

MY NAME IS TYSON: IDENTIFYING PROPER NAME TRANSLATION AND ITS EFFECT(S) IN *BEYBLADE*

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Abstract: This study examines the procedures adapted for the proper translation of (character) names in the anime *Beyblade* and the effects of applying these translation procedures. Character names belong to the Culture Specific Items (CSIs) group known as proper names. As a CSI, names can contain historical and/or cultural references, which makes them difficult to translate. The study extracted the original names from the source text, *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*, and compared them to their English version in the target text, *Beyblade*. The data collected were analyzed using the translation procedures proposed by Fernandes (2006) and Hervey & Higgins (1992) to determine how the translation affects the movie. The analysis indicated that name translation in *Beyblade* mainly employed translation procedures of Recreation, Substitution, and Copy. They result in the loss of cultural reference and hidden meaning behind the names, affecting the story's intrinsic elements, particularly regarding the plot and characterization. The American audiences, therefore, are deprived of the opportunity to gain specific insights into the characters' roles, relationships, and traits embedded in the character names of the original *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*.

Keywords: Beyblade, Translation Procedures, Translation Effect, Name Translation

INTRODUCTION

Should names in literary works be translated? Whether names should be translated or not has been a subject of discussion among scholars, translators, and readers for many years. The issue arises when a literary work is translated from one language to another, and the names of characters, places, and objects also need to be translated. Name is an essential part of literary works as it is often related to intrinsic elements of the story and carries the author's intention. In addition, it can also contain the cultural, historical, and social context of the story, as well as the author's intention. Furthermore, it can reveal their personality, background, or role in the story (Wamitila, 1999; Windt-Val, 2012).

Translating character names can influence its (historical, social, or cultural) content and affect how a story goes. Previous studies on the translation of names primarily focus on the language aspects of the translation process. More discussion has yet to be made regarding how it can affect the intrinsic elements of a literary work.

Beyblade, launched in the United States in 2002, was adapted from *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*—a Japanese animated series based on a *shonen manga* of the same name. The series aired in Japan in 2001 before being translated into English and broadcast to American audiences. As a typical *shonen* or show for boys, it follows the story of a group of young boys (Bladebreakers in English or BBA

team in the original) in their adventures fighting against others in a spinning-top game known as Bey battles. *Beyblade* was first licensed by Nelvana, which produced the English version of the anime. It consists of 51 episodes spanning three seasons: the first titled *Beyblade*, the second *Beyblade: V-Force*, and the third *Beyblade: G-Revolution*.

Like other Japanese animations in the U.S., the series underwent several adjustments and a complete Americanization before the English version was released. The adjustments involve translating and changing the original logo, creating new theme songs for the series, and translating and adapting new names for the characters. For example, Kinomiya Takao, one of the main characters in *Beyblade*, has his name localized into Tyson Granger. Another is Mizuhara Max, who becomes Max Tate in the English version. Those two names sound more American than their original ones, but why are such things necessary? Initially, U.S. producers believed that anime's "Japaneseness" would not appeal to U.S. audiences (McKevitt, 2010).

Furthermore, Chambers (2012) also mentions that scholars have previously predicted that anime would not survive, let alone become popular, in the West because of the vast cultural and social differences between Western and Eastern animation. In the movie, certain cultural practices may not translate to American audiences; hence, the references are lost to them. Then, there is also the case of themes that are socially acceptable to the Japanese but are not to the Americans. These cultural and social differences make it necessary for U.S. producers to translate and localize anime for American audiences.

Character names are one of the items that are changed during the localization of *Beyblade* into its English counterpart. Names can be defined as a part of cultural elements or are otherwise known as Culture Specific Items (CSIs). According to Aixela (1996), Culture Specific Items (CSIs) are "elements of the text connected to certain concepts in the foreign culture (history, art, literature) which might be unknown to the readers." CSIs encompass any references, practices, or items that belong to a particular culture and may not be familiar to those from other cultures. Aixela (1996) divides CSIs into two categories—proper names and common expressions. Character names, as a part of a person's name, are included in the

proper name category. This research is limited to the study of proper names, especially concerning character names and how translating those names affects the (intrinsic) parts of the story.

Proper names imply a particular word or label that refers to "...specific person, place, or thing, and is usually capitalized" (Howard, 2009 in Brasiene, 2013). It covers conventional names with no particular meaning and unconventional names with specific historical and cultural associations (Aixela, 1996). Since names can contain historical and/or cultural references, name translation poses challenges to translators. They must find its equivalency in the target language. After all, culture is regarded as "the greatest obstacle...at least to the achievement of an accurate and decent translation" (Newmark, 2010:172-173). Therefore, translators have to truly consider whether they want to translate the character names into more familiar ones to the target audience or whether they want to keep the character names as they are and make them sound foreign to the target audience.

