

FROM IGBO TO FRENCH: THE UNTRANSLATABLES

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Abstract

Igbo language is one of the three major indigenous languages of Nigeria. It is the native language of the Igbo people who are mainly concentrated in the South East of Nigeria. The French Language, on the other hand, is a romance language spoken in Europe, and in the other four continents of the world. It is the mother tongue of only a few countries, but it is one of the most spoken languages of the world. In today's world, where mutual understanding plays a major part due to globalisation, the need for translation cannot be overemphasized. However, translation uses languages as tools, and language has a lot of cultural undertones. These cultural attributes of language constitute real problems in translation as words to translate them can never be found except in the settings where they exist, neither can the words and expressions be understood by people outside the fold. This paper seeks to use practical examples of such untranslatables to demonstrate the problems they pose to translators. Newmark's classification of culture (1988) has been used as a theoretical framework to sieve out these untranslatables emanating from culture. The paper went further to suggest certain techniques to solve the problem of untranslatability.

Key words: Igbo, french, translation, untranslatable

Introduction

In today's world the role of communication cannot be over emphasized. The world has turned into a global village and the need to understand one another has become inevitable due to the many exchanges (both local and international) that take place in today's world. Language has been discovered to be the only true barrier to the much desired communication. But thanks to translation the linguistic problems of communication has been brought to the barest minimum. Translation intervenes as a mediator to transfer messages from one language to another and thus help to complete the circuit of communication.

Translation involves the rendering of messages from one language to another. Languages are the major tools of the translator and they can be in form of sign language, spoken language or written language so the translator translates both

signs and words. There are many languages in the world and every language represents a speech community and each community is shred in culture. Language and culture are so interrelated and interwoven that it is difficult to say which one precedes the other. One thing is however clear every language came into existence to serve a particular society and so is best suited for that community and each community develops a culture that serves it best and the most effective in describing the realities of the speech community. This explains why no language can develop above the community it serves. Every language has as much vocabulary as it needs to explain the realities of its surroundings, realities and existence. This is why linguists have argued that no language is more important than the other, as all languages of the world serve the same purpose of communication.

But the reality of today's world is that linguistic, cultural, religious, economic, scientific, technological exchanges abound. There are new discoveries every day and thanks to the internet, these discoveries are shared and distributed within the shortest possible time. Today humans are always in search of information which is very pertinent even for their day to day functioning and interaction.

The result of this is that languages, which hitherto were preserves of particular communities, serving only the cultures of the host communities, are now used to translate and interpret the happenings in different other language communities with entirely different cultures. Hence the major problems of translation can be classified into two groups; linguistic and cultural.

Some languages due to some historical relationships either come from the same parent language or so share a lot of linguistic similarities in their syntax, semantics, morphology and phonology. This is the case of English, French and Spanish languages. Emenanjo illustrates this further when he expressed that:

.....While it is probable that between 14th and 17th centuries the Belgians and the French had certain significant culture elements in common. It is improbable that the Germans and the Indians had at that same period, any significant culture elements in common.(1)

Translating from one language to the other, though never an easy task is easier when both the term and version are in languages of the same family. As language and culture are interwoven and cannot be separated from each other, every language has enough words to represent those aspects of its culture, but may not have words to represent things that are alien to it. A translator , in the

course of this intercultural exchange, is faced with some realities that are peculiar to only the culture of one of the languages that serve as his work tools.

Bellos (160) opines that, “languages tend to have words their users need, and not to have words for things never used or encountered”. But in this era of globalization, there is need to translate even from the remotest language to the so called “developed languages”, from related and unrelated languages. French/Igbo translation is one of such instances of translation between languages that share very little or nothing in common, neither culturally nor linguistically.

