| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

Resolving Constraints in Translating Modifiers in Mungaka Oral Folktales into English

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| **ABSTRACT**

A major challenge encountered when translating Mungaka oral folktales into English centres on the use of modifiers, precisely adjectives and adverbs. The manner in which these grammatical categories are employed in Mungaka oral folktales engenders numerous constraints that render their translation into English difficult. This paper sets out to identify the specific translation constraints that originate from the use of modifiers in Mungaka oral folktales and establish methods to resolve them when translating from Mungaka into English. With the help of unstructured interviews, five Mungaka oral folktales are recorded, transcribed and analyzed qualitatively to identify excerpts that pose translation problems. The use of modifiers in Mungaka gives rise to 16 translation problems (problematic excerpts). The study uses mainly Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), buttressed by the linguistic, interpretative and aesthetic communication theories of translation, employed to resolve the translation problems in the excerpts. Findings reveal that the translation of Mungaka modifiers is stymied by lexical, semantic and syntactic constraints, and strategies such as transposition, amplification, modulation, omission, substitution, adaptation and reformulation can help in resolving these translation constraints. These strategies are thus recommended for the translation works from Mungaka into English.

| **KEYWORDS**

Translation constraint, modifiers, oral folktales, Mungaka language, English language

1. Introduction

Folktales constitute a major genre of Mungaka oral literature. They are the most popular form of African oral literature that serves a variety of purposes (Amali 2014, p. 95). This justifies the need for their preservation and propagation. And translation has been identified as one of the key methods of preserving such literature, as was the case with Sabah oral literature, which was successfully translated from Rungus into English (Appel 2010). However, translation of Mungaka oral folktales into a language like English has not been commonly practised due to several factors, including their oral nature, unavailability of resources like corpora, terminologies and dictionaries, lack of financial interest and linguistic distance. An aspect of this linguistic distance constraining the translation of Mungaka folktales is the use of modifiers, which varies significantly between English and Mungaka.

Modifiers are words that change, clarify, qualify, or limit a particular word in a sentence in order to add emphasis, explanation or detail. They give additional information about nouns, pronouns, verbs, and themselves to make those things more definite. There are two types of modifiers, namely, adjectives and adverbs. Adjectives are words that modify nouns and pronouns, while adverbs are words that modify verbs, adjectives or other adverbs. In some translations such as Swedish-English, the task of rendering modifiers is considered relatively straightforward because adjectives especially are used in practically the same way in both English and Swedish (Milikic, 2010, p. 11). But in the current study, modifiers are used differently in Mungaka and English, which renders their translation more complex and demands specific attention.

Considering that modifiers play a major role in oral narratives (folktales) and that their translation is not usually a straightforward process, it is necessary to establish a systematic procedure for their translation in order to ease the translation of the folktales, and

 this is the essence of the present study. It identifies the specific translation constraints engendered by the use of adjectives and adverbs, analyses them using selected translation theories and, with the help of relevant translation strategies, proposes a translation for each adjectival and adverbial expression.

2. Literature review

The translation is not just an interlingual endeavour but an intercultural activity that demands a good mastery of the different socio-cultural systems involved. In an analysis of some issues specific to the translation of African oral literature into European languages, Bandia (1993, p. 55-56) explains the complications of this task based on the fact that it deals with linguistic systems embedded in very divergent sociocultural backgrounds. This is typical of translation from Mungaka indigenous language into English. Mungaka is a minority Semi-Bantu language of Cameroon, modified by many languages of the Sudanic group (Fochang, 2004, p. 34), whose visibility in the world of literacy has been through few works of translation (Fokwang, 2003) and academic research (Awah, 1997), while English is the global and dominant language of wider communication. Translation involving languages of this nature is usually plagued by several constraints.