In addition to cultural references, character names also serve a particular purpose in fiction; they are not simply chosen for no reason. Fernandes (2006) stated that names play a role in "...creating comic effects and portraying characters' personality traits, which will often guide the reader throughout the story's plot." Epstein (2012) also voices a similar view that "by creatively employing names, authors can relatively easily, and without using a lot of excess words, hint at a character's personality, beliefs, habits, experiences, feelings, and/or appearance, and they can lead readers to make certain judgments about the people in this fictional world." It means that character names are vital in portraying the characters' personalities, traits, and identities and giving the audience information about the story.

Character names are as much a character identity as they are part of the story. Changing character names in a translation or localization process will affect the story as a whole. In 'Kinomiya Takao's' case, for one, by looking at his original name, the audience might have guessed that the anime takes place in Japan or other East Asian countries. They can also deduce that 'Takao' is of Asian origin and possesses typical Asian features and

personality, thus giving the name. However, since the English version of *Beyblade* modifies his name into 'Tyson Granger,' allusions will be lost, as mentioned earlier. Once the American audience watches *Beyblade* and sees 'Tyson,' they will immediately assume that the setting of the anime's story is in the U.S. or some Western countries. Also 'Tyson' is more likely an ordinary boy living in one of those places as mentioned above. Will this affect the story? Yes, it probably will, especially since the original 'Takao' is supposed to be one of the Japanese representatives in BBA's team of beybladers.

This study aims to explore the case of name translation in *Beyblade*. It focuses mainly on identifying translation procedures used in the English version and their effects on the series. Scholars have introduced different translation procedures. Translators usually apply one or a combination of translation procedures in their work. The translation procedures they use determine the way translators approach the text, whether they want to keep the translation close to the source language and culture or whether they want to move it closer to the target language and culture. It is essential, therefore, for translators to be familiar with the culture of both target and source languages. Cultural sensitivity and awareness can lead translators to produce the most accurate translation.

Translation procedures proposed by Fernandes (2006) are used in this study to examine name translation in *Beyblade*. Fernandes suggested ten procedures for name translation as follows: a) Rendition, used when the name in the source text is entangled with the lexicon of the source language, thus acquiring "meaning" to be rendered in the target language; b) Copy, used to replicate the name in source text without any orthographic adjustments; c) Transcription, used to adapt a new name to conform to the language system of the target; d) Substitution, used when a new name in the target text replaces the one in source text, even though the two names are not related formally and/or semantically; e) Recreation, used when the new name is created in target text to create similar effect to the target audience; f) Deletion, used to remove the original name either partially or totally from the target text; g) Addition, to provide extra information about the original name so the

target audience can better understand it; h) Transposition, to change a part of the name from one part of the speech to another without modifying the meaning; h) Phonological Replacement, used to create a new name, which has a similar sound to the original name; i) Conventionality, usually used for translating historical, literary, or geographical names by replacing the original name with an existing one in the target language, which especially invokes the same image as the original name in the source text.

The topic of name translation in literary works like novels and films has been discussed previously by many researchers. Davies (2003), for instance, focuses on analyzing the translation of cultural elements, including names, in *Harry Potter* books. Sabzalipour & Pishkar (2015) also discuss translation strategies for proper nouns in children's literature; they describe the case of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. Furthermore, Fernandes (2006) puts his two cents and explores the translation of names into various titles in the children's fantasy literature genre. Similarly, Mazi-Leskovar (2003) deals with the matter, especially in the domestication and foreignization of American prose for Slovenian children.

Nevertheless, more research must be done on name translation and its effects in anime. Only a few, like Suter (2022) with the domestication of anime in the US, Dwyer (2012), and González (2007) with their anime fansub, come close to the discussion of anime translation, and Sung et al. (2016) about the response of children to the character name translation. Anime has become a large part of the U.S. youth today (Suter, 2022; Chambers, 2012; Jiang Bresnahan et al., 2006; Fennell et al., 2013; Seale, 2018); therefore, studies on anime (and also manga) are popular. Scholars have been writing about various topics on anime. Chambers (2012) explores how Japanese anime affects American people born in the 80s and 90s.

On the other hand, Ramasubramanian & Kornfield (2012) look at the gender issues in anime, particularly concerning how the U.S. youth see Japanese heroines as their role models. Similarly, Wood (2013) shows interest in anime, especially boys' love, and its censorship. Then, there is also Lu (2008), who investigates the politics behind the

internationalization of Japanese anime. Anime undoubtedly offers a variety of topics and opportunities for academic research. Although some researchers have begun to take an interest and write on the topic, various areas of anime have yet to be explored, including translation into and/or anime.

