

**CENTRE FOR TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION**

**LOSS OF MEANING IN TRANSLATED SOUND BITES IN SUBTITLING FOR  
TV FEATURES FROM KISWAHILI TO ENGLISH IN KENYAN MEDIA**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my own work and that no part of this work has been previously submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution.

Signed.....

Date.....

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## **DEDICATION**

**To my loving mother, Florence Chogo and my dear father Henry Chegero Barang'a**

Your earnest prayers and encouragement kept me going even in times when I felt like the walk has been difficult. You taught me to believe, to have a positive attitude and above all, to work hard. May God bless you. I love you mum and dad.

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**To the glory of God**

**Philippians 4:13...*"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."***

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## ABSTRACT

Long form TV features are special segments that may be aired weekly or monthly in media houses in Kenya. There are journalists who have over the years specialized in producing the TV features. A number of them translate their Kiswahili sound bites to English before subtitling. This dissertation had three objectives that guided the research. They are: to find out if there are errors in the translated subtitles of sound bites in long form TV features at NTV, KTN & Citizen TV, to find out the challenges bilingual journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites for Kiswahili to English for long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV and to explore strategies of appropriate translation and subtitling of sound bites for TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. From these objectives, three research questions were derived. The questions were tested through a questionnaire where ten journalists who specialize in producing TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV were interviewed. Apart from questionnaires, the researcher also sampled a few long form TV features from the three TV stations that had translated sound bites and subtitles. The findings were presented and analyzed using the Skopos Theory of translation. Through the analysis, the research questions are answered and the objectives fulfilled. Some of the findings that stood out from the findings was that errors that were conspicuous in the translated subtitles happened when journalists omitted some words from the source language to try fit in in the subtitles which at times led to loss meaning, some of the results of analysis from the data collected was a number of journalists mentioned that translating and subtitling was tiresome therefore the research recommends that newsrooms could look into the possibility of having a special desk whose mandate would be to assist journalists in translation and subtitling of sound bites in their long form TV features. The findings of the study will greatly benefit journalists who specialize in producing long form TV features to improve their work by understanding what is required when translating and subtitling of sound bites.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Dubbing** –It consists of translating and lip-syncing the original audiovisual text, where the source language (SL) voice track is replaced by the target language (TL) voice track.

**Frames** – they are rapid succession of still pictures that appear as moving pictures. Even though TV features and documentaries appear as moving pictures, they are not.

**Long form features** –are similar to documentaries. They are news pieces whose duration is long compared to the daily news stories. They contain a lot of information on a specific subject that the focus is on.

**Rece** – is a production term, which refers to a pre-filming visit to a location to determine its suitability for shooting. The director of the production commonly carries this out.

**Sound bites** - are recorded interviews that help tell the story, in most cases they need to be translated.

**Subtitling** – is the linguistic practice showing written text on a screen that conveys a target language version of the source speech.

**Video Editing** - is the process of manipulating and rearranging video shots to create a new work. Editing is usually considered to be one part of the postproduction process – other post-production tasks include titling, color correction, sound mixing etc.

**Voice-overs** - are a key features in long form features/documentaries, simply put; it is the voice of the Journalist narrating the story.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AVT</b>	Audio Visual Translation
<b>BBC</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>CA</b>	Communication Authority of Kenya
<b>CDF</b>	Constituency Development Fund
<b>CNN</b>	Cable News Network
<b>NTV</b>	Nation Television
<b>NMG</b>	Nation Media Group
<b>SL</b>	Source Language
<b>TL</b>	Target Language
<b>TV</b>	Television

