

TRANSLATOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SERMONS IN NIGERIAN CHURCHES

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Abstract

Based on the researchers' observation, most Nigerians do not regard interpreting as a profession; rather, they see it as a common task. In most cases, the generally held view is that any individual who understands more than one language can serve as an interpreter. Therefore, this work examines the reality of interpreting as a profession and the possible roles of interpreters in Nigeria. The study also examines the constraints interpreters encounter and the strategies they employ to overcome them. The study focuses on some selected sermons preached within the Diocese of Nsukka, Anglican Communion and the Assemblies of God Mission, Ede-Oballa, between 2018 and 2019 following the mixed method of data analysis. This study adopts Qiang's interpretive theory and As-Safi's interpreting constraints and strategies because of their significance in the assessment of sermon interpreting. From the analysis and research findings, it was discovered that the majority of the constraints identified bother on syntactic and semantic issues. This means that the interpreters found reproducing the messages in the target language difficult. Also, decoding the meanings of many source language words is very problematic, affecting their interpretations and leading to misinterpretations. Therefore, this study recommends that interpreters or individuals, who take interpreting tasks, especially in church settings, should be encouraged to acquire the necessary training in the profession of interpreting and also be proficient in the languages with which they are to work, especially the source language. These skills will help them not distort the original message but produce a natural version of the source language (SL) message in the target language (TL).

Keywords: Translation; translatology; interpreting; interpreter; sermon.

Introduction

The study of translation is referred to as translatology. According to Harris (1988, p. 94), translatology is "the objectively recorded observation and scientific analyses of what translators do and how they do it, what they produce and how other people perceive what they do and produce; with the aim of investigating translators' mental processes from the most elementary to the most sophisticated levels as their bilingual language skills develop under social conditioning." The science of translatology, as reported by Snell-Horby (1988), emerged in the 1940s in an attempt to establish it as a new discipline involving radical changes in the approach and classification of translation as an umbrella term housing interpretation, away from the age-old dichotomy of 'word vs sense' or 'literal vs free' translation, which has dominated the traditional translation theory since

Cicero. Translation is understood in a broader sense because it is present in several contexts and manifests in different forms. One of the different forms of translation is interpreting, while others are subtitling, dubbing, painting and photography.

Various scholars, like Qian (1994), Roy (2000), and Pochhacker (2004), have made attempts to formulate a comprehensive definition for interpreting. They have done this by taking cognizance of several parameters involved in interpreting. With these parameters, interpreting is classified according to mode – simultaneous, consecutive, sight and sign language. It is also classified according to setting – intra-social and inter-social settings. In intra-social settings, there are instances of interpreting activities at the community level, such as in hospitals, courts, police, and religious settings.

This work focuses on religious interpreting. In Wallmach's (2016) view, religious interpreting can take place in many different contexts. According to Downie's (2016) perspective, those contexts are usually spiritual. Those settings, according to James (1998), include places of worship, seminars, synod meetings, retreats, counselling sessions, camp meetings, hospitals backed by religious organizations, etc. Wallach (2016) also states that interpreting is commonly used in religious contexts where the congregation consists of people speaking more than one language, which is becoming more common worldwide. For instance, in the eastern Nigerian context, a church service can occur in the Igbo language. However, some congregation members may not understand Igbo and, thus, require interpretation in another language, like English or any other native language, as the case may be.

From the foregoing, a certain level of professionalism is required in interpreting religious texts. Non-professional interpreters risk confusing the texts or communicating them with their limitations. Professional religious' interpreters, therefore, possess a specialized set of skills that help ensure that messages are accurately and meaningfully communicated to the congregation. In addition, they are acquainted with the terminologies, scriptures, common prayers, songs, and the doctrine that are obtainable in the religious setting. The present study, therefore, engages in the translational analysis of some selected sermons in Nigerian church settings.

Statement of the Problem

Awareness of the issues of church interpreting is very minute in Nigeria. Most Nigerians seem not to regard interpreting as a profession. To many, the norm is that any individual proficient in more than one language is eligible for the role of an interpreter. Nevertheless, according to Moeketsi (1999), speaking more than one language does not necessarily guarantee that bilingual or multilingual interpreters will be good interpreters. The fact remains that all types of interpreting, including church interpreting, are professional and technical and should not be taken up without proper training. There has been a handful of research on interpreting studies in the Nigerian context, such as Ogwezzy (2016) and Adewuni (2010). However, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, no studies have examined the roles of interpreters in church settings in Nigeria, the constraints they encounter, and the strategies they employ to transmit the SL messages. The above issues form the problem of this study.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the roles of interpreters, the problems and constraints they face and the strategies they employ to manage the interpreting situation. Interpreting has two broad divisions – consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. The latter entails the interpreter speaking as the speaker talks without waiting for the speaker to pause or finish. In contrast, in the former, the interpreter has to wait for the speaker to end a sentence and render the words in the target language. This study is based on consecutive interpreting. Furthermore, this research also examines the reality of interpreting as a profession and the possible roles of interpreters. This study is also carried out within the context of church settings in the Diocese of Nsukka, Anglican Communion and the Assemblies of God Mission, all in Enugu State, Nigeria, between 2018 and 2019.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. to explore the constraints encountered by the interpreter(s) in interpreting the selected sermons;
2. to examine the interpreting strategies employed by the interpreter(s) in overcoming the encountered constraints;
3. to ascertain the perceptions of the congregation on the role(s) of the interpreter(s) in the selected interpreted sermons and;
4. to evaluate the areas of training required for interpreters.

