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PRELIMINARY FINDINGS IN THE STUDY OF ENGLISH-HAUSA TRANSLATIONS

Usman Ahmad, 2023

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African Studies
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Abstract

This article presents interesting early discoveries in the study of English-Hausa translations. They are the preliminary findings deduced from reading both primary and secondary texts, visiting libraries and research centers, and from holding interviews and discussions with translators, experts, and scholars. The paper identifies the aims of the English-Hausa translations, examines the texts and background of the translators, and also analyses the reception of the documents by the target audience. These incidental findings include some unidentified English-Hausa paratextual translation traditions, the wide range of differences between English source texts and Hausa translations, the unavailability of some important English-Hausa translations that are supposed to be in high demand, how assumed Hausa source texts turn out as translations, and the profiles of the English-Hausa translation agencies.

Keywords: Hausa, translation, translators, translation tradition, source text, target text, target audience

Résumé

Cet article présente les premières découvertes intéressantes dans l'étude des traductions anglais-haoussa. Il s'agit de conclusions préliminaires tirées de la lecture de textes primaires et secondaires, de visites de bibliothèques et de centres de recherche, ainsi que d'entretiens et de discussions avec des traducteurs, des experts et des universitaires. L'article identifie les objectifs des traductions anglais-haoussa, examine les textes et les antécédents des traducteurs, et analyse également la réception des documents par le public cible. Parmi les conclusions, citons certaines traditions de traduction paratextuelle anglais-haoussa non identifiées, le large éventail de différences entre les textes sources anglais et les traductions en haoussa, l'indisponibilité de certaines traductions anglais-haoussa importantes censées être très demandées, la manière dont les textes sources haoussa supposés sont transformés en traductions et les profils des agences de traduction anglais-haoussa.

Mots-clés : Haoussa, traduction, traducteurs, tradition de traduction, texte source, texte cible, public cible

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PRELIMINARY FINDINGS IN THE STUDY OF ENGLISH-HAUSA TRANSLATIONS

Usman Ahmad

1 INTRODUCTION

The idea of working on English-Hausa translations was suggested to me by my mentors, Dr. Roxana Ma Newman and Professor Emeritus Paul Newman. Although my career path was clear to me when I was planning for my Ph.D. studies since I already had a permanent position at the University of Katsina (Nigeria), I was still wondering about the exact branch of linguistics I would pursue for my Ph.D. Therefore, I sent out an email to my mentors asking for their opinion about what I should write my research proposal on. In the email, I asked for their opinion on whether I should work on African linguistics or English language studies in the context of Africa. The ideas I had in mind were Sociolinguistics topics that I mentioned to them: *An Analysis of hawkers' marketplace language in the wider context of Hausa culture, society, and public health*; *A Linguistics Study of Northern Nigerian Standup Comedy*; and *A Linguistics Analysis of the Nigerian Parliament's Debates*. I got the first response from Dr. Newman, who advised me about the things I should consider in making my decisions, highlighted to me the cons and pros of my topics, and sent me a list of references I should read for further comparison. Some days later, I received a response from Prof. Newman in which he said, "I have given a lot of thought to the topics you proposed, and I am sorry to say that neither one of them strikes me as a good idea." He went ahead to state the reasons why my proposed topics were not significantly interesting to him, some of which were already stated by Dr. Newman, as the disadvantages of writing my Ph.D. thesis in the research area. They were all compelling reasons: I had to agree. One of these reasons highlighted by Newman was the relevance of these topics to my long-term career. He then suggested other two topics to me that might fit well into my skills and interests,

