

## **Problems of Interpreting as a Means of Communication: A Study on Interpretation of Kamba to English Pentecostal Church Sermon in Machakos Town, Kenya**

**Eunice Nthenya Musyoka**

Kigari Ttc

Private Bag, Embu

Kenya

**Dr Peter N. Karanja**

Kenyatta University

Kitui Campus

Kenya

### **Abstract**

*The paper concerns itself with the problems facing interpreters in the Pentecostal church sermons. The sermons are preached in English and consecutively interpreted into Kamba. Interpreting is viewed as a communicative event which occurs during cross-cultural communication when two interlocutors do not share a language. The major goal of interpreting is that a message makes the same impact on the target audience as was intended by the speaker in the source language (Angelelli, 2000). Given that interpreting is a major communication skill, the paper examines the problems that the interpreters face in the process of achieving this goal. The problems were analysed using Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis and Monitor Model Hypothesis. A descriptive research design was used to obtain information from a sample population. Purposive sampling was used to select five churches that used consecutive interpreting, in which the sermons were preached in English and interpreted to Kamba. The five interpreters from the sampled churches formed the key informants for the interviews. Data was collected through non-participant observation and interviews. Ten sermons were audio-taped from the sampled Pentecostal churches. Data from the audio tapes was transcribed word for word to create texts for analysis. The findings reveal that there are a number of problems facing the interpreters. The problems range from external factors that are beyond the interpreters, which included time constraints, the nature of the input, the audience, and factors originating from the interpreters' personalities and the preachers.*

**Key Words:** interpreting, Pentecostal churches, sermon, communication strategies, Kamba language, interpreting challenges, comprehension input, response elicitation

### **1.0 Introduction**

The goal of interpretation is that a message makes the same impact on the target audience that a speaker intends for an audience of the same language. Interpretation like all other forms of communication is a multi-faceted activity; it involves a sender, a channel and a recipient. It is a form of communication between people with different linguistic and cultural background (Qian, 1994). More often than not, the task of the interpreter is portrayed as one of "transcoding" - a simple changing of one code to another (Angelelli, 2000). This is not enough to meet the goal of interpretation since there is much more to communication than words or signs. According to Angelelli (2000) communication involves interaction, context, form, gist, gesture, tone and relations of power. The basic principle outlined in interpreting is the importance of language proficiency because interpreting is more than simply transferring words from one language to another. It involves understanding the meaning, the sense of what is being said before redelivering it into the targeted language. This means that to concentrate on the message, the interpreter has to be well acquainted with the topic at hand and integrate it in the communicative setting, to exploit not only the verbal information but also all other information implicit in the event. Hymes (1964) highlights that, most interpreters lack the necessary background with respect to language proficiency and world knowledge.

Since it's a means of communication interpreting involves the transfer of meaning from one language (the source) to another (the target) language. The transfer of meaning is identified as one of the basic problems in interpreting. The transfer of meaning involves relaying on lexical meaning, grammatical meaning and rhetorical meaning, including implied or inferable meaning (Hatim and Mason, 1990). The question that arises in the context of this study is: how does the interpreter cope with this basic problem of transferring meaning from one language to another?

The source text sender transmits a message through the source language to the interpreter who in turn resends it through the target language to the target audience. Thus the interpreter is seen as a transitional point of contact between two languages. This task puts him in direct contact with the senders and receivers of the message. The interpreter has to assess the intention of the speaker and transform what is being spoken at all levels of communication, including intentions and implicature. Thus an interpreter holds a key position, in the field of communication (Herbert, 1978).

Firth (1951) proposes phonological, grammatical, collocational and situational levels of meaning. Each of these levels has its own contribution to make in the communication process and confronts the interpreter with particular problems. This study recognizes that it is within these levels of meaning that limits of interpreting sermons from English to Kamba are to be found. The study looks at these levels as some of the problems that the interpreter is faced with during performance. For example at the phonological level, wrong pronunciation from the source language speaker may lead to a wrong production in the targeted language.

Lyons (1979), in a discussion on translation, indicates that there may be semantic distinctions drawn by one language system that either cannot be translated at all or can only be roughly and inadequately translated in terms of some other language system. From this point of view, the current study sought to explore on the validity of interpreting through evaluating the strategies the interpreter uses in church sermons.

Further, communication is seen as a form of social interaction. It involves a high degree of unpredictability and creativity in form and message, and takes place in discourse and social cultural contexts (Breen and Candlin, 1980). This raises questions on whether interpretation involves creativity and how the interpreter copes with it without interfering with the meaning or the content of the message. Riccardi (1998) asks the rhetorical question: is the interpreter creative? His own attempt to answer this question is that:

if interpreting is considered as a problem solving activity where the source text is the problem and the target text the solution, then it follows that interpreting is on-line activity that leads to a creative process from a limited set of cues or elements continuously unfolding, with no interruption or thinking longer than a few seconds, the interpreter has to come to a correct conclusion or be able to anticipate the message in such a way that he can organize his language output correctly, in doing so, she is not simply repeating something said by somebody else but also engaging in a creative or productive process, (Riccardi, 1998:172). According to Riccardi, the interpreter has to come up with strategies to achieve this creativity which creates challenges in interpreting.

