

Abstract

Translation is enjoying growing recognition in today's globalised world. It plays an important role in all spheres of human activities and is fundamental to intercultural communication, particularly in international organisations. This empirical research therefore explores how the profession is practised at the African Union, particularly at the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP). More specifically, it establishes the profile of translators in both institutions, assesses the quality of translations, and determines if translations are source or target-oriented. To this end, this study uses statistical and documentary research as well as quantitative and qualitative data gathering through personal interviews with translators and a supervisor. Further, it critically evaluates four original texts and their translations using House's (1997) model of translation quality assessment. Except for the *Solemn Declaration of Oath of Allegiance*, the evaluated texts displayed ideational features purposefully aimed at informing the readership. These result in a *covert* translation strategy being employed by translators and a cultural filter being applied in order to achieve a functional equivalence. A critical analysis of questionnaires and personal interviews with translators and one supervisor through purposive sampling shows that translation plays a strategic role in the smooth running of the two institutions. Translators mostly adhered to original texts, while ensuring that the translation was natural and fluent.