According to Bandia (1993), the languages and cultures are non-related, and the translation is mainly from oral texts to written forms and from one language culture to another alien language culture. This has perhaps led to the rather pessimistic stance by some critics that orality cannot be successfully translated into written languages without losing meaning (Nnamani & Amadi, 2015; Joshi, 2018), thereby invalidating to an extent the historical role of translation in mediating between languages and cultures (Murray, 2005; Katan, 2009; Liddicoat, 2016; Valdeón, 2021). Positivists, however, advocate for meticulousness in the choice of translation approaches to guarantee the quality of the translated material. These approaches should enable the translator to preserve the sociocultural content of the SL while being conscious of the sensibilities of the TL reader (Bandia, 1993, p. 56).

Apart from cultural distance, languages differ in the way grammatical categories are expressed, and this has a significant incidence on translation. In Baker's (2001) reflection on some of the main intricacies involved in rendering a text from one language into another, based on modern linguistic theory, she observes that there is no notional category that is regularly and uniformly expressed in all languages. She asserts:

> Differences in the grammatical structures of the source and target languages often result in some change
> in the information content of the message during the process of translation. This change may take the form
> of adding to the target text information which is not expressed in the source text. (Baker, 2001, 86).

This implies that the use of grammatical categories affects the process of translation to a certain extent. As part of these categories, modifiers, especially adverbs, are regarded as a slippery area for the translator because they implicitly involve fuzziness that easily leads to mistranslation and language misuse if the translator is not cautious. (Nnamani & Amani 2015, p. 34). Two languages may have common descriptive words, but their positioning in sentences may differ in a way that distorts meaning. An example is English and Swedish, which are closely related languages but differ when it comes to the position of adverbs. Apart from the position, the function of modifiers also affects their translation significantly. In a corpus-based study on trends in the translation of epistemic adverbs from English to Spanish, Ramon (2009) argues that the multifunctionality of modal adverbs in English poses a problem for their translation into Spanish. Consequently, in English-Spanish translation, adverbs that perform only a pragmatic and not grammatical function in the ST are likely to be omitted in the TT without any nuance in meaning. But this is not necessarily true for other language combinations.

Also, the way adjectives are constructed and used differs significantly across languages, making it tricky to obtain equivalence in meaning during translation. In Arabic, for example, some descriptive words that function as adjectives for human beings and their behaviours are derived from the names of animals which cannot be rendered by their direct equivalents in English. In this light, Faraj (2019, p. 30) explains that equivalence in the translation of adjectives is sometimes a mysterious spot since even the dictionary or lexical meanings of some often thought of as equivalent adjectives remain relative and even far from being similar.

Faced with the challenge of translating these grammatical categories (adjectives and adverbs), translation theories and strategies constitute an indispensable asset. According to Newmark (1981, p. 19), translation theory is concerned mainly with determining appropriate translation methods for the widest possible range of texts or text-categories. It also provides a framework of principles, restricted rules and hints for translating texts and criticizing translations, a background for problem-solving. They ought to be scrutinized and contextualized to minority oral languages in order to enhance the propagation of their literature through translation. Commenting on the significance of translation theory, Cronin (1995, p. 88) suggests that it be handled, not as an obscure luxury indulged in only by the mandarins of major languages but as a crucial means to understanding minority (mostly oral) language speakers in relationships of language and powers.

Wanchia (2016) has proposed a quadridimensional approach to translating these "remote literature", which are often embedded in orality and expressed through languages of limited diffusion such as Mungaka. The first component of his approach is the

conceptual input, which in the present paper is based on oral folktales, grammatical modifiers and translation. The second component is the contextual input, which in this study establishes the translatability of Mungaka modifiers into English. In fact, it focuses on the translation of modifiers used in folktales for the purpose of easing the potential translation of the entire folktales from Mungaka into English. In line with the third aspect, the theoretic input, this paper applies both literary and translation theories and strategies. Structuralism is used for literary analysis because modifiers are linguistic structures that, according to Castle (2007, p. 117), form the basis of structural criticism. For the translational analysis, three theories are used, including the linguistic theory of translation, which is based on a comparison of the linguistic structures of the source texts (ST) and target texts (TT) (Nida, 1991; Catford, 1965); the interpretative theory which helps to capture all the nuances of cognitive meaning (Shuttleworth & Cowie 2014, p. 85) and the theory of aesthetic communication, which sheds light on the dynamic texture of vivid stylistic variations in the translation process (Abdul, 2011, p. 41). Besides these theories, domestication strategies such as transposition, amplification, modulation, omission, substitution, adaptation and reformulation are employed in the translation process. Finally, the fourth input is a procedural component that describes how data is presented and analyzed. In this study, the data is presented in a tabular form showing the different steps of qualitative analysis, which will be discussed in detail in the following section.

