

## Challenges Encountered During the Interpretation and Translation of Sermons in the Pentecostal Churches in Vihiga County

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### Abstract

This study sought to analyse challenges encountered during interpreting and translating of sermons in the Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. Interpretation and translation are a reflective professional undertaking fraught with linguistics challenges. The challenge is pronounced during sermon delivery in Pentecostal churches, where untrained volunteer interpreters and translators predominantly undertake interpretation and translation. Marianne's Interpretive Theory of Translation guided the study. The descriptive research design was employed, and the target population consisted of the clergy, translators, interpreters and congregants drawn from the Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. Purposive sampling was used to select five preachers, interpreters, translators and congregants from five Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. Audio-video recording, guided interviews and structured observations were adopted to collect data. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic content. The results showed that the interpreters and translators faced numerous challenges during sermon interpretation and translation. The challenges included inadequate language and biblical knowledge, the use of complex terminologies, pronunciation problems and unpredictable preaching styles, insufficient preparation, cultural differences and inability to fulfil community language expectations, lengthy utterances and prolonged elicitations, the use of independent and non-contextual translation and lack of synonyms for different linguistic features. It is recommended that interpreters and translators undergo adequate training in interpretation and translation to enhance their ability to deal with the dynamics of translation and interpretation of the sermons in Pentecostal churches.

**Key terms:** Challenges, interpretation, Pentecostal churches, sermons, translation.

## INTRODUCTION

Like any other forms of communication, interpretation and translation are arguably multi-faceted communication processes encompassing a sender (source language), a channel, and a recipient (target language). It is employed when the interlocutors speak mutually unintelligible languages (Qian, 2014). The primary purpose of interpretation and translation is to facilitate the conveyance of the meaning to create the impact envisaged by the speaker. The interpreter often converts the source code to the target code so that the audience can meaningfully interpret it (Holbert, 1991). However, this is inadequate to fulfil the communication purpose of interpretation because communication does not just simply imply the conversion of speech signals, words or utterances. As conceptualised by Angelelli (2016), communication is an all-encompassing activity involving several features such as power relations, the interface between the audience and the speaker, contextual factors, the form of utterances, the intended gist, gesture, tone and mood of utterances. Indeed, translation and interpretation supersedes the mere conversion of words from one language to another.

Although these extra features should be considered in interpretation-mediated communication, language proficiency and rendition accuracy are important factors to consider during interpretation and translation. However, several scholars, including Qian (2014), have conceptualised interpreting as a process that involves the primary conveyance of semantic connotations from the communicator to the audience via the interpreter or translator. For the transfer of the meaning to be complete, all the different types of meanings (lexicology, grammar and rhetoric) and their implications must be accurately decoded and properly relayed (Hatim & Mason, 2010).

In a multilingual setting, the interchange depicts the speakers who transmit the message in their linguistic setting and the interpreters who relay the message to the audience in their language (Dorani, 1996). Thus, the interpreters occupy a cardinal transmission point connecting two different languages. As postulated by Herbert (2021), the interpreters can effectively play their connecting role if they can discern the intents of

the speaker and the different needs of the audience. This capacity tends to influence the effectiveness of interpretation and translation from one language to another. Lyons (2009) principally draws attention to the presence of semantic categories and linguistic features, which cannot be translated. Accordingly, any attempt to translate such categories and features may result in semantic distortions unless the interpreter can figure out the rough or near-equivalents. Considering the inherent difficulties, the study examined the challenges faced during interpretation and translation of the sermon in the Pentecostal churches. For example, in the Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County, the tendency is to deliver the sermons in English and consecutively translate to the local languages (Kinyore, Ragoli) or Kiswahili. Like in other Pentecostal churches, the interpreters and translators often encounter diverse challenges. The study examined the challenges faced during sermon interpretation and translation of the sermon in the Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Consensus exists regarding challenges during translating and interpreting sermons in the Pentecostal churches. The challenges are inevitable when the perspectives of the preachers, congregation translators and interpreters are considered. However, interpretation and translation require an in-depth understanding of the determinants of practical interpretation and translation. Mugambi (1977) delineated these considerations to include the background of the church community, religious guidelines, and philosophical assumptions of the Pentecostal churches. However, understanding the challenges facing the interpreters and translators of sermons has been an exciting area of research attention (Dam, 2010). Musyoka and Karanja (2014) are among the scholars credited with advancing research interests in the challenges sermon interpreters and translators face. The focus of most studies has predominantly revolved around the specific problems encountered when untrained interpreters and translators carry out the interpretation and translation. The absence of well-equipped personnel has implications on the extent to which interpretation and translation can meet the intended theological