This study focuses specifically on the name translation in the English version of an anime titled *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*. The anime is renamed into *Beyblade* upon reaching the U.S. shore and has most of its character names translated into new English ones. Hence, it attempts to analyze the translation procedures applied in the name translation of *Beyblade*'s characters and find out what kind of effect(s) they bring to the story, especially regarding the intrinsic elements (plot, characterization, setting, theme, or point of view).

METHOD

The current study's source text (S.T.) is the original anime of *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*, while the target text (T.T.) is the English version, *Beyblade*. The series was first launched in 2001 in Japan and later came to the U.S. in 2002. The study is only limited to the first season produced by Nelvana. It was chosen because Nelvana's English version is the basis for the anime's international version and the general *Beyblade* franchise. Furthermore, the first season has many characters who appear and play a significant role in the later seasons.

The study collected proper names, specifically character names, from the source text (*Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*) manually. Then, they were mapped and compared to their English counterparts in the target text (*Beyblade*) to determine the translation procedures used. After learning about translation procedures, the study investigated the possible effects of applying the procedures to the English version. It employed the translation procedures proposed by Fernandes (2006) to identify the translation of character names in the animation series. Additionally, Hervey & Higgins's (1992) theory was used to reveal the concept of translation loss in determining the effects of applying the said translation procedures.

In short, the study started with listing down all proper (character) names in both S.T.

and T.T., comparing them, identifying the translation procedures (using Fernandes' theory as a base), and finally discussing the effects of the whole process (using Hervey and Higgins' theory as a base). A comparative analysis of character names in S.T. and T.T. revealed different translation procedures. As stated, character names can be divided into conventional and unconventional. Conventional names encompass names with no particular meaning, while unconventional names refer to names with specific meanings, whether inside or outside the story. Therefore, translating them using specific procedures can bring about different effects. The details of these translation procedures and their impact on proper name translation in *Beyblade* are discussed in the following section.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Character names in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* are originally diverse. Although it mostly takes place in Japan and most of its characters are Japanese, the anime introduces many characters from Europe, America, and even Asia. Furthermore, the plot involves the main characters visiting other foreign countries and participating in a worldwide *Beyblade* tournament. Thus, it gives the series international nuance even without translation into English. Nevertheless, Nelvana has decided to translate the anime and localize all character names for American audiences. The sub-sections below will discuss the procedures used for proper (character) name translation and their effect on the story.

Translation Procedures and Name Translation

Bakuten Shoot Beyblade is originally a Japanese anime; therefore, it contains Japanese CSIs. Concerning character names, Japan has a different naming system from the U.S. Family name is put first in the beginning, while the given name is in the last. For example, 'Kinomiya Takao' means that his family name is 'Kinomiya,' and his given name is 'Takao.' In contrast, in the U.S., a given name is put at the beginning and a family name at the last. Hence, for Takao, his name in the U.S. is supposed to be 'Takao Kinomiya.' The same applies to the other characters in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*. Their English counterparts should have the order of their name switched to make them

equivalent. Most of the character names in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* can also be categorized into unconventional names, meaning their names have some special meaning to the storyline. However, as presented in Table 1 below, different translation procedures have been applied to character names in *Beyblade*.

Table 1. Character Name Translation

Original Name in S.T.	English Name in TT	Translation Procedure(s)
Kinomiya Takao	Tyson Granger	Recreation
Hiwatari Kai	Kai Hiwatari	Rendition and Copy
Mizuhara Max	Max Tate	Substitution
Kon Rei	Raymond "Ray" Kon	Recreation and Phonological Replacement
Saien "Kyouju" Manabu	Kenny "Chief"	Substitution and Recreation
Kinomiya Ryuunosuke	Ryu Granger	Recreation
Daitenji Kogoro	Stanley A. Dickinson	Recreation
Chen Rai	Lee Wong	Recreation
Chen Mao	Mariah Wong	Recreation
Kiki	Kevin Cheng	Recreation
Gao	Gary Tan	Recreation
Steven	Steven	Copy
Antonio	Antonio	Copy
Emily Watson	Emily York	Substitution
Michael Sommers	Michael Parker	Substitution
Olivier Boulanger	Oliver Polanski	Substitution
Tornatore Giancarlo	Enrique Giancarlo	Substitution
Ralf Jürgens	Robert Jürgens	Substitution
Johnny McGregor	Johnny McGregor	Copy
Boris Kuznetsov	Bryan Kuznetsov	Substitution
Vladimir Borkov	Boris Balkov	Transcription and Substitution
Zangiev	Alexander	Recreation
Yuri Ivanov	Tala Valkov	Recreation
Ivan Papov	Ian Papov	Transcription
Sergei Petrov	Spencer Petrov	Substitution
Hiwatari Souichirou	Voltaire Hiwatari	Rendition and Substitution
Hiruta	Carlos	Recreation
Suzuka	Stewart	Recreation
Tsukuba	Casey	Recreation
Motegi	Trevor	Recreation
Mizuhara Judy	Judy Tate	Substitution
Kinomiya Tatsuya	Tatsuya Granger	Substitution