The Igbo language

The Igbo language is autochthonous to the Igbo culture area. The Igbo culture area is an area delimitable by an imaginary line running through the states of Agbo,(Agbor, Obiaruku, Ebu (Anioma igbo area, Ehwuda (Ahoada, Diobu Umuagbai (Port Harcourt area, Arochukwu (Ehugbo (Afikpo,Ndinoofu, Isiogo (Abakaliki area) and the Enugu-Ezike, (Nsukka Area), and Nzam. This imaginary line encloses an area in which the people not only speak the various dialects of the Igbo language but also share typical and significant common culture, traits and patterns. Up to or above 50% in the Igbo culture area, Oka (Awka, Nri, Ihiala and Owerre (Owerri)) are in the culture centre, while Agbo (Agbor) and Ebu (Anioma Igbo), Enugu Ezike, Ehugbo (Afikpo) Azumini and Ikwere (East Igbo) are in the culture margin. The people living within the Igbo culture area speak the same Igbo language and so constitute what the linguists call a speech community. Within this speech community there are scores of regional dialects (Emenanjo 2015)

Igbo is spoken by tens of millions of people in the south-eastern geo-political zone of Nigeria. It is spoken as the only native language in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo state. These are monolingual states. It is also spoken as a major language in Delta and Rivers State in south south geopolitical zone. These are multilingual states. Pockets of Igbo State communities are also to be found in Benue, Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. Igbo is one of Nigeria’s major or national languages and is taught in Nigerian Secondary Schools , in keeping with the language provisions of the National Policy on Education 2004 (Emenanjo 2)

The French language.

According to Grin et Michele Gazzola, French is a romance language and the mother tongue and official language of France. It is also spoken as mother tongue in some parts of Canada and Belgium. There are also some African francophones,

who became francophone due to past colonisation .The French people represent about 63%of the francophone space, followed by Canadians(9.5%), Ivorians (5%),Belge (4.4%), The African francophones together represent 20% . (3) (Our translation) French language is the seventh most spoken language in the world but is the most widely distributed as it is present in the five continents of the world. It is a language of diplomacy and so is very important in international relations. French Language is one of the languages adopted by the United Nations for their day to day transactions.

Translation

Translation as conceived by Cartford is the replacement of textual materials in one language (source language) with an equivalent textual material in another language (target language)(32) Translation has long evolved from mere interlinguistic exchange to semantic exchange from one language to another. It is a complex process affected by time, place, text and socio-cultural knowledge of both the source and target audience. These variables sum up the context. According to Ellrodt Robert « *la traduction joue un rôle essentiel dans le monde moderne dans tous les domaines ; littéraires, scientifique, politique, sociologique* » (13) Translation plays a very essential role in all domains of the modern world such as the literary, scientific , political, sociological domains. (Our translation)

In an attempt to cross linguistic and cultural barriers which the translator must do to do his work the italian expression “Traduttore, traditore” came into use. This is an expression that simply means that the translator is a traitor. This expression is fuelled by the belief that the translated text can never accurately represent the original. As human beings are different so is the way each individual perceives the world. Each individual has a peculiar way of using language which no other person can exactly translate. But the current day exigencies and exchanges have kept translation alive despite the challenges.

Untranslatability

Untranslatability simply means not translatable. Untranslatability is an encompassing word which has come to mean different things in the linguistic and translation circles. The justification for the Italian saying traduttore traditore (the translator is a traitor) can be found in the fact that no two human beings are the same as each individual is a separate entity and an embodiment of his life experiences which include his culture and as such trying to translate another man’s thought is therefore an impossible task as even comprehension, which is needed before any meaningful translation can take place, is only an

approximation of meaning. Israel Fortunato declares that *"l'oeuvre...est jugée intraduisible sous prétexte qu'elle est impossible d'en établir le double exact, de la reproduire en préservant toute la complexité de ses choix initiaux."*(17) A text is adjudged untranslatable under the pretext that it is impossible to establish its exact replica or to reproduce the text while still retaining all the complexities of its original choices. (Our translation)

A word is said to be "untranslatable" when it has no direct corresponding words or phrases in the target language, or when important cultural connotations from the source language are not properly communicated through the target word. Untranslatability could just mean that the feeling, occurrence or concept in one culture does not happen enough in another culture to be named. It could be a situation that exists but to which the cultural area does not attach enough importance to name or describe. It means that a text or utterance in one language has no equivalent text or utterance or meaning in another language. It is a term that has erroneously been misunderstood for a lack of word for word equivalent.