3. Methodology
This qualitative study focuses on 15 excerpts from five Mungaka oral folktales, which were randomly collected by audio recording with the goal of translating into English. The tales were transcribed into written texts and analyzed according to translation units/excerpts. Translation units that posed a problem for the translation of the text were further analyzed to identify the specific translation constraint in them. Fifteen (15) of these constraints were based on differences in the use of modifiers between Mungaka and English. Translation theories that could help analyze and interpret the problematic excerpts and their contexts of production and consider a range of possible strategies for the translation were identified. These translation theories included linguistic, interpretative and aesthetic communication approaches. All translations in this study were domesticated because the goal was to conform to the linguistic norms of the target language in order to ease the target readers' understanding. Domestication strategies such as transposition, amplification, modulation, omission, substitution, adaptation and reformulation helped in proposing a translation for each adjective and adverb in the study.

3.1. Presentation and analysis
Data for this study comprises 16 excerpts, including ten (10) adjectival and six (6) adverbial expressions. The excerpts are organized in four subsections according to lexical, semantic, syntactic and collocational constraints identified in them. They are first presented in tables showing different stages of qualitative analysis. The first step presents the source text; the second explains the meaning of the Mungaka expression in English; the third briefly states the Context of Production; the fourth states the Translation Constraint identified in the excerpt, the fifth states the Proposed Translation, while the sixth and seventh present the translation method which is made up of a translation theory and translation strategy respectively. Each table is followed by an explanation of how the translation constraints were identified, analyzed and resolved.

4. Results and discussion
The results of this study are discussed in four categories according to the lexical, semantic, syntactic and collocational constraints identified in Table 1 above. Each subsection provides a detailed description of the translation constraints, proposes translations for the problematic excerpts, explains the method used in translating and justifies the choice of that method.

4.1. Resolving lexical constraints
The way modifiers are used in Mungaka oral folktales in this study engenders six (6) lexical constraints to their translation into English. The lexical constraints are due to the limited range of word classes in the SL and differences in expressive meaning between the SL and TL. The linguistic and aesthetic communications theories are used for analysis while transposition, omission, reformulation and semantic equivalence are translation strategies that help in proposing translations for each excerpt as presented in table 1 below:

Table 1: *Presentation of excerpts by their lexical constraints*

S/N	Source text	Meaning	Context of production	Target text	Proposed translation	Translation method	
						Theory	**Strategy**
1	Musid ghâyɛ, i lô' yĭ nǎ ghǎ ma **tu nchì**	Musit said he will take his own mother to the **head water**	The two friends are planning on how and where to kill their mothers	Lexical constraint (limited range of word-class)	Towards the upper reach of the stream	Linguistic approach	Transposition

