DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ON COVID-19 TO RURAL DWELLERS THROUGH TRANSLATION: A PANACEA TO COVID-19 SPREAD

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Abstract

The ravaging coronavirus has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). Its rate of spread and mortality is alarming. To worsen matters, there is no cure, no vaccine presently, though clinical trials are going on. The economies of different countries have been shut down; people are being isolated and quarantined. Everybody has been advised to stay home and stay safe. For developing countries like Nigeria, the only safeguard to mitigate the crazy impact of the pandemic is to adhere to the precautionary measures outlined by health experts – physical distancing, wearing of facemasks, use of sanitizers, maintaining personal hygiene and avoiding social gatherings. Information on COVID-19 needs to reach all Nigerians no matter their location or level of literacy if the impact would be mitigated. Nigeria is a multilingual society so the COVID-19 information needs to be available to all linguistic groups especially those in the rural areas. This paper discusses the dissemination of information on COVID-19 to rural dwellers through translation. The focus here is the Igbo in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. The paper examines translation and terminology, then goes on to give the Igbo version of about 117 COVID-19 terms employing different methods of term creation like equivalence, composition, naturalisation, idiomatic expressions and explicative modulation. With these, the rural Igbo speakers can understand what COVID-19 is all about, the inherent dangers and the precautionary measures to take in order to stem the tide and preserve lives. Some recommendations were also made to help the containment of the pandemic.

Keywords: coronavirus, information, translation, terminology, language

I. Introduction

There had been series of life threatening diseases that have attacked the human race among which are: HIV/AIDS, SARS, MERS and EBOLA. The latest amongst them is the corona virus disease. The coronavirus disease popularly known as COVID-19 started towards the end of 2019. The first case of COVID-19 was found in Wuhan, China, where the outbreak started. The virus is called corona because it looks like a crown. CO – corona, VI – virus, D – disease while -19 points to the year it was discovered. It has spread very rapidly to almost all the countries in the world which led the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it a pandemic disease. As at May 13, 2020 by 16.34 GMT, worldwide, there are 4,390,382 confirmed cases, 1,633,862 recovered and 295,334 deaths. That leaves us with 2,461,186 active cases [17]. The infection rate continues to rise by the day.
It is taking a huge toll on families, societies, health systems and economies around the world, and for as long as the virus threatens any country, the entire world is at risk. To the best of our knowledge, there are no specific vaccines or treatment for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments. The best way, therefore, is to prevent and slow down transmission by being well informed about the COVID-19, the causes, symptoms and mode of transmission and precautionary measures that should be taken.

For one to be well informed and be able to digest all the necessary information about COVID-19, there is the need for all necessary information on the deadly disease to be disseminated in the language of the immediate environment or mother tongue. Most of the people residing in the rural areas are either semi-literate or illiterates in English language. Ironically, the information disseminated concerning the deadly COVID-19 is in English language, hence there is an urgent need to translate all the available literature in English into Nigerian indigenous languages to carry the rural dwellers along. The COVID-19 index case was diagnosed in Lagos on February 27th and as at May 13, 2020, by 16.34 GMT, there are in Nigeria, 4,787 total cases, 3,670 active, 158 deceased and 959 recovered [17].

In Nigeria, there are over 450 languages spoken and if all the available literature on COVID-19 is translated into all the indigenous languages in Nigeria, it will prevent and slow down the rate of transmission. The crux of this paper, therefore, is to translate some texts on symptoms and prevention of COVID-19, assemble terms related to it and create terms where necessary. Our sources were mainly the internet, dictionaries, the media – print and electronic.

II. Multilingualism and Nigeria
Multilingualism is a linguistic concept used to describe a situation in which an individual, a group or a nation uses more than two languages in communicating national or group needs. Similarly, Nigeria harbours a multiplicity of ethno linguistic groups; hence Nigeria is a multilingual nation. In Nigeria, there are three major languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba while a lot of non-major languages are developing.

III. Igbo language
Igbo language is the principal native language of the people in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. Reference [7] explains that Igbo belongs specially to the Igbooid group which consists of Igbo and other related languages. It has about 45 million speakers and is made up of over 20 dialects, though mutually intelligible. It is presently spoken Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo and parts of Delta and Rivers States of Nigeria.

