

**Aspects of Mistranslation from English into
Ibibio: The Case of Aids and the Ibibio
Language Equivalent**

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Abstract

This paper examines the semantics of AIDS in Ibibio, one of Africa's languages spoken in the Southern part of Nigeria. It asserts that "Udoño itiaita", literally "Eight diseases", which the Ibibio-speaking people adopted as AIDS equivalent in the language, is a mistranslation and semantically inaccurate. The findings show a phonological mix-up over AIDS and the number "eight" due to the accidental resemblance between them. The paper posits that when Ibibio native-speakers first heard about AIDS, they assumed it had to do with the number "eight". This was the beginning of the problem, as AIDS and "eight" sound alike phonologically. An attempt is made to compare the Ibibio equivalent of AIDS with those of French, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The result is that of Ibibio falling short semantically and failing the back-translation test. The paper avers that it is worrisome that "Udoño itiaita" is still retained as AIDS equivalent in Ibibio decades after it was wrongly adopted, making it to look as if the word was untranslatable in that language. The paper argues that AIDS is translatable in Ibibio. It proposes "Idiok udoño anana nsuuk," i.e., a pandemic that defies a cure and "Udoño éd", i.e., AIDS disease, as alternatives. It concludes that "Udoño itiaita" is misleading because it was based on a wrong assumption and has failed to portray AIDS as a killer disease to the target audience.

Introduction

Language is the indisputable tool for communication among humans without which there would be no meaningful interaction of any kind. The use of language for the purpose of documentation and communication knows no bounds and covers all areas of human activities. For example, we use language to teach a subject e.g. a science subject (Maduka-Durunze, 1997:12); to promote culture (Anyaehe, 1997:41); to search for equivalents between languages (Okeke, 1997:80); to relate specific registers that can be suitable for a classroom situation, and other areas such as law, worship, medicine, etc. (Eka, 2000: 41,42). Similarly, Maduka and Eyoh (2000: 1) view language as a medium of communicating poetry, a form of word game which abounds in the various languages, while Udoh (2002: 141) considers language as a tool that can be used to promote national development.

The communicative nature of language, which can be oral or written (Udoakah, 1993: 33), is evident in all the languages of the world whether they are spoken by a majority of the people or by a minority. Contributing further to the attribute of language, Eka and Udofot (2001: 3) argue:

Language is the most brilliant of human inventions. It is also about the most useful. By means of language people who live together are able to interact and express their thoughts and feelings. Language is first perceived as a string of noises organised into a meaningful pattern for the purpose of communication ... It can as well be seen as graphic symbols also organized into meaningful patterns, the organized patterns being meaningful particularly to the people of the speech community where the language is used.

As a vehicle of communication, the forms of each language, namely, the actual words, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs, etc. (Larson, 1998:3), are always pregnant with meanings both within the particular language itself (intralingual) and between it and other languages (interlingual). As a tool of human communication (Ashong,

1999: 3, 4) language is said to be dynamic in nature as well as a system of signs that is based on specific rules such as the lexis and the syntax peculiar to the language being considered. In that capacity the words of a language do not have inherent meanings. On the contrary, we assign meanings to words, meanings which we derive from our experience (Adedeji, 2005: 15, 17). This is the context within which this paper is discussed, i.e., the meaning assigned to AIDS, which is often read on the bill board, heard on the radio and television jingles, and in discussions among individuals in Ibibio. When AIDS was first reported in English, the Ibibio adopted “Udoño itiaita” meaning “eight diseases” as the equivalent of the disease in that language.¹ Meanwhile, what was begun informally has remained until now, and “Udoño itiaita” or “eight diseases” continues to be used as if it was an accurate meaning of the killer disease in Ibibio, yet it was not. But what is Ibibio and who are the Ibibio?

Ibibio – A language* and a people

By way of classification Ibibio refers to the language of a people of the Southern part of Nigeria who are also known as Ibibio. In other words, Ibibio stands for a people as well as their language at the same time. Deliberating on the classification, Okon and Ekpenyong (2002:13) further indicate:

Ibibio is one of the languages of Nigeria spoken by a people who constitute the fourth largest ethnic group of the country and are also known as Ibibio. Ibibio is therefore ethnoglossonym, the name by which both the people and their language are known.

