

Application of Eugene Nida's Translation Theory and Techniques in Rendering Standard English Newspaper into Nigerian Pidgin on Wazobia 95.1 News Broadcast

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Abstract

The study examined the application of Eugene Nida's translation theory and techniques in rendering the Standard English newspaper texts into Nigerian pidgin during broadcast on Wazobia 95.1 F.M. Guided by Nida's principle of formal and dynamic equivalence, the study investigated how news presenters adapt vocabulary, syntax, idioms, and cultural references to suit the linguistic competence and socio-cultural background of the station's diverse audience. Using qualitative descriptive approach, selected English newspaper stories and their corresponding pidgin versions aired on Wazobia F.M. were analysed to identify the translation strategies employed. Findings revealed that dynamic equivalence and lexical simplification, idiomatic substitution, cultural adaptation, and structural modification are dominant techniques used to ensure clarity. The study concludes that Nida's theory provides a suitable platform for media translation into Nigerian Pidgin by enhancing message comprehension and listener engagement. It also emphasises the role of translation in bridging linguistic gaps and promoting inclusive news dissemination in multilingual societies.

Keywords: Eugene Nida's Translation Theory, Techniques, Newspaper, Nigerian Pidgin, and News Broadcast

Introduction

The term translation itself has several meanings: it can refer to the general subject field, the product (the text that has been translated) or the process (the act of producing the translation, otherwise known as translating). The process of translation between two different written languages involves the translator changing an original written text (the source text or ST) in the original verbal language (the source language or SL into a written text (the target text or TT in a different verbal language (the target language or TL).

Translating from Source Language (SL) to Target Language (TL) is never an easy flowing activity. A translator has to face enormous problems in each and every step of the process and

it happens primarily because of the linguistic and cultural differences. Finding the equivalent words sometimes becomes very difficult, even impossible as every language (culture) has its own nuances, peculiar to it only. In such cases the translator is to depend on his/her creativity. Keeping in mind the cultural context, the translator is bound to resituate the source text.

The language of Nigerian Pidgin is currently undergoing a process of social expansion as a result of its dynamic socio-cultural relevance and increased communicative demands, thus, consistently expanding its lexicon and widening the range of application of the meanings of its lexical items (Mensah, 2011). Over the years, Nigerian Pidgin has undergone a lot of modifications and re-modifications by drawing lexicons from various Nigerian indigenous languages as well as English language. Words like Ogbonge (Original), Tanda-gidigba (Firm), Kpafuka (Ruined), join-bodi (Association) and so on, have become generally used and accepted Nigerian Pidgin words.

Years ago, Nigerian Pidgin was used widely on national radio stations for advertisement and today more and more radio stations use NP for news broadcast. With some stations allocating slots to broadcast their radio programs in NP, a few radio stations like Wazobia F.M broadcast programs is done entirely in Nigerian Pidgin. Owing to the fact that there are over forty million native speakers of NP (Faraclas, 2006) who speak it as one among their first languages, it is important that the language of the mass media is unequivocal. If a percentage of the said forty million NP speakers rely on a radio station like Wazobia FM 95.1 for information on nation issues, then it is essential that the radio station communicates the news using language commensurate to the matter or issues being transmitted in such a way that the audience understands the information accurately across socio-economic, educational levels and geography etc. It can be agreed the standardization of the NP language will provide a common use of NP lexes which in turn will provide shared interpretation of such NP terms, making news communicated by radio stations to the audience more effective.

Presenters of news broadcast in NP on Wazobia F.M demonstrate a high level of fluency and are savvy in their use of the language in transmitting messages from the source language to their target audience. NP terminologies are used tactically in conveying messages aimed at achieving a desired interpretation and in some cases desired feedback.

Aims and Objectives

The major aim of this study is the application of Nida's translation theory and strategies in rendering Standard English newspaper into Nigerian pidgin on Wazobia 95.1 news broadcast. Specifically, the study set to:

- a. provide a case study of Nida's theory of translation
- b. examine the accuracy and adequacy in the translation of the news broadcast on Wazobia F.M from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL)
- c. identify some of the techniques of translation at different levels used in converting the Standard English newspaper into pidgin.