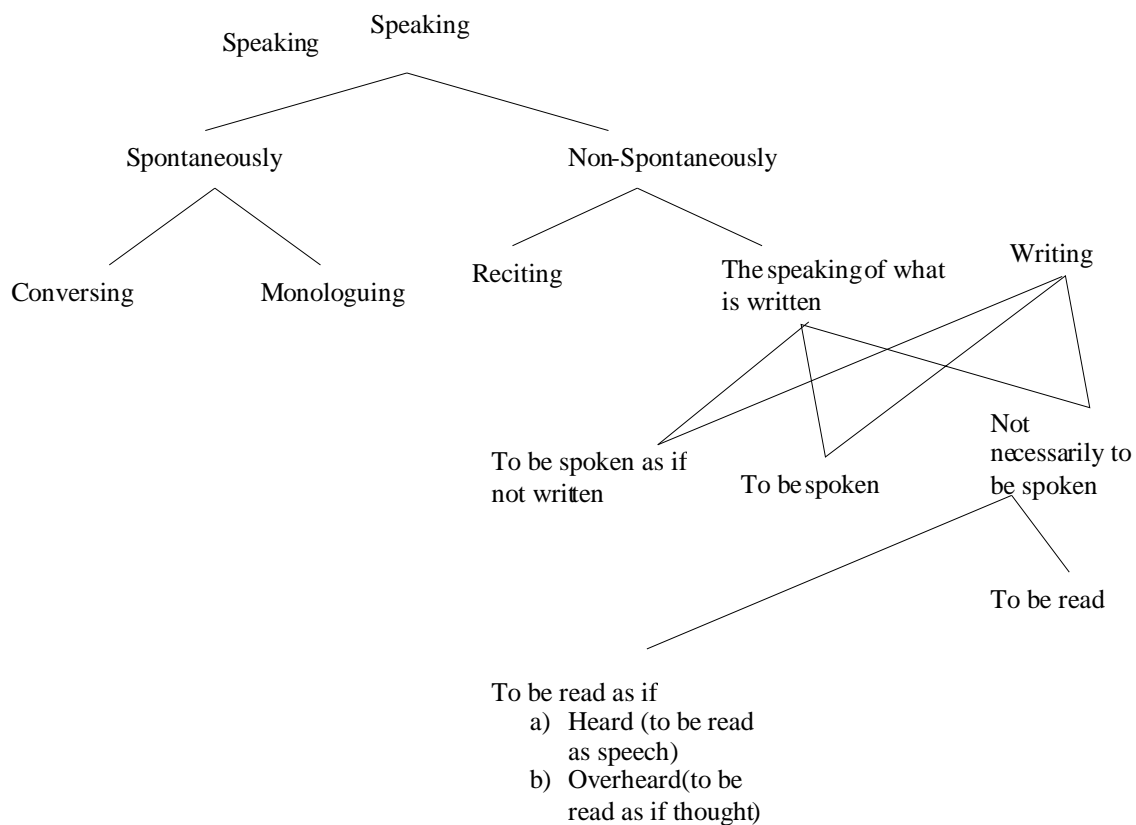
### **1.1 Interpreting as Discourse**

Members of a religious community are expected to share certain community language expectations, for example, what Fairclough (1985) calls 'knowledge base'. This incorporates the knowledge of the language norms and use, knowledge of situation, and knowledge of the world. This highlights the fact that, for appropriate interpreting, an interpreter has to be exposed to the community he is interpreting for and the knowledge of the targeted language. The strategies the interpreter uses closely depend upon the interpreter's knowledge, organization and experience. There are those strategies that are as a result of implicit competence and those that are as a result of explicit knowledge application.

The lexico-semantic dimensions, both implicit and explicit, comprise technical terms that are used in religious discourse. Relevant to the interpreter are the three basic aspects of discourse, the field of discourse, the tenor of discourse, and the mode of discourse (Hatim and Mason, 1990). Field or the reference to what is going on is the kind of language use, which reflects the purposive role and the social function of the text (Gregory and Carroll, 1978). It is similar to Crystal and Davy's (1969) 'Province' that additionally emphasizes the occupational, professional, and special character of fields, for example, religious sermons. In interpreting, field can become a problem when working from a source language, such as English, which has developed a scientific and technical culture, and consequently a wide variety of what Gregory (1990) calls marked fields of discourse, to reflect this 'world experience.'

