Ebonyi Journal of Language and Literary Studies Volume 9 (4) October 2026
EJLLS www.ejlls.com ISSN: 3141-3935 (Online); 3141-3943 (Print) VOL 9

AN APPRAISAL OF GOOGLE TRANSLATE VS HUMAN TRANSLATION OF THE NIGERIAN CONSTITUTION INTO INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

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Abstract

The increasing use of artificial intelligence in language translation has created new opportunities for improving access to information across multilingual societies. In Nigeria, where English remains the principal language of constitutional and official legal documentation, the translation of the Constitution into indigenous languages could promote constitutional awareness, civic participation and access to legal information among citizens who are not sufficiently proficient in English. However, translating a constitution presents challenges beyond ordinary linguistic conversion because constitutional provisions contain technical terminology, legal relationships, institutional concepts and expressions whose meanings must be preserved with considerable precision. This article critically appraises the relative strengths and limitations of Google Translate and professional human translation in translating the Nigerian Constitution into indigenous languages, with particular attention to English–Igbo translation. Drawing on legal translation theory, equivalence theory and translation quality assessment, the article examines the implications of machine-generated translation for semantic accuracy, legal equivalence, terminology, grammatical acceptability, cultural appropriateness and readability. It argues that Google Translate offers speed, accessibility and considerable practical value as a preliminary translation resource, but its outputs should not be treated as authoritative translations of constitutional provisions without professional linguistic and legal validation. Professional human translation offers greater scope for contextual interpretation, terminological consistency and legal judgement, although its quality depends on the competence and specialization of the translator. The article proposes a Human–AI Collaborative Constitutional Translation and Validation Model through which machine translation can support, rather than replace, professional human translators and legal experts. It concludes that Nigeria should develop a coordinated framework for the translation, standardization, validation and institutional recognition of constitutional and other important legal materials in indigenous languages.

Keywords: Google Translate, human translation, machine translation, Nigerian Constitution, indigenous languages, Igbo, legal translation, artificial intelligence.

Introduction

Language is central to the operation of law, governance and democratic participation. Legal institutions formulate rights, obligations, procedures and sanctions through language, while citizens depend on their understanding of legal information to exercise their rights and fulfil their civic responsibilities. Where the language of legal documentation is inaccessible to a substantial proportion of the population, the effectiveness of legal communication may be weakened. This concern is particularly significant in multilingual societies such as Nigeria, where linguistic diversity coexists with the predominance of English in official documentation, legislation, public administration and formal legal proceedings.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended), is the country's supreme legal instrument. It establishes the structure of government, defines the powers of public institutions, provides for citizenship and fundamental rights, and sets out the principles governing the relationship between the state and its citizens. Its provisions affect virtually every aspect of national life. Nevertheless, the accessibility of the Constitution depends partly on citizens' ability to understand the language in which its provisions are expressed. Although English functions as Nigeria's principal official language, it is not the first or most accessible language for every Nigerian. Many citizens communicate more effectively in Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and other indigenous languages.

The linguistic accessibility of constitutional information is therefore an important issue in the country's democratic and developmental experience. Citizens who cannot adequately understand constitutional provisions may find it difficult to appreciate the scope of their rights, the responsibilities of public institutions, the limits of governmental authority and the procedures available for seeking redress. Translation into indigenous languages could help bridge this communication gap by making constitutional information available in languages that citizens understand and use in their everyday lives.

The Nigerian Constitution recognizes a limited place for indigenous languages in legislative communication. Section 55 provides that the business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English and, when adequate arrangements have been made, in Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. This provision is significant because it recognizes the relevance of Nigeria's major indigenous languages to legislative activities. However, it should not be interpreted as automatically granting official legal authority to every translation of the Constitution produced in these languages. The provision concerns the languages in which the business of the National Assembly may be conducted; it does not expressly establish a comprehensive multilingual publication and authentication regime for the Constitution.

Developments in artificial intelligence have introduced new possibilities for addressing the challenges associated with multilingual communication. Machine translation systems, particularly Google Translate, have made it possible for users to obtain translations of texts across numerous languages within seconds. Google announced the inclusion of Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba in Google Translate in 2013, expanding the platform's potential usefulness in Nigeria's multilingual environment (Google, 2013). The current availability of these languages on the platform further demonstrates the potential of machine translation as an accessible language resource.