and also be practically doable. He suggested that I could work on either *The English of northern Nigerian middle school teachers* or *A study of Hausa-English / English-Hausa translation*, which I decided to work on. Even though I had no experience in translation studies, I found the area very interesting the moment I was pointed to it and I immediately connected it with my experience of translating some documents from English to Hausa. I thought about the various tricky decisions I had to make when translating some interviews conducted by Professor Gracia Clark of Indiana University. In the initial proposal, I intended to study two directions of translation, English to Hausa and Hausa to English, to identify the strategies used in these translations, assess the quality of the translations, compare the characteristics of the different directions and also differentiate the translated version from the original. I also wanted to use House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment, Vinay and Darbelnet's Translation Procedure Model, and Nida's Functional Equivalence Model as the analytical frameworks; however, I had numerous adjustments due to various early discoveries. These adjustments cut across all parts of the earlier proposal, including the objectives of the research, analytical frameworks, and even the primary texts to be studied. Thus, now I use the Descriptive Translation Study (DTS) theory pioneered by Holmes (1988) and further developed by Toury (1995). This theory of Translation Studies is one of the most comprehensive frameworks that cover various aspects of translation practice and analysis. It formulates general principles that allow one to both explain and predict translational phenomena.

2 CHALLENGES ON WHAT TEXTS TO SELECT FOR MY STUDY

As a starting point, I wanted to limit the study to a small number of nonfiction books. The selected texts for this study at the proposal level were two books originally written in English and then translated into Hausa and two books that were originally written in Hausa, and then translated into English. The selected texts were *But Always as Friends, Let Truth be Told, My Life, and Baba of Karo*. Smith's (1969) *But Always as Friends* was written in English by Bryan Sharwood Smith in 1969. It was translated into Hausa in 1974 by Alhaji Abubakar Imam with the title: *Auren Zobe (ring marriage)*. The book is basically an account of the author's experience in Northern Nigeria and Cameroon. He spent over thirty years in Northern Nigeria and retired as the Governor in 1957. When I read Smith's book, I realized that the long-term relationship helped him to understand the people of Northern Nigeria. He assessed Northern Nigerians with great affection for their way of life, dignity, courage, and hospitality. He talked about their weakness as well as their virtues. The instant finding about this translation is that there is an incredible difference between the source text and the translation. While Bryan's original text has more than 400 pages, Alhaji Abubakar Imam translated the book into less than 90 pages. This is to say that the translated version is less than a quarter of the source text's size. Despite this wide variation between the source text and the translation, Alhaji Abubakar Imam ended the Preface of his translation with a disclaimer that his translation is the exact equivalent of what Bryan Sharwood Smith said in the source text. Here is the disclaimer:

“Wannan littafi da za ku karanta, ba daɗi ba rafi cikin maganar abinda Mai Wandon Karfe ya rubuta da Turanci. Iyakar nawa shi ne, yadda ya yi kokari ya nuna Turanci harshensa ne a cikin littafin nasa, haka ni ma na yi kokari in nuna cewa Hausa harshena

ne a cikin wannan fassara. Ma'ana tasa ce, wasa da harshen Hausa nawa. To, ku saurari Mai Wandon Karfe.” (Imam 1974)

This disclaimer could be loosely translated as:

"The book you are about to read is what Bryan Sharwood Smith wrote in English, without any omission or addition. All I have done in this translation is, I demonstrated that Hausa is my native language, the way Bryan Sharwood Smith showed that English is his mother tongue. Therefore, the meaning is his while the language play is mine. Now, you can read from Bryan Sharwood Smith."

However, Alhaji Abubakar Imam omitted a lot of things from the source text in his translation despite this disclaimer. By the way, the size difference between the source text and the translation was considered an interesting problem for my research at the beginning, but I still had to drop the idea of using the text in my corpus when I realized that the stories were not in the same order. Therefore, it is difficult to track the translations of different units in the text, without which there is no way I can have an adequate descriptive analysis of the translation at the micro level.

Moreover, similar challenges were found in Smith's (1954) *Baba of Karo*. Here, the 260-page English version is assumed to be the translation of the 80-page Hausa text. This book was presumably dictated and transcribed in Hausa and eventually published with the title *Labarin Baba: Mutuniyar Karo ta Kasar Kano (The Story of Baba: A Woman from Karo of Kano)*. The English translation, prepared and edited by Mary F. Smith, was first published in 1954, some 37 years *before* the original Hausa text. It is an autobiography of a Hausa woman who gave an account of her experiences in male-dominated Hausa society. She talked about family settings, slavery, farming, and rituals among others. This book is one of the most valuable books for African Studies but had to be dropped from my list also due the technical issues like how to categorize a wide range of differences between the source text and the original.

