THE PROBLEMS OF ORTHOGRAPHY ON HAUSA ADVERTISMENT BILLBOARDS.

BY

MUHAMMAD TAHIR RABIU

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURE

FACULTY OF ARTS

AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

2011

ABSTRACT

Translation and orthography arc elements that cannot be separated. This is true of the fact that a text without an authentic orthography cannot be translated correctly by the translator. Therefore translation is like a dialectic process, and orthography is only possible when the respective situation is taken into account in the translation. Orthography is becoming a major problem in most areas, especially the entertainment industry, more specifically on billboard advertisements. Most of the Hausa advertisements on news papers and especially billboards do not show the proper Hausa orthography, for example some of them use full stop in between the words in a sentence, while some of them merge two different words together. Therefore, this paper intends to bring out common mistakes, on translation and orthography particularly as it relates bill board advertisement, and to present standard Hausa advertisement texts and Orthography Hausa visa-vi bill board advertisement.

INTRODUCTION

Translation became the most effective means of communication, between people that do not understand each others. Because of the need to pass. Concrete message under different situations . The Translator should always start with the clearest language. The general elementary and universal consideration for translation is the language and Orthography. Translation has its advantages in the life of a people because it helps in promoting socio-economic and other spheres of human endeavour.

To have an in depth understanding of the problem of a particular aspect you have to study its genesis. Translation and orthography are elements of applied linguistics that have been used from time immemorial. This paper intends to study common mistakes in the art of translation and orthography, Particularly in the media and billboards advertisements. These mistakes make important messages by companies, Government and individuals vague, hence further widening communication gap. There is not doubt that communication through proper translation and orthography are the drops of oil that lubricate the machinery of effective communication via delivery of desired messages.

Table 1.1 **Hausa billboard advertisement offered by some companies/ organizations.**

ADVERTISMENT	**COMPANIES/ORGANIZATIONS**
Yana korar ciwon nantake	Cafenol
Abun sha mai kuzari, yakuma saka cikin shiri ko yaushe	Power Horse.
Jama'a ku bada gudunmuwarku wajen bawa yaranku ilimi----------	Children Support- UNICEF.
Kun seyi na ku?	Afribank shares.
Mutunchi zaɓi Arch Namadi Sambo.	PDP Board, Kaduna
Cikakken maganin gubar-ciki	Gestid.
Tsayar da won ciwon kai	Medik-55
Yi. Wayar.	Celtel.

It is observed that all Hausa adverts examples in table 1.1, are with some orthographical errors. However, the correct forms of all the adverts will be analysed in this paper.

DATA ANALYSIS

Word separation errors are apparent in adverts (1), (2) and (3). This is evident in place where words are merged instead of being separated. Examples:

(1) Nantake, instead of Nan take.

2-----yakuma saka, instead of ya kuma sa ka-------. The aforementioned adverts also have omission errors which make the first phrases almost meaningless. Examples;

Abun sha mai * kuzari, instead of Abin sha mai sa kuzari----------

---

(3) Jama'a ku bada gudunmuwar ku wajen bawa yaranku ilimi--------, instead of Jama'a ku ba da gudummuwar ku wajen ba wa yaran ku ilimi-

----------.

Advertisement (4) have a pronunciation effect in such a way that the Hausa word "sayi", which mean "to buy" is written wrongly as "seyi". This does not make any meaning to a typical Hausa native speaker because of the fact that there is no any word as "seyi" in Hausa language.

Similarly, spelling, punctuation and pronounciation errors exist in advertisement (5) where the " Mutun**chi**", which is wrongly written, from the Hausa word 'Mutun**ci**'. There is no '**ch**' consonant in Hausa

language, but '**c**' alphabet which covers up for all the '**ch**' words.The omission of punctuation mark made the whole sentence ambiguous. In this advertisement, a none native speaker will be made to understand that it is '**Mutunchi**' {mutunci} that has been adviced to vote for Arch. Namadi Sambo, which is contrary to the message being communicated. But with a punctuation mark, be it a comma (,) or a colon (:), the message can be understood, especially with the correct Hausa spelling.