IV. Need for all to be adequately educated and informed about COVID-19
One of the fastest means of developing a nation is communication – the transmitting and receiving information, ideas, feelings and thoughts. According [11], any transfer of information which has a direct and deliberate impact or influence upon a people’s social, economic or political welfare, has considerable impact on the thoughts and conduct of the people. Reference [6] concludes therefore that it is absolutely necessary for the people to know and understand issues, proposals, plans and policies being made for their own good. This underlines the emphasis that this paper is placing on sending the COVID-19 message to all and sundry irrespective of language or location.

In order to succeed in our health information dissemination, it is necessary that accurate and sufficient information be provided in our indigenous languages, in this case, Igbo language, to enable the non-
English speakers to be aware of the symptoms, prevention and contend with the challenges of the COVID-19. Understanding all about covid-19 in the indigenous language will help people’s attitude towards those that have been infected with the deadly disease. Stigmatization will be reduced to the barest minimum and infected people will willingly present themselves for adequate treatment. Similarly, Adequate education and information will help the people to be conscious of the danger of exposing themselves to infection, appreciate government’s effort and then obey the instructions on the dos and don’ts of the disease. It will also help in boosting the socio-economic standard of the people. Non-Governmental Organizations and other governmental agencies will have literature on COVID-19 terms in Igbo which will assist them in reaching out to the rural dwellers, discussing and disseminating the much needed information on all aspects of the disease.

V. Translation and Terminology

Translation has been defined in several ways by different linguists and translators. We will go by [2] that says, “Translation is the rendering of a Source language (SL) text to a Target language (TL) so as to ensure that the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and the structures of the SL will be preserved as clearly possible but not so closely that the TL meaning will be seriously distorted”.

A history of world culture from the perspective of translation reveals a constant movement of ideas, information and of cultures constantly absorbing new influences because of the work of translation. In multilingual nations such as Nigeria and Ghana, translation has come to acquire another role: it functions as an instrument of political consciousness and national unity. Through translation, the federal, states and local governments make their policies and programmes accessible to their numerous linguistic groups that make up the entire country. However, translation works with terminology.

Terminology is the study of terms. Terms are very important to the translator as it equips him to do his job faster. A translator, as a matter of necessity, relies on his own ingenuity and imaginativeness in order to originate and generate terms and equivalence in the mother-tongue. In translating a corpus, the translator needs to choose appropriate terms that correspond with the source language text. We have said earlier on that translation and terminology are interwoven and therefore it would not be and therefore it would not be an overstatement to say that terminology is very essential in, nay central to, translation practice.

VI. Translation of text on Coronavirus (COVID-19)

We made attempt to translate a text on coronavirus spread, symptoms and prevention. The Igbo translation is placed side by side the English text.

Our sources were mainly from the internet [18] – [20].
What is Coronavirus or COVID-19?

Coronavirus is a very serious sickness that affects the respiratory system and lungs. It is called COVID-19 because CO stands for corona, VI stands for virus, D for disease and 19 for 2019.

When someone has COVID-19, they start coughing and have a fever and they are unable to breathe properly.

There is no medicine for COVID-19 yet. But people who catch it can become well again if they are treated very early in a hospital with good care from doctors and nurses. Many people in Nigeria who were sick with COVID-19 are now well because they were treated early.

If people who catch COVID-19 don’t get treated quickly, then they become very sick and die from it.

How do people catch COVID-19?

People catch COVID-19 through these ways:

When you inhale the droplets of an infected person when they sneeze.

When you inhale the droplets of an infected person when they cough.

When you touch a person who is sick with COVID-19, the surfaces they touch and then you touch your face.

If you don’t do any of these, then you won’t catch COVID-19.

Who can catch COVID-19?
Everyone can catch COVID-19, but it affects these people more…

Older people

People who are sick with other disease like diabetes, heart disease, etc

Children who are exposed to infected people and areas can contract the virus and have severe symptoms.

It is important to protect all children from contracting COVID-19 including people with disability, pregnant women, refugees and migrants, marginalized and vulnerable groups like people who are internally displaced.

How can I protect myself from catching COVID-19?

There are few smart things you can do so that you don’t catch COVID-19…

Always wash your hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds.

No shaking of hands.

Cover your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.

Dispose the used tissue immediately into a closed bin.