Tenor of discourse relays the relationship between the addresser and the addressee and it may be analyzed in terms of basic distinctions such as polite-colloquial –intimate, on a scale of categories that range from formal to informal. On such a scale various categories have been suggested such as casual, deferential, intimate, among others. The categories are viewed as a continuum and not as discrete categories. This kind of variation is relevant in interpreting between languages which are culturally distinct from one another. Namy (1979) relates how interpreting between American and French trade union officials involves a constant shift of tenor. Gregory and Carrol (1978) suggest that there is a further kind of tenor namely ‘functional tenor’ which can be defined as the category used to describe what language is being used for in the situation; is the speaker trying to persuade, to exhort or to discipline?

The third dimension of discourse is the *mode* of discourse. This refers to the medium of the language activity. It is the manifestation of the nature of the language code being used. The basic distinction is between speech and writing and the various permutations as illustrated by Gregory and Carrol (1978). The mode variation can therefore be illustrated by means of a diagram:



Source: Hatim and Mason (1990: 49)

**Mode of Discourse**

The diagram illustrates the extent of mode variation. It indicates that the discourse can take the written or the spoken form and their permutations.

According to Halliday (1978), mode of discourse includes rhetorical concepts such as expository, deductive and persuasive descriptive. In sermon interpreting, the mode of shift during preaching is a problem. The sermon shifts from monologue to dialogue, to rhetorical questions, to response questions. This challenges the appropriateness of interpreting strategies that the interpreter has to use to relay the same message in the target language during such shifts.

The three discourse variables - tenor, field and mode - are interdependent. A given level of formality (tenor) influences and is influenced by a particular technicality (field) in an appropriate channel of communication (mode). An interpreter needs to be aware of what Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964) asserted that a speaker speaks in many registers thus allowing for shifts of register within a text.

The register here refers to the discourse, because it is from the discourse that we get the three aspects of field, mode, and tenor of discourse. It is common for fluctuations of mode to be inappropriately reflected in interpreting due to continuous shift during speech.

In sermons, communication takes place in a discourse that is controlled by the preacher. Although communication in the church seems to be a monologue, Pentecostal preachers make use of various strategies to elicit responses from the audience. Pentecostal churches form the Pentecostal movement within protestant Christianity. The Pentecostal movement comprises of many different churches that use the aspects of Pentecostalism (Livingstone, 2002). The idea that the audiences are involved in responses poses a challenge to the interpreter- whether their responses should be interpreted or not.

Pentecostalism is a form of Christianity that emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit and the direct experience of the presence of God by the believer. Pentecostal churches stress on the importance of conversations that amount to a Baptism in the spirit and speaking in tongues- this claim is uniquely Pentecostal. A distinctive feature of Pentecostalism has been a vibrant and kinetic worship style characterized by clapping, waving, and raising hands; dancing, marching, and falling in the Spirit, shouting; a call-and-response form of preaching and a general sense of spontaneity (Macchia, 2006). The call-and- response type of preaching is a challenge when the sermon is to be interpreted.

The messages in the Pentecostal churches are often interjected by unsolicited comments, noise and clapping from the congregation. The Pentecostal churches are also unique in the way the preacher elicits responses, which may be in form of speech, that is, vocal utterances. The preacher often leaves the pulpit and moves freely among the congregation, sometimes selecting some members of the congregation to respond to the elicitation. There is a tendency for such preachers to want to carry the congregation along in their messages by demanding, either directly or indirectly, verbal response from time to time (Taiwo, 2006).

The characteristics of Pentecostal church sermons as formulated by Taiwo (2006) clearly indicate that there are many instances of register shift by the preacher and the audience. The preacher may use affirmative statements or demand an answer from the audience, or non-verbal response like clapping, such that at one point the audiences are shouting, at another point they are clapping, repeating the preacher's statement, or responding to the preacher's questions. This rapid shift of mode of discourse and field of discourse is hypothesized by the study to be a challenge to the interpreters. The audience interjections are also hypothesized to be a problem to appropriate interpreting. This study was motivated by the fact that the interpreter is expected to meet the goal of communicating, that is, relay the message as it is in the source language into the target language amid all the 'noise' originating from the sermon.

For the preacher to elicit responses, there is need to reach the entire audience. There are cases where part of the audience does not understand the language that the preacher uses. Pentecostal churches in Machakos, the target of the current study, serve as an example where the messages are preached in English and interpreted to Kamba.