If the above objectives are achieved, the findings of this study, without doubt, shall be helpful to other researchers who would wish to research this topic or any other topic related to church or sermon interpreting. Since studies in interpreting as a whole, and church interpreting in particular, are relatively novel research areas that need to be explored, this work will be instrumental to linguistics researchers. The study will enable both language teachers and learners to discover how syntactic, semantic, phonological, and prosodic aspects affect interpreting and the strategies one could employ to handle the interference of those aspects of linguistics in interpreting. This awareness is necessary in the education system because it will help teachers know the areas to concentrate on while training interpreters. On the other hand, scholars in religion will also find the present study valuable because it will provide detailed information on the role and involvement of interpreters in religious settings during sermons, Bible study, church services, etc.

Operational Definition of Key Terms

This section reviews several definitions of translation and interpretation from different scholars. Nida and Taber (1969) assert that translation consists in reproducing a message in the receptor language, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style. Furthermore, categories of interpreting are considered as well. Two criteria of classification are elaborated below, namely code and mode.

a) Translation Types According to Code

Jakobson (1959), in Schulte and Biguenet (1992), distinguishes three ways of interpreting a verbal sign: it may be translated into other signs of the same language, into another language or into another code that is a nonverbal system of symbols.

b) Translation Types According to Mode: Written vs Oral (Translating vs Interpreting)

Nord (2007) makes a clear distinction between two senses of translation: oral translation (interpreting) and written translation (translation in the narrow sense). Oral translation (interpreting), according to Pochhacker (2004), is a form of translation in which a first and final rendition in another language is produced based on a one-time presentation of an utterance in a source language. In Qian's (1994) view, interpreting is communication between people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The source text sender transmits a message through the source language to the interpreter, who resends it to the target language and to the target audience.

Various modes and types of interpreting exist in interpreting, such as simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, sight interpreting, and sign language interpreting. There are also various interpreting settings, such as inter- vs. intra-social settings, and different types of interpreters, like (non-) professional vs. volunteer interpreters.

According to this study's outlook, interpreting is an interpreter-mediated communication in short consecutive mode, performed orally, primarily in monologic form, in a one-to-many church setting.

Review of Previous Studies on Interpreting

Kotze (2018) investigated the role of the pastoral interpreter within religious settings, taking cognizance of the debate regarding professional and non-professional interpreting and what this debate means for future research on interpreting role descriptions. Data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis software. From the results of the study, it was deduced that pastoral interpreters' perception was that it would be unethical not to act according to what they believe in, which was to deliver a message received from the Holy Spirit, thus becoming a spiritual conduit. The study's results also indicated that formal training would enhance pastoral interpreting practices as there were gaps in untrained pastoral interpreters' theoretical knowledge and knowledge of standard interpreting practice. While Kotze's study used the qualitative analysis method, the present study uses the QUAL-quant paradigm to ascertain interpreters' role in interpreting sermons.

Kinnamon (2018) used quantitative and qualitative data to provide an accurate depiction of the non-professional interpreters who were working in religious settings, their church environments, their stories of pursuing professionalism, the reasons for their pursuit, their experiences with professional interpreters, and their motivation for continuing to work in religious settings. She found that interpreters who pursued professional training to gain qualification indicated their experiences, which were either negative or positive; that was the only category where there was no mixture of emotions. Once aware of limited skills and the need for professional development, these interpreters were either encouraged or met with a sense of inferiority complex by the certified interpreters. This present research work, in contrast with Kinnamon's work, focuses on interpreters' performance instead of their experiences. Nevertheless, the interpreters here are volunteers; they have no professional training in interpreting, and their skills are overtly limited. That necessitates the need to establish and execute plans for professional skill development.

The above empirical studies reviewed have presented several issues and findings related to the various aspects of the present research work. This present study presents an analysis of the

interpreter's performance in religious settings in Nigeria, as well as the problems the interpreters encounter in the course of the interpreting. This study also investigates the strategies the interpreter employs in tackling the problems he encounters in the interpreting process. One important aspect of this study is the holistic approach to the church; with a focus on the function that interpreting service plays in its procedure of institutionalization, wherein it does not exist earlier than now.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts Qiang's (2013) interpretive theory and As-Safi's (2011) interpreting constraints and strategies. In the interpretive theory of translation, according to Qiang (2013), it is believed that interpreting is interpretive because interpreting is for effective communication. It divides the interpreting process into three stages: the comprehension of the meaning, deverbalisation, and reformulation of the meaning. In other words, interpretive theory is an act in which interpreters extract meaning by deverbalising input information in its original linguistic form and then expressing naturally the extracted meaning in the target language.

