Paralinguistic Communication in Igbo Nollywood Subtitles: A Case Study of Two Igbo Films

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Abstract: Translation is the process of transferring information from one book to another. Language is a tool that is used to move information from one book to the other. Textual and paratextual translations are two types of translation. Textual translation is a book translation, whereas paratextual translation is a non-book translation, sometimes, known as an audiovisual translation. There are two parts to this audiovisual: dubbing and subtitling. This study is focused on subtitling that addresses written information on the screen of television or cinema. Generally, translation as a type of information transfer, has aided many people and the entertainment industry in communicating information to various target audiences through language. Oral and written communication, as well as paralinguistic, such as body language gestures, are all examples of how language can be represented. Language is the tool by which man conveys his thoughts and ideas, meaning that it is the most efficient form of communication for man, and it is vital to humanity. The component of communication that occurs outside of the words themselves is known as paralinguistic. This study aims to determine the efficacy of paralinguistic communication in subtitles. In order to make the point of discourse apparent, examples of gesture were taken from two Nollywood films, *Aka Azụ Dị Ya* and *Ụmụ Afrịka*. A descriptive methodology approach of data used for the study was employed. This study discovered that paralinguistic is significant in presenting information to audiences, particularly, specific audiences because, it aids in the understanding of a certain expression. This study suggests that paralinguistic is extremely important in communicating information in subtitled films, both in Nollywood and in other film industries throughout the world. In order to generate a communicative Nollywood Igbo films, the study finds that sufficient attention should be paid to film subtitling and editing throughout production, as well as the expertise of the film editors.

Keywords: Language, Paralinguistic, Communication, Translation and Subtitles

1. Background to the Study

Communication is described as the exchange of ideas, messages, and information between two or more people across a medium in such a way that the sender and receiver both comprehend the message in the same way, i.e. they establish a shared understanding of the message. The Latin word 'communicare' implies to share, impart, participate, exchange, convey, or make common. It emphasises the exchange of shared data, ideas, and messages. That is to say, it is more than just providing commands and directives. Communication is a two-way exchange of information or ideas. To put it another way, one person cannot communicate alone. When one communicates, there must be a recipient or audience who will respond in kind. Then and only then can one's conversation be considered complete. The process of giving and receiving verbal and nonverbal information is known as communication. This, on the other hand, is only judged effective if it gets the intended reaction or response from the receiver. It is possible that the response will be positive or negative. Communication is incomplete if no response is received. Communication can also occur between a media piece and audiences in order to transmit alleged information from the source film to the target receiver, or audience. As a result, the purpose of this research is to determine the validity of paralinguistic communication in subtitles.

From the foregoing, communication is defined as the transfer of information from a sender to a receiver, i.e., media to target receivers via subtitles, with the information being understood by the receiver as depicted on the screen.

Communication is the process of passing information from one person to another via speaking, writing, or utilising another medium. Communication, according to MCNEILL is the interchange of data, ideas, views, or emotions between two or more people [1]. In a word, communication is the process of transmitting and comprehending information. However, it is a two-way process of mutual understanding, a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening, and understanding, as well as a two-way process of making one's ideas and opinions known to others, a process of imparting ideas and making oneself understood by others, transmission and accurate replication of ideas ensured by feedback for the purpose of eliciting actions. There is always an objective that a particular communication sets to attain when trying to reach a certain target audience, the sender of the message, which in other terms can be described of transmitting a message from cinema to a specific group. This means that communication according to Nwike and Agbedo is carried out with a specific goal in mind, [2]. Adoption of linguistic or paralinguistic forms can help attain these goals. From a linguistic standpoint, vocalised language is the goal of discourse, as it is a means for passing information from the source to the target languages through words. However, maybe more than any other characteristic, the ability to communicate distinguishes humans from other animals. This means that language is solely employed by humans and not by other creatures of lower social status. As a result, the capacity to use a language necessitates extensive information that most speakers are unaware of.

