De/Recolonization in Translation

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ABSTRACT

Although the creative appropriation of the language of the former British colonizers in Anglophone African writing has received ample attention in postcolonial literary studies, much less has been written about what happens when this creatively appropriated, linguistically hybrid discourse is translated into another hegemonic European language. The ideological implications in particular have remained under-investigated and the few studies within translation studies that have been done in this area tend to equate target-text strategies of fluency with a 'recolonization' of the text, as they do not take into account the exoticizing and hence stereotyping potential of non-fluent strategies, both in the source and the target text. Taking the viewpoint that translation has the potential to be 'a source of separation when it reaffirms received stereotypes' (Carbonell i Cortés, 1996; 83) rather than a bridge across cultures, and, hence, that a recolonization also takes place when the target text perpetuates the stereotypical image the target culture has constructed of the source culture, this article argues that neither strategies of fluency nor strategies of non-fluency *per se* are de- or recolonizing. Instead, it suggests that a more detailed and differentiated analysis of the creatively appropriated, linguistically hybrid elements in the source text as well as the effect a non-fluent rendering would have in the target text is needed. Without such an analysis it is impossible to reach conclusions about whether translations of postcolonial texts show a tendency towards recolonization, attempt to uncover the motivations behind this presumed recolonization, and ultimately, explore what alternative translation strategies are realistically available to a translator working in a commercial publishing environment. Furthermore, such an analysis is needed in order to be able to investigate how translator training can contribute to encouraging translators to opt for strategies that prevent this presumed recolonization and in so doing work to change the norms behind recolonizing translation strategies.

Keywords: literary translation; postcolonial writing; linguistic hybridity; decolonization; recolonization.

Çeviride Yeniden Sömürgeleştirme / Sömürgecilikten Arındırma

ÖZ

Anglofon Afrika yazınında kullanılan eski İngiliz sömürgeciliğine ait yaratıcı yazın dili sömürgecilik sonrası edebiyat içinde fazlasıyla ilgi görmüş olsa da bu benimsenen kurgusal edebiyatın ve dilbilimsel açıdan melez söylemin baskın bir Avrupa diline çevrildiğinde ortaya çıkanlar hakkında günümüze kadar çok az çalışma yapılmıştır. Özellikle bu durumun ideolojik çıkarımları üzerine fazla çalışma yapılmamış olmasının yanında çeviribilim alanında bu konuyla ilgili yapılan az sayıdaki çalışmanın ise, hem kaynak metinde hem de çeviride akıcı olmayan stratejilerin egzotikleştirme ve devamında klişeleştirme eğiliminin göz ardı edilmesi sebebiyle, kaynak metnin akıcı dil stratejilerini metni yeniden sömürgeleştirerek bastırdığı görülmektedir. Çevirinin, kültürler arası bir köprü olmak şöyle dursun, 'algılanan klişeler üzerinde hak iddaa ettiği durumlarda ayırıcı bir hal alma" potansiyeline sahip olduğu (Carbonell i Cortés, 1996; 83) fikrinden yola çıkarak - ki bu bağlamda, erek metnin kaynak kültürden aldığı ve erek kültür için şekillendirdiği basmakalıp imgeleri kalıcı hale getirdiği durumlarda metnin yeniden sömürgeleştirilmiş olduğu söylenebilir – bu çalışma, ne metinsel akıcılığa ilişkin stratejilerin, ne de metinsel akıcılığın olmadığı stratejilerin kendi başlarına metni yeniden sömürgeleştirebileceğini veya sömürgecilikten arındırabileceğini tartışmaktadır. Bunun yerine bu çalışma, hem kaynak metinde bulunan benimsenmiş yaratıcı dilin ve dilbilimsel olarak melez sayılan öğelerin daha detaylı ve farklılaştırılmış analizinin, hem de akıcı olmayan bir dil stratejisi uygulandığında erek metinde ortaya çıkacak etkinin incelenmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Böyle bir inceleme olmadan, sömürgecilik sonrası metinlerin çevirilerinin yeniden sömürgeleştirmeye yatkın olup olmadığı, varsayılan yeniden sömürgeleştirmenin arkasında yatan sebepleri ortaya çıkartıp çıkartmadığı ve en önemlisi de bu çevirilerin ticari yayınevleri için çalışan bir çevirmen için ne tür gerçekçi çeviri stratejilerini ele alıp alamayacağı gibi konularda sonuçlara varmak imkansızdır. Dahası bu tür bir analiz süreci, bu varsayılan yeniden sömürgeleştirme eğilimini engelleyecek stratejileri belirlemek amacıyla çevirmenlik eğitiminin çevirmen adaylarını yönlendirebilmesi ve bu şekilde de çeviride yeniden sömürgeleştirme yöntemlerinin altında yatan kuralları değiştirilebilmesi için gereklidir.

Anahtar kelimeler: edebi çeviri; sömürgecilik sonrası yazın; dilbilimsel hibridite; sömürgecilikten arındırma; yeniden sömürgeleştirme.

I. The Place of Recolonization in Translation Studies

While much has been written about how Anglophone African writers appropriate and 'decolonize' the language of their former European colonizers, forging a new, hybrid code (most notably Zabus, 1991; but also 1990a; 1990b; 1990c; Bandia, 2008; see further e.g. Ashcroft et al., 2002; Bamiro, 1991; 2006; Barber, 1996; Bokamba, 1982; Gane, 2003; Goke-Pariola, 1987; Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984; Sridhar, 1982; Talib, 2002; Todd, 1984) – including accounts given by the writers themselves (e.g. Achebe, 1965; 1975; Ngugi,

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1986; Okara, 1963; Saro-Wiwa, 1992; 1994) – much less attention has been paid to what happens when this 'decolonized' hybrid discourse is translated into another hegemonic European language. Those studies that do focus on the translation of Anglophone African writing into European languages, hegemonic or not, are mainly concerned with notions of translatability and equivalence (e.g. d'Almeida, 1981; Bandia, 1994; Fioupou, 2006; Klíma, 1996), in particular with the (im)possibility of translating Pidgin and Creoles (d'Almeida, 1981; Bandia, 1994; Klíma, 1996), and, in the case of translations between those European languages that due to the colonial legacy are still widely spoken in Africa, notably English and French, with the equivalence of colonial varieties of these languages (d'Almeida, 1981; Bandia, 1994; Fioupou, 2006).