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

In newsrooms of local media houses in Kenya, long form TV features are common especially in the mainstream media. Long form TV features are similar to documentaries (in terms of duration and topical issues presented in them) only that journalists in Kenya refer to them as long form features. Pollak (2008) regards a film as a documentary when there is the explicit or implicit claim by its producers and/or company that broadcasts it, that it is a documentary. Pollak's definition of documentaries further liberates Kenyan journalists who prefer to refer to documentaries as long form features and therefore, for purposes of this study, the researcher will use long form TV features instead of documentaries. Nichols (2001) says documentaries adopt no fixed inventory of techniques, address no one set of issues, display no single set of forms or styles. Not all documentaries exhibit a single set of shared characteristics. Nichols argument vividly explains the intention of documentaries, which is to cover a wide array of societal issues. Documentaries have no specific style of presentation they all depend on how the journalist wants to present it. Subjects covered in the long form TV features vary from Human Interest, Education, Health, Environment, Sports and games, Investigative pieces and so on. People from all walks of life and different backgrounds often consume this content.

Long form TV features are special segments that are rich in information and at the same time demand a lot of time in preparation because the packaging is different from the day-to-day news pieces. It is because of this that the features tend to have a longer duration which can be from 20 minutes to 1 hour when compared to the daily news stories.

Rafferty (1990) says the purpose of documentaries is to tell us things that we think we should know, even if we didn't know that we wanted to know them. This description puts into perspective the reason as to why media houses would invest to have long features as part and parcel of the content that they serve their viewers once in a while. Long form features are not only limited to TV, they can also be found on Radio and print media.

In most occasions long form TV features attract a lot of attention mainly because of the information contained in them. Fortune (1959) says it is impossible to over-estimate or over-emphasize their power, their immense influence for good. A good example in Kenya, there is an investigative feature titled Red Alert on NTV that exposed the ills some of the big supermarkets were engaging in by using chemicals in preservation of meat. The ripple effect that followed immediately the feature went on air was huge. The Ministry of Health began its investigations and selling of meat was banned from some of the supermarkets. Fortune (1959) continues to say, through long form TV features, *wrongs are brought before us, to acknowledge, assess, and if possible, remedy. And we are a jury of millions.*

Long form TV features entail researching and identifying areas where the story will be focused on. This is done through a recce, where the team producing the feature goes to the ground and interacts with the people they will be getting the story from, (Recce's are not done every time a journalist is preparing to work on a Long form feature, this is because at times it can be very expensive depending on the geographical area of the place of interest) then the journalists fixes dates on when they will record the interviews - all this is done in the pre-production stage.

The next stage is post-production. This comes after the team working on the TV feature has been to the ground and collected all the information needed. The journalist then scripts, and an editor goes through the script to ensure there are no grammatical errors, the facts are right and the story has a flow, finally the journalist sits down with a video editor and together they piece the story together (aligning video and audio) using video editing softwares. This is the final stage before the story goes on air. It is at this last step that the journalist identifies rich sound bites that will help in enriching the story. Sound bites are a very important aspect in long form TV features. Sound bites are recorded interviews (from the news source) that help tell a story; sometimes they need to be translated.

Foley (2012) defines sound bites as a picture of the candidate (person) talking; short enough to fit into the limits and pithy enough to satisfy the producer's criteria of pith. He goes on to say that, "*sound bites are remarks marked not only by their length, but also by their lure: they are ideally compact and colorful*". This means that, the process of selecting sound bites to use in any story is critical. This is because, they have the ability to make or

break a story. Sound bites should be memorable. They are meant to be catchy, punchy and dramatic.

Long form TV features are dependent on sound bites; this is because they help in simplifying the story and making it memorable. In print media, they appear as quotes but on TV, they are short recordings of an interview. Sound bites are normally embedded in news stories.