Greenberg (1963), cited in Essien (1990: ix), makes further clarification on Ibibio as a language:

Genetically, the Ibibio language belongs to the Benue-Congo sub-family which in turn belongs to the Niger-Congo family, one of the largest families of languages in Africa.

Still under this genetic classification, Ibibio belongs to the Lower Cross group, a group of closely related languages to which Efik and Annang, with which Ibibio forms a cluster of dialects, also belong ...

Essen (1982) also gives insight into the identity of the Ibibio in terms of their language, traditional religion, world view, society, family, and economic life, etc. In this paper however, prominence is on Ibibio as a language vis-à-vis AIDS, with reference to the Ibibio as those that make use of the language to communicate with meaning in view.

Methodology

The methodology adopted is translational as it focuses on the translation of AIDS into Ibibio and examines the strategies involved. Although the source language text (SLT) consists of just one term, it constitutes a text all the same and calls for an operational methodology which we describe as translational in scope due to the contact between two languages (Fagborun, 1993:65). In the words of Newmark (1981: ix) concerning translation, "Those who can, write; those who cannot, translate; those who cannot translate, write about translation." Here we have not written to translate but have translated a word from a source language (SL) into a target language (TL).

This we would achieve on the basis of a loan translation or borrowing, a strategy proposed by Vinay et al. (1958: 47), the semantic approach proposed by Taber et al. (1971: 55), and the communicative translation proposed by Newmark (1981: 38). Clearly then, the translator is a strategist who applies different strategies while translating (Munday, 2001: 20), negotiating the meaning of texts in different ways (Candkin, 1991: xiii). To arrive at the desired solution to the problem spelt out in the paper, we have taken a look at a number of equivalents for AIDS in use in some Nigerian languages through interviews (Cf. NOTES) for comparison, analysis and conclusion, French inclusive.

Semantics – Making sense out of words

Semantics, the term for meaning, and the process of making sense out of words; indeed out of a given text, must be relevant here because according to Catford (1978: 35), meaning is a property of language. Also contributing to the important question of semantics or meaning, Ndimele (1999: 1) raises the question: “What is semantics?” He goes on to provide the answer:

Semantics is an area of linguistics, which studies the meaning of words and sentences in language. Although the term ‘Semantics’ came into popular use about the first half of the 20th Century, it does not suggest that the study of meaning is as recent as that. Since the time of Plato and Aristotle, scholars have been interested in investigating the nature of meaning. Scholars from philosophy, logic, psychology, anthropology, and recently linguistics have paid great attention to the study of meaning.

Meaning is imperative in all aspects of communication where language is the vehicle for interaction. Many a times, however, getting the required meaning from lexical items becomes difficult due to certain factors which can also be resolved only semantically, i.e., by exploring every possible means of arriving at the desired meaning. AIDS, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrom, (Ebisiike, 2004: 34), fits into this description given its present equivalent in Ibibio which this paper finds to be unacceptable on grounds of semantic shortcomings.

The shortcomings are glaring given Nida and Taber’s (1971: 206) semantic approach to translation, which places a contrast between the denotative and connotative meaning of the word. The approach also prescribes analysis, aimed at discovering the kernels underlying the source text and the clearest understanding of the meaning in preparation for the transfer, i.e., translation. Going by this, there is time to assign a concrete meaning to a word, and there is time to assign it a connotative meaning. This is why the translation of AIDS from English into Ibibio as “udoño itiaita” (eight diseases), and many a times simply as “itiaita”, which is the Ibibio word for the number “eight” (Kaufman, 1985: 208),

is incorrect. This is because according to Nida and Taber it has failed to relate AIDS to what it actually symbolizes in the nonlinguistic world. As we go in-depth in discussion, we consider it necessary to provide the equivalents for AIDS in some other languages before considering that of Ibibio. The aim is to help the reader to have a better understanding of the argument.

Aids equivalent in other languages

Ever since AIDS was traced as a disease in 1982 (Parry et al., 2004: 200), and the word came into the vocabulary of the English language, other languages around the world have assigned equivalents or meanings to it in different ways. A look at some of these languages can explain the way the word is perceived by speakers of those languages. For example, in French the word for AIDS is (le) “sida”, an acronym or abbreviation of “syndrome d’ immunodéficience acquise”.² In Yoruba, the word is “Aarun ko gboogun”.³ In Igbo, the word is “Oria obiri najocha”.⁴ In Hausa, the word is “Chuta mai karya garkuwanjiki”.⁵ In Ibibio, it is “Udoño itiaita”.⁶ These examples are given to readers to be guided by with regard to the equivalents for AIDS in these languages, including Ibibio, and to form their opinion on that of AIDS in Ibibio.⁷ As the reader will see, there is a very wide semantic gap between the equivalents for AIDS in French, Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa, which apparently means the same thing, and that of Ibibio, which is saying quite a different thing from the translation point of view.