Some words might also have cultural contents which make them difficult to be rendered into another language. The unexplained aspect of language, present at the time of the construction of meaning such as the connotations of the context, as well as extra linguistic vectors of meaning, can only be imagined. Only users of the same language, and within the same speech community, can actually share and understand the same extra linguistic additions to texts and utterances because they have a certain degree of knowledge that they share in common.

Translation theorists like Seleskovitch and Lederer and other proponents of the theory of meaning, have severally argued against untranslatability while maintaining that one only needs to contextualize a notion for the so called untranslatability to disappear. Mounin goes a step further to explain how contextualization can take place when he explained translation as passing *"...d'un monde culturel à l'autre... (61)"* "from one cultural world to another". (Our translation) Linguists like Vinay and Darbelnet have also suggested some translation techniques to take care of lexical gaps resulting to untranslatability.

From Igbo to French: the untranslatables

Apart from the general linguistic problems of translation, which occur as no two languages are the same, the untranslatables are highly rooted in culture, in the belief system of a people and the physical environment which may not be the same as in the target language. Newmark (1988) classified culture under seven headings: ecology, material culture, social culture, political ideologies, religious,

artistic aspects greetings and address terms and this paper discusses the untranslatables using Newmarks cultural classification.

Ecology

The Flora and fauna, winds, plains, rivers, hills, plateau all form the ecology. Animals play major roles in the axiology of a people. Many Igbo towns have their sacred animals. The crocodile for the Agulu man, The python for the Idemili man, the monkey for the Awka man are all sacred animals that must be respected and sometimes venerated. Every attempt is made by the people concerned to protect these animals and even when they are accidentally hurt the culprit should tender them apologies verbally. When they die due to human activities, it is considered a very bad omen. Sometimes the person that provoked the death would be required to organize a funeral to appease the soul of the sacred animal.

Thus when in the book of Chinua Achebe a missionary killed a python, translating “*eke*” as just “python” will not suffice to bring out the full weight of the action nor the true feelings of the people that share such culture, where “*eke*”, a sacred animal that is supposed to be venerated is murdered in cold blood.

Animals are also symbolic and can be used to represent virtues or vices In a folk narration and even in everyday language the tortoise, whenever mentioned depicts treachery. Thus one would always hear the expression such as: “This man is a tortoise.”. Which simply means that the man is cunning? Any translator who does not share this basic knowledge will not find it easy to appropriate the text he is translating. And if the translator is to translate a text that contains such symbolic animals as tortoise, python, owl, termite without knowing the sentiments they evoke, such translation would be far from being faithful.

The Igbo language does not always have names for the babies of animals. To express them the affixation « *nwa* » is added as seen in the table below ;

Young of an animal in French	Young of an animal in Engl	Young of an animal in Igbo
Le chevreau	Kid	Nwa ewu
L'agneau	lamb	Nwa atụlụ
Le chiot	puppy	Nwa nkita
Le chaton	kitten	Nwa nwamba
Le porcelet	piglet	Nwa ezi

Material culture

Material culture deals with food, clothing, houses, town and transport. The gastronomy of the igbo people is highly varied. Today's Igbo gastronomy is a blend of the western and the native Igbo cultures. The dishes which are of foreign origin like jollof rice , sauce, stew, baked beans, yam porridge etc easily find their equivalents in French. But how does one translate dishes like *abachanacha*, (A dish made with cassava flakes) *ngwo-ngwo* (A delicacy prepared with pieces of goat head), *ahụ* (made with breadfruit seeds), *ofe onugbu* (soup made with thoroughly washed bitter leaves), *ugba* (*prepared from fermented and finely cut oil-bean seeds.*) etc that are typical Igbo dishes?