Little attention has been paid to the ideological implications of the translation discourse. Notable exceptions are Woodham (2006) and Batchelor (2009) on fluent strategies, albeit in the context of English translations of Francophone African literature, and Steiner (2006) on the ideological implications of the manipulation of both paratextual and textual features in the German translation of Tsitsi Dangarembga's novel *Nervous Conditions*. Further, in *Translation and Reparation*, Bandia conceptualizes the translation of Europhone African writing into another European language as a 'tripartite or three-tiered' translation process in so far as the author first decodes the indigenous orature, then translates his or her interpretation 'through a crosscultural analysis of the representation of Africanness' into the colonial language, and eventually the interlingual translator transfers the text into another colonial language (2008; 173-174). Bandia likens the last step to a 'process of conversion' (2008; 179), pointing out that such a conversion 'is not a straightforward search for linguistic equivalents, but rather a serious undertaking to maintain the African world view in the alien colonial language' (2008; 187). Furthermore, Fioupou (2006) touches briefly on ideological concerns of stereotyping when translating Africanised English into Africanised French. López Heredia (2003) warns that Venuti's (1995) visibility might result in unwanted exoticism when translating postcolonial texts[*], and Bandia (1995) discusses the pros and cons of domestication and foreignization in the context of translation 'between pre-industrialized and industrialized language cultures'. In *Translation and Linguistic Hybridity* (Klinger, 2015), I discuss how translation shifts in linguistic hybridity can affect the world-view that the reader constructs for the texts but also for him- or herself.

Both Batchelor (nee Woodham) and Steiner equate target-text strategies of fluency with a 'recolonization' of the text, without taking into account the exoticizing and hence stereotyping potential of non-fluent strategies, both in the source and the target text. The same is true, to some extent, for Bandia. Although he does recognize that 'the terms of conversion may vary from one colonial language to another, depending on each language's history of colonization in Africa, as well as relations between African and colonial language cultures on the one hand, and those between the rival colonial language cultures themselves on the other' (2008; 179), in the discussion of the examples he uses to illustrate his argument he criticizes fluency strategies as erasing the African world view, and, therefore, by implication, as recolonizing. Yet recolonization, as hinted at by Fioupou, is far more complex and involves not only naturalization, but rather a 'subtle game of complementary-contradictory exoticization and naturalization', to borrow Jacquemond's (1992; 153) words.

In his seminal essay 'Translation and Cultural Hegemony: The Case of French-Arabic Translation', Jacquemond (1992; 153) comes to the conclusion that 'the further the Arabic work goes in asserting both pre-existing Western representations of Arab alterity and Western values, the higher the chances for it to find its way into translation'. As Carbonell i Cortés (1996; 84) points out, correlates to Jacquemond's (1992) as well as Said's (2003) observations about Western representations of the Orient can be found in the West's stereotyped fictional accounts of a variety of non-Western cultures. Hence, as I have pointed

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[*] However, in Venuti's defence it has to be said that (i) he does not suggest a foreignizing translation discourse for texts that occupy a marginal place in the target culture's literary polysystem – as is the case with postcolonial literature – and (ii), in Venuti's terminology, what counts as a foreignizing discourse (i.e. a marginal discourse) is defined by the domestic system, not the foreign one, as it merely describes whether a translational act counteracts mainstream tendencies in the domestic system or complies with them. If the dominant translation discourse for translating Lusophone African literature into Catalan, to take López Heredia's example, foregrounds the exotic, then, in Venuti's (1995) terms, a foreignizing translation discourse could be a naturalizing translation discourse that counteracts this exoticizing tendency.

out elsewhere, Jacquemond's argument quoted above could be generalized as follows: 'the more the non-Western work complies with Western stereotypes about the non-Western culture, and at the same time confirms Western values, the more easily it will be accepted by a Western audience, while a work that challenges Western stereotypes or Western values minimizes its chances of being translated into a Western language and therefore reaching a Western audience' (Klinger, 2015; 150).

However, as I have also argued (2015; 150), not only decisions about which texts are to be imported through translation, but also the translation discourse itself can comply with (or challenge) domestic stereotypes and confirm (or challenge) domestic values. In other words, the translation discourse can be part of the 'subtle game of complementary-contradictory exoticization and naturalization' that brings the foreign (in this case non-Western) text to the domestic (in this case Western) reader, to use Schleiermacher's (1992) metaphor. Hence, translation strategies that naturalize (and hence erase the 'other') as well as translation strategies that exoticize (and hence foreground the *stereotypical* 'other') are a form of domestication (and, in a postcolonial context, recolonization), as they bring the foreign text to the domestic reader, and not the reader to the text. This view is also voiced by Carbonell i Cortés (2006; 55), who speaks of the 'powerful tendency to assimilate, domesticate, accommodate the Other through invisibility, or, more often than not, the ready-made stereotypes of the receiving culture'.

As many scholars (see e.g. Adejare, 1998; Adejunmobi, 1998; Bandia, 2000; 2003; 2008; 2012; Gyasi, 2006; Prasad, 1999; Sales Salvador, 2003; 2005; Tymoczko, 1999) have argued, postcolonial writing is a form of translation as the author 'translates' his/her culture. Furthermore, postcolonial writers also translate, in a broad sense, their language for an international audience or a national audience comprising different ethnicities and, hence, multiple mutually unintelligible indigenous languages†. Hence, as in any translation that signals the foreign, foreignizing strategies are to be found in postcolonial writing. 'Foreignizing strategy' is here meant to indicate a strategy that signals the source text's foreignness (be it a tangible source text as is the case with translation or an imaginary one as is the case with postcolonial writing). Hence, it is not used in Venuti's (1995) dichotomist sense of marginal discourse versus canonical discourse, where foreignization indicates a translation discourse that counteracts mainstream tendencies in the domestic system.

