

DUAL LANGUAGE DISORDERS IN ESL SITUATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED CHURCH SERMON INTERPRETATIONS FROM ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO HAUSA LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The coexistence of the English language alongside the indigenous Nigerian languages in the cognition of a bilingual who lacks executive control often culminates into various language disorders. However, literature on bilingualism and multilingualism studies are mainly fraught with studies on interference and transfer paucity of studies on the effects of L2 on L1 in ESL situations. The objective of this study, therefore, was to investigate the linguistic evidences of backlash in the interpretations of selected church sermons in an ESL situation. The study adopted the case study research design, and qualitative method of data analysis. Hence, a sample of twenty purposively selected, recorded and transcribed sermons from five Seventh-day Adventist churches served as the data, the analysis also involved random selection of interpretations from the sermons. The sociolinguistic theory of translation was adopted as the theoretical framework. The findings revealed that the interpreters used borrowing, adaptation, discursive creation, amplification and common equivalence translation techniques. The total percentages of the translation techniques found are as follows: Adaptation 11.8%, Amplification 14%, Borrowing 16.3%, Discursive Creation 14.3%, Common Equivalence 13.5%, and Backlash 17.3%. The study concludes that apart from interference and transfer which have been identified as dual language

disorders, as evident in the data of this study, backlash is another fundamental dual language disorder that does not only impede meaning in the religious context but contributes to language death in ESL situations. Further research on backlash as a dual language disorder should be carried out subsequently.

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Key Words: Bilingualism, Backlash, Dual language disorders, Translation.

Introduction

Bilingualism and multilingualism are universal phenomena as most nations, after the confusion at the Tower of Babel are multilingual nations. Eka (2012) defines bilingualism as a situation in which two languages are used interchangeably for the purposes of communication. Accordingly, a nation or group is termed bilingual when such uses precisely two languages (dual languages) for the exchange of ideas. Similarly, an individual is termed a bilingual when the person has acquired proficiency in two languages. The proficiency of the bilingual may vary or range from the ability to speak two languages, or the ability to understand the two languages or the ability to read, write and understand the two languages involved.

Bilingualism is a common phenomenon in Nigeria, because the indigenous languages of the nation operate alongside English language, with the former playing a minor role and the latter a plus higher role. The English language is the official language in Nigeria. The language was implanted in Nigeria through colonialism and imperialism by the British colonial empire. Initially, it was formerly referred to as a foreign language (English as Foreign Language) henceforth (EFL) when it was not commonly spoken but later became a second language or (ESL) in Nigeria because a large number of Nigerians can communicate effectively with the language (Araromi, 2018).

The English language is the language of formal education and a compulsory subject to be taught in schools across the country as entrenched in the 1999 constitution and also the National policy for education (FGN, 2004). From a pedagogical stance, efforts have been put in place in order to effectively teach the English language as a second language, several approaches such as: Contrastive analysis, Error analysis and Discourse analysis have been employed.

According to Ali (2019) contrastive analysis is the branch of applied linguistics that studies two languages with the aim of finding differences that can pose difficulty to learners. This field was started in 1945 by Charles Fries and Robert Lado. The hypothesis from this study was developed by Lado in 1967 who termed it contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) which exists in three versions: the strong, weak and moderate versions respectively. The strong version of the hypothesis maintains that where differences exist between the two languages, the learner's first language rules interfere with the learning of the second language. Most researches carried out over the years dwelled on interference and transfer. Other studies are premised on the weak version of the hypothesis which maintains that when there are differences between the target language and the learner's mother tongue, the learner will not have problems with interference, rather the first language serves as escape route when the learner faces difficulties in producing sentences in the second language.

More so, as Nigeria's lingua franca, English language performs multipurpose roles in the country including functioning as the language of communication in the church. Preachers employ the language in order to effectively communicate with the heterogeneous worshippers from different ethnic groups and culture. However, since some worshippers do not understand the

English language, some churches deem interpretation as a necessity.

