



An Ecolinguistic Analysis of Ecological Narratives in the English Translation of Jeanne Marie Rosette Abou'ou's *Lettre À Tita*: Translation Strategies and Ecosystemic Effects

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Abstract:

This study conducts an ecolinguistic analysis of the English translation of Jeanne Marie Rosette Abou'ou's bilingual novel *Lettre à Tita* (2012–2013), translated by Maurice Ngompe (2014). We examine how ecological narratives evolve between the two volumes of the novel and how their translation into English preserves, transforms, or erases these narratives. Drawing on Stibbe's (2015) typology of ecological narratives, Chesterman's (1997) taxonomy of translation strategies, House's (2015) model of translation quality assessment, and Venuti's (1995) distinction between foreignisation and domestication, we analyse 174 bilingual segments across four thematic categories: fauna, eco-cultural practices, flora and natural elements, and natural phenomena. Our findings reveal a radical rupture between the two volumes: Volume 1 constructs an animist ecology of harmony and symbiosis, while Volume 2 documents an ecology of degradation and extraction. Ngompe's translation adopts a resolutely foreignising strategy, with literal translation (35.9%) and borrowing (29.2%) as the dominant procedures. The translation demonstrates complete preservation of ecological meaning in 67.2% of segments, with ecosystemic gains (13.2%) primarily occurring in Volume 2, where the translation amplifies the ecological critique. We conclude that Ngompe's translation functions as an act of cultural and ecological resistance against neo-colonial homogenisation.

Keywords: Ecolinguistics, Ecological Narratives, Translation Strategies, Ecosystemic Effects, Cameroon Literature, *Lettre A Tita*, Foreignisation

Original Research

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1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between language, culture, and ecology has become an increasingly important area of scholarly inquiry in the context of global environmental crisis. Ecolinguistics, as a field of study, examines how language shapes human perception and action towards the environment. As Arran Stibbe (2015) defines it, ecolinguistics shows how linguistic analysis can help reveal the stories societies live by, open them up to question, and contribute to the search for new stories (p. 1). This engaged form of critical enquiry analyses how language constructs relationships between humans and the non-human world.

In postcolonial contexts, the stakes of ecological representation are particularly high. African literature has long engaged with environmental themes, documenting traditional ecological knowledge, critiquing environmental degradation, and imagining alternative relationships between humans and nature. However, as Eyenga Onana (2021) has demonstrated in her sociocritical reading of *Lettre à Tita 2*, the novel deeply encapsulates the writer's desire to postulate an emerging world in which Cameroonians would readily identify themselves (p. 78). The present study extends this line of inquiry by examining how this ethical and ecological vision is articulated through ecological narratives and how its translation into English affects its transmission.

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The translation of African literature into global languages raises important questions about the preservation or erasure of local ecological knowledge. Michael Cronin (2017), in *Eco-Translation: Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene*, argues that translation can play a vital role in the future survival of the planet (p. 2). This perspective positions translation not as a neutral linguistic transfer but as a politically and ethically charged act that can either contribute to or resist the homogenisation of ecological discourse.

1.1. Presentation of the corpus

Lettre à Tita is a two-volume novel by Jeanne Marie Rosette Abou'ou that presents a diptych structure. The first volume, subtitled *L'âge d'or de Zilan* (The Golden Age of Zilan), offers a nostalgic description of life in Zilan-village under the guidance of the patriarch Tita. It depicts a nostalgic image of daily life in that hamlet buried in the equatorial forest, at a time when humans, animals, plants, and natural elements coexisted in a harmonious order governed by animist beliefs and practices of sharing and regulation. The second volume, subtitled *La Lettre* (The Letter), is framed as a letter from Edima to his deceased grandfather Tita. It documents the systematic degradation of this ecological order, functioning as a barely veiled satire in which the author denounces the ravages of modernity. The novel thus presents a before-and-after narrative that allows for a comparative analysis of ecological narratives in the two volumes. The work has been translated into English by Maurice Ngompe (2014) under the title *Letter to Tita*, making it accessible to an Anglophone readership. This translation provides a unique opportunity to examine how the ecological narratives of the source text are rendered in a target language that carries its own historical and cultural baggage.

1.2. Statement of the problem and research questions

This study is situated at the intersection of ecolinguistics, critical translation studies, and postcolonial ecocriticism. We investigate how ecological narratives evolve in a bilingual Cameroonian novel and how their English translation preserves, transforms, or erases these representations.

