in the two languages. He must have full knowledge of the two languages and cultures being compared. That is why the present study is entitled « language and culture-specific ». The contrary leaders as Bassnett (1987: 32 ) quoting Catford (1965) says, to two types of untranslatability: Linguistic and Cultural.

On the linguistic level, untranslatability occurs when there is no lexical or syntactic substitute in the target language for a source language item. In other words, linguistic untranslatability is due to differences between the S.L. and the T.L. whereas cultural untranslatability is due to the absence of the T.L. culture of a relevant situational feature for the S.L. text.

Thus, it seems to be a difficult task to translate rundi praise poetry into English since the two languages do not share the same ancestor language. They fall into the category of distant languages, one being a bantu language, and the other, an indo-European language.
Thus, their cultures are far from being related too. Moreover, Sapir (1975) quoted in Bassnet (1987: 16) claims that:

No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached.

This emphasizes the idea that rundi praise poetry cannot be fully translated into English since the speakers of the two languages do not share the same social reality. Sapir(1975) quoted in Bassnett(1987: 16) talks about the relationships between language and culture:

> No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structures of natural language. Language then, is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy.

This quotation implies that language and culture are so intertwined and interdependent that we cannot separate them. Therefore, a study on the translatability of a literature that is culture-bound has to take into consideration both language and culture because one cannot exist without the other. Its a case of a language transmitting a culture and vice versa. In fact, Burundian culture is expressed through Kirundi. The rundi praise poetry is a vehicle of aspects of culture; it focuses on definite parts of culture. Any translation of it into another language, in this case English, becomes a difficult task considering the unrelatedness of cultures.

As far as the translation of a piece of poetry is concerned, translating a piece of poetry is likely to be difficult since the integrity of both the lexical unit and the rhymes has to be preserved within the context of corresponding punctuation which essentially reproduces the tone of the original and accurate translation of metaphor.

While all imagery has universal, cultural, personal sources, the effect and meaning of poetry is usually language and culture-specific; it is therefore almost an impossible task to transfer the poetic meaning of the original poem into the target language. Hence this study seeks to analyse the difficulties related to this type of translation.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

It is evident that people who live together do not always use the same language. It is certain that they face less communication problems if their languages are very close(e. g. Kirundi and Kinyarwanda languages). For this case, communication is easy because they share so many linguistic similarities that there is no need of translating.

However, when people do not use related languages, they cannot understand each other since the languages they use are distant (as is the case for Kirundi and English). For these people, thre is need of translation in order to communicate.
However, accurate translation is almost impossible especially when the text to be translated embodies cultural traits. It is believed that we cannot transfer a message from one language into another without some loss of meaning and of information.

The resulting loss of information is intrinsec to any translation process. In fact, translation cannot be considered as a means to an end. It is not a magic solution to any problem of communication between people. However,it can help at some levels. Then, the reader may wonder to which extent translation can be satisfactory. The answer is given by Newmark (1984) who asserts that though there are dictionaries and encyclopaedias to use, there is still a gap in the area of translation.

As far as heroic poetry is concerned, it is accepted that poetry is hard to translate. Poetic genre is hermetic and tight; and to translate it is to reduce it to a simple essay without any poetic aesthetics. Rundi poetry-related vocabulary or terms do not have their equivalence in English and some may not have them.

Poetry itself is a literature which is difficult to translate because it is full of images, figurative senses which are not easily understandable to the target language reader, sometimes even to the source language reader.

Moreover,while translating a piece of poetry, it is impossible to keep intact the rhyme, rhythm, the meter, the length of the verses because sentences become longer or shorter than the original ones.

Hence, the flavour of the original poem absolutely changes since the words the poet of the original poem decides are heartfelt to him may not be so in the translated version.

Therefore, since poetry is a culture-bound literature the limits that one may face in translating it are due to the specificity of language and culture.
The present study is then concerned with linguistic and cultural traits, habits which are specific to Burundi (and Burundians) and the translation of which results in the limits of translatability of some expressions or verses found in the poetic text.

## 1.3. Aims of the Study

The present study seeks to explore the problems related to translating one's S.L. culture-specific (and language-specific) text into another T.L. culture quite distant from the S.L. one , namely Kirundi and English. Emphasis is put on this domain in order to discover the difficulties that such translation causes and, suggest translation strategies. Translation is a trickly problem because there are words, expressions, verses ... whose true correspondence in another language are difficult to find without reducing their deep meanings. These are words, expressions related to culture. Hence, they become specific to each language. They may be difficult to translate or even untranslatable. Translation is therefore possible only to some exent. The present study investigates the limits of translatability of these culture-specific words, expressions, within praise poetry and suggests how to handle their translation.

Moreover, poetry embodies many elements that have to be taken into account for its overall understanding: metre, rhyme, rhythm, etc. While translating Kirundi praise poetry into English, it is impossible to expect to keep the metre, rhyme, rhythm, length of verses of the original text. This study aims at verifying whether or not absence of rhyme, rhythm, metre in the translated version contributes to the loss of the poetic flavour and aesthetic value of the original poem. Furthermore, in any piece of poetry, figurative language abounds and this is also culture-specific. Many figures of speech are found in a Kirundi piece of poetry and the meaning they convey must be understood in the context in which they are used. The translator must have both linguistic competence and communicative competence in both languages being compared.

The present study seeks to identify specific limits of translatability of these figurative senses found in this type of poetry to see whether or not they are impermeable to onother T.L. culture.

## 1.4. Research Questions

The present study purports to answer the following questions:

1° What kind of difficulties do we encounter while translating a piece of poetry ?

2° What strategies may we adopt to translate rundi praise poetry ?

3° Are cultural knowledge and contextual situations useful to help the translator understand poetic words and expressions ?

4° How do the linguistic and the cultural levels determine the problems of translatability ?

## 1.5. Motivation

Translation is an activity of enormous importance in the modern world and it is a subject of interest not only to linguistis, professional and amateur translator, and language teachers, but also to the field of science. Books and articles are written by specialists in these fields and translated into other languages.

Writers on the translation have approached it from different perspectives: translation as a literary art, or as a problem of science, as a discussion of problems of « **faithfulness** » of rendering on whether words or ideas are to be translated,...
Translation is also important in this cross-cultural environment where the world threatens to become a global village.

Thus, on the one hand, translation is an activity of enormous importance in the modern world, and on the other hand, poetry is the most personal and concentrated of all the other literary forms. This is the reason which motivates the choice of this study, to try to parallel translation and poetry, and to study them as constituting one body.

We want to investigate how translation, already regarded as a problem, can be handled when dealing with poetry. Poetry is hard to translate or analyse since it embodies many aspects and uses figurative senses which are culture-specific.
Translation of poetry proves to be difficult because the S.L. text contains culture-specific imagery difficult to translate into another language. Thus, this work explores strategies to overcome the problems caused by translation of poetry.

## 1.6. The Scope of the Study

Poetry is broad term. In Burundi we have many poetic genres : lyrical poetry, epic poetry, pastoral poetry, heroic poetry, song to a bee-keeper, song to a mortar, etc. Within heroic poetry, there are also different types of poetry such as war poetry, praise poetry but the latter are sometimes so close that it becomes difficult to separate them. This oriented our choice to one type of poetry , namely « **praise poetry** ». The reason of the choice of this type of poetry is that there are already existing works dealing with this kind of poetry and, in addition, these works contain short texts while in war poetry for instance, we find too long texts which may cause more difficulties while translating them.

## 1.7. Methodology

### 1.7.1. Data Collection

The present study uses data collected from the already existing texts in this field of poetry. In other words, this is a library work since these existing materials are found in the library.

Therefore, our data deals with four texts, two are taken from Manirakiza's (1991) thesis « **Guerre et paix dans le Burundi traditionnel: Une étude anthropologique et sémiotique de la poésie guerrière** », another one is taken from Rwasa's(1987) thesis « **Les marques linguistiques dans les mazina y'ubuhizi: essai d'explication** » and the last one is taken from Rodegem's (1993) work Anthologie Rundi.

### 1.7.2. Data Analysis

In this section, the first step is to present the texts corresponding to the oral literature (oral poetry) in Kirundi and then have them semantically translated. Hence, problems pertaining to the translatability of this texts are explored according to some levels of analysis. In fact, these problems are explored on the lexical level, the stylitic level, and the phonological level.

Moreover, figurative senses within the above mentioned levels of analysis are deeply explored.

# CHAPTRE 2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.0. Introduction

Translation is an operation performed on language: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another. It belongs most properly to semiotics, the science that studies systems or structures; sign processes and sign functions but has a central core of linguistic activity. Translation makes possible all foreign news coverage in the press, radio, news magazines, as well as highly specialized trade publications . Brislin (1996: vii) says that translation enables people of all cultures to enjoy foreign production; children of all lands learn from other children and other lands through books translated or adapted for them from all the living languages into all the living languages.

## 2.1. Definitions

Before undertaking any work on a given topic it is worth explaining it. So what is translation ?
Many writers and scholars have attempted to define the concept of translation.

Brislin (1976 :1) definies translation as follows:

> The transfer of thougbts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form, whether the languages have established orthographies or do not have standardisation.

Catford (1965: 20) views translation in the following terms:

> the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language).

Dominique Aury (1976 : 12) asserts of translation as follows:

> « La traduction consiste à produire dans la langue d'arrivée(T.L.), l'équivalent naturel, le plus proche du message de la langue de départ (S.L.), d'abord quant à la signification, puis quant au style ».

Translation consists in producing in the T.L., as nearly as possible, the equivalent S.L. message, as to the signification first, then as to the style.

Moreover, Newmark (1982: 7) defines transltion as:

> « a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and or statement in one language by the same message and or statement in another language ».

Newmark (1988: 5) views translation as « rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended ».

From all these definitions, it is clear that they all converge in affirming that translation is a task consisting in replacing oral or written material in one language called Source language (SL) by oral or writen material in another language called target language (TL), following the principle of similar or equivalent response or effect, i.e; dynamic equivalence, as Nida (1974) says.

## 2.2. The Craft of Translation

From time immemorial, translation has been -and still is- an activity which contributed to the advancement or which gave rise to the evolution of the English language and literature. In fact, this corrobrates Newmark's (1988: 3)
argument when he says that King Luther's Bible translated in 1522 led to the foundation and king James's Bible in 1611 has an influence on English language and literature.

George Steiner (1975) in Bassnet (1987: 40)divided the literature on theory, practise and history of translation into four periods:

- The first period, he claims, extends from the statements of Cisero and Horace on translation up to the publication of Alexander Fraser Tytler's **Essays on the Principles of Translation** in 1991. This era is characterized by immediate impirical focus; i.e. statement and theories.
- The second period runs up to the puplication of Larbaud's Sous l'invocation de Saint Jérôme in 1946. Its is characterized by a development of a vocabulary and a methodology of approaching translation.
- The third period stems with the publication of the first papers on machine translation in the 1940s and is characterized by introduction of structural linguistic and the theory into the study of translation.
- Steiner's (1975) fourth period originates with the early 1960s and is characterized by the setting up of the discipline in a whole frame.