On the other hand, As-Safi's (2011) interpreting constraints and strategies consists of the following:

- a) **Linguistic constraints:** These have to do with problems encountered at the language level. They are as follows:
 - i) **Phonological and prosodic constraints:** They include features that are non-existent in both source language [SL] and the target language [TL], in relation to segmental phonemes, suprasegmentals and prosodic features, which include stress, intonation, pitch, rhythm and tempo.
 - ii) **Syntactic constraints:** This is a problem that occurs because of the difference in word order in SL and TL.
 - iii) **Semantic constraints:** It is a lexical incompatibility which occurs because the interpreter finds it difficult to handle tough jargon term, a neologism or a blended word.
- b) **Cultural and phatic constraints:** It addresses subculture specificities, whether or not religious, political or social institutional nomenclature constraints are involved.
- c) **Paralinguistic and psychological constraints:** These constraints include the speaker's tone and loudness of voice, the tempo of delivery and gestures, as well as the mental/psychological state of the interpreter.

The above framework and strategies are employed in data analysis of this study.

Methodology

This study adopts an emergent research design and employs a mixed-methods (QUAL-quant) approach to investigate interpreter-mediated sermons within religious contexts in Nsukka. The research is situated within the domain of religious interpreting, explicitly focusing on sermon interpretation during worship services and religious gatherings.

Data were collected from two selected churches within the Nsukka metropolis: the Assemblies of God Church, Ede-Oballa, and the Triumphant Ministry, a prayer meeting typically held at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Anglican Communion, Nsukka. The study utilized multiple data sources, including audio-recorded sermons, structured questionnaires administered to interpreters and congregants, and participant observation during live services.

The research instruments underwent content validation by domain experts to ensure reliability and relevance. Data analysis centred on evaluating interpreter performance, identifying interpretive constraints, and examining strategies employed during sermon delivery. These elements were analyzed within the framework of interpretive theory, with particular attention to message accuracy, interpreter involvement, and the communicative effectiveness of the interpreted sermons.

Data Analysis and Result Presentation

The data collected are analysed here to ascertain the level of the interpreters' involvement and their roles in delivering sermons in religious settings. This section also discusses the constraints and strategies to overcome them.

1. Interpreting Constraints

This section discusses the various problems the interpreters face during the interpreted events they participate in. Because of space, one example is given for each of the constraints. They are discussed in two broad categories: linguistic constraints and paralinguistic constraints.

a. Linguistic Constraints

These are the problems encountered at the language level during the interpreted events. They originate from the structure and usage of both languages involved. They are discussed as follows:

i. Phonological Constraints

At this level of language analysis, attempts are made to highlight and analyze when and how sounds affect the interpretive activities in the sampled sermons.

Example 1

Speaker: Even though the people of Israelites they **tested** God, they saw God working miracle in their midst.

Interpreter: Agbanyegị na ha bụ ndị **deturụ** Chineke **ire** hụ Chineke ka ọ na-arụ ọrụ ebube.

In example 1 above, the speaker of the original message uses the verbal phrase '...tested God'. Here, the word 'test' means to try. In other words, the speaker intends to say that 'God is tried' or 'being put to trial.' However, it is interpreted as *deturụ Chineke ire*. It is considered a misinterpretation because the output implies 'to taste' when translated back to the source language. The mistranslation occurs because the words test /test/ and taste /teist/ sound alike, but their spellings and usages differ.

ii. Syntactic Constraints

During interpretation from a source language (SL) to a target language (TL), the interpreter encounters syntactic constraints due to the differences in both languages' word structures. This claim is supported by the theory of universal grammar, which contends that there are universal rules across languages, but how these rules function differs across languages. As it concerns this study, As-Safi (2011) proposes that the difference in word order in SL and TL puts a heavy burden on the interpreter. He further notes that, in most cases, both languages differ in sentence structures and grammatical constructions. Deprived of enough time for manipulation, structural asymmetry frequently obliges the interpreter to resort to pauses and delays, among other things. In this research, the SL is English, whereas the TL is Igbo.

➤ **Syntactic Constraint-induced Substitution**

The data shows that the interpreter uses another word or group of words in the TL which are not in the SL. For instance:

Example 2

Speaker: If you need the power of God **to be with you**, I want you to join us and sing this song

Interpreter: Ọ bụrụ na ị chọrọ ka ike Chineke **bịakute gị**, achọrọ m ka ị soro anyị bụọ abụ a

The words in bold print in (2) are where the substitution occurs. The interpreter renders the structure ‘to be with you’ as ‘to come to you’. When glossed interlineally, the Igbo sample could be rendered as such:

<i>Ọ</i>	<i>bụrụ</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>ị</i>	<i>chọrọ</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>ike</i>	<i>Chineke</i>	<i>bịakute</i>	<i>gị</i>	<i>achọrọ</i>	<i>m</i>
It	be-pst	that	you	want-pst	conj	power	God	come-near	you,	want	I
<i>ka</i>	<i>ị</i>	<i>soro</i>	<i>anyị</i>	<i>bụọ</i>	<i>abụ</i>	<i>a</i>					
comp	you	follow	we	sing	song	this					

From the above illustration, it is seen that the structure of ‘to be with you’ does not align with ‘bịakute gị’ as interpreted.