Aids equivalent in Ibibio

As mentioned earlier, and just as it is done in the other languages, such as those discussed above, “udoño itiaita” are the two words used by the Ibibio speakers as the equivalent for AIDS in their language. But this came as a mistranslation even though the people have continued to retain it until now as if it was an accurate translation of the deadly disease (Sanu et al., 2004: 11). There is, therefore, an inaccuracy in the meaning of AIDS in Ibibio. As mentioned above, “udoño itiaita”, which has been used over the years to mean AIDS, literally means “Eight diseases,” and this has nothing to do with the HIV epidemic (Stiles, 1998: 15,58).

The consequences are that until this time many Ibibio-speaking persons have continued to have a wrong notion about AIDS in terms of number rather than that of a killer disease, and this has not preserved the message of the SL text. The problem then is simply that of assigning a wrong meaning to the scourge and that makes it sound as if there is no way of generating a semantically acceptable equivalent for the pandemic in Ibibio. Now the wrong view of AIDS in terms of number came through an inappropriate arbitrary meaning given to the word by the people from its inception and this needs to be corrected through proper and acceptable means and translation plays an important role here.

The attempt of the discussion henceforth is to give an acceptable translation of AIDS in Ibibio that is based on meaning, not on the form of the word (Larson, 1998: 3). It is a fact that the present meaning of AIDS in Ibibio is not translationally arrived at but phonologically derived. Those who assigned it took the form of the English word “eight” which sounded like AIDS and transferred the form, hence the mistranslation. But according to Larson (3), “it is meaning which is being transferred and must be held constant.” Furthermore, the mistranslation had to stay unnoticed this long because translation was not yet popular in this part of the world, and people paid little or no attention to what was going on in that regard.

With the introduction of translation now at various levels, interest in issues such as the one under consideration here is beginning to take place and many are becoming better informed than before. Consequently, apart from this author⁸, many Ibibio scholars and intellectuals⁹ are objecting to “udono itiaita” as the meaning of AIDS. They are beginning to look for a meaning that portrays the realities of AIDS which translation has the answer.

AIDS and translation

The solution to the problem of viewing AIDS in Ibibio in terms of number instead of a disease resides in translation, “a discipline which has to concern itself with how meaning is generated within various groups

of people in various cultural settings (Baker, 1999: 4).” The translator, defined by House (1977: 1), cited in Bell (1991: 15), as a “bilingual mediating agent between monolingual communicating participants in two different language communities,” is in a better position to unravel the mystery of AIDS in terms of meaning in *Ibibio* just as it has been done in other languages. Since the disease became known, it has been translated into different languages of the world in ways that can be said to be acceptable within the context of AIDS, as exemplified in languages used in this paper, and the same could be done in *Ibibio*. In other words, AIDS could be translated into *Ibibio*, and the way to do that is to start with the analysis of the components of the word in English, the language in which it was first diagnosed and reported, and then to do the same in *Ibibio* as prescribed by Nida et al. As is well known, AIDS is an acronym of “Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome”. If these components could be translated into the *Ibibio* language, then one could have an accurate translation of AIDS, at least communicatively if not literally, as a killer disease in *Ibibio*, and not as a disease of number. Here is a breakdown of the meaning of AIDS in *Ibibio* based on each component of the acronym:

Acquired: “*Se ebo esin ke idem*” (What is received into the body)

Immune: “*Se udoño mikanna ituuk*” (What a disease cannot touch)

Deficiency: “*Idaha eme mkpo ananake nsuuk*” (The state where something lacks a cure)

Syndrome: “*Mme mkpo ke idem ediwut ke owo enyie idiok udoño*” (Things in the body showing that one has a killer disease)