*For example*

*Reporter's voice: Almost 70% of Kenyans especially in the rural areas are yet to register for Huduma numbers. The government hopes to register a number of them before the deadline later on in the week.*

*Sound bite: My family and I are not going to register for Huduma number, why is the government forcing us?*

A number of sound bites in long form TV features in the Kenyan media are translated, transcribed into a script and later transformed into subtitles. The journalist and video editor solely do translating of sound bites for TV features before they are placed on the screen as subtitles. The supposed errors occurring in subtitles of translated sound bites from Kiswahili to English are the bedrock of this study. Subtitles are part of Audio Visual Translations (AVT). AVT is the transfer from one language to another of the verbal components contained in audiovisual works and products such as in this case long form TV features. Khalaf (2016) defines subtitling as a type of translation, particularly in the audiovisual field, which includes dubbing, voice-over and audio description. In other words, the audiovisual language of TV programs or films transferred with certain forms to be understandable by target audiences whom they are not familiar with its source language. On the other hand, Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997) p.161 define subtitling as 'the process of providing synchronized captions for film and television dialogue'. This is the simplest description of subtitles, which is similar to O'Connell (2007) who defines subtitling as 'supplementing the original voice sound track by adding written text on the screen'.

Translated subtitles are not a new phenomenon in the media and film industry in the country. They are common in some of the long form TV features and they appear as texts at the bottom of the screen. According to Perego & Bruti (2015) there are two types of subtitles. The inter-lingual subtitling which is written in a language different from the language of the original audiovisual product and intra-lingual subtitling which is written in the same language as of the original audiovisual product. At NTV, KTN and Citizen TV, inter-lingual subtitling focuses on translation from Kiswahili to English is mostly used. Intra-lingual subtitling is used but on rare occasions especially if the audio is not clear. At times in huge film productions, intra-lingual subtitling is used to enable the deaf access the information being passed. Subtitles come in different formats and style as well as placement on the screen. All these elements are determined by the house style of a particular media house. In Kenya media houses, there is an unwritten rule when it comes to placement of subtitles on the screen. A majority of media houses place them at the bottom of the screen. This is done deliberately so that the text does not interfere with the other elements of the video. Reading from the bottom of the screen is also easier compared to reading from the top or sides of the screen.

Subtitles are not only the type of audiovisual translations used in Kenyan media houses but they are the most popular. Once in a while, some journalists may chose to use dubbing in the translation of the sound bites in their TV features though it is on rare occasions. In this study, the researcher will mainly focus on the loss of meaning in translation of sound bites in subtitling for long form TV features. The study concentrates on translation of sound bites from Kiswahili to English at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV, which are part of the local media in Kenya.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

This study examines how meaning of what is spoken in the sound bites may be lost during translation from source language to target language through subtitling. A number of journalists in Kenya are bilingual, which means that they can comfortably communicate in English and Kiswahili. But, though they have a good understanding of the two languages, a majority of them including video editors are not professional translators. The status quo notwithstanding, many of them who produce long form TV features, find themselves with

the task of translating sound bites and writing subtitles. As accurate as they may want to present their works at times they miss out on presenting the meaning of the sound bites as it was from the original source.

When translating and subtitling the sound bites in the long form TV features, journalists and video editors try to fit in the number of words on the screen through shortening of sentences, meaning at times is lost when they omit some words that might be crucial on the information being shared. This might end up distorting the story. Apart from trying to squeeze words and ensuring the subtitles are grammatically correct, there are instances where a journalist might misinterpret what the interviewee told them.

Following this background, this study will delve deep into analyzing errors in sound bites that have been translated and subtitled as well as investigate why they occur, which might negatively affect the final product where a communication breakdown may occur when intended meaning is lost. At the same time, the study sought to understand the challenges bilingual journalists go through when they are translating sound bites and subtitling them and finally, explore strategies of how best journalists can translate sound bites and subtitle them.

This study is vital because when complete it will shed light on the challenges journalists go through when they are translating and writing subtitles of sound bites from source language to a language their audience can comprehend and at the same time analyze translated sound bites in some of the long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. The study will also seek to come up with recommendations on how best journalists from all media houses can rectify the problem.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The research aims to fulfill the following objectives:

- i. To find out the kind of errors in the translated subtitles of sound bites in long form TV features at NTV, KTN & Citizen TV.
- ii. To find out the challenges bilingual journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites for Kiswahili to English for long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV.

