

Article

The Pragmatics of Anthroponomastics and Implications for Translation in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

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Abstract

Naming is a global cultural phenomenon that has been with man from creation because every known thing has a name. It was for this reason that linguistics, before Ferdinand de Saussure, was simply thought to be a matter of nomenclature. The study of names known as onomastics is further split into two branches: anthroponomastics and toponomastics. The former deals with names of persons while the latter has to do with the study of names of places. As an aspect of world culture that is present in every sphere of human endeavour, it has also been used to good effect in literary creations given that it is a major element in plot and thematic development. In this paper, we critically examined how this phenomenon contributes to the understanding of *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe and *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. In both works, the second sharing an intertextual rapport with the first, it is observed that most of the names given to characters are derived from the Igbo cosmology. This implies that their significance to the development of the plots as well as themes is lost to non-Igbo readers. It is therefore equally imperative in this study to consider the implications for the translation of names. In order to achieve our aim we hinged our analysis on two theoretical frameworks due to the double-pronged nature of our study: a pragmatic context for in-depth exegesis and translation sense theory for limitations in meaning transfer for the benefit of a non-Igbo audience.

Keywords: Onomastics, anthroponomastics, toponomastics, culture, cosmology, pragmatics, translation

Introduction

Everything, both animate and inanimate that is known to man has a name. A name is therefore the word by which such a thing is known. This concept might just be one of the reasons why linguistics before Saussure laid more emphasis on nomenclature. Our study is situated within the realm of onomastics which implies the study of names in general. When it has to do specifically with the study of names of persons it is narrowed down to anthroponomastics as opposed to toponomastics which deals with the study of names of places. In the abstract to his work titled "Personal Names and Anthropology", Bramwell (n.d.) states that "Anthropologists have not found a single society which does not use personal names in some form; they are a human universal. However, the forms that these names take and how they are bestowed and used vary between cultures". The culture that particularly concerns us in this study is that of the Igbo in South East Nigeria.

In this article, our focus is on the names of characters in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. We have decided to use these two novels because of the intertextual rapport that both of them share. As an aspect of world culture that is present in every sphere of human endeavour, names have also been used to good effect in literary creations given that it is a major element in plot and thematic development. The significance of names in literature

can therefore not be undermined. Authors usually use specific names which convey specific meanings in order to further the plot of a story. Ennin et Nkansah (69) share this view when they state that “The use of names in a literary text is also a very important tool for the identification of characters”. This phenomenon seems to tally with the cultural practice of personal names in many cultures thus underlining the nexus between literature and the society it reflects. Nicolaisen, one of the pioneers of onomastics in literature, in an article published as far back as 1982, assembled more than fifty reasons from various authors to justify the importance of names in literature. On page LOS 7 he gives his reason:

I have deliberately stripped this selection of quotations culled from the introductory passages of papers published in the first seven volumes of *LOS*, of references both to authorship and to the writers and works studied, in order to show how little the intentions and expectations vary, whether the work under consideration is a Spanish picaresque novel or a modern American play.

He goes on to deal a subtle critical jibe on fellow critics, whom he calls “fellow passengers” (LOS 4), who do not seem to read what either those before them or their contemporaries have written about anthroponomastics before writing theirs. In order not to receive, albeit in retrospect Nicolaisen’s blow, we intend to push the frontiers a bit further by proffering solutions that can help non Igbo readers understand what the personal names mean in the chosen works. Having already established the importance of anthroponomastics in literature with many other added voices as Ennin and Nkansah (70) assert, our main concern in this study is hinged on the fact that most of the names given to characters in the novels chosen for our study are derived from the Igbo cosmology, their significance to the development of the plots as well as themes are lost to non-Igbo readers. It is therefore equally imperative in this study to consider the implications for the translation or non-translation (borrowing) of names. Let us note that the translated versions of both works maintain the names of characters as they are in the source text. To achieve our aim in this study we have structured our work as follows: Names as cultural identities and destiny markers, pragmatics and the sense theory as theoretical frameworks, summaries of both novels, anthroponomastics, and exegesis of the corpus, anthroponomastics, and implications for translation and conclusion.

Names as Cultural Identities and Destiny Markers

Personal names can serve as identifiers. What we mean here is that by someone’s name, his or her ethnic origin can be known. This is especially true so far as African native names are concerned. If one considers the case of Nigeria, and such a person is conversant with the tribes that make up the nation, he only needs to hear the name and know where the individual comes from. According to Okafor, Emeka and Inyama (24), “Naming a child is an important function among the Igbo, and normally takes place on the eighth day after a child’s birth. It is a mark of honour to be invited to give a name”. The same cannot be said about names acquired through colonialism or religious conquest. Such names rather situate the individuals who bear them within specific religious confines.