As shown above, all the four English components of AIDS can be translated into *Ibibio* all of which point to the basic constituents of the SL, viz “*Se ebo esin ke idem*” (What is received into the body) for the word “Acquired”; “*Se udoño mikanna ituuk*” (What a disease cannot touch) for the word “Immune”; “*Idaha eme mkpo ananake nsuuk*” (The state where something lacks a cure) for the word “Deficiency”; and “*Mme*

mkpo ke idem ediwut ke owo enyie idiok udoño” (Things in the body showing that one has a killer disease) to refer to the word “Syndrome”. From the above analysis one can see the procedures and then the possibility of translating AIDS into Ibibio, either communicatively as “idiok udoño anana nsuuk” (a killer disease without a cure), or as a loan translation with a transliteration of the word AIDS, hence “Udoño éd” (AIDS disease). All the evidence in the analysis is pointing to AIDS as a disease without a cure and no number such as eight is involved. The translation achieved here is communicative and not literal as is the case between English and French. In other words, a loan translation, a communicative translation, or a semantic translation may be applicable to the same situation as seen in this paper while the target audience is free to use one or both end results interchangeably. For instance, the Ibibio-speaking audience can now use “idiok udono anana nsuuk”, which is a communicative translation, or “Udoño éd”, which is a loan translation with the same meaning in mind.

A communicative translation

Where a communicative translation attempts to produce on its reader an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original (Newmark, 1981: 39), a literal translation, as the name implies, is achieved word-for-word (Vinay et al., 1977: 48), especially where the SL and the target language (TL) are closely related, e.g. English and French. In other words, our Ibibio translation for AIDS from English is in the first instance communicative, not literal and is intended to emphasize the “force” of the SL message which “idiok udoño anana nsuuk” has achieved on the Ibibio speakers as does AIDS on hearers and speakers of English. Through it the actual sense of AIDS has been brought out thus remaining faithful to the original. That also agrees with Nida and Taber according to whom “translating must aim primarily at ‘reproducing the message; and that to do something else is essentially false to one’s task as a translator.” “Udoño itaita” on the other hand is neither communicative nor literal. It is misleading medically as it does not project the deadly nature of the disease. It is misleading semantically as it does not convey the sense of the SL message. It is misleading translationally as it is based on a wrong assumption that AIDS is the same as “eight” and not on linguistic fact in the SL.

Although some might contend that “*idiok udoño anana nsuuk*” can refer to any disease other than AIDS in Ibibio, and therefore should not be seen as its equivalent in the language, the argument is that when discussed within the context of AIDS, it is 100% applicable to it just as it can be applicable to any other disease within its own context. Similarly, others might contend that eventually there will be a cure for AIDS hence “*idiok udoño anana nsuuk*” is not applicable. Again the argument is that until that happens, AIDS must be seen presently in Ibibio in the same way that it has been seen in other languages – a devastating disease that has wasted millions of lives since its inception. Furthermore, there might be the contention that in spite of the mistranslation, the people are conscious of AIDS as a killer disease, therefore the wrong equivalent does not really matter. Here again, the paper argues that AIDS is translatable into Ibibio, and that “*Udoño itiaita*” (Eight diseases) is not the translation.¹⁰ Translation is about effective communication, accurate information, suitable equivalents and meaning, etc., and the Ibibio-speaking persons are entitled to the right equivalent(s) for AIDS in their language, which this paper has provided.

A loan translation or borrowing

Over the years, loan words have remained a veritable translation technique to translators. According to Vinay et al. (1977: 47), a loan translation reveals a gap, generally a metalinguistic gap, due to new techniques or concepts that are unknown to the speakers of the other language. When that occurs, the best option is that of borrowing from the SL, resulting in the retention of foreign or new words in the receptor language, e.g. “dollars” and “party”. Vinay et al. have referred to this as a direct translation, as opposed to an oblique or indirect translation. They also view it as one of the simplest ways of translating. The point being made here is that translation thrives through the process of borrowing from other languages, resulting in the creation of stylistic effects or local colour as well as the addition of new words to the vocabulary of the target text (TT). We have found this technique quite applicable to the translation of AIDS from English into Ibibio. Consequently, we are also proposing “*udoño éd*”, i.e. AIDS disease, as the next equivalent for AIDS in Ibibio through the loan translation. Like the first proposal,

this has also brought out the full meaning of AIDS in Ibibio without any difficulty. It also shows how misleading “udoño itiaita” is, and that it is nothing but a mistranslation due to apparent reasons.