Sanitize your hands using an ‘alcohol-based sanitizer’ always.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Ónyé embali nwere ike ibute orịa njekorona, mana ọ ka emeụta ndị a…

Ndzi okenye

Ndzi nwere orịa ndị ozo dik hisi mariri, orịa obi dgz.

Umụaka ndị ha na ndị bu ya na ebe bu ya nwere mmekọrịta, nwere ike orịa njekorona (ỌNK-19), bijuee ụnwe oké mbgààmà.

Ọ dị mkpa ichekwa umụaka niile site n’ihe orịa njekorona (ỌNK-19) tidyere ndị nwere nkwaru, ndị dị ime, ndị gbara oso ndụ, ndị mbimbi, ndị a na-akpapụtụ akpapụ, na ndị na-enweghi nchekwa dị ka ndị a chụpụtụ n’ebe ha.

Kedu ka m ge-esi echekwa onwe m ka m hapụ ibute orịa njekorona (ỌNK-19)?

E nwere ihe ole na ole I nwere ike iji akọ mee ka I hapụ ibute orịa njekorona (ỌNK-19)…

Were ncha kwụọ aka gi na mmiri na-agba agba opkatampe ntabi anya iri abụọ.

Ekwekwala n’aka.

Were njikọta mkpemkpeaka gi maọbụ tishuu kpuchie imi na onụ gi mgbe I na-ákwa ụkwara maọbụ ama uzere.

Tụfuo tishuu ahụ ozugbo ozugbo n’ihe nkwafo doti nwere okwuchi.

Were sanjataza nwere akọhọlụ na-echicha aka gi mgbe embali.

Gbanahụ imetu aka n’anụ, imi na onụ gi.
If you traveled from a place that is affected by COVID-19 or you come in contact with someone who is infected with COVID-19, you need to take responsibility by isolating yourself so that you don’t infect others.

During self-isolation:
Stay in an isolated room with windows for 14 days.

If you experience any symptoms like cough, fever or difficulty in breathing, a call should be made to the health authorities to take you for treatment.

When you are in isolation, don’t be worried or afraid. Try to keep yourself busy by e.g reading, writing stories, singing, exercising and so many other fun things.

Cleaning touched surfaces and objects.
Staying at home when you are sick.

Avoid crowded areas.

Keep a safe distance of about one meter away from people including a sick person.

So if you have a fever, cough or difficulty in breathing, tell your parents or guardian early so that they can seek medical guidance for you.

How to wash your hands properly:
(1) Wet your hands with running water.
(2) Apply enough soap to cover your wet hands.
(3) Scrub all surfaces of your hands thoroughly — including the back of your hands, your wrists, between fingers and under finger nails — for at least twenty (20) seconds.
(4) Pay particular attention to your thumbs.

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Oburuna I si ebe oria njekorona (ONK-19) meturula, maobu na gi na onye bu oria a meturu ahu, I kwesiri ihu ya di ka ihe ga-emere site n’i kpapu onwe gi ka I hapu ibunye ya ndi ozoro.

N‘oge mkpapu onwe:
I ga-anọ n’ulo mkpapu nwere mpio (windo) ruo abali iri na anọ.

Oburuna I nwee mgbamà dí ka ùkwara, ahụ ọku maobu I nwee nǹhamaahụ n’iku ume, I ga-akpo ndị ọrụ ahụike ka ha kpọọ gị maka ogwugwọ.

Mgbeta I nọ na mkpapu onwe, atụkwala egwu maobu nwee ahụ mgbakasa. Hụ na o nwere ihe I na-emere dị ka ịgu akwụkwọ, ide edemede, ịgu egwu, imeghari ahụ maka mgbatiọ ọkpụka na akawara, na otutu ihe ndị ozoro na-enye obi uto.

Ihichasị elu ihe na ebe e meturu aka.
Ịnọ n’ulo mgb ebe na-adighị gị.

Sọọ ebe igwe mmadụ nọ.

Hụ na I nọ otu ntu mita site n’ebe onye ozoro nọ tinyekwara onye ahụ na-adighị.

Oburuna I nwee ahụkọ, ụkwara maobu nǹhamaahụ n’iku ume, gwa nne na nna gi maobu ndị na-eleko na ọsịjọ ka ha nwee ịke ibido n‘oge chọwa ogwugwọ gị.