The central problem can be formulated as follows: how do ecological narratives evolve in

Lettre à Tita between the first volume, which constructs an ecology of harmony, and the second volume, which documents an ecology of degradation? And to what extent does Maurice Ngompe's English translation preserve, transform, or amplify these narratives, in a context of linguistic and cultural domination exercised by the forces of globalisation?

The research questions that guide this study are the following:

1. What are the dominant ecological narratives in Volume 1 and how do they manifest across the thematic categories of the corpus?
2. What are the dominant ecological narratives in Volume 2 and how do they differ from those of Volume 1?
3. What are the preferred translation procedures employed by Maurice Ngompe in the treatment of ecology-related segments, and what general tendencies characterise his strategy?
4. To what extent does the English translation preserve, transform, or erase the ecological narratives of the source text? What are the observed ecosystemic losses and gains?
5. Can Ngompe's translation be interpreted as an act of cultural and ecological resistance against neo-colonial homogenisation?

1.3. Significance of the study

This study contributes to ecolinguistics by validating a narrative approach to ecological discourse, applying Stibbe's (2015) typology to a bilingual literary corpus. It contributes to translation studies by providing a detailed case study of a foreignising strategy (Venuti, 1995) and its ecological implications. It contributes to postcolonial ecocriticism by demonstrating how translation can preserve or erase local knowledge. Finally, it contributes to the preservation and valorisation of Cameroonian cultural and ecological heritage.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

This study is grounded in four complementary theoretical frameworks. The first is Stibbe's (2015) typology of ecological narratives, which identifies eight types of narratives that structure human perception and action towards the environment: ideologies (belief systems), frames (cognitive structures), metaphors (figures of speech), evaluations (judgements of

value), identities (constructions of self and others), convictions (beliefs about truth), stories (narratives that structure understanding), and erasures (what is rendered invisible). In the context of this study, erasure acquires a particular significance. In Volume 1, erasure is paradoxically positive: the absence of modern naturalist and utilitarian discourse installs animism as an unquestioned horizon. In Volume 2, erasure is negative: the erasure of local knowledge and animist memory signals ecological and cultural degradation.

The second framework is Chesterman's (1997) taxonomy of translation strategies, which distinguishes three types of translation strategies: syntactic strategies (changes in grammatical structure), semantic strategies (changes in meaning), and pragmatic strategies (changes in communicative effect). Syntactic strategies include literal translation, borrowing, calque, transposition, and change of structure. Semantic strategies include synonymy, paraphrase, explicitation, abstraction, modulation, and change of information. Pragmatic strategies include adaptation, naturalisation, addition, omission, change of visibility, and change of illocutionary force.

The third framework is House's (2015) model of translation quality assessment, which evaluates translation through the analysis of three dimensions: function, register, and genre. House distinguishes between overt translation, which preserves the cultural and linguistic specificity of the source text, and covert translation, which adapts the source text to the norms of the target culture. Functional equivalence is the central concept in House's model: a translation is functionally equivalent to the source text if it achieves the same communicative function in the target culture as the source text achieves in the source culture.

The fourth framework is Venuti's (1995) distinction between foreignisation and domestication. Domestication produces a translation that is fluent, transparent, and readable, erasing all traces of the translator's intervention and the presence of the foreign other. Foreignisation aims to render visible the presence of the translator by highlighting the foreign identity of the source text and protecting it from the ideological dominance of the target culture.

Our analytical framework integrates these four perspectives in a coherent sequence. First, we identify ecological narratives in the source text using Stibbe's typology. Second, we identify translation strategies employed using Chesterman's taxonomy. Third, we evaluate functional and ecological quality using House's model. Finally, we assess the foreignising or domesticating approach using Venuti's framework.

The research adopts a qualitative, descriptive, and interpretive design, combining corpus-based translation studies, qualitative content analysis, and critical discourse analysis within the framework of ecolinguistics and ecotranslation. The corpus consists of 174 bilingual segments extracted from both volumes of *Lettre à Tita* and their English translation by Maurice Ngompe. The segments are distributed across four thematic categories: fauna (46 segments), eco-cultural practices (41 segments), flora and natural elements (55 segments), and natural phenomena (32 segments). Our sampling approach is purposive, combining judgement sampling (selection based on relevance to research questions), stratified sampling (selection from thematic categories and volumes), and clustered sampling (selection of thematic clusters). Segments were selected if they contained references to fauna, flora, natural elements, natural phenomena, or eco-cultural practices.