As pointed out previously (Klinger, 2015; 151), these foreignizing strategies can be either alienating (foreignizing strategies that challenge the domestic canon) or exoticizing (foreignizing strategies that comply with domestic stereotypes about the foreign culture). Alienating strategies may first and foremost be aimed at subverting the dominant, colonial culture and simultaneously at asserting the author's own cultural identity. Exoticizing strategies, however, can be either (i) intentional as postcolonial writers might deliberately play with Western stereotypes (see also Carbonell i Cortés, 2002; 9) or even deliberately comply with these stereotypes to a certain degree in order to get published and read in the West, or (ii) unintentional, an inevitable side-effect of a text that does not want to deny its foreign origins. A translated text (be it a metaphorically translated text such as postcolonial writing or translation *proper* as defined by Jakobson (1992; 145), i.e. interlingual translation based on an existing source text) that is foreignizing in as such as it avoids to 'culturally transplant' the text in its entirety, to borrow Hervey and Higgins' (1992) terminology, will always be exoticizing to some extent as by definition it foregrounds the foreign, constructing the source culture as 'other'.

II. Exoticizing (Translation) Strategies

Establishing whether a foreignized source-text element is alienating or exoticizing – and to what purpose – is therefore crucial before reaching conclusions about the de- or recolonizing character of the target text due to (non-)normalization of these foreignized source-text elements, as the normalization of exoticizing strategies present in the source text does not necessarily constitute a recolonization of the text, but quite to the contrary, could disrupt the perpetuation of the 'subtle game of complementary-contradictory exoticization and naturalization' that is recolonization. This section will therefore illustrate

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† This is the case for example in Nigeria. According to Achebe (1975; 56), English is the only language read nationwide. He argues that therefore Nigeria's national literature has to be written in English, as literature in Nigeria's indigenous languages 'is available only to one ethnic group within the nation'.

how foreignizing translation strategies, commonly found in both original postcolonial writing and translation *proper*, can exoticize a text.[‡]

(a) Intra- and paratextual commentary

Tymoczko (1999; 28) argues that 'translators moving from a dominant-culture source text to a minority-culture audience often leave dominant cultural materials implicit', asserting thus the hegemonic stance of the dominant culture. This implies that if translators moving from a minority-culture source text to a dominant-culture audience make use of intra- or paratextual commentaries (such as intratextual glosses, footnotes, glossaries, maps, introductions and afterwords) to explain minority cultural materials to their readers, they too participate in what Tymoczko (1999; 28) calls 'the assertion of cultural dominance, defining what constitutes the domain of knowledge necessary for public discourse' and what does not. As Soovik (2006; 159) points out, intra- and paratextual commentaries single out strands, treating them 'as exotic deviations that should be accounted for explicitly'. By implication, the remaining strands that compose the hybrid source text then come to be seen as 'the norm' (2006; 159). Ashcroft et al. (2002; 65) express the same view when they maintain that 'glossing gives the translated word, and thus the "receptor" culture the higher status'. Intra- or paratextual commentary therefore generally constitutes a form of exoticization, as it does not erase the foreign (as does naturalization), but its foreignness, in so far as it erases its alienating element of resistance or opacity, and in doing so moves the text towards the reader. As Carbonell i Cortés puts it, intra- and paratextual commentary 'attempts a clarification, balance or softening of situations that might be understood as *alien*' (2002; 6; emphasis original). Hence, it has the potential to transform an alienating source-text element into an exoticizing target-text element.

Furthermore, Jacquemond (1992; 149) argues that footnotes, glossaries and commentaries reinforce 'the same representations Orientalism has created: [...] the image of a "complicated Orient" [...] irremediably strange and different' and in need of the Orientalist 'as the indispensable and authorized mediator between Arabo-Islamic and Western cultures'. This view is shared by Carbonell i Cortés (2002; 8), who argues that the 'academicist approach' of intra- and paratextual commentary prioritizes difference and thus highlights the mediating role of the translating Orientalist. A similar point is made by Soovik, who states that the translator's afterword in the Estonian edition of Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh* leaves an overall exoticizing impression, 'playing on the East-West opposition, in which Rushdie, although he is labelled [an] English [author] in the beginning, emerges as an Oriental Other in the end' (2006; 164).

This highlighting of difference, asserting on the one hand the cultural distance between source and target culture and on the other the indispensability of the expert mediating between the two cultures, goes hand in hand with a loss of the text's literary quality. A cumbersome apparatus deters the non-professional reader and ensures that these translations circulate within a limited audience, while the non-professional reader 'learns to satisfy himself with the second-hand knowledge he is provided through the Orientalists' writings' (Jacquemond, 1992; 149). A risk also noted by Tymoczko (1999; 29), who claims that 'frontloading' cultural information 'potentially compromises the literary status of a text *per se*'. The 'Oriental ethos', so Jacquemond (1992; 150), 'assumes that the Arabic text is not readable in translation unless its implicit meaning is made explicit by the translator, thus limiting further than necessary its possible readings and sometimes even misleading the reader'. Thus, alterity is constructed and barriers created for a text to reach its potential readership; this can range from a decrease in reader engagement due to the text's over-explicitness to the reader turning away from the foreign literature altogether.

[‡] Some of the exoticizing strategies discussed below (e.g. selective reproduction, archaisms, literariness, paratextual commentary) are strategies proposed by Venuti (1995; 307-313) in his "Call to action" in order to marginalize the discourse of foreign texts that are 'canonical in the target language culture' (1995; 310). However, in the context of translating postcolonial or, more generally, minority writing, these same strategies can also be part of the canonical discourse. Carbonell i Cortés for example points out that in the context of Western translations of classical Arabic literature, exoticizing foreignization constitutes the norm, 'by foreignising Arabic tales or fiction, ethnocentric translators domesticated oriental literature and culture' (2002; 4).