Based on Table 1, the translation procedures used in translating *Beyblade's* character names are Recreation (13), Substitution (10), Copy (3), Transcription (1), Rendition and Copy (1), Rendition and Substitution (1), Recreation and Phonological Replacement (1), Substitution and Recreation (1), and Transcription and Substitution (1). It concluded that Recreation is the translation procedure primarily used in *Beyblade's* name translation, followed by Substitution, Copy, and Transcription. The rest involved a combination of two procedures, like Rendition and Copy, Rendition and Substitution, Recreation and Phonological Replacement, Substitution and Recreation, and Transcription and Substitution.

Changing the Audience, Changing the Characters

Recreation—making up an entirely new name in target text to create a similar effect to the target audience—is the procedure mainly used for name translation in *Beyblade*. Based on the table, the procedure seems to involve making an entirely new set of (both given and family) names or only a part of the given name or family name. 'Kinomiya Takao' of *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* is recreated into 'Tyson Granger' of *Beyblade* through this procedure. 'Takao' (タカオ) is a pretty masculine name in Japan, meaning either 'filial piety' or 'high/valuable'. Then, 'Kinomiya' (木ノ宮) refers to the 'shrine/palace of wood.'

On the other hand, 'Tyson' can mean 'high-spirited' or 'ember/firebrand' while 'Granger' is an occupational name for 'worker of a grange or granary.' 'Tyson' may make an excellent equivalent to 'Takao'. 'First, the name 'Tyson' has the same starting letter (T) as the original. Also, it does well to illustrate the boy's bright nature. Finally, it has a similar meaning to the original. However, while the first name 'Tyson' is a good recreation for 'Takao,' the same thing does not apply to the family name. 'Kinomiya' underlines the boy's role as the keeper of one of the legendary beasts, Dragoon—which 'Granger' fails to replicate as a simple granary worker.

Some characters in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* do not initially possess a surname, but through Recreation, they suddenly have a complete (given and family) name in *Beyblade*.

The examples are '**Kiki**,' who becomes '**Kevin Cheng**,' and '**Gao**,' who becomes '**Gary Tan**.' Then, a few have changed their names to entirely different English-sounding ones, like **Zangiev** to **Alexander**, **Hiruta** to **Carlos**, **Suzuka** to **Stewart**, **Tsukuba** to **Casey**, and **Motegi** to **Trevor**. The new names in *Beyblade* are very different from their original counterparts in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*. The character names are recreated into new English ones that do not have the same effect as the original ones in S.T. but are more familiar and culture friendly to the target audiences.

The second procedure used for translating character names in *Beyblade* is Substitution. Fernandes (2006) stated that Substitution involves replacing the original name in S.T. with a different one in T.T. that has little to no connection with the original. From the data, there are nine cases of Substitution in *Beyblade*. First, Max's family name, '**Mizuhara**,' is substituted with '**Tate**.' In Japanese, the name 'Mizuhara (水原)' can be defined as 'water field,' while 'Tate' is of English origin and means 'cheerful.' The two names do not share any links either formally and/or semantically.

Such is the case with the rest of the substitution group. 'Emily **Watson**' in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* also becomes 'Emily **York**.' However, the names 'Watson' and 'York' significantly differ as the first is a patronymic surname while the second is habitational. Correspondingly, 'Michael **Sommers**' starts as having the surname of 'child of summer' in the S.T. and suddenly becomes 'Michael **Parker**,' a 'park keeper' in T.T. The substitution procedure in translating *Beyblade*'s name characters involves replacing a part of the character's name with a new name of English (or Western) origin. It sounds more familiar to the American audiences. Furthermore, the new names adapted for T.T. (*Beyblade*) do not share any similarities with the original ones in S.T. (*Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*).

The third procedure, Copy, implies replicating the name from S.T. to T.T. It means that the original name in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* will remain more or less the same in *Beyblade*. Only three instances are found—'Johnny McGregor,' 'Antonio,' and 'Steven.' Three of them possess the same name, both in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* and *Beyblade*. It also works for 'Hiwatari Kai,' whose name

undergoes Rendition and Copy procedures and turns into 'Kai Hiwatari' following the U.S. naming system. No further modifications are detected from his name. The copy procedure seems the safest as it does not change anything and thus will not affect the story.