In establishing these divisions, Steiner(1975) avoided periodization because of the difficulty of studying translation diachronically. It seems virtually impossible to divide periods according to dates for, as Lotman (1978) in Bassnet(1987: 41) points out, human culture is a dynamic system. Attempts to locate stages of cultural development within strict temporal bounderies contradict that dynamism.

## 2.3. Theory and Principles of Translation

### 2.3.1. Theory of Translation

With the increasing number of translator and reviser teams for documents and glossaries, the formulation of some translation theory becomes necessary. Moreover, the need for any translation theory is reinforced by the proliferation of terms of art, in particular of technological terms, and the desire to standardize the terminology, intra- and interlinguistically.

Translation is an aspect of semantics, which is itself a branch of linguistics. So one can say that translation is related to comparative linguistics since, according to Newmark (1982: 5), linguistics, semantics, socio-linguistics aswell as semiotics, all have a continuous bearing on translation theory.

But, what is the translation purpose ?
It attempts to give some insights into the relation between thought, meaning and languages; the universal, cultural and individual aspects of language and behaviour, the understanding of cultures, the interpretation of texts that may be classified and even supplemented by way of translation.
The theorist's main concern is therefore to select an appropriate general method of translation, always bearing in mind that « standardized language » must be translated by the equivalent T.L standard term, if one exists.
Translation, as a process, is always unidirectional, as one reads in Kabugubugu (1996), i.e. it is always performed in a given direction, « from a source language into a target language ».

Newmark (1982: 2) proposed two methods of translation that are appropriate to any text:

**(a)** Communicative translation, where the translator attempts to produce the same effect on the T.L. readers as was produced by the original on the S.L. readers; and

**(b)** Semantic translation, where the translator attempts, within the bare semantic and syntactic constraints of the T.L., to produce the precise contextual meaning of the author.

These two methods are, indeed, the most important since, by using them, the translator seeks to produce in the T.L. as nearly as possible in the same effect and meaning of the S.L.message. The translator must understand first the text he is studying, often to analyse, and make some generalizations about this text before he selects an apppropriate translation method.

So it is up to the translator to suggest some criteria and priorities for this analysis. According to Newmark (1982: 20), the translator must, therefore, bear in mind the following four major points while translating:

1°The intetion of the text,
2° The intetion of the translator,
3°The reader and the setting of the text,
4° The quality of the writing and the authority of the text.

Before deciding on this method, the translator assigns his text to one of these four general categories in order to help him understand what he has to do.

Then, he must have knowledge of literary and non literary textual criticism, since he must assess the quality of the text before he decides how to interprete and translate it. While translating, good writing has to be respected. In fact, the quality of the language, structures and content have to be preserved, whether the piece is scientfic or poetic, philosophical or fictional.

The translator operates under some constraints while translating. As it has already been said, a hundred percent translatability is quite impossible. As a matter of fact, it is almost impossible to transfer a message from one language to another without some loss of meaning. Newmark (1982: 7) has analysed some causes of loss of information under four points.

He said that the basic loss is on a continuum between over translation (increased detail) and undertranslation (increased generalization). The causes are the following:

**(1)** The first cause of loss of meaning is due to culture material. In this respect, transfering a text about natural environment, institution and culture of its language area entails inevitable loss of meaning. The translator's language can only be approximate.

**(2)** The second cause results from the fact that two languages in context are lexically, grammatically and morphologically different, usually, the closer the language and the culture the closer the translation and the original.

**(3)** The individual uses of language of the text-writer and the translator do not coincide. Everyone has his own way of writing, and this difference between the writer's and transltor's use of language constitutes the third cause of loss information.

**(4)** The fourth and last cause of loss of information is due to the fact that the text writer and the translator may use different theories of meaning and have different values.

Newmark(1982: 7) concludes by asserting that the translator's theory may colour his interpretation of the text; he may pay much more attention to connotation and less on denotation.

**What is Translation about ?**

Newmark (1982: 19) says that translation theory is neither a science nor a theory, but the body of knowledge that we have and still have about the process of translating.
Translation theory has to determine appropriate methods for the widest possible range of text categories. It provides a frame work of principles, as we will see it, restricted rules and hints for translating texts and criticising translations, a background of problem-solving.

The theory has to demonstrate the possible translation procedures and the various arguments for and against the use of one translation procedure rather than another in a particular context.

Newmark (1982) concludes saying that the theory covers a wide range of pursuits, attempts always to be useful, to assist the individual translator both by stimulating him to write better and to suggest points of argument on common translation problems. Assumptions and propositions about translation normally arise from practice, and should not be offered without examples of originals and their translations.

In his article « **On linguistic Aspects of Translation** » Jackobson (1959) quoted in Bassnet (1987: 14) distinguishes three types of translation:

**(1)** intralingual translation, or rewording (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language)

**(2)** interlingual translation, or translation proper
(an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other languages)

**(3)** intersemiotic translation, or transmutation
(an interpretation of verbal signs by means of non verbal sign systems).

Having established these three types, of which (2) « translation proper » describes the process of transfer from S.L.to T.L.., Jackobson (1959) goes on immediately to point to the central problem in all types: he says that while messages may serve as adequate interpretation of code units or messages, there is ordinarily no full equivalence throutgh translation.

Moreover, as we read in Kabugubugu (1996: 8-9), Brislin (1976) gives a number of translation theories that need be looked at.

First, the philological theories of translation. These are concerned with literary texts and are based on philological approaches to literary analysis. In certain aspects, they may also be said to deal with deep structures. For instance the philologist will not describe the principal episodes of a narrative but he will understand these in terms of their underlying structures.

Second, the linguistic theories of translation are based on a comparison of the linguistic structures of source and receptor texts rather than a comparison of literary genres and stylistic features.

In fact, the principal differences between various linguistic theories of translation lie in the text extent to which the focus is on surface structure or corresponding deep structures.

Finally, the sociolinguistic theories of translation should not be understood as neglecting linguistic structures to higher level of relevance where these can be viewed in terms of thier function in communication.
From the above, it follows that the interpretation of certain expression depends on the extralinguistic context of an utterance. The sociolinguist is much concerned with the author, the historical backgrounds of the text, because all these elements are amongst the features of the social setting of communication.

The translator, therefore, must be aware of such factors as irony, hyperbole, litotes which are frequently signaled by l inguistic signs but in congruity with the communication context.

We can conclude that what translation theory does is to identify and define a translation problem to indicate all the factors that have to be taken into acount in solving the problem; and then to list all the possible translation procedures always recommending the most suitable translation procedure, plus the appropriate theory.
In addition, Bassnett (1987 :37) clearly indicates the purpose of any theory of translation. He says that the purpose of the theory of translation of translation is to reach an understanding of the process undertaken in the act of translation and to provide a set of norms for effecting the translation in the same respect, literary criticism does not seek to provide a set of instructions for producing the ultimate poem or novel, but rather to understand the internal and external structures operating within and around a work of art.

Nonetheless, whatever translation theory or procedure one may use, Newmark (1988: 4) summarizes this saying that:

> we cannot neither make someone into a good translator, nor can we cause him to write well. The best, we can do is to suggest some general guidelines for translation, bearing in mind that the translation theorist is mainly concerned with meaning.

## 2.3.2. Principles of Translation

Any theory has to be principle-based. In this respect, any theory of translation that may be used must be based on some principles which help the translator attempt his task without difficulties.

The main aim of the translator is to produce as nearly as possible the same effect on his readers as was produced on the readers of the original. This means, according to Newmark (1982: 10), That the readers of a translated version or material should laugh where the readers of the original material had to laugh. Newmark (1982) says that his principle was termed by Nida (1964) as « **Similar or equivalent response or effect; or functional or dynamic equivalence** ».
This principle demands a considerable imaginative or intuitive effect from the translator. In fact, the translator need not identify himself with the readers of the original, rather he must empathize with them.

Therefore, the emphasis of this principle is right on communication on the readers of the translated version. The translator should produce a different type of the same text for a different type of audience. Moreover, as Newmark (1982: 10) goes on explaining this principle, it allows for a wide range of translation styles. If the writer of the original deviates from the language norms of a given type of text, we would expect the translation to do likewise.

In this respect, therefore, a poem or a story would retain the flavour of the original text. Bassnett (1987: 63), asserts that Alexander Fraser Tytler (1970) published a volume entiltled The Principles of Translation, the first systematic study of the translation processes in English. Tytler (1907) set up three basic principles:

(1) The translation should give a complete transcript of the idea of the original work,

(2) The style and manner of writing should be the same character as that of the original,

(3) Translation should have all the ease of the original composition.

These three principles show, indeed, how faithful the translator must be towards the original material, and are, in fact, related to Nida's (1964) principle.

Moreover, Newmark (1988: 21) has propounded two approaches to translating:

(1) You start translating sentence by sentence to get the feel and the feeling tone of the text, and then you deliberately sit back, review the position, and read the rest of the S.L. text;

(2) You read the whole text two or three times, and find the intetion, register, tone, mark the difficult words and passages and start translating only when you have taken your bearings.

Which of the two methods the translator will choose depends on his judgement about the kind of text he is working on, and on whether he trusts his intuition, or the power of analysis.

Many writers and scholars have stated theories and principles of translation expressing how the translator should handle the task of translating. In this respect, Dolet (1540) published a short outline of translation principles, entitled « La manière de bien traduire d'une langue en autre » (How to translate well from one language into another) and established five principles for the translator, which we find in Bassnett (1987: 54):

(1) The translator must fully understand the sense and meaning of the original author, although he is at liberty to clarify obscurities,

(2) The translator should have a perfect knowledge of both S.L.and T.L.,

(3) The translator should avoid word-for-word-renderings,
(4) The translator should use forms of speech in common use,
(5) The translator should choose and order words appropriately to produce the correct one.

Dolet's (1540) principles, ranked as they are in a precise order, stress the importance of understanding the S.L.text as a primary requisite. The translator is far more than a competent linguist, and translation involves both a scholarly and sensitive appraisal of the S.L. text and an awareness of the place the translation is intended to occupy in the T.L. system.

These views were reiterated by Chapman (1598), the great translator of Homer. In his dedication of the Seven Books, Chapman (1598) quoted in Bassnett (1987: 55) says that:

The work of a skilfull and worthy translator is to observe the sentences, figures and forms of speech proposed in his author, his true sense and height, and to adome them with figures and
forms of oration fitted to the original in the same tongue to which they are translated.

He repeats his theory more fully in the Epistle to the Reader of his translation of the Iliad by A. Pope (1967).
In the Epistle, Chapman (1598) states that a translator must:
(1) avoid word-for-word renderings
(2) attempt to reach the « Spirit » of the original
(3) avoid overloose translation, by basing the translation on a sound scholarly investigation of other versions and glosses.