(b) Selective reproduction

Selective reproduction, a term coined by Sternberg (1981), refers to the inclusion of scattered words and phrases in the reproduced source language (e.g. the underlying indigenous language in the case of postcolonial literature). This can have an alienating effect. Prasad for example (1999; 54) argues that many Indian English writers, rather than 'using Indian words and expressions for local colour, to create an exotic ethnographic text, attempt to make the process of reading as difficult as that of writing'. This difficulty stems from the fact that the selectively reproduced lexis 'forces the reader into an active engagement with the horizons of the culture in which these terms have meaning' (Ashcroft et al., 2002; 64; see also Carbonell i Cortés, 2003; 156).

However, selective reproduction can also be an exoticizing strategy, for example when the selectively reproduced foreign language words are easily understood by the target audience or glossed in their immediate context. As argued above, the cushioning of foreign words, being a form of intratextual commentary, is an exoticizing strategy, as (i) it participates in the 'assertion of cultural dominance [in so far as it defines] what constitutes the domain of knowledge necessary for public discourse' (Tymoczko (1999; 28; see also Ashcroft et al., 2002; 65) and (ii) it highlights the foreign and at the same time counteracts its potential of 'resistance' (cf. Tymoczko, 1999), its alienating potential. Hence, while selective reproduction *per se* can be both exoticizing and alienating, cushioning invariably exoticizes selective reproduction. The alienating attempt to 'make the process of reading as difficult as that of writing' (Prasad, 1999; 54) is thwarted by an exoticizing cushioning translation strategy (see also Carbonell i Cortés, 2003; 156).

Furthermore, as writers often resort to indigenous words when the language they are writing in cannot adequately express the sociocultural reality they are describing and they therefore need to compensate 'for a lack of adequate terminological equivalence' (Bandia, 1996; 143), selectively reproduced words frequently denote realia that are culture-bound and therefore particularly prone to evoking stereotypes.

However, culture-bound realia might also be chosen for selective reproduction even when the target language offers equivalent terms. In his translation of *Cento colpi di spazzola prima di andare a dormire* (*One Hundred Strokes of the Brush before Bed*), Venuti (2004) for example leaves the word "motorino" (scooter), a means of transport stereotypically associated with Italy, untranslated, despite the fact that an equivalent English term is available. This choice can be seen as both exoticizing ("motorino" as a common means of transport in Italy and stereotypically associated with it) and alienating at the same time (not every English reader might be acquainted with the Italian term). However, Venuti explains the Italian term "motorino" in the immediate context: 'I didn't start the scooter right away. The traffic at that hour is terrible, even on a motorino' (2004; 36). The decision to cushion the foreign term erases its alienating effect and in consequence heightens its exoticizing effect.

If such an exoticizing selective reproduction of foreign words is not compensated by alienating selective reproduction (i.e., foreign words that do not evoke stereotypes, that are not easily understood by the reader or familiar to the reader, and that are not explained through intra- or paratextual commentary), the result might be an exoticization of the text, as this kind of selective reproduction adds local colour without bringing the reader closer to the source culture.§ This view is also voiced by Dyson (1994; 178-179), who accuses Rushdie of exoticism on grounds of his strategy of selective reproduction, saying that '[h]is use of Urdu adds colour to his texts, but does not lead us to an Indian intellectual world.' The Estonian translator of *The Moor's Last Sigh* mirrors and multiplies this practice when, in one instance, she translates the English word 'mix' with the word 'masala' in her Estonian target text (Soovik, 2006; 161); a translation choice that adds nothing in terms of resistance and instead evokes Indian clichés.

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§ This is also the case in Venuti's translation. Other Italian words selectively reproduced are *piazza; villa; Firenze; Campidoglio; arrivederci; grazie; un bacio; Duomo; torta di mele; brava; ciao, bella; simpatico*. Some of these words (piazza; villa; brava; ciao; simpatico) are listed as entries in the OED, others (Campidoglio; Duomo; Firenze) are culture-bound realia (and therefore by definition closely associated with the source-text culture). Venuti gives the translation an 'Italian flair' by selectively reproducing foreign language words stereotypical linked to the source culture without challenging the reader to engage more deeply with this culture – the translation exoticizes, it does not alienate.

(c) Typographic foregrounding

Soovik's (2006; 159) observations about intra- and paratextual commentary are equally valid for typographic foregrounding such as italics: strands of text are singled out and treated 'as exotic deviations'. This exoticizing strategy is particularly recolonizing when items that are selectively reproduced in the indigenous language in the source text are not only maintained in the target text but also typographically foregrounded, while items in the foreign colonial language that are selectively reproduced in the target text are left typographically unmarked. This translation practice has been observed by Soovik (2006; 164) in the translations of both Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. While Rushdie and Roy 'tend to give equal status to their heteroglot components […] by often avoiding the use of italics to signal the status of foreignness of non-English lexical items', the translators 'tend to increase the exoticization of the colonised by paratextual and partly also typographical means, while the canonical culture-specific elements of the colonial power are left unmarked' (2006; 164).

(d) Distancing through literalness, archaization and ennoblement

Jacquemond (1992; 149) argues that literalness serves first and foremost the Orientalists: firstly, because as scholars they benefit from an 'accurate' translation and secondly, because, as is the case with intra- and paratextual commentary, a cumbersome literal translation deters the non-professional reader and therefore reinforces their status as experts. As this type of literalness prioritizes scientific accuracy, it aims to mirror the source language as closely as possible. It is therefore different from relexification (Zabus, 1991) as well as foreignization (Venuti, 1995), where a consistent deviance from the norm is not pursued to serve accuracy, but to forge a defamiliarized language. Another type of literalness is noted by Carbonell i Cortés (2002; 6), who claims that the selective literal rendering of phraseology has become 'one of the main recognizable features of exotic literature' in translation. These 'literalist deviations from the norm […] prop up exoticist, ethnocentric stereotypes', highlighting the East-West duality (2002; 8). In other words, both the exotic language of literally translated phraseology noted by Carbonell i Cortés and the exotic literalness aimed at scientific accuracy noted by Jacquemond create a linguistic barrier. As Carbonell i Cortés puts it, 'exoticism underlines (and celebrates) untranslatability, the rift between cultures' (2003; 150).