2	ŋgɔ' Musid làmî nǎ i ma **tu tɨ**	Whereas Musit hid his mother on the **head tree**	Musit hides his mother on a tree and deceives his friend that he has killed her	Lexical constraint (limited range of word-class)	Tree crown	Linguistic approach	Semantic equivalence
3	Sinyàm lɔ̂' yǐ nǎ nto ma **chɨŋnǐ nchì**	Sinyam took his own mother to the **bottom water**	Musit goes up and Sinyam down to kill their mothers separately	Lexical constraint (limited range of word-class)	Towards the lower reach of the stream	Linguistic approach	transposition
4	Sɨ ŋgwî ba tànchala' jǐd bu **miyà miyà**	Fisherman's first wife, walk **small small**	The mysterious creature caught tells the fisher's wife to walk slowly	Lexical constraint (limited range of word-class)	Walk slowly	Linguistic approach	Omission and transposition
5	**ŋkud kwà' ŋkud** njə bô ŋkud vin ma ŋka' a	**Tied, really tied** as they tie thatches on the roof	The wise maiden securely ties a giant pumpkin with straws.	Lexical constraint (difference in expressive meaning)	Tied as firmly as	Aesthetic communication	Reformulation
6	ŋgâ **nâ Musid fɔ'**	that **Musit's mother is there**	A hunter discovers that Musit's mother is still living and reports to Sinyam	Lexical constraint (difference in expressive meaning)	Musit's mother is alive	Linguistic approach	Transposition

A major type of lexical constraint encountered is a limited range of word-class given that Mugaka either has fewer adjectives and adverbs or employs them in a more generalized manner than English such that a few applications in many different instances. This is seen in excerpts 1 (**tu nchì,** *head water*) and 2 (**tu tɨ,** *head tree*). The word 'head' is used as an adjective to describe the upper part of the stream and the top of a tree because the SL has no adjective to describe the upper direction/position in general. So it uses the '*head*' since it is the uppermost part of the body, and everyone can easily relate to it. The same phenomenon applies in excerpt 3 (**chɨŋnǐ nchì,** *bottom water*). *Chɨŋnǐ* is the word for the human backside/behind/bottom but is used as an adjective to describe the lower part of the stream because the SL has no specific term to describe the lower direction/position in general. This is not the case with English which contains numerous adjectives to describe various positions.

The linguistic theory of translation provides insights into these differences because the translation is constrained by the different ways in which Mungaka and English languages perceive and construct description. With the help of transposition, the noun "head" is rendered as an adjective "upper" and the excerpt translated as "upper reach of the stream", while "chɨŋnǐ" (bottom) translated as "lower" in the expression "lower reach of the stream". In the case of "tu tɨ", semantic equivalence is used to provide the appropriate expression (tree crown) since the concept already exists in the TL.

Limited range of word class is equally encountered in the translation of adverbs as seen in excerpt 4, "**jǐd miyà miyà**" (walk small small) and 5, "**ŋkud kwà' ŋkud njə** bô ŋkud vin" (tie really tie as they tie straw). In the former, the verb "walk" is complemented by a reduplication of the adjective "small" in place of an adverb of manner (slowly) because Mungaka has fewer adverbs than English. Such reduplication is not acceptable in the English language norms; thus, the adjective is translated by the appropriate adverb, "slowly". The linguistic theory of translation is applied because the way language is used affects the understanding of the message and thus the translation process. This theory equally guides in the choice of two translation strategies to resolve the problem. **Omission** helps to minimize the effect of the SL orality (redundancy) in the TT, while **transposition** enables us to replace the ST adjective (small small) with a TL adverb (slowly) which is an appropriate complement for the ST Verb (move).

Similarly, in "**ŋkud kwà' ŋkud** njə bô ŋkud vin" the verb *ŋkud* (tie) is repeated to emphasize how firmly a wise woman ties a giant pumpkin with straws to secure it from cracks during transportation because Mungaka lacks a specific adverb to modify the action.

Besides, there is a difference in the expressive meaning because the SL expression *kwà' ŋkud* (really tie) does not express the idea of *strongly fixed in place,* which is the intention of the ST. So the excerpt cannot be translated into English by simply repeating the verb (tie). There is a need for an appropriate adverb to render the meaning of the SL expression while respecting the TL norms. The theory of **aesthetic communication** is used for the translation because the goal is to achieve the same ST stylistic effect in the TT by using an equivalent simile. **Reformulation** is used as a strategy to identify a functional equivalent of the ST simile in the TT. Consequently, the excerpt is translated as "tied **as firmly as** straw is tied".