The introduction of machine translation into legal communication, however, raises important questions. Ordinary texts may tolerate a degree of approximation without substantially affecting their communicative purpose. Constitutional texts cannot be treated in the same way. A slight alteration in the meaning of a legal expression may affect the interpretation of a right, the scope of an institution's authority or the relationship between constitutional provisions. Consequently, the ability of a translation system to produce grammatically plausible sentences does not necessarily demonstrate that it has preserved the legal meaning of the original text.

Professional human translators, particularly those with legal translation competence, are generally better positioned to interpret contextual meanings, recognize legal concepts and make informed decisions about terminological equivalence. Nevertheless, human translation is not automatically accurate. A translator without adequate knowledge of constitutional law, legal terminology or the target language may also produce an inaccurate or misleading translation. The relevant comparison is therefore not between an infallible human translator and an inherently defective machine. It is between the capabilities and limitations of automated translation and those of competent professional human translation in a specialized legal context.

This article examines that relationship with particular attention to the translation of the Nigerian Constitution into indigenous languages, using Igbo as its principal illustrative case. It explores the extent to which Google Translate can support constitutional translation, the limitations that arise when automated systems process legal language, and the advantages and limitations of professional human translation. It also proposes a collaborative framework in which artificial intelligence provides preliminary translation support while professional translators and legal experts retain responsibility for interpretation, validation and institutional approval.

Professional Human Translation

Professional human translation involves the transfer of meaning from a source language into a target language by a translator who possesses the relevant linguistic and contextual competence. Unlike automated systems, human translators can consciously interpret context, identify ambiguity, consider the purpose of a text and make reasoned decisions about expressions that do not have direct equivalents in the target language.

In legal translation, the translator must understand not only the vocabulary of the source and target languages but also the legal concepts represented by the expressions being translated. A legal translator therefore requires more than general bilingual competence. The translator should understand the relevant legal system, the function of the document and the consequences of terminological choices.

Baker (2018) explains that equivalence in translation operates at several levels, including word, grammatical, textual and pragmatic levels. These levels are important because the meaning of a legal expression cannot always be established by examining individual words in isolation. The relationship between a term and the sentence, paragraph, provision and wider legal instrument may determine its appropriate translation.

Human translation nevertheless has limitations. Translators may differ in their interpretations of difficult expressions, particularly where the target language lacks established equivalents for technical legal concepts. Dialectal differences, inconsistent terminology, limited reference materials and inadequate legal knowledge may also affect the quality of translated documents.

Accordingly, the appropriate standard for constitutional translation is not simply human involvement. It is competent professional human translation supported by legal knowledge, terminological research, independent review and institutional validation.

The Nature of Legal and Constitutional Translation

Legal translation is a specialized form of translation concerned with texts that express legal rights, obligations, powers, procedures and institutional relationships. It includes the translation of constitutions, statutes, regulations, contracts, judicial decisions and other legal documents.

The distinctive character of legal translation arises from the relationship between language and legal systems. Legal concepts are often embedded in particular institutional and historical contexts. An expression in one legal system may not have an exact equivalent in another because the institutions, procedures or legal traditions represented by the expression may differ.

Šarčević (1997) argues that legal translation requires attention to the legal effects and functions of the source text rather than merely its linguistic form. Cao (2007) similarly demonstrates that legal translation requires knowledge of legal terminology, legal systems and the relationship between legal language and meaning.

Constitutional translation is particularly demanding because constitutions establish fundamental rules governing the state. Their provisions may define the powers of the executive, legislature and judiciary, determine citizenship, protect fundamental rights and regulate the relationship between

government and citizens. An inaccurate translation may therefore affect the way citizens understand the constitutional order.

The translator must preserve the meaning of the source provision while expressing it in language that is understandable and acceptable to the target-language community. This requires a balance between terminological precision and communicative accessibility. Excessive literalism may produce unnatural or confusing expressions, while excessive paraphrasing may alter the legal meaning of the original provision.

Linguistic Challenges in English–Igbo Constitutional Translation

The translation of the Nigerian Constitution into Igbo illustrates some of the challenges involved in transferring legal meaning between languages with different grammatical, lexical and discourse structures.

First, the two languages do not necessarily organize information in identical ways. English constitutional provisions frequently use long sentences, embedded clauses, passive constructions, nominalizations and technical expressions. An Igbo translation must reproduce the relevant relationships without mechanically copying English sentence structures where they are unsuitable for Igbo.