needs of the congregation. Although scholarly works have addressed translation and interpretation in the Christian church community (Ballard & Pritchard, 1996; Barr, 1973), most of these works have dwelt on the mainstream churches where there is formal and predictable sermon delivery. However, few systematised studies have generally focused on the challenges faced by interpreters and translators of the sermons in the Pentecostal churches. In a study entitled, *Toward a Science of Translating*, Nida (2021) focused on the technicalities abiding translations and called for clarity regarding the audience's intention of the biblical message and the socio-cultural and religious realities and contexts of sermon delivery. The theorist's undisputed proposition was that the sermon should be delivered in a language the congregation understands.

Barnett (2023), in his book *Schism and Renewal in Africa*, has given a forthright assessment of the interpretation and translation in the independent African churches by interrogating the concept of scripture translations into vernacular languages. Although the analysis of the sermon interpretation did not come out clearly, the role of translation was imminent in supporting the missionary work. Cook (1986) scrutinised the potential benefits of translation and interpretation and averred that training is essential because the interpreters are not immune to the pressures, which result from the dynamic characteristics of the congregation. In a multi-ethnic and multilingual society like Vihiga County, the congregation is diverse and translation and interpretation cannot be considered to be the preserve of a few people.

If translation and interpretation are to become effective, more people should be involved in the training process. When the Pentecostal churches seek to make the liturgical work reach a wider multilingual audience, translation and interpretation must be given serious thought, and their prospects must be restored by empowering the sermon interpreters and translators (Cox, 1995). Ribadon (2021) contends that cultures are complex, changing from time to time, presenting the possibility for dynamism in translation and interpretation. Words, too, are not

straightforward, for they acquire various overtones and associations that may be unique in one language and general in another. For instance, English biblical translators encounter difficulties finding lexical synonyms for diverse words in remote languages or cultures that are quite different from the original culture about which the Bible was written (Ribadon, 2021). Ward (2022) sympathises with the translators in these contexts but finds ease with non-theological interpretations and translations of internationally agreed-upon scientific subjects and linguistic phenomena. Clifford (1998) places the interpretation and translation challenges to the situational features of text focusing on the absence of near linguistic and functional relevance rather than the completeness of communication. However, it is not clear whether the interpreters and translators in the Pentecostal churches can determine the functional relevance of the liturgical texts from the perspective of their multilingual congregation.

Many commentators are congruent on the circumstances when translation and interpretation are bound to fail, and the common contention is that failure tends to occur when attaching functionally relevant features to a context (Luccock, 1944). This has brought out difficulties related to linguistic and cultural incongruences where there are no formally corresponding features in both languages (Watt, 2021). Bitonge (2022) interrogated the factors that influence the use of interpretation in delivering sermons in churches in Uasin Gishu County. Nida's functional equivalent interpretation theory guided the study, which averred that among the most profound determinants of interpretation were the preachers' preferences for English and the audience's linguistic challenges in the source language. Highly skilled interpreters were recommended to make interpretation effective. While this study has important implications, the focus differs from the present study due to its emphasis on the determinants of the use of interpretation and not on communication strategies in Pentecostal churches. Gimode (2006) looked at the mistranslations occurring when translating from English to Kiswahili. Evidently, translators made errors mainly due to lack of training and the preachers' uncontrolled speed. The unit of

analysis in Ali's work was the observed errors in the Kiswahili news bulletin. The cardinal observation pertained to the errors caused by the translators' incompetence and short time spent preparing the news. These studies suggested further investigating the communication strategies adopted to conceal the eminent errors that formed the basis of this study.