The analysis proceeds in four stages: quantitative analysis (counting frequencies of translation procedures and ecosystemic effects), qualitative analysis (detailed examination of each segment using the three-dimensional grid), comparative analysis (comparison across themes and volumes), and synthesis (integration of findings into a coherent account). Each segment is assessed for its ecosystemic effect, defined as the extent to which the translation preserves, transforms, or amplifies the ecological meaning of the source text. We distinguish four categories: complete preservation (accurate reproduction of ecological meaning), minor loss (attenuation of nuances, but overall meaning intact), significant loss (alteration of a central component of ecological meaning), and ecosystemic gain (reinforcement of ecological message through explicitation, semantic enrichment, or intensification).

3. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The distribution of segments across thematic categories reveals a striking symmetry for fauna (23 segments in each volume). However, the thematic composition differs considerably. Volume 1 is dominated by segments on fauna, hunting rules, and animals as social actors, reflecting the harmonious integration of fauna into daily life. Volume 2, by contrast, features segments on trade, poaching, zoophilia, and deforestation, themes that did not appear at all in the first volume. This thematic shift is itself indicative of the ecological transformation documented by the novel.

Table 1: Distribution of segments by thematic category and volume

Thematic Category	Volume 1	Volume 2	Total
Fauna	23	23	46
Eco-cultural practices	19	22	41
Flora and natural elements	39	16	55
Natural phenomena	21	11	32
Total	102	72	174

3.1. Translation procedures and strategies

With recourse to Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) taxonomy of translation procedures, literal translation emerges as the most frequent procedure, accounting for 40.2% of cases, which points to a general fidelity of the translator to the source text. Borrowing follows close behind at 32.8%, reflecting a consistent effort to preserve

Cameroonian cultural realities such as proper names («Tita», «Ko'oko») and culturally specific objects. Oblique procedures (modulation at 8.0%, equivalence at 5.7%, adaptation at 1.1%) are comparatively rare, which suggests that the translator favoured a fairly literal approach overall.

Table 2: Translation procedures used in the corpus

Procedure	Volume 1	Volume 2	Total	Percentage
Borrowing	35	22	57	32.8%
Calque	8	4	12	6.9%
Literal translation	42	28	70	40.2%
Transposition	18	12	30	17.2%
Modulation	6	8	14	8.0%
Equivalence	4	6	10	5.7%
Adaptation	0	2	2	1.1%
Total	113	82	195	100%

In terms of Chesterman's (1997) translation strategies, syntactic strategies predominate at 90.8% when combining literal translation, borrowing, calque, transposition, and change of structure, confirming the foreignising orientation of Ngompe's translation. Semantic strategies (explicitation, modulation, synonymy, paraphrase) account for 16.5% of cases, while pragmatic strategies (adaptation, addition, omission) are minimal at 4.1%. This distribution reflects a translation approach that prioritises formal correspondence and cultural preservation over target-audience accommodation.

Table 3: Translation strategies used in the corpus

Strategy Type	Specific Strategy	Total	Percentage
Syntactic	Literal translation	70	35.9%
	Borrowing	57	29.2%
	Calque	12	6.2%
	Transposition	30	15.4%
	Change of structure	8	4.1%
Semantic	Synonymy	6	3.1%
	Paraphrase	4	2.1%
	Explicitation	8	4.1%
	Modulation	14	7.2%
Pragmatic	Adaptation	2	1.0%
	Addition	4	2.1%
	Omission	2	1.0%
Total		217	100%

3.2. Ecosystemic effects

Our findings demonstrate that complete preservation constitutes the dominant translation outcome, accounting for 67.2% of the analysed segments. This result indicates that the translator consistently maintains the ecological worldview and animistic representations embedded in the source text.

Minor losses represent 17.2% of the corpus and are primarily associated with lexical modulation or semantic generalisation, such as the replacement of more specific ecological terms with broader lexical equivalents. These modifications slightly reduce semantic precision without significantly altering the ecological framework of the narrative.

