

DEVELOPING NIGERIAN LANGUAGES THROUGH TRANSLATION OF SPECIALIZED TERMS

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Abstract

Translation, a complex but essential human process, is the transfer of message from one language to another. Without translation, people will be confined to their own enclave and will not have access to information and discoveries from other nations. In this era of globalization, there is need to reach out to other people. English language is developed, while Igbo language is in the process of development. There is a wide gap between the two, both linguistically and culturally. In the area of specialized terms, the English language has terms for all concepts. The Igbo language is constrained in this aspect. This work tries to translate into Igbo some specialized terms with a view to promoting, enriching and developing the Igbo language.

Key Words: Translation, specialized terms, language and culture

Introduction

Languages are in constant state of evolution. The rate of change has plummeted due to globalization in every sphere of life: economy, political, science and technology. etc. To cue in to this wave of change, there is need for evolution of terms in specialized areas in Igbo language. Technical translation has a huge market; hence, technical terms are required to meet its demands. Language is closely tied to economic power, and any country that controls the economy, controls the world. Igbo language should not be left out in this era of communication explosion. We have earlier noted that the English language is well developed, while the Igbo language is lagging behind. Most times, we resort to borrowing when there are no equivalent terms in Igbo to match the foreign concept. Loaning is one of the translation techniques. We should go beyond that and develop our language. If other languages have specialized terms, Igbo language can. Bellos (2011) is of the opinion that, "... anything which can be expressed in one language can also be expressed in another". Anyaehie (1995) stressing the importance of specialized terms in Nigerian indigenous languages states that, the issue of translating scientific concepts in Nigerian languages is one that should be viewed with grave concern by every Nigerian language speaker who is constantly constrained to switch from his first language in order to express certain basic concepts of science and technology.

Specialized terms in Igbo will enhance communication and information flow especially through the media.

State of Igbo Specialized Terms

Efforts have been made by some researchers in the area of specialized terminology. These include: Ezeuko (1997); Nwanjoku (1997); Ijioma (2011); Uhuegbu and Ijioma (2010); Ijioma and Ezafulukwe (2015b), Ijioma (2016) and Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC (1991) etc.

Source of Data Collection

The specialized terms used in this work were collected from the book, *Nigeria and the World Trade Organization* by Eze, Osita C. (2004). It is a unique book in the sense that it is multidisciplinary in nature. The different domains include: commerce, economy, health, politics, and different aspects of law that govern international trade. etc.

Differences between English and Igbo Languages

The English and Igbo languages belong to two different families and as such are not close together. The translator should take cognizance of the structural and lexical differences between the two languages as this could constitute a bottle neck during the translation process. Baker (1992) is of the same opinion that, *the structural and lexical differences between languages could be one of the major problems in translation*". Pratima (2012) on his part posits that,

there are structural, surface differences between languages that result in the lack of one to one correspondence between them at different levels. Phenomena like inflections, affixes, word order differences, and disparity in number, tense, gender, etc. result in significant problems of translation.

English and Igbo languages have many structural differences, but we shall discuss only the differences that are relevant to our work.

Tone Language

Igbo is a tone language. This implies that in the language, the pitch of the voice can make a difference to the meaning of an element, word, phrase or sentence when the vowels and consonants are all the same. Here are a few examples, *okè-boundry; òke-a rat; òkè-share* (Onukawa, 2011). Tones are important structures of Igbo language. Dots are equally important because they bring out the differences in words which are otherwise alike. Such examples include: *izu-to steal; ìzù-to buy; ìsì-head; ìsì-smell; ìsì-blindness; ukwù-leg; ukwu-waist etc.* (Ijioma, 2016).

Generic Language

English and Igbo languages belong to two different families and as such, do not share much in common. While English has terms for all concepts, Igbo, on the other hand, because of its generic nature is very limited. Most times, one term is used to translate many related concepts. For example, *law*, is translated with one term, *iwu* irrespective of the type. On the generic nature of Igbo language, Uhuegbu and Ijioma (2010) observe that, *"the Igbo linguistic community makes no distinction between the different forms of legislation as found in the English language"*. We know that different languages encode meaning in different forms.

Sentential and Descriptive

Igbo is a sentential language. According to Ijioma and Ezeafulukwe (2015b), *Igbo language, most often, uses longish, paraphrasing, excessive dilution and description to express foreign concepts*". This is due to the low level development of technical and specialized terms. Also, in a bid to avoid borrowing and the use of generic terms, the translator resorts to description and explanation.