In excerpt 6, **(nâ Musid fɔ̀'**, *mother of Musit is there*), the hunter informs Sinyam that his friend Musit's mother is not dead as he deceived him into believing. She is alive. The ST uses an adverb (**fɔ̀/ there**) instead of an adjective to describe a condition. This gives the impression that the author is referring to the person's physical location; meanwhile, he is referring to a state of being. The task is to find in the TL an adjective that best describes the condition in question because translating it by an equivalent adverb of place (there) will alter the ST meaning. With the help of **transposition**, the SL adverb *(there)* is translated by a suitable TL adjective *(alive)*.

4.2. Resolving semantic constraints
The use of modifiers in Mungaka oral folktales generates five (5) semantic constraints which have to do with polysemy, differences in expressive meaning between SL and TL and paralinguistic accompaniments. Translation theories used for analyses include linguistic, interpretative and aesthetic communication, while micro-strategies include transposition, substitution and modulation, as presented in table 2 below:

Table 2: *Presentation of excerpts by their semantic constraints*

S/N	Source text	Meaning	Context of production	Target text	Proposed translation	Translation method	
						Theory	**Strategy**
1	i jî̵ kěji̵ bi **kwà' mbɔ̀ŋkɛd**	he ate his food **very well**	Musit goes to his hidden mother, who gives him food, and he eats very well.	Semantic constraint (polysemy)	To his satisfaction	Linguistic theory	Transposition
2	njɔ̌b **kwà' nì mànjì** yì Musid kǎ njɔ̂b a	sang it **just the way** Musit sang it	The hunter exposes Musit's secret and teaches Sinyam his secret song	Semantic constraint (polysemy)	Exactly	Linguistic theory	Substitution
3	ŋgǎ nchě ma mɔ̌' li̵' **njə nchì lun**	Arrived at a place and **saw water full**	A man gets to a stream but cannot cross because it is flooded	Semantic constraint (difference in expressive meaning)	Saw a flooded stream	Interpretative approach	substitution
4	njə nchì lun, **ni ndâ mɛ wuuuuuu**	Saw water full, passing like this: **wuuuuu**	The flooded stream runs very fast, producing a frightful noise	Semantic constraint (paraling-uistic accompa-niment)	Whooshing at the speed of light	Aesthetic communication	Modulation
5	i ntam masi mɛ **bum!**	He threw it down like this *bum!*	After beheading his wife, the farmer takes the head to parents and throws it down in front of them	Semantic constraint (Para-linguistic accompani-ment)	He throws it down **brutally**	Linguistic theory	Transposition

A major form of semantic constraint identified in the translation of Mungaka modifiers into English is polysemy. This is mainly because of the Mugaka general intensifier "kwà'", which modifies verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Its meaning in the TL is determined by the word it modifies. This also determines whether it should be translated as an adverb or adjective. For example, in excerpt 5, (**"ŋkud kwà' ŋkud"),** "kwà'" modifies the verb "**ŋkud"** (tie) and can be rendered by the adverbs really, tightly or firmly. But in excerpt 1, in the expression **"i jɨ̂ kějɨ bi kwà' mbɔ̀ŋkɛd"** (he ate his food him very well), "**kwà'** functions as an adverb (very), intensifying the adjective **mbɔ̀ŋkɛd"** (well). However, it cannot simply be translated as "very" because the expression does not refer to the manner of eating, but a reasonable quantify of food that keeps the individual satisfied for a long time since he cannot freely access the food. For this reason, it is rendered as "to his satisfaction". This complexity is understood with the help of the linguistic theory of translation. **Transposition** is employed in order to switch grammatical structures from a ST adjectival phrase to a TT noun phrase that better communicates the message.

In excerpt 2, "**kwà' nì mànjì**" (intensifier + the way), "kwà'" modifies the adverb "way". It describes the accuracy and exactitude with which the hunter repeats Musit's action, so the task is to find a SL intensifier that not only collocates with the adverb but also produces the effect intended by the ST. Through **substitution**, an appropriate TL complement, an adverb of manner (*exactly*), is used to express the exactitude of the action, which is expressed in the ST by a general intensifier.