Otu e si akwọ aka nke ọma:
(1) Mee mmiri n’aka gi na mmiri na-agba agba.
(2) Tee nchi ọma n’ebi niile mmiri meturu gi n’aka.
(3) Kwochasị elu gi n’ọma niile ọma, tinyere azu aka gi, njiko mkpuruka gi na ime mvọ gi - ihe di ka ntabi anya iri abụọ. ??
(4) Lebara mkpuruka ukwu gi anya nke ọma.
(5) Press finger tips into the palm of each hands.

(6) Rinse thoroughly with running water.

(7) Dry hands with a clean cloth or air them to dry.

An easy way to time it is by singing the full happy birthday song twice or the ABCDEFG… song.

When should I wash my hands?

In general and in the context of COVID-19 prevention, you should always wash your hands at the following times:

After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

After visiting a public area including public transportation, market and place of worship.

After touching surfaces outside of your home including money.

Before and after eating.

Before, during and after taking care of a sick person.

After using the toilet.

After handling garbage.

After touching animals and pets.

After changing babies’ diapers or helping children use the toilet.
When your hands are visibly dirty.

Don’t believe what is not true about COVID-19.

Don’t use chloroquine or buy other drugs to treat COVID-19. Allow medical experts to tell you what to take.

People should not take alcohol against COVID-19.

COVID-19 cannot be transmitted through mosquito bites.

Taking a hot bath does not prevent COVID-19.

Don’t stigmatize people who are infected.

When you are sick, you can pray. But you must also call the health authorities to request for a test so that you can be treated medically and receive good care from doctors and nurses.

COVID-19 does not only affect rich people.
### VII. ENGLISH/IGBO COVID-19 TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS

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103. Symptoms
104. Take responsibility

évé ńdédó ńdí ọrịa hà dí jísì ọkè ńkè  Explicative modulation
Kómítì ọrịa ńjékórònà  Equivalence
Ùjọ ńkàpà́pù (mákà ńdị bú ọrịa ńjúfè)  Explicative modulation
Mkpápù  Equivalence
Bêlàtà ọkè ńnòọkètè ọnụ  Equivalence
Enweghì ọkè ńgághì  Equivalence
Ánụghì ńśì  Equivalence
Ánụghì ńtò  Equivalence
Ngù  Equivalence
Ínýé ńkwádá ihe ńnyémáka  Explicative modulation
Úsòrò ńdùzí ńkàhá  Equivalence
Ídị ńtú ńhúńké  Ichidé (VP)
Nlézì ńn'Ọ'kúkwúkú ńkà  Equivalence
Cèkwáà ńké ńkù ńpúbù ńbú ńgághì  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Ngbà ńghị ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Cùgài ńghị ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Ngbà ńghị ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Gúzù ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Ngbà ńghị ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Gùzù ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Ngbà ńghị ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
Gùzù ńn'pú bù ńụmá àh  Ichidé (Adv.p)
VIII. Methods of term creation

It was only after due research for existing and documented Igbo equivalent terms had been exhausted that we resorted to term creation. Terms are not created haphazardly. For a term to be created, some methods must be employed. In the creation of terms, attempts have been made to ensure that the created terms are both transparent and specific, since they are cognitive tools for understanding phenomena. One of the methods of term creation used was Dubuc’s and it is classified into direct and indirect methods. In the present glossary, only the direct method has been used. The predominant aspect of the direct method used is composition, which involves joining two or more full meaning words. In addition to the above composition method, care has been taken to analyze component terms into their nuclear elements before the terminal composition. Other techniques used include: Naturalization, equivalence, explicative modulation, idiomatic rendering.