However, the bilingual interpreter goes through several mental processes in order to interpret the sermons to the target audience, the worshippers because they have to choose linguistic resources from their two balloons (L1 and L2 think tanks) a process which leads to some disorders in bilinguals' language use. Disorders such as: negative transfer, interference, and backlash that is the reverse influence of L2 on L1 which Bosede (1992) sees as often displayed in the course of acquisition, learning process and usage of the two languages.

Several scholars have researched on dual language disorders. Chu and Lou,(2022), Deby, (2017), Turaeva,(2017), have carried out studies on some aspects of the strong version that entails: language transfer and interference. These studies investigated how the native Nigerian Languages or mother tongues influence the English language, a second language in Nigeria. The effect of the second language on indigenous Nigerian languages should also be investigated as Adegbite, (2011), claims that the linguistic ability of Nigerian populace is on the decline from the older generation to the younger generation. This is because of the attitude of Nigerians towards the native languages, and also the government's inability to implement the national policy on education. Hence, the need for this study on backlash, and its effects on dual language use.

Some other scholars like Ali and Elham, (2015), Rana,(2016), Sabbah (2015) have researched on dual language disorder, focusing more on transfer and interference while leaving out backlash. Also, works on dual language disorders like Bialystok, (2009), (2010), have focused on finding language disorders using children while neglecting the fact that dual language disorders are evident in adults. However, this research

will take a different dimension by collecting data from adults to show the presence of language disorders in adults, not just children, by focusing on the dual language disorders in some language interpreters' sermons.

Some aspects of the strong version of language disorder like language transfer and interference constituted the focal point of then researches of Chu and Lou (2022) and Deby, (2017). Though these studies have investigated to establish how the native Nigerian Languages or mother tongues influence the English Language, a Second Language in Nigeria. The import of the second language on the first language should also be investigated. Hence, there is a need for an in depth study on backlash and its effects on dual language use.

Overtime, when speakers gradually loose words from their lexicon of the L1, children who are born will not acquire their L1 in its purest form anymore. Subsequently, the language decays in the minds of the speakers. This study seeks to provide linguistic evidences for backlash and its import on the L1 bilinguals.

The core objective of this study is to examine dual language disorders in the interpretation of selected church sermons. Deriving from this core objective, four specific objectives will be addressed to:

1. Identify backlash in the mapping of the transcribed selected church sermons.
2. Investigate the translation techniques used for the interpretation of selected sermons.
3. Identify the causes of backlash in the translation of selected church sermons.
- 4.

Methodology

This research used the case study research design. Case study research design as defined by Bostley (2019) refers to in

depth examination of people or groups of people. As such, the sermons of selected interpreters, was used to determine the disorders present in the mind of dual language users. This research aims at pointing out dual language disorders of bilinguals that have not been expanded upon. To validate this methodology, a case study is needed. Case studies mostly go hand in hand with content analysis method of research. A sample of twenty purposively selected, recorded and transcribed sermons from five Seventh- day Adventist churches served as the data, the analysis also involved random selection of interpretations from the sermons. Data were analysed using the sociolinguistic theory of translation which accounts for translation techniques. The data of this study were analysed qualitatively. The qualitative method was used in identifying the translation techniques and the conceptual metaphors employed in the sermons. Additionally, a contrastive method was used in showing the differences in the mapping of the English and Hausa version of the interpretation.

Data analysis and presentation of results

According to the data collected, the sermon interpreters used basically five translation techniques, out of the 14 techniques mentioned by Patthew, (2020) namely: Borrowing (from L2 to L1) , Adaptation, Amplification, Discursive creation, and Common equivalence.

Borrowing:

Sample 1: ...at creation, the Garden of Eden was indeed a beautiful place, wow!

Interpretation: ...lokacin halitar duniya, gonar Adini was yi kyau da gaske, wow!

From the interpretation from English made above by the interpreter, ‘wow’ an expression and a word as well, was used alongside Hausa language. Going by the definition of borrowing

above, pure form of borrowing technique was used during the interpretation of that sentence.

Adaptation:

Sample 3: ... it happened during winter, while they went skating on the snow

Interpreter: ... a lokacin tsanyi, sa lin da sun je wasa a kankara... In the above Hausa sentence, the word ‘snow’ could not be translated, because the element is not represented in the culture, so a near equivalent was provided as a substitute (ice), same was done also for ‘winter’, because winter season is not experienced in Nigeria.

