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Losses and gains in rendering the Uganda National Land Policy from English into Runyankore-Rukiga

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Abstract:
This article explores gains and losses that are experienced when certain parts of the Uganda National Land Policy (UNLP) are translated from English to Runyankore-Rukiga. It responds to the limited availability of legal and policy documents in indigenous Ugandan languages and asks how legal meaning changes when a specialised English land-policy text is translated for a Runyankore-Rukiga readership. Guided by Nida's equivalence theory and Vermeer's Skopos theory, the study used comparative textual analysis of the English source text and Runyankole-Rukiga target versions, supported by semi-structured interviews with twelve participants, including translators, legal practitioners and local leaders. The findings indicate lexical, syntactic and conceptual deficits in the translation of terms like fiduciary relationship, sovereign trusteeship, administrative land tribunals and land-tenure categories. At the same time, the translation achieved gains in semantic exactitude, cultural approachability and administrative clarity by means of paraphrase, compensation, modulation and the expression of culturally appropriate ideas. The article suggests that the translation of the law into indigenous languages be considered a linguistic and civic project, mandating terminological standardization, training of translators, joint efforts among legal experts and indigenous-language specialists.

Introduction

Legal translation is pivotal to citizens' engagement in public policy, as it enables them to both comprehend and apply it in a meaningful way only if it has been translated into languages they can understand. In Uganda, land is a sensitive and complex resource, yet there is a significant gap in the production of key land policy documents in English. This situation restricts access for a large number of speakers of indigenous languages, such as Runyankore-Rukiga. Runyankore-Rukiga is a Bantu language spoken primarily in Southwestern Uganda, especially in the regions of Ankole and Kigezi. It encompasses two closely related dialects: Runyankore and Rukiga. These dialects are mutually intelligible and share significant linguistic, cultural, and historical similarities.

The Uganda National Land Policy (UNLP) is thus a suitable case study to explore the interplay of legal meaning, institutional authority and cultural interpretation in the process of translation. The aim of this article is to discuss selected clauses in English from the UNLP alongside the Runyankore-Rukiga translations to look for the losses and gains in the process of translation of legal policy discourse. The article is concerned with the transition of technical terms, lengthy legal structures and culturally unknown land tenure concepts into the target language without detracting from the meaning of the law or the accessibility for the reader. It deals specifically with the losses and gains in the translation process.

Venuti (2012) defines losses in translation as elements of meaning, tone or cultural distinction that are inevitably changed or lost when translating a text from the source language text into the target language text. Meanwhile, McGuire (1980) describes gains as 'the enrichment' of the target language or clarification of the source language text in the process of translation. According to Nida and Taber (1982), 'translation equivalence' refers to the process of conveying the source language message into the target language by finding the nearest natural equivalent meaning. From the above definition, it can be inferred that 'translation equivalence' is majorly of two types: 'formal and dynamic equivalence'. Formal equivalence can be traced in the source and target texts at the levels of a single word, at grammatical

level as well as at the collocational level, among others. On the other hand, dynamic equivalence is traceable beyond textual level. It goes beyond the formal level to include the impact of the source language text on the target audience. It therefore extends to the pragmatic levels. This multiplicity of meaning interpretations posed serious challenges for the translators of the Uganda National Land Policy which demanded an extra translation competence that transcended all the above levels to include specialised legal knowledge on how legal texts are written and interpreted.

Theoretical Framework

The 'equivalence theory' (Nida,1964; Nida & Taber, 1974) and the 'Skopos theory' of translation (Vermeer, 1997) guided this study. In legal translation, Nida's Equivalence Theory (1964) is key in differentiating between formal equivalence (word-for-word) and dynamic equivalence (sense-for-sense). Vermeer's Skopos Theory (1997) prioritises the function and purpose of the translation, asserting that the strategy must align with the communicative goal in the target culture. Together, these frameworks enabled the researchers to balance legal precision with cultural and linguistic accessibility.

The researchers chose to combine these two thronged but complementary theories because they both fall under a broader theoretical framework of "translation equivalence theories". The researchers selected this framework following the precepts by Grant and Osanloo (2014) who argue that in translation, "there is no one theory that fits best with any inquiry" (p. 19). As a result, the study benefited from their combined strengths as a lens for the study's data collection, analysis, and interpretation. According to Berry et al. (1997), a theoretical framework helps the researchers to develop ways of interpreting and understanding the study outcomes as guided by the research questions. Given that the researchers endeavoured to position the study under a broader framework of understanding losses and gains involved in the translation process of the Uganda's National Land Policy, they embraced the postulates of Lederman and Lederman (2015) which confirm that the theoretical framework empowers the researchers' understanding of the study's impact.

Additionally, the researchers embraced Grant and Osanloo's (2014) view of a theory as an essential guiding tool that links the parts of the study problem

to the body of existing knowledge.

Literature Review

Losses and Gains in Translating Legal Documents

In the process of translation, it is inevitable that some meanings are bound to be lost while others may be gained. A translator can lose elements of cultural specificity or stylistic resonance, yet gain clarity or reader accessibility (Schaffer,2009). A translator must identify such elements within the original text that engender meaning losses and gains in the translation task, particularly when dealing with culture-specific items (CSIs), namely superordinate (general categories of words) and hyponyms (specific categories) (Baker, 2011). The existence of diverse cultures may result into meaning losses and gains, which CSIs seek to detect. Davies (2003) argues that the more cultural differences there are between the source text and the target text language, the more skilled a translator must be to create a translation that is acceptable to both parties. Therefore, translators should comprehend the traditions and other cultural aspects that distinguish the ST from TT languages.

However, while Davies' (2003) emphasis on cultural understanding is crucial, it does not fully account for the difficulties in achieving equivalence in legal translation. Šarčević (1997) emphasises the difficulty of achieving equivalence in legal translation, particularly when there are no direct terminological equivalents in the target language. A similar challenge is echoed by Kasirer (2001) who highlights the semantic loss that occurs when translating civil law terms from English into other languages. These challenges suggest that while cultural adaptation is essential, it must be complemented by strategies intended to bridge these terminological gaps, such as using descriptive translations (Schäffner, 1997).

While acknowledging the inevitability of meaning loss and gain in translation as crucial, particularly at semantic or syntactic levels, several studies, such as Sholikin (2013) have shown that meaning loss and gain can occur in words and phrases in bilingual books. The goal of meaning loss in translation is to give the target text a more acceptable and comprehensible meaning. We are closer to loss and gain in translation when we acknowledge

the premise that no two languages are exactly the same (Nida, 1964). Effectively, translators experience loss when they encounter challenges when translating particular concepts with no equivalents in the target language. Nozizwe and Ncube (2014) examine the concepts of gain and loss, using a selected few chosen court rulings as a guide. Nozizwe and Ncube point out that the court process further complicates interpretations in the courtroom by using a great deal of specialised legal jargon with English, Latin, Roman and Dutch roots. In view of Nozizwe and Ncube's perspective, the current study was conducted with the hypothetical premise that translation inevitably resulted in both gains and losses.