Repetition

Igbo language in certain instances, resort to repetition of words. Here are some examples.

Ọsọ ọsọ	quickly
Mmiri mmiri	watery
Édó édó	yellowish

Uhie uhie	reddish
ọbara ọbara	reddish
ndụ ndụ	greenish
nwaayọ nwaayọ	slowly

Translation Technique

There are various procedures of translation depending on the text typology. Vinay and Darbelnet (1977) proposed technical procedures which include: literal translation, calque and loaning and the indirect method: transposition, modulation, adaptation and equivalence; non-technical: amplification, stuffing, lexical economy, explication, dilution, shedding and concentration. We will present the techniques encountered in our work.

Equivalence

Equivalence does not mean identical. It is the procedure by which the translator uses completely different wordings to express the same situation in the receptor language. Anything which can be expressed in one language can also be expressed in another. This is because translation is the enemy of ineffable. Bellos (op.cit). This is often common with proverbs and idioms. For example:

English	Igbo
Hypocrite	onye ihu abụọ
To beat someone black and blue	ịkụ mmadụ isi abaa okpu

Explanation/Explication

Some languages lack specific terms for a concept. This gives rise to the use of explanation to express the concept. This is very common with the developing languages. We have already noted that explanation is one of the characteristics of the Igbo language where a concept is explained through its function, association or analogy.

Lexical economy/concentration

This involves the use of a single word to express a concept originally expressed in many words. This is not common in Igbo language, but in our work we encountered some. This buttresses the fact that languages evolve. The lexical economy will be discussed in details in our commentary.

Loan

No language exists in isolation. Languages come in contact. This results in loaning or borrowing. Every language is guilty of loaning. Bellos (op. cit) posits that, "... *borrowing between cultures in contact with each other is a fundamental fact of intercultural communication- and that is the very field of translation*". Here are some examples cited from Ijioma and Ezeafulukwe (2015a).

English	Igbo
Wire	waya
Hour	awa
French	Nigerian Languages
Beaucoup	bọkwụ
Espagne	pagna etc

Calque

Calque is a form of loaning where the constituent elements are translated word for word: *white lie* is translated as *asị ọcha*.

Terms and Igbo Translation

The table below shows the English specialized terms translated into Igbo.

S/N	ENGLISH	IGBO	TECHNIQUE
1.	Agricultural goods	Ihe ubi	Equivalence
2.	Aims and objectives	mbunuche	Equivalence/lexical economy
3.	Annual budget	Ihazi mkpata na mmefu nke afọ	Explanation
4.	Arbitration	Usoro ime udo	Explanation
5.	Border trade	ahja a na-azu na oke obodo	Explanation
6.	Capital economy	Ọnọdụ akụ na ụba obodo di n'aka ndi ji ego	Explanation
7.	Cash crops	Ihe okukụ eji akpata ego/ihe mmepụta a na ere ere	Explanation
8.	Cash flow	Ego na-abata na-apụ	Explanation
9.	Contracting parties	Ndi otu iwu jikọkọtara	Explanation
10.	Code of conduct	Iwu akparamagwa	Explanation
11.	Copyright	ikike imepụta ihe	Explanation
12.	Copyright law	Iwu ikike imepụta ihe	Explanation
13.	Copyright piracy	Ohi ikike nke mmepụta ihe	Explanation
14.	Currency policy	Iwu ihazi ego	Equivalence
15.	Custom duties	Ụtụ taksị kọstom	Loan
16.	Custom union	Otu kọstom	Loan
17.	Developed countries	Obodo mepere emepe	Equivalence
18.	Developing countries	Obodo na-emepe emepe	Equivalence
19.	Disease carrying organisms	Nje na-ebu orja	Description
20.	Disease causing organisms	Nje na akpalite orja	Description
21.	Dispute settlement	Ime udo	Equivalence
22.	Dispute settlement body	Ngalaba na-ahụ maka ime udo	Explanation
23.	Dispute settlement procedure	Usoro ime udo	Equivalence
24.	Division of labour	Biri ka m biri	Equivalence (Idiom)
25.	Domestic currency	Ego obodo	Equivalence
26.	Domestic goods	Ngwa ahja obodo	Explanation
27.	Domestic law	Iwu obodo	Equivalence
28.	Domestic products	Ngwa ahja obodo	Explanation
29.	Economy	akụ na- ụba obodo	Explanation
30.	Economic conditionalities	Usoro obodo ji agbazi ego na ụlọ akụ/oba ego mba ụwa	Explanation
31.	Economic growth	Ikwalita akụ n'ụba	Explanation
32.	Economic power	Ikike akụ n'ụba	Equivalence
33.	Economic reform	Ihazigharị akụ n'ụba	Explanation
34.	Enabling clause	Iwu ikike nnabata	Explanation
35.	Environmental degradation	mmetọ gburugburu ebe obibi	Explanation
36.	Export competition	ịsọ mpi mbupu ngwa ahja	Explanation
37.	Export restrictions	igbochi mbupu ngwa ahja	Explanation
38.	Export duties	Ụtụ ibupu ngwa ahja	Explanation
39.	Financial policies	Usoro ikpata na mmefu ego	Explanation
40.	Foreign exchange	Mgbawe ego mba ọzọ	Explanation
41.	Foreign exchange market	ahja mgbawe ego mba ọzọ	Explanation