Second, legal terminology may not always have an established, universally accepted Igbo equivalent. Expressions such as *jurisdiction*, *sovereignty*, *impeachment*, *judicial review*, *constitutional supremacy* and *due process* represent specialized concepts. Their translation requires an understanding of their legal functions. A translator who simply selects an ordinary dictionary equivalent may produce an expression that is understandable in everyday communication but inadequate in constitutional discourse.

Third, some constitutional expressions are context-dependent. Words such as *shall*, *may*, *subject to*, *notwithstanding* and *provided that* perform important legal functions. They may indicate obligation, permission, qualification, priority or exception. Translating them without attention to their function in a particular provision may distort the legal relationship expressed in the original.

Fourth, Igbo has dialectal and orthographic considerations that may influence the acceptance and interpretation of translated texts. A translation intended for national constitutional communication should adopt an appropriate standard form while remaining sensitive to the linguistic diversity of Igbo-speaking communities. This requires consultation with language specialists and speakers rather than the arbitrary selection of expressions by an automated system.

Finally, cultural and conceptual differences may complicate the translation of legal expressions. Some legal concepts are not directly represented in traditional linguistic categories. In such cases,

the translator may need to adopt an established borrowing, develop a carefully defined equivalent or use an explanatory construction. The chosen approach must be consistent and must not introduce meanings that are absent from the source text.

These challenges demonstrate that constitutional translation requires a systematic approach to meaning, terminology and linguistic acceptability. They also explain why the translation of individual words cannot be treated as sufficient evidence of the successful translation of an entire constitutional provision.

Translation Equivalence and Quality Assessment

Translation equivalence concerns the extent to which a target text communicates the relevant meaning and function of the source text. It does not necessarily require the reproduction of identical grammatical structures. Rather, it requires the translator to preserve the important semantic, textual and communicative relationships of the original.

Nida (1964) distinguishes between formal and dynamic approaches to equivalence. Although developed in a different translation context, the distinction remains useful for understanding the tension between preserving the form of a source text and communicating its meaning effectively in another language.

Baker (2018) further demonstrates that equivalence must be considered at different linguistic levels. In legal translation, the translator must consider lexical meaning, grammatical relationships, textual coherence and pragmatic function.

House (2015) provides a framework for assessing translation quality through the relationship between source and target texts, including their contextual and functional characteristics. This is relevant to constitutional translation because a target text should not only be linguistically acceptable; it should also perform a communicative function consistent with the source document.

For the purpose of this article, constitutional translation quality is considered through seven related dimensions:

1. **Semantic accuracy:** The extent to which the translation preserves the meaning of the original provision.
2. **Legal equivalence:** The extent to which the translation preserves the legal function, rights, duties, powers and limitations expressed in the source.
3. **Terminological consistency:** The consistent use of appropriate expressions for recurring legal concepts.

4. **Completeness:** The extent to which all relevant words, qualifications, conditions and clauses are represented.
5. **Grammatical acceptability:** The extent to which the translation conforms to the grammatical conventions of the target language.
6. **Cultural and contextual appropriateness:** The extent to which the translation communicates the intended concept without introducing misleading cultural associations.
7. **Readability:** The extent to which the intended audience can understand the translated provision without unnecessary linguistic difficulty.

These dimensions provide a more appropriate basis for assessing legal translation than grammatical fluency alone.

Critical Appraisal of Google Translate and Professional Human Translation

One of the major advantages of Google Translate is its speed. A user can translate a word, sentence or lengthy passage within a short period. This feature is particularly useful where the immediate purpose is to obtain a preliminary understanding of a document.

The platform's accessibility also makes it useful to students, researchers, public officers and members of the general public who may not have immediate access to professional translators. For a country with considerable linguistic diversity, such accessibility may contribute to the wider circulation of information.

Professional human translation generally requires more time. A competent translator must read the source text, understand its context, research difficult expressions, identify suitable equivalents and review the completed translation. In constitutional translation, this process may be more demanding because the translator must consider the legal consequences of terminological and grammatical choices.

Nevertheless, speed should not be the principal measure of success in legal translation. A rapidly generated translation that changes the meaning of a constitutional provision may be less useful than a slower translation that preserves its legal significance. Google Translate is therefore more appropriately viewed as a preliminary translation resource than as an independent authority for producing final constitutional texts.

Semantic Accuracy and Contextual Interpretation

Semantic accuracy concerns the preservation of the meaning of the source text. It is particularly important in constitutional translation because individual expressions may determine the scope of rights, powers, restrictions and obligations.

Google Translate can provide useful translations of ordinary expressions and familiar sentence structures. However, constitutional language frequently depends on contextual relationships that cannot be adequately understood through isolated word equivalents.