➤ **Syntactic constraint-induced structural asymmetry**

The data collected show structural asymmetry between the SL and the TL. The constraints the interpreter encounters result in the observed structural asymmetry. This is illustrated in the excerpt from example (3) below:

Example 3

Speaker: Get seated

Interpreter: **Ka anyị** nọrọ ọdụ

In (3), there is a difference between what the speaker says and what the interpreter interprets. The interpreter adds another structure: ‘Ka anyị’ to the actual structure, which is ‘Nọrọ ọdụ’.

➤ **Syntactic constraint-induced epenthesis**

In the data, due to the structural asymmetry between the English and Igbo languages, the interpreter is faced with the constraint of being faithful to the syntactic structure of the SL. This constraint results in the interpreter adding some syntactic structures in the TL which are not present in the SL. This phenomenon manifested in example (4) of the data as illustrated hereunder:

Example 4

Speaker: To the people of Israelites, something happened to them.

Interpreter: Ebe ụmụ Izrel nọ, o nwere ihe mere **ebe ha nọ**.

In example (4), the words ‘ebe’ and ‘nọ’ are added.

➤ **Syntactic constraint-induced elision**

Some syntactic elements are deleted here. Observe example (5).

Example 5

Speaker: It is about how one will live a righteous life, **how one will live** a holy life, a blameless life

Interpreter: Etu onye ọbụla ga-esi wee dị ndụ dị ọcha, ndụ ezi omume, ndụ na-adighị ita ụt

As As-Safi (2011) notes, structural asymmetries may make interpreters resort to pauses, delays and elision. In (5), ‘how one will live’ is deleted. This feature of elision of structures from the SL in the TL illustrates the syntactic constraints the interpreter encounters during interpretation.

iii. Semantic Constraints

This bothers on the interpreter’s ability to understand the message of the source language speaker. As stated earlier in the tenets of interpretive theory, the essence of interpreting is communication, and its effectiveness depends on the interpreter’s comprehension or misconception of the source language message.

Example 6

Speaker: Eee... what I want to speak on says principles of God for divine supply

Interpreter: Ihe m chqru ikwu okwu maka nya bu eeee... d[ke Chineke shi eme ihe

In example (6), the speaker mentions ‘principles’ implying ‘the standards set by God for providing for his people.’ The target language of that word is ‘ụkpụrụ.’ However, it is interpreted as ‘dị ke ... shi eme ihe’, which means how task(s) can be accomplished.

b. Cultural and Phatic Constraints

This has to do with problems created by words or their usages peculiar to the culture of the source language, which are either not obtainable in the target language or do not have a direct equivalent in the TL. It might be religious, political or social. The occurrence of this phenomenon shall be analysed in this section.

Example 7

Speaker: But the Bible says, “be wise as serpent, be careful as dove”

Interpreter: Mana Akwụkwọ Nsọ sị na anyị ga-amara ihe dị ka agwọ dịkwa nwayọọ dị ka nduru

In (7), we see two idiomatic expressions, ‘as wise as a serpent’ and ‘as careful as a dove’. These are difficult for the interpreter to domesticate in the target language. The reason is that in the target language culture, serpent and dove are not symbols of wisdom and carefulness. In the target language culture, the tortoise is used as a symbol of wisdom and carefulness. Thus, it cannot make much meaning to an Igbo thinker when told to be as wise as a serpent and as careful as a dove. To the Igbo man, ‘snake’ symbolizes ‘deadliness or wickedness’, while ‘dove’ symbolizes ‘a good omen’. Therefore, the figurative expression poses a challenge to the interpreter.

c. Paralinguistic and Psychological Constraints

This is a situation where the interpreter is subjected to some levels of pressure consequent upon the speakers’ tone, tempo and gestures. On the other hand, the psychological state of the interpreter, timidity, stress and stage fright also contribute to this kind of constraint. In trying to render an

accurate interpretation, the interpreter is usually overworked. Most often, these result in omissions, hesitations and time lag. This factor is analysed in this section.

Example 8

1. Speaker: It means that you have to sit down, even that you will eee... a kind of rest
Interpreter: Ihe o na-egoshi...
2. Speaker: A kind of freedom
Interpreter: Ihe o na-egoshi bụ ne i kweshiri ino ala, nke bụ na a ga-enwe ezumike, a ga-enwe nnweru onwe, a ga-enwe mmesere eshi
3. Speaker: To continue standing shows anxiety, and worry
Interpreter: Mene o buru na a gaa n'ihu ikwu oto...
4. Speaker: He is not moved by the situation
Interpreter: O na-egoshi ne mmadu no n'echiche na nchegbu mana Chineke, echiche ne onodu ojoo anugu emegwoju Chineke enya

In example (8), the speaker preaches rapidly, affecting the interpreter while reproducing the message in the target language. There are many cases of rapid tempo throughout the message, and the interpreter from example (8) is thrown off balance.

There are many other instances where the interpreters had problems due to various paralinguistic factors, such as stage fright, stress, speakers' pace, gestures, etc. These resulted in pauses, omissions, and hesitations.