- iii. To explore strategies of appropriate translation and subtitling of sound bites for TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study will be guided by the following questions.

- i. Are there errors in the translated subtitles of sound bites in long form TV features at NTV, KTN, and Citizen TV?
- ii. What are the challenges journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites for long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV?
- iii. What are some of the appropriate strategies that can be put to use in the translation of subtitles in long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV?

#### **1.6 Rationale of the Study**

This study will be significant in Translation because it will expose the challenges bilingual journalists (who report using Kiswahili and English) who use subtitles for their long form TV features go through when translating sound bites as well as look at the probability of loss of meaning in the subtitles that might result to a communication breakdown between the final product on air and the audience. The research will also analyze some of the long form TV features aired on NTV, KTN and Citizen TV to find out if there was loss of meaning in the translated subtitles and at the same time identify the errors.

The study will also seek to find the well-being of journalists when they are translating and working on subtitles for sound bites of their long form TV features. This is because a majority confirmed that since this is the last stage in the post-production they are normally very tired and in a hurry to complete the product. Following this, the research will also look at the option of having trained translators in the newsrooms and how efficient they will be in assisting journalists in translation of sound bites and finally putting subtitles. The researcher agrees with Diaz (2009) who says the transfer of language from oral to written is responsible for the quality of the language of subtitles, which follows the rules of the written language so that the natural flavor of speech remain intact. This will help ensure they avoid loss of meaning as a result of the quality of subtitles used in long form TV features, which is a problem whose root can be traced to translation.

The findings of this study will help professional journalists from the Kenyan media to be aware of some of the errors that might escape them when they are translating and typing subtitles of sound bites. Through the discussion, the researcher hopes the findings of this study will go a long way in helping journalists improve the quality of their work in translating texts from Kiswahili to English and choosing whether to translate word for word or putting the meaning into context before subtitling.

### **1.7 Scope and Limitations**

This study focuses only on translation and subtitling of sound bites from Kiswahili to English for long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. This is because Kiswahili and English are recognized as official languages in Kenya, that notwithstanding, the researcher is aware that there are members of the public who may not be conversant with either English or Kiswahili and that there are chances that a journalist may meet such people while on the field. The researcher also settled on only three TV stations, but she is well aware that the Kenyan media landscape is vibrant and that there are more TV stations that have journalists who also produce long form TV features.

The study is also limited to journalists with a specialty in producing long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV knowing very well that there are journalists who do not produce long form TV features but may work on a piece once in a while. The study also focused only on journalists who translate their sound bites and subtitle them. The researcher is aware that there are long form TV features that are produced by journalists who do not translate the sound bites and neither do they use subtitles.

The study also focuses on long form TV features as opposed to the day to day news pieces because TV features they are packaged in such a way that they contain a lot of information and they are the mostly watched given that before a feature is aired, there is a promo that runs throughout the week which has the time and date on when the feature will go on air. Due to this, a number of people tune in to watch, which helps if the sound bites are translated and subtitles put on the screen. Also, a number of long form TV features have translated subtitles, which are the center of the research. The researcher is also aware that there is a section of viewers who are visually impaired and cannot fully comprehend what subtitles are, due to this, they might feel left out.

Since the study is concentrating on the translation and subtitling of Kiswahili sound bites to English, the research will focus on the 9PM bulletin at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. The three TV stations have a number of news programs that may have news stories that may or may not have subtitles. But, because the focus is on translated and subtitled Kiswahili sound bites to English, the main 9PM bulletin will be used. Even though, the researcher is aware that there are Kiswahili TV features that air during the 7PM bulletin that might have translated and subtitled sound bites from English to Kiswahili.