According to Clader (1998), distinct grammatical and lexical items should be shared in the phonological or graphological forms of two languages to minimise the chances of ambiguity. Considering the requirement of completeness of communication, it can be deduced that translation challenges arise from a lack of equivalence between the source text and the target text and that translation cannot escape from meaning distortions (Pandit, 1987). This calls for the analysis of the cultural and linguistic differences to remedy the problems because the challenges can become quite acute and discouraging in the case of spiritual discernment, as expected in the Pentecostal church sermons.

Thus, avoiding a mistranslation or coming up with a superficial rendering are critical goals of the interpreters and translators of sermons in the Pentecostal churches. From the preceding discussion, the challenges of translation and interpretation may broadly be classified into two types: external and internal. Based on this classification, external problems commonly lead to translation problems, with the language and culture playing a monumental role, while individuality-related issues come in as peripheral attributes that only become adverse when training is not offered. However, most studies seemed to have ignored the idiosyncratic factors, labelling them inconsequential. Nonetheless, the external problems may be avoided, prepared for and commonly understood as foretelling. These factors can impact the art of translation, negatively inhibiting the transmission of the message to the audience. Thus, the unsuccessful transmission of the gospel message is probably linked to the challenges faced during the process of interpretation and translation.

## Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on the interpretive theory of translation, which Marianne pioneered in 2003. Marianne (2003) considered translation a process involving a thorough understanding of the message from the source text, interpreting it and then transmitting it to the audience. The process consists of the utilisation of the mental and cognitive processes in comprehending the text, calling upon the interpreters and translators to be keen in making sense of the original text. The theory calls upon the interpreters and translators to maintain a relatively fast interpreting speed to minimise the possibility of communication discontinuity. The process also involves the application of cognitive and psychic energy to enable the audience to grasp the essence of the original linguistic components of the message. On this basis, interpretive theory becomes suitable for understanding the challenges associated with the translation and interpretation of the sermon.

In addition, the theory is relevant because it appreciates the unique position of the interpreters and translators in decoding and transmitting spoken messages. The data generated also supported Marianne's theory postulation that translation ought to engender an understanding of the message from the source text before relaying it as effectively as possible to the audience. According to Marianne (2003), the core translation competencies are accuracy, fluency, instantaneity, and appropriateness. The results have also supported Marianne's emphasis on rigour and keenness during interpretation and translation to help capture the essence of effective translation's linguistic and cultural determinants. However, the study highlighted the challenges impeding the interpretation and translation of sermons.

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilised the descriptive survey design. This involved collecting data, which helped answer the research questions concerning the challenges encountered during the interpretation and translation of sermons in Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. The target population included the clergy (preachers), translators, interpreters, and church members from

Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. Purposive sampling was employed to identify five Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. The identification and selection of the informants was guided by the purposive sampling criterion owing to the impracticability of involving every member of the target population. Hence, the guiding criteria included familiarity with sermon interpretation and translation and availability during the Sunday sermons. The sample consisted of 5 preachers, five interpreters and translators and 30 congregants from 5 Pentecostal churches, totalling 35 study participants. The preachers were coded as P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5, while the interpreters and the translators were coded as TI 1, TI 2, TI 3, TI 4 and TI 5, and the members of the congregation were coded as CONG1 CONG30. The study adopted interview guides, audio-video recordings, and observation guides to collect data. The tape-recorded sermons were transcribed, and the extracts and transcribed texts were studied to identify the challenges the translators and interpreters encountered during sermon delivery. The qualitative data was analysed using thematic content analysis.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study focused on the errors and mistakes the interpreters and translators committed in sermon interpretation and translation. While the respondents highlighted different challenges, there was a contradiction in their perception of the challenges, as some of them perceived the challenges to be contextual and cultural while others considered them eccentric in nature. In the following subsections, the various challenges are discussed.