In addition to the main three procedures, there are several combinations, such as Rendition and Substitution, Recreation and Phonological Replacement, Substitution and Recreation, and Transcription and Substitution. An example of Rendition and Substitution can be seen in Kai's grandfather, Hiwatari Souichirou, whose original surname 'Hiwatari' is rendered the same in *Beyblade*. In contrast, his name '**Souichirou**' is substituted with '**Voltaire**.' Similarly, the Replacement doesn't have any relation to the original name. Rei also encounters the same procedure, though with slightly different procedures. 'Kon Rei' goes under the combined knife of Recreation and Phonological Replacement and becomes 'Raymond "Ray" Kon.' His given name is recreated into a familiar English name of '**Raymond**,' gaining a new nickname, 'Ray.' Phonological Replacement involves inventing a new name with a similar sound to the original name. In this case, '**Rei**' is being replaced with '**Ray**,' which sounds similar to the original but is more familiar to the target audience.

The following combination is Substitution and Recreation, which is performed for translating Saien "Kyouju" Manabu into Kenny "Chief." The Substitution part involves replacing Manabu's nickname "**Kyouju (Professor in English)**" with "**Chief**." His name '**Manabu**' is also recreated into '**Kenny**.' The name 'Manabu' holds the meaning of 'studying or learning,' but 'Kenny' is apparently a diminutive form of Kenneth, which means 'handsome or born of fire.' They are quite different formally and/or semantically.

Finally, the last set is Transcription and Substitution, which works for Vladimir Borkov's character. The surname of '**Borkov**' is transcribed into '**Balkov**,' which is more commonly used in the U.S. '**Vladimir**,' a name of Russian origin, is replaced with '**Boris**' of Bulgarian origin. Both names also do not share the same meaning, with 'Vladimir' being identified as 'great ruler' and 'Boris' as 'small' or 'wolf/snow leopard.' The choice of naming is another far-fetched match without any

correlation, as almost all name translations in *Beyblade*.

What is behind a name

In translation, transfer from the source language to the target language will result in differences, otherwise known as loss. Hervey & Higgins (1992) believe translation loss to be parts that cannot be replicated from S.T. to T.T., inevitably leading to the loss of cultural references. However, translation loss can also appear in different forms; Hervey & Higgins (1992) mention the loss regarding sound and rhythm. Lurisari (2019) describes three types of translation loss: reduction, linguistic compression, and particularization. The translation loss in *Beyblade* specifically is related to character names. Many names in the series are loaded with meanings; translating character names causes a loss of cultural references and hidden meanings. The hidden meaning aspect, in this case, refers to how the name translation has affected the role, relationship, and/or traits of the characters in the S.T. (*Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*).

Names in fiction incorporate cultural references and carry the author's intention and hidden meanings. *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* provides excellent examples of such cases through their character names. Bit-beasts of the BBA team—Dragoon, Dranzer, Draciel, and Driger—all represent the *shijin sōō* or Four Gods. These Gods are quite popular in East Asia and often appear in various literary works. Seiryuu (Qinglong) is the Azure Dragon who guards the East and deities of wood nature; Suzaku (Zhuque) is the Vermilion Bird who rules over the South and deities of fire nature; Byakko (Baihu) is the White Tiger of the West and deities of metal nature; and finally, Genbu (Xuanwu) is Black Tortoise of the North and deities of water (Lazar, 2018; Ding, 2005; Goethem, 2016). In the movie, Dragoon is Seiryuu; Dranzer is Suzaku; Driger is Byakko; and Draciel is Genbu.

The bit-beasts representing Four Gods in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* are parts of Japanese CSIs. The figures of these bit-beasts are linked to their owner's name. First, Dragoon or Seiryuu is owned by Takao Kinomiya. As mentioned, Seiryuu, the Azure Dragon, rules over deities of wood nature. Hence, Takao's family name, Kinomiya (木ノ宮), contains the

Japanese character (kanji) for wood (木) to signal his relation to the Azure Dragon bit-beast. The same thing also applies to the other members of the BBA team. Kai, for instance, has 'Hiwatari (火渡)' as his family name. The kanji (火) stands for 'fire' in Japanese, symbolizing his connection to Dranzer or Suzaku, who has a fire affinity. Then, there is also Max, whose family name 'Mizuhara (水原)' is written with the kanji for water (水). It is related to Draciel's water manipulation ability. Last, Kon (金) from Rei's family name can have several meanings, but the most appropriate one for this case will be 'metal' or 'gold'—Byakko/Driger's attack type.