The idea of a sumptuous and complete meal in Igbo gastronomy is a well prepared dish containing both vegetables and many other ingredients, including spices that will sharpen one's appetite for the food. But describing good meal for a French man would mean talking about the hors d'oeuvre, the main dish and the desert. These do not exist like that in the traditional Igbo dish. Eating of food items like groundnuts, drinks, chin-chin, soup and fruits which can serve as hors d'oeuvre, main dish and desserts are done without making them part of the dish.

Also, same foods are given different names according to the methods used in preparing them e.g Akpu, garri, otunke, alibo are all made from cassava though they bear different names according to the mode of preparation. These dishes cannot find direct equivalents in a language like French where they do not exist.

Food condiments such as *ogiri*, *okpei*, *dawadawa*, though all made from fermented melon, yet would be wrong to translate them as melon paste, as some authors have done, as it does not distinguish these different seasonings from each other. Such a translation does not give the full meaning of the different condiments, which are prepared in different ways. The same applies to *Ugba*, *ukpaka* which are made from oil bean but with minor differences in preparation, and each better suited for a particular type of dish. *Igbagwu oka*, *ukpogede*, *moi-moi*, *ji-awai*, *nsala* soup are all native foods without equivalents anywhere in the world. An attempt to translate them would be impossible. They can only be explained, calqued, borrowed or adapted in the process of translation.

Kola nut plays a very important role in the day to day life of an average Igbo. sign of Igbo hospitality, it is the fruit which is offered to a visitor who is welcome. Whoever does not have kola to offer to a guest should have the politeness to apologize for not having it. When neither Kola nor an apology is

offered, it means the guest is not welcome. Translating Kola into *noix de kola* (cola-nut) is not enough to bring out all these cultural attributes of the fruit.

Talking about clothing and dressing *Agbada, Danchiki, okpu nze* are special traditional dresses and styles of clothing peculiar to Igbo and Africans at large and so cannot find their equivalents in French where these forms of clothing do not exist.

Social culture

Work, leisure, organization, customs, procedures, concepts, festivals, ceremonies are all culture specific. In the traditional Igbo setting social works just like road construction and maintenance, maintaining the sources of water supply like streams and rivers are organized and executed by age groups. The youth form the labour force and are grouped according to their age brackets. Names are given to the various age brackets for easy identification and appellation. Thus one can hear sentences like . *O bu ndi Ofuobi luru uto mmiri.* "C'est le groupe Ofuobi qui a approprié le sentier qui mène a la rivière " (It is Ofuobi that cleared the road to the stream) Such translation, one would agree, has lost a lot of meaning as *Ofuobi* needs more explanation to be understood.

For leisure there exists a lot of folk games such as *ikpo oga* (a game played by clapping of hands and simultaneously extending, retracing or scattering the legs), *ime popii* (a game which involves closing the eyes and attempting to step across lines ruled on the ground), *izu nchorokoto* (played by distributing seeds in holes distributed to other players with the view of appropriating them.) etc. These are purely games of igbo conception which find no expression in any other language. Different other cultural activities like *Egwu onwa* (games at moonlight), *igba ofala* (Kingship party), and the different initiations such as *ito ogbọ* (initiation into adulthood), *iba mmanwu*, (initiaton into the masquerade cult) *ino omugwo* (Mandatory months of postnatal confinement), *ichi ozọ* (taking the ozọ title.) and different other native festivals which abound in the different towns in Igbo land such as *obu ofo* (tribute to our fallen heroes) in Uga town of Anambra State, *Imoka* in Awka in Anambra can never find equivalent words to represent them in a culture where they are completely inexistent

Political heads like *Igwe, Obi, Eze* only have the general word chief (*chef*) for their translation, but this word does not really bring out the paraphernalia that distinguish these positions.