The discrepancy in size between the original texts and the translated versions for the remaining two texts that I had planned to study is situated within a reasonably acceptable range. The translations are about 20 pages longer than the source texts. Muffett's (1976) *Let Truth be Told* was written in English by D.J.M. Muffett in 1976. Seven years later, the book was translated into Hausa under the title: *In Za Ka Fadi, Fadi Gaskiya* (If you tell, tell the truth). The book gives an account of the post-independence coup d'etats that ultimately led to the Nigerian civil war. It is interesting the way it describes the events that took place and the key players' involvement based on the accounts of credible and assessable witnesses. On the other hand, in the case of Sir Ahmadu Bello's (1962) *My Life*, published in Hausa in 1961 under the title *Rayuwata* (My life), and in English a year later, it is not clear which language represents the original and which translation. The book is an autobiography of Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, who was the first Premier of the Northern region.

It is an account of life experiences from childhood through adulthood. Sir Ahmadu Bello was assassinated in 1966, just four years after this book was published, during the bloody coup d'etat that brought General Ironsi to power. Both the English and Hausa versions were written by the same author as an autobiography within the same period of time. Therefore, it is difficult to say that he translated one of the versions into another because he was fluent in both English and Hausa. Moreover, the story was about his life experiences which he could tell and retell without the need for going back to a version as the source text. Since I could not find any research that described the features of Hausa-English or English-Hausa translated text, I realized that it would be difficult to clearly describe this translation. Thus, I changed the primary texts from historical to legal texts. However, the choice for the translation of legal documents here is mainly to have a translation where the information is put in the same order in both the source texts and their translations so that a detailed descriptive analysis could be done at the micro level of the translations.

3 THE ABSENCE OF HAUSA LEGAL SOURCE TEXT

Although I changed the selection of the texts from historical narratives to legal texts, I wanted to maintain the format of analyzing two directions of the translation, English-Hausa, and Hausa-English translations. Thus, I had a scope that comprised legal translations with a very wide perception. I assumed that there would be legal documents translated from English to Hausa and some others from Hausa to English, but I found out that my assumption was not completely right when I went to the field to collect the documents. I later realized that none of the legal documents was originally written in Hausa. Therefore, I had to limit the study to this single direction of translation, English-Hausa translations of legal documents. It was a shocking preliminary discovery in my research to find out that even the Shari'a legal documents were originally written in English and then translated into Hausa.

The Shari'a legal system had been in existence in Northern Nigeria before the presence of the colonial system in the region. Thus, it wasn't initially codified in the English language but rather the judges relied on the basic sources of Islamic law, the Qur'an, the Hadith, and other books of *fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence). During the colonial period, various forms of laws were being operated in Northern Nigeria, depending on the context of which court – in which province, city, or town, or even on which side of the street in the same town – the accused was tried in, and further, sometimes, on the wide discretion of the judge sitting in that court on that particular day. These laws include the English Criminal Code, Islamic criminal law, native criminal laws, and customs. A unified Penal Code of Northern Nigeria was later introduced, which was derived from Indian and Sudan Penal Codes, both of which had been enacted by the British for populations similar to Northern Nigeria's in their proportions and mixtures of Muslims and non-Muslims and had found acceptance there among all groups. The content of the Penal Code were negotiated at length with Northern politicians and legal scholars of various schools, particularly the North's leading *ulama* (Islamic preachers) (Ostien 2007). This little history explains why laws for Northern Nigeria were not originally written in Hausa. However, I expected to see the Shari'a documents written in Hausa when it was re-introduced in 1999.