Lastly, Kenya has more than 40 ethnic communities and foreigners who may be working in the country as expatriates. This means that journalists may encounter a variety of sound bites from different languages not necessarily English and Kiswahili that need to be translated and subtitles typed, but the study will only focus on sound bites spoken, translated and subtitled from Kiswahili to English.

### **1.8 Literature Review**

A number of studies relating to sound bites and translated subtitles have been carried out. Most of them are targeted at professional translators and those who work on subtitles professionally. Jorge and Remael (2014) says the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST) came up with guidelines for good subtitling practice that are regarded as standard in the profession, but some researches have raised concern on the guidelines saying they are meant to promote unnecessary uniformity which may not apply in all countries.

It is upon this basis that the researcher believes this study will go along way in creating awareness to journalists in Kenya on the errors that may occur in translating subtitles of sound bites from Kiswahili to English as a number of the guidelines are focused on professional translators and subtitlers. Translating and subtitling are two professions that journalists who work on long form TV features find themselves in. With no basic training, journalists still feel compelled to deliver their best and in the long run they may end up affecting the quality of their work. While a number of researchers have dwelt more on professional translators and subtitlers as they tackle this subject, the researcher will try to fill the gap left by the academicians by focusing on journalists who may lack the skills of translation and subtitling but still they have to perform in the unfamiliar territory with the

basic skills that they possess. Curti (2009) emphasizes on the importance of subtitles, which he says that they are texts, that brings the spectator into a reciprocal relationship with filmic content and expression. This means that subtitles will be deemed to have accomplished what they were meant to do if a viewer who depended on them fully understands the content. In as much as the researcher agrees with Curti, she is also aware that the author's research was focused on subtitles on film, which is different when it comes to long form TV features. Therefore, this study seeks to bring out the element of ensuring subtitles are in tandem with Kenyan viewers who watch the TV features. Perego and Bruti (2015) document that the first manuals for subtitlers started to be published from the late 1990's. This further paints a picture of why the craft is still new in Kenyan newsrooms. In as much as there are manuals with guidelines on how to generate subtitles, a number of Kenyan journalists are unaware of their existence. A majority of journalists, who produce long form TV features in the local media, do not even know that subtitling is a profession and that it has guidelines. The researcher hopes this study will create awareness and introduce the basics of subtitling to Kenyan journalists who specialize in the production of long form TV features and eventually result to quality work.

From the number of studies the researcher has read touching on the subject of translation and subtitling, a majority of the researchers focused on Chinese, English, Finnish, French, Italian, Japanese and Polish languages. The researcher did not come across a study done on subtitles in the Kiswahili and English languages, which this study seeks to cover.

In the month of April 2019, British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC an international media house based in London but with a strong presence in Kenya published guidelines on subtitles that their journalists refer to when they are generating subtitles. The guide describes best practices as well as instructions the staff at the media house can use when it comes to subtitling for the BBC. Though, the instructions are targeted at generating subtitles for viewers who cannot hear, they still can apply for the general public. Local media houses do not have such a resource for its staff. This further makes it a complex assignment for journalists who opt to use subtitles in their long form features. The study hopes that after the research, journalists who specialize in producing long form TV features

in local media houses might borrow a leaf from the BBC and engage with professionals in the translation and subtitling sector to tailor guidelines that will be suit them.

Apart from not having a guideline, journalists in local media houses are also disadvantaged because they lack softwares for subtitling. The softwares as listed by Will Brown (<https://www.jbistudios.com/blog/3-time-code-errors-that-kill-subtitles-translation-projects> [15.05.2017]) are not available in Kenyan newsrooms. Due to this, journalists depend on inbuilt soft wares available on editing soft wares such as Final cut pro. The challenge with this kind of soft wares is that they lack time codes and therefore subtitles generated in this manner are bound to have errors. This gap of lack of such resources is part of this study.