Family ties

French people conceive family as the nuclear family and even when the extended family is mentioned, it is only to accommodate the grandparents and the uncles and aunts. The Igbo families span beyond this, and extends as far as human memory can recount. Thus, words like *nwannaa*, *umu nnam*, *ndi nne ochie*, *ndi nna ochie*, *umu okpu*, *dee*, *daa*, which are used to designate family members that span beyond third generation relationships, continue to pose real problems to the igbo/ French translator.

The extended family system is very much valued in Igbo land. As such, many appellations are given to members. Because such ties are not of much importance in France and many European countries the terms to designate them do not exist.

When an Igbo person marries into a family, a lot of other relations from the conjugal family are acquired and the members are expected to relate with each other as one family. Thus one hears appellations like *Nwunye dim*, which literarily means "my husband's wife" This appellation only goes a long way to explain the Igbo concept of marriage as a union of families and kindred instead of the union of two people.

That same way any woman married into a family is supposed to see all the other members of the extended family as her husband. Though she is not allowed to have canal knowledge of any of them, she still calls them «husbands « just as they see and address her as their wife and fulfil all their social obligations towards her. What is peculiar in the Igbo culture is that even the females in the family are free to call a woman married into thier family *nwunye m* (my wife) but that does not in any way imply a same sex relationship.

Nwunye dim, which literarily means my husband's wife, is only understood to mean a woman married into the same family with me. The closest equivalent in English is "ma belle soeur" (my sister-in-law) but it does not exactly depict the meaning, since the Igbo concept of family could span into a whole kindred or even beyond , depending on where the word is being used. The word can mean a woman married to my husband, a woman married in the same family with me, a woman married in the same village with me, or even a woman married in the same town with me.

The artistic aspects of culture

The artistic aspects of culture cover paintings, music, literature and other performing arts. It tends to be semiotic in nature. Traditional musical instruments e.g. *udu* (a resounding clay pot), *alo* (a very big iron gong), or traditional make-ups like *nzu* (native chalk), *ufie*, *jigida* (pierced plastic, glass or wooden balls worn around the waist) are prepared by the Igbo people for their kind of music and so will never find equivalents in cultures that are divergent.

Songs and poetry accompany virtually every important aspect of human activity. Birth, death, funeral, title taking, festivals, planting, harvesting etc. all have musical accompaniments that make them interesting and thus turn them into merry-making events. Such songs can only be translated if the situations necessitating them are well understood. The context of the song determines the rhythm, the dancing steps and the attire for the dance.

Poetry or song translation is however a problematic aspect of translation, no matter what languages are involved. Many have resorted to translating poetry by forgetting all the rimes and rhythm thus turning it into prose to pass the message. But even when one decides on this option a lot of information would still be lost in the interpretation. Take for example this participative response *Ajambene* that accompanies a popular Igbo folktale.

Igbo participatory song	Difficulties to the translator
<p><i>Mbe agaba. Ajambene¹</i> <i>Mbe agaba. Ajambene</i> <i>Gaa gaa gaa gaa². Ajambene</i> <i>Gaa gaa gaa gaa. Ajambene</i> <i>Bia na nkwu nke a. Ajambene</i> <i>O si ya nkwoirikwu³ Ajambene</i> <i>O si ya nkwoirikwu. I miri one?</i> <i>Ajambene</i> <i>O si ya miri ofu. Ajambene</i> <i>Puo i bughi nkwu. Ajambene</i> <i>Nwa mkpomkpo ana. Ajambene</i> <i>Ana anaghi amita ihe. Ajambene</i></p>	<p>1 <i>Ajambene</i> which though an igbo word has no known meaning. But its meaning lies in its nothingness. In a sentence it all means senseless or nothing. Thus in the sentence <i>I na-ako ajambene</i>. It means you are talking nonsense.</p> <p>2 The repetition of the word <i>gaa gaa gaa</i> literally means "go go go". This type of repetition only serves to express a prolonged action in Igbo language. The French would simply say <i>Il eu une longue marche</i> (He had a long walk.) thus using an equivalent expression instead of translating it.</p> <p>3 <i>Nkwukirikwu</i> as used in the song is</p>

	just coined from the word <i>nkwu</i> (palm tree/ palmier in French). The suffix - <i>kirikwu</i> was just added to word <i>Nkwu</i> that is personified, to make it feel dear and beloved.
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Leitmotifs in Igbo songs and poetry and in Igbo narratives also pose serious problems in translation. Africa, Igbo people inclusive, is known for oral literature with a lot of storytelling to transmit culture. Responses in folk narration and folksongs (*ajambene, nda, otii/oyooo*) can only be calqued, borrowed, paraphrased or omitted as they cannot be translated.