In translation studies, gains are generally understood as instances where the translated text enhances or expands on the original, offering a richer or more localised experience for the reader (Baker, 2011). Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) categorise translation techniques that result in gains, such as amplification and explicitation, as adding clarity and depth to the target text. In addition, Schaffer (2009) also categorises translation gains into several types, including amplification, explicitation and cultural substitution. Amplification, for example, involves adding information to clarify points that may be implicit in the source language but unclear to the target audience. For the Uganda National Land Policy, amplification might mean explaining specific policy clauses with additional contextual information pertinent to Uganda's land rights.

According to Munday (2016), translation gains occur when the translator introduces elements that improve the intelligibility of the text without altering its essential meaning, allowing readers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds to grasp complex concepts. Gains, therefore, are strategically important in translating policy documents as they help to clarify legal intentions and enhance reader comprehension by adding culturally relevant details or simplifying technical language (Pym,2010).

Nakayiza (2013) and Soriano Barabino, (2020) provide valuable insights into the practices and challenges of legal translation in Uganda. On one hand, Nakayiza (2013) focuses on the translation of constitutional texts that

highlight issues such as lack of standardised legal terminology and the need for specialised training for legal translators. Soriano Barabino, (2020), however, explores the translation of legal documents in rural areas where the importance of cultural adaptation and community engagement is emphasised.

Research by Zabajungu (2007) provides further evidence of the linguistic and cultural difficulties of translating literature between two unrelated languages using a sample of five folktales from Runyankore-Rukiga into English. He notes that inflectional grammatical categories like tense, case, gender, number and mood are used in English and that descriptive phrases are employed to express the intended meaning of the source text when there are no equivalents in the receptor language, leading to losses and gains. However, Zabajungu's (2007) study, while being informative, may not fully capture the unique challenges of legal translation, where accuracy and faithfulness to the original text are paramount.

Methodology

The study used qualitative design where comparative textual analysis and semi-structured interviews were used. Clauses from the English UNLP were chosen for comparison with the versions of UNLP in the Runyankore-Rukiga language that were produced during the translation process. Lexical choice, syntactic restructuring, conceptual transfer and cultural adaptation along with changes in the legal meaning of the text between source text (ST) and target text (TT) were used for the analysis. Twelve participants were purposively selected because of their experience with translation, law, land administration or local governance. They included translators, legal professionals and local council leaders. Interview data were used to support the textual analysis by showing how translators and local readers perceive losses, gains and accessibility in the translated policy. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities. The researchers' revised renderings are presented as TT version 2 where they address problems observed in participant translations.

Findings

This section presents the study findings that focus on the objective: To identify the losses and gains involved in translating the UNLP from English into Runyankore-Rukiga. The findings below are grounded in the qualitative

approach which relies heavily on a descriptive and comparative analysis (Neuendorf, 2017) of the source text (ST) in English and the target text (TT) in Runyankore-Rukiga. Drawing on Nida's (1964) understanding of the formal and dynamic equivalence, this section examines the selected excerpts from the ST where meaning was lost, shifted, retained, or enhanced.

Losses from the data and responses from the interviewees on losses

The data is presented in four columns in Table 1.0: Type of loss, ST version, TT version 1 translated by the study participants, and the researchers' version (TT2) that addresses the losses identified.

Table 1. Identified translation losses

Type of loss	Source Text in English	TT Version 1 Translated Text by participants with loss in meaning	TT Version 2 Translated Text by researchers to addresses the loss
Lexical vagueness	[…] "Ambiguities that arose in the 1995 Uganda Constitution with regard to the **sovereign powers of the State** are clarified in this policy." […]	[…] Ebitashoboorokire *ebyareebekire omu Ngyenderwaho y'Eihanga eya 1995 ebirikukwata aha* ***bushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira obu eihanga riine*** *nibishobooroorwa omu nkora egi*." […]	[…]"*Empurirwakum we ezaabaireho omu ngyenderwaho ya Yuganda y'omugwa 1995 eyorekyereire* ***aha kwemariirira kw'amaani g'eihanga*** *ebi bishoboorokire gye omuri eki kiragiro*." […]
	[…]"Land will be categorized as Private Land, Public Land and Government	[…]"*Eitaka niriija kugwa omu bicweka ebya Eitaka ery'omuntu, Eitaka eiriho* **(sic)** *ahabw'oburungi*	[…] "*Eitaka niriija kusharwamu nk'Eitaka ery'Abantu Buntu, Eitaka ry'Abantu Abaingi hamwe n'Eitaka rya*

	Land." […]	*bw'abaingi (nk'ery'ebitongore) hamwe n'Eitaka erya Gavumenti*." […]	*Gavumenti"* […]
Conceptual Ambiguity	"The **fiduciary relationship** between the State and the Citizens of Uganda created under the 1995 Constitution and the Land Act 1998 for the efficient utilization and management of land-based resources is re-affirmed."	***Akakwate k'obushoboorozi*** *akariho ahagati y'Eihanga hamwe n'abanya Uganda akaatairweho Egyenderwaho ya 1995 hamwe n'Ekiragiro ky'Eitaka ekya 1998 ahabw'okukoresa n'okureeberera kurungi* eby'obugaiga bw'omu itaka nikahamisirizibwa ."	[…] ***Obuzaare oburimu obwesigwa*** *rwagati ya gavumenti n'Abatuuragye ba Yuganda obwahangirweho omu ngyenderwaho ya 1995 hamwe n'ekiragiro kya pariyanmenti ky'eby'obutaka 1998 ky'okukoreesa gye n'okureeberera ebiine akakwate n'obutaka kyongyeire kuhamibwa.*"
Conceptual Simplification	"**Administrative Land Tribunals** will be reinstated, adequately resourced and facilitated to enable them carry out their constitutional mandate."	"**Obukiiko bw'okukora aha nshonga z'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti** nibwija kugarurwaho, buheebwe eby'okukoresa kandi buhwerwe kukora emirimo yaabwo nk'oku burikujunaanizibwa engenderwaho."	***Obukiiko bw'okuramura enshonga z'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti*** *n'obwokugaruzaho, buheebwe ebikozeso biragasha kandi buhagirwe okugira ngu bubaase kukora emirimo yaabwo ebuhaibwe engyenderwaho y'eihanga*