Based on the translation procedures, such cultural references, and hidden meanings are not reproduced in *Beyblade* because the English version has translated almost all the character names into new ones with little to no connection to the original. Tyson, for example, can mean 'firebrand' or 'high-spirited,' while Granger refers to the occupation of a granary worker. It does not indicate wood origin nor hint at his relation to Dragoon/Seiryuu. Max also faces the same problem. His original surname, 'Mizuhara,' implies his position as the owner of Draciel/Genbu, who has water affinity. On the other hand, his new last name in *Beyblade*, 'Tate,' means 'cheerful.' Both 'Mizuhara' and 'Tate' are too far apart. The significance of Takao Kinomiya, Max Mizuhara, and many other characters' names is most likely lost on the American audiences because the *Beyblade* does not reproduce similar references and hidden meanings as in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*. Max and Takao, in one team together with Rei and Kai, are an allusion to the Four Gods. The four of them are the series' main characters; therefore, the audiences of *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* can easily understand the bit-beasts and elemental affinity they have based on the character names. Max Mizuhara's name has a meaning related to water which in turn refers to Genbu, the deities of water. Same with Takao-Seiryuu-wood, Kai-Suzaku-fire, and Rei-Byakko-metal. The BBA team (Max, Takao, Kai, and Rei) is an allusion to the Four Gods. How the team comes to be, and their relationship is an important part of the plot. The American audience, however, might need to include this part of the plot and think that

team was made by chance and has no special relationship.

In addition to Takao and Max, several names in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* are also inextricably linked. **Daitenji Kogoro's** name, loosely translated as 'great temple of Beyblade, provides a good example. He is the chairman of the official Beyblading Committee. His surname, 'Daitenji (大転寺),' consists of the Japanese characters for 'big/great' + 'revolve/spinning' + 'temple.' The character (転) refers to Beyblade, a spinning-top game. Hence, his original name signifies his position as a prominent figure in the Beyblade world. The English version of his name, **Stanley A. Dickinson**, could not comply with the original one because his name does not have any references to Beyblade nor indicate his role as one of the most influential figures in the Beyblade world. The issue of translating Japanese characters (hiragana, katakana, kanji) can be tricky as different characters lead to different readings and meanings. For example, the word katsu written like this, 'カツ' would mean that deep-fried cutlet typically refers to a breaded and deep-fried cutlet of meat. However, when the word is written using this combination of characters '勝つ,' it would mean 'to win' or 'to be victorious.' While written in kanji character '活' (katsu) can lead to many meanings related to 'activities.' The specific combinations of Japanese characters used in writing character names are crucial in determining their importance. In the case of *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*, it becomes much more complex as the name also carries the author's intention or a hidden purpose related to the plot.

The names in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*, the primary or supporting characters, mainly belong to the unconventional name category. Aixela (1996) stated while conventional names do not have any special meanings, unconventional names are different as they may contain specific historical and cultural associations. The character names originally signal their role in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*—as in the case of Max and Takao as the owner of two legendary beasts with their respective elemental affinity and Daitenji as the chairman of the Beyblading Committee. Furthermore, they also foreshadow the relationship between the characters. A perfect example is the

relationship between bit-beasts and owners such as Takao-Dragoon/Seiryuu, Kai-Dranzer/Suzaku, Max-Draciel/Genbu, and Rei-Driger/Byakko which the owners' surname has suggested. When the anime is translated to English, most of the translated character names (like Tyson Granger, Max Tate, Stanley A. Dickinson, and others) fall into conventional names group which has no particular meaning (Aixela, 1996) to the story. Lu (2008) mentions that giving English names to Japanese characters in anime is one of the "de-politicized internationalization" attempts which is intended to make the product (anime) closer and the characters more approachable to the U.S. audience.

While the change (name translation) is a part of internationalization and an attempt to bring the characters closer to the audience, it ends up disturbing the story and removing critical cultural references. One of the examples is the relationship between Takao and Kai. They belong to the same team but are usually described as rivals in the series. Takao holds the Azure Dragon bit-beast, Dragoon, whereas Kai owns the Vermilion Bird, Dranzer. In Chinese tradition, a dragon and a phoenix are usually portrayed together as a symbol of the royal family; it is perceived as an auspicious sign (Wang, 2021). Furthermore, Wang (2021) elaborates on some famous sayings to describe the relationship between dragon and phoenix, such as "the dragon is playing with the phoenix" (*you lóng xi fèng*) and "the dragon and phoenix together accomplish the auspicious" (*lóng fèng cheng xiàng*). Japan has also employed dragon and phoenix symbolism in many literary works, often appearing as either lovers or rivals. However, Tho (2015) noted that Japanese dragons are rarely paired with phoenixes despite having Yin and Yang qualities. Because of their differences, the dragon and phoenix make a perfect pair, whether as allies (lovers) or enemies. Takao and Kai's relationship in the anime is quite similar to the bit-beasts they hold—dragon and phoenix. Both complement each other as a team yet contrast each other as rivals. Their relationship remains more or less the same in *Beyblade*, albeit missing the cultural references of rivalry between dragon and phoenix as told in old Eastern tales. The American audience of the movie may have difficulties understanding the rivalry (an allusion to the dragon and