The Shari'a legal system was fully re-introduced in most of the states in Northern Nigeria between 1999 and 2001. The founder of this movement, Ahmad Sani Yariman Bakura, started it during his campaigns as an aspirant for the governorship of Zamfara state, which could just be a political strategy. It attracted more popularity than he expected, as he admitted during an interview with British Broadcasting Corporation. After his success in the general election, Yarima fulfilled the promise and organized a public declaration of Zamfara as a Shari'a state in what was believed to be the largest-ever crowd gathering in Northern Nigeria. Following the favorable reaction toward the movement by the general Muslim population in Northern Nigeria, other state governors enacted the law also in their states. These states include Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Sokoto, and Yobe. The Shari'a Penal Code document for Zamfara state was prepared by some volunteers from the Faculty of Law, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria sometime later than the formal declaration of the Shari'a in the State. Since all these volunteers had their law training in the English language, they wrote the document in English. Other states prepared their Shari'a documents in English as well, using the Shari'a Penal Code of Zamfara State as a template, which was drawn from the sources of shari'a in Islam, such as the Qur'an and *Haith* (The prophet's traditions).

4 ENGLISH-HAUSA TRANSLATION TRADITION

Various translation traditions were described by scholars in translation studies. For example, the Japanese translation tradition is identified as a 'monochromatic' approach whereby no particular attempt is made to reproduce the tone and style of the original while the Indian translation tradition is associated with loose adaptation features in comparison to the closer translations style more commonly found in Europe (Baker and Saldanha 1998). Moreover, many other translation traditions, like American, Arabic, and Chinese, were clearly described by different scholars but I haven't seen any descriptive study of the Hausa translation tradition, which could have been influenced by both Arabic and English translation traditions due to the contact they had over time.

There has been a long history of translating or adopting foreign works of literature in Northern Nigeria through Hausa writings. In most cases, the writers are very creative to the extent that even those who know the source text hardly recognize that the Hausa versions are not the originals due to a striking difference between the translation and the original. For example, one of the most published playwrights in Northern Nigeria, Ahmad Yerima, was highly praised as a sociopolitical realist playwright whose dramatic representations reflect Nigeria's socio-political reality (Julius-Adeoye 2013). Yerima was further described as a playwright who is conscious of his immediate environment, reflects it in his drama, and often re-enacts Nigeria's and indeed, Africa's contemporary social, political, economic, cultural, and religious issues.

Similarly, Alhaji Abubakar Imam used a similar style of adaptation in his famous book *Magana Jari Ce* (Oratory is an asset). The book is an adaptation of the 1001 Nights but with different characters and settings. He adopted the frame structure, narrative technique, and coherent organization of the stories from the 1001 nights but reworked the stories to fit into the socio-cultural backgrounds of Northern Nigeria. Imam merged 11 stories from the 1001 nights with many other stories to come up

with his three volumes as *Magana Jari Ce*. Nonetheless, some English-Hausa translations are closer to the source texts than others. For example, Bala Abdullahi's translation of *Animal Farm* could be regarded as one of the most faithful English-Hausa translations of literary works, because he maintained the whole plot structure. However, these kinds of faithful translations also differ from the source texts in many ways. For example, in *Gandun Dabbobi*, Bala Abdullahi was very creative in using ideophones for various expressions.

Thus, the English-Hausa translation of literary works is a kind of free translation, full of creativity, and I found a similar tradition in the translations of historical text when I started this research with the intention of analyzing some autobiographies. Similarly, the English-Hausa translations of legal documents are also characterized by this kind of target-language-centered translation tradition because the translators commonly censor the information in the translation of these documents, particularly on issues that are related to cultural, social, and religious beliefs. Therefore, in a situation where the source text contradicts the beliefs of the Hausa people, the translators modify the target text through various translation techniques, like omission, addition, implicitation, or explicitation among others. Moreover, the translator also buffers issues that counter the cultural practices of Hausas, for the target text to be accepted in the traditional Hausa society. They also make some structural adjustments to the form of the source text to suit the Hausa linguistics structure.