Many parents in sub-Saharan Africa, and elsewhere in the world, give their children specific names with the hope that such names will shape the destiny of the child. That is why in the Igbo culture in South East Nigeria they have names such as: “Egoakonam: May I not lack money” (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 103); “Emena: May such (bad thing/event) not occur/happen again” (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 113). Other African cultures also use names in the same manner. Some of them are expressions of gratitude to God. For instance: “Chiemegwo: God has done it”, “Chiemeka: God has done so much/well”, “Chiemezie: God has done well; God is my helper” (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 81).

A pertinent question that one should ask at this juncture is whether such godliness, spirituality, and quest for a positive destiny have always been the constant so far as naming in Africa is concerned. Ennin and Nkansah (70) provide an answer when they stress that “...names...serve as reminiscence to some pleasant and unpleasant experiences which may have some sociocultural implications.” In the Kom culture, some parents are known to have given names to their children not because they had the children in mind when they were born, but because something happened to them (the parents) around that period. Some examples include “Munkelwi” (I don’t have), “Kfisalu” (useless death), and “Ninying” (alone). They exist in the Igbo culture too: “Iyida: misfortune has befallen me” (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 150), “Iweala: anger over land; anger has not stopped” (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 149), “Iroanya: sad-eyed enemy (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 148). Some owners of such names are known to have changed them for others with positive connotations which they think would attract good luck to them.

Another phenomenon worth mentioning concerning naming in the Igbo culture has to do with translating the name from Igbo to English. Names such as “Blessing” (Ngozi), “ThankGod” (Chukwudalu), “Godsgrace” (Amarachi), “Godspower” (Ikechukwu), “Godsfavour” (Ihuomachukwu), “Goodnews” (Ozioma) are examples. This trend of translating Igbo names into English and giving them to a child ties strongly with the view that the Igbo language is indeed endangered. Notice that in “Godsgrace”, “Godspower” and “Godsfavour” the grammatical rule of the “s” that signifies possession is flouted. Could this trend of translating Igbo names into English be as a result of the parents’ knowledge that if their children are given the same names in Igbo they shall grow up not aligning with the meaning of their names? This view provides a window for further investigation. Translation of African names into English indicates that colonialism still wields its influence so far as naming in Africa is concerned. Little wonder in some riverine communities in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria some names lack indigenous cultural input. In this respect, postcolonialism would have been the appropriate literary theory to base our analysis on, but since our chosen works are based on the Igbo cosmological importance of names in the comprehension of Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* we have chosen to build our thesis on the theoretical foundations of pragmatics and the sense theory of translation.

Pragmatics and the Sense Theory of Translation

The word “pragmatics” is given a prominent place in the title of this paper “The pragmatics of Anthroponomastics and implications for translation...”. This calls for

an attempt at understanding what it means in relation to onomastics. Verschueren (1) defines pragmatics as “the study of language use, or, to employ a somewhat more complicated phrasing, the study of linguistic phenomena from the point of view of their usage, properties and processes”. The last three nouns of this quote are particularly relevant to our study. Wamitilda (35) states that “A mention of name in literature is almost always likely to recall the question Juliet posed to Romeo about his family name Montague in William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*”. This underscores the “usage” of the linguistic phenomenon, “name”. Verschueren (7) posits that “pragmatics is concerned with the full complexity of linguistic behaviour. From that perspective, there is no way of addressing, for instance, issues of cognition without taking society and culture into account”. This statement seems to endorse our assertions in the introduction concerning the importance of names within a given culture.

Aboh and Uduk (7) aver that “pragmatics deals with meaning in contexts. It studies how human communication is effected through the intended meaning of the speaker and is decoded by the hearer taking into account the context”. The context in our study is two-fold: the one created by the interactions among the characters in a given society within the works in focus and the one that has to do with the authors (Achebe and Adichie) and their audiences so far as the interpretation of names is concerned. We shall examine how both novels can be better understood through an interpretation of the proper names used by both authors. The word “interpretation” happens to be at the core of the sense theory of translation. It is therefore clear that both theoretical frameworks: pragmatics and the sense theory are interrelated.