phoenix relationship in legend) that Takao (Tyson) and Kai symbolize in *Beyblade* due to the Substitution of Takao's original family name—Kinomiya in Japanese—to Granger in English.

Another hidden aspect of character names in the original *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* is that they hint at personal traits. This part is also removed when the names are all translated into conventional names in U.S. *Beyblade*. **Chen Mao** from *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* turns into **Mariah Wong** in *Beyblade*. Her given name, Mao, means 'cat' and refers to her cat-like features and her bit-beast, Galux. Yet her new name, Mariah, does not possess any feline meaning. As a name of Latin origin, Mariah means either 'the Lord is my teacher, bitter, beloved, or drop of the sea.' The two names, therefore, are not connected and fail to convey the personal traits that the character possesses.

The name 'Mao' is also related to her being a part of the White Tigers team. Rei initially started as a member of the White Tigers from China but left the group searching for new knowledge. He is the strongest blader of their team and the holder of Driger/Byakko, which is described as a White Tiger in Japanese and Chinese mythology (Lazar, 2018; Ding, 2005; Goethem, 2016). Like Rei, other members of White Tigers also have bit-beasts related to cat species. Mao has Galux, a Lynx bit-beast, while Rai, a War Lion, has Galeon. This connection is severed in *Beyblade* when Chen Mao turns into Mariah Wong.

The 'cat' characterization that the movie's creator intended for the Chen Mao character through her name in the original story could not be seen in the translated version. Hence, the American audience would see Mariah Wong as another character with cat characteristics without any background information from her name. In the eyes of the American audience, it may change her relationship with other characters with feline characteristics, like Rai and Rei.

Name translation changes the characters' origin and the story's setting. The original *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* mostly takes place in Japan. The character names carry Japanese cultural references, as in the case of the BBA's team and the Four Gods. They can also contain hidden meanings that depict the characters' roles or traits, like in Takao or

Mao's case. With the character names all translated into English, none of those remain. The American *Beyblade* takes place mainly in Bey City, an imaginary city whose location is probably in the Western country based on the name. Most characters also adopt English names. Any Japanese references need to be included in the translation. The audiences of *Beyblade* would not get the opportunity to understand Japanese cultural references and hidden meanings of character names like in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*. On the one hand, name translation allows the target audience to be acquainted with cultural-friendly and familiar names. They will not be confused with foreign names and can get into the story quicker since the characters and setting are of the exact origin as them (Davčíková, 2013; Palm Åsman & Pedersen, 2013; Vid, 2008). On the other hand, it will be difficult to understand the story (especially the plot and characterization, which involves the characters' roles, relationships, and traits in this case) if the names being translated are loaded with meanings and cultural references that play a role in the story like in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*. Differences in character names in both S.T. (*Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*) and T.T. (*Beyblade*) cause a gap of missing details regarding culture and intrinsic elements of the story, particularly the plot and characterization for the target audience. The American audience will probably lose why the BBA team, which the movie's main characters belong to, has an Azure Dragon, Vermilion Bird, White Tiger, and Black Tortoise for their bit-beasts.

The BBA team is an important part of the story as the team consists of the main characters in the series. According to the plot, their team selection is based on a tournament result where the four main characters face each other. The result of bey battles is often decided by the rank of bit-beasts and/or their elemental affinity. Max, Takao (Tyson), Kai, and Rei (Ray) have the sacred bit-beasts (Azure Dragon, Vermilion Bird, White Tiger, and Black Tortoise) who are the allusions to Four Gods in Eastern legend and far superior to other bit-beasts. Hence, four of them advanced to the semifinals and became the BBA team. All of which have been 'foreshadowed' in the original character names. Unfortunately, everything is

lost in translation, with the character names translated into English.

This study also explores the effects the translation has on the story. The findings demonstrated that character names play an important role in the case of *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*, as most of the character names hold a special meaning related to the culture and plot. Hence, cultural references and hidden meanings are lost when the names are not translated correctly into the English version. American audiences who watch *Beyblade*, the English version of *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*, will lose some important information on the series, such as characters' roles (Max and Tyson), characters' relationships (BBA's team and their bit-beasts), characters' traits (Mariah). More details about the characters will be needed to ensure the audiences understand the plot of the story as a whole. Therefore, it is crucial for future research on name translation to consider analyzing the effects of the name translation in addition to determining the specific procedures, techniques, and/or ideologies used in the process.