5 THE TRANSLATORS

English-Hausa translators come from various professions, and many lack formal training in translation. Therefore, the quality of the translations differ significantly, depending on the efficiency of the translator, the quality of the printing procedure, and the commitment of the agency that sponsors the translations. The most qualitative English-Hausa translations are the ones published in reputable publishing companies like Northern Nigeria Publishing Company, Cambridge University Press, and Oxford University Press. Nonetheless, the quality of English-Hausa translations of legal documents depends largely on the personality of the translator because they are commonly published by different agencies, rather than formal publishing companies.

Unlike translations of literary texts and other books, some translations of legal documents have no information about their authors. These kinds of translations are only owned by the agencies that sponsor the work. Among these is the translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which is owned by the United Nations and the information about the translators is neither written on the document nor on the United Nations website where the documents are deposited. The source document was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948, and the only information about the source authors was that it was drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world. Another Hausa translation of a legal document for which no translator is mentioned is the Katsina State Child Protection Law, which was sponsored by The Katsina State House of Assembly, in collaboration with an international Non-Governmental Organisation, Save the Children International (SCI). The absence of authorship tagging on the Hausa translation of Benue State's Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establish-

ment Law is notable. Instead, the sponsors of the translation - the International Center for Peace, Charities and Human Development (INTERCEP) - are credited. A pattern emerges in which translations from English to Hausa that are sponsored by government agencies, international organizations, or non-governmental organizations tend to be attributed to the sponsoring agency rather than the translators themselves. It is worth noting that even the Hausa translation of Nigeria's Constitution was anonymous. The Foundation Centre for Constitutional Literacy and Civic Education claimed credit for the translation upon announcing its completion.

The availability of professional Hausa translators is limited because none of the universities in Northern Nigeria offers a degree in translation. Thus, people look for linguists or Hausa speakers who are professionals from the field of the content of the document to be translated. For example, when the Bayero University Centre for Research in Nigerian Languages, Translation, and Folklore wanted to translate some science textbooks into the Hausa language, they formed a team of experts from education, engineering, and linguistics to carry out the project. However, the translators of the Shari'a Courts (Civil Procedure) Rules of Zamfara, Katsina, and Kaduna States are all legal practitioners.

The translator of the Katsina State Shari'a Courts (Civil Procedure) Rules, Hamisu Lawal Malumfashi is a private practicing lawyer based in Katsina state at the time of his translation; he worked under the Katsina State Ministry of Justice for a long period before resorting to his private firm. Hamisu Lawal was born in Malumfashi local government area of Katsina State. He attended his primary school at Galadima primary school Malumfashi from 1971 to 1977, then he proceeded to the Government secondary school Giwa of old Zaria local government of Kaduna State from 1977 to 1982 where he obtained his General Certificate of Education (GCE). He started working at Kaduna State Judiciary Clerical Assistant on Grade Level 03 in 1984. Two years later, he proceeded to Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, where he had a Basic Judicial Course. Years later, Hamisu Lawal went back to the university where got a law degree and started practicing as a private lawyer. In the year 2008, he translated the Katsina State Shari'a Courts (Civil Procedure) to make it available to the legal practitioners, in Hausa.

The person who translated the Shari'a Courts (Civil Procedure) Rules of Kaduna State, Adamu A. Abdulsalam, also worked under the Ministry of Justice, Kaduna State. He was born in Zaria City, Kaduna State. He was raised by his grandfather, Mal Abubakar, the Deputy chief imam of Dodan Army Barrack Lagos. He attended a Catholic missionary School from 1968 to 1974, and then proceeded to the Government Secondary School Zaria (now Alhudahuda College), from 1974 to 1979. Adamu A. Abdulsalam went to Basawa Teacher's College in 1980, where he got his Grade II certificate. He started working with Zaria Local Government as a Classroom teacher before he proceeded to Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, where he got a Diploma in Law in 1990. After getting his diploma, he started working at the Kaduna State Judiciary as Assistant Registrar and retired as a Principal Registrar. He was asked by the Grandkhadi of Kaduna State, Dr. Maccido Ibrahim, to voluntarily translate the Shari'a Courts (Civil Procedure) Rules of Kaduna State into Hausa, which he did in 2010.