Loss related to terminology specificity	"**Government agencies**, charged with regulation of land use planning, and **departments** responsible for enforcement of land laws, and the maintenance of law and order, were also consulted.	**Ebitongore bya gavumenti, *ebirikujunaanwa*** *okutebeekanisiza enkoresa y'amataka, hamwe* ***n'ebitongore ebirikujunaanwa*** *okuteesa omunkora ebiragiro by'itaka, hamwe n'okureeba ngu ebiragiro byakuratirwa kandi haabaho n'obuteeka, nabyo bikeebuuzibwaho.*	***Ebitongore bya gavumenti ebiine obujunaanizibwa bw'okureebuuza entwaza y'obutaka n'enkozesa yaabwo,*** *hamwe* ***n'ebitongore ebiine obushoboorozi bw'okuhikiiriza ebiragiro birakwata aha eitaka,*** *hamwe n'okurinda obutahenda amateeka hamwe n'obuteeka nabyo bikebuzibwaho*
Syntactic loss	The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and the Land Act (Cap 227) provide that land in Uganda **may be held in only four tenure categories namely**: customary, freehold, mailo and leasehold tenure.	*Engyenderwaho y'Eihanga rya Uganda hamwe n'Ekiragiro ky'Eitaka (Akacweka 227) neeyoreka ngu omu Uganda omuntu* ***naabaasa kugira itaka omu miringo ena egi****: Eitaka ery'ensikirano, eitaka ery'omuntu buntu, eitaka erya mayiro hamwe n'eitaka ery'obupangisa (erya*	*Engyenderwaho y'entegyekwantoore Uganda hamwe n'Ekiragiro ky'Eitaka (Akacweka 227) neeyoreka ngu omu Uganda omuntu* ***naabaasa kugira eitaka omu miringo ena egi****: Eitaka ery' empungurano, eitaka ery'omuntu buntu ririho ekyapa kandi eriteine kakwakurizo koona, eitaka erya mailo hamwe n'eitaka ery'empangisano*

		riizi).	*(erya riizi).*

The findings presented in Table 1 illustrate several critical translation losses encountered by the investigated participants whose expertise was sourced to translate the UNLP from English into Runyankore-Rukiga. Several losses were identified at different levels of translating legal terminology and concepts. These losses significantly impacted on the clarity and legal precision of terminology and concepts in the UNLP by the target audience. It should be noted that legal translation competence is characterised, among other things, by precision and accuracy, a sound linguistic knowledge of legal terminology, attention to detail, subtleties and distinctions of both the ST and TL legal systems, and cultural sensitivity to the cultural and contextual aspects of the source and target languages (Venuti, L.1995)

The participants were tasked to translate the following phrase in the UNLP:

> Ambiguities that arose in the 1995 Uganda Constitution with regard to the sovereign powers of the State are clarified in this policy.

They rendered it as:

> ***Ebitashoboorokire ebyareebekire omu Ngyenderwaho y'Eihanga eya 1995 ebirikukwata aha bushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira obu eihanga riine nibishoboororwa omu nkora egi.***

The researchers noted that the translation by the participants manifested some losses resulting from lexical vagueness and lack of terminology precision while translating the phrase '**sovereign powers of the State'** which was rendered as **o*bushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira obu eihanga riine*.** The translated version was still deemed unclear by the researchers because it raised issues of ambiguity in interpreting its meaning in Runyankore-Rukiga. Although the participants resorted to paraphrase to render this phrase, the technical legal term of **sovereign powers of the State** demonstrated some scores of lexical and conceptual inaccuracies in the TT. To address this loss, the researchers suggested a different version that addressed the loss:

> ***"Empurirwakumwe ezaabaireho omu ngyenderwaho ya Yuganda y'omugwa 1995 eyorekyereire aha kwemariirira kw'amaani g'eihanga ebi bishoboorokire gye omuri eki kiragiro,"***

Another lexical loss was noted in the phrase that classifies land types in the UNLP:

> "**Land will be categorised as Private Land, Public Land and Government Land**".

The translation of land types in the UNLP in the above phrase suggested by the participants also produced another ambiguous meaning because it lacked legal clarity and precision. This ambiguity was possibly caused by the absence of equivalent specific terms (hyponyms) in Runyankore-Rukiga that refer to the above classifications of land. Possibly, this could have resulted from the traditional communal land tenure system among the communities investigated. In fact, among the Runyankore-Rukiga speaking communities, land was traditionally communally owned. This explains why terminology of foreign land tenure systems is hard to translate. To resolve this, the participants insufficiently sourced general terms (superordinates) to add clarity to the translated text as follows:

> ***Eitaka niriija kugwa omu bicweka ebya Eitaka ery'omuntu, Eitaka ririho aha bw'oburungi bw'abaingi (nk'ery'ebitongore) hamwe n'Eitaka erya Gavumenti.***

Although the participants used the translation 'strategy of annotation' ***(nk'ery'ebitongore)*** to address the loss in meaning while classifying the three types of land ownership, it was observed by the researchers that a 'culturally friendly translation' supported by the 'adaptation' and 'modulation' translation techniques (Nida, 1964) would ease the comprehension and classification of land types for the target audience and to achieve naturalness and equivalence in the target text. The following translation proposed by the researchers helped to address this loss because it ensured legal precision in terms of land classification in the UNLP as follows.

Eitaka niriija kusharwamu ebicweka bishatu: eitaka ery'Abantu Buntu, Eitaka ry'Abantu Baingi hamwe n'Eitaka rya Gavumenti…

The findings of the study also revealed notable conceptual ambiguities in translating a legal terminology on the 'fiduciary relationship' between the State and the citizens. In law, a fiduciary duty describes a relationship of trust between a trustee and their stakeholders. This is how the UNLP states this relationship:

The fiduciary relationship between the State and the Citizens of Uganda created under the 1995 Constitution and the Land Act 1998 for the efficient utilization and management of land-based resources is re-affirmed.

The rendition proposed by the participants for the above text was:

Akakwate k'obushoboorozi akariho ahagati y'Eihanga hamwe n'abanya Uganda akaatairweho Egyenderwaho ya 1995 hamwe n'Ekiragiro ky'Eitaka ekya 1998 ahabw'okukoresa n'okureeberera kurungi eby'obugaiga bw'omu itaka nikahamisirizibwa.

The findings revealed that the legal concept **'the fiduciary relationship'** which was translated by the participants as "***Akakwate k'obushoboorozi***" diluted the explicit legal role of a fiduciary relationship. As a result, a loss in meaning continued to be felt in the translation proposed by the participants. The Runyankore-Rukiga version for the term ***akakwate*** is not legally binding. It simply refers to a general relationship between two parties without any legal implications. However, a fiduciary relationship implies significant legal and ethical implications for the parties involved. The latter are under obligation to act in the best interests above their own. In case this oath is contravened, legal action can be taken against the offender and can led to penalties and reputational damage

To resolve this ambiguity, the researchers explicitly resorted to the compensation strategy to cater for the loss of meaning and effect in the ST

phrase (Rosyidah, 2017). The researchers opted for an ethical terminology "***obwesigwa***," that is traced from the traditional African values where violation of this relationship would be considered an abomination. To arrive at this translation, the researchers also adopted a collocational tie that strengthened: ***obuzaare*** *and* ***obwesigwa*** which in translation studies is used to add clarity at the level of two words to reinforce the presupposed meaning in the target culture of the Banyankore- Bakiga. Collocations are sourced when the meaning in the TL is at stake. This strengthened the impact of the translation to the Runyankore-Rukiga audience.