A linguistic barrier can be likewise constructed through archaization, creating a distance in time. Carbonell i Cortés claims that the practice of the 'denial of coevalness', a term introduced by Johannes Fabian (1983), constitutes 'one of the pillars of a marginalising representation of the Other: the other cannot, must not be contemporary; it is primitive, distanced in a remote past or an inaccessible future' (2002; 3). He goes on to argue that it was for precisely this reason that Cinca and Castells' Spanish translation of the *Arabian Nights* was rejected by its critics: their fluent, modern translation discourse suspended this customary 'denial of coevalness' (2002; 3). By erasing the temporal distance, the translators erased part of the other's exoticism and thus violated audience expectations.

A third strategy for creating linguistic distance is ennoblement. Carbonell i Cortés (1998; 64) draws attention to how Oriental literature over time became associated with 'a tendency towards the use of overelaborate metaphors and bombastic expression', resulting in a translational norm that 'the translated work had to reflect the same characteristics in the target language' in order to satisfy audience expectations.

Although literalness, archaization and ennoblement prevent or at least hinder the reader's identification with the fictional characters, unlike alienation they do not 'forc[e] the reader into an active engagement' (Ashcroft et al., 2002; 65) with the text and its source culture. While alienating strategies defamiliarize, exoticizing strategies fulfil reader expectations. Often literalness and ennoblement, or archaization, are closely linked. This is illustrated by an example cited by Carbonell i Cortés (2002; 6), taken from Tawfiq al-Hakim's novel *Diary of a Country Prosecutor*: the popular Arabic expression "*wa h_ayy_ti caynayka*" is literally rendered as "*por vida de tus ojos*" ("for the life of your eyes") in the Spanish translation by Emilio García Gómez. While in the source text the popular expression serves to signal the rural background of the speaker and, hence, to set him apart from the more urban character he is interacting with, the expression loses any rural connotations in the target text. Instead, due to the literal translation, it acquires a more

literary register (i.e. it is ennobled), thus reinforcing Western stereotypes of the 'bombastic expression' typical of the source culture and hence setting the speaker apart not against his fictional counterpart but the Western reader.

(e) Distancing through popularization

Gullin (2006; 139) points out that in the Swedish translation of Nadine Gordimer's novel *The House Gun*, the black lawyer Motsamai expresses himself with a 'vocabulary that has a more vulgar and colloquial ring in the Swedish text than in the source text', the effect being that 'the suspicion that Claudia and Harald feel towards the black lawyer […] becomes more evident in the Swedish translation'. Hence, while the popularization of Motsamai's vocabulary is due to a fluent, idiomatic translation and therefore naturalizing, at the same time it can be seen as exoticizing as it complies with Western stereotypes and prejudices. Furthermore, this compliance with domestic stereotypes, the translator's intervention, is concealed by the fluent discourse of the translation and therefore has the potential to be particularly recolonizing as its reaffirmation of Western stereotypes is less likely to be registered on a conscious level by the reader. Generally, it could be argued that, just like ennoblement, a qualitative impoverishment of the style, too, can result in a form of exoticization whenever it confirms target-culture stereotypes about the source culture (e.g. primitiveness, backwardness).

Woodham (2006) draws attention to a different manifestation of popularization. She describes how the English translator of Kourouma's first novel *Les Soleils des Indépendances* simplifies the lexis referring to 'spiritual beings and realities' and even omits whole sentences providing precise details on spiritual activities (2006; 127). Kourouma's intention 'to explain Africa's gods to the West' falls victim to the translator's 'casual attitude' (2006; 127). While Kourouma's detailed descriptions can be interpreted as an attempt to narrow the gap between Africa and the West, the translator, arguably with the best intentions and having the interests of his target readers in mind, mystifies and thus conserves the other's exoticism and reasserts what Carbonell i Cortés has called 'the rift between cultures' (2003; 150).

III. Normalization as Indicator for Recolonization?

As the exoticizing strategies outlined above can be found in postcolonial writing, it becomes clear that any potential target-text normalization of foreignizing source-text features does not automatically imply recolonization. Whether the normalization of the foreignizing source-text features is recolonizing or not will depend firstly on the alienating or exoticizing effect the foreignizing source-text element has in the source text, and secondly on the alienating or exoticizing effect a non-normalizing strategy that mirrors the foregrounding would have in the target text. A careful, contextualized analysis of the effect of foreignizing features in the source text as well as the effect of a potential mirroring in the target text is therefore essential before reaching conclusions about the recolonizing potential of normalizing strategies in the target text. While, as illustrated above, strategies like intra- and paratextual commentary, selective reproduction, typographic foregrounding, popularization, literalness, archaization and ennoblement can be employed to exoticize a text, this does not mean that these strategies are by definition exoticizing. The context has to be taken into account. A detailed discussion of three types of foreignization encountered in Francophone African literature, highlighted in Woodham's (2006) above-mentioned article on the ideological implications of fluent translation strategies, will serve to illustrate this point.

Investigating how English translators tackle the French of the three African writers Lopes, Kourouma and Tansi, Woodham (2006) distinguishes the following three 'types of linguistic decolonisation' in the source texts:

- reflection of the diglossic situation of the societies portrayed in the novels;
- reflection of the grammatical and lexical properties of underlying African languages;
- reflection of oral story-telling techniques and traditions.