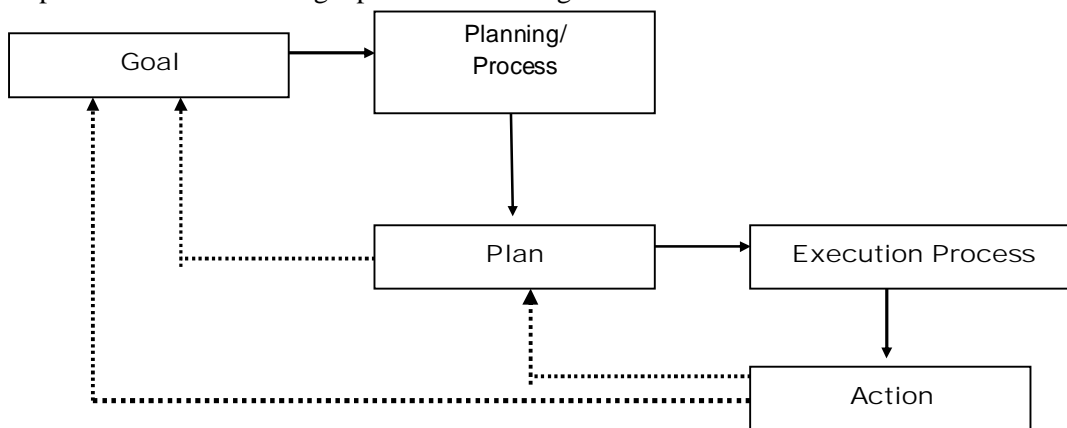
According to Glasser (1983) successful communication occurs between two people who speak the same language and share the same culture and who have a mutual understanding of verbal and non-verbal communications. Weller (1990) and Glasser (1983) stress on the difficulties of interpreting and communication between two people or parties who do not share the same language and culture. Interpreting therefore poses a problem to the interpreters. The interpreters quite often not only rely on their linguistic competence, but also use context, their knowledge of the world, and any type of extra linguistic information available (EL- Shiyab, 1994). In attempting to show the challenges facing an interpreter during the process of performance, which is similar in many ways to the challenges facing a second language learner during a difficult conversation task, Weller (1990) in AL- Khanji, EL- Shiyab and Hussein (2000) states:

One (an interpreter) never knows what is waiting around the bend when one accepts a commitment to interpret. It is precisely this professional challenge, a type of linguistic and emotional roller coaster, which keeps the interpreter on his toes. Experienced interpreters do not only know more vocabulary, how to better control the voice, how to handle a wider variety of accents e.t.c. but they have more strategies for dealing with the unknown features of 'i+1' (AL-Khanji, EL-Shiyab and Hussein, 2000:449).

Based on this argument, it is clear that both interpreters and second language (L2) learners use strategies to deal with a difficult performance. There are many challenges facing the interpreter in church sermons, such as linguistic competence, elicitation of responses by the preacher, communicative competence, religious discourse, social and cultural context, religious norms, 'knowledge base' context, and the problem of transfer of meaning.

### 2.0 Interpreting and Communication Strategies

Since the interpreter faces the same problems as the second language learners, they also resort to communication strategies used by the L2 learners (AL-K hanji et al 2000). Communication strategies pertain to the conscious employment of verbal or nonverbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when precise linguistic forms are for some reason not available to the speaker at that point in communication (Brown, 1987). According to Faerch and Kasper (1983) communication strategies are defined as potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal. A problem here is seen as the difficulty faced by the interpreter in trying to express the concept of source language in the target language. The problem, in this definition, is taken to refer to interpreter’s inadequate command of the language which calls for a plan to overcome the problem. While defining a plan the following model can be used

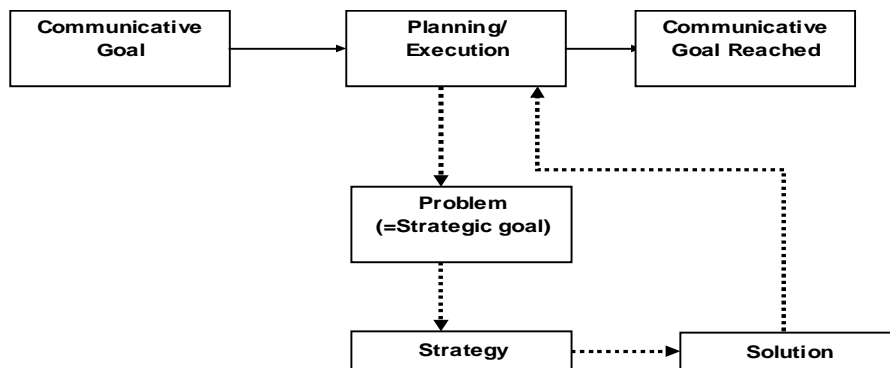


**Communication Model Plan**

Source: Faerch and Kasper (1983: 22)

This model is used to define a plan as used in the process of defining communication strategies. The model looks at speech production in two phases: planning phase and the execution phase. In order for the plan to match the goal, the individual has to base the construction or the section of the plan on the analysis of the given situation and its resources with regard to the goal. The goals we are concerned with are communication goals, that is, goals relating to the activity of engaging in communicative events. The goals consist of actional, modal, and propositional elements (Faerch and Kasper, 1983). The actional element is associated with speech acts; the modal element with the role relationship holding between the interactants, and the propositional element is associated with the content of the communicative event. These goals are all important to an interpreter in assisting the creation of correct output in the target language.