In some cases, a SL modifier has an equivalent in the TL but which, depending on the context, does not describe the same reality intended by the ST. A case in point is in excerpt 3, **"njə nchì lun"** (see water full). The ST refers to a rainy season context, where after heavy downpours, streams are flooded, bridges are covered by water, rendering it impossible for people to cross from one side to the other. If rendered as a "full-stream", using the exact equivalent of the SL adjective, the meaning will be lost. With the help of semantic equivalence, the adjective *lun* (full) is therefore translated as "flooded", which expresses the ST meaning of a flooded stream.

Moreover, in oral tales, sometimes the description or modification is expressed using paralinguistic accompaniments and onomatopoeia, which usually do not have obvious equivalents in the target language. Consider excerpt 4, "*I to mɨ njǐd, ŋgǎ nchě ma mǒ' lɨ' njə nchì lun,* **ni ndâ mɛ wuuuuu***" (he got to a certain place and saw water full, passing like this wuuuuu). The narrator mimics the sound of fast running waves in risen tides to describe the fast water currents. The translator's task is to find words that express the SL meaning (of *wuuuuu*) in conformity with TL language conventions. Aesthetic communication is used because the TT uses an idiom that describes the action vividly without losing any ST meaning. **Modulation** enables us to get a TL verb that adequately describes the rushing movement of water as well as a TL metaphor to describe the water speed. It is a combination of the water movement and speed that generates the ST sound '*wuuuuu.*'. By the same token, the use of the sound "*bum!*" in excerpt 5 to describe the ruthless manner in which the farmer throws the head of his beheaded wife constrains translation because there is no equivalent TL sound that expresses that meaning. With the help of substitution, the sound is replaced by an adequate TL adverb (brutally).

4.3. Resolving Syntactic constraints
The way modifiers are used in Mungaka oral folktales gives rise to three (3) syntactic constraints related to the position of adjectives and differences in word order. The linguistic theory of translation is used for the analysis of translation problems while adaptation, omission and modulation guide in the proposed translations as shown in table 3 below:

Table 3: *Presentation of excerpts by their syntactic constraints*

S/N	Source text	Meaning	Context of production	Target text	Proposed translation	Translation method	
						Theory	Strategy
1	**ndâŋ ŋgwɛd … fǔ ndìkàŋ**	People took container oil; people took powder gun	At a place full of calabashes, people collect different calabashes for different uses	Syntactic constraint (position of adjectives)	Oil containers … gun powder	Linguistic theory	Adaptation
2	I ghâ 'nchì **ì bàŋ bàŋ** bə ŋkɔ'	He said when the **red red water** climbs	Description of the colour of the liquid in a boiling pot	Syntactic constraint (difference in word structure due to word order)	Red liquid	Linguistic theory	omission

| 3 | ŋgǎ ni **ŋgɔ̀ŋ njə̂ ited** | Go to villages about three | A frog visits about three villages looking for its mom | Syntactic constraint (word order) | About three villages | Linguistic approach | Modulation |

Syntactic constraints in the translation of Mungaka modifiers into English are mainly at the level of word order and position of adjectives. With regards to the position of adjectives, Mungaka adjectives generally come after the noun they modify, as seen in excerpt 1 (**ndâŋ ŋgwɛd … fǔ ndìkàŋ,** container oil … powder gun), irrespective of their type. This rule is different in English because nominal adjectives are generally used attributively (preceding the noun). To accurately translate this excerpt, the word order must be altered to suit TL grammar rules. The **linguistic theory** of translation is used because the focus is on the structural differences between the SL and TL, and with the help of **adaptation,** the excerpt is translated as "oil containers … gun powder", and the grammatical structure of the TL is respected. Correspondingly, colour adjectives in English always precede the noun, meanwhile in Mungaka, when a colour adjective is placed before the noun, it is reduplicated, and when it is used attributively, it is not. In except 2, (**ì bàŋbàŋ** bə ŋkɔ', when the red one climbs**),** the adjective bàŋ (red) is reduplicated as it comes after the pronoun. But because this rule does not apply in English, the **omission** is employed as a strategy to overlook the repeated word, which neither adds nor reduces meaning in the TT.