Four segments (2.3%) were identified as significant ecosystemic losses. The most notable is the rendering of «geste réparateur» as «preparatory gesture», which suppresses the reparative and sacrificial dimensions conveyed by the original expression, thereby weakening its ecological and symbolic significance.

Ecosystemic gains account for 13.2% of the corpus and occur predominantly in Volume 2. These gains result from translation strategies including explicitation, emotional intensification, and semantic reinforcement. Expressions such as «Rivers dry up», «panic-stricken», and «dragged» increase the salience of ecological degradation, human responsibility, or animal suffering, thereby strengthening the environmental message conveyed to the target readership.

Table 4: Quantitative distribution of ecosystemic effects

Ecosystemic Effect	Volume 1	Volume 2	Total	Percentage
Complete preservation	72	45	117	67.2%
Minor loss	18	12	30	17.2%
Significant loss	1	3	4	2.3%
Ecosystemic gain	11	12	23	13.2%
Total	102	72	174	100%

3.3. Analysis of ecological narratives

Volume 1 of *Lettre à Tita* depicts a harmonious relationship between humans and animals. The rooster Ko'oko announces the hour, the parrot Jakop relays village news, and birds signal the ripening of rice. The act of naming animals constructs them as family members rather than interchangeable specimens. Hunting is governed by elaborate rules of sharing, with the entrails of game reserved for brothers, and the viper, a mythical snake, requiring parental authorisation for consumption. This animist frame presents animals as social actors integrated into an enléd moral community. Volume 2 documents the systematic degradation of fauna. The forests have been emptied by the trade in game; animals flee poaching and the noise of machinery; rivers no longer hold fish; and the episode of Papi, who mates with village animals, marks the furthest point of degradation. The game trade reduces animals to commodities, industrial farming

medicalises the animal body, and zoophilia violates the animal as a subject.

An illustrative segment from this category is the following:

French: « Les forêts n'ont plus d'animaux sauvages, le commerce du gibier a vidé les forêts. » (Abou'ou, 2013, p. 23)

English: «The forests no longer have wild animals; game trade has emptied the forests. » (Abou'ou, 2014, p. 23)

This narrative of extinction uses the verb «a vidé» (has emptied) to evoke a container stripped of its contents. The repetition of «forêts» in both clauses creates a chiasmic structure that emphasises the causal relationship. The translation preserves this structure, maintaining the categorical negation and the force of violent removal. The ecosystemic effect is complete preservation.

Volume 1 documents the cultural practices that encode ecological knowledge: hunting, fishing, agriculture, medicine, religion, marriage, mourning, and justice. These practices are governed by elaborate rules that ensure sustainability. The sharing of game, the consumption of the viper, and the symbiosis with birds are presented as beneficial narratives that integrate human and non-human worlds. Volume 2 documents the erosion of these practices. The sale of crops and fruit trees to outside buyers, the abandonment of traditional justice systems, and the corruption of ritual practices signal the breakdown of the community. The narrative of famine, «nous mourons de faim» (we are dying of hunger), marks the failure of the traditional system to provide for its members. An illustrative segment from this category is the following:

French: «On pouvait se voir traîner devant les notables pour avoir mangé seul une antilope.» (Abou'ou, 2012, p. 37)

English: «One could be dragged before the notables for eating an antelope alone.» (Abou'ou, 2014, p. 35)

This is a sanction narrative in which transgression of the sharing rule is punished through public humiliation. The verb «traîner» is a powerful stylistic choice evoking degrading treatment. The translation renders this as «dragged», a modulation that intensifies the physical violence of the gesture and makes the social shame more salient for the Anglophone reader. This intensification constitutes an ecosystemic gain. The noun «notables» is retained as «notables», a borrowing that keeps the cultural specificity of the village elders. The ecosystemic effect is ecosystemic gain.

Volume 1 presents the forest as a community of beings, with trees, water, and natural elements treated as partners in dialogue. The forest provides sustenance, medicine, and spiritual connection. Volume 2 documents the systematic destruction of the forest: trees are cut for export, the soil is exhausted, and water sources are polluted. An illustrative segment from this category is the following:

French: «On le trouvait régulièrement en train d'adresser la parole à un arbre, à l'eau, aux étoiles, au soleil ou à un animal.» (Abou'ou, 2012, p. 7)

English: «He was regularly found talking to a tree, to water, to the stars, to the sun, or to an animal. » (Abou'ou, 2014, p. 7)

This segment installs a beneficial animist frame in which nature figures as a community of beings with whom dialogue is possible. The French imperfect «trouvait» combined with the impersonal pronoun «on» conveys a collective, repeated past action, a nuance that the English preterite «was found» with the pronoun «he» transforms into a specific, singular observation. The enumerative structure, however, is strictly preserved in the target language. The formal French phrase «adresser la parole» is rendered through the neutral phrasal verb «talking to», which reduces the ritual solemnity of the original. The ecosystemic effect is minor loss.