> ***Obuzaare burimu obwesigwa rwagati ya gavumenti n'abatuuragye ba Yuganda obwahangirweho omu ngyenderwaho ya 1995 hamwe n'ekiragiro kya Pariyamenti ky'eby'obutaka 1998 ky'okukoreesa gye n'okureeberera ebiine akakwate n'obutaka kyongeire kuhamibwa***.

Another conceptual loss revealed in this study was the 'conceptual simplification' or generalisation in translating the following phrase:

> Administrative Land Tribunals will be reinstated, adequately resourced and facilitated to enable them carry out their constitutional mandate.

The above phrase was oversimplified by the participants in their translation:

> ***Obukiiko bw'okukora aha nshonga z'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti*** *nibwija kugarurwaho, buheebwe eby'okukoresa kandi buhwerwe kukora emirimo yaabwo nk'oku burikujunaanizibwa engenderwaho.*

In this translation, the participants resorted to legal precision and context. In response, the researchers explicitly detailed the constitutional mandate by proposing:

> ***Obukiiko bw'okuramura enshonga z'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti*** *n'obwokugaruzaho, buheebwe ebikozeso biragasha kandi buhagirwe okugira ngu bubaase kukora emirimo yaabwo ebuhaibwe engyenderwaho y'eihanga.*

The findings further indicated a loss in specificity regarding the translation of the legal concept of "**Government agencies" and "departments"** in the source text:

> Government agencies, charged with regulation of land use planning, and departments responsible for enforcement of land laws, and the maintenance of law and order, were also consulted.

This was rendered as;

> **Ebitongore bya gavumenti, *ebirikujunaanwa*** *okutebeekanisiza enkoresa y'amataka, hamwe* ***n'ebitongore ebirikujunaanwa*** *okuteesa omunkora ebiragiro by'itaka, hamwe n'okureeba ngu ebiragiro byakuratirwa kandi haabaho n'obuteeka, nabyo bikeebuuzibwaho.*

These concepts were generalised as "***Ebitongore bya gavumenti ebirikujunaanwa***" which suffered from ambiguity in meaning concerning the specific regulatory roles and responsibilities of different government agencies. A government agency refers to a government entity with legal powers and specific functions to oversee the administration of specific sectors while a department is a distinct division within a large organisation or institution. To address this loss, the researchers resorted to the techniques of paraphrase and compensation to give more detailed descriptions of the concept:

> ***Ebitongore bya gavumenti ebiine obujunaanizibwa bw'okureebuuza entwaza y'obutaka n'enkozesa yaabwo,*** *hamwe* ***n'ebitongore ebiine obushoboorozi bw'okuhikiiriza ebiragiro birakwata aha eitaka,*** *hamwe n'okurinda obutahenda amateeka hamwe n'obuteeka nabyo bikebuzibwaho.*

The above rendering by the researchers clearly articulates the explicit functions of these governmental entities in land regulation and management.

Lastly, the findings of this study revealed a syntactic loss. For example, this loss occurred in the participants' translation through structural oversimplification and ambiguity. In the source text where it is stated that 'land in Uganda may be held in only for tenure categories…'

> The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and the Land Act (Cap 227) provide that land in Uganda may be held in only four tenure categories, namely: customary, freehold, mailo and leasehold tenure.

The participant translated this as:

> *Engyenderwaho ya 1995 hamwe n'iteeka ry'eitaka (cap 227) biragira ngu omu Yuganda eitaka **niriija kugabanwa mu miringo ena**: ery'ensikirano, ery'omuntu buntu, nerya mayiro hamwe n'ery'okupangisa (erya riizi).*

The participants used '*eitaka niriija kugabanwa*' to imply that *'land will be divided'*, altering the original syntactic structure of *'land may be held'*. This changed the meaning significantly, suggesting enforced division rather than optional tenure types. To address this loss, the researchers rendered the source text as:

> *Engyenderwaho y'entegyekwantoore Uganda hamwe n'Ekiragiro ky'Eitaka (Akacweka 227) neeyoreka ngu omu Uganda omuntu **naabaasa kugira itaka omu miringo ena egi**: Eitaka ery'empungurano, eitaka ery'omuntu buntu nari ekitongore ririho ekyapa kandi eriteine kakwakurizo koona, eitaka erya mailo hamwe n'eitaka ery'empangisano (erya riizi).*

The researchers preserved the syntactic intent of the source text '*omuntu naabaasa kugira itaka*' meaning that 'a person may have land', thus maintaining the original sense of optionality and individual choice provided in the Uganda National Land policy.

5.2 Interview findings on losses

When the twelve study participants were probed about their day-to-day experience, their voices converged on five core issues: observable losses, legal concepts that tended to be lost, positive outcomes that may result from translating the Uganda National Land Policy into Runyankore-Rukiga and their perceptions on the overall accessibility of translating the document under investigation. The quotations that follow are verbatim extracts from the interview recordings with Runyankore-Rukiga words inserted in italics. Pseudonyms were used to safeguard the participants' confidentiality.

Losses in the translation Process

Many participants acknowledged that translations inevitably lead to some

losses, particularly in terms of cultural context nuances. Mary shared that:

> *"There's often a loss of tone or emotion, which affects meaning especially where urgency might not be reflected in the translation as reflected in the original version."*

Others noted that subtle local references may sometimes get lost in translation. Some participants also highlighted the loss of idiomatic expressions, which are often difficult to translate directly. For example, Linda, one of the participants, noted:

> *"In translating land-related policies, phrases like 'equitable access to land' sometimes lose their full meaning, especially when we try to explain them to local communities who may not have a direct equivalent."*

Sarah, another participant Sarah, noted:

> *"We have to find creative ways to explain those ideas without losing the meaning."*

Additionally, a few participants expressed concern about the loss of technical accuracy, especially with specialised terms. Joseph, also a participant, shared that:

> *"In technical translation, sometimes the terms don't exist in our language, so we end up using foreign terms."*

Sarah further explained that:

> *"In legal documents, any misinterpretation can lead to serious issues, so we always try to double-check everything."*

Sarah also reflected on the difficulty that translators confront:

> *"Some English legal expressions are like airtight boxes, once you open them in Ruyankore-Rukiga, abit of legal exactness (obungyereza bw'amateeka) is lost."*

Peter shared that splitting long English clauses can blur intended relationships. He stated:

> *"You chop the sentence to fit local syntax and suddenly people cannot see which clause controls which obligation -oburagiro".*

Linda pointed to procedural detail:

> *"The original words state clear filing deadlines, but if you are not careful, the translated version turns them into loose suggestions-nibiheebwa nk'obugabe bw'okucweka."*

Collectively, the participants agreed that concision is often traded for completeness since some shades of meaning inevitably fade away when specialised vocabulary has no direct equivalence.