Proverbs and fixed expressions

Proverbs, according to the erudite Igbo laureate Achebe, “are the palm-oil with which words are eaten” (5). Akporobaro and Emovon also stated that

... proverb belongs to the wider category of figurative and aesthetically concerned forms of expressions like the metaphor, simile, hyperbole and other anecdotal forms. It differentiates from these forms in terms of the explicit truthfulness of questions it states and by the terseness of picturesque quality of its style and form of statement [...] The truth presented in the proverb is different from those of other language groups whose geographical and socio-cultural realities differ. (2-3.)

Proverbs pose real problems in translation because they are sometimes ambiguous and need contextualization for their real meaning to be understood, Even among members of the same social setting, the interpretation of proverbs is not always easy. Being able to use and interpret proverbs is a mark of intelligence and wisdom. Many francophone countries do not have the culture of the use of proverbs in their day to day life. That same way, fixed expressions are closely linked to the way a people conceive reality as well as their cultural setting. They therefore differ from culture to culture. Lexical associations can bring about semantic changes due to the combination of the lexical units.

Meaning of the lexical units	Meaning of lexical units in English and French	Semantic import of the combination
Eze/ nwanyi	King/female,	Priestess

Di/ji	roi/femelle Husband/yam, mari/igmane	Extensive farmer	yam
Aka/ azu,	Hand/behind, main/derriere		
Afo/njo	Belly/bad	Bribe Wickedness	

E.g *Eze* is a word that means “king” (roi in French) , *Nwanyị* means female (femelle in French) but the combination of the two words *Eze nwanị* does not mean female king i.e queen (reine) but rather a priestess. Other examples include *di* “husband” (*mari* en français) *ji yam* (igname en français), *aka azu*, *afo njo* etc.

Some expressions may not exist in the target language eg. *Oso chi egbu* (accomplice of malicious personal gods), This does not exist because it is rooted in the Igbo belief system that individuals are believed to have personal gods that could either be passive or active, benevolent or malicious to the persons they are guarding and guiding. *Eji m ofo* (I hold the justice symbol), *Ofo* is a symbol of justice *Nwoke a bu abani di egwu* which literally means “This man is a dreadful night” can only be translated with *Cet homme est un brigand nocturne*. (This man is a night marauder).

Greetings

Greetings and address terms are culture specific. Igbo people have a unique way of greeting which is peculiar to them. For greeting a crowd the greeting could be *Igbo kwenu, kwenu, kwezuenu* or *ora obodo ekenee m unu, ndi be anyi dalu noo*. Many French translators have resorted to “Mesdames et Messieurs” (Ladies and gentlemen) in translating the aforementioned greetings since that is the closest they can get to the meaning. *Ida iya* and *Itu nnya* are stylish but calculated movements aimed at greeting, appreciating or calling the attention of people especially visitors by the male and female folks respectively. To each movement the people respond with *yaaa*.

Other forms of greetings such as *ndewo, dalukwanu, Igwee, nke onye chiri ya zere, Eze I ga adi ndu rue mgbe ebighi ebi*, cannot be translated the way they are without explanations.