2. Strategies of Interpreting

Here, the interpreting strategies, according to As-Safi (2007), are used as a yardstick to discuss how the interpreters of the sermons sampled in this study can manage the situations and convey the messages of the speakers to their audiences. The strategies include:

a. Compensation Strategy

With this strategy, the interpreter tries to compensate for places where he suspects mistranslations or where he thinks there are gaps in interpreting.

Example 9

Speaker: It is about how one will live a righteous life, how one will live a holy life, a blameless life

Interpreter: Etu onye o bula ga-esi wee di ndu di ocha, ndu ezi omume, ndu na-adighi ita uta

In (9), the interpreter renders the phrase 'righteous life' as 'ndu di ocha' that is a clean life'. When he discovers this interpretation is unsuitable, he quickly changes it to 'ndu ezi omume', but he drops 'holy life' to catch up with the preacher's pace.

b. Syntactic modification strategy

This strategy is employed by the interpreter to eliminate or reduce delays. Moreover, because the speaker is fast at some points in the preaching event, the interpreter uses this strategy to keep pace

with the speaker in order not to lag behind. In such instances, he starts interpreting simultaneously as the speaker is still talking. Observe example (10) below:

Example 10

- 1 Speaker: Had it been I am a baby child of God, a baby Christian
Interpreter: Ọ bụrụ na m bụ nwata...
- 2 Speaker: I will start shivering
Interpreter: N'ime onye nwe anyị...
- 3 Speaker: I will start panicking; I will start to be afraid
Interpreter: Ọ bụrụ na m bụ nwata n'ime onye nwe anyị aga m amalite ịtụ ụjọ, ịma jijiji

In example (10) above, three strings of utterances are used to indicate instances where the interpreter performed at relatively faster paces. This is in order to meet up with the speed with which the speaker is delivering his sermon. In those situations, the interpreter is almost interpreting simultaneously. If he had waited for the speaker to finish a given stretch of information, he would have either forgotten or missed the discourse. Therefore, he resorts to the syntactic modification strategy to avoid lagging behind or missing the message.

c. Segmenting and Chunking Strategy

This method applies when the SL speaker utters a lengthy sentence. In such a case, the interpreter slices the sentence into sense units to cope with short-term memory.

Example 11

Speaker: A story was told of a boy. This boy he is by name Nnaemeka. They said that this boy begin to read book nine hours, from nine hours to seven hours and this boy came out with a fine result and people were looking for this boy for him to come and be lecturer in their school. This UNN looked for the boy, Ebonyi State University did the same thing, because of what, his knowledge

Interpreter: A kọrọ akụkọ maka otu nwa ntakịrị na-ewepụta taịm, na-eweputa ohere guwa akwụkwọ ya guwa akwụkwọ ya, mechee, wee, mee ofuma na ezaam ya. Taa, ndị mmadụ na-achọsi ya ike maka amamihe ya

The interpreter in (11) employs the segmenting and chunking strategy when the speaker renders long or lengthy utterances. As seen in Example (11) above, the interpreter slices them into sense units to cope with memorizing them until the speaker is done. Using this strategy, the interpreter does not struggle to capture everything the speaker says. Instead, he groups them into sense clusters or units. In other words, instead of re-expressing the long stretch of utterance that the speaker delivers, he summarises it. This helps save some time and reduces the risk of forgetting the speaker's words.

d. Lining Up or Queuing Strategy

With this strategy, the interpreter delays rendering certain segments or elements of information and is caught up in subsequent lines. The four interpreters used for this study applied this strategy while interpreting the four sampled messages. However, it is pertinent to note here that the delays

sometimes do not always flow with the line of thoughts in the lines they later occurred. At other points, however, they are not out of place. This strategy is used thus:

Example 12

1. Speaker: Because in the olden days when you see a real Christian, you will know, you don't need anybody to come and explain to you that this is real Christian. **But what is happening today?**

Interpreter: Mana maka ne mgbe gara aga, i hụ nwa Chineke i ga-ama maka na e ji enya ama oka chara acha

2. Speaker: Fashion has been the order of the day

Interpreter: **Mana taa gịni bụ ihe na-eme?**

In example (12), the interpreter delays interpreting the bits of information typed in boldface at the time they are supposed to render them. This could be a way of keeping up with the tempo at which the preacher is speaking to avoid lagging behind.

e. Calquing Strategy

The four interpreters used this strategy to solve the time problem and other problems associated with the word and sentence structures of the source language message. They are forced to imitate the lexical patterns and collocations of the source language, thereby producing a literal or verbatim rendition.