Gains from the data and responses from the interviewees on gains

Gains are found in words, phrases and clauses when one is trying to faithfully render a source text into a target text. They therefore make additions of elements of meaning that are not present or explicit in the source context. Gains can enable a language to change for the better and to adapt to the needs of its speakers.

Table 2. Identified Translation Gains

Type of gain	**Source Text in English**	TT Version 1 Translated Text by participants with gain in meaning	TT Version 2 Translated Text by researchers
Semantic Precision	[…]"Initially, colonialists introduced individualised ownership of property rights in land previously held either communally or	[…]"*Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakatandikaho enkora y'obushoboorozi aha bintu kuba omu mikono y'omuntu buntu omu mataka agaabaire gaba gari*	[…] *Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakataho obugabe bw'omuntu okutunga ebintu bye ahabwe nk'omuntu omu*

	on the basis of **sovereign trusteeship**."	*ag'abantu abatwire hamwe nainga okugyendera aha ky'**okukwatsibwa obushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira**.*	*by'obutaka obwakare obwabaire buri obw'orukwatane nainga okugyendera aha **bushoboorozi obu eihanga riine omu kureberera eitaka.***
Cultural Appropriateness	[…] This duality of property rights systems resulted in land tenures, whose maintenance has **turned cumbersome and confusing** in the current social, economic and political circumstances."	[…]"*Enkora egi ey'obujunaanizibwa aha bintu kuba omu mikono ebiri kikarugamu emiringo y'okugiramu amataka, ahi okugareeberera **kihendeire kigumire kandi kirikubuzabuza** omu muringo ogu abantu baturaine, eby'entaasya hamwe n'obwebembezi obwa gavumenti*	*Egi miringo ibiri y'enkora y'obugabe bw'ebintu, eyaakomookirem u emiringo y'okugiramu amataka **kubaire amaino ga ruguru** kandi etakyengyekire omuri obu bunaku bw'obwimukyer o bw'emibeereho y'abantu, eby'empiiha n'ebyobutegyeki .*
Systemic Precision	This **duality of property rights systems**…"	*Enkora egi **ey'obujunaanizib wa aha bintu kuba**	*Obu **bugabe aha bintu**

		omu mikono ebiri …"	***obw'emiringo ebiri***
Administrative Clarity	"…**Administrative Land Tribunals** will be reinstated…"	***…. Okushuganisa ebiragiro byoona ebiine akakwate n'obutaka***…"	"…***Obukiiko bw'okuramura enshonga z'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti***…"
Syntactic Gain	Initially, colonialists introduced individualised ownership of property rights in land previously held either communally or on the basis of **sovereign trusteeship.**	*Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakatandikaho enkora y'obushoboorozi aha bintu kuba omu mikono y'omuntu buntu omu mataka agaabaire gaba gari ag'abantu abatwire hamwe nainga okugyendera aha ky'**okukwatsibwa obushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira**.*	*Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakataho obugabe bw'omuntu okutunga ebintu bye ahabwe nk'omuntu omu by'obutaka obwakare obwabaire buri obw'orukwatane nainga okugyendera aha **bushoborozi bw'eihanga riine omu kureeberera eitaka.***

Table 2 above presents translation gains observed in the target versions. These gains were not additions in the sense of changing the policy message; rather, they were clarifications that made the legal content more intelligible to Runyankore-Rukiga readers. The gains included semantic precision, cultural appropriateness, systematic precision, administrative clarity and

syntactic naturalness. One of the findings in the translation of the Uganda National Land Policy was the identification of semantic gains that enhanced the legal clarity and resonance of concepts in the target text. For instance, in the source text of the UNLP, it is stated:

> Initially, colonialists introduced individualised ownership of property rights in land previously held either communally or on the basis of sovereign trusteeship.

The study participants initially offered this rendition as:

> *Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakatandikaho enkora y'obushoboorozi aha bintu kuba omu mikono y'omuntu buntu omu mataka agaabaire gaba gari ag'abantu abatwire hamwe nainga okugyendera aha ky'**okukwatsibwa obushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira**.*

The researchers rendered it as:

> *Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakataho obugabe bw'omuntu okutunga ebintu bye ahabwe nk'omuntu omu by'obutaka obwakare obwabaire buri obw'orukwatane nainga okugyendera aha **bushoborozi bw'eihanga riine omu kureberera kw'eitaka.***

The source text word "sovereign trusteeship" fuses two ideas: 'sovereignty' which is the ultimate, indivisible authority of the state over territory; and 'trusteeship' which is the state's fiduciary duty to manage land as a public good. By coining the compound "*obushoboborozi bwe'eihanga riine omu kureberera kw'eitaka*," the researchers explicitly separated these strands: "*obushoboborozi*' for 'custodial authority' which foregrounds the trust obligation while "*bw'eihanga riine*" (belonging to the nation itself) signals sovereign ownership. Hence effectively explaining 'sovereign trusteeship' as "*obushoboborozi bw'bw'eihanga riine omu kureberera kw'eitaka'.* This gained explicitness helped to achieve semantic precision and richness.

The findings further revealed that some gains were needed to achieve translation equivalence between the ST and the TT. An example of cultural appropriateness is highlighted by complex phrases in the UNLP that describe the dual nature of property rights to be cumbersome and confusing. In the source text, it stated that:

This duality of property rights systems resulted in land tenures, whose maintenance has turned cumbersome and confusing in the current social,

economic and political circumstances.
The participants rendered the above text as:

> *Enkora egi ey'obujunaanizibwa aha bintu kuba omu mikono ebiri kikarugamu emiringo y'okugiramu amataka, ahi okugareeberera* ***kihendeire kigumire nari kirikubuzabuza*** *omu muringo ogu abantu baturaine, eby'entaasya hamwe n'obwebembezi obwa gavumenti*

The researchers translated it as:

> *Egi miringo ibiri y'enkora y'obugabe bw'ebintu, eyaakomookiremu emiringo y'okugiramu amataka* ***kubaire amaino ga ruguru*** *kandi etakyengyekire omuri obu bunaku bw'obwimukyero bw'emibeereho y'abantu, eby'empiiha n'ebyobutegyeki.*

The researchers' rendering used culturally applicable metaphors "*amaino ga ruguru"* meaning 'extremely complicated'. The image of 'crooked upper teeth' in the TT instantly communicates the idiomatic concept of '*hard to manage*' that enhances cultural relevance, clarity and reader comprehension.