It follows therefore, that the translator seeks to bring about a « **transmigration** » of the original text, which he approaches as a skilled equal with duties and responsibilities both to the original author and the audience. The translator has to follow some of the principles and theories stated in the previous lines in order to produce a T.L. version related to the S.L. material.

## 2.4. Translation Strategies.

The central problem of translating has always been whether to translate literally or freely. The argument has been going on since at least the first century B.C. up to the beginning of nineteenth century, many writers favoured some kind of « free » translation: the spirit not the letter, the sense not the words, the message rather than the form; the matter not the manner.
Newmark (1988: 45) sets up a number of translation strategies that are helpful to the task of translating. Let us look at them each at a time:

(1) Word-for-word translation: this is often demonstrated as interlinear translation, with the T.L. immediately below the S.L. words. The S.L. word-order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings out of context. Cultural words are translated literally. The main use of word-for-word translation is either to understand the mechanics of the source language or to construe a difficult text as pre-translation process.

(2) Literal translation: The S.L. grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest T.L. equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly,out of context. As a pre-translation process, this indicates the problems to be solved.

(3) Faithful translation: it attempts to produce the precise contextual meaning of the original with the constraints of the T.L. grammatical structures. It transferes cultural words and preserves the degree of grammatical and lexical
'abnormality' (deviation from S.L. norms) in the translation. It attempts to be completely faithful to the intentions and the text-realisation of the S.L.writer.

(4) Semantic translation: it differs from 'faithful' translation only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value (i. e. beautiful and natural sound) of word-play or repetition jars in the finished version.

Further, it may translate less important cultural words by cultural equivalents. The distinction between 'faithful' and semantic translation is that the first is uncompromising and dogmatic, while the second is more flexible, allowing for the translator's intuitive empathy with the original.

(5) Adaptation: This is the 'freest' form of translation; it is used mainly for plays (comedies) and poetry; the themes,characters, plots are usually preserved, the S.L. culture converted to the T.L. culture and the text rewritten.

(6) Free translatin : It reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original. Usually it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called intralingual translation, often prolix and pretentious, and not translation at all.

(7) Idiomatic translation : It reproduces the message of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by prefering colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

(8) Communicative translation : attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership.

Of all these strategies, however, Newmark (1988: 47) argues that only semantic and communicative translation fulfil the two main aims of translation, which are accuracy and economy.

A semantic translation is more likely to be economical than a communicative one, unless the text is poorly written. In general, a semantic translation is written at the author's linguistic level, a communicative one at the reader's. Semantic translation is used for expressive texts, communicative translation for informative and vocative texts. Newmark (1988) still explains the dichotomy which exists between the two most important strategies of translation.

Semantic translation is, according to him, personal and individual; it follows the thought processes of the author, tends to over-translate, pursues nuances of meaning , yet aims at concision in order to produce pragmatic impact.
Communicative translation, on the other hand, is social and concentrates on the message and the main force of the text, tends to under-translate, to be simple, clear and brief, and is always written in natural and resourceful style.

## 2.5. The Translation of Poetry

The translation of poetry is the field where most emphasis is normally put on the creationof a new independent poem and where literal translation is usually condemned. Poetry is the most personal and most concentrated of the four forms of literature (poetry, short story, novel, drama), no redundancy, no phatic language, where as a unit, the word has greater importance than in any other type of text.

If the word is the first unit of meaning, the second is not the sense or the proposition, but usually the line, thereby again demonstrating a unique double concetration of units.

Poetry is presented in order to convey the feeling, in particular, and however concrete the language may be, each represents something else, a feeling, a behaviour, a view of life as well as itself.

Newmark (1988: 165) is sceptical about the idea that a translator of poetry is primarily communicating, that he is to his readers, in the conventional definition of communicative translation, trying to create the same effect on the T.L. readers as was created by the poet on his own readers; his main endeavour is to « translate »
the effect the poem made on himself.

In most examples of poetry translation, the translator first decides to choose a T.L. poetic form (sonnet, ballad, quatrain, blanck verse, etc)... as close as possible to that of the S.L. Although the rhyming scheme is part of the form, its precise order may have to be dropped.

Secondly, he reproduces the figurative meaning, the concrete imagery of the poem. Lastly the setting, the thought-words, often the various techniques of a sound-effect which produce the individual impact have to be worked on at later stages during the rewriting.

Whether the translator gives priority to content or manner, and within manner, what aspect-metre, rhyme, sound, structure- is to have priority, must depend not only on the values of the particular poem, but also on the translator's theory of poetry. Therefore, no general theory of poetic translation is possible and all a translation theorist can do is to draw attention to the variety of possibilities and point to successful practice, unless he rashly wants to incorporate his theory of translation into his own theory of poetry.

Deliberately or intuitively, the translator has to decide whether the expressive or the easthetic function of language in a poem or in one place in a poem is more important.

Within the field of literary translation, more time has been devoted to investigating the problems of translating poetry than any other literary mode. Many of the studies purporting to investigate these problems are either evaluations of different translations of a single work or personal statement by individual translators on how they have set about solving problems.
Rarely do studies of poetry and translation try to discuss methodological problems from a non-empirical position, and yet it is precisely this type of study that is most valuable and most needed.

In his book on the various methods employed by English translators, Lefeverre (1975) quoted in Bassnett (1987: 81) catalogues seven different strategies used in the translation of poetry:

**(1)** Phonemic translation, which attempts to reproduce the S.L. sound in the T.L. while at the same time producing an acceptable paraphrase of the sense Leferre (1975) comes to the conclusion that although this works moderately well in the translation of onomatopoeia, the overall result is clumsy and often devoid of sense altogether.

**(2)** Literal translation, where the emphasis on word-for-word translation distorts the sense and the syntax of the original.

**(3)** Metrical translation, where the dominant criterion is the reproduction of the S.L. metre. Lefeverre (1975) concludes that, like literal translation, this method concetrates on one aspect of the S.L. text at the expense of the text as a whole.

**(4)** Poetry into prose: here, Lefeverre ( 1975) concludes that distortion of the sense, communicative value and syntax of the S.L. text results from this method, although not to the same extent with the literal or metrical types of translation.

**(5)** Rhythmed translation, where the translation enters into a bondage of metre and rhyme. Lefeverre's (1975) conclusions here are particularly harsh, since he feels that the end product is merely a caricature of Catullus.

**(6)** Blank verse translation. Again the restrictions imposed on the translator by the choice of structure are emphasized although the greater accuracy and higher degree of literalness obtained are also noted.

**(7)** Interpretation: Under this heading, Lefeverre (1975) discusses what he calls « versions » where the substance of the S.L. text is retained but the form is changed, and « imitations » where the translator produces a poem of his own which has only title and point of departure, in common with the source text.

What emerges from Lefeverre's (1975) study is a revendication of the point made by Chrysnaar (1976), for the deficiencies of the methods he examines are due to an over-emphasis of one or more elements of the poem at the expense of the whole.

In other words, in establishing a set of methodological citeria to follow, the translator has to focus on some elements at the expense of others and from this failure to consider the poem as an organic structure comes a translation that is demonstrably unbalanced. The translator has the right to differ organically, to be independent, provided that independence is pursued for the sake of the original in order to reproduce it as a living task.

## 2.6. The Limits of Translatability

### 2.6.0. Introduction

In translating, as stated earlier, we encounter many problems in transferring some words froms the S.L. to the T.L. This becomes more difficult when the words being translated embody cultural traits. Thus when such difficulties are encountered by the translator, the whole issue of translatability of the text is raised.
Catford (1965) distiguishes between two types of untranslatability, which he terms as Linguistic and Cultural untranslatability.

On the linguistic level, untranslatability occurs when there is no lexical or syntactic substitute in the T.L. for an S.L. item. Examples are such sentences that involve structures that do not exist in English. Catford's (1965) category of linguistic untranslatability is straight forward but his second category is more problematic. Linguistic untranslatability he argues, is due to differences in the S.L. and the T.L., whereas cultural untranslatabilty is due to the absence in the T.L. culture of a relevant situational feature for the S.L. text.

As we read in Bassnett (1987: 34), it is Popovic (1976) who has attempted to define untranslatability without making a separation between the linguistic and the cultural untranslatability. Popovic (1976) also distinguished between two types.

The first, as we find it in Bassnett (1987: 34) is:

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.

The second types goes beyond the purely linguistic:

A situation where the relation of expressing the meaning, i.e.the relation between the creative subject and its linguistic expression in the original does not find an adequate linguistic expression in the translation.

The first type here may be seen as parallel to Catford's (1965) category of linguistic untranslatabilty and the second type, like Catford's (1965) secondary category, illustrates the difficulties of describing and defining the limits of translatability, but while Catford (1965) starts from within linguistic, Popovic (1976) starts from a position that involves a theory of literary communication.

Moreover, in his preface to Ovid's Epistles, Dryden (1680) in Bassnett(1987: 60) tackled the problems of translation by formulating three basic types:

(i) Metaphrase; or turning an author word by word and line by line, from one language into another,

(ii) Paraphrase, or translation with latitude, the Ciceronian sense-for-sense view of translation,

(iii) Imitation, where the translator can abandon the text of the original as he sees it.

Of these types Dryden (1680) chooses the second as a more balanced path, provided the translator fulfils certain criteria, to translate poetry, the translator must be a poet, a master of both languages and must understand the characteristics and « spirit » of the original author, in addition to conforming to the aesthetic canons of his own language.

So, to attempt to impose the value system of S.L. culture int the T.L. culture is a dangerous ground, and the translator should not be tempted by the school that pretends to determine the original intentions of an author of the T.L. text. The translator cannot be the author of the S.L. text, but as the author of the T.L. text, has a clear moral responsibility to the T.L. readers.

A hundred percent translation is often impossible but translatability is always possible. So when Catford (1965: 94) says that translation fails or that translatabilty occurs when it is impossible to build relevant features into the T.L. text, he takes an extreme stand because, as Ndihokubwayo (1997: 16) concludes, translation cannot « completely » fail.

As a matter of fact, there is more or less a way to express any concept from a natural language into another. In the same way, Ndihokubwayo (1997) argues that human experience, human spirit and knowledge vary from country to country.

Therefore, a text is neither completely translatable nor totally untranslatable. Each exercise of translation is a dialectic, in which, the basic loss is a continuum between overtranslation and undertranslation. It is an operation in which the limits of translatability are determined and remedied so that the sum of gains and losses on each linguistic item brings about the same effect as was made on the audience of the T.L. This heading on the limits of translatability occurs, in fact, following certain problems which need be looked at closely.