When learning a language, it is important to understand which sounds or signals are utilised in the language and which are not. This, on the other hand, comprises understanding how the language's sounds can be blended, as well as which sounds can begin a word, and which sounds can end a word, and which sounds can follow each other within a word. As a result of the preceding, it may be concluded that understanding one's language's sounds also entails knowing how one's face appears when producing them. The alternative sort of communication, on the other hand, is paralinguistic. The component of communication that occurs outside of the words themselves is known as paralinguistic, a person's voice volume, speed, and intonation, as well as gestures and other nonverbal cues. That is to say, that Schandorf is of the view that anytime there is misunderstanding or stereotyping in cross-cultural contact due to language origins, paralinguistic is frequently used to save the situation [3]. On this foundation, it is clear that paralinguistic can be broken down into categories that will be useful in language education or class presentations. Gestures, facial expressions, proxemics, kinesics (body language), and eye contact are all examples of body language.

Eye contact offers vital input for discussions to take place, such as turn taking and conversation beginning and ending. The amount of eye contact that is considered appropriate is culturally determined. Boredom, intimidation, and disdain can all be displayed by using too much or too little. Again, kinesics, often known as body language, is concerned with one's posture. Under discussion, postures reveal a lot of information. On this, each person in each culture according to Bross has a different demand for personal space [4]. It does, however, address how far apart one sits or stands when speaking with someone, as well as how you feel when someone enters your personal space without your permission. A case study of Americans as it relates to a certain cultural community. Talking too loudly is a common American habit that is interpreted as a sign of anger or lack of tact. Again, the British custom of speaking softly might be perceived as secretive, and this corresponds with the Japanese saying "Those who know do not talk - those who speak do not know," which means that silence is avoided in American and Arabic cultures. Gestures according to Hoste and Signer are frequently used in films, presentations, and the classroom to help second language learners understand a message, but they have different meanings in different cultures [5]. However, it can be said to be culturally oriented or focused. For example, in Nollywood films, gestures are used to convey additional messages to the target audience. Gesture provides additional insight into the most accurate interpretation or meaning of data. In the Nollywood film *Aka Azụ Dị Ya,* the actor(s) used various gestures in order to convey a certain message to the target or audience.

Figure 1. *Using of hand to add clarity to the source message.*

This actor talks about levels or grades of witch-crafting in the photo above, based on the film's content and the captions on the screenshot, which are also in alignment with the cultural belief of the Igbo language speaking society. As a result, he began to utilise the hand to indicate the degrees of witch-crafting. The employment of the hand in illustrating the grades of witchcraft will clearly assist the hearing impaired patient in understanding the content of the original video with ease, with little or no attention paid to reading the subtitles on the screen, which are designed to last seconds, as shown in the photo.

It is still worthwhile to maintain that gesture is culturally based, especially, on the cultural conventions of many languages around the world. Someone, for example, is waving. Waving in the United States indicates "hello or farewell," however in Mexico, it means "come here." Imagine how perplexing this could be for students or others who don't grasp the cultural norms of the target and source languages. Furthermore, some facial expressions, such as happiness, grief, and surprise, are universal. Aside from the aforementioned, there are a few others that aren't ubiquitous. When reading a child's or one's facial expressions, for example, one must be careful not to draw assumptions based on how other cultures use facial expressions. In Japan, for example, children are

frequently observed refraining from expressing emotions through facial expression, particularly unpleasant feelings. In many cultures, reading brow movement is quite telling. Face expressions can be used to indicate both negative and positive emotions in the Igbo language community. As a result, it is clear from this discussion that one's facial expression can be used to convey information and, as a result, communicates with the potential target audience.

Figure 2. Using facial expression to support her message.

It can be noticed in the above image that instead of using spoken communication, a facial expression was used to indicate disapproval of something. This, on the other hand, conveys a more nuanced statement about how one feels about a specific topic. This form of language usage aids in comprehending the depth of the message intended for a certain audience. This also helps persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or otherwise referred as hearing impaired to understand a message well. Due to a variety of factors, this can be seen in films intended for specialised audiences. This is to say that while watching a subtitled film, the target audience or foreign language learner of a particular language will look at the displayed facial expression and use cognition to deduce what message is being passed by the person, as subtitles replace verbal utterances with their written equivalences on the screen.