Seleskovitch and Lederer propounded the translation theory known as “*théorie du sens*” or “*théorie interprétative*” in ESIT (Ecole Supérieure d’Interprétariat et de Traduction), Paris. The theory is, therefore, otherwise known as the theory of the Paris School. It has as its main tenet three steps, which if properly applied should lead to an acceptable translation of any text from one language to another. These steps are comprehension, deverbalisation, and reformulation in the target language. They share Akmajian’s view presented thus by Yong and Kris-Ogbodo (107):

One of the most comforting statements ever made in the field of translation, according to us, is the one that borders on the fact that whatever is said or written in one language can be expressed in any other. Akmajian (2007) puts it thus: “There is nothing that can be expressed in one language that cannot be expressed in any other.” This concept that owes its origin to the theory of meaning as espoused by the Paris school of thought did not only destroy the principle of “*intraduisibilité*”, it also placed a heavy burden on the translator who must ensure its veracity is upheld.

Other theorists of translation such as Durieux (24) and Herbulot (307) have said more or less the same thing.

If the names of characters in a novel are considered elements that aid in the understanding of the work, then we come face to face with the translation of personal names, an exercise discouraged in the theory and practice of translation.

What is then the way forward if a translator must ensure that the meanings of names that help in the understanding of a story are within the reach of the reader who does not understand what they mean? Before attempting a response to this question which is at the center of our work, we need to present, briefly, the plots of both novels and an analysis of selected character names in them.

Things Fall Apart

According to Anieke (55), Killian posits that the history of *Things Fall Apart* takes place between 1850 and 1900 (the period just before and after the arrival of the White man among the Igbo). Achebe highlights the conflict between an invasive European culture and the established Igbo culture. The main character around whom Achebe weaves this moving story is called Okonkwo. Thanks to the strength of his arm, his athleticism, and his warlike abilities he becomes a very famous personality in his community. Hardworking and ambitious, his goal is to avoid the shame, poverty and indolence of his father, Unoka. When he was young, he had shown signs of greatness in an incredible fight in which he beat Amalinze, the cat. Okonkwo becomes very wealthy and to flaunt it, he marries three women and receives two titles. Because he does not want to appear as weak as his father, he is very strict in his family and does not tolerate any signs of weakness from his son, Nwoye.

However, when he inadvertently kills a young member of his tribe, he has to go into exile for seven years in his mother's village where he continues to make a fortune. His only wish during this period was to return to Umuofia and regain the respect and authority that he enjoyed. During this seven-year exile, the village changed considerably due to contact with European culture and the Christian religion. Okonkwo cannot understand why Umuofia Obodike must accept such things. He decides to fight to free Umuofia. After the destruction of the church by the Egwugwu, Okonkwo and other Umuofia elites are arrested and imprisoned. He vows to lead the fight against the Whiteman. An opportunity to take revenge arises when the Whiteman's messengers arrive to disperse a gathering in Umuofia. For Okonkwo, this is the best time to fight the colonizer. Furious, he beats one of the intruders and kills him hoping that his people would join him. Realizing the betrayal as no one stood with or for him, he commits suicide.

Purple Hibiscus

Purple Hibiscus, a novel by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, opens with a presentation of Eugene's family composed of him, his wife, and two children: Kambili, the narrator, and Jaja, her elder brother. Eugene is a disciplinarian and a successful businessman whose ardent belief in Catholicism ultimately turns him into a wicked fanatic of a husband and father. He is bestowed with the title "Omelora" in his clan. He is also known for his fight against corruption, thanks to his love for justice and Christianity. As a result of his devotion to the church, he metamorphoses into an insensitive man who keeps a close watch on his children's timetable and any other family programme. He raises his children according to Catholic teaching and so influences them that they lose the capacity for self-actualization. His extreme suppression suffocates and makes them behave like robots. Even his father does not

escape his wrath. His disengagement from his African roots is seen in the way he treats his father. He does not want to have anything to do with the latter because he refuses to be a Christian like him.

After staying a week in Nsukka with their aunt, Kambili and Jaja discover another modest and irregular lifestyle. This discovery has a profound effect on Kambili. As for his brother Jaja, he begins to revolt against his father's autocratic stance. Poisoned by his wife, whom he still beats, even in her pregnancy, he falls ill and breathes his last after a few weeks of suffering.