Problem- orientedness criterion, in the definition of communication strategy, presupposes a distinction between goals in which an individual experiences no difficulty in reaching and goals which present themselves to the individual as ‘problems’. Only plans that relate to the latter type of goals have been considered strategies in interpreting. The goal of the strategy (strategic goal) is the problem facing the interpreter, and the product of the execution phase is a solution to the problem. This relationship is represented in the diagram below.



**Model to Illustrate a Problem**

Source: Faerch and Kasper (1983: 33)

Problems within the planning phase may occur either because the linguistic knowledge is felt to be insufficient by the interpreter, or predicts that problems will arise in executing the plan. In the execution phase, problems have to do with retrieving the items or rules, which are contained in the plan (Faerch and Kasper, 1983). This involves problems such as technical words which lack near equivalents in the target language or calls for the descriptive approach during the interpretation process. In the execution phase which involves the production of the output (in the target language), the interpreter faces problems that are related to the time allowed to relay the utterance in the target language (concept of time in the Monitor Hypothesis). Even when the planning phase is successful, if time allowed is not enough, the output is ineffective in relaying the message of the source text in the target text. The interpreter may also be concerned about fluency or the correct grammar during the execution stage which poses a challenge to output. The challenges facing the interpreter which are discussed in the study includes technical words in the source language, lengthy utterances, short pauses by the preacher, elicitation of responses, overlapping, lack of order by the preacher, lack of exposure in the religious language and in the source language. The interpreters also lack professional training.

### **3.0 Methodology**

A descriptive design was used in data collection and analysis. Results were presented in form of descriptive essays. The study was conducted in five Pentecostal churches in Machakos town which were purposively sampled to select those churches in which sermons were preached in English and interpreted to Kamba. The researcher observed and listened to the sermons in the natural setting. Two sermons from each church were audio taped forming a total of ten sermons which were used to form texts for data analysis.

The researcher used a semi-structured interview to collect data from the audience and the interpreters. Purposive sampling was used to select two members from each church who understood both English and Kamba and had listened to the sermons. A total of ten members were interviewed on whether the interpreters communicated the same message intended in the source language or not and what caused the misinterpretation. Though the researcher understands both languages interviewing the audience reduced bias and added reliability to the study. The 5 interpreters from the sampled churches who interpreted the recorded sermons were also interviewed. The interpreters were able to assess their performance when the audio tapes were replayed to them. Data collected and analysed revealed that interpreters were faced with challenges during the performance and resulted to reduction communication strategies. The problems are examined under results and discussions.

### **4.0 Results and Discussions**

The interpreters faced problems both at the planning stage and in the execution stage. In the planning stage the interpreters are aware that, there is a challenge whose source is identified and they then plan on how to tackle it. The plans are discussed as strategies to solve the problems.

At execution stage the interpreter relays the message of the target language in the way that is planned in the planning stage. Other problems occur at this stage such as overlapping that makes it impossible for the message to be delivered as planned. This study discusses the problems facing the interpreters at these two levels and the strategies the interpreter uses to deal with the challenges.

#### **4.1 Comprehensible Input**

The notion of comprehensible input in the study refers to the spoken pieces of information that are understood and interpreted by the interpreter. According to AL-Khanji et al (2000), such information comes in form of words, sentences, utterances or even paragraphs. The comprehensible input is a concept used in Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis that was adopted in this study. The Hypothesis explains how L2 learners progress from stage  $i$  where  $i$  represent current competence to  $i+1$ , the next level of language competence. The Input Hypothesis makes the claim that, a necessary (but not a sufficient) condition, to move from stage  $i$  to  $i+1$ , the acquirer understood input that contains  $i+1$  where 'understand' means that the acquirer is focused on meaning and not the form of the message. We acquire only when we understand language that contains structure that is a little beyond where we are now.

Krashen (1985) postulates that in order for language to advance from one stage to another, it must have a "comprehension input" which is a little beyond its current level of competence, or, in other words  $i+1$ . Here Krashen aims at second language acquisition. However, it seems that this same basic process is used by interpreters.

They use more than their linguistic competence to help them understand the source message; they use context, their 'knowledge of the world' and any type of extra linguistic information available to them. Based on this argument, the study used the principles of comprehensible input, which means that interpretation is successful when the input from the source language is enough, clear and understood by the interpreter.

There were cases where the preacher (the source language) used lengthy utterances making the input incomprehensible. In such cases the interpreter employed strategies that were not effective in dealing with the problem. Such strategies included the use of incomplete sentences in which the interpreter interpreted only what was held in the memory. According to Gile (1995), interpretation requires some sort of mental 'energy' that is only available in limited supply. Interpretation takes up almost all of this mental energy and sometimes requires more than is available, at which times performance deteriorates. When lengthy utterances are used, interpretation becomes a problem. In this study, it was observed that incomplete sentences strategy was used in utterances that were long demanding the interpreter to listen, internalize and produce the utterance in the target language. The input was incomprehensible due to the length of the utterances in the source text thus production was negatively influenced. This is illustrated in the following examples:

Preacher: *When man fell into sin, he lost his dominion, not to God but it was snatched away from him by the devil*

Interpreter: *Indi ila mundu wekie nai niwaaisye usumbiko wake, ti Ngai wosie indi...*

B/T: And when man sinned he lost his leadership it is not God who took but...