The translation of the phrase '***This duality of property rights system'*** from English into Runyankore-Rukiga demonstrated a systematic precision gain. A systematic precision gain refers to increased accuracy and clarity achieved through careful and consistent choice of terms within a translation (Nord,1997). This gain is particularly manifested in the researchers' rendering compared to that of the participants. The source text states that:

> This duality of property rights systems resulted in land tenures, whose maintenance has turned cumbersome and confusing in the current social, economic and political circumstances.

The phrase '***duality of property'*** was rendered by the study participants as ***'ebintu kuba omu mikono ebiri':***

> *Enkora egi* ***ey'obujunaanizibwa aha bintu kuba omu mikono ebiri*** *kikarugamu emiringo y'okugiramu amataka, ahi okugareeberera kihendeire kigumire nari kirikubuzabuza omu muringo ogu abantu baturaine, eby'entaasya hamwe n'obwebembezi obwa gavumenti.*

Here, the participants' translation '***ey'obujunaanizibwa aha bintu kuba omu mikono ebiri'*** reflects the 'responsibility of things being in two hands' which is overly general.

The researchers rendered it as:

> ***Obugabe bw' emiringo ebiri aha bintu****, eyaakomookiremu emiringo y'okugiramu amataka kubaire amaino ga ruguru kandi etakyengyekire omuri obu bunaku bw'obwimukyero bw'emibeereho y'abantu, eby'empiiha n'ebyobutegyeki.*

The researchers' translation '***obu bugabe aha bintu obw'emiringo ebiri***' exhibited a systematic precision by explicitly specifying "*obugabe aha bintu*," that clearly indicates the '*property rights*," and "*emiringo ibiri"*, refering to the two distinct systems. This phrasing distinctly and accurately reflects the intended meaning of "duality" as two underlying separate legal frameworks for property rights that systematically preserve the precise legal context from the source text.

Another gain was observed in the translation where more clarity was made regarding the administrative nature of land tribunals. Administrative clarity gain refers to the enhanced accuracy and explicitness needed when translating terms and concepts related to institutional or administrative roles, structures, or functions in the UNLP. For instance, in the source text, the policy states that:

> Administrative Land Tribunals will be reinstated, adequately resourced and facilitated to enable them carry out their constitutional mandate.

The above text was rendered by the study participants as:

> ***Obukiiko bw'okukora aha nshonga z'amataka*** *omu ofiisi za gavumenti nibwija kugarurwaho, buheebwe eby'okukoresa kandi buhwerwe kukora emirimo yaabwo nk'oku burikujunaanizibwa engenderwaho.*

The phrase "**Administrative Land Tribunals**" was translated by the participants as: ***obukiiko bw'okukora aha nshonga z'amataka.***

This was later refined by the researchers to read as:

> ***Obukiiko bw'okuramura enshonga z'eby'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti*** *n'obwokugaruzaho, buheebwe ebikozeso biragasha kandi buhagirwe okugira ngu bubaase kukora emirimo yaabwo ebuhaibwe engyenderwaho y'eihanga.*

It was more than just an illustration of the function of the institution: this rendering placed it in the framework of government, thereby enabling local readers to identify the tribunal with its familiar shapes. The researchers

added a lot of significant clarification to the administration: *"Obukiiko bw'okuramura enshonga z'eby'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti…"* They clearly translated the phrase saying what these tribunals are: *Obukiiko obuteirweho eiteeka*, meaning the *'committees established by law'*; and they expressed clearly what they do*: okuramuriramu enshonga z'eby'amataka*, which means 'to judge land issues'. This specificity helped to establish the fact that these are not just ordinary administration committees, but specialised legal administrative tribunals (entities) of the law established by Uganda's legislation to resolve land disputes.

In the translation of the Uganda National Land Policy, several other instances revealed that the researchers skillfully restructured some sentences and phrases to reflect the authentic Runyankore-Rukiga syntactic patterns. For example, the participants rendered the following Runyankore-Rukiga sentence:

> Initially, colonialists introduced individualised ownership of property rights in land previously held either communally or on the basis of sovereign trusteeship.

It was rendered as follows:

> *Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakatandikaho enkora y'obushoboorozi aha bintu kuba omu mikono y'omuntu buntu omu mataka agaabaire gaba gari ag'abantu abatwire hamwe nainga okugyendera aha ky'**okukwatsibwa obushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira**.*

While this translation attempted to convey the meaning of the phrase *'sovereign trustees,'* **t**he syntax proved to be rather complex. The researchers rendered the same text as:

> *Omu kubanza, abakubuuzi bakataho obugabe bw'omuntu okutunga ebintu bye ahabwe nk'omuntu omu by'obutaka obwakare obwabaire buri obw'orukwatane nainga okugyendera aha **bushoborozi bw'eihanga riine omu kureberera kw'eitaka.***

The researchers introduced the concept '*eihanga*' which refers to 'the State' as the grammatical subject and assigned to it its inherent powers, namely, its '*sovereign authority*' through the structure 'o***bushoborozi bw'eihanga' (the powers of the state).*** The phrase ***"riine omu kureberera kw'eitaka***" (having responsibility over land) helped to add a relative clause that precisely

describes the function of the 'sovereign trusteeship.' This grammatical construction helped to mirror how modifiers are grammatically used in Runyankore-Rukiga to allow the target speakers to understand the trusteeship's function as held by the State.

Gains achieved through translation

The participants highlighted some benefits after reading the text in their local language. John beamed:

> *"Once I rewrite it in our language, you watch farmers nod immediately. They finally hear the policy speaking to them-Ekiragiro ky'obutaka kiragira kiti."*

Micheal stressed the explanatory power of culturally anchored idioms, saying:

> *"Plant a tree for your grandchildren - byara omuti gw'abaijukuru- hits harder than the English line about protecting future generation."*

Esther, noticed a tonal gain too. She said:

> *"Politeness markers show respect, and the audience feels that the policy is on their side, not barking orders."*

From the participants, it was also noted that translation often led to significant gains, particularly in terms of accessibility and understanding. Peter, another participant, shared:

> *"The biggest gain is that people get to access important information that they would otherwise miss which is through explanation of some terms."*

He emphasised that translation opens up communication for people who may not be fluent in the original language. Some other participants highlighted the cultural enrichment that comes with translation, where local expressions and values are incorporated. Peter added:

> *"By translating into our language, we can preserve some of our cultural identity."*

Micheal supplemented:

> *"It feels rewarding when you see people appreciate the local references or idioms we add during the translation."*

Furthermore, some participants also pointed out the personal satisfaction and professional growth they gain from the practice. Mary said:

> *"I learn a lot through translating different materials, especially when I have to research terms and concepts, I'm not familiar with."*

Lastly, David also shared:

> *"… Each translation project helps me refine my skills and grow in my career." … "We don't just move words; we add clarity and humanity."*

Legal concepts that tend to be distorted

When asked which terms were at risk, Mary singled out the challenge of terminological alienability:

> *"…there is no simple local term for land you can freely sell, so we end up with a full clause- obugabe oburashoborora okutwarwa hariho obundi- that feels less clear."*

Joseph added:

> *"People hear 'freehold' and translate it as okutwara burundu and think it is the same yet the fine distinction disappears."*

Ruth drew attention to polysemous statements in English or *Runyankore-Rukiga*:

> *"…the word 'title' in English is neat but in Runyankore-Rukiga, it can be*

ekyapa, or ekipapura, we have to spell it each time."