### 2.6.1. Problems of Equivalence

The question of defining equivalence is being pursued by two lines of development in translation studies.
The first lays an emphasis on the special problems of semantics and on the transfer of semantic content from S.L. to T.L. within the second, which explores the question of equivalence of literary texts, the work of the Russian Formalists and the Prague Linguists, together with more recent developments in discourse analysis, have broadened the problem of equivalence in its application to the translation of such texts.

The translation of idioms takes us a stage further in considering the question of meaning and translation, for idioms, like poems, are culture-bound. The image conjured up by a sentence containing an idiomatic expression is somewhat startling, and, unless the context referred quite specifically to such a location, the sentence would seem obscure and virtually meaningless.

In his definition of translation equivalence, Popovic (1970) quated in Bassnett (1987: 25) distinguishes four types:

**(i)** Linguistic equivalence: where there is homogeneity on the linguistic level of both S.L.and T.L. texts, i.e. word-for-word translation.

**(ii)** Paradigmatic equivalence: where there is equivalence of the « elements of a paradigmatic expressive axis », i.e. elements of grammar, which Popovic (1970) sees as being a higher category than lexical equivalence

**(iii)** Stylistic (translational) equivalence: where there is functional equivalence of elements in both original and translation aiming at expressive identity with an invariant of identical meaning.

**(iv)** Textual (syntagmatic) equivalence: where there is equivalence of the syntagmatic structuring of a text, i.e. equivalence of form and shape.

Translation involves then far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages and, as it can be seen in the translation of idioms and metaphors, the process may involve discording the basic linguistic elements of the S.L. text so as to achieve Popovic's (1970) goal of « expressive identity » between the S.L. and T.L.texts.

But once the translator moves away from close linguistic equivalence, the problems of determining the exact nature of the level of equivalence aimed for begin to emerge.

Moreover, the problem of equivalence, a much-used and abused term in translation studies, is of central importance. Nida (1964) in Bassnett (1987: 26) distinguishes between two types of equivalence, formal and dynamic, where formal equivalence focuses on the message itself, in both form and content. In such a translation, one is concerned with such correspondences as poetry to poetry, sentense to sentense and concept to concept. Nida (1964) calls this type of translation a « gloss translation », which aims to allow the reader to understand as much of the S.L. context as possible. Dynamic equivalence is based on the principle of equivalent effect, i.e. the relationship between receiver and message should aim at being the same as that between the original receiver's and the T.L.message.

In trying to solve the problem of translation equivalence, Neubert (1967) in Bassnett (1987: 27) postulates that from the point of views of theory of texts, translation equivalence must be considered a semiotic category, comprising syntactic, semantic and pragmatic components. These components are arranged, in hierarchical relationship, where semantic equivalence takes priority over syntactic equivalence, and pragmatic equivalence conditions and modifies semantic and syntactic equivalences. Equivalence overall results from the relation between signs themselves, the relationship between all three components determines the process of selection in the T.L., as for example, in letter writing.
Equivalent in translation should, therefore, not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot exist between the S.L. and the T.L version.

In conclusion, the use of the term equivalence is 'perverse'. The translator of a literary text is not concerned with establishing equivalence of natural language but of artistic procedures. Such procedures cannot be considered in isolation, but must be located within the specific cultural and temporal context within which they are used.

### 2.6.2 Problems of Language and Culture

Newmark (1988: 94) defines cultures as the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to comunity that uses a particular language and its means of expression. He says that universal terms like **'live', 'die', 'mirror', 'table'** present no translation problem. However, he argues that cultural words will present translation problems unless there is cultural overlap between the source and the target languages. Universal words such as **'embrace', 'pile'**,...often cover the universal function, but not the cultural description of the referent.

Frequently, where there is cultural focus, there is a translation problem due to the cultural ' gap' or 'distance' between the S.L. and the T.L. language that does contain all kinds of cultural deposits, in the grammar, forms of address as well as lexis which are not taken account of in universals either in consciousness or translation.

Furthermore, the more specific a language becomes for natural phenomena (like flora and fauna) the more it becomes embedded in cultural features, and therefore creates translation problems. Most cultural words are easy to detect, since they are associated with a particular language and cannot be literally translated, but many cultural customs are described in ordinary language, where literal translation would distort the meaning and translation may include an appropriate descriptive, functional equivalent.

Nida (1975: 91) advocates that there occur many problems while translating a literary product of a given culture into another language. He says that it is easier to see the problems when one's own culture is not involved, for there is too much about one's own patterns of behaviour which is taken for granted.

Moreover, he adds that an examination of selected problems in various aspects of culture will make it possible for one to see more clearly the precise relationship of cultural information to the semantic problems encountered in descriptive linguistic. He thus propounds ways of overcoming these translation problems. Translation problems are essentially problems of equivalence which may be conveniently treated under (1) ecology, (2) material culture, (3) Social culture, (4) religious, and (5) linguistic culture. Let us have a look at therm respectively.

**(i)** The extremity of ecological variation from territory to territory is seldom anticipated, and there is often considered difficulty in finding equivalence in terms which designate such ecological features. For example, it is difficult to translate in Kirundi the four seasons found in the temperate zone simply because such succession of seasons is totally unknown in this sub-region where there are only two seasons: the rainy and the dry seasons. In the same way, we do not know if there can be perfect English equivalent for the Kirundi words, inyovu, umukubezi, igihungurabayi,...

**(ii)** According to Nida (1975: 69) features of material culture are far more complex than those involving ecological features. This problem occurs especially when the S.L. and T.L. evolue in two highly separate linguistic and cultural communities, like in the case of Burundian and the Anglo-Saxon societies.
These material culture features are those used in everyday life, like those used in agriculture, breeding, hunting,... Ndihokubwayo (1997) states that the main problems encountered when translating English material culture terms into Kirundi are due to the fact that the objects they designate have never been seen in Burundi except some such as, axe and hammer , which are universal, and those such as rake, and tractor which have been introduced recently from western countries. According to Ndihokubwayo (1997) we encounter the same problem stated above translating Kirundi material culture words such as uruhindu; ikivumvu,.... into English.

**(iii)** Social culture lexical items are terms which are related to the social organization and the social control of a community. They are associated with age, gender, family, and class relationships.

They vary from society and the translator is frequently confronted with many difficulties in interpretation and equivalence due to the differences in cultural environment. Newmark (1988: 98) says that in considering social culture one has to distinguish between denotative and connotative problems of translation. As a translation problem, there occur connotative difficulties of words like 'the people', 'the common people' 'the masses'...

Ndihokubwayo (1997) says that English lexical items denoting features of social culture designate concepts which are widely different from Burundian social organisation conception, and this of course is at the origin of translation problems; e.g. middle classes = abàntu basànzwé. Lord, Sir, Earl, Marquis, Esquire, Baron = Nyakwubahwa.
Similarly, these also occur many problems translating Kirundi lexical words denoting features of social culture such as umushîngantahe, = a gentleman, umukungu = an ordinary person. There are no strict English equivalents for Kirundi lexical terms.

**(iv)** With regards to religious culture, the problems of translation are often the most perplexing. The names for deity are continually difficult. Whether the translator is aware of it or not, the natives usually equate a forein term (for deity) with one of their better-known and understood deity. More difficult, however, than the titles for deity are the words for sanctity and holiness! these words are so closely connected with the entire problem of taboo (religious beliefs) that it is quite difficult, in many instances, to find an adequate designation.
As far as Kirundi and English are concerned here, the translator of English religious terms into Kirundi is lucky because the Bible was translated several years ago. What he has to do for English Biblical terms is to transcribe them as they appear in the Kirundi version .E.gs.
Holy Spirit---> Mutima mweranda
Gospel-----> Injili (from French: « Evangile »)
Abraham----> Burahimu

The translation of Kirundi Biblical terms into English does not cause problems on the one hand since Burundians are mostly christians, and therefore, christian religion was brought to Africa a long time ago. However, Burundians are not totally Christians. They used to be involved in traditional religion.
Thus, Christian terms are difficult to translate since they are confronted with lexical gaps which make them difficult to translate into English. Ndihokubwayo (1997) gives a number of examples:

- Kwîraba ingondo (ingwa) = to spot oneself with line
- Ikinyámwonga = bad spirit
- Igiheko = talisman

**(v)** The phase of culture in which the greatest number of translation problems arise is the linguistic one. Language is part of culture, but translation from one language to another involves, in addition to the cultural problems, the special characteristics of the respective languages. Nida (1975: 95) argues that many languages express some concepts in verb-like words which we normally express in nouns. He concludes saying that what is expressed in a noun phrase in one language may be expressed by a verbal expression in another language.

Now that we have had a look at a number of translation procedures and principles, let us now look at the kind of text which interests us in this study.

## 2.7. Oral Poetry

Poetry is a concept difficult to define:
Gourevitch (1972: 11) says this: « **Définir la poésie, c'est labourer avec ses doigts. Plus la fonction est contestée, plus le terme est envahissant** ».
This can be translated as follows: « **To define poetry, is like to plough with one's fingers. The more the function is contested, the more the lexeme is intrusive** »

However, we can define poetry in relation to prose. In this sense, poetry is characterized by a systematic distance in respect of prose norms. This distance lies in the idea of literary aesthetics that the poet makes use of when he writes or when he recites the poem.

Oral poetry supposes language professionals who match ability with the respect of traditions. It sends back to a civilization of « **la parole** » where the well saying is never separated from the doing.

In Africa, as well as in all other oral tradition societies, oral poetry rhythms everyday activity. It is addressed in a way or another to the hearer in order to conserve and preserve from social values it codifies.
Oral poetry allows the poet to display his singularity. We see him excited, praising his great deeds (eg war poetry), singing his cows' beauty (pastoral poetry), and the ability of his activities.

### 2.7.1. Burundian Oral Poetry

According to Rodegem (1973: 31) several Kirundi texts belong to poetry, considering the preponderent features of rhythm, essential element of poetry. We think the only criterion of rhythm is not enough to identfy poetic genres. In fact all texts of oral style (poems, tales, short stories, myths,...) are characterized by this feature. For a Burundian, poetry has laudable place in everyday life, and as Rodegem (1973) states this:

> « Chanter ses joies et ses peines, exprimer la faveur ou le dépit, l'éloge ou la satire sous une forme permanente pour la communiquer à d'autres, tel est le rôle de la poésie ».(1973:30)

This can be translated as: « **To exult one's joys and pains, express favour or spleen, eulogy and satire under a permanent form in order to communicate it to others, such is the role of the poet ».**

Therefore, all activities (agricultural, pastoral, artisanal...) are driven by specific poems, poetry being related to the major life events (birth, marriage, victories, death,...). Consequently, Burundian oral poetry is diverse and multiform. Here are some examples:

**(i)** In lyrical poetry, the poet vaunts his own sentiments; it is an effusion, a confidence. In this type we can mention: lullaby or cradle-songs (ivyugumbiro), modulated greetings (akazehe, akayego) and the like.