Volume 1 presents natural phenomena as integral to the rhythm of village life: the seasons guide agricultural activities, the birds signal the ripening of rice, and the weather is understood through animist knowledge. Volume 2 documents the derangement of these phenomena: famine, drought, and climatic disruption signal the breakdown of ecological order. An illustrative segment from this category is the following:

French : « Les rivières n'ont plus de poissons. » (Abou'ou, 2013, p. 11)

English: «Rivers dry up, freshwater fish is becoming scarce. » (Abou'ou, 2014, p. 11)

This segment belongs to a narrative of disappearance, the French version lapidary, stating a fact without naming its cause. The absence of explanation leaves the statement as a stark lament, a memorial observation of loss. The English translation operates a significant explicitation by adding «Rivers dry up», making the hydrological cause explicit and introducing a dynamic process absent from the French static statement. The categorical French «n'ont plus» is rendered as the progressive «is becoming scarce», which introduces a temporal dynamic and a diagnostic dimension. This transposition constitutes a notable ecosystemic amplification, aligning the narrative more closely with ecological diagnosis than with pure lament. The ecosystemic effect is ecosystemic gain.

3.4. Synthesis: evolution from Volume 1 to Volume 2

Table 5: Evolution of ecological narratives

Type of Narrative (Stibbe)	Volume 1	Volume 2
Ideology	Animism, sharing, respect	Materialism, capitalism, exploitation
Frame	Nature as a community of beings	Nature as a resource to be exploited
Metaphor	Animals as partners	Animals as commodities
Evaluation	Positive	Negative
Identity	Tita as ecological guarantor	Edima as denouncer
Conviction	Divine justice, respect for ancestors	Immanent justice, punishment of exploiters
Story	Symbiosis, harmony, regulation	Extinction, flight, rupture, zoophilia
Erasure	Absence of protective laws (positive erasure)	Erasure of local knowledge (negative erasure)

Table 5 visualises this shift. It is worth noting that erasure appears on both sides: in Volume 1, it is positive erasure, the absence of hygienist and utilitarian discourse; in Volume 2, it is negative erasure, the erasure of local knowledge and animist memory. The translation, by preserving both regimes, makes this dialectic perceptible to the Anglophone reader.

This evolution manifests through emblematic segments. In Volume 1, the relationship of symbiosis with birds, the ritual sharing of game, and the personification of the parrot Jakop illustrate an animistic dialogism. In Volume 2, by contrast, the definitive disappearance of the panther, the flight of animals panic-stricken by the noise of machines, and Papi's zoophilic act signal the rupture of this bond.

Our quantitative analysis confirms this qualitative observation. Ecosystemic gains (13.2%) occur predominantly in Volume 2, where the translation reinforces the ecological critique through explicitation («Rivers dry up»), emotional intensification («panic-stricken»), and semantic reinforcement («dragged»). This suggests that Ngompe's translation not only preserves but occasionally amplifies the ecological message of the source text, particularly in the sections that denounce environmental degradation.

The significant loss (2.3%), the rendering of «geste réparateur» as «preparatory gesture», stands as a reminder that even a generally faithful translation can sometimes weaken the ecological and symbolic meaning of the original. This loss is significant because it affects a segment that narrates the reparation of a transgression against the hunting rules, a narrative that carries ecological and social meaning.