Example 13

Speaker: If you look at the things we've been doing since morning, it's all about holiness

Interpreter: O bụrụ na i lezie anya n'ihe anyị na-eme ebe a kemgbe ụtụtụ, ha ncha bụ maka odudo nsọ

In example (13) above, the interpreter provides a rendition of a faithful interpretation, which is interpreting the exact words of the source language speaker into the target language. Here, the interpreter does not have much business with whether his output is in concordance with the grammar of the target language. He paid little or no attention to the syntactic appropriateness of his output, but he achieved semantic appropriateness.

f. Paraphrasing Strategy

This strategy is used to handle words that are very peculiar to the culture or domain of the source language. In such cases, the interpreter tries to describe or explain what those words mean instead of finding whole words that can be taken as equivalents to those words. The paraphrasing strategy is used as follows:

Example 14

Speaker: Like our **drama**, you can see that the first person, it is because of hunger that she dropped her faith

Interpreter: Dịka anyị hụrụ n'ihe **ngosi** anyị na onye izizi putara bu maka afọ ya ka o ji wee hapụ Chineke tinye isi ebe ọzọ

In example (14), the interpreter encounters an unfamiliar concept. The word is peculiar to the culture of the source language and does not have equivalents in the target language. Because the target language does not have such a concept, the interpreter resorts to description or explication of the concept in order to ensure effective communication. Again, ‘...dropped her faith’ was paraphrased as ‘...hapụ Chineke tinye isi ebe ọzọ’

g. Approximation Strategy

The interpreters in the four sampled sermons used this strategy in situations where they could not find direct equivalents to certain words in the target language or failed to remember them. To deal with this challenge, they resorted to using alternatives to such words. Those alternatives share the same semantic features as the words in question. The cases where this occurred are highlighted below.

Example 15

Speaker: God will be telling you that this type of life you are living that it is not good but yet your **heart** will be hardened

Interpreter: Chineke ga na-agwa gị na ụdị ndụ a ị na-adị adighị mma ma ị ga na-aga n’ihu na-ekwesi **olu** ike

As mentioned above, the interpreter encounters a concept, and although he can decipher its meaning, its direct equivalent eludes him at the moment of rendition. Consequently, the interpreter resorts to using another expression similar to the concept's semantic import. Hence, ‘heart’ took ‘olu’ instead of ‘obi’.

h. Borrowing and Transliteration Strategy

It is observed in the sampled sermons that the interpreters transliterate the words, especially when the interpreter cannot provide the Igbo equivalents of some words or in situations where the equivalents elude him. In other words, he borrows or domesticates those words whose interpretations challenge him. This situation is observed as follows:

Table 1: Borrowed Words and their Transliterated, Borrowed or Domesticated Versions

S/N	Borrowed words	Transliterated, borrowed or domesticated versions
1	Meeting	Mitin
2	Instead	ịnsted
3	Shop	Shọp

i. Ellipsis Strategy

The interpreters used this strategy in the four selected sermons to reduce certain segments. This manifested, especially in segments that the interpreters considered superfluous or where there are repetitions or redundant expressions. In any such instances, some source language words are deleted. Observe example (16) below:

Example 16

1 Speaker: **If you are still standing up**, you will not get the provision

Interpreter: I nwetekọgụ nya bụ ọzụzụ

- 2 Speaker: That he never fought with anybody and the person didn't **beat him, anybody that fights him will beat him**

Interpreter: Na o nweshuelegi onye ya na ya luru ọgụ o meriri

Example (16) above is one of the many instances where the interpreters deleted parts or segments of the source language messages, probably because they considered them irrelevant, immaterial, or inconsequential to the messages. The words typed in boldface in the English versions are omitted; hence, they are not reflected in the target language's interpreted version.

3. Data analysis of the quantitative data (see Appendix I for Tables 2-9)

This section analyses the data gathered from respondents in the sampled population.

a. The perspectives of the congregation on the roles of the interpreters

Table (2) presents information on the sampled respondents. As seen in Table 2, 33.3% of the 30 validly sampled respondents are male, while as much as 66.7% of them are female. This shows that most of the respondents are female. Also, 16.7%, 73.3% and 10.0% of the respondents are aged 20 years and below, 21 to 40 years, and 41 and above, respectively. This indicates that most sampled respondents are aged 21 to 40. More so, 96.7% of the sampled populations are Igbos, while the remaining 3.3% come from Igala (others). As expected, the result indicates that most of the respondents are Igbos. Of the sampled respondents' highest completed education, 36.7% and 63.3% of them have completed secondary and tertiary education, respectively. This indicates that most respondents have completed higher education and should be exposed and enlightened.

Furthermore, all the sampled respondents, as expected, considering their level of education, indicated that they could read, write, and understand the English language. Finally, 20.0% and 50.0% of the respondents are clergy and congregation members. The following 30.0% belong to either of the aforementioned categories; however, they function as interpreters. In other words, they belong to and serve as interpreters in the settings under review.

The item in Table (3) tries to ascertain whether sermon interpreters in the Christian settings must be Christians instead of belonging to Islam or any other religion. The responses of the respondents are presented in Table (3), and they show that 96.7% of the respondents say that being a Christian should be needed, while only 1 (3.3%) respondent indicated that it is not necessary for a Christian sermon interpreter to be a Christian, as far as s/he is a professional interpreter.

As can be observed in Table (4), most of the respondents (73.2%) indicate that the interpreter must be a devout Christian. Also, 6.7% of the respondents indicate that a sermon interpreter being a mature Christian with sound knowledge of the Bible and Christian doctrine does not matter. This means that most of the respondents agree that it is needed. More so, only 3.3% of the respondents indicate that for a sermon interpreter to have a preaching experience does not matter. The result here shows that most respondents think a sermon interpreter should have preaching experience.