Statement of the Problem

Some researchers like Al-Salem (2008), and Agboola (2013) over the years have focused more on translation strategies without reference to any theory. The study therefore, arises from the gap of carrying out an examination of the application of Nida's translation theory and strategies in rendering standard English newspaper into Nigerian pidgin on wazobia 95.1 news broadcast.

Definition of key terms

- Standard English: This refers to as the variety of English that has undergone codification to the point of being socially acceptable
- Nigerian Pidgin: Also known as “Naija” in scholarship. It is an English-based creole language spoken as a lingua franca across Nigeria.
- Wazobia FM 95.1: A radio station situated in Lagos, Nigeria, which transmits information entirely in Nigerian Pidgin.

Literature Review

Translation was first investigated as a linguistic phenomenon, as a process of communication or meaning transfer via linguistic conversion. Efforts were made for developing a linguistic translation theory or a “translation science” (Nida, 1964), with the aim of giving a comprehensive description of the equivalence relations between signs and their combinations in the SL and TL. Nida (1964) stated that the translator's problem is that he/she is under constant pressure due to the conflict between meaning and form. In general, it is clear that equivalence and shift are important tools in the translation process.

As it is defined, translators constantly have the problem of how to define the cultural aspects in a source text (ST) and find the most suitable way to successfully convey these aspects in

the TL. The scope of these problems varies depending on the linguistic and cultural gap between the two (or more) languages (Nida 1964, p. 130).

Nida adopted Chomsky's universal generative-transformational grammar as well as semantic and pragmatic perspectives on meaning (Nida) to provide a scientific umbrella for his theory of translation. Nida's theory of translation will be examined and applied to English newspaper translation and the three models which operate on the SL and TL together will be applied. Nida suggests that before the translators perform any act, they first have to delve deeply into the basic part of the SL to come to grips with its intended meaning. This follows the second stage where translator "transfer" this intended meaning into the target language and last stage is the restructuring of the transferred meaning both semantically and syntactically to produce equivalent TT.

Empirical Framework

In a study conducted by Al-Salem (2008) she quoted Nida because he translated the Bible. Her comparative analytical study required her to map out the various studies on the translation of sacred texts such as the Bible and the Quran. In her opinion, Nida's dynamic equivalence and literal translation can be followed in the translation of the Quran since the two strategies worked for Nida's translation of the Bible. Al-Salem's study was on the English translator of metonymy as used in the Quran, but discussed Nida's theory of translation without any specific reference to its applicability or inapplicability to any specific surah in the Quran, whereas the present study elaborates on Nida's theory of translation and attempt to test its applicability to the Pidgin Translation of Newspaper on Wazobia F.M.

Theoretical Framework

A theory is a coherent and integrated set of propositions used as principles for explaining a class of phenomena. Translation cannot be separated from theory. Therefore, theory is a basic in translation. Theory basis provides the rule and meaning in translation by which every translation can be measured. It must be an appropriate translation determination and it should be measured by suitable theory. If the translation process is not based on translation theory, the result of the translation will fail and can't succeed as a target translation. Therefore, translation theory is an important necessity.

Nida's Equivalence Theory

In 1964, Eugene Nida proposed his new notion of equivalence; Nida presented two new types of equivalence; dynamic and formal equivalence. His theory is based on theoretical concepts and terminology from semantics and pragmatics, and from Chomsky's work on syntactic structure. A word acquires its meaning through context and can create varying responses

according to culture (Munday, 2008). According to Nida, Translation is a rewriting of the message contained in the source language into the target language to find similarities. Nida sees translation as a process of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. In other words, translation is a transfer of meaning, message, and style from one SLT to the TLT. In the order of priority, style is put the last. Here, the things to reproduce (transfer) is stated, message. Nida prefer the term 'Receptor Language' (RL) to 'target language' since the word 'target' does not always have a pleasant connotation.