Peter explained that:

Terms like 'freehold title' or 'usufruct rights' don't exist in our language, so we have to find ways to explain them.

He added:

> *"…this can make the policy harder to grasp for people unfamiliar with legal jargon."*

Micheal mentioned that there was the translation issue of concepts related to land ownership and rights. He noted:

> *"The term 'secure land tenure' doesn't translate easily; it's difficult to express the idea of long-term, recognised ownership."*

Mary added:

> *"It's hard to explain 'land registration' because people are used to informal land transactions that don't involve written records."*

David noted that terms related to land use and distribution, such as 'equitable access to land,' lose some of their meaning in translation. He said:

> *"The concept of 'equitable access' is abstract, and in Runyankore-Rukiga, we often don't have a clear word for 'equity."*

These voices together give a balanced view on the translation context. The legal differences are not always reflected in the translation, but there are definite gains in clarity, cultural impact and citizens' empowerment. Despite knowing about the various decisions that were made while rendering each of the list of words, the participants agreed that overall, the target document brought the Uganda National Land Policy closer to its objective of inclusion and land governance.

It is clear from the above analysis that translation is not a process of a simple linguistic transfer but a negotiation between legal equivalence and a communication that is clear and has cultural meaning. The results indicated that although it was necessary to lose some meaning in the process of translation (particularly in the translation of institutional concepts and legal terminology), it was possible to gain something in the process, notably in the ability to render policy language transparent, understandable, and locally relevant. The findings of this study do confirm Nord's (1997) assertion that there is a need to find a balance between the source-text fidelity and audience comprehension of the target text. The Uganda National Land Policy had this dual responsibility when translated into Runyankore-Rukiga. In some cases, the meanings were presumably contracted or reduced, in others augmented or enriched, particularly those that were localised in linguistic and cultural contexts.

DISCUSSIONS

This study found that notable losses of lexical vagueness occurred during the translation of the legal discourse in the UNLP. This finding is confirmed by Venuti (2012) who also argued that lexical losses are inevitable in technical translations. In his study, Venuti found that specialised terminologies were hard to translate because they have no direct equivalents in the target language. This finding is also echoed by Newmark's (1988) who asserts that precise translation of legal texts depends heavily on clear terminological equivalence to preserve legal clarity. The findings of this study, supported by Newmark (1988) and Venuti (2012), confirmed the view that lexical precision is fundamental in legal translations. Furthermore, this finding is supported by the dynamic equivalence theory (Nida & Taber, 1982), which emphasises that in order to effectively express similar effects on the target audience, translations must not only capture literal meaning but should also properly mimic the intended legal connotations.

Another translation loss highlighted by the study was related to terminology specificity, particularly in classifying land types (*Private Land, Public Land, and Government Land*). Baker (2018) indicates that such losses frequently arise

from lexical specificity, especially where the target culture lacks direct equivalents due to differing social structures. In this study, the translators resorted to using superordinates, hyponyms and annotations (*nk'ery'ebitongore*) as partial solutions, yet these approaches continued to yield ambiguity, thereby compromising the aspect of precision inherent in legal texts. The use of superodinates is supported by Baker (2018) who argues that employing general terms without clear specificity diminishes the text's legal and functional clarity. Therefore, Baker (2018) proposed to use culturally sensitive hyponyms which enhance translation specificity that is advocated for in Nida's (1964) dynamic equivalence such as the translation: *Eitaka ery'Abantu Buntu, Eitaka ry'Abantu Baingi, hamwe n'Eitaka rya Gavumenti.* Dynamic equivalence thus facilitates culturally-rooted translations, ensuring that the target audience experiences the same impact, clarity and precision intended in the source text.

In addition, the conceptual ambiguity was identified as a significant translation loss in this study in the translation of the UNLP. The need to preserve explicit legal implications of the text is one of the main concerns when translating conceptual terms, particularly in legal texts, as Chesterman (1997) points out. The participants' translations of the English Source text, such as the translation *"Akakwate k'obushoboorozi"*, which means "relationship" in English, eliminated key legal implications and conveyed a more generic sense of relationship rather than legal responsibility. This is consistent with Chesterman's worry about conceptual ambiguity being a serious constraint on the effectiveness of law translation. To address this, the researchers used Rosyidah's (2017) approach of compensation using the term *obwesigwa* (trustworthiness), to enhance the conceptual clarity. Moreover, they employed a collocational combination – *"Obuzaare burimu obwesigwa"* to bring her text closer to local legal-cultural expectations. Hence, this finding is corroborated by Chesterman (1997) and Rosyidah (2017) that culturally embedded terminology can significantly increase the conceptual accuracy. The Skopos theory also backs this strategy, as it puts emphasis on purposeful modulation, a translation strategy which makes sure that the target text is culturally relevant and legally precise.

This study also found considerable loss due to conceptual simplification, which is clearly shown in the terms such as Administrative Land Tribunals.

In relation to this, Larson (1995) also states that oversimplification or generalisation of translation in general tends to lessen the specificity and accuracy of legal text. The participants simplified this concept as: *Obukiiko bw'okukora aha nshonga z'amataka.* In this version it failed to serve its statutory duties. With this opinion of Larson, the researchers clearly translated the above concept as: *"Obukiiko bw'okuramura enshonga z'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti"*. This undoubtedly enabled the precise constitutional mandate of the tribunal to be maintained. This study strongly recommended translations that maintain particular institutional functions to ensure the integrity and enforceability of the law text, which conform to Larson's suggestions.

This study also found that some losses were incurred due to lack of specificity when translating institutional terms like "Government agencies" and "departments." This is supported by Schaffner (2001) who highlights the importance of accurate translation of institutional terms to clearly establish their roles and functions. The study participants legal translators generalized these terms to be: *"Ebitongore bya gavumenti ebirikujunaanwa",* This version erased their unique roles, bringing interpretative ambiguity. The reseachers did not aim to interpret the terms as Schaffner recommended, but rather to render them explicitly as: *"Ebitongore bya gavument ebiine obujunaanizibwa bw'okureebuuza entwaza y'obutaka…";* regulatory functions and enforcement tasks were separated. On this regard, the researchers are fully backed by Schaffner's claim that institutional translations eliminate ambiguity, administrative clarity, and hence aid in the implementation of policies.