For example, expressions such as *subject to*, *notwithstanding*, *provided that* and *in accordance with* may perform different legal functions depending on their location in a provision. A machine translation that fails to recognize these relationships may produce an output that communicates an incomplete or misleading meaning.

Professional human translators can examine the wider provision and consider the legal context in which an expression occurs. They can also consult constitutional law materials and ask whether a proposed target-language expression preserves the intended relationship between the relevant institutions, rights or obligations.

Human translators, however, are not immune to semantic errors. An inadequately trained translator may misunderstand the source provision or select an unsuitable target-language expression. The advantage of professional human translation lies in the opportunity for informed contextual judgement, not in an assumption that every human translation is automatically correct.

Legal Terminology and Conceptual Equivalence

Legal terminology presents one of the most significant challenges in constitutional translation. Many constitutional expressions represent specialized concepts whose meanings have developed within particular legal and institutional traditions.

Terms such as *sovereignty*, *jurisdiction*, *judicial review*, *impeachment*, *constitutional supremacy* and *due process* cannot always be translated adequately by selecting their nearest ordinary-language equivalents. Their meanings must be established within the Nigerian constitutional and legal context.

Google Translate may generate a target-language expression that appears lexically appropriate but does not fully communicate the legal concept. This is a risk where the target language has no widely standardized terminology for a particular constitutional concept.

Professional human translators can investigate the relevant concept, examine its use in Nigerian legal materials and consult language specialists before choosing an equivalent. They may use an established borrowing, a descriptive construction or a carefully developed indigenous expression.

However, human translators may also disagree about the appropriate terminology. This is why constitutional translation should not depend on the personal preference of a single translator. A standardized legal glossary, developed and reviewed by linguists, translators and legal experts, is necessary to promote consistency.

Grammatical Structure and Legal Register

Constitutional texts frequently contain complex sentence structures, including subordinate clauses, qualifications, exceptions and embedded conditions. These structures establish relationships that are central to the legal meaning of a provision.

A machine translation system may produce a sentence that is generally understandable but grammatically awkward or structurally ambiguous. It may also reproduce aspects of the English sentence structure that do not fit naturally into the target language.

Professional human translators can reorganize sentence structures where necessary, provided that the legal relationships and conditions expressed in the original remain intact. They can also maintain an appropriate legal register, ensuring that the translated text is formal and precise without becoming unnecessarily difficult to understand.

The challenge is to avoid two extremes. A translation that follows English syntax too closely may be unnatural in Igbo, while a translation that freely paraphrases the original may change its legal meaning. The translator must therefore balance grammatical acceptability with legal fidelity.

Cultural and Linguistic Appropriateness

Translation takes place within social and cultural contexts. Languages do not merely provide different labels for identical concepts; they also reflect different histories, experiences and ways of organizing meaning.

In translating constitutional provisions into Igbo, the translator must consider whether a selected expression is understandable to the intended audience and whether it communicates the relevant legal concept without introducing misleading associations.

Google Translate can assist with ordinary linguistic conversion, but it does not necessarily provide the cultural and institutional judgement required to determine whether a proposed legal expression is appropriate for a constitutional document.

Professional human translators can consult native speakers, language scholars and legal practitioners to assess the acceptability of expressions. They can also distinguish between everyday language and the formal register required for constitutional communication.

This does not mean that every constitutional concept must be replaced with a traditional indigenous expression. Some legal concepts may appropriately retain borrowed terminology, provided that the borrowed terms are clearly defined and consistently used. The objective is not linguistic purity but accurate, intelligible and sustainable legal communication.

Consistency and Completeness

Constitutional documents are internally connected. A term introduced in one section may reappear in several other provisions. If different translations are used for the same concept, readers may assume that the provisions refer to different legal matters.

Google Translate may produce different renderings of a recurring expression depending on its immediate linguistic context. This may be acceptable in ordinary communication but problematic where terminological consistency is essential.

Professional human translators can maintain a glossary and apply agreed terminology throughout the document. However, consistency requires deliberate editorial control. Without a shared glossary and systematic review, different human translators may also use inconsistent expressions.

Completeness is equally important. A translation should not omit qualifications, exceptions, conditions or explanatory clauses that form part of the original provision. A seemingly minor omission may alter the scope of a right or obligation.

For this reason, constitutional translation should involve a systematic comparison of the source and target texts to ensure that all relevant elements have been represented.