**(ii)** Pastoral poetry where Rodegem (1973: 30) subdivided this type of poetry into three categories:

a) the genre « **ukubonekesha** » when the cows (cattle) are drinking deep,

b) the genre « **ukuvumereza** » when the cattle is coming back from grazing ground (pasture) going to drink.

c) the genre « **ukwiyamiriza** » when the cattle is coming back from grazing ground (pasture) going to drink.

**(iii)** Besides this rich pastoral poetry, there exist other productions more or less important. These are: ode to a hoe, ode to a bee-keeper (amazina y'inzuki), ode to a mortar (kuvugira isekuro), cynegetic poetry (amahigi)...

In conclusion, we notice that oral poetry is the heart of every day activities. It animates, gives life to activities, it diverts, entertains members of a given community. Of course we must here introduce the framework in which praise poetry is situated.

### 2.7.2. Rundi Praise Poetry

#### 2.7.2.1. What is Rundi Praise Poetry ?

The Burundian language and culture share a great number of features with some neighbouring countries (Rwanda, ex-Zaire, Tanzania) and with the peoples who are said to belong to what is called the Bantu region; and in general, to the Sub-Saharan region. As far as literature is concerned we find many rundi literary genres common to the Bantu speaking peoples: tales, traditional dances, proverbs, legends, riddles are met all over the world; traditional songs such as the inanga (harp), the ikembe (sanza), the musical bow (umuduri) and the fife (umwironge) are not exclusive monopoly of only Rwanda and Burundi; they are also found in other communities.

Praise poetry is a particular form of rundi literature. It is found in many countries'lore, in Africa as well as in Europe. Muhitira (1982: 19) gives such works as Kunene's Heroic Poetry of the Basotho (1971), T. Cope's Izibongo: zulu praise poems (1970); Schaper's Praise Poems of Tswana Chiefs (1965); Morris;s Heroic Recitations (1964) and Lord Parry's Serbo-Croatian Song (?) etc.

Praise poetry was approached by the authors above mentioned. For example, Kunene (1966), speaking of the Sotho heroic poetry termed it as : « this poetry whose subject matter is mainly the heroic deeds of warriors and Kings » (1966: 16). Their chief purpose is to praise, i.e. to extol the virtues of manly prowess of courage, of valour, and of fighting skill.

In Burundi, we use the term « amazina » (praise names) to mean « those words said in order to praise oneself, to extol one's heroism, to praise one's cows or plants ».

Whatever is eulogized in this poetry, the chief, the reciter himself, the animal strives to show the highly commendable qualities of these elements. The reciter achieves this through the use of language and the high-pitched delivery by means of which he captures the listener's attention.

Indeed, the conventions of praise poetry recitation are the following: « high in pitch; loud in volume, fast in speed » Ndulute (1977: 106). These create an emotional excitement in the audience as well as in the praiser himself, whose voice often rises in pitch volume, and speed as he progresses, and whose movements become more and more exaggerated. It is also a convention of praise poem recitation that the praiser never stands still; he suits the actions to the words, the words to the actions; the performance is indeed dramatic. The reciter of rundi praise poetry does not seek to fit words to the action or vice versa.

He only recites his high deeds loudly and fast. Volume and speed of the delivery joined to the elegant motion from right to left and from left to right, are among the characteristics of Rundi praise poetry recitation.

### 2.7.2.2. Is Rundi Praise Poetry Verse or Prose ?

When the reciter is extolling his high deeds, the hearer immediately recognizes to which literary genre he is listening. He cannot take heroic recitations for a tale or lullaby. The delivery differs, indeed, according to the genre. The conventions for good recitations are high pitch, loud volume and speed. The delivery must be fast whereas the pitch and volume depend upon the number of listeners or audience.To the question of rundi praise poetry being prose or verse, Muhitira (1988: 22) says that we refer to Finnegan (1977) when he says that: « a poem is likely to be delivered in a manner and mood which set it apart from everyday speech and prose utterance ». We have also to recognize the importance of features like metaphorical expression, structural repetitions, ect. to our rundi praise poems.

However, rundi praise poetry is not met in everyday speech, despite its liveliness. Although the genre appears to decline, especially in recent years, rundi praise poetry remains a living tradition, highly prized by the listeners and the reciters, that Muhitira (1988) calls « consumers », and « producers ».

### 2.7.2.3. Oralness of Rundi Praise Poetry

It is not worth discussing the oralness of rundi praise poetry since this literary is wholly oral. Still, we can point out three criteria of the oralness of poetry:

(i) oral composition

(ii) oral transmission, i.e. from mouth to mouth, and not relying on the written, or printed word;

(iii) oral performance.

Rundi praise poetry is not an exception to this, if we take these criteria as they are formulated. The poet may deliver a long unwritten text which he composes on the spot, relying on a fund of some built up ideas which oral literature critics term « oral formulae ». With practice and listening to the other bards, the reciter will improve his art. Rundi praise poems have always been transmitted orally and their significance well seized by the listener in actual perfomance. Rundi praise poems are, therefore, essentially oral.

The terms oral transmission, oral composition and oral performance for rundi praise poems do not seem to have any difference between these three criteria. Rundi praise poems as well as rundi heroic recitations seem to be composed and transmitted in perfomance. There is no specific time for oral composition, and oral transmission.

### 2.7.2.4. When is Rundi Praise Poetry Recited ?

The circumstances of these heroic recitations are varied. Traditionally, heroic recitations were declaimed following these occasions:

1. Before and after a battle: when preparing for a battle or coming back home victorious or not, in both cases the heroes would relate their deeds in highly coloured and nearlyunbelievable speech.

2. Over the enemy's corpse. After killing the enemy, the hero would put his foot on the corpse and would say how he has avoided his arrows and spears.

3. During ceremonies on public events (independence day, labour day, ...),

4. When one has been given an award by his superior, especially a cow, a way of thanking the giver (« gukura ubwatsi »).

After this short introduction of the nature of praise poetry, let us now talk about the way we are going to analyze our data.

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

## 3. 0. Introduction

No research findings are reached at random. Before getting to their findings, researchers must follow a certain methodology. They show step by step the paths that they followed from the hypothesis to the thesis. This has to be the prerequisite for any investigation which claims to be methodological and systematic.

This chapter of methodology shows how the present study will make use of the theories and principles described in the first chapter to achieve the main goal of this work, to study the major problems pertaining to the translatability of Kirundi literary texts into English. It describes how the data was collected and analysed.

## 3.1 Data Collection Procedure

The way data is collected determines most of the time the success of the results of the research. Several ways of data collection exist such as an interview, a questionaire, a tape-recorder, a corpus, etc. and every researcher chooses the appropriate way of collecting them.

As far as the present study is concerned, the data was collected from some already existing materials available in the library which pertain to the field of poetry.
Such works as Rodegem's (1973), Manirakiza's (1991), Nkezabahizi's (1986) and Rwasa's (1987) inspired me much in the choice of the corpus.

The latter being the way of data collection tobe used here.
Two texts were taken from Manirakiza's « **Guerre et paix dans le Burundi Traditionnel: Une étude anthropologique et sémiotique de la poésie guerrière** » the first having thirty- seven verses and the second, twenty-five; the third text, with twenty-nine verses, was taken from Rwasa's « **Les marques linguistiques de l'énonciation dans les mazina y'ubuhizi: essai d'explication** » and the last one, taken from Rodegem's Anthologie Rundi (1973: 82), has twenty verses.

## 3.2. The Appraisal of the Texts

An inquisitive person needs to know why the researcher selected these texts and not others. There are some reasons for this.

**(i)** First and foremost, they join the theme (topic) we are working on**: « Praise Poems ».** Thematically, these texts have the same theme, « **Praise Poems** » or « **war poems** ».
In fact, the main theme extols great deeds during wartime.
One can draw, however, some other minor themes such as pround cruelty, steady courage, humiliation of a vanquished person.

**(ii)** Second, on the rhetoric level, the composer of the poems was keen on selecting words ready to produce a certain flavour, ready to produce ease at the hearing level. The poet uses many figures of speech, characteristic of good literay texts, such as repetition, metaphors, assonance, allitertion, ...

**(iii)** Finally, I decided to select these texts from others because they are short and are presented in the Kirundi version and then translated into French; so it will be my duty to translate them into English while others that we find in Muhitira (1982: 29) and Nkurunziza (1986: 46) are already translated into English.

As stated above the data to be used here is a corpus. According to Greimas (1966) **« Le corpus désigne un ensemble de messages constitué en vue de la description d'un modèle linguistique » (1966: 42): « The corpus designates a set of messages constituted for description of a linguistic model ».**
The corpus in case here contains four praise poems which extol the poet's great deeds, his courage and adroitness, and bravery. He scorns or disdains fear and clumsiness. The poet talks about himself in eulogistic terms and shows the development of events and the flow of his great actions.

## 3.3. Data Analysis Procedure

While analysing the data, the first step is to present the corpus in its original form (version) i.e. in Kirundi and then have it translated into English. The translation was made as communicative as possible in order to help the reader understand the meaning conveyed by the Kirundi praise poetry. However, poetry being what it is, there may be loss of meaning as in some words expressed figuratively or simply in some untranslatable words.
In the analysis of such words or phrases we use two ways of translation: literal and communicative in order to show the difference between the literal and communicative translation of a same word or phrase. For example: « Kuva umwuna » for an archer means nothing. When rendered semantically the meaning becomes well understandable. It means to be covered by blood after it had stuck an enemy, in other words it expresses the poet's winning over his enemy.

In addition, the analysis of the texts will be focused on the problems pertaining to translatability on the lexical, stylistic and phonology levels.

Moreover, in the analysis we will answer the research questions talked about in the first chapter. It will also highlight some solutions to the way to overcome the problems of translatability of an SL material into a T.L. material.

# CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

## 4.0. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to carry out an analysis of translatability of the collected data and consequently find the answers to the research questions raised in the first chapter.

This analysis is based on two major points: Linguistic and Cultural untranslatability. Coming back to the explanation of the latter, we may remember that linguistic untranslatability is related to a lexical gap between the two languages i.e. Kirundi and English. Cultural untranslatability occurs when objects and situations that words designate in the source language are not found in the target language.

Duff (1981: 26) joins this idea by arguing that most often individual words represent features of the S.L. that are quite not found in the T.L.; or present in very different form. They may also refer to customs and habitual expressions.
Thus, the translation of such words encounters a lot of difficulties.

## 4.1. Problems Pertaining to Translatability

As the audience differ, the way of translating differs also.
In translating scientific, technical and academic words, it is more important that terms be fully understood and that neat translation for them be found. This goal cannot be total ly reached since the languages and cultures involved are historically and genetically unrelated. Therefore, in order to attempt to solve the problem of untranslatability, the translator has to look for levels of equivalence which Nida (1964) quoted in Bassnett (1987: 26) distinguished in two types: Formal equivalence and Dynamic equivalence.