As mentioned above, Woodham (2006; 123) comes to the conclusion that in the translations analysed by her, 'the overwhelming tendency is towards a normalisation of the linguistic innovation of the originals,

the non-standard French being rendered in standard English'. This normalization, so Woodham (2006; 125), 'neutralize[s] the subversive intentions of the authors' and results in a recolonization of the texts. However, this conclusion is problematic as it takes for granted that (i) the use of non-standard language in a postcolonial context is by definition a decolonizing strategy and (ii) that therefore a normalization of this decolonizing source-text element must necessarily result in a recolonized target text. There are two issues here. Firstly, as seen above, non-standard language, foregrounding the foreign, need not be alienating, but can also be exoticizing in the source text. Secondly, elements that are alienating or exoticizing to the source-text reader need not necessarily have the same effect on the target-text reader. A close discussion of the three 'types of linguistic decolonisation' highlighted by Woodham and their respective normalization will serve to illustrate these two points.

(a) Reflection of the diglossic situation of the societies portrayed in the novels

The first type of 'linguistic decolonisation' mentioned by Woodham is colloquial speech, a French 'rang[ing] from the highly colloquial and africanised to the hypercorrect' that often 'has been shaped by the speaker's own mother tongue, or, in more standardised versions, by other African languages' (2006; 121). This observation already makes clear that a normalization of colloquial speech cannot by definition be equated with recolonization. Whether the target-text normalization is re- or decolonizing will first and foremost depend on the characterization achieved by the deviant speech. A few examples, mainly taken from Anglophone African writing, will be given as illustration.

Soyinka (1970 [1965]) plays with the expectations and preconceived notions of his Western readers in his novel *The Interpreters*. While, on the page, the Nigerian characters converse in unmarked British English, it is the foreigners whose pronunciation is satirized by portraying it as deviant: 'I'm German, but I use 'merican passport. Just gonna get m'self a zrink' (Soyinka 1970 [1965]; 136). However, it is not only the actual foreigners whose speech is satirized; Professor Oguazor, who strives to imitate the British and their pronunciation, is ridiculed in a similar fashion: 'The whole centry is senk in meral terpitude' (1970 [1965]; 249). Thus, the Nigerian English of the story-world becomes the standard by representing it as unmarked British English on the page, while the British English of the story-world is portrayed as a departure from the norm – a truly Nigerian perspective and a reversal of Western expectations.[**]

Kenyan writer Binyavanga Wainaina (2003) uses deviant speech in a similar way in his short story *Ships in High Transit*, for example to mark the accent of the Western visitors, be it a Texan tourist or an US marine:

> I reckon me and you we're like the same, huh? Me, I'm jus' this accountant, with a dooplex in Hooston and two ex-wives and three brats and I don' say boo to no one. I come to Africa, an' I'm Ernest Hemingway – huh? I wouldn't be seen dead in a JR hat back home. (Wainaina, 2003; 225).

> I wanna beach-view room you stoopid fuck. Fucking Third World country. This is all bullshit. (Wainaina, 2003; 239).

Furthermore, Wainaina uses deviant speech to show that the locals are aware of what Westerners expect of them and act accordingly, illustrated for example by the mocking imitation of the speech of a souvenir dealer:

> It is my totem, ma'am, the magic of my family. I am to be selling this antique for food for family. She is for to bring many children, many love. She is buried with herbs of love for ancestors to bring money. She was gift for great grandmother, who was stolen by the ghosts of Shimo La Tewa…' (Wainaina, 2003; 227).

[**] For a more detailed discussion of Soyinka's use of English in *The Interpreters* see Gane, 2003.

The latter example could be seen as a form of ironical code-switching, to borrow Rampton's (1998; 306) terminology, although it does not directly reflect the identity of the person addressed, but rather reflects the expectations the person addressed has of the speaker.

Both Wainaina and Soyinka use deviant speech to exoticize the speakers. However, as it is the Westerners (or those Africans who imitate the Westerners or comply with their stereotypes) who are exoticized, while the from a Western viewpoint "exotic" characters are represented as the norm, this exoticization can be interpreted as decolonizing.

However, foregrounded colloquial speech does not necessarily serve decolonizing purposes in postcolonial literature. Pidgin, Creoles and non-standard speech in general are often used to underline a character's lack of education or to distinguish between social classes. Zabus (1991; 50-51) points out that '[a]lthough Pidgin is a wider code of communication among the various ethnic groups in Ghana and Nigeria than English, it is still associated with a half-literate subculture.' This is a point also observed by Bandia (1996; 149); he states that Pidgin 'has remained, for the most part, the contact language spoken by the "illiterate" and "semi-literate" masses of the urban centres'. In *Midnight's Children* for example Rushdie uses deviant English to underscore Padma's lack of education[††]: 'It was my own foolish pride and vanity, Saleem baba, from which cause I did run from you, although the job here is good, and you so much needing a looker-after!' (1982 [1980]; 192). In a similar fashion, Jean Rhys signals Christophine's background in her novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*: 'The Jamaican ladies had never approved of my mother, "because she pretty like pretty self" Christophine said' (2000 [1966]; 5).

Nevertheless, Zabus (1991; 52) points out that a gradual 'shift of the use and status of Pidgin in the novels from baby talk to "the tongue of the people" or public patois on to the counter-prestige language of modernity' can be observed. Some novels have their characters switch between standard and non-standard language for example, depending on context, highlighting thus their ability to adapt to different environments, instead of portraying them as semi-literate. Non-standard language can indicate an informal atmosphere or outright intimacy, as is the case for example in Achebe's novels *Anthills of the Savannah* or *No Longer at Ease*. According to Zabus (1991; 76), however, this code-switching is not always the character's conscious choice. She argues that 'Pidgin remains an "auxiliary" language into which a character slides, slips, lapses, as in a fall from a higher register' (1991; 76). Gane (2003; 144) argues that Pidgin and non-standard speech often hints at 'the seamy underside of official reality'. One example in this vein is Chief Winsala's speech when he solicits a bribe in Soyinka's *The Interpreters*. This once more indicates the popularizing potential of Pidgin, conjuring up negative connotations.