Comparative Assessment

The following table summarizes the principal differences between Google Translate and professional human translation in the context of constitutional translation. It presents an analytical comparison of their general capabilities and limitations; it is not a report of experimentally measured performance.

Assessment dimension	Google Translate	Professional human translation
Speed	Produces translations rapidly.	Usually requires more time for interpretation, research and review.
Accessibility	Widely accessible through digital devices and internet services.	Depends on the availability of qualified translators.

Semantic accuracy	May communicate general meaning but may miss context-dependent legal distinctions.	Can interpret context and clarify difficult meanings, subject to translator competence.
Legal equivalence	Does not independently guarantee preservation of legal effects or institutional relationships.	Can consider legal concepts and functions when performed by a qualified legal translator.
Terminology	May produce inconsistent or unsuitable equivalents for specialized legal concepts.	Can apply an agreed glossary and undertake terminological research.
Grammar and register	May generate fluent or awkward structures depending on the text and language pair.	Can adjust sentence structure and register to the conventions of the target language.
Cultural appropriateness	May not adequately recognize local linguistic and cultural implications.	Can consult speakers and specialists and make context-sensitive decisions.
Consistency	May vary its rendering of recurring expressions.	Can maintain consistency through glossaries and editorial guidelines.
Completeness	Requires checking for omissions, additions and altered relationships.	Can conduct systematic source–target comparison, although human errors remain possible.
Accountability	Its output does not itself establish professional or legal responsibility for the translation.	Responsibility can be assigned to identifiable translators, reviewers and certifying institutions.
Institutional recognition	Machine-generated output is not automatically an authorized legal text.	Human translation may be submitted for institutional review and formal approval.

The comparison indicates that the two approaches perform different functions. Google Translate is particularly useful for speed, accessibility and preliminary understanding. Professional human translation is more suitable for the interpretation, validation and final preparation of specialized legal documents, provided that the translators possess the necessary competence.

The most defensible position is therefore not that machine translation should be rejected, but that its role should be clearly defined. It can support the translation process, while professional human translators and legal experts remain responsible for determining whether the final text preserves the meaning and function of the constitutional provision.

Implications for Constitutional Translation in Nigeria

Nigeria's linguistic diversity makes multilingual legal communication an important national concern. English serves as the principal language of formal legal and governmental documentation, but the country's citizens use many indigenous languages in their everyday lives.

Section 55 of the Constitution provides for the conduct of National Assembly business in English and, where adequate arrangements have been made, in Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. This recognition provides an important constitutional basis for considering the role of indigenous languages in legislative communication. It also demonstrates that the use of indigenous languages in formal national institutions is not inherently incompatible with constitutional governance.

However, the constitutional recognition of these languages in legislative proceedings should be distinguished from the legal status of translated versions of the entire Constitution. A translation may be useful for education, public information and civic awareness without necessarily possessing the same legal authority as the enacted constitutional text.

This distinction is essential. A translated constitutional document may be linguistically accurate and professionally produced, yet its institutional status will depend on the legal and administrative arrangements governing its approval and use. The production of translations should therefore be accompanied by a clear policy on their intended purpose, certification and relationship to the authoritative constitutional text.

Translation and Access to Justice

Access to justice involves more than the physical availability of courts and legal institutions. It also includes the ability of individuals to understand relevant legal information, recognize their rights and obligations, and communicate effectively with legal institutions.

The translation of constitutional materials into indigenous languages could contribute to legal awareness by making important provisions more accessible to citizens. It may help individuals understand the constitutional organization of government, fundamental rights, citizenship, public responsibilities and the limits of state power.

However, the availability of translated constitutional materials should not be confused with an automatic entitlement to have every legal proceeding conducted in a preferred language or to receive an officially authenticated translation of every legal document. Such rights and procedures

depend on the relevant constitutional and statutory provisions. In particular, the right to interpretation in criminal proceedings should be considered within its specific legal context rather than treated as an automatic guarantee of an officially translated Constitution.

The broader argument is that language accessibility can support the effective enjoyment of legal rights. It cannot replace the legal and institutional measures required to protect those rights.

Translation and National Development

Language accessibility has implications for national development because development depends partly on citizens' ability to understand public institutions, participate in governance and access relevant information. When constitutional information is made available in indigenous languages, citizens may be better positioned to understand the structure of government, the responsibilities of public officers and the principles governing the exercise of public power. Such understanding may contribute to civic education, public accountability and democratic participation.