In the latter, the reader should be affected by the reproduced text in the same way the original text affected the first readers or listeners, whereas the first one seeks to produce a counterpart in a receptor language whose form corresponds to the original as nearly as possible; i.e. a word in the source language is reproduced in concordance with a word in the receptor language.

These two leves, though they can help solve the translator's problem suffer from a deficiency. In a formal correspondence, the effect on the reader is unnatural and tiring because the fresh impact of the original has been lost in favour of more formal elements. Moreover, a dynamic equivalence does not attempt to fill the cultural gap. On the contrary, it makes as clear as possible the difference between the culture of the S.L. and the culture of the receptor language.

All in all, one can conclude that the translator has to gather all the information concerning translatability or untranslatability of the text he is concerned with. Thus, in order to translate, the translator needs to replace the concept to the context, antecedents to consequences, or other settings in which it might be used.

After having defined the goal of the chapter and demonstrated the risks to fail and the chances to succeed for the translation in a theoretical way, now it is time to be more practical for whatever has been said previously.The analysis of the texts is presented in accordance with the levels mentioned previously.

## 4.2. The Limits of Translatability

### 4.2.1. The lexical Untranslatability Level

This section aims at exploring the problem pertaining to the translatability of Kirundi lexemes into English. It shows that translatability encounters difficulties on the lexical level.
In fact, the meaning conveyed by a given sentence is not the sum of the meanings of the words that make up the sentence when taken separately. Moreover, the semantic meaning totally differs from the literal one. This can be shown under the following lines which are developed under three themes found in the texts.

#### 4.2.1.a. Proud Cruelty

The semantic account is that the poet cynically describes the ways in which he put his enemies to death. The following examples ilustrate this theme:
**(...) nkabitsa umwugi umwungere:** Literally translated, this means
« I consigned an arrow to a shepherd ».
Semantically, the poet wants to tell the audience that he stuck an arrow into a shepherd's viscera, in other words, he killed the shepherd.
**(...) Nzimana umwugi Bantwaye:**
« I offered Bantwaye an arrow »

The verb pattern « nzimana » comes from the verb « kuzimana » which means to offer, to give something to eat or drink to a visitor, but semantically, this sentence is related to the previous idea of killing. From the above examples, it follows that there exists a significant difference between the meaning conveyed by the association of the Kirundi lexemes and the real meaning conveyed by the whole stanza or verse.

### 4.2.1.b. Steady Courage

The poet wants to show the reader how courageous he was during a battle. But again he does not use direct language, but instead he uses images whose true meaning requires a clean-cut understanding of the Kirundi language.

E.g. - **Sinonkeje muzirakugoba**: I did not breastfeed the-one-who-does not-bend

Here there is personification of the poet's archer.

- **Sinigize mburumbone:** I did not make me miss-me-and-see-me
- **Sinigize ntumangende**: I did not make me tell-me-to-go.

The literally translated versions do not mean anything to a non native person when reading them. But semantically or communicatively all the above examples explain the attitude that the poet took during wartime; the one of readiness, he was always ready to fight, always courageous never was he lazy or pretended to be so.

### 4.2.1.c. Humiliation of the vanquished persons

The poet humiliates his enemy after having defeated him.

e.g.; T2: 11 **...Bata imiheto bambara imihiti:**

**« *... and they dropped their bows and put on marrow's leaf* ».**

They surrendered, they put hands up.

This example « bata imiheto » which means « they dropped their bows » can be easily understood, thereis no particular problem: it is the sense of defeatedness, of surrendering. However, difficulty occurs when we add « bambara imihiti » which mmeans « they put on marrow's leaf ». Unless one is familiar with the Burundian culture, the reader will not be able to understand the meaning of this sentence.

The meaning of this sentence differs from the sum of the two meanings taken separately; this sentnce conveys the meaning of surrender and humiliation. The enemy was humiliated.

From the above one can say that the difficulty arisesfrom the translation of sentences that contain lexemes which are typically Kirundi-related because the translation fails to convey the exact meaning of the lexemes into English.In fact, this is due to the unrelatedness of the two languages. Kirundi lexemes do not always have their equivalents in the English language and therefore translatability difficulties occur at the literal level but the semantic translation overcomes those difficulties. The next level of analysis is the stylistic one which purports to study the problems of translation caused by the figurative language.

### 4.2.2. On The Stylistic Level

This section aims at exploring the problems of translatability related to figures of speech and idiomatic expressions, which abound in any piece of poetry. Figures of construction and allusive language turn the proper meaning of a word into a figurative sense. Throughout the Kirundi language, the speaker avoids saying things as they are; instead, he uses turns, figures of speech and allusion which are, most of the time, complicated to understand. At this level there occur difficulties of understanding the meaning conveyed by a figure of speech in Kirundi translated into English since we do not use the same imagery.
In order to understand it we have to explain why we use such a term, to explain what it denotes in Kirundi.

e.g.1 Comparison: T1, I:3. « **Ndi Sentamba** » (I am the swallow, martin)
Here the poet identifies himself with something.
« **Sentamba** » translated as « swallow » causes no difficulty since the kirundi word has an English equivalent.

However, the problem lies in the use of such a word. Why did the poet say he is a swallow ? Which connotation does « intamba » have in the Kirundi lexicon? Is it the same as the one it has in the English lexicon?
We must say that the limit of translatability does not lie in finding English equivalents but in finding out the reasons for such a choice. Therefore when the poet says « Ndi Sentamba » he refers to intamba which is a kind of bird which is very quick, enduring, to show how solid, fast he was during the war or battle.
We do not know, however, if the word « swallow » has this connotation in the English lexicon. If it does,there is no limit of translatability; but if it does not, the limit of translatability exists because the reader would not understand anything.

**e.g.2. Metaphor**

Metaphor is a strong comparison used to stress the warrior's power. It has the same function as comparison. In the case of metaphor, the problems of translatability are not those of finding out which English word corresponds to a given Kirundi lexeme, but those related to meaning, or connotations that are attributed to Kirundi lexemes which are not necessarily those attributed to English lexemes.For instance, if the poet says:

**« Ndi agashenyo kamara amadago » ( T2, 11)**

« Iam the axe that massacres crowds of people »

« **Agashenyo** » is a small metal material used to cut a big wood in order t o get small pieces.
The reader of the translated version will inevitably get problems to understand the meaning conveyed by this word.
Moreover, « **amadago** » can communicatively be translated as, crowds of people but we do not have an English equivalent which exactly means « **amadago** » since this word is even rarely used in the Kirundi language.

Therefore, in this sentence « **ndi agashenyo kamara amadago** » ( I am the axe that massacres crowds of people), the poet compares himself to an axe to show that he defeats his enemies easily because he is as strong and powerful as an iron.

Here we can say that there are limits of translatability in the sense that we have words in the kirundi language whose English equivalents do not exist and we have to provide more explanation contextually in order to get the meaning of the word.

« **Ndi igisuru ndi ikiboroza** » (T, 12):
« I am the nettle that pricks, stings »
« **Inkuba ya Rasa isumba iya Songa** » **(T1, 12; T.3, 4)**
« I am the thunder of Rasa, greater than that of Songa »

Here, « igisuru » is a kind of plant well-known in Burundi for its irritating, inflamming state.

In fact, when the nettle is applied or gets into contact with a human body, the latter becomes immediately irritated and inflammed. The poet compares himself to this kind of plant to mean that whenever he meets his enemies he irritates them , his prowess causes his enemies to be scared.

The translatability problem involved here is to know exactly the use of this figurative language where the person's quality is compared to that of a plant; the reader would inevitably have difficulties to understand the meaning conveyed by the Kirundi words « **ndi igisuru** » if he is not aware of the connotation that « **igisuru** » has in kirundi.

**e.g.3. Allegory**

This figure of speech is a prolonged metaphor. An example of this is when the poet says that he is a melted iron (T1. 34) **« Je cuma c'indarayi »,** literally « I, the metal of the iron » and communicatively (I, the well-donne iron).
In this example there is a difference between the literal and the communicative translations. As a matter of fact, the sentense « I, the metal of the iron » is completely meaningless; no one would understand what it means; or hardly can he but if he is presented the sentense « I, the well-done iron » surely he understands that the author of such a sentence compares himself to the iron to put forward his great prowess.

Therefore, this sentence means that the speeker is powerful enough to defeat, to route his enemies. The literal translation here fails to provide the readers with much understanding of the meaning conveyed by the original version (Kirundi) may be because it is expressed in a figurative language. But with a communicative translation, the limit is raised because we try to convey the meaning of the S.L. material into the T.L. as nearly as possible as it was conveyed in the S.L.

**e.g.4. Antonomasia**

This figure of speech designates the use of a noun or a periphrase in the place of a proper noun or vice-versa.
e.g. Ndi Sentamba Ruvuzakivuguto (T1, 2)
The translation of such a sentence becomes more complex.
In fact, this sentence embodies two images which limit its translatability.

On the one hand we have « **Sentamba** » (Se 'father' + **(i) ntamba** 'swallow'). If we were to translate this word literally we would have « I, the father of the swallow » because, in the Kirundi lexicon, the prefix « Se » has the paternity meaning. cfr. Sebabiri (the father who has given birth to twins); naming 'Harpagon', the prototype of miserly men, we say « **Sentibiribwa** », « **Serugo** » to mean a husband (as opposed do « **inarugo** » = wife). So literally, this word becomes difficult to render into English if we want to keep the meaning it has in the original version, i.e. the Kirundi language.

On the order hand, we have « **Ruvuzakivuguto** » which is a compound-noun that derives from two words Ruvuza (from the verb kuvuza) and « **(i) Kivuguto** » which comes from the verb « **kuvuguta** »

Moreover these words are polysemous. For instance, the verb « **kuvuza** » can be followed by some nouns and then convey different meanings: **kuvuza inanga,** umuduri, ikembe (to play the harp, bow, ...), **kuvuza iradiyo** (to play the radio, to switch on the radio) kuvuza induru (to cry), ... « Ruvuza » is therefore the one who - performs these activities. « Ikivuguto » (yogourt) is a kind of milk, but « Kuvuguta » can be attached to the following words: 'Kuvuguta umuti' (to get traditional medecine (liquid ) by mixing leaf with water), 'kuvuguta isabuni', this is said while washing or bathing when you mix water with a soap or when you apply the soap on your body.

So, literally « **kuvuza** » + « **ikivuguto** » does not mean anything but communicatively, the noun Ruvuzakivuguto means « the-one-who-makes the bow-resounds » (the one who resounds the bow).

Therefore, it follows from the preceding that there is a significant problem when one is translating a figurative language or polysemous words. The literal meaning is quite different from the communicatively rendered one. This shows the kind of translatability problem arising from the translation of polysemous words. By this word, the poer wants to say that he is as clever, skilful, cunning as the archer; he has the same ability as the archer.