Anthroponomastics and Exegesis of the Corpus

After presenting brief storylines of both works above we intend to, in this section, examine some names whose meanings are relevant to the understanding of both novels. In doing so we agree with Ennin and Nkansah (71) who state that

As far as the use of names in literary text is concerned, Wamitilia (1999) in his study points out that names of characters are very important in literature. The names of characters go beyond individualizing to being a semantic, pragmatic, allusive, and symbolic import that must be seen from the perspective of the overall structure of a particular work. Names foreground particular themes or motifs, reveal the fictional character, situate a character within a specific and identifiable cultural setting, reveal different points of view, and even used as a plot device, as a sarcastic or a satirical strategy.

That names have “semantic” value since they can reveal “themes” is a salient point that Achebe and Adichie use to good effect. The nexus between names and “cultural setting” has already been established. Our attention is drawn to the following names in *Things Fall Apart*: Okonkwo, Unoka, Ekwefi, and Ikemefuna. While in *Purple Hibiscus* we shall examine the following: Achike, Omolera, Eugene, Jaja, Kambili, and Ifeoma.

Okonkwo, the protagonist in *Things Fall Apart*, rises to prominence quite early in life when, in a wrestling bout, he defeats the hitherto invincible Amalinze the Cat. He is a man of action whose greatest fear is to turn out a sloth, like his father. The drive to distance himself from the laziness of his father is the catalyst behind his achievements. According to Okafor, Emeka and Inyiama (223) the name Okonkwo is given to “a male child born on Nkwo day, the fourth Igbo market day”. One can say that this name has no significance relating to the destiny of a child. This lack of significance is in itself significant in the sense that Okonkwo is a self-made man who does not have to depend on any “divine predictions” to make it in life. The emptiness of his name, and the fact that it is even the “fourth” and not the “first” market day should not be lost on the reader. How else would such a lazy father as Unoka have named his son? Unoka in Igbo means “house is greater or higher”. This may refer to the household. Greater than what? One may ask. The likely answers are money, wealth, etc. His name seems to tally with his character which eventually fuels Okonkwo to great achievements. Achebe (3) tells us that “If any money came his way, and it seldom did, he immediately bought gourds of palm-wine, called round neighbours, and made merry”. His name, therefore ties in with his character.

Another character who contributes to the development of the plot and themes of *Things Fall Apart* is Ikemefuna. He is a young boy taken from a nearby village as compensation for a slain woman in Umuofia, Okonkwo's village. He is handed to Okonkwo who soon loves him like his own son. But when the Oracle says the boy must be sacrificed it is his own foster father, Okonkwo, who cuts him down for fear of being considered weak. According to Okafor, Emeka & Inyiama (142), Ikemefuna means "let my struggles not be in vain; may my struggles to bear a child not be in vain; let my strength remain". The irony of this name is quite resounding. A plea by the boy's mother during the naming ceremony, the first blow she receives is when the boy is forcefully taken from her. Applied to Okonkwo, "let my strength remain" is ironic in the sense that killing Ikemefuna only reveals his hubris as a tragic hero.

Other names that run contrary to destiny invocation, one of the motivations for names in the Igbo culture, are indeed furnished by Achebe (61) himself when he narrates the ordeal faced by Ekwefi as she buried nine children in a row:

The birth of her children, which should be a woman's crowning glory, became for Ekwefi mere physical agony devoid of promise. The naming ceremony after seven market weeks became an empty ritual. Her deepening despair found expression in the names she gave her children. One of them was a pathetic cry, Onwumbiko - 'Death, I implore you.' But Death took no notice; Onwumbiko died in his fifteenth month. The next child was a girl, Ozoemena - 'May it not happen again'. She died in her eleventh month, and two others after her. Ekwefi then became defiant and called her next child Onwuma - 'Death may please himself.' And he did.

Achebe seems to hold the view here that giving a child a particular name to fashion his destiny is entirely useless. This irony expressed in the names of Ekwefi's dead children, however, does not apply to hers and that of her surviving child, Ezinma. The meaning of Ekwefi can be derived from combining "ekwe" (gong, a musical instrument) and "efi" (cow). Ekwefi, therefore, can be said to be "the gong of a cow". It's a name that smacks of derision and emptiness. It seems to tally with her fate until the arrival of Ezinma (good road or way) which brings solace to her distraught heart. Ezinma is Okonkwo's most beloved daughter, not only because of her beauty. What endears her to him is the fact that she is different from other women in the way she challenges him and exerts ample self-control. Okonkwo wishes she had been born a son instead of a daughter. To him, therefore, she is "the good road" to follow in the realization of the clan's ambitions. Her assertiveness is the character Okonkwo wanted to see in his people when he killed the Whiteman's messenger.