Translation may also support the development of indigenous languages by expanding their use in specialized domains. The consistent use of indigenous languages in constitutional and legal communication can encourage the development of legal terminology, reference materials, dictionaries and academic resources.

Nevertheless, translation alone cannot guarantee national development. Its contribution depends on the availability of reliable translations, public access to the materials, educational programmes and institutional commitment to multilingual communication. The relationship between translation and development should therefore be understood as an enabling relationship rather than a direct or automatic outcome.

Implications for Indigenous-Language Development

The translation of constitutional materials presents an opportunity to expand the functional domains of Nigerian indigenous languages. Languages that are predominantly used in everyday communication can also be developed for legal, educational, administrative and technological purposes.

Such development requires more than the production of isolated translations. It requires the systematic creation of terminology, style guides, bilingual legal corpora, dictionaries and reference materials. It also requires collaboration among linguists, legal practitioners, translators, universities and government institutions.

The process should be inclusive. Speakers from different linguistic communities should be consulted to ensure that the selected terminology is understandable and acceptable. At the same

time, standardization is necessary to avoid excessive variation in the expressions used for recurring constitutional concepts.

Recommendations

Adoption of a Controlled Human–AI Translation Policy

Government institutions and organizations responsible for constitutional translation should adopt a policy that permits the use of machine translation as a preliminary tool while requiring professional human review before publication. Google Translate should not be treated as an independent authority for producing final constitutional translations.

Development of Standardized Indigenous-Language Legal Terminology

Universities, language research institutes, legal institutions and professional translation bodies should collaborate to develop bilingual legal glossaries for Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and other Nigerian languages. These glossaries should provide consistent equivalents and explanations for recurring constitutional and legal concepts.

Establishment of a Multidisciplinary Translation and Validation Committee

A national or institutional committee should be established to coordinate constitutional translation projects. Its membership should include constitutional law experts, professional translators, linguists, indigenous-language specialists, legal educators and representatives of relevant government institutions.

Development of Digital Legal-Language Resources

Nigeria should invest in the development of bilingual legal corpora, digital dictionaries, translation memories and validated constitutional texts. These resources would improve the quality of future machine-assisted translations and provide translators with reliable reference materials.

Institutional Certification and Public Access

Translated constitutional materials should undergo appropriate legal and linguistic review before being published. The institution responsible for publication should clearly state whether a translation is intended for educational or informational purposes or has been formally approved for a recognized legal function. Approved materials should be made accessible through public libraries, educational institutions, government websites and civic education programmes.

Conclusion

The translation of the Nigerian Constitution into indigenous languages is an important consideration in promoting inclusive legal communication, constitutional awareness and democratic participation. In a multilingual society, the accessibility of constitutional information should not depend exclusively on citizens' ability to understand English. Making constitutional provisions available in languages such as Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba could contribute to broader public understanding of rights, obligations and the structure of government.

Google Translate offers considerable practical value in this regard. Its speed, accessibility and support for Nigerian indigenous languages make it a useful resource for preliminary translation and general communication. However, the requirements of constitutional translation extend beyond the conversion of words and sentences from one language into another. Constitutional provisions contain specialized terminology, legal qualifications, institutional relationships and expressions whose meanings must be preserved with precision. Machine-generated fluency does not, by itself, establish semantic accuracy or legal equivalence.

Professional human translation offers greater opportunities for contextual interpretation, terminological research and linguistic adaptation. Nevertheless, human translation is not automatically reliable. Its quality depends on the translator's linguistic competence, understanding of constitutional law, familiarity with the target language and commitment to systematic review. The most appropriate standard is therefore professional human legal translation supported by independent linguistic and legal validation.

The article has consequently proposed the Human–AI Collaborative Constitutional Translation and Validation Model as a framework for combining the practical efficiency of machine translation with the contextual judgement of human professionals. The model emphasizes source-text authentication, preliminary machine translation, legal and terminological analysis, independent human translation, linguistic validation, quality assessment and institutional certification.

Ultimately, the objective of translating the Nigerian Constitution should not be limited to producing texts in different languages. It should be to ensure that the translations communicate the meaning and function of constitutional provisions accurately, consistently and intelligibly. Google Translate can contribute to this objective, but it should operate within a controlled professional framework. The responsibility for determining the accuracy, adequacy and institutional status of translated constitutional materials must remain with competent human experts and the appropriate legal authorities.

A deliberate national approach to multilingual constitutional translation would not only improve access to legal information but also strengthen the development of indigenous languages as instruments of formal knowledge, public communication and democratic participation.

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