Furthermore, only 40.0% of the respondents indicated that the sermon interpreter being a member of the church he/she interprets for does not matter. This shows that most respondents think the sermon interpreter needs to be a member of the church he interprets for. In the same way, only

16.7% of the respondents indicated that it does not matter if the sermon interpreter believes in the theology of the particular church or not. The result here shows that most respondents believe that the sermon interpreter should believe the theology of the particular church he/she interprets for. Similarly, only 3.3% of the respondents say it does not matter if the sermon interpreter uses correct Christian terminology. This indicates that most respondents accept that the interpreter should use correct Christian terminologies of the Christian denomination s/he is interpreting for.

As seen in Table (5), 30.0% of the respondents indicated that the sermon interpreter should replicate the preacher's emotions and voice inflections. In contrast, another 30.0% of the population shared the same opinion but were more emphatic. The interpreter should replicate the preacher's emotions and voice inflections. Also, 43.3% of the respondents strongly indicate that the sermon interpreter should replicate the preacher's facial expression and hand gestures, while another 30.0% share the same view. More so, 26.7% and 30.0% of respondents believe that the sermon interpreter should remain unanimated and must interpret seriously even if the preacher is enthusiastic.

Furthermore, 26.7% and 40.0% of the respondents agree that the sermon interpreter should always say exactly what the preacher says without adding, omitting or changing anything. However, 40.0% and 33.3% of the respondents believe that the sermon interpreter could correct any mistake the preacher makes. Again, 30.0% and 56.6% of the respondents indicate that the sermon interpreter should clarify any misunderstanding that arises from the preaching. Similarly, 50.0% and 23.4% of the respondents accept that the sermon interpreter should change anything the preacher says that is culturally inappropriate. The inferences drawn above establish the fact that the roles of sermon interpreters are to replicate the preachers' emotions and voice inflections, replicate the preachers' facial expressions and hand gestures, remain unanimated and interpret seriously even when the pastor is enthusiastic, always say exactly what the preacher says, but correct any mistake the preacher makes, clarify any misunderstanding that arises from the preaching and change anything the preacher says that is culturally inappropriate.

Table (6) focuses on what is expected of a sermon interpreter when s/he significantly changes something the preacher says; 26.7%, 23.3%, 46.7% and 3.3% of the respondents, respectively, indicate that s/he should never significantly change anything the preacher says, check with the preacher first to get approval before significantly changing anything, notify the preacher that s/he significantly changed something, and does not need to inform the preacher.

b. Areas of training required for interpreters

The results in Table (7) show the respondents' perception of their feelings when they listen to English sermons in Igbo since they understand the two languages. The results show that the highest number of the respondents (86.7%), indicating that it makes the sermon more meaningful. In comparison, the lowest percentage (13.3%) is of the opinion that interpreting becomes a distraction. Table (7) also shows that most respondents agreed that listening to an English sermon interpreted in Igbo makes the sermon more meaningful.

Table (8) presents respondents' opinions on their feelings when listening to an English sermon interpreted in Igbo with mistakes, considering that they know English and Igbo. The analysis shows that 3.3% of the respondents feel that it reduces interest in the sermon, and 43.3% say that

interpreting becomes a distraction. In comparison, 53.4% are of the view that they focus on the English version of the sermon. This response is from educated members of the congregation. They could notice the mistakes because they are learned, but the uneducated will accept whatever they hear in the target language, whether right or wrong.

On whether a sermon interpreter needs to be a Christian or a skilled interpreter, as seen in Table (9), the results show that 53.4%, 3.3% and 43.3% of the respondents, respectively, feel that it is more important for the sermon interpreter to be a Christian, it is more important for the sermon interpreter to be a skilled interpreter, and all of the above respectively. That means that interpreters in church settings should add skills to their Christianity. Skills here include interpreting skills to know how best to carry out their duties. They also need language skills with reasonable attention to the syntactic and semantic levels of language, where most constraints were observed.

Summary of the Findings

This research engages in the translational analysis of selected sermons in Nigerian churches. The sermons used in this research work are preached in English and interpreted into the Igbo language, specifically, the Northern group of dialects, according to Nwaozuzu's (2017) classification of the Igbo dialects. Using As-Safi's (2011) theory of interpreting constraints and strategies, the study's findings reveal that the interpreters face some challenges that hamper their performances in interpreting events. Those challenges occur at various levels of linguistic analysis, ranging from phonological, syntactic, semantic and para-linguistics/psychological aspects. These problems are encountered because the interpreters featured in the sermons are not indigenous users of the source language (English). Through the analysis of the questionnaires, the researchers find that the interpreters are of Igbo origin rather than English.