Causes of the mistranslation

As everyone would agree, there is a serious flaw in the use of “udoño itiaita” to mean, or to be the equivalent for AIDS in Ibibio. The reasons for that, as have been emphasized, are linguistic in scope, then due to certain wrong assumptions. It is linguistic because of the phonological mix-up over AIDS and “Eight,” and due to an assumption because when some Ibibio native-speakers first heard about AIDS, they assumed it had to do with the number “Eight”. Shedding light on the development more than three decades ago, and based on a similar incident, Nida and Taber (1974: 118) comment as follows:

But even when there is due regard for the phonological structures ... one may have to make certain further adjustments if the forms of a name or borrowed word accidentally resembles another word in the receptor language. For example, a systematic transliteration of Messiah in one language of West Africa turned out to be identical with an indigenous expression meaning “death’s hand.” Quite obviously, it was necessary to make an adjustment in order to avoid a wrong association

This incident provides a clear picture of the AIDS situation in terms of its translation and/or equivalent in Ibibio. There was certainly an “accidental resemblance” between two English words AIDS and “Eight” to the Ibibio audience. But that notwithstanding, there is still an urgent need for an adjustment in order to avoid a continuous wrong association between a killer disease and a mistranslation, which could be attributed to certain wrong assumptions about translation.

Some false assumptions about translation

Further reasons for the semantic deficiency in “Udoño itaita” are the false assumptions about translation, which usually emanate from the wrong thinking that once individuals are able to communicate in two languages then they can translate in those languages. This must explain what took place among the people vis-à-vis AIDS decades ago. Garnham (1985: 96), cited in Ukut (1995:17), argues that this appears to arise from the fact that “people experience no conscious difficulty in working out the meaning of most of the utterances that they hear.” Also, according to Ukut (1995: 18,19) the false assumptions are predicated on the fact that since humans are endowed with the natural faculty and facility for acquiring and using language, little or no thought is taken about the complexity of the human language. Next is the false assumption that translation is simple enough for everybody without requisite training, and the false assumption about bilingualism and who a bilingual is. The assumption here is that with some smattering knowledge of English, as an example, some feel they know enough to translate it into the native language or vice versa. But that does not make one bilingual.

Bilingualism, Ukut maintains, requires more than just a few words of the target or source language in order to be able to translate or interpret accurately. Also, there is the assumption that where there is an acceptable bilingual in both English and Ibibio, for example, then such a person requires no training to become a translator or an interpreter where the two languages are involved. Furthermore, there is an assumption that is caused by a lack of awareness of the discipline of translation. In this category, people regard all amateur language learners as bilinguals and accept mistranslations as translations. They assume that any form of crossing a message between two languages is translation. Lastly, Ukut points out, there is an assumption that does not call for, nor encourage, accuracy in translation or interpretation. All these assumptions about translation aptly portray the way meaning was assigned to the English word AIDS in Ibibio by those who knew little or nothing about translation, and its resultant semantic gap between it and English, and then with other languages. It was based on the wrong assumption that it could be its equivalent, and not on accuracy. And that is why it has turned out to be a mistranslation in need of a solution.

The solution

The solution to the mistranslation of AIDS from English into Ibibio lies in considering it as a killer disease, which must be translated as such. When that is done, it can be seen that “udoño itiaita” means “Eight diseases,” while AIDS means “idiok udoño anana nsuuk”, i.e. a killer disease without a cure as earlier indicated. There is a difference between the two, and the way to determine it is by retranslating AIDS equivalents in the languages used here, namely French, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and Ibibio, into English where the word was derived. The aim is to compare and contrast the meanings or AIDS equivalents in these languages with that of Ibibio with a view to determining where the problem lies.

French: “Syndrome d’immunodéficience acquise”: A syndrom of immune deficiency acquired (word for word)

Yoruba: “Aarun ko gboogun”¹¹: A disease that defies treatment (communicative)

Igbo: “Oria obiri najocha”: A disease that ends in the grave (communicative)

Hausa: “Chuta mai karya garkuwanjiki”: A disease that breaks the shield of the body (communicative)

Ibibio: “Udoño itiaita”: Eight diseases (neither literal nor communicative)

By re-translating AIDS equivalents in the languages above, it is possible to see what it means in each of those languages. We notice a one-to-one equivalent between French and English due to their linguistic closeness. Although we do not find such closeness in AIDS equivalents between Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and English, there is a relationship between them within the context of AIDS as a killer disease in the meaning assigned to it in those languages. This kind of relationship within the context of AIDS as a killer disease is absent in Ibibio, and

stands as proof that it was a mistranslation. It should be rejected for being inaccurate as shown in the translation test above. The testing process, also known as back-translation, can be used by the translator or the general reader to determine the accuracy of a translation. This can be achieved by comparing the translation with the source text and through the back-translation into the source language (Larson, 1998: 529-535). This we have done and found that the necessary information that should serve as a guide to the deadly nature of the disease as contained in the other languages was lacking in Ibibio, which explains why it should not continue to be accepted as AIDS equivalent in that language.