As concerns word order, in excerpt 3, differences in word order between ST and TT pose a translation problem. The adjectival phrase *njə̂ ited* (about three) follows the noun *ŋgɔ̀ŋ* (villages), whereas, in the TL, the noun has to be placed after its qualifying adjectives. The **linguistic approach** to translation is applied because the major concern is to understand and regulate the differences in the SL and TL structures. **Modulation** is used in order to conform to the norms of the TL, given that upholding the linguistic norms (word order) of the SL will lead to the production of a wrong message.

4.4. Resolving collocational constraints

This study identified two main collocational constraints and analyzed them using the interpretative theory. With the help of amplification and transposition, these constraints are resolved, and a translation is proposed for each of the excerpts, as seen in table 4 below:

Table 4: *Presentation of excerpts by their collocational constraints*

S/N	Source text	Meaning	Context of production	Target text	Proposed translation	Translation method	
						Theory	**Strategy**
1	nju'ti **à lɨ̀m**, i kwɛd bi mɛ'	Tasted it, it was sweet; she ate it all	A woman's soup tastes so delicious that she eats all, leaving the husband nothing	Collocational constraint	Very delicious	Interpretative theory	Amplification
2	bà ba majǐ ŋgɔ̀ŋ, **bùn ŋgɨŋgɨ**	Fathers in the village, big big people	Describing high ranking village authorities.	Collocational constraint	dignitaries	Interpretative theory	Transposition

Collocational constraints to the translation of modifiers from Mungaka into English are based on the engrossing effects of source text patterning. The collocations **à lɨ̀m** (it is sweet) in excerpt 1 and **bùn ŋgɨŋgɨ** (big people) in excerpt 2 can be found in English but do not confer the same meaning as that of the source collocations. In **à lɨ̀m,** the ST uses the adjective 'sweet' to describe food; meanwhile, the two words do not collocate naturally in the TL except figuratively. This collocation is intended to express an augmented sense of good taste which can be expressed with appropriate TL words (delicious, exquisite). The interpretative theory of translation sheds light on the constraint, and **amplification** helps to construct a suitable description (*very delicious*) of the ST concept (*very tasty food*) in the TL. Likewise, the adjective "big" in **bùn ŋgɨŋgɨ** explains the important status of the village notables meanwhile, in English, big does not necessarily describe a societal function, but the size or other quality of a man. With the help of transposition, the adjective is rendered using an English noun (dignitaries) that incorporates both meanings of the ST noun and adjective.

5. Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated how the use of modifiers, particularly adjectives and adverbs in Mungaka oral folktales, stymie their translation from Mungaka into English especially. It has shown that differences in the use of modifiers between Mungaka and English give rise to several lexical, semantic, syntactic and collocational constraints. Guided by DTS, the linguistic, interpretative and aesthetic communication theories are employed in analyzing and interpreting the source texts and the contexts of production, their reception and a range of possible strategies for their translation. Strategies such as transposition, amplification, modulation, omission, substitution, adaptation and reformulation helped in successfully proposing a translation for each modifier. Consequently, this paper establishes that even though modifiers constitute a major problem in translating certain aspects of our oral literature into their Western equivalent, these problems are not insurmountable as has been judged formerly (Nnamani & Amadi, *2015). With the use of appropriate translation theories and strategies, they can be effectively translated into English. Looking at the global picture of translating Mungaka oral folktales, this study is limited because it focuses on adjectives and adverbs, two out of several parts of speech that are all capable of causing translation problems. Therefore future research can examine other parts of speech such as nouns, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions to see how they stymie or enhance translation from Mungaka into English.*

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