Formal equivalence or formal correspondence also called Word-for-word, formal correspondence. It is inclined to be more ST structure oriented. It is more concerned with the message in the TL, but it should match as closely as possible the different elements in the SL (Nida, 2000). This type of translation is called 'gloss translation' in which the translator seeks to produce the closest approximation of the original. This translation requires a reader to have moderate familiarity with the subject matter. Shakernia (2013) states that a translation done by means of formal correspondence tries to remain as close to the original text as possible, without adding the translator's ideas and thoughts. It is a more literal rendering of the text because it remains as close to the original as possible in both form and content.

Dynamic Equivalence also called thought-for-thought, dynamic equivalence. According to Nida (2003), dynamic equivalence is defined as the quality of a translation in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the receptor language that the response of the receptor is essentially like that of the original receptors. This kind of translation involves taking each thought from the original text and rendering it into a thought in the receptor language that conveys the same meaning, but may not use the exact form, or structure, of the original (Shakernia, 2013). Nida believed strongly that reproducing the message ought to be the primary aim of the translator, but that he must also be careful to make appropriate and accurate adjustments with regards to grammar and vocabulary (Nida & Taber, 2003). For example, the popular Psalms 23:1a "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" (KJV). NASB translates as "I shall be supplied with whatever I need" this is because the word "want" is ambiguous in English and ambiguity should be avoided as much as possible in dynamic equivalence because it aims for clarity of expression.

Types of Equivalence compiled by Eugene Nida's (1964)

S/N	Types of Equivalence	Explanations
1.	Literal transfer	The translation is having word-to-word translation. It maintains the structure and the word translated word by word so it produces a strange translation.
2.	Minimal transfer	Minimal transfer shows that the translation is between literal and literary; it has word-to-word translation and literary expression
3.	Literary transfer	A translation has a different wording but still can maintain the message of ST to TT

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study is the qualitative research which involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach which involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. The researcher downloaded series of live news broadcast aired daily on Wazobia F.M Chook Mouth Program between January and June, 2024 and excerpts were drawn from these videos for analysis.

Data Analysis and Discussions

In this section, analysis and discussion will evaluate the accuracy of Nida's translation theory in rendering Standard English newspaper into Nigerian pidgin on Wazobia 95.1 news broadcast. Data were collected from Chook Mouth program on Wazobia F.M where news reviewers translate from English using the Punch, Tribune and Guardian newspapers into Nigerian Pidgin. The texts were taken randomly from the month of January to June, 2024 being the period of this research. The researcher listened to the Nigerian pidgin versions of the news and compared the translation with the source texts. Nida's functional translation and his communicative approach is the theoretical framework for this study.

Presentation of Data

Excerpt 1 (3rd January, 2024 news report on Wazobia)

Source Text (Standard English Newspaper)

“FG suspends accreditation of degree certificates from Benin Rep, Togo –VANGUARD

The Federal Government yesterday announced suspension of evaluation and accreditation of degree certificates from Togo and the Republic of Benin. The action followed media report

that exposed fraudulent acquisition of degree certificates by some desperate degree seeking individuals.”

Target Text (Nigerian Pidgin Translation on Wazobia)

FG don knack suspension ontop accreditation of Benin & Togo School Certificate

Federal Government don knack suspension ontop accreditation of degree certificates from Benin Republic and Togo. FG say some Naija people dey use bad ways to get degree, so dem fir get job wey dem no qualify for.

Excerpt 2 (23rd February 2024's News report on Wazobia)

Source Text (Standard English Newspaper)

“The Lagos State Government says it will engage canteens locally known as *Mama Put* to feed between 1,000 to 1,500 residents daily in each of the Local Government areas of the State.”

Target Text (Nigerian Pidgin Translation on Wazobia)

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu don tok say Lagos State wan arrange with “Mama Put” pipo to give food to 1,500 people for each local government every day.