2. Subtitling Communication Through Paralinguistic

Subtitling is a type of translation that occurs in the media, such as television or film. In other words, translation according to Nwike, Olaide and Obiora is an information transfer that takes place between two languages, where the language that owns the information to be translated is the source language while the language used for translation is the target language [6]. These forms of languages used for translation is evident in subtitling, thus, the voice track of the film to written on the screen. The voice track is the source language, and the written expression of same information of the source video is the target language. In line with this, it can be said that these languages can be interlingual or intralingual; in the sense that the former involves two different languages, thus English to Igbo, while the latter is intralingual, thus, Onitsha Igbo which is dialect of Igbo language to Igbo central (Igbo izugbe). However, intralingual translation is the type

that is done in varieties of same language. For Dayan, it is a subcategory of audiovisual translation that is broken into two parts: dubbing and subtitling [7]. This is to state that according to Nwike subtitling is unquestionably one of the two most popular types of audiovisual translation, the other being dubbing [8]. As a result, Shuttleworth, Mark andMoira said that it can be described as one of the two basic ways of language transfer utilised in translating forms of mass audio-visual communication such as film and television [9]. Subtitles, as diverse as their definitions may be, are usually accepted to be translated utterances, written translations, or written target texts. The early academics in this discipline, according to Luyken, Georg-Michael, Thomas, Langham-Brown, Helene, and Hermans understood subtitles as condensed textual translations of original dialogue, which appear as lines of text, usually positioned towards the foot of the screen [10]. Subtitles, on the other hand, appear and disappear in time with the corresponding piece of the original dialogue, and are nearly typically applied to the screen image as a post-production activity at a later period. In terms of content–textual translations, position – the bottom of the screen, presentation–synchronisation, production–post-production activity, and nature–additive, this description summarises the most distinguishing aspects of subtitling. Subtitling is utilised for a variety of audiovisual goods, including movies, television, video, DVD, LaserDisc, CDRom, computer games, the internet, and live events, among others. It has several advantages over dubbing, according to O'Connell, as an affordable, rapid, foreign-culture friendly, and generally politically correct technique of screen translation [11]. Subtitling can be done in two ways: interlingually and intralingually.

Subtitling between two languages in the thoughts of Gottlieb is referred to as interlingual subtitling [12]. It is a translation from a source language (SL) to a target language (TL), which in the idea of Cintas indicates the relationship between the two [13]. For Bartoll, this sort of subtitle is known as an interlinguistic subtitle since it appears when there is a translation [14]. The idea of this category is that two separate languages must be transferred or translated, however it applies to subtitling rather than traditional written translation. It is worth noting that this group includes not only two languages, but also two dimensions: speech and writing. As a result, this style of subtitling is also known as diagonal or oblique subtitling. For Gottlieb it indicates that both the manner and the languages are changed, crossing over from speaking in one language to writing in another [12]. On the other hand, intralingual subtitles are those that appear in the same language variety.

Subtitling within the same language according to Nwike, Agbedo and Ndubuisi is known as intralingual subtitling [15]. It covers the link between the same source and destination languages, according to Gottlieb [12]. In other words, it is an intralinguistic subtitle, and because it works between the same languages, Bartoll claims that it happens when there is transcription [14]. Cintas echoes this viewpoint and argues that there is no alteration in language, thereby Christianizing