To what extent normalization of colloquial variants of English implies recolonization will therefore largely depend on how the author puts the colloquial speech to use. Erasing Soyinka's or Wainaina's play with language and the expectations of the Western reader, turning on its head what is considered to be standard, could be seen as a highly recolonizing translation act. However, normalizing and therefore erasing the linguistic disparity between servant and master as for example in *Wide Sargasso Sea* would not be recolonizing as such, but could, quite to the contrary, be interpreted as a decolonizing strategy.

The complexity of the issue increases when the African colloquial variety of English has connotations of informality without characterizing the speaker either negatively or positively. Let's say we were faced with the task of translating Christopher's use of Pidgin in Chinua Achebe's novel *No Longer at Ease* into German. Christopher switches effortlessly between Pidgin, English, and Igbo.

> Whether Christopher spoke good or 'broken' English depended on what he was saying, where he was saying it, to whom and how he wanted to say it. Of course that was to some extent true of most educated people, especially on a Saturday night. But Christopher was rather outstanding in thus coming to terms with a double heritage. (Achebe, 1994 [1960]; 125-126)

Normalizing Christopher's Pidgin with standard German in the target text would not only homogenize the text but would recolonize it in so far as it erases the distinctly African element. However, even if the

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[††] For a discussion of Padma's English in *Midnight's Children* see for example Prasad, 1999.

target text would not normalize the Pidgin, but render it for example with a colloquial, or even broken German, this translation choice can still be called a recolonizing strategy, because (i) it still erases the distinctly African element as there is obviously nothing African about colloquial German and (ii) in addition to this, the target text could be seen as exoticizing as it substitutes Pidgin with a form of German that commands low prestige and therefore, instead of highlighting the speaker's cultural fluidity and his ability to converse in more than one language, it portrays him as inarticulate and uneducated and, hence, complies with Western stereotypes about Africa, and (iii) by not rendering his Pidgin with standard German – as opposed to British/American varieties present in the source text – it denies Pidgin – or any African variety of English for that matter – the same status as British/American English (see also López Heredia, 2003; 168 on fluent strategies in order to respect the African variety as 'una lengua autosuficiente' [a language in its own right] instead of a 'una desviacion de la norma' [a deviation from the norm]). Another non-normalizing approach, translating Pidgin with a German dialect, faces the same dilemma. Furthermore, dialects are usually perceived as very closely linked with the geographical area in which they are spoken, much more so than is the case with standard language; 'a vernacular clings tightly to its soil', as Berman puts it (2004; 286). Indeed, the German translation of Achebe's novel *A Man of the People* was never published as the publisher deemed the translator's choice to opt for Bavarian to render Pidgin passages inappropriate (Loimaier, 2002). Similarly, Grotjahn-Pape (1997; 267), in his foreword to his German translation of Saro-Wiwa's novel *Sozaboy*, dismissed the idea of using dialect to render Africanised colloquial English, judging it too unrealistic due to its close link with its geographical area.

As discussed elsewhere (Klinger, 2015; 178), one alternative would be to translate Pidgin with an innovative German that deviates from standard German without being associated with a regional variant, a less prestigious sociolect, or the broken German of second-language speakers. In other words, the 'more experimental, creative translation strategies' Woodham (2006; 128) calls for in her article. However, while this method might convey the 'otherness' of the Pidgin compared to the standard variety, and hence succeed in maintaining the heteroglossia without necessarily portraying this other variant as inferior, it will nevertheless either erase the Africanness or foreground and therefore exoticize it.

This implies that as a general rule – no rules without exception – non-normalization of colloquial speech results in exoticization. This view is voiced by Berman (2004; 286), who claims that the 'traditional method of preserving vernaculars is to exoticize them'. This exoticization can take the form of (i) typographic foregrounding, the form of (ii) 'emphasizing the vernacular according to a certain stereotype of it', or the form of (iii) popularization, rendering 'a foreign vernacular with a local one' (2004; 286). Woodham's conclusion that normalization of colloquial speech results in recolonization, implying that this recolonization could have been avoided by non-normalization, is therefore only true when the colloquial speech exoticizes the (from a Western point) "non-exotic" characters as in the above-mentioned examples by Soyinka and Wainaina.

(b) *Reflection of the grammatical and lexical properties of underlying African languages*
The second type of 'linguistic decolonisation' mentioned by Woodham (2006; 120) is the reflection of 'the grammatical and lexical properties of underlying African languages'. This second type clearly overlaps with the first type discussed above as local varieties of French often reflect the indigenous language. A factor also noted by Woodham (2006; 121), '[t]he second type of linguistic decolonisation (the bending of French to reflect underlying African languages), also plays a role in the reflection of the situation of diglossia'.

As examples for this second category, Woodham (2006) highlights three instances of hypostase encountered in novels by Tansi and Kourouma. Hypostase – a term borrowed from Noumssi and Wamba (2002; 31; quoted in Woodham, 2006; 121) – is defined as the 'processus par lequel une forme linguistique passe d'une catégorie grammaticale à une autre, sans modification formelle' [the process of a linguistic form switching grammatical categories without formal modification]. All three instances are normalized in their respective English translations. For Woodham, 'hypostase' is a form of linguistic decolonization as it involves 'the bending of French to reflect underlying African languages' (2006; 121) and therefore is a manifestation of 'a non-conformist attitude to the French language' (2006; 123). While the three examples

chosen by Woodham might be decolonizing (and their normalization in the target text recolonizing, as Woodham argues), I take issue with the fact that there seems to be an underlying assumption that this type of linguistic bending of the colonizing language is by definition an expression of a 'non-conformist attitude'. The examples are given without a wider context; it is left to the reader to guess whether they are the result of inadvertent calquing or a conscious experiment, or whether they reflect a local variety of French, for example to signal the speaker's lack of formal education or, in contrast, to signal his or her cultural in-betweenness.