Excerpt 3 (23rd February 2024's News report on Wazobia)

Source Text (Standard English Newspaper)

“We called off strike over intimidation threat---Ajaero. The Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC, yesterday alleged Federal Government’s efforts to undermine it through divide-and-rule tactics, saying the two-day protest was called off because of threats and intimidation. It also expressed concern that its headquarters as well as state offices nationwide had been militarized by the federal government, insisting members of the congress won’t be cowed by any threat...”

Target Text (Nigerian Pidgin Translation on Wazobia)

NLC say na threat make dem suspend protest. Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) tok say dem don suspend dia nationwide protest. Presido of NLC, Joe Ajaero, tok dis one for one news conference for Abuja. According to Ajaero, e dey important make the public know say serious threats dey against di leaders of NLC.

Excerpt 4 (5th March, 2024 news Report on Wazobia)

Source Text (Standard English Newspaper)

Report Bribe Seekers To Me, Tinubu Tells Qatari Investors.

President Bola Tinubu has re-echoed his government's resolve to fight corruption and create a good business environment, urging Qatari investors to report any Nigerian government. "I am here to give you the assurance that reforms are going on; forget about whatever you heard in the past. Whatever is the obstacle or problem that some of you might have experienced; it is in the past because there is no obstacle in the future," Tinubu said. Do not offer a bribe to any of our people, and if it is requested or taken from you, report to us. You will have access to me.

Target Text (Nigerian Pidgin Translation on Wazobia)

Presido Tinubu don knack hand for chest tell investor wey wan put money inside we obodo-Naija make dem no fear. If anybodi ask dem to pay egunje, make dem shaperly come report to am because eim wan make dia mind touch ground as dem dey carry money enter we country.

Excerpt 5 (24th April, 2024 news Report on Wazobia)

Source Text (Standard English Newspaper)

Yahaya Bello used Kogi's \$720,000 for child's tuition – EFCC chair The Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Ola Olukoyede, claimed on Tuesday that investigation by the anti-graft agency revealed that the embattled former governor of Kogi State, Yahaya Bello, withdrew \$720,000 from the state's coffers to pay his child's school fees.

Target Text (Nigerian Pidgin Translation)

Di corruption case wey EFCC put ontop di head of former Kogi State Governor , Yahaya Bello don enter anoda gear. EFCC don tok say Bello comot 720,000 dollars from the government akant to pay eim pikin school fees in advance.

Excerpt 6 (28th May, 2024 news Report on Wazobia)

Source Text (Standard English Newspaper)

Association Urges Kano Gov to Obey Court Order Against Deposition of Emirs. The Kano Traders Association has urged Governor Abba Yusuf to comply with a Federal High Court's order restraining the Kano State Government from repealing the Kano Emirate Council Law 2019.

The association, in a statement by its spokesperson, Abdlazees Sulieman, emphasized the importance of respecting the rule of law and urged all arms of government to work together in harmony to ensure peace, stability and progress in the state.

Target Text (Nigerian Pidgin Translation)

Di join-bodi of elders for North a.k.a Northern Elders Forum don put mouth for di mata of emir waka from Kano. Dem come out tok dis one becos of di gbege wey shele for Kano las weekend.

Tok tok person for di Northern Elders Forum, Oga Abdlazees Sulieman don tok say make di Governor of Kano obey wetin court don tok for di mata.

Excerpt 7 (16th June, 2024 news Report on Wazobia)

Source Text (Standard English Newspaper)

Six killed, many abducted as gunmen attack Sokoto community on Eid-el-Kabir day.

No fewer than six persons have been reportedly killed with more than 100 persons also abducted as suspected gunmen attacked a community in Sokoto State in the early hours of Sunday.

The police in Sokoto, through their spokesman, Ahmed Rufai, confirmed the killing of over six persons and abduction of scores of residents at Tudun Doki, Gwadabawa Local Government Area of Sokoto. Rufai said though information about the attack was still sketchy, six people were confirmed killed.

Target Text (Nigerian Pidgin Translation)

Sallah no too sweet for di pipi wey dey Tundun Doki village for Gwadabawa Local Government Area of Sokoto State. Tok tok pesin of Police Ahmed Rufai confirm di attack wey happen for early morning for sallah day and di bad guys kill six pipi.