The continuous change in the media landscape in the country is set to force journalists to start incorporating subtitles in the near future. This will mainly be for the purposes of inclusivity. Will Brown (<https://www.jbistudios.com/blog/3-time-code-errors-that-kill-subtitles-translation-projects> [15.05.2017]) captures this fact so well. Brown argues that subtitling is mandatory for any production project. This means that for journalists who are yet to embrace this skill will be in for a rude shock when they realize there is a shift when it comes to including subtitles as part of their projects. The study hopes to inspire more journalists to embrace the craft of subtitling which is still not a do or die affair in Kenyan newsrooms.

The importance of subtitles when it comes to long form TV features cannot be over emphasized, notwithstanding the effect of a simple error which has potential of distorting meaning leading to a communication breakdown. The researcher agrees with Anne Billson (<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/apr/25/say-what-why-film-translators-are-in-a-war-of-words-over-subtitles> [25.04.2019]) who says that, “*Clumsy and insensitive translations can ruin the enjoyment of a foreign-language film. Don’t blame us, say the subtitlers pressing film-makers for more appreciation of their art.*” Though, Anne refers to subtitles placed on foreign films, the latter also applies to long form TV features. This is because, translating and subtitling commands a level of professionalism which the study seeks to encourage on journalists to look into. The main errors emanating from translating and subtitling of sound bites from Kiswahili to English for long form TV features at NTV,

KTN and Citizen TV is the assumption that provided a journalist can communicate in the two languages, and then they are in a position to translate and write subtitles for sound bites. This at times backfires when mistakes on the subtitles appear on air. Billson continues to paint a scenario that stresses on the importance of subtitles by citing an example of where Spanish subtitles from a film on Netflix had to be removed following criticism from a section of viewers who found them to be offensive. Still on the same, she also pointed out that in February 2019, the Association des Traducteurs (ATAA) pointed out that French subtitles on the same film were full of grammatical errors, spelling mistakes and mistranslations. The researcher hopes to bring out this challenge when it comes to translation and subtitling of sound bites in long form TV features from Kiswahili to English even though the examples cited by Billson refer to mistakes in Spanish and French subtitles. Another important aspect on this subject is

### **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

According to Vehmas-Lehto (1999), scholars of translation have classified theories of translation into linguistic and communicative categories. Linguistic theories are those that focus more on the literal formats of texts, which basically means staying true to the original text, which means translating word for word. On the other hand, communicative theories, which were mostly developed in the 1960's, focused more on conveying the message of the text from the source language to the target language. Skopos theory is the most popular communicative translation theory. *Skopos* is a Greek word, which means 'aim', or 'purpose' which means that any translation is an action and goal-oriented thus any translating action needs to have a purpose, or a Skopos. The genesis of this theory can be traced back to the late 1970's. Hans J. Vermeer and Katherine Reiss who are best known for their Skopos Theory of translation first introduced it in 1978 in a German journal *Lebende Sprachen*. It was claimed to be a "framework for a general theory of translation" (Nord) 2012. Vermeer and Reiss view on this general approach is highly motivated by his attempt to seek another way to translate without depending on linguistics level only, as stated by (Nord) 1997: "Linguistics alone won't help us; first, because translating is not merely and not even primarily a linguistic process."

Skopos theory stresses on the purpose of translating which helps in determining the strategies to be used in the process of rendering a piece of work from a source language to a target language. Baker (1988) argues that through the Skopos theory, translating is seen as a human action that has a purpose, a Skopos. In addition to the purpose, the act of translating has an outcome, which is referred to as the translatum, that is, the translated text. The Skopos of the target text does not necessarily have to be identical to the one of the source text. Therefore, through Skopos, translators should be in a position to figure out the main purpose of the target text before translating the subtitle from the perspective of the theory.