The output thus rendered the message incorrectly in the target language. According to Webber (1990: 45) in response to this kind of lengthy utterances he asserts that: listeners normally have a natural 'absorption threshold' beyond which they can no longer absorb and process information. This threshold may be higher if they are listening to their native language and lower when listening to a foreign language.

From this assertion, it is clear that when the interpreter is listening to a foreign source language, the 'absorption threshold' is decreased and it is decreased further when long utterances are used. It becomes difficult to process the information and produce an output in the target language.

The input was also incomprehensible when it contained technical terms that the interpreter was not familiar with. In such cases the interpreter resulted to use of approximate strategies and skipping strategies which did not communicate the message in the target language. According to Rabin (1958), approximation, as used in translation theory is the selection of words whose area bounds upon the blank space and which by insertion into the context of the word they are made to translate will suggest to the reader the association of that word. In the use of technical or culture-specific words the interpreter is also faced by the problem of equivalence as illustrated in the following example:

Preacher: *These people are building a tower.*

Interpreter: *Maendea kwaka nyumba ya munyoolo.*

B/T: They are building an oval house.

An example of approximation is where 'tower' is interpreted as 'an oval house'. Such a term is culturally bound in the source language; it does not have an equivalent in the target language (Kamba). By using this approximate of 'oval house', the meaning is distorted. The biblical tower had a connotation of a tall building that was meant to link heaven and earth. It was to be used by the people to reach God's throne (Genesis 11:4). This means that it had to be a very tall building and certainly not a house. Thus, when the interpreter describes it as 'an oval house', its semantic sense is reduced.

According to Fearch and Kasper (1983), approximates are used when the speaker has semantic voids which they relate to semantic competence. Semantic competence for a native speaker includes the ability to recognize when relations of hyponymy exist between items in the lexical systems and when a number of items have a common 'superordinate', which can replace them. The speaker confronted with semantic voids can exploit such relations between items in the lexical system of the target language by adding a 'qualifier' - the technical term used by Wonderly (1968) for explanatory additions to a word in translation. In such a case, the full meaning can sometimes be conveyed. Without a qualifier the use of superordinate name alone always results in the depletion of meaning. In the study skipping strategy was also used when the input was incomprehensible. Interpreters skip single words or a group of words from the source text utterance in which they lack the appropriate or close approximates in the target language as reflected in following example:

Preacher: *It's the supernatural power of God.*

Interpreter: *Ni vinya wa Ngai.*

B/T: *It's power of God.*

There are lexical items that are bound in a given discourse or culture in which case the interpreter is expected to be conversant with, but if this is not the case such words poses a problem. In the process such words are skipped thus impacting on the interpretation negatively. A religious bound word is reflected in '*Supernatural*' which was avoided by the interpreter. When the word '*supernatural*' is omitted the meaning of the interpreted version is reduced because power is general but *supernatural power* specifies a given power - power beyond human understanding in religious discourse.

Newmark (1988) asserts that most of the cultural words associated with a particular discourse are not easy to translate. The interpreters indicated that they resulted to skipping such words due to the fact that they could not easily come up with appropriate words and ended up leaving them out in the interpreted text.

#### 4.1. 2Elicitation of Responses

In sermons, communication takes place in a discourse that is controlled by the preacher. Although communication in the church seems to be a monologue, Pentecostal preachers make use of various strategies to elicit responses from the audience. The messages are often interjected by unsolicited comments, noise and clapping from the congregation. The Pentecostal churches are unique in the way the preacher elicits responses, which may be in form of speech, that is, vocal utterances. The preacher often leaves the pulpit and moves freely among the congregation, sometimes selecting some members of the congregation to respond to the elicitation. There is a tendency for such preachers to want to carry the congregation along in their messages by demanding, either directly or indirectly, verbal response from time to time (Taiwo, 2006). The elicitation of responses poses a serious challenge to the interpreters. It leads to disorder and noise to the part of the audience that depend on the interpreter for meaning. For example in this instance;

Preacher: *Somebody say Amen.*

Audience: *Amen! Amen!*

It is clear from the interviews that prolonged elicitation of such responses caused more harm to the audience who did not understand the source language. It even became impossible to follow the message later when the interpreter got the chance to interpret because they could not connect what was said before the present utterances. A sermon's message is not drawn from separate portions but from the continuous flow of the sermon.