In conclusion we can say that the poet explores all sources of the language to embellish the style. The allusive language; the striking images, poetic alliterations as well as tropes, all rush, jostle in a scintillation of images.
Moreover, the vocabulary used in such a piece of writing does not allow immediate understanding.

In fact, except the audience which has experienced the events that the poet is describing, the net of figurative expressions used creates an esotheric language. As it was said in the previous lines, the poet voluntarily avoides an ordinary word which he replaces by derived terms considered as more striking, more descriptive and noble. He just wants to mark the difference between his poetic language and his ordinary language.

### 4.2.3. On The Phonological Level

The phonological level of any poetic genre is characterized by such features as intonation, punctuation and silence. However, since the present material is not recorded but written, we will not talk about intonation and pauses, but instead, we will focus on those features as alliteration and assonance and the problems involved in the translation.

In Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary, alliteration is the use of speech or writing of several words close together which all begin with the same letter or sound.
By extension it is any consonantic repetition within a flow of related words. Examples of alliteration abound in our corpus. We have many verses which begin by the same sound, the first person singular pronoun « Ndi » (I am). In text 2, 10 we have another case of alliteration of {m} which is repeated several times.
eg. **« Nakwikiye mu mugunguma kavira umwuna mu muhunda »**
« I helved it into the maytenus arbutiofolius and on the sharp end it bleeded »

In addition, The Penguin English Dictionary (1965: 40) says that assonance is the similarity of words having the same vowel sound but different consonants as in the example above where we have assonance of {u} which is repeated nine times.

As a matter of fact, the problem involved here is not that of showing where we can have alliteration and /or assonance, but rather the major problem is the one pertaining to the translation of these features.
In fact, while translating a Kirundi sentence containing such features into English we do not expect the latter to be preserved into the translated version, they disappear completely.
As an example, the translation of the sentence above would be: **« I helved it into the maytenus arbutiofolius and on the sharp end it bleeded ».**
From this example we see that there is neither alliteration of the Kirundi {m} nor the assonance of {u}. Such repetition in alliteration and assonance has, as Cohen (1971: 81) says, the expressive function. A sentence like the latter is not likely to let the reader know its original meaning because the words used in the Kirundi language are culture-specific.

For example, « **Kuva umwuna** » ( to bleed from the nose) is understandable but it becomes more complicated when we say « **Kuva umwuna for an archer** » since this verb pattern is used for human beings only, this means that the hero's archer became covered with blood because it shot the enemy and it killed him.

Moreover, when translating a piece of poetry, some verses become longer or shorter than the original ones appear. Therefore, it becomes somehow impossible to keep the flavour of the original poem.

To conclude this section the present study aimed at analysing the problems pertaining to the translatability of Kirundi praise poems into English. As we mentioned earlier a hundred percent translation is quite impossible; even when translating a less complicated piece of writing than poetry, it is unlikely that comprehension reaches the hundred percent level. It becomes even more complicated when the texts under translation embody cultural traits, figurative senses, metaphorical uses, ... Thus, our texts are no exception.
We have found in them assests that can help us seek whether or not this translatability exists, we have found that some words and phrases are culture-bound and language related. They are therefore difficult to translate into English; and this is part of the texts richness for translatability.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Rundi praise poetry is a language-specific and culture-specific literature. It describes everyday activities. It is expressed in a figurative language and its vocabulary is not easy to understand. We find in it figures of speech which ascribe it a well-structured figurative sense.
In order to understand it, beside the linguistic knowledge, the reader must have cultural knowledge so as to move from the literal sense to the semantic sense. Language is a mirror of the total cultural organisation of a community, i.e. language is the heart within the body of culture. The two are so intertwined and inseparable that the transfer from the S.L. to the T.L. encounters serious obstacles especially in the case of our interest where the two languages, Kirundi and English, are unrelated and have widely distant cultures.

The cultural differences between the two language make their translatability become difficult. This is to say that words or expressions of the source text missed a similar setting culture in the target language. Therefore, differences related to cultures have a negative impact on the respective languages as far as translatability is concerned.

In the analysis, we have highlighted problems pertaining to the translatability of our corpus. We found that these problems really exist because the languages and cultures involved in the translation process are historically and genetically unrelated. Some solutions have been suggested. In fact we have relied on Nida's (1974) solutions of levels of equivalence; namely formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. However, althought the latter constitute solutions, it is unlikely that the flavour of the original poem remains the same to the reader of the translated version because it is not always easy to fill the cultural gap which exists between the two cultures.

Moreover, the analysis revealed the limits of translatability following the lexical, stylistic and phonological levels of analysis.

At the lexical level, we saw that difficulties are expected while translating some lexemes from Kirundi into English. However, there are cases where the Kirundi lexemes are translatable into English but the meaning conveyed by the sum of the lexemes is semantically different from the real meaning conveyed by the original verse.

This has been discussed through three short themes: proud cruetty, steady courage and humiliation of the vanquished persons.

The examples that have been given all attest to the meaning gap existing between the literal translation and the communicative translation. Literal translation conveys the explicit sense which is not understandable to the T.L. reader. The words that make up the verse or stanza are literally translated into English and the meaning conveyed by the sum of the words is really meaningless for the T.L. reader.

Without a communicative translation, the reader of the T.L. text will not understand what the verse talks about. The translator, therefore, has to provide the implicit sense which is the implied meaning given by the communicative translation. He has to decode the figurative sense hidden in the Kirundi version and which was not decoded by the literal sense.

At the stylistic level, we analysed the translatability of figures of construction and the allusive language.

We saw that in Burundian culture, the use of figurative language is common. In every conversation whether formal or informal, Burundians avoid saying what they have to say directly; instead, they use turns; i.e. figures of speech.

Thus, when translating figurative words literally, there will always occur difficulties of meaning because the way Burundians choose figures of speech to be used is not the same as the English speakers procede.

Though comparison, metaphor,allegory,... exist in Kirundi as well as in English, a Kirundi metaphorical phrase or sentence is not easily understood by an English speaker.

Our analysis then reveals that there is a big difference between the literal translation and the communicative one. While the literal translation conveys the surface meaning which does not mean anything to to the T.L. reader; the communicative translation conveys the deep meaning which is the true meaning.

On the phonological level, our analysis showed that the flavour of the original poem cannot remain the same in the translated version. The poet chooses words with repetitive sounds which, when translated into English no longer have these repetitive sounds. The alliteration and assonance abviously disappear in the translated version.

The T.L. reader finds it difficult to understand the whole poem because, apart from the words used, the poem per se describes a given event; and if the reader of the translated poem has not experienced such an event it will somehow be difficult for him to follow what the whole matter is about.

To cut short a long story, this paper is a cntribution in the field of translation. Yet, we cannot hope to have explored this field thoroughly. It is too broad and the time available is too limited. Thus, the area remains a field of research.

Future research should go deeper than we have because in a domain like this one, there is always something to improve or to expand. No one can deny that the research has to expect difficulties. Instead of trying to pass behind them, he rather has to welcome them because they constitute the basis of his work and their analysis will make the translation discipline progress and also be subject to many discussions.

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# APPENDIX

## The Presentation of the corpus

## Text 1. « Ndi Sentamba Source: MANIRAKIZA, Z. 1991: 76

1. Ndi Sentamba
2. Ndi Sentamba Ruvuzakivuguto
3. Ikivura gihinda i Bukamanka
4. Ndi kirara ca Baziro
5. Bidahusha ico bihuye
6. Amasera ku masohoro
7. Sentamba nkiri muto
8. Ubusore bukimbanda
9. Ubukumi bukimparaye
10. Nari Rwimpari nari Rwukurankuki
11. Vyambarira ku mbeba
12. Agashenyo kamara amadago
13. Inkuba yarasa isumba iya songa
14. Itera ikinya mu nda z'abatagira imitima
15. Nari intwari mu rugambaraye
16. Sinigeze nigira mburumbonye
17. Sinigeze mba Ntumangende
18. Urugamba rugumije amarabura ku mutwe wa Gitanga
19. Nari ry'Ibisambi
20. Numvise karadeba i Burambi
21. Nitabisha Umuhoho
22. Ndatsinda itako
23. Inkota n'inkongoranyi zirahaga
    Ibitagenda mw'itaba i Ciyubake
24. Nararashe agapfagabokari ku ziko
    gatuneje inkono y'amagoma

25. Agapfagore gasimba urusenge
    gapfana iminihiro
26. Intano zitanu zitana muziko
27. Narikoze ku muhoho mfora atamaganya
28. Nzimana umwugi Bantwaye
29. Abarimbi b'iwabo bamutwara nabi
30. Bamutwara nk'inkwi
31. Ngo bamuhe umwerera w'amata aca arya icansi
32. Ngo bamuhe uw'inzoga arya urwato (...)
33. Ndaciye ku mayange
34. Amazina ntahoza umwana kandi ntabuza
    umugore kugenda buje
35. Ndaciye ku mayange
36. Je cuma c'indarayi
37. Je Sentamba
38. Sintambatamba aho rugeranyeko
39. Nti mwiriwe ga mwa ndanga

**Text 2: Source: MANARIKIZA, Z., 1991: 86**

1. Ndi gishikizo ca Mugamba
2. Intakare y'amkanda
3. Mbambarwa nk'incira
4. Nkazirana n'ikizinga
   urugo rwa databuja
5. Ndi agtana mu rugamba
   agashobotse mu ndwano
6. Ndakonyora bagakanda
7. Ndi iyica ndi iy'amakira
8. Sinaraye kubiri n'umihoho
9. Sinatetereje abagenzi
   bampaye agacumu kanje mugunguza
10. Nagakwikiye mu mugunguma
    kavira umwuna mu muhunda
11. Nasagose abanyamusagara
    bata imiheto bambara imihiti
12. Ndi igisuru ndi ikiboroza
13. Nararashe agapfagabo
    agapfagore karahundagara
    gakwira ikinywabi
14. Nti ndaguhaye baraharira
15. Ndi uwo kwazuba
16. Ndi umukoracumu
17. Ndi umuzira kujoba wa databuja
18. Ndi uw-inzigo yazinze
    kadacika kadacikirirwa (...)
19. Nararakiye nturagara nk'iyamakira
20. Ka Muguguza karagaruka kisiga iraso
21. Mukura arandaba arangomwa
22. Ampetera ya Bigabo ntaraheta umugongo
23. Inka yavyawe na Rwabirenzi
24. Ntanyungu yungukiye mu nyambo
    Biranka nawe vyankiye mu rusago