However, they learnt English as a second language, which is used as a teaching medium in Nigerian schools. They do not know the dynamics and usage of the language as the indigenous users would. Other factors, such as culturally bound terminologies and usage and the speakers' tempo and pitch, as found in sections 1b and 1c respectively, affected their performances. They employ certain strategies to cope with the constraints and produce suitable and appropriate interpretations, and sometimes they render incorrectly. The strategies include compensation, syntactic modification, segmenting and chunking, lining up or queuing, calquing, paraphrasing, approximation, borrowing and ellipsis. These strategies, to a large extent, proved helpful to the interpreters.

The study's findings through the respondents' responses show the interpreter's exact role in an interpreted sermon. A more significant percentage of the respondents said that the interpreter participates with the preacher in providing effective communication of God's word. This agrees with Qiang's (2013) interpretive theory, which maintains that the purpose of interpreting is communication. Furthermore, as a partner to the preacher, the interpreter could replicate the preacher's emotions and voice inflections and replicate the preacher's facial expression and hand gestures because they all facilitate the communication of the message. The interpreter should remain unanimated and interpret seriously even when the pastor is enthusiastic, always say exactly what the preacher says but correct any mistake the preacher makes. The interpreter should also clarify any misunderstanding from the preaching and change anything the preacher says that is culturally inappropriate. This is necessary because either the preacher or the source language is of

different backgrounds with both the audience and the target language. Therefore, as a matter of necessity, the message should be given to the target language audience in its worldview. Anything short of that could hamper the fulfillment of the purpose of the message, which is effective communication. The researchers discover that the interpreter must be a Christian to function well in a church setting.

Again, the interpreter should both be skilful and formally trained in interpreting. As pointed out by the respondents, being deficient in interpreting distracts and confuses the congregation, thereby inhibiting communication. The required skill and training are not the only criteria for interpreting; it also entails proficiency in both the source and the target languages. The interpreters from our findings are both members and clergies belonging to the sampled churches, who either volunteered or were appointed to render interpreting services because of their ability to understand both the English and the Igbo languages. They are not trained in the profession of interpreting. The constraints observed in the interpreting process from the sampled sermons indicate that the interpreters lack formal and in-depth knowledge of both the source and target languages. The respondents also attested to the importance of proficiency in the source and target languages in interpreting as a prerequisite to effective performance in sermon interpreting.

From the analysis, it is observed that most constraints are bothered by syntax and semantic constraints. This means that the interpreters find it difficult to reproduce the messages in the target language while maintaining the sentence structures of the target language. Also, the decoding of the meanings of many source language words is very problematic, which affects their interpretations. This leads to inadequate interpreting and misinterpretations.

The factors stated above are indications that support our assertion that the interpreters are not trained in interpreting. In other words, they do not have the training to acquire a good knowledge of the source language, structure, and usage. Therefore, it is paramount for the interpreter to be trained in the field and have good knowledge of the two linguistic systems the interpreter intends to work with. In addition to the training, the interpreter must be versatile in both languages, especially the one he is interpreting (the TL). This versatility can be acquired by reading any/every available literature in that language. Reading vastly helps the interpreter master the target language's lexicons.

Conclusion

Every communicative activity's essence is passing information from one end to another. In a situation where there is language and cultural contact, especially where the audience does not understand the language of the speaker, it then becomes imperative for an interpreter to mediate between the speaker and the audience for communication to be achieved. For communication to be achieved from Phelan's (2008) perspective, the interpreter has to extract information and meanings that agree with what is obtainable in the target language rather than pursue the mechanic equivalence of the two languages.

Therefore, an interpretive activity will be successful only when the message from the source language is sufficiently reproduced in the target language, retaining the quality and meaning of the original message. This present study has established that the interpreter is as important as the

speaker. Thus, he should be able to perform efficiently and make his output as natural as the original speaker's. Since the interpreter's performance can affect the message, the interpreter needs to attain a good level of linguistic competence and be well-trained in interpreting.

Bringing it down to the church setting, the interpreter needs to be well trained in religious interpreting, be a Christian as found in Table (3), and know and believe the doctrine and practice of the denomination he is to work (Table 4). This is because the interpreter is expected to be conversant with the beliefs, patterns, practices, terminologies etc, peculiar to that denomination. For instance, a Roman Catholic interpreter will interpret 'Jesus Christ our Lord' as *Jesu Kristi Di nwenụ Anyị*, while an Anglo Catholic will have it as *Jizọs Kraịst Onye Nwe Anyị* etc. Thus, the interpreter should belong to the particular denomination s/he is working for.

Recommendation

From the findings of this study, it is highly recommended that interpreters should be encouraged to acquire necessary interpreting skills. They should also be trained in the languages they are to work with, both the source and the target languages. This will help them not to distort the original message and produce a natural version of the SL message. Considering the importance of language efficiency, the interpreters' competence level should be prioritized when choosing an interpreter. On this premise, an interpreter should not be chosen just because s/he can speak or understand the two languages involved, which in this study are English and Igbo.

Again, religious institutions should plan to formalize the training of their interpreters to improve their efficiency. The training should focus on language and some background knowledge of the doctrines and practices of the denominations involved. The interpreters should also be trained to manage psychological factors that affect their performances. Finally, the researcher observes that much work has not been done on interpreting in Nigerian settings. Therefore, scholars are encouraged to explore the area of interpreting and conduct more research.

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