Hypostase, albeit bending the colonizing language, does not need to be non-conformist, but can comply with Western stereotypes and therefore be exoticizing. A point in case would be the Nigerian writer Amos Tutuola, whose non-standard English writing reflects Yoruba, but, as has been amply demonstrated, this calquing is the result not of a conscious experiment – and non-conformism presupposes a conscious act – but an inadvertent interference from his first language (see e.g. Zabus, 1991; 108ff). Hence, the bending of the colonizing language, which might have alienating, highly poetic, and therefore arguably decolonizing effects in one case, might be exoticizing in another case, as it complies with domestic stereotypes such as backwardness and lack of education.

Secondly, as in Woodham's analysis it seems to be taken for granted that in the context of postcolonial writing a linguistically deviant source-text element is by definition decolonizing, this also implies that any mirroring of the linguistic deviance in the target text is by definition equally decolonizing. However, the same element may have different effects in the target text than in the source text. López Heredia (2003; 168) for example draws attention to the risk that a mirroring of the grammatical and lexical peculiarities of the Africanized variety of the colonizing language might be misinterpreted by '[el] lector poco informado' [the uninformed reader] and seen as evidence that 'las ex-colonias no han sido capaces de aprender "correctamente" las lenguas de los antiguos colonizadores' [the ex-colonized are not capable of "fully" mastering the languages of the former colonizers]. Another example of how effects can differ in the source and in the target text are instances of selectively reproduced lexis which might have been absorbed by the colonizing language and become a loanword in the source language, but not in the target language. In the Estonian translation of *The God of Small Things* for example, the term 'dhobi' is translated as 'pesuküürija', an Estonian term denoting a similar concept (Soovik 2006; 160). As 'dhobi' is listed in the OED, one could argue that the term does not alienate the source text, increasing its resistance and therefore decolonizing it, but rather exoticizes the text. To the Estonian reader however, the term 'is likely to remain opaque' (Soovik 2006; 160) – non-normalizing the exoticizing source-text strategy could therefore potentially have resulted in an alienating target-text strategy.

(c) *Reflection of oral story-telling techniques and traditions*
The third and last type of linguistic decolonization mentioned by Woodham (2006; 122) is 'the incorporation of features associated with oral story-telling traditions'. Woodham gives the example of Kourouma's novel *En Attendant le vote des bêtes sauvages*, 'which is built around the traditional praise-song, or donsomana' (2006; 122). The oral story-telling character is partly reflected 'in the overall preference for short, fragmented sentences and a simple, as opposed to an elevated, lexis' (2006; 122). While the translation maintains the structure of the traditional praise-song, so Woodham (2006; 123), the sentence structure is normalized, using less fragmented, longer sentences, and everyday lexis is substituted with a more literary lexis.

Again, these observations do not suffice to reach conclusions about the de- or recolonizing character of the novel or its translation. Oral story-telling is predominantly associated with cultures that do not have at their disposal a written literature. Hence, depending on context, the novel's oral story-telling techniques could indeed be interpreted as exoticizing rather than alienating, as it suggests different stages of a presumed cultural progress and reaffirms the assumption of the cultural superiority of the West. A simple lexis is equally no indicator for decolonization; as seen above, popularization can indeed be exoticizing, reaffirming for example stereotypes of a "backward, primitive" Africa. Likewise, deviant syntax *per se* is no indicator for decolonization. As seen above, deviant syntax can be the result of for example exoticizing literalness or inadvertent calquing, or even of a calquing consciously employed to create the image of an

indigenous story-teller narrating in the colonizing language with a stereotypical, exotic sounding accent. Without a more in-depth analysis of the nature of the deviant elements in the source text, no sound conclusions about the re- or decolonizing effect of its normalization in the target text can be made.

IV. Conclusion

The discussion above illustrates that a wholesale condemnation of normalization as a form of recolonization of postcolonial literature is not called for. Neither normalization nor non-normalization *per se* are de- or recolonizing; their de- or recolonizing potential depends first and foremost – but not solely – on the exoticizing or alienating nature of their corresponding source-text element. Not conforming to the norms of the former colonizer's language does not have to be non-conformist – and in this sense, the African writer, creating in the language of the former colonizer and hence for an audience that includes the former colonizer, might indeed represent 'a literary trend […] of the conquering nation' (Diop, 1956 in Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; 25) rather than challenging the conquering nation's stereotypes.

One case in point is Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* which was well received in Britain and Continental Europe, but harshly criticized in West Africa as it was feared that it reinforced stereotypes (Dathorne, 1976; 94). 'Nigerian readers […] alleged that Europeans were mainly attracted by the quaint exotic qualities of the book and that they did not judge the work on literary merits' (Ulli Beier, quoted in Dathorne, 1976; 94). A point also made by Schäfer (1979; 107) who argues that Tutuola's style runs the risk of 'koloniale Vorurteile über den „naiven" Eingeborenen zu bestärken' [reinforcing colonial prejudices about the "naïve" indigenous].

As translation has the potential to be 'a source of separation when it reaffirms received stereotypes' (Carbonell i Cortés, 1996; 83), recolonization therefore also takes place when the target text perpetuates the stereotypical image the target culture has constructed of the source culture. Normalization, with its potential to neutralize exoticization present in the source text and to avoid the reaffirmation of received stereotypes, is therefore not to be automatically equated with recolonization, as Woodham (2006), Batchelor (2009), Soovik (2006) and to some extent also Bandia (2008) seem to imply. A more detailed and differentiated analysis of the linguistically deviant elements in the source text as well as the effect their non-normalization would have in the target text is therefore essential, before (i) reaching conclusions about whether translations of postcolonial texts show a tendency towards recolonization, (ii) trying to uncover the motivations behind this presumed recolonization, and (iii) ultimately, exploring what alternative translation strategies are realistically available to a translator working in a commercial publishing environment, and (iv) investigating how translator training can contribute to encouraging translators to opt for strategies that prevent this presumed recolonization and in so doing work to change the norms behind recolonizing translation strategies.

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