When meaning in one portion is interfered with, the audience strains to follow the message. This poses a danger that the whole message may not be followed or the audience is likely to get a distorted message as illustrated;

a) Preacher: *Somebody say Amen.*

Audience: *Amen! Amen!*

b) Preacher: *We are great people, created in a special way.*

Interpreter: *Yu ni ...*

B/T: *Now is...*

In this case the interpreter did not interpret the utterance '*we are great people, created in a special way*' - due the effect of the previous utterance in (a) - '*somebody say amen*' - which required an elicitation of a response. From the taped sermons and observation, it was evident that the impact of the noise led to message abandonment in the utterance that followed.

It was also observed that in other cases the audience who understood the source language (English) cut-in (they joined in) after the preacher's utterance and joined in loud applause in support of the preacher's message, they shouted, '*amen!*' '*hallelujah, hallelujah!*' For example:

Preacher: *Because this thing came upon me.*

Audience: *Amen! Amen!*

Preacher: *I tore it into pieces.*

Audience: *Hallelujah! Hallelujah!*

According to Taiwo (2006) this kind of response encouraged the preachers to preach more since, to them, the audience is alert and ready to be preached to. The researcher noted that the preacher encouraged the interjections by appreciating the audience through giving them chances to talk or join in clapping.



Where the interpreter attempted to interpret, it caused overlapping which, according to Lee (1999), decreases accuracy in interpretation. The elicitation of responses results to unclear input and according to Weller (1990), for effective interpretation, the input must be clear and understood by the interpreter. The interpreters also faced challenges due to their limited exposure.

#### 4.1.3 The Exposure of the Interpreter

The five interpreters used in the study were not professional interpreters; none had received professional training in interpreting. They had learnt the target language (Kamba) up to standard three and the source language up to form four (according to the Kenyan system of education). They all depended on their limited exposure to the two languages though most of them were efficient Kamba speakers having acquired it as the first language. They faced the challenges of listening to a source language in which they lacked the linguistic and communicative competence and relaying it to the target language was a problem. Their inadequacies were reflected in the time they needed to internalise the message in order to relay it in the target language. Though consecutive interpreting allows the interpreter time, the interpreters asserted that they were constrained by time thus resulting to ineffective strategies. The interpreters need enough time to search for the most accurate terms and to express themselves in the best possible style. When they are constrained by time their choices are severely restricted in the process of instantaneous converting oral messages at a speed which is very fast for them, (Seleskovitch, 1978). The interpreter is expected to produce the correct output despite the time constrain. Krashen's Monitor Model Hypothesis (1985) which was used in the study, considers time as an important factor if the production of the language items have to be correct. Due to limited time the interpreters used strategies such as generalisation, skipping, incomplete sentences and filtering ineffectively.

When strategies like filtering are used by professional interpreters they result to economy of expression without losing the meaning as reflected in AL-Khanji, El-Shiyab and Hussen, (2000) study. This is because the interpreters understand the message and decide to render the same in the target language using fewer words. Interpreters also resorted to Filtering strategy in which important information was filtered out. According to AL-Khanji et al (2000), this strategy was used when interpreters tried to compress the length of an utterance in order to find an economic way of expression. Filtering meant the compression of the message, which consequently affected the length of the interpreted utterances. In so doing interpreters seem to have preserved the semantic content of the message. The interpreters are not facing a problem with the difficulty of economizing by reducing the length of an utterance.

In the study using untrained interpreters unlike AL-Khanji et al, filtering was used when the interpreters were facing the challenge of lagging behind the preacher. What was filtered contained important information that affected the semantic content of the message;

- a) Preacher: *If we want to understand spiritual dominion, we need to understand the auto dominion that God had given Adam before he fell into sin. This was dominion over all the creation on the earth.*  
Interpreter: *Ethwa mundu nukwenda kwithiwa na usumbi ula Ngai wanengete Adam, Numuvaka tusyoke ivu ingi*
- b) Preacher: *And the church of Christ is ineffective in this earth. It's not because Jesus is not with them, but it is because they are ignorant of the constitution that Jesus accepted in his kingdom.*  
Interpreter: *Na kanisa wa yesu nundu wa kwithwa utese nikyo kitumi wika maundu ala mataile kwithiwa mayika.*

**B/T:** And the church of Christ because of not knowing, it is the reason they do things that they should not be doing.

This study observed that the interpreters did not internalized the meaning of such long utterances and rendered them in a different way. This disagrees with the filtering strategy where the interpreter understands the meaning in the lengthy utterance and renders the message in summary in the target language. In the process of summarizing or filtering the message some information is lost. This is contrary to the goal of interpretation: to transfer into the language of the second party to produce the same effect they would have produced in an audience who shared the first party's language (Seleskovitch and Lederer, 1989).

The interpreter has to accommodate listening, analyzing and production within a given time span and the three require what Gile (1999) refers to as 'processing capacity'. According to Gile, interpreters also resort to filtering strategy to avoid devoting too much capacity to production and leaving too little for the listening and analysis.