There are still other methods that are not used here but which are worthy of mention. They include:

A. Semantic extension: This means extending the meaning of a word. It can be done in three ways:

1) logical relationship  
   - clay pot : ìtè àjà  
   - a drink : mmáyá  
   - latest fashion : ébé ánò  
   - in my view : n’ úchè m  
   - bomb : ógbúnígwè  

2) analogy e.g.  
   - Volkswagen : ókpúrúkpú mbè  
   - Network : álúghàlàłù
3) assimilation e.g.
   motor : mótò
   diapers : pampasi

B. Adaptation: Here, there is a radical change in the sound or the pronunciation of the term in the target language to suit the orthography of the language e.g.

   copying: nkópì
   pound: póóm

C. Back formation: This is chopping off certain segments of a word e.g.

   laboratory : láábụ

D. Acronyms: This is using the first letter of component words to form a term e.g.

   óríà njé kóróna – ÔNK
   ima múmadụ ôfúma – ìmọ

E. Hybridization: This is the inter-marriage of two languages e.g. itè pot

IX. Explanation of the techniques of term creation used

A. Naturalization: This is to introduce a word from the source language into the target language using the orthography of the target language.

   1. Sanitizer        Sànjáàžà        Naturalization
   2. Refugees        Ìgbàà ọ́gbàó (NP)/Ìgbà́refújúú        Composition/ Naturalization
   3. Tissue           Tìshùù        Naturalization
   4. Nigeria          Nàjìrírí        Naturalization

B. Composition/compounding: is a process of joining two or more meaningful independent words to form a single term. It does not involve words from a particular part of speech, words from different parts of speech can also be stringed together. Examples include:

   1. Asymptomatic     Ènwéghí (V) njirimárá (N)        Composition
   2. Community spread  Mbugé (N) n’ogbè (VP)        Composition

C. Equivalence: These are terms that have their equivalents in the target language. Examples:

   1. Border protection  Ñchékwá ókè        Equivalence
   2. Bullying         Îkù ihe        Equivalence
D. Explicative modulation/expansion of meaning: This technique is applicable where there is lack of equivalent in the target language. Using explicative modulation – explaining the meaning in the target language solves the problem. Examples:

1. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer  Sànịtaizá nwere akọbọhụ  Explicative modulation
2. Ambulance  Ùgbọála mibú ozu/ndị mɛrụrụ ahụ  Explicative modulation

E. Idiomatic rendering: According to Ohaike (2010), idioms are a succession of words whose meanings are not obvious through the knowledge of the individual meanings of the constituent words but must be learnt as a whole. It is an expression that is peculiar to a society. It is a form of word coining which leads to the introduction of new words or extension of meaning of existing words. Example:

1. Meticulous in hand washing  Nhézi anya n’okwụkwọ aká  Idiomatic rendering
2. Precaution  Idi akó  Idiomatic rendering

X. Recommendations

From the foregoing, the following measures are recommended:

A. All text or literature on COVID-19 in foreign languages should be translated into our indigenous languages.
B. There is the urgent need to create COVID-19 and related terms in our indigenous language.
C. Health care providers should be trained in the use of our indigenous languages in relating to their patients and the public at large.
D. Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) should mobilize and sponsor translators and language experts to translate into our indigenous languages any document on COVID-10 in any foreign language.
E. Enough time should be allotted to the use of our indigenous languages in the electronic media in disseminating information to the citizenry especially for those residing in the rural areas.
F. Government and Non-governmental organization (NGO) should sponsor the publication and distribution of translated materials.
G. Our indigenous system of information dissemination (ekwe, ikoro, town-criers etc) should be used in disseminating information on COVID-19 to the rural dwellers.
H. Government should mandate NINLAN to go into aggressive assembling and creation of terms in our indigenous languages.
I. Teachers should be trained and retrained in the use of the indigenous language to meet up with the challenges of teaching health issues in schools.
J. Government should create a parastatal or an agency that would be in charge of terminological development in local languages, translation and documentation of every communication between her and the people.
K. There is the urgent need for our Government to build and furnish our hospitals to world class standard and translators/interpreters employed alongside the health workers.

XI. Conclusion

The world is being ravaged by the deadly COVID-19. One of the ways to prevent the spread of the deadly disease is information dissemination and this could be achieved through translation. We have contributed our quota in the prevention of COVID-19 by making sure the rural dwellers are abreast with the symptoms of COVID-19 and precautionary measures that should be taken to prevent it by translating text COVID-19 and assembling and creating where necessary some terms related to COVID-19. We have also made some recommendations that if considered, standardized, approved and implemented will go a long way in preventing or curtailing the spread of COVID-19. This will be very helpful especially to African countries like Nigeria where the health systems can in no way cope should the pandemic descend heavily on us like it has done in the developed countries of America and Europe.

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