In *Purple Hibiscus* by Adichie personal names that are relevant to the story are equally used, most of them with a tint of irony. Eugene, Kambili's and Jaja's father who rules his household with a lot of high-handedness bears the surname, Achike which means "Rulership deserves no high-handedness" (Okafor, Emeka & Inyiama, 36). His draconian attitude is seen in the way he treats his wife and children. Even in a state of pregnancy, his wife is subjected to the full weight of his physical brutality. The fact that he bears an English name Eugene tells of his cultural

migration towards Western concepts which he imbibes and applies ferociously against his own. One even wonders why he takes a traditional title even when he hates his culture. This thought, however, diminishes with an examination of the meaning of his title "Omelora" (Omeluora) which stands for "a patriot who is charitable to all without discrimination; a lover of his people; a philanthropist; servant of the people; one devoted to the service of the community" (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 342). This is perhaps the most poignant example of charactonomy in the novel. The positive characteristics espoused by his exalted title do not reflect in the way he treats his immediate family and his father.

Two other major characters worthy of analysis in the light of literary onomastics are Eugene's daughter, Kambili, and his son, Jaja. Her name, which means "Allow me to exist", (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 154), seems to be a plea directed at her father who tries to control every aspect of her life. She is terrified and resorts to hard work at school and a noiseless life at home which affects her relationship with her mates. They mistakenly consider her snobbish because she does not indulge in conversations not knowing that her taciturnity is owed to the silence imposed at home.

A major support that helps pull her out of her inertia, as it were, is her aunt, Ifeoma, whose name is also loaded with significance. According to Okafor, Emeka & Inyama (133), Ifeoma means "A good thing that commands silence; a (child is) good thing; a thing (child) of beauty; worthy of admiration; something good has arrived". Her role in the life of her niece ties in with the meaning of her name.

Kambili's brother, Jaja, finds his way to freedom too through the influence of his aunt, Ifeoma. True to the meaning of his name: "One who asks does not miss his way" (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 152) he therefore finds freedom. He does so by confronting his father in an area most dear to him: fanaticism. He deliberately skips communion with an understanding of the consequences. This rebellious attitude is picked from his interaction with Ifeoma's children who are not afraid to speak their minds. It is also worth noting that one of his names, Chukwuka, means "God is mighty/excellent/great; He is transcendent" (Okafor, Emeka & Inyama, 91).

In both works, we have seen that personal names are indeed important. They can help the audience understand the literary work. This assertion ties in with one of Nicolaisen's anonymous quotes which states "It is my contention that the analysis of names in literature, though an interesting pursuit in its own right, becomes more significant and fruitful when seen in the context of a broader interpretation of the structure and symbolism of a literary work" (LOS 5). Let us now consider what a translator should do in the face of personal names with exegetic impact.

Antroponomastics and Implication for Translation

Translation is the rendering of a message from one language to another bearing in mind the semblance of effect from both audiences. Lederer (111) captures this concept succinctly when in her definition of translation she stresses the following points: transfer of notional and emotional contents; perfect bilingualism on the part

of the translator; who must identify with the author of the original text; and be conscious of the effect of the translation on the audience. If names in a literary text are significant it therefore should be the concern of the literary translator. Their translation poses some problems as variously expressed by the following critics: Jaleniauskiene and Cicelyte (31), Martinet (392), Anas (9), Laurenti (180), Moruwawon (211).

The question seeking to know whether proper names should be translated have been a topical one within translation circles with the opinion against it holding sway. It is for this reason that Laurenti (181) posits that “Although various strategies are suggested, it is often believed that proper names, indicating a precise thing or person, in a precise society, are untranslatable and, therefore, should not be translated”. While we agree with Laurenti, we are a bit worried when he uses the word “untranslatable”. We say so because the sense theory on which we base this work avers that translation is possible. The mere use of the first of Vinay and Darbelnet’s strategies, “borrowing”, makes the translation of names possible. However, for the most part, we support Laurenti’s assertion because rendering names differently in the target text would rob the source culture of vital elements and pose other problems regarding other cultural elements such as settings. If we take the case of the French and English cultures for instance one notices that there is a high level of similarity so far as certain first names are concerned: John (Jean), Peter (Pierre), William (Guillaume), Suzan (Suzanne) Cecilia (Cecile), Mary (Marie), etc. If a translator translates an English literary work into French and decides to use the French version of these names he would face serious problems with settings. He would not change “London” to “Paris” or “The White House” to “Champs Elysée” unless the text is being adapted. The appropriate thing to do is therefore to leave the personal names as they are in the source text.