### Inadequate Language and Biblical Knowledge

The challenge associated with linguistic inadequacy was evident owing to the apparent differences between English and Kinyore and other local dialects spoken in Vihiga County. The sermon interpreters and translators asserted that they were not well endowed with the working vocabulary in the English language, particularly in circumstances where there were no word equivalences. This is supported by TI2, who observed that: *It is not easy to translate from English to mothertongue. I am not very good at English, but I can understand everything... When you translate from*

*Kiswahili to English, you will be straining because certain words are difficult to translate (TI2/2022)*

On the other hand, lack of exposure was associated with the language problems experienced during sermon interpretation and translation. As a demonstration of the perceived linguistic inadequacy, the interpreters and translators often took a lot of time thinking of what to say in the target language and consequently lost the flow of preaching. Lack of language skills, coupled with scanty familiarity with the English culture, made the interpreters and translators take a long time to figure out the possible equivalent words to say, which constrained the flow of preaching. This was evident in the following excerpt:  
*P: that is the price God has wanted you to pay for a soul*  
*T: nibwo obukusi bwa Nyasaye.....(Pause)*  
*yenyanga orunga nondi khulwo okhuchia okhuhonia esoul*

*P: there's a soul that is perishing somewhere*  
*T: khuli nende... (Pause) omwoyo kunyakhana habundu*

The pauses in the given excerpt confirm that the interpreters and translators took too long to figure out what to say to represent the soul, only resorting to coining the word *soul*, resulting in a humorous episode from the congregation. This was contributed to by the fact that the interpreters and translators were generally untrained and needed to gain prior knowledge of interpretation and translation skills. Indeed, all the participants confirmed that the interpreters and translators did not have professional certifications and satisfactory biblical knowledge to permit them to undertake interpretation and translation work. This is against the expectation that one of the key requirements for interpreting and translating the sermon is sufficient biblical knowledge (Peremota, 2017). In some sermons, the preachers often recited the scriptures without referring to the Bible.

This situation made the interpreters and translators loose focus, attention, and rhythm as they struggled to find the scriptures in the Bible. More often, reciting the scriptures from their brain in Kinyore, English, and Kiswahili was difficult because they had not prepared well. However, the respondents affirmed that some

volunteer untrained interpreters and translators managed to interpret successfully despite lacking specific training in interpretation and translation. This was mainly due to their tacit knowledge gained through experience, interactional expertise, and the Bible knowledge acquired through active engagement in the church community. Given this point, the general background in biblical knowledge played a significant role in helping the translators and interpreters perform well. This study contends that the interpreters and translators should endeavour to expand their biblical knowledge, backing it with liturgical expertise to make it easier to cope with the preachers' pace during sermon delivery.

### Complex Terminologies, Pronunciation Problems and Unpredictable Preaching Styles

It was evident that the interpreters and translators encountered complex vocabularies, pronunciation

problems and unpredictable preaching styles. These problems were too vivid, especially for the preachers unfamiliar with the local languages. Some preachers used technical terminologies when preaching in English, which made the interpreters and interpreters fail to comprehend their meaning. In an interview with IT5, it was evident that some preachers used words that were difficult to understand. Further interrogation revealed that the difficulty was not about the meanings of words but how the words were pronounced. Hence, using complex vocabularies such as *aimlessly, palace, ecclesiastic, hegemony, soul* and *finances* presented a significant challenge for the interpreters and translators of sermons. Getting the ideal synonyms for these words in the target language was problematic. Table 1 presents the words that the interpreters and translators pronounced differently from the intended words:

**Table 1: Wrong Pronunciations Rendered**

Intended word	The Pronunciation rendered
Lies	Lice
Full	Fool
Sin	Seen
Holy	Wholly
Peace	Piece
Judge	Charge

The end-result of wrong pronunciation was message distortion and confusion among the audience. This was particularly evident in situations where the interpreters and translators could not keep pace with the speed of the preachers. Thembhani (2016) concurred that the pronunciation problem and the speed of preaching have remained problematic in sermon translation with the consequential potency of affecting the performance of the interpreters and translators of sermons.