Discussion of Findings

Examination of Translation accuracy and adequacy in the selected data on Wazobia F.M

Where there is no one-to-one equivalence and no readily definable contextual correspondence in the form of words then adequacy is obvious. The translator refrains from the wording of the original, and from what the dictionary offers to use various techniques of translation. Such is the case of the Chook mouth news casters when it comes to translation of the Nigerian newspaper from the SL to TL. For example, the excerpts above show the use of translation of the basic meaning or an attempt to relay some of the flavour of the original to show some nuances. There is translation inadequacy and inaccuracy in excerpts 2, 3, 6, and 7. Literal translation of Lagos State Government as “*Government of Lagos*” in excerpt 2 would have been appropriate instead of translating as “*Governor Babajide Sanwolu*.” Also, in the same excerpt under consideration, an element “1,000” was omitted. The translation only

captures 1,500 residents. In excerpt 3 there is lack of translation adequacy as translator failed to translate some important elements in the SL. “...its headquarters as well as State offices nationwide has been militarized by Federal Government” is not translated in the target language. In excerpt 4 the translator employed Nida’s dynamic- sense-to-sense translation- in translating “I am giving you the assurance” to “President Tinubu don knack hand for chest” The structure of the phrase changes while the message is still retained.

In excerpt 6 “Kano Traders Association” is translated orally by the newscaster as “Northern Elders Forum.” This translation is grossly inadequate and inaccurate; it would have retained the source text or perhaps translated using Nida’s literal translation method. In excerpt 7, the chook mouth news reviewer in her translation omitted 100 others that were abducted by the gun men; it only captured six people that were killed.

A critical look at the translation in excerpt 1 gives interpretation of the statement said by the Federal Government by adding “so dem fit job wey dem no qualify for.” There is nothing like that in the SL. Also, in excerpt 4 “...because he wan make dia mind touch ground as dem dey carry money enter we country.” This is a complete interpretation of the statement of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu; the intended meaning. The statement “he wan make dia mind touch ground” was translated using Nida’s formal equivalence which means to give assurance about something.

In excerpt 5, the translator added corruption case which is absent in the SL. The additional explanation makes the TT clearer and longer than ST. The translator opted for adding extra explanation to make the reader and listeners decipher the TT. Nida’s requirement of a good translation “making sense” can be detected in the translator’s choice of adding more explanations.

One of the techniques employed by the translator is compensation which include the use of compound words, insertion, etc. Compounds words like *Obodo-Naija* (Nigeria), *Join-bodi* (Association), *Presdio-Tinubu* (President Tinubu), *Chook-mouth* (Discuss), *Kontri-people* (Country people) are evident in the TL. The use of inserted words such as “*Baawa*” meaning Baba wa” referring to President Tinubu, “*Nigeria Labour Congress e don cast, e don cast ooo*” *sebi una get coconut head, we go do una wetin una get coconut head*” “*Na wa oo.*” All these words are nowhere to be found in the ST.

The technique of borrowing is evident in the excerpts, for instance, ‘*Federal Government*,’, ‘*suspension*’, ‘*Benin Republic*’, ‘*Mama put*’ that are present in the ST are borrowed to the Target text.

Conclusion

Translation is neither all equal, nor are they always similar. Carrying out the age old debate, some translations aim for literal translation, i.e. word for word translation of the ST, while others strive for dynamic, sense for sense. Translation theory recognizes that different languages encode meaning in differing forms therefore; translator will have to find appropriate ways of preserving meaning while using the most appropriate form of each language. This paper has provided a case study of Nida's theory of translation and investigated its applicability to the pidgin translation of selected Nigerian newspaper on Wazobia F.M. The study has provided a case study of Nida's theory of translation as well as the examination of the accuracy and adequacy in the translation of the news broadcast on Wazobia F.M from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). It has also identified some of the techniques of translation at different levels used in converting the Standard English newspaper into pidgin. It can be concluded that translation is important in disseminating information.

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