42.	Free trade areas	Ogba jzụ ahị dijiri ọha	Explanation
43.	Free trade agreements	Iwu jigidere ahia ọha na eze	Explanation
44.	Geographical indications	Njirimara okè obodo	Explanation
45.	Global economy	Usoro ego mba ụwa	Explanation
46.	Global economic policies	atumatụ usoro ego mba ụwa	Explanation
47.	Global family	Otu ụwa	Equivalence
48.	Ground rules	Iwu ntụ anị	Equivalence
49.	Human rights	I nwe ikike onwe	Explanation
50.	Human rights abuses	mmetọ i nwe ikike onwe	Explanation
51.	Human rights law	Iwu na- echekwa i nwe ikike onwe	Explanation
52.	Importers	Ndi na-atubata ngwa ahia	Explanation
53.	Import duties	Utụ itubata ngwa ahia	Explanation
54.	Industrialized countries	Obodo na-emeputa ngwa ahia	Explanation
55.	Industrial savings	Ego nriita ngwa ahia	Explanation
56.	Infant industries	ndostiri ohuru	Calque
57.	International law	Iwu jikoro ụwa/iwu ozurumba	Explanation
58.	International relations	mmekorita mba na mba	Explanation
59.	International trade	ahia mekotara mba ụwa	Explanation
60.	Just and equitable	ikwado ndamiwu	Equivalence
61.	Labour standards	Iwu na-echekwa oru	Explanation
62.	Legal document	akwukwo iwu	Calque
63.	Manufacturing companies	Ulo oru na-emeputa ihe	Explanation
64.	Market access	Iwe onu okwu n'ahia	Explanation
65.	Market forces	Ikike na-akwado ahia	Explanation
66.	Monetary treason	mpu megidere ego obodo	Explanation
67.	Multilateral trade	Ahia jikotara otutu obodo	Explanation
68.	Multilateral trade agreements	Iwu ahia jikotara otutu obodo	Explanation
69.	National boundaries	Okere jikotara obodo na obodo	Explanation
70.	Null and void	adighiire; enweghisi	Equivalence/lexical economy
71.	Patent law	Iwu na-echedo onye meputara ihe	Explanation
72.	Pirated goods	Ngwa akuruaku	Equivalence
73.	Private sector	Ulo oru nke onye	Explanation
74.	Public sector	Ulo oru obodo /gogmenti	Explanation
75.	Raw materials	Ngwa eji emeputa ihe	Explanation
76.	Rights and obligations	Ikike na-iwu jigidere	Explanation
77.	Rights and privileges	Ihenrite	Equivalence//lexical economy
78.	Rule of law	nsopuru iwu obodo	Explanation
79.	Safeguard measures	Usoro ichekwa aku, uba n'ahu ike	Explanation
80.	Service sector	Ngalaba na-ahazi ulo oru na-emeputa ngwa ahia	Explanation
81.	Stakeholders	ndi were onu okwu na oke n'ihe	Explanation
82.	Tarified products	utu ngwa ahia	Explanation
83.	Terms and conditions	Usoro	Equivalence/lexical economy
84.	Textile firms	Ulo oru na-emeputa akwa	Explanation
85.	Trade barriers	Mgbochi ahia	Equivalence

86.	Trademarks	Akara njirimara ngwa ahja	Explanation
87.	Trade secrets	Ihe nzizo azumahja	Explanation
88.	Treaty law	Iwu tiriiti	Loan
89.	Unemployment	Ọnọdụ enweghi ọrụ	Explanation
90.	Waivers	ị wepụ ụfọdụ ụtụ ga-eme ntụbata ahja nfe.	Explanation

Commentary

Our commentary is based on the nature of Igbo language. A look at the specialized terms shows that, in most cases, we resorted to explanation. This is because of the nature of the Igbo language. We give below some examples from the table.