This study also found the following critical syntactic losses to be related to simplification of the structure in the phrase "land may be held." An important part of translation, according to Jakobson (1959), is syntactic precision, because any slight modification in the syntactic structure may result in a different meaning. This study, in agreement with Jakobson, did render an accurate picture as*: "omuntu naabaasa kugira eitaka",* which clearly brought the concept of optionality and individual choice that was suggested by Jackobson. This is further proof that syntactic fidelity is for semantic accuracy, legal precision, and communicative effectiveness and resonate with Jakobson's perspective. This finding is also supported by the Dynamic

equivalence theory which emphasises the responsibility of the translators to preserve the original idea and message clarity in their target language texts by making syntactic changes that reflect the target language norms (source).

Translation gains

This study showed that the semantic precision is one of the important translation gains, particularly in the concept "sovereign trusteeship." Semantic precision in translation is, in the words of Nida and Taber (1982), the "choice of words for the target language that convey exactly the same connotations and implications as the words in the source text. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) also note the need for accuracy in the technical and legal field. The study participants' interpretation of "sovereign trusteeship" was: *"obushoboorozi bw'okwemariirira"*. This translation captured the general meaning of authority, but it did not fully express important aspects such as fiduciary responsibility and sovereignty. Based on the translation constructs as suggested by Nida and Taber (1982) and Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), this study suggested the TT rendition of: *"obushoboorozi bw'eihanga riine omu kureberera kw'eitaka"*. This rendition distinctly isolated the dual meaning– "sovereign authority' and "fiduciary duty' inherent in the UNLP. This clear definition of the term is supported by McGuire (1980) who claims that improvement in translation is realised by the translator making deliberate additions in the target text in order to accurately capture the differences in the source text. This, therefore, is the kind of researchers' selection that contributed to the maintenance of the semantic correctness of the text and to the legal clarity, which is in accordance with the dynamic equivalence theory.

This study also showed that the cultural appropriateness was found to be very useful in making the text readable and relevant. This opinion is in line with Baker (2018) who argues that a successful translation should be idiomatic and use metaphors that involve words or phrases that are familiar to the target language readers. The study participants translated the concept of "duality of property rights systems" in a generalised form – *"omu mikono ebiri"* (in two hands). This version didn't have the cultural connection. The researchers strongly agree with Baker's view, using the Runyankore-Rukiga metaphor *"amaino ga ruguru"*, which translates to *"crooked upper teeth"*, vividly to convey this difficulty and complexity. This metaphor not only

helped to convey the meaning of the source text but also added resonance to the policy in the cultural context of the Runyankore-Rukiga people. Therefore, the researchers' decision of translation is supported by Baker's theory that cultural appropriate translation greatly improves comprehension and acceptance by the target audience.

One of the most important advances in the translation of the UNLP was those institutional terms like "duality of property rights systems" were translated systematically and precisely. Chesterman (1997) emphasises the above systematic precision through careful and consistent terminological choices. These decisions contribute to the coherence of the text internally and to the fidelity of the text externally to the source language text's original meaning. The word *omu mikono ebiri* had an insufficient terminological precision to mark the intended legal distinction, as was the case with the participants' translation *"ey'obujunaanizibwa aha bintu kuba"*. But, as Chesterman's terminological rigor suggests, the researchers explicitly introduced the dual frameworks in her rendition as: *"obu bugabe aha bintu obw'emiringo ebiri"*. This rendition made it very clear that the researchers had introduced the dual frameworks as: "property rights referred to in the source text and their distinctions". This is supported by Chesterman's view and Chesterman and Toury's view that systematic precision in translation greatly aids readers to understand technical and legal distinctions. Again, the Skopos theory justifies the use of precise language, emphasising the deliberate and clear communication to the needs of the target audience.

At the beginning of the study, the translators, after consulting with the participants, rendered it as: *"obukiiko bw'okukora aha nshonga z'amataka"*. When it was first translated, it was *"obukiiko bw'okukora aha nshonga z'amataka"*, according to the participants. The researchers reviewed this rendition as this was a generalised term that was not specific to an institution. This was modified by the researchers to create: *"Obukiiko bw'okuramura enshonga z'eby'amataka omu ofiisi za gavumenti,"* a legal-administrative special body established by law to solve problems. Schaffner (2001) agrees with explicit translation in authoritative comprehension. This study's stance very much reinforces these academic perspectives and confirms that explicit

administrative translation has a great impact in terms of both the understanding and the legitimacy of the institution in the target group. This is also in line with the theories of dynamic equivalence and the Skopos, which stress clarity and functional precision for effective policy implementation.
The syntactic gains which were revealed from this study were restructured sentences to reflect authentic Runyankore-Rukiga syntactic patterns made with deliberate efforts. Larson (1997) maintains that the naturalness and readability of dynamic equivalence can be in favour of syntactic restructuring in translation. There were syntactically complex and unnatural constructions in the translation of "sovereign trusteeship" by the participants, which made the translation difficult to read. Following Larson's interpretation, the researchers purposefully used the term *'eihanga'* (the State) as the grammatical subject, making it clear that the State possesses sovereign powers (obushoborozi bw'eihanga) and fiduciary responsibility (riine omu kureberera kwe'eitaka). This restructuring was similar to the use of syntactic patterns of Runyankore-Rukiga that facilitated the enhancement of readability and understanding. The syntactic advantages described are highly conforming to the idea that effective translation is concerned with matching the norms and the structure of the target language (Jakobson 1959). This is corroborated by Larson and Jakobson's translation method of syntactic restructuring, which at times can change the form of the original text to improve semantic faithfulness and natural understanding in the target text for the target community.

Conclusions

The study showed that there were some compromises required in translating the Uganda National Land Policy into Runyankore Rukiga. Some nuances and distinctions in English were not necessarily reproduced in their equivalents, such as "*Sovereign Powers of the state" versus "formal"* or the legal term "*Fiduciary relationship and Land Tribunals"*. The good thing is that it was easier for the local Runyankore (Rukiga) speaking people to read and relate with the translation. It was familiar and borrowed words like *mailo* and *dipuloma,* easy rephrasing and family words like *obujunanizibwa aha bintu kuba omu mikono* that were used to bind big legal concepts into the culture. The target text did not contain literal translations but rather more flexible versions of certain sentences, which maintained the meaning and essence of

the issue of land ownership, care and taxes, while also making it easier for the ordinary reader to feel that the target text truly speaks his or her language.

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