captioning [13]. It touches on dimensions, as it does in interlingual subtitling. It is referred to as vertical subtitling by Gottlieb, which means that just the mode is altered, not the language, and that speech is written down in the original language [16]. According to Cintas [17] and Gottlieb, this style is primarily targeted towards deaf and hard of hearing individuals, language learners, and karaoke singers [16]. This type of communication that can be used to reach out to a group transmits information intended for them, together with any accompanying paralinguistic uses that were used to emphasise and deepen the scope of the intended message. This is to state that, regardless of the method used for subtitling, it is critical to underline the importance of appropriate communication. This is due to the fact that the desire to socialise and establish organised groupings demands communication. People convey changes in technology, structure, or people to their subordinates in today's fast-changing world. It is easier for subordinates to grasp and act on the message if the communication system is well-organized. This is feasible because communication is crucial in the lives of both individuals and organisations since it serves as a foundation for planning. The most basic role of human management is planning. If plans are well-designed and conveyed to the individuals who will be implementing them, they will be a big success. Environmental scanning and knowledge regarding internal and external sociocultural aspects are required for planning. This information can be obtained with the help of a good communication system. The plans must be communicated to everyone in society in order to be implemented. As a result, communication is the foundation of planning.

3. Communication Principles

Because communication is such a vital aspect of human relationships, Nwike adds that it is no surprise that it is surrounded by elements [18]. This set of elements is known as the 'Cs' in communication, and it serves as a checklist for ensuring that meetings, emails, conference calls, reports, and presentations are well-constructed and clear, allowing the intended message to reach the intended audience. Communication must be Clear, Concise, Concrete, Correct, Coherent, Complete, and Courteous, according to the 'Cs.' From the list, it can be stated that efficient communication occurs when information is transferred accurately through translation, subtitles, interpretation, or paralinguistic. This means that the 'Cs' in communication are made up of components that are interconnected at some places, resulting in Idea. Receiver/Decoder, Sender, Decoding, Encoding, Feedback, Message, Channel, and Medium are all terms used to describe the roles of the receiver and decoder.

4. Subtitling and Paralinguistic Communication

As previously stated, paralinguistic communication include aspects of communication other than words, such as voice volume, pace, and intonation, as well as gestures and other non-verbal indicators. Communication is an interchange of ideas in and of itself. Communication is defined as the process of exchanging information as well as sharing information, ideas, concepts, and messages. This means that through communication, information is exchanged between two or more people, with the initiator of the exchange being the sender of the message. Subtitles, when vocalised messages in a film or television are subtitled on the screen, have both paralinguistic and communicative effects, according to the following. For example, in the movie *Aka Azụ Dị Ya*:

Figure 3. *Using kinesics or body language to add more meaning to his comprehension.*

The body movement in the above snapshot has a message it is passing across. This can be regarded to be a sign of confirmation of what he heard, as the use of such body language goes beyond simple hearing. The man in photo who went to the woods to lay traps for bush animals, used similar gestures which is one of the paralinguistic to express his extreme connection to the statement he heard about Chike, Nduluo's son who was trying to marry an outcast. Because gesture is one of the nonverbal languages utilised by humans, the way Nduka used his hand to convey a specific expression tries to communicate more than mere language can. In order for him to demonstrate what he heard, which in other words sounds quite unpleasant, he then attempted to demonstrate that he not only heard something but also executed that action in order to verify the validity of what he heard about the Nneoma and Chike's engagement party. As a result, the usage of this gesture in this situation implied a better understanding of the message, leading to effective communication in subtitles.

In line with the above, in the film *Ụmụ Afrịka,* it can be discovered that paralinguistic elements help in effective communication in subtitles. For instance,

Figure 4. *Using kinesics or body language to support his understanding.*

The snapshot demonstrates how offensive and unacceptable his mother's behaviour was to him. Mmaduka was taken aback by what had happened, and his expression and fidget said it all. However, because paralinguistic communication is one of the ways humans communicate, it may be claimed that the message is sent clearly with only a glance at the photo. As a result, deaf, hard of hearing, or language students will not have difficulty understanding the message because, it is delivered effectively through gestures thereby making the essence of communication effective in subtitle.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, based on the study's goal of determining the validity of paralinguistic communication in subtitling, it is clear that paralinguistic communication plays an important role in communicating information to audiences, particularly special audiences such as foreign language students or hearing impaired patients. This categorically facilitates the comprehension of a certain expression, while they previously struggled to comprehend a spoken expression. Paralinguistic can also aid to widen the scope of a message that has already been expressed. As a result, this research suggests that paralinguistic are significant in conveying information through subtitles.

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