**Text 3: Source: Rwasa L., 1987: 23.**

1. Nari muheto wa Ruhehera wa Ruhembanduru
2. Nkaba kiramvu c'imongoranyi baramvura iyo inkuba zasana;
3. Nkaba gakwavu k'umutaho gatamba gabira izuba;
4. Nkaba nkuba y'icaga itigeze icangazi murugamba rw'abagabo,
5. Nkaba umugaragu wa Rugomwibigoroye rwanka ibigoramye ingorore ya Gisabo
6. Nkaba umurindanzikubana mu kivumu kwa Kanani
7. Bishinginama y'ukurinda abatinyi bashinga iyo guhunga
8. Narazanye Rugondo ntaragondama
9. Nzana inkungu muzo kwa Bihege
10. Ndi umugaragu wa Rigomwibigoroye rwanka ibigoramye ingorore ya Rugema intwaza, intwari ya Gisabo
11. Yari yarampaye imbarike y'ibanibaniro iturutse ku ceru
12. Ampaya ngo nze ndangwe muntatangwa no mu makungu kwa Ndoyi
13. Bukeye aransubira ampa Mugwa y'agahambaye
14. Ntiyayimpa ayimbambirako, yayimpa yanshimye
15. Bukeye andungika kwa Sentahendabahange ampa Rweru rw'imyangange ziturutse kwa Binyati umugamba
16. Ndavuga Semikore we yakoze mu Migeni akampa Bitangwa-Bitakwa-imigago, Masimbi-ya-Gisahura-Muyonga,
17. Naragiye mu Bukeye bwa Banga ndahakura zibiri zirimwo Bizima-bitira-ikizinzo
18. Aragarura Mirindi y'akabanga
19. Ayigarura igeze i Burarana ati: « Mbe nzane ikimasa ? »
20. Ati: « kuri wewe kiguze igihugu »
21. Ati: « yitware ndatanga rwanje »
22. Sinagujije ikimasa nk'abamoso ba Sebusuma
23. Ngemero wa Rugema yankuye kubatware ikiboko kinekera
24. Nararwanye i Bwami ziranywa iz'abandi zirumaze
25. Ni je Murindanzikubana nararahiye kunywa amazi,
26. Nije mugaragu wa Rogamwibigoroye-rwanka-ibigoramye
27. Yarankomoreye Rutangamahinda bapfana agahinda
28. Nkaba ndi inkuba y'icaga itagije umuryango

**Text 4 :Source :Rodegem ,F.M. ,1973: 83**

1. Maranyi ya Rusengo navumye umuhoho nsogota izisumiye mugara
2. Kw'ikuriro ry'ubwatsi kwa Kiranga indangirwa y'i Buhiga
3. Nabaye nkira umuyengeyenge ndekurirwa mu ntambara
4. Nseruka ku ruhunga; izo duhungiye na Ruyego zikoma amashi
5. Ku murambi wa Nyagishika na Nyarutumba,Sinatabariye kujunja,
6. Abahiga bacuranwa abarimbi mu karindimuko i Marumba
7. Ndi Umuhizi
8. Sinatabariye kujunjanya imyampi intambara ivugiye kwa Rugeyo
9. Abana b'impayamaguru bavoma igasanza mu gishanga i Kabutare
10. Ndi umhimbarangoga ndi uwa Ruhiza
11. Nashungukanye ubuhizi agakirwe bakura mu ndengane
12. Isama nd'iy'ishema, ndi iya Muhoho nsongoza urukamvyo, mbamba ibisonga
13. Izibambiye ku murombero
14. Ndi umutabara-kurerega
15. Ndi uwaruyego rwo mu masango umwana atabaye mu musama
16. Rwamponyozi nakebutse Rwanduruka imibamba ico umuhongo abanogera ku runini kwa vyara
17. Muco wa Bihizi numva karayenga
18. Ndarana ubuhizi maranira ubuhizi mu kibaya kwa Bugerere
19. Inkuru yirwa ari umuryango i Nyagashiha ko natabaye Rugero rwa Mbanga
20. Ntabara kumara imihigo mu gishanga i Rukanka; Nyaruka kugaruka ku murombero kwa Ruvurura.

## SEMANTIC TRANSLATION OF THE CORPUS

### Text 1. Ndi Sentamba

1. I am called Sentamba, the martin par excellence
2. I am Sentamba, the brave who resounds the archer's rope when showers of rain were pouring down at Bukamanka
3. I am the domesticated fallow of Baziro
4. The one who never misses the targets
5. The dexterous clever on striated flanks
6. Sentamba,hen I was young and fresh
7. When the youth still exercised an internal thrust on me,
8. The cheriched of young ladies
9. I was the quarreller, the brave, I saved myself from the proeminer front head
10. I knew how to put on warrior's adorning (ornament) while running
11. The axe that massacres crowds of people
12. The thunder of Rasa made more deaths than the one of Songa
13. And the thunder terrified those who are not courageous
14. I was the most valiant during the hardest battle
15. I have never been treacherous
16. I have never pleaded (used pretexts) to flee the battle
17. When hostilities were causing clothes fall on the top hills of Gitanga
18. I was the fallow, always with bristled up hair
19. Having heard that the danger was ranging at Burambi
20. I responded the call shooting my arrow
21. I crouched / hid myself and, launched sharp-pointed archers
22. Knives and spears made many victims on the land of Ciyubake
23. I short a gentleman sitting arround a port of colocase
24. His poor wife jumped up to the ceilling, unable of anything else than crying

25. While his five orphelins traced out their own refuge into the fire place
26. I took my bow and I aimed shamelessly
27. I fed with my arrow Bantwaye
28. His friends picked him up carelessly
29. They put him down on earth like a burden of wood
30. And when they gave him milk, he ate the milk-pot (cup)
31. And when they presented him milk beer, he ate the calabash
32. Praise names neither calm a cying child nor forbid a woman to return back to her parents by anger
33. I finish to tell briefly my exploits
34. I the solid iron who makes myself the framework of the footbridge
35. I, Sentamba, the Martin par excellence
36. I do not gambol were war is taking place
37. And I say « hello the brave »

**Text 2: NDI GISHIKIZO**

1. I am called Gishikizo the son of the archer
2. The ferocious on a terrifying
3. I stand erect like a snake
4. I fight those who want to assualt my master's home
5. I am rude on a battle
   I know how to make war
6. I breake enemy's body parts
   and his mates rush to massage him
7. I am the fallow that kills, the thunder
   of first shower of rain that stuns
8. I have never slept unarmed
9. I have never disappointed my friends
   who gave me the spear that I called Muguguza
10. I helved it in the maytenus arbutia-folius
    and on the sharp end, it bleeded
11. I stuk it into the people's viscera of Musagara
    who immediately gave up their archers and put on marrow's leaf
12. I am the nettle that stings / pricks the most
13. I terrified a young man and his wife wandered through the bushes
14. Then I proclaimed high my bravour
15. I am the brave of zuba, the sun
16. I am the hard spear's manipulator
17. I am a good warrior, faithful to the chief of armies
18. I attacked improvisibly and massacred all adversairies, stupefied
19. I am the one whose rancour is gnawing since then,
    the tenace, the various, the galant
20. I lightened and detonated like a thunder
21. My spear went away only to find it covered with blood
22. And Mukura looked at me: I raised up his admiration
23. He then gave me the one born from Bigabo
24. It was the time when my back was not yet bent
25. The cow that was given birth by Rwabirenzi
26. The cow that I, Ntanyungu, I gained while Biranka was waiting.

**TEXT 3**

1. I was the archer of Ruhehera of Ruhembanduru
2. I was also the archer's wood, the tooth-drawer that they deploy when thunders fight each other
3. I was also the crafty hare that gamblingly seeks to shelter from sun
4. I was again the agressive thunder which did not *make* itself vagabond while the gallants were fighting
5. I was the servant of Rugomwibigoroye, the enemy of rough things, sun of Gisabo.
6. I was the one who took good position while war was raging under the ficus, at the Kinanas
7. The one-who-took decision to sustain the battle while others decided to flee
8. I brought Rugondo before I became old
9. I brought a hornless cow, taken from Bihege's cattle
10. I am the servant of Rugomwibigoroye the one-who-detests rough things, son of Rugema, the armies ' chief, the gallant of Gisabo
11. He had given me a cow as a gift covet by the enemies when coming from the Ndonyis at Ceru
12. And he gave me a calf, Birangwa so that I may be well-known among great notables and elsewhere in the world
13. The following day he gave me again « Mugwa y'Agahambaye »
14. It is not due to fear that he offered me it, but because he admired me
15. The day after the morrow he recommended me at Sentahendabahanga who gave me Rwegure rw'imyangange which sprang from Binyati, umugamba
16. I praise Semikore
17. I praise Semikore, who, from migenis gave me Bitanga.
18. I went to Bukeye-of-Banga, wherein I brought two cows among them Bizima which hates a laugh hunt

19. I brought back Mirindi with short horns
20. He had caught it at Burarana asking me if he should bring a steer
21. The answer was: « For you, is it worth a thousand? »
22. He replied: « Take it, I will get mine »
23. I did not exchange the steer as do people of Moso at the house of Sebusuma
24. Ngemero, son of Rugema removed me from the chiefs authority when the stump (snag) was raging,
25. I foughton the King's Sides and my cattle watered while other's were starving of thirst.
26. It is me Murindazikubana, I swore not to drink water any more
27. It is me the servant of Rugomwibigoroye, the enemy of rough things, son of Gisabo
28. He offered me Rutangamahinda and my enemies died of envy
29. Moreover, I am the agressive thunder which did not lessen the family

**Text 4**

1. Exterminator, people of the rousset/red - haired person,
   I took my archer and stuck those who had seized up on the may
2. Where we pick up / dig grass at Kiranga, the domestic animal of Buhiga
3. I was still young when they let me go to war
4. I rapidly appeared and those we were to attack with Ruyego clapped their hands
5. On the Nyagishiha and Nyarutumba hills I did not go in expedition only to remain indolent
6. When those who declaim praise names ate up at best
   the hutus on the abrupt slope of Marumba
7. I am a praise poetry reciter
8. I did not go in expedition to remain indolent with arrows when fight takes place at Ruyego
9. Agile / nimble children fetch blood in the kabutare marsh
10. I am the rapidity, the elated, I belong to the Yellowish
11. I came down with my arrows, and took off grass's chump from the way
12. I am the eloquent with wood's arrows, I am the man of archers
    I cut the enemy with my rope, I nail him with my traits
13. Those who block the way near the hedge
14. I am the warrior who leaves for expedition in order to fight
15. I am the man of Ruyego of Masango, son of Mponyozi; I am the child who goes in expedition at Masama
16. Rwamponyozi, I looked at Rwanduruka and immediately warriors terrified the Abanogera at Munini, at the Vyaras
17. I, the light, companion of BIHIZI, I hear a slight noise
18. The whole night, I compete with praise names reciters at Kibaya at the house of Bugerere
19. My expedition news, I, the example, companion of Mbanga, are spread like day's light at Nyagishiha
20. I go to the expedition to challenge in the marsh of Rukanka
    I hurry to come back near the hedge at the Ruvururas.