Amplification

Sample 5: ...in the time of the end, false teachings will emerge.

Interpreter: ... a kwanakin karshe, kwasuwoyin rudu za su taso kala kala dag a ko ina a duniyan nan.

From the Hausa interpretation, the underlined part of the sentence is a detail that is not present in the source language. The source language only mentioned that “false teachings will emerge in the time of the end”, but the interpreter added that “different false teachings will emerge from all over the world”.

Discursive Creation

Sample 8: ...but the coming of Jesus will be different, every eye will see Him.

Interpreter: ... ama zuwan Yesu zai yi dabam, kowane ido zai gan shi, ni zan gan shi kai ma za ka gan shi.

The underlined part of the interpretation is irrelevant to the context, because the preacher said that every eye will see the coming of Jesus and leaves it at that, but the interpreter goes further to mention that he will see Jesus so also will the audience see Jesus.

Common Equivalence

Sample10: ...It is like the oil that runs through the beard of Aaron.

Interpreter: ...yana nan kamar mai da ya na zuba a bisan gemun Haruna.

The underlined words of the interpretation are familiar words that common to the Hausa speech community, and as such translation used their equivalents.

Backlash

Sample 15: ... when we say the number of the beast, what do we mean?

Interpreter: ... in mun ce number na bisa, mene mu ke nufi?

Sample 16: In times like these, we are being challenged...

Interpreter: ... A lokaci Kaman yanzu a na challenging na mu

Sample 17: ... life is like a flower...

Interpreter: ... rayuwa kamar flower ce...

In the above sentences, the words underlined are instances of backlash. Those words have either a word or a synonym in Hausa language Number (Lamba), Challenge (Kalubala), Flower (Fure), but the interpreters failed to provide the Hausa versions of those words, because they lack proficiency. To substitute for this, they resulted to backlash.

Table 1.0

Cumulative frequency distribution table of translation techniques found and instances of backlash

Translation technique	Cumulative frequency(CM)	Percentage (%)
Borrowing(from L2 to L1)	98	16.3
Adaptation	71	11.8
Amplification	84	14
Discursive Creation	82	14.3

Common Equivalence	81	13.5
Backlash	104	17.3

Table 1.0 above shows the percentage and cumulative frequency distribution of the 5 out of 14 translation techniques used and instances of backlash found in the data collected.

Summary

The central thesis of this study was to investigate backlash as a dual language disorder of bilinguals in ESL situations. It was identified that other scholarly researches have been carried out on dual language disorders have focused more on negative transfer and interference with little emphasis on backlash. The aim of this research was to examine dual language disorders in the interpretation of selected church sermons, focusing more on the import of the L2 on L1.

Adopting the sociolinguistic theory of translation, the findings revealed that the interpreters used: Borrowing, Adaptation, Discursive creation, Amplification and common equivalence translation techniques. The total percentages of the translation techniques found are as follows: Adaptation 11.8%, Amplification 14%, Borrowing 16.3%, Discursive Creation 14.3%, Common Equivalence 13.5%, and Backlash 17.3%. The study argues that backlash takes place in the interpretations of selected church sermon interpretations because the translation techniques employed by the interpreters were mostly inappropriate, as such meaning was distorted. From the sociolinguistic point of view, backlash takes place as a result of the loss of words from the mental lexicon of the language user. If backlash prevails, language gradually decays in the minds of the speakers, and eventually, language death takes place.

Conclusion

The core objective of this study was to examine dual language disorders in language use of selected sermon interpreters with emphasis on backlash. In line with extant studies like Sabbah, (2015) and Rana, (2016), negative transfer and interference are also dual language disorders. This study concludes that apart from interference and transfer which have been identified as dual language disorders, as evident in the data of this study, backlash is another fundamental dual language disorder that does not only impede meaning in the religious context but contributes to language death in ESL situations, in line with the position of Amir, (2020). Based on the findings of this research, the study recommends for further research on dual language disorders with emphasis on backlash which poses as an endangerment to language and eventually the cause of language death

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