The solution then to all this lies in the alternatives to “udoño itiaita”, which we have already provided. Furthermore, since the problem of the semantics of AIDS or equivalent in Ibibio is one of language, and since one of the techniques of transferring from one language to another, is borrowing, the Ibibio can retain AIDS in their language in a loan form, transliterated as “udoño éd”, i.e., AIDS disease, in addition to “idiok udoño anana nsuuk” as the second equivalent for AIDS in Ibibio. The Yoruba, apart from having “Aarun ko gboogun”, also have borrowed it as “Aarun edi”, i.e., AIDS disease, and the Ibibio can do the same.¹²

Conclusion and recommendations

The discussion ultimately shows language as a vehicle of communication among humans and the words of every language as containing meanings and argued that semantics, a word relevant to this paper, is synonymous with meaning and that as a level of linguistic analysis, it seeks to explore ways of making sense from texts of various ranks. The article dwelt specifically on the meaning or equivalent assigned to AIDS from English into Ibibio, and argued that it was erroneous and unacceptable from the translational point of view even though it has been in use as such for decades. It was also argued that the error was due to the accidental resemblance between AIDS and “Eight” phonologically, hence the wrong association of a killer disease with the number “itiaita”, the word for “eight” in Ibibio. We have seen examples of AIDS equivalents in other languages, discussing why they are suitable equivalents within the

context of AIDS in those languages and also why that of Ibibio cannot be accepted as the equivalent for AIDS: Its failure in the back-translation test; its being form-based rather than meaning-based translation; and its failure to portray AIDS as a killer disease. Furthermore, it was also asserted that AIDS was translatable into Ibibio and proposed “idiok udoño anana nsuuk” (a pandemic without a cure) as an alternative to “udoño itiaita”, (eight diseases) which has nothing to do with the realities of AIDS as a pandemic, and makes no sense from the medical, semantic and translational points of view. The discussion proposed “udoño éd” (AIDS disease), a loan translation, and the simplest to use. Although it looks simple and short, it has captured the complete semantics of AIDS in the SL, then in the target language.

The article describes the translator as one who approaches his work through different strategies, pointing out that many are beginning to run away from “udoño itiaita” in favour of a meaning that is applicable to AIDS in Ibibio. It concludes that the continued use of “udoño itiaita” on radio/television, in discussions and in any form in Ibibio, undermines the integrity of the language and is an affront to the intellect of its speakers. Although the mistranslation has been around for quite sometime, there is a need for an adjustment in favour of the alternatives given in the paper. Any of these two alternatives is the AIDS equivalent in Ibibio, NOT “udoño itiaita.”