### Inadequate Preparation

The quality of interpretation and translation requires the interpreter to prepare thoroughly spiritually, psychologically and physically (Peremota, 2017). Spiritual preparation requires the interpreters and translators to have adequate knowledge of the textual

interpretation of the scripture they interpret and translate. However, it was unfortunate that almost no preachers interviewed provided speeches or preaching notes to the interpreters. P5 observed: *The issue of preparing them by giving them texts before interpreting is a real problem... .. I do not give them texts or provide speaking notes before the interpretation. Therefore, the interpreter must rely entirely on the preacher (P5/2022).*

Failing to share the preaching notes made most interpreters and translators fail to interpret and translate the sermons effectively. In addition, inadequate preparation prevented the interpreters and translators from rendering the message effectively. Although there was evidence of prior preparation by holding prior meetings with the

preachers, the interpreters and translators still struggled to maintain a common preaching rhythm, suggesting inadequate preparation.

## Cultural Differences and Inability to Fulfill Community Language Expectations

Usually, the religious community members share certain community language expectations, which the interpreters and translators ought to be conversant with. This includes but is not limited to the knowledge of the working language, its norms (such as euphemisms), contextual usage, the varieties of the dialects, and the level of language advancement. Hence, to effectively transmit the gospel message, the interpreters and translators must be exposed to the community they are interpreting in and know the community language expectations and experience. Contextually, cultural considerations were found to be a genuine concern for the members of the Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. P2 described the cosmopolitan nature of the congregation thus: .....Kinyore lacks some vocabulary, but in preaching, you will largely be ineffective if there is no translation... The truth of God is always the same, but it must be preached in a somewhat different manner to different people. The manner of preaching suited to one group is different from that suited to another culture (P2/2022)... ibidem.

The diversity created by the cultural differences presented both linguistic and non-linguistic constraints for sermon interpreters and translators. For instance, the gestures that dominate the Nyore language are mainly absent in other languages spoken by some congregation members in the Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County. Although the basic principle of sermon interpretation and translation is to rise above cultural realities to meet the goals of religious discourse, Gumul (2015) is concerned that amid cultural differences, understanding the meaning of the

interpreted text is often constrained by cultural considerations.

## Lack of Synonyms for Linguistic Features

During sermon translation and interpretation, the problems related to lexical disharmony are often evident because it is difficult for two people to display synonymous linguistic features in form, content and context. Hence, there is a need to make some adjustments on the part of the audience to avoid distortion of the original message. The translator has to reckon with what is intended by both the speaker and the audience. This is illustrated in the following excerpt:

P: *They were fitted with spikes*

T: *Bialikho nende .....vitu kama miiba*

P: *For you to stand firm*

T: *Kho oltole okhusinjila obulunji*

P: *The woman was living in a palace*

T: *Omukhasi uno wamenya mwikulu*

P: *enjoyed royal treatment*

T: *nasangaala amang'ana akali mwi...*

P: *and I was challenged..*

T: *manibaaa... nimbulaa...*

As evident in the excerpt, no equivalent translations are *fitted with spikes* and *palaces* in the Kinyore language. Thus, the interpreters and translators opted for *vitu kama miiba* (certain things like thorns) and *mwikulu* (meaning heaven). Also, the word *obulunji* means straight and not firm, while in the last part, the interpreter could not figure out the equivalent word for *royal*. Also, the word *challenged* troubled the interpreter, considering two possible equivalents (*manibaaa* and *nimbulaa*). Whatever the efforts made by the interpreters and translators to figure out the equivalents, there is often mistranslation, which leads to loss of information and distortion of meaning. Additional words the interpreters and translators found difficult to interpret are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Words with No Direct Translation in Kinyore**