The audience in any translation exercise is of paramount importance. If, for example, a literary work is written in Igbo and has to be translated into another African language such as Yoruba, the equivalents of the Igbo names charged with meaning can be found within the Yoruba cultural database. This is because both of them share some cultural similarities. So it is important that the translator determines his audience before he begins the translation. Yong and Ebiringa (111) state that:

Chaque fois qu'on doit traduire un texte en langue anglaise vers la langue française et vice-versa, il y a cette tendance de croire que les Anglais ou les Français constituent le public visé. Or ce n'est pas le cas dans toutes les circonstances car ces langues n'appartiennent plus seulement aux communautés linguistiques originales. En Afrique, par exemples il y a plus de personnes qui s'expriment en français qu'en France.

(Every time one has to translate a text in English into French and vice versa, we tend to think that the English or the French is the target audience. It is not so in all cases if we consider the fact that these languages no longer belong to the original owners only. In Africa, for instance, there are more speakers of French than in France.) [Notre traduction]

In the case of our selected novels, the primary audience is Africans of French expression. This explains why Michel Ligny and Mona de Pracontal did not only stick with the images as contained in proverbs and other idiomatic expressions, they simply transferred the names of characters from the English to the French versions: *Le Monde s'effondre* and *L'Hibiscus pourpre*. It is possible that the translators might not have considered the significance of names so far as a deeper understanding of both works is concerned.

Sartre has a different opinion regarding audience specificity. In a response to his question that serves as the heading of the third chapter of his book *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?*, Sartre (87) states that "on écrit pour le lecteur universel". This, however, does not diminish the fact that there is always a "primary" audience. According to Yong and Nwosu (13), Gikandi states that:

Chinua Achebe was to note in an influential essay published in the early 1960s, one of the key motivations for producing an African literature was to restore the moral integrity and cultural autonomy of the African in an age of decolonization. The fundamental theme of African writing, noted Achebe, was that "African people did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans; that their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty, that they had poetry and above all, they had dignity

From this assertion, Achebe had the colonizers in mind when he wrote *Things Fall Apart*. It is also obvious, in view of the rich Igbo cultural display that he sought to rekindle in the Igbo man the dignity that he lost due to the humiliation of the Whiteman. By extension, all Africans can be said to share in this loss and quest for restored dignity. The translator should therefore bear in mind the identity of the primary audience.

It is expedient that we probe further in order to find some answers that relate to literary onomastics and translation. If both Achebe and Adichie consciously gave meaningful names to some of their characters, did they expect their audience to be limited only to those of Igbo extraction who understand the Igbo language? If they had a wider audience in mind, why did they not explain what those significant names mean? Their failure to do so implies that the critic or reader of Igbo extraction has an edge over the non-Igbo critic or reader so far as the understanding of the novel is concerned. He must do more research in order to benefit from the full import of caractonymic exegesis.

The literary translator who is conscious of the importance of names in such works should heed the suggestion proffered by Anas (9): "Like cultural allusions unlikely to be comprehended by the TL audience, names that may be well known in the SL culture, always need to be provided with an explanatory comment..." The translator can do so as footnotes or as a glossary of meaningful names at the end of the translated text.

Conclusion

In this paper on the pragmatics of anthroponomastics, we aimed to critically examine the meaning of personal names in *Things Fall Apart* and *Purple Hibiscus* and to consider the implications for translation. In the introduction, we discussed names as a phenomenon common to every culture the world over. Their characteristics especially within the Igbo cultural space were also discussed and the connection between the society and its reflection in creative works was established. Besides serving as an identifying factor, authors use names to reveal themes and advance the plot as seen in both works reviewed.

Two interrelated theories were used to achieve our aim in this paper. They are pragmatics, which emphasizes understanding an utterance from the contextual point of view; and the sense theory of translation which holds that whatever is said or written in one language can be said or written in any other. After successfully applying the first of these theories in the interpretation of selected names in both novels and agreeing with the core tenet of the second regarding the translation of proper names, we insist that the recommended borrowing technique does not help the non-Igbo reader of the original and translated text benefit from the significance of names as would readers and critics of Igbo extraction. To correct this anthroponomastic exegetic imbalance in literary creations and their translations, we do not suggest the translation of names but insist that authors and translators provide footnotes and glossaries that explain such personal names that contribute to the plot.

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