

***Astérix* as *Soora Pappa*: Translating Proper Names of French Cartoon Characters into Sinhala**

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Astérix, the well-known French comic series is exceptional in many ways: unforgettable characters, intriguing plot, cultural and historical references and refreshing comical aspect. Written by René Goscinny and illustrated by Albert Uderzo, *Astérix* has been translated into a number of languages and adapted to cinema as well. The Sinhala translation of the *Astérix* film series is an adaptation of its English translation and not its original French version. When translating into Sinhala, a target audience who are not familiar with French comics or the French culture, translators must be resourceful and creative in their choice of strategies.

The present paper focuses on the proper names in the Sinhala adaptation of the film *Astérix et Cléopâtre*. The translation of proper names is crucial to the story. Proper names are created in *Astérix* with references to historical and political events and figures and use an interesting wordplay. By comparing the French names and their Sinhala version, the study analyzes strategies preferred by translators to make the characters more appealing to the Sinhala audience. The choice of the suffix “*Pappa*” added to almost all the proper names of the Gauls is met with huge success: *Soora pappa*, *Loku pappa*, *Jim pappa*, *Keko papa*. The paper argues that though its popularity leads to a phenomenal success, the loss of certain cultural references alters the interpretation of the source film. The receptor friendly strategy used by the translators naturalizes most foreign elements in the French names. As a result, the name of the character does not clearly demonstrate how or why it was attributed to him/her as in the French version or in its English translation. In the comic series created by Goscinny and Uderzo, lot of effort was put in to the naming of the characters which eventually

contributed to the success of *Astérix*. It can be concluded that the translators have concentrated mostly on the comical aspect attempting to create memorable characters for the target audience. Their strategy of “selective” interpretation of characters though successful questions whether it does justice to the adventurous Gaulish warriors.

KEYWORDS

audio-visual translation, cultural translation, translating humour, ‘selective’ interpretation

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