No.	Word in English	translations in Kinyore and Possible meanings
1	Mercy	<i>Esirenda</i> for mercy or grace
2	Commandments	<i>Amalako</i> for rules or orders
3	Witness	<i>Omukobokheli</i> for eyewitness or see
4	Repentance	<i>Okhwikanila</i> for atonement or turn away from sin
5	Fallible	<i>Okhuramwa</i> for weak or imperfect
6	Rejoice	<i>Obuyanzi</i> be happy or celebrate
7	Justice	<i>Akelikali</i> for fairness or uprightness
8	Suffering	<i>Eminyakhano</i> for sorrow or pain
9	Glorification	<i>Okhwitsiomia</i> for praise or worship
10	Omnipresent	<i>Habundu hosi</i> for see all or present everywhere
11	Reconciliation	<i>Okhubelaana</i> for ceasefire or reunion
12	Omniscient	<i>Owamanya biosi</i> for see all or know all
13	Judgment	<i>Okhuyala</i> for ruling or resolution
14	Covenant	<i>Indakano</i> for agreement or bond
15	Confess	<i>Okhwiwama</i> for admit or accept

It can be construed from Table 2 that Kinyore language lacked some words to represent equivalent English concepts such as Grace (*esirenda* for mercy or grace) and *eminyakhano* for pain, problems or suffering. According to Mertab (2022), lack of equivalence or near equivalence of religious messages in some languages compels interpreters and translators to use similar or related words interchangeably. Although ambiguity is the most striking example of sentential context effects, the phenomenon also applies to unambiguous words, which can be flexibly interpreted, as in the case of tablets (medicine or computer gadgets). In these instances, the interpreters and translators tended to interpret them as more specific and not in compliance with a particular religious context.

### Independent and Non-Contextual Translation

Independent or non-contextual translation is a common problem in the church discourse. This exposes the salient linguistic issues that bedevil sermon interpretation and translation tasks. Perhaps this is the reason why P3 lamented that:  
*..... if the interpreter is a poor communicator, there will be a predicament in the whole process of translation... ..you see if they donot get words well ... they do not get it well.... (P3/2022)'*

When the interpreters and translators begin to give each linguistic element an independent translation, mistranslation or misinterpretation is bound to occur. Due to lack of training, the interpreters and translators tend to ignore vital linguistic aspects like the appropriate prosodic and contextual skills. If these aspects are absent, the intermediary role of the interpreters will also be lost. Non-contextual translation also occurred because the speakers appeared to be faster than the interpreters in carrying out their tasks effectively (Gwak, 2020). In this regard, the interpreters should have negotiated with the speakers to adjust or tone down their speed to render interpretation manageable.

Moreover, the participants suggested that the interpreters should familiarise themselves with the sermon message well in advance to lessen the problem of mistranslation in the simultaneous interpretation of the church sermon. Similarly, some words were mistranslated. For instance, inspire was translated as *okhuyanzisia*, yet *okhuyanzisia* means to make happy, and justification is translated as *okhuana obulafu*, yet this phrase means giving light. Moreover, redemption was translated as *okhuonia*, yet *okhuonia* generally refers to healing and *okhuoniatsisoni* refers to saving one from embarrassment in different

contexts, while glorification has no equivalent in the intended contexts.

### Lengthy Utterances and Prolonged Elicitations

Kalina (1994) contends that shorter utterances interfere with transmitting the meaning of the interpreted and translated texts, while long utterances compromise the interpreter's ability to comprehend the preacher's intended meaning. In the presence of protracted expressions, time constraints crop in, and the problem becomes even more pronounced. Yet the interpreter and translator must render the correct output despite the time constraints. According to CONG1 long utterances:

*..... prolongs the preaching time...a sermon that should take one hour takes two hours because the same words are said twice....(CONG1/2022)*

In some instances, the preachers' utterances become quite long when the interpreters attempted to interpret, often stretching into the listeners' natural absorption threshold (Antonini, 2011). The threshold tends to be longer when the interpretation is done from English into Kinyore. This lends credence to the assertion that when the interpreters work from an unfamiliar language or dialect, the listeners' absorption threshold is severely affected. When the utterances are long, the interpreters and translators may resort to skipping strategies, resulting in ineffective communication. For example:

**P:** *And he said, I just enter any place of worship, where Sunday finds me, I just go there, even in a mosque. After all, we pray the same God.*

**T:** *Ise njichakho tsa habundu hosi he libukana li...ha Jumapili inyoola.....*

**P:** *I told you when you surrender; I don't know if we have somebody in the house that's under pressure to pray*

**T:** *....ouliowenyanga okhusaya, ouli nende omusukumo okwo okhusaya*

In this example, the phrases *I just go there*, *Even in a mosque* and *After all, we pray the same God*, were skipped probably because the utterance was long for the translator/interpreter to comprehend. At the same time, *I told you that when you surrender, I don't know if we were skipped* because the preacher made long utterances fast. It was also evident that the interpreters raised concerns about culturally bound lexical items, especially those lacking in the Kinyore language.