Sentential and descriptive language

Annual budget	Ihazi mkpata na mmefu nke afọ (no. 3).
Capital economy	Ọnọdụ akụ na ụba obodo di n'aka ndi ji ego (no. 6).
Cash crops	Ihe ọkụkụ eji akpata ego/ihe mmepụta a na ere ere (no. 7).
Industrialized countries	Obodo na-emepụta ngwa ahja (no. 54).
Service sector	Ngalaba na-ahazi ụlọ ọrụ na-emepụta ngwa ahja (no. 80).
Stakeholders	ndi were ọnụ okwu na oke n'ihe (no. 81)
Waivers	ị wepụ ụfọdụ ụtụ ga-eme ntụbata ahja nfe. (no. 90).

From the few examples cited, we can see the use of many words to explain the English terms. Igbo is a sentential language. This is due to the low level development of technical and specialized terms. Also, in a bid to avoid borrowing and the use of generic terms, the translator resorts to description or explanation.

Generic nature of Igbo Language

The generic nature of Igbo language played out in the course of our work where a concept is used to translate many concepts. Here are some examples from our work.

Arbitration	usoro ime udo (no. 4).
Dispute settlement procedure	usoro ime udo (no. 23).
Code of conduct	iwu akparamagwa (no. 10).
Domestic law	iwu obodo (no. 27).
Enabling clause	iwu ikike nnabata (no. 34).
Ground rules	iwu ntụ anj (no. 48).
Labour standards	iwu na-echekwa ọrụ (no. 65).
Legal document	akwụkwọ iwu no. 62).
Cash flow	ego na-abata na-apụ (no. 8).
Capital economy	onọdụ akụ na-uba obodo di n'aka ndi ji ego (no. 6)
Currency policy	iwu ihazi ego (no. 14).

Looking at the examples above, it is observed that the same concept is used to translate 'Arbitration' and 'Dispute settlement procedure', *usoro ime udo*. Also in the case of any form of law as seen in the examples above, the term *iwu* is used to translate *law, clause, code, rules, standards and legal document*. In the same vein, *ego* is used in translating *cash, economy and currency*. The problem arises when you do a back translation of the translated terms. We have to note that context is very crucial in every translation process.

Lexical economy

Contrary to the generic nature of the Igbo language, we encountered the use of a term to translate two or more words. This is the case of doublets in legal field. Doublets are among the most common redundancies in legal drafting. How will these terms be Igbo translated into Igbo language? They are closely related in meaning. Below are examples of doublets encountered in our work.

Aims and objectives	mbunuche (no. 2)
Rights and privileges	ihenrite (no. 77)
Terms and conditions	usoro (no. 83)
Null and void	adighiire//enweghisi (no. 70)

We can see from the above examples that the pairs are closely related. The Igbo language has one concept for each pair. The issue of back translation comes into question here. The result of the back translation will give either of the terms not the pair. There lies the problem. This is when the issue context and the domain are taken into account.

Loan

There are a few incidences of loan in the translated terms. Here are some examples.

Custom duties	utu <u>taksi kostom</u> (no. 15)
Custom union	otu <u>kostom</u> (no. 16)
Treaty law	iwu <u>tiriiti</u> (no.88)

Calque

We also have a few cases of calque. The following examples are cited below.

Infant industries	industiri oħuru (no. 56)
Legal document	akwukwo iwu (no. 62)

It has earlier been noted that calque is another form of loan. In the case of loan, the borrowed word is adapted to the phonology or syntax of the target language. It can also be observed that in the calque, there is a loan word. At times, it is difficult to separate them.

Conclusion

Languages evolve to cope with the changing world. No language exists in isolation. Hence when languages come in contact, new ideas, and words are learned. In the face of globalization, there is need to project one's language to the global society. This is evident in the specialized terms in the domain of international trade encountered in our work. These terms will help in the development, promotion of our indigenous languages. We should avoid borrowing where possible. Ijioma and Ezeafulukwe (2015a) are of the view that, "*loanwords could be the only way out for a translator when faced with a word that has no equivalent in the receiving culture*". The developed languages passed through what we are going through now. With concerted efforts, we shall take our language to a higher level. We have not claimed to have done the final job on this. There is need for more research and creation of terms. Equally, where our translations are not accepted, we welcome constructive criticisms as a way forward. We should work as a team to see to the development of our languages and ensure that our languages do not go into extinction.

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