4. DISCUSSION

Our findings confirm that Volume 1 is dominated by beneficial ecological narratives that construct an animist ecology of symbiosis, sharing, and regulation, while Volume 2 is characterized by destructive narratives that describe an ecology of extraction, commodification, and derangement. This opposition is not gradual but abrupt, and it manifests across all thematic categories. This radical rupture reflects the broader transformation that Eyenga Onana (2021) identifies as a descent into hell (p. 77) following the death of Tita. The first volume, with its nostalgic description of the golden age, constructs an ideology of animism and sharing. The second volume, with its documentation of degradation, constructs an ideology of materialism and exploitation. The shift from nature as community to nature as resource represents a fundamental transformation in the relationship between humans and the environment. This transformation is also evident across thematic

categories. For fauna, the shift from animals as partners to animals as commodities represents a radical change in the ontological status of non-human beings. For eco-cultural practices, the shift from ritual sharing to market sale represents a radical change in economic and social organisation. For flora, the shift from the forest as a community of beings to the forest as a resource to be extracted represents a radical change in the human relationship to their environment. For natural phenomena, the shift from harmonious seasonal cycles to climatic derangement represents a radical change in the understanding of natural processes.

Our findings also confirm that Maurice Ngompe adopts a resolutely foreignising translation strategy. The predominance of literal translation (35.9%) and borrowing (29.2%) indicates that Ngompe prioritises formal correspondence and cultural preservation over target-audience accommodation. This strategy manifests in several ways. First, in the treatment of proper names, Ngompe systematically resorts to borrowing for personal names (Tita, Tabita), personified animal names (Ko'oko), and ritual objects. This choice refuses generic dilution, such as «rooster» for «ko'oko», and preserves the cultural identity of beings and things. Second, in the preservation of enumerative structures, the long lists of animals, game parts, or food items are systematically retained in their entirety and in their original syntactic order. The cumulative effect, characteristic of the oral rhythm of the Cameroonian narrative, is not sacrificed to a more fluent English prose. Third, in the preservation of metaphors and personifications, the figures of speech that construct animism, such as dialogue with animals and the attribution of intentions or responsibilities to beasts, are transferred into English as they stand. The translator does not rationalise these representations by turning them into mere beliefs or superstitions; he presents them as narrative givens, thus respecting the regime of truth of the source text. Fourth, in the handling of ambiguities and ironies, Ngompe maintains this register

even if the irony may be less immediately transparent to a non-francophone reader. He does not sacrifice enunciative complexity on the altar of clarity. From House's (2015) perspective, Ngompe's strategy aligns with overt translation: the target text does not pretend to function as a second original in the English-speaking culture; it assumes its cultural and linguistic otherness. The cultural filter is minimal: Ngompe does not adapt the text to Anglo-Saxon norms, but preserves the enumerative structures, proper names, and animist metaphors. The functional equivalence, that is, the preservation of the source text's ecological function of denouncing the degradation of fauna and preserving the memory of traditional knowledge, is maintained in the target text.

Our findings further confirm that the translation largely preserves the ecological meaning of the source text, with complete preservation accounting for 67.2% of segments. Ecosystemic gains account for 13.2% of the corpus and occur predominantly in Volume 2, where the translation amplifies the ecological critique. Ecosystemic gains result from translation strategies including explicitation, where «Rivers dry up» makes explicit the hydrological cause absent from the French «Les rivières n'ont plus de poissons», emotional intensification, where «panic-stricken» intensifies the distress of «affolés», semantic reinforcement, where «dragged» intensifies the physical violence of «traîner», and contextual enrichment, that is, the addition of information that clarifies the ecological context for the Anglophone reader. These gains are particularly significant in Volume 2, where the translation reinforces the ecological message of the source text. This suggests that Ngompe, while maintaining general fidelity to the source text, seizes opportunities to amplify the ecological critique when the context allows. Ecosystemic losses are limited, with significant loss accounting for only 2.3% of segments. The most significant loss occurs in Segment 15, where «geste réparateur» (restorative gesture) is translated as «preparatory gesture», suppressing the

reparative and sacrificial dimensions of the original expression. This loss is significant because it affects a segment that narrates the reparation of a transgression against the hunting rules, a narrative that carries ecological and social meaning. Minor losses (17.2%) are primarily associated with lexical modulation or semantic generalisation. For example, the replacement of «renseignements» (intelligence gathering) with the generic «information» reduces semantic precision without significantly altering the ecological framework of the narrative.