The point of contention was that the interpreters were expected to be conversant, but in reality, they were green about it. It was inevitable to find problems about these contradictory expectations. Such words were skipped, thus affecting negatively on the interpretation and translation of the sermon. Because most cultural words are not easy to translate, the interpreters and translators were justified in skipping them or leaving them out in the interpreted text instead of struggling to figure out applicable words or near synonyms. Table 3 presents the words that the interpreters skipped or gave the wrong interpretation.

**Table 3: Skipped Words**

Word	Possible translations
Greed	<i>isakhwe/omukhwolu/khukhwola</i>
Redemption	<i>okhununula/ okhuonia</i>
Repentance	<i>Okhwikanila</i>
Rejoice	<i>Obusangali</i>
Righteous	<i>Abalunji</i>
Testimony	<i>Obuloli</i>
Tribulation	<i>Eminyakhano</i>
Wrath	<i>Oburima</i>
Temptation	<i>Amatemo</i>
Confession	<i>Okhweyama</i>

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Reconciliation	Obuhambani
Fallible	Okhramwa
Judgement	Okhuyala/okhukhalakilwa
Commandments	Amalako
Covenant	Indakano/echiamri/echiagano

Apart from the skipping strategy, the interpreters found it challenging to provide accurate translation. For instance, where the ideas were expressed by one word, the interpreters provided two or more words. These included glorification (*okhuana oluyali*), justification (*okhuana obulafu*), and incarnation (*okhubakho ommbili kwomundu*), among several lexical items. Given that a sermon's message is not drawn from separate portions but from the continuous flow of the integrated sermon, when the meaning in one portion is interfered with, the audience strains to follow the message, resulting in a distorted message. The interpreters and translators also skipped some utterances that required an elicitation of supportive responses. This was supported by T12, who concurred that:

*.....yes there can be long periods when the congregation get immersed in the preaching that, as a preacher, you miss a chance to get your footing and time to translate, forno one would be listening to you, oryou would not hearwhat the preachersays (T12/2022)*

In this regard, the impact of noise hampered effective communication and resulted in message abandonment. This encouraged the preachers to accelerate their preaching vigour, giving the interpreters and translators no chance to interpret. The protracted elicitation of responses was expected to encourage the audience to interject by clapping, but this was not evident during the entire sermon delivery.

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## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Conclusion:** Based on the findings, it is concluded that the sermon interpreters and translators in the Pentecostal churches in Vihiga County encountered different challenges during sermon delivery. The challenges included inadequate language and biblical knowledge, the use of complex terminologies, pronunciation problems and unpredictable preaching styles, insufficient preparation, cultural differences and inability to fulfil community language expectations, lengthy utterances and prolonged elicitations, the use of independent and non-contextual translation and lack of synonyms for different linguistic features. The challenges originated from the source language as well as the target language. The challenges resulted in misses and missteps in the interpretation and translation of the sermon.

**Recommendations:** Due to the challenges encountered during sermon interpretation and translation in the Pentecostal churches, it is recommended that the interpreters and translators be adequately trained in the art of interpretation and translation to enhance their understanding of sermon interpretation and translation dynamics in the Pentecostal churches. The study also recommends that the interpreters and translators be conversant with the theological doctrines of the Pentecostal churches so that their work does not contradict the tenets of the Pentecostal churches. The preachers and the interpreters should also work in harmony with the preachers by sharing their work and agreeing on how to support one another in the entire process of sermon delivery.

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