Translating proper nouns

It is generally believed that proper nouns should not be translated, but it is also true that these proper nouns carry with them a lot of meanings which if not translated amounts to a lot of loss in translation. This is particularly so with Igbo names which are coinages from life experiences or circumstances of birth or even social status eg *ume, eze, okpala, dim* are affixations to the names of free-borns as in the names: *Umeanozie, Ezeafulukwe, Okpalaononuhu, Dimejesi* etc.. Whereas *ohu, osu* are for the slaves or the outcasts and are added to their surnames *Ohuabunwa, Ohuamanam, Osuagwu, Osuala* etc.

Names like *Anakgbamkpu*/meaning, let the land arise and fight for the accused, *Onyedinmanazu*,/ a name that means "who is above calumny?" *Osinomumu*/ It is not just about child bearing, all depict life experiences and beliefs of a people. Generally Igbo names are long as they consist of full sentences or questions expressing inner feelings. In the Igbo classic *Things Fall Apart*, a lot of meanings were lost due the fact that names like *Okonkwo, Ikemefuna, Unoka, Ezinne* were not translated though the names summed up the behaviours of the various characters that they represent.

The Igbo traditional week is a four day week (*oye, afo, nkwo, eke*) hence *izu n'abo* (two weeks) represent eight days. These different week days are also conceived as deities. People are also named according to the week day they were born or the deity to which they or their forefathers, whole heartedly surrendered themselves, in time of persecution. Names like *Nweke, Nwoye, Mgbeke and Mgbafor* are therefore common. Names like *Nweke, Nwoye, Nwafor*, though today answered by the offsprings of the people that took the names, are names given to families or persons betrothed to the deities that the Igbo people worshipped.

Science, new inventions and discoveries

No language ever develops above the culture which it serves. This being the case, it is quite natural that countries of the 3rd world would have less developed languages. Globalization has however, made intercultural exchanges very easy and today the major hindrance to these exchanges is language barrier. An attempt to translate these new scientific inventions and discoveries has met with a lot of difficulties, since equivalent terms are not yet in existence in the Igbo

language nor are there equivalents translators could have recourse to. A lot of efforts have been made by some Igbo scholars to find equivalent representations for new inventions and technologies, but most of such works are stocked up somewhere in the archives and libraries of institutions and so not accessible for public use. The attempt made by Ajunwa Enoch towards the creation of computer terms in Igbo is worthy of mention and praise and needs to be publicized.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In as much as some aspects of language have being tagged “untranslatable” because no direct equivalents to such words and expressions are known, but the view of Lederer and Selescovitch that no human utterance is untranslatable remains a truth for all times. This is because translation, as understood today, is not merely a linguistic exchange but rather primes the transfer of meaning. The meaning of a text can be passed to another even without recourse to any of the words used to construct the meaning in the original text. The translator only needs to contextualize the text for its full meaning to emerge and he is also bound to convey this meaning in a way that the receiver would get at it. Therefore failure to find exact word equivalents does not make translation impossible as there are many techniques that can be of help to the translator in such a situation.

Borrowing, calquing and direct translations of such words or phrases could prove useful. If the first two techniques are adopted, it might be necessary to back them up with explanations either in the form of footnote, paraphrases or illustrations. This is sometimes necessary, not just to cover-up a linguistic lacuna but also to add local colour to the translation as well as sell the source culture to the outside world.

Igbo lexicographers are however encouraged to roll up their sleeves and face the responsibility of creating current and updated Igbo dictionaries that are in tune with the rapid pace of development of the world, so that Igbo translators can have a working document.

There should also be a way of harnessing the various works done by Igbo scholars all over the world on term creation and lexicography so that unnecessary repetition and duplication of work does not retard advancement in this regard. The result of discoveries and works already done should be made accessible to the Igbo people and the media workers so that they can be popularized and put into use.

More Igbo translators should be trained and the older translators given a new orientation and updated as to how to go about the so called untranslatables when they come across them. They should be discouraged from always resorting to the lexical equivalents that readily offer themselves in the target language, but should rather try to borrow and explain out the Igbo situation, the way the target reader would understand. By so doing they market not only the Igbo culture but also the Igbo language, after all in this era of globalization, every culture has something to offer, the Igbo culture inclusive..

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