Thus, to avoid saturation based errors, the interpreters compress the input to give themselves time to listen to the incoming information. To be able to compress the information and maintain the semantic content, there is need to train the interpreters.

To ensure full rendition of the message in the target language, it is advisable for the interpreters to listen to the source language with a minimal amount of capacity. This will resort to concrete understanding of source language and enable them come up with appropriate production of the target language production (Gile, 1995). The filtering strategy was used in cases where the interpreter wanted to listen more to the incoming information leading to compressing the information that consequently led to either omission or loss of information in the interpreted information. According to Smit (1999), too much summarization (compressing the message) leads to omitting important information. According to Gile (1999) filtering strategy can only be effective if what is considered unimportant information by the interpreters is outside the speaker's main line of reasoning and involves comments, modifiers or digressions that are outside the main line of thought, but such a scenario of effective filtering was not identified in the study.

Lack of training and exposure was also reflected in the way the interpreters used strategies such as approximate and generalisation. The "knowledge of the world" as an important condition in the Krashen Monitor Model Hypothesis (1985), which the interpreters lacked resulted to ineffective interpretation as illustrated in the following example;

Preacher: *Devilish intelligence comes to them*

Interpreter: *ui uyuka.*

B/T: knowledge comes.

When the word '*devilish*' is left out in the interpreted text, the message is altered. From the religious knowledge the interpreter is expected to know that '*devilish*' knowledge means that '*destructive knowledge that originates from the devil*'. In the interpreted text it means that *knowledge comes*, it does not indicate whether it is destructive or constructive knowledge.

In interpreting, it is possible that interpreters are more likely to leave out a word or expressions with no immediate target language equivalents or with equivalents requiring the construction of multi-word structures, for fear of missing a more important source – speaker segment (Gile, 2001).

The Monitor Hypothesis condition of 'know the rule' emphasizes that for appropriate language production in the target language to take place, the performer needs to know the rules of the source language. In this study, the interpreters had only learnt Kamba language formally up to class three (in the Kenya education system). Further, none of the respondent interpreters had received formal training in interpretation.

The interpreter needs to know more than just the topics at hand but also the specific vocabulary of each event since it is possible for the preacher to use unfamiliar terms even in the religious discourse and to shift from one field of discourse to another (Gregory and Carroll, 1978). There is need to understand the voice quality, the pauses of the preacher since interpreting requires both linguistic and non-linguistic skills: mastery of the active language social background, general knowledge some personal qualities like the faculty of analysis and synthesis, the ability to intuit meaning, the capacity to adapt immediately to change in the subject matter and the different speakers and situations. Such knowledge can only be attained through formal training. Without training on the two languages and professional training the interpreters face serious challenges during their performance.

## 5.0 Conclusion

The unsuccessful interpretation was linked or caused by the challenges the interpreters faced during interpreting. The factors that impacted negatively on the interpreted sermons included: problems originating from the input and the source language speaker such as lengthy utterances, use of technical terms, overlapping, elicitation of responses and speed of delivery. For example, technical terms were either avoided or approximated to lexical items that did not communicate the original concept in the source language. Lengthy utterances resulted to incomprehensible input leading to inaccurate interpretation. Overlapping, elicitation of responses from the audience and the speed of delivery resulted to the use of incomplete sentences and message abandonment.

There were also problems originating from the interpreter. These were factors that originated from the interpreter's personal abilities and inabilities. These included educational level, professional qualifications and exposure to the language and religious discourse.

All the interpreters were not trained - none of them was a professional interpreter. Basing the argument on the fact that interpreting is a difficult task which does not only involve 'transcoding' but also communication which involves interaction, context, form, gist, gesture, tone and relations of power (Angelelli, 2000), it is clear that without training it is very challenging for the interpreter to meet the goal of interpreting. This study found out that the interpreters were limited in terms of formal education level in both languages - English and Kamba. Most of them used Kamba language as a means of communication in their homes and in their neighbourhood. Although the interpreters had only learnt Kamba up to standard three (in the Kenyan system of education) this limitation did not affect their interpreting ability very much because they had been exposed to enough Kamba at the household and community level. Their main problem was their limited exposure to English and the religious discourse.

Interpreting in Pentecostal churches need to be treated with the seriousness it deserves given the role that spiritual communication plays in society. Preaching is one aspect of shaping the morals in the society. The targeted audience should understand sermons. The interpreting should, therefore, be as accurate as possible in relaying the intended message to the target audience in Kamba. As this paper has revealed, for the goal of interpreting to be achieved in the church sermons, interpreters for church sermons should be trained in accordance with the religious discourse, the languages they interpret from and the language they interpret to. The preachers should be trained on how to handle sermons in which interpreting is done. This includes the need to give comprehensible input and allow the interpreter enough time to relay output in the target language.

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