Finally, our findings confirm that Ngompe's foreignising strategy functions as an act of cultural and ecological resistance. By refusing to systematically translate vernacular names into generic equivalents, by maintaining enumerative structures, and by not smoothing over syntactic asperities, Ngompe practises what Cronin (2017) terms ecotranslation, a translation that resists the erasure of local knowledge and the neo-colonial homogenisation of representations of nature. In Venuti's (1995) terms, Ngompe's foreignising strategy renders visible the presence of the translator and highlights the foreign identity of the source text, protecting it from the ideological dominance of the target culture. This choice is particularly significant in the context of the ecological narratives, where the preservation of animist representations, such as the attribution of intention to animals, the personification of the parrot, and the ritual logic of viper consumption, challenges the rationalist and utilitarian assumptions of Anglophone discourse. This resistance is not confined to the diegetic content; it extends to the translation itself. By refusing to naturalise the text for the Anglophone market, Ngompe resists the erasure of local knowledge and the neo-colonial homogenisation of representations of nature. His translation becomes an act of memorial resistance: it makes audible, in English, a voice that has not renounced its geography, its fauna, or its ancestors. As Eyenga Onana (2021) notes, the apostrophe to Tita transforms the narrative

into a tacit dialogue between the living and the dead (p. 74), a gesture that invokes the past as a resource for resisting the present. Ngompe's translation extends this gesture by making it accessible to an Anglophone audience, making translation itself an act of memorial resistance against neo-colonial erasure.

This study makes several contributions to theoretical debates. To ecolinguistics, it validates Stibbe's typology as an analytical tool for literary translation, demonstrating the operability of the eight narrative types on a bilingual corpus. It shows how ecological narratives evolve not only within a work but also across its translation. To translation studies, it demonstrates the applicability of Chesterman's taxonomy and House's model to the analysis of ecological meaning in translation, showing how syntactic strategies can affect ecosystemic effects. It also contributes to the understanding of translation as a political and ethical act. To postcolonial ecocriticism, it demonstrates the political stakes of translation in postcolonial contexts, showing how foreignisation can function as resistance against cultural homogenisation. It also contributes to the understanding of slow violence (Nixon, 2011) in African literature. To sociolinguistics, it illuminates the role of the translator as a cultural mediator in contexts of linguistic and ecological inequality, showing how translation choices affect the representation and preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity.

5. CONCLUSION

We have examined the evolution of ecological narratives in Jeanne Marie Rosette Abou'ou's *Lettre à Tita* and Maurice Ngompe's English translation. Our findings reveal a radical rupture between the two volumes: Volume 1 constructs an animist ecology of harmony and symbiosis, while Volume 2 documents an ecology of degradation and extraction.

Ngompe's translation adopts a resolutely foreignising strategy, with literal translation and borrowing as the dominant

procedures. The translation demonstrates complete preservation of ecological meaning in 67.2% of segments, with ecosystemic gains primarily occurring in Volume 2, where the translation amplifies the ecological critique.

We conclude that Ngompe's translation functions as an act of cultural and ecological resistance against neo-colonial homogenisation. By preserving the cultural and ecological specificity of rural Cameroon, the translation functions as an act of memory and resistance against the forces of globalisation that impose a logic of extraction and erasure of local knowledge.

This study has highlighted a radical rupture in the relationship with animals, cultural practices, flora, and natural phenomena: the animist and dialogical community of Volume 1 gives way to industrialised exploitation and the violation of bodies in Volume 2. Maurice Ngompe's translation, faithful to a foreignising strategy, preserves this ecological narrative, while sometimes amplifying the critique through more incisive lexical choices.

This study has several limitations that we acknowledge. First, it is limited to a single literary work and its translation; future research could examine multiple works or multiple translations of the same work. Second, the study is limited to translations from French to English; future research could examine translations into or from Cameroonian indigenous languages. Third, the study focuses on ecological narratives; future research could examine other aspects of translation, such as stylistic or cultural features. Future research could also explore the reception of the translation by Anglophone readers, examining how foreignising strategies affect the understanding and appreciation of ecological narratives. Additionally, comparative studies of multiple translators of the same work could illuminate the relationship between translation strategies and ecosystemic effects. Finally, this study opens the way for broader reflection on the role of

translation in the preservation of local ecological knowledge in the age of the Anthropocene. As the environmental crisis intensifies, the question of how local knowledge can be preserved and transmitted across linguistic and cultural barriers becomes increasingly urgent. Translation, as Cronin (2017) argues, can play a vital role in this enterprise, provided it is practised with ecological awareness and sensitivity to cultural specificities.

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