The other English-Hausa translation of legal documents, the Hausa Translation of the Penal Code of Northern Nigeria, was not done by a legal practitioner, but rather by a colonial administrator, F. W. Parsons. He studied Classical Moderation at Oxford University. He then entered the Colonial Administrative Service in the early 1930s and spent 13 years in the northern provinces of Nigeria. In 1946, Parsons was appointed as Lecturer in Hausa at the School of Oriental and African Studies, assisting as successor to the Reverend G. P. Bargery, the compiler of the famous *Hausa-English Dictionary* (1934), in the provision of language training for colonial officials. He was appointed Reader in Hausa in 1965, a position he held until he retired in 1975. He is universally recognized as the dominant figure in Hausa linguistic studies during that period. Parsons is best known for his influential publications on the Hausa verbal system, and also on the operation of grammatical gender. His earlier (1959) translation into Hausa of the Northern Nigerian Penal Code is also widely recognized as an outstanding piece of scholarship. The reason Parsons's translation stands out is that apart from using standard Hausa it begins with an 18-page preface that gives clarifications for ambiguous terms and expressions in the translations and also explains the translation issues encountered while translating the source document.

6 TARGET AUDIENCE FOR ENGLISH-HAUSA TRANSLATIONS

In 2015, the National Orientation Agency (NOA), called for volunteers to help translate the 1999 Constitution into indigenous languages. They stated that the translation helps in making the document available to empower the perceived disenfranchised, oppressed, and voiceless due to their inability to read and understand the English language. Mr. Mike Omeri, Director-General of the agency, noted that the translation of the constitution was to motivate Nigerians to be conscious of their rights by reading and understanding it. When the translations of the Nigerian Constitution into Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa were launched in February 2022, the work was hailed as a step to promote national orientation, unity, and integration (Adegbamigbe 2022). The Centre for Constitutional Literacy and Civic Education reported that they conducted a survey about public awareness of the Nigerian Constitution. Among the 4,000 Nigerians randomly sampled in urban areas, over 80 percent had never seen or read in whole or part, a soft or hard copy of the 1999 constitution, and more than half of those who had read it could not recall what they had read. The statistics in rural areas are abysmal, largely due to literacy levels (Ogunshola 2015).

Moreover, International Center for Peace, Charities and Human Development (INTERCEP) stated the purpose of translating Benue States's Anti-Open Grazing law is to facilitate an easy understanding of the law and bridge the gap in sensitization of stakeholders improving the relationship between farmers and herders in the state (Hir 2020). Katsina State House of Assembly also said that the translation of Katsina State Child Protection Law intends to provide quality sensitization of the populace, on the importance of protecting the rights of the child in the state. They added that they translated the law into Hausa so that the target audience, can read and understand its content (Sardauna 2021).

The goal in translating legal documents into Hausa is always stated as being to bring the document closer to people, create awareness and equip the Hausa people with vital civic education as Nigerian citizens. However, this aim is hardly achieved because the translations are rarely available for public. I noted this when I was collecting the data for this research. It is difficult to find the documents in the market, libraries, or research centers; most of the target audience themselves are not aware of the translations. Mr. Innocent Lagi, a lawyer, also noted this challenge when he said that the translation of the constitution might not achieve the intended goal because most Nigerians do not read and the high level of illiteracy in the country will impede the objective. He advised that the NOA should rather intensify teaching of the contents of the constitution and sensitize the citizenry on their right as embedded in the constitution. He added that people should be taught what section of the constitution is relevant to their needs and the benefit that will accrue to them in knowing such sections. In his opinion, the problem is not about the language but how to read and understand its contents and values (Ogunshola 2015).