Advertisement (7) has a structural problem. Standard Hausa, which is supposedly applied to virtually all the advertisement, does not allow a full stop in between words in sentences. Full stop is made to mark the end of a complete sentence. If anything needs to break a sentence, then it should be a comma (,) or a colon (:) which is used to further explain a word or drop a phrase to complete a sentence. This is sometimes followed by an exclamation mark (!). In this advert, the full stop renders the sentence meaningless and the message, blank. Example:

Yi.wayar, should be written and read as Yi wayar. Yi should be separate from wayar but not written together as a phrase.

Two errors are eminent in advertisement (8) they include:

a. Wrong use of a word,

b. Typographical or Orthographical error.

In this advertisement, either the word **"won"** is used wrongly or there is a typographical error. Because **"won"** seems to be an English word, which happens to be past tense of **'win'**, and it does not fit into Hausa language. But if **"won"** happens to be a typographical error, then it could be believed to be the Hausa word for **'yawan'** and it does not use an **" o "** **{yawon}** but rather an **'a' {yawan}.**

It should also be noted that in a standard Hausa, the word **"tsayar"** does not properly fit into this sentence, but rather **"warkar"** . because **"tsayar"** means **"to stop"** while **"warkar"** means **"to cure".** So, the proper Hausa sentence should be **"warkar da yawan ciwon kai "** and not **"tsayar da won ciwon kai"** as written on the billboard. Therefore, the wrong use of orthography in this advert distract instead of attract the customers.

CONCLUSION:

There are a lot of billboard adverts with many wrong Hausa translation and orthography errors meant for advertisements all over the places .It would be better for the Companies or Organizations concerned to assign professionals that will help in passing their messages properly, irrespective of the cost. Also there are quite a number of ways that can be used to attract the attention of customers, and the best way is to use the

right Hausa words, sentences or phrases in the adverts. Translators should be involved in drafting such advertisements and to train others in the art of translation so as to arrest this contagious problem that is visible all over the nation.

RECOMMENDATION:

In this paper, I would like to recommend the training of Hausa orthography right from the primary schools, so that intensive Hausa studies will help to check unnecessary errors that bring about the distortion of the grammar and the conveyed message . Secondly a Hausa translation and editing committee or association should be formed in order to have unanimous and accepted vocabularies and rules in Hausa translation which could guide the translation process.

The Hausa Language teachers should be vigilances in monitoring their students orthography.

REFFERANCE:

Abraham, R.C. (1958). ***Dictionary of the Hausa language***. London: Hodder and Stoughton ltd.

Garba,A. W (2005). ***Daidaitacciyar Hausa da ka'idojin rubutunta*** . Kaduna Olatunder Rashid. Publishing Works.

Aminu, M.L. (2007). "Gudunmawar Mammam Shata Katsina wajen bunkasa falsafar bahaushe". A Paper Falsafar Bahaushe".Paper Presentation at the National Conference on Hausa Studies. Sokoto Usmanu Danfodiyo University.

Bada, et'al (2006). The role of Hausa proverbs in accident control in Northern Nigeria Paper Presented at the National Conference on Hausa Studies. Sokoto Usmanu Danfodiyo University.

Gidley,C.G.B. (1974). "Karin magana and azanci as features of Hausa saying" African Language Studies" P-Ninety six

Kirk-Greene, A.H.M (1966). ***Hausa ba dabo ba ne*** Ibadan. Oxford University Press.

Mora, A. (1989) . ***The Abubakar Imam memoirs***. Zaria N.N.P.C.

Philip, J.J. (2001). ***Hausa*** Amsterdam / Philadelphia London Oriental and African Language Library John Benjamin's Publishing Company.

Piotrawska, Maria. (1997) Learning translation-learning the impossible? A Course of translation from English into Polish . Krakow: Wydawcow Prac Naukowych Universitas.

Yahaya , I.Y. (1988). ***Hausa a rubuce tarihin rubuce- rubuce cikin Hausa.*** Zaria. Gaskiya cooperation Limited

Yakasai, H.M. (1994). Figurative language in English-Hausa Translation: A communicative approach. An M.A. Dissertation, Kano Bayero University