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Notes

- 1 Information on AIDS can be heard in Ibibio on radio/television jingles in the form of warning that “udoño itiaita” is real, and other discussions.
- 2 Cf. Robert Collins Dictionnaire Francais-anglais anglais-francais, Daphne Day, Phyllis Gautier, Jean-Francois Allain et al (eds), Sixth Edition, Collins, 2002.
- 3 Dr. Jegee, S. A., Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan, provided the AIDS equivalent in Yoruba through the telephone via Dr. A. W. Oluwabamide, Department of Sociology, University of Uyo.
- 4 Professor P. E. C. Onwurah and Dr. Anyanwu, University of Uyo, jointly provided the AIDS equivalent in Igbo language.
- 5 Mr. Bala Sadauki, a Hausa resident in Uyo and Mr. Salaudeen Ibrahim Adedeji, University of Uyo, jointly provided the AIDS equivalent in Hausa. “Sida” and “K’anjamau” are other AIDS equivalents in the language.
- 6 Author is of the Ibibio extraction.
- 7 Author has M.Phil and PhD in Translation Studies.
- 8 (i) Mrs. Emma Ebong, lecturer, University of Uyo, Nigeria: “Udoño itiaita” is so called because AIDS is a synonym of “eight,” but it is not the equivalent of AIDS in Ibibio; (ii) Mr. Moses Ekpenyong, lecturer, University of Uyo, Nigeria: “Udoño Itiaita” is not the equivalent for AIDS in Ibibio. It was an easy term meant for those not familiar with the English term to assimilate the concept of AIDS in Ibibio. AIDS is a pandemic and “udoño itiaita” does not reflect that. There is need for an alternative meaning; (iii) Dr. Luke Eyoh (Associate Professor), University of Uyo, Nigeria: “Udoño Itiaita” is a play on the word AIDS which sounds like “eight” and is scientifically wrong. The problem resides in the acronym which gives a sound that mocks AIDS. To clear the confusion as well as arrive at the right meaning, the translation should start with each of the constituent words; (iv) Dr. Grace Nwagbara, lecturer, University of Uyo, Nigeria: “Udoño itiaita” exists as a result of the similarity in sound between AIDS and eight which did not result in an acceptable equivalent for AIDS in Ibibio. There is need for an alternative though it might be difficult to get used to it due to high level of illiteracy among many members of the public. In spite of that, there is need to replace “udoño itiaita” with a better alternative even though it will take a lot of effort to do so; (v) Dr. Effiong Eyofoki, lecturer, University of Uyo, Nigeria: attributes “udoño itiaita” to an acronym which in turn sounds like “eight” to the Ibibio. Not the equivalent for AIDS but a very wrong adaptation. It is wrong to view AIDS in terms of number. Highly misleading and does not have any signification at all. Not a translation but a misnomer. It was a great carelessness to refer to AIDS by

that name. Worse still, it does not capture the situation, hence it does not allow for deterrence as people rather make fun of the name; (vi) Dr. Joe Ushie, lecturer, University of Uyo, Nigeria: “Udoño itiaita” makes no sense in Ibibio as AIDS equivalent. It is too arbitrary; (vii) Mr. Friday Okon, lecturer, University of Uyo, Nigeria: What we have now is not the equivalent for AIDS in Ibibio. He suggests “udoño anana nsuuk” (a disease without a cure); (viii) Prof. Dorathy Motaze, University of Uyo, Nigeria: “Udoño itiaita” is quite a misnomer emanating from the similarity between the acronym, AIDS, and “eight” to the Ibibio when pronounced. Motaze welcomes an alternative that would capture the meaning of AIDS within its context as a pandemic in Ibibio. To do that would require the translation of each component of the acronym AIDS. She said she liked what the author was doing; (ix) Prof. Ime Ikkideh, University of Uyo, Nigeria: Initially not interested in an alternative to “Udoño itiaita,” and saw nothing wrong with it. However, he budged finally and said he would support anyone who was able to come out with something different from what was going on presently; (x) Mrs. Imaobong Udoh, a media worker: Although AIDS sounds like “eight,” hence “Udoño itiaita,” we should not continue to see it as an equivalent for the pandemic in Ibibio. We should not call it “Udoño itiaita” any longer. She said she was willing to support a campaign in the media to that effect; (xi) Dr. I. U. Enang (gynaecologist, Medical Centre) University of Uyo, Nigeria: “Udoño itiaita” does not portray the pathology in AIDS, and welcomes any change that would spell out the pathological associations with it; and (xii) Dr. Effiong Inyang (Public Health/General Practitioner, Medical Centre) University of Uyo, Nigeria: said a categorical no to “Udoño itiaita” as AIDS equivalent in Ibibio. He blames “Udoño itiaita” on the resemblance between AIDS and “eight” in English and suggests “usat akpa” (getting dry until death). He says AIDS is a disease that consumes the individual.

- 9 Author obtained information on AIDS in languages other than Ibibio from scholars learned in the languages concerned as seen in NOTES.
- 10 Paper attracted appropriate responses from participants at the CLAN (Conference of Linguistic Association of Nigeria) where it was first presented.
- 11 Another AIDS equivalent in Yoruba, according to Dr. S. A. Sanni, University of Uyo, is “Aarun edí”, i.e., AIDS disease. This is a loan translation with a transliteration just as we have done in Ibibio.
- 12 Borrowing is applicable to Ibibio in the context of AIDS and that we have provided.