This study is similar to the research conducted by Jaleniauskienė and Čičelytė (2009), who identify the translation strategies used for name translation in four popular fantasy books translated from English and German by three Lithuanian translators. While the two studies share similarities in analyzing the translation procedures or strategies used for name translation, they differ in the theory used and the subjects examined. Jaleniauskienė and Čičelytė (2009) use translation strategies proposed by Davies (2003), while this study applies Fernandes' (2006) theory. Both believe that character names in literary work have hidden meaning, and translating them into the target language make "these subtle allusions inaccessible" (Jaleniauskienė and Čičelytė, 2009) to the new audience. The findings similarly identify that (re)creation is the strategy or procedure mainly used for name translation. However, it adds that a combination of translation procedures can also happen during name translation instead of only adapting single translation procedures.

This study goes further by examining how name translation can affect the intrinsic elements of a narrative. The effect of translation procedures on the text has also been discussed by Mussche and Willem (2010).

Nevertheless, they focus on analyzing the effects on textual and stylistic features while this study focuses on the intrinsic elements, such as plot and characterization. Mussche and Willem (2010) find out that through the style of the text, the translation text rarely manages to reproduce connotations in the source text, resulting in translation loss. Similar effects can also be found in the case of *Beyblade*. Character names, originally belonging to the unconventional names category and coded with specific historical and cultural associations related to the plot, are translated into new conventional names with no particular references. Hence, it affects the story's plot and characterization, especially regarding the characters' roles, relationships, and traits.

Exploring the linguistics and social side of the translation process is crucial. Nevertheless, when the translation process influences and changes the literary elements, readers may interpret and understand the relevant literary works differently. The translation would be an entirely new work and separated from the original. Thus, studies on how translation affects literary elements are mostly uncharted areas, therefore compelling for future research.

CONCLUSION

The translation procedures used for name translation in *Beyblade* can be divided into two groups: a single procedure and a combination of procedures. Recreation is the most commonly used one in the single group, with 13 occurrences, followed by Substitution with 10. The combination group only shares one occurrence in the whole series. Thus, creating a new name—the one that is hopefully more familiar to the audience but is also capable of exerting a similar effect—for the characters seems to be the most popular choice in *Beyblade*. The second most popular option is making a replacement that shares no resemblance in meaning or form to the original name, Substitution.

However, these procedures have resulted in translation loss. Since the original *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade* mainly occurs in Japan, the character names carry Japanese cultural references, as in the case of the BBA's team and the Four Gods. They can also contain hidden meanings that depict the characters' roles or

traits, like in Takao or Mao's case. With the character names translated into English, none of those remain. They need help with translation. The audiences of *Beyblade* would not get the opportunity to understand cultural references and hidden meanings of character names like in *Bakuten Shoot Beyblade*.

While the English names do not produce the same nuances as the original, they still create a new meaning or effect as in the original anime, like Tyson and Max's case. To some extent, the new name might work well to illustrate the two characters' traits, yet it cannot explain how they are fated to be in the same team as the holder of four legendary beasts. This difference is also considered a translation loss. Using translation procedures in *Beyblade*'s name translation causes a loss in cultural references and hidden meanings (especially regarding characters' roles, relationships, and traits).

Therefore, the name translation in *Beyblade* is supposed to consider each name's cultural aspects and their meanings within the story. More than simply making the new English names sound familiar to the target audience is required, especially when the original names contain Japanese CSIs and wordplay that tend to have hidden meanings to

the story. In terms of translation procedures, Copy and Rendition are good options for translating character names in anime since they do not perform any significant changes to the original name and thus would not affect the story. Substitution and Recreation may also work if the new name in T.T. carries a similar meaning to the original one. That way, the target audience of S.T. and T.T. can enjoy the anime without significant translation loss and confusion about the plot and characterization.

This study only concerns the translation procedures adapted in *Beyblade* and its effects on the story regarding the intrinsic elements, including plot and characterization. It focuses on literary translation and contributes to the conceptual and theoretical aspects of translation, media, and literary studies. The conceptual contribution offers valuable insights into the challenges and considerations of proper name translation in media localization. In the theoretical aspect, this study provides a framework for understanding the impact of translation on media reception and interpretation. Therefore, it is possible to conduct future research on other related fields, such as linguistics, literary criticism, or cultural studies, regarding this topic.

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