Abstract

The paper concerns itself with the problems facing interpreters in the Pentecostal church sermons. The sermons are preached in English and consecutively interpreted into Kamba. Interpreting is viewed as a communicative event which occurs during cross-cultural communication when two interlocutors do not share a language. The major goal of interpreting is that a message makes the same impact on the target audience as was intended by the speaker in the source language (Angelelli, 2000). Given that interpreting is a major communication skill, the paper examines the problems that the interpreters face in the process of achieving this goal. The problems were analysed using Krashen’s (1985) Input Hypothesis and Monitor Model Hypothesis. A descriptive research design was used to obtain information from a sample population. Purposive sampling was used to select five churches that used consecutive interpreting, in which the sermons were preached in English and interpreted to Kamba. The five interpreters from the sampled churches formed the key informants for the interviews. Data was collected through non-participant observation and interviews. Ten sermons were audio-taped from the sampled Pentecostal churches. Data from the audio tapes was transcribed word for word to create texts for analysis. The findings reveal that there are a number of problems facing the interpreters. The problems range from external factors that are beyond the interpreters, which included time constraints, the nature of the input, the audience, and factors originating from the interpreters’ personalities and the preachers.