7 PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE TRANSLATIONS

In Nigeria, whenever there is an announcement that a particular document is going to be translated into local languages, people receive the news with excitement and enthusiasm. It is always the trending news on social media when such a translation is presented. For example, Nigerians across all social classes celebrated the translation of the Nigerian Constitution into national languages. So many people posted on Facebook and Twitter that they were excited to have the Constitution in either Hausa, Igbo, or Yoruba. The translations were ceremoniously launched on Thursday, 3 February 2022, in Victoria Island, Lagos, attended by various dignitaries from across Nigeria. The event was broadcasted live on television and more than ten newspapers reported it. It was the lead story in the *Punch* Newspaper the following day. The Newspaper reported how various people expressed their excitement about the translation. The story began with the expression of Oba Adeyemi, Alaafin of Oyo, a traditional ruler in Yoruba land. He said that “it is an opportunity for Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo people to read the constitution in their local language and come to a conclusion whether the constitution is working or not.” The governor of Lagos state also emphasized that the translations will have a far-reaching impact on governance. He added that “we should now expect contributions of people in governance, even from pepper sellers on the street.” Moreover, a former governor of Lagos State and the current president of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, said that broadening the understanding of Nigerians about the constitution, especially with the translation of the document into three indigenous languages, was a big and laudable job. The *Punch* Newspapers article presented praises and commendations by other traditional rulers, politicians, legal practitioners, and other stakeholders (Punch 2022).

Moreover, there were a lot of positive comments when the International Center for Peace, Charities and Human Development (INTERCEP) translated the Benue States’s Anti-Open Grazing Law into Hausa. Similarly, the translation of Katsina’s Child Protection Law into Hausa generated many recommendations from the general public in Northern Nigeria. People get excited about these kinds of works due to the patriotic feelings they have toward their local languages. Thus, the promotion of

the local languages makes the native speaker feel politically important. This linguistic patriotism was clearly shown when Facebook announced the inclusion of Hausa as one of the language auto-selects. Almost all Hausas on Facebook reposted the announcement. A lot of people also reposted a statistic about the Hausa language interest generated by one Facebook user who stated that it has 21,772,130 users on the Facebook platform as of the date which Mark Zuckerberg announced the inclusion of the language. The announcement, as well as the reaction by Northern Nigerians, sparked controversy where some Southern Nigerians claimed that it signals a sinister move against Southern Nigeria (Vanguard 2016).

8 CONCLUSION

Halfway into my research work in the area of translation study, I have made a great number of discoveries that have helped me better understand various aspects of research and also changed my opinion on some issues. My understanding of translation itself is entirely different from the one I had before this research. The most interesting finding I have so far is about the Hausa translation tradition, which I realize is always open and creative, irrespective of the genre being translated. I was aware that Hausa translations of literary works are full of creativity by the translators to suit the target culture. Thus, I decided to limit my study to historical texts like biographies, which I expected to be more closely translated, but it turned out to be as open as the Hausa translations of novels and plays where so many domestication processes were applied. I was surprised to find out a wide range of differences between the source texts and the target texts. When I later opted for the translation of legal documents, I assumed that there was no room for any kind of deviation there. So, I expected to see something close to a word-for-word translation. However, I found that even in the translation of legal documents, the translators had to adjust information to suit the Hausa socio-cultural settings and linguistics structure. At the beginning of my research, I wasn't in favor of this technique of deviating from the source text to accommodate the target culture as I understood it as unfaithfulness, but I later realized that the translators deserve credit for using these techniques since the goal of translating the documents from English to Hausa would not be achieved if they maintained the source text. What made me change my opinion was the interviews I had with translators which drew my attention to the cultural and religious sensitivity in Northern Nigeria. In a freer society where freedom of speech is well respected, translators can afford to be strictly faithful to the source text, but in an environment where a recognized cleric could be sentenced to death for interpreting religious scriptures contrary to the existing belief, every translator has to be very careful not to contradict the existing belief as well.

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