### **1.9.1 Criticisms over Skopos Theory**

Skopos theory has received critiques by opponents of linguistic and equivalence based theories. The critiques focus on the definition of translation and the attitude of the Skopos theory toward the source text (Schaffner) 1998. The theory is seen to go beyond the translation proper's limits as a result it makes "the contours of translation, as object of study, steadily vaguer and more difficult to survey (Koller) 1995 which may bring a translated product closer to an 'adaptation' rather than a 'translation'. The critiques suggest that the theory should put emphasis on the target text as the starting point regardless of the purposes of the texts produced during the translation process. Newmark (1991) another critique underlines oversimplification which inherently exists in functionalism, emphasis on the message instead of the richness of meaning and also detriment of the source language text.

There are five underlying rules that the Skopos theory adheres to:

- a) **A target text is determined by its Skopos (aim)** – the result of the translation should be determined and guided by its purpose. To achieve this, the translator ought to understand the intention of the work, which will act as a guide on how they will approach it. The translator should understand their target audience, which will help in deciding on the language to use. For instance, knowing the purpose of sound bites in long form TV features would inform how the translations will be done from Kiswahili to English.

- b) **A target text is an offer of information in a target culture and target language concerning the offer of information in a source culture and source language** – for a translator to effectively communicate the message to the target audience, they must first be conversant with the culture and language of audience.
- c) **A target text does not initiate an offer of information in a clearly reversible way** – this means that there is no translation that is 100% accurate and that even if a back translation is to be done, the reverse would never be 100% accurate. This is because languages do not have 100 percent lexical equivalence whether at conceptual or connotative level.
- d) **A target must be internally coherent** – the fact that the purpose supersedes everything does not mean that the target text should have no logical flow. It should be written in a logical sequence and coherent manner, to ensure that the message is clearly understood as intended in the source text.
- e) **A target text must be coherent with the source text** – even if the purpose determines the target text, the target must remain coherent with the source text in terms of clarity and accuracy of message. The purpose determines the approach to be taken, but the message must always remain the same as that in the source text.

Skopos theory will help this research study in data collection, presentation, and analysis of interviews the researcher will conduct with journalists who have a specialty in producing long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV and draw conclusions from the findings. Through this theory, the researcher will seek to find the aim Journalists have when they are generating subtitles for Kiswahili sound bites that have been translated to English and at the same time look at the analysis of the outcome of the final work that goes on air. The theory also helped in understanding why translation of sound bites from Kiswahili to English in long form TV features is done the way it is. It guided the research methodology in identifying how best to capture the required data using questionnaires.

## **1.10 Research Methodology**

### **1.10.1 Place of Research**

The research was conducted at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. The study was targeted at journalists working in the three privately owned TV stations in Kenya. NTV is the broadcasting arm of Nation Media Group, NMG. It began in 1999 as Nation TV before it was rebranded to NTV in 2005. It was founded by His highness the Aga Khan in 1959 and it is the largest private media house in East and Central Africa with presence in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania.

NMG, has a number of publications under its belt such as Daily Nation, The East African, Business Daily, Taifa Leo, Daily Monitor, The citizen, Mwanaspoti, and Ennyanda. In broadcast, apart from NTV Kenya, the company also owns NTV Uganda, Nation FM, Dembe FM, KFM and Spark TV. On the digital platform, NMG has runs Nairobi News, Swahili hub, Nation mobile and Kenya buzz.

KTN is the broadcasting arm of Standard Media Group. It is the oldest privately owned TV station in the country as it was launched in 1990. In its broadcast department, apart from KTN News, the company also owns KTN Home, KTN Burudani, Farmers TV, Radio Maisha, Vybez Radio and Spice FM. In print media, Standard Media Group owns the Standard newspaper, The Nairobiian, Pambazuko and Mt. Kenya Star. On the digital platform, the company owns Standard digital, Eve digital, Nairobiian among others.

Citizen TV is the youngest of the three TV stations. It is owned by the Royal Media Services. It was started in 1999 and was re-launched in 2006. The company also owns Inooro TV and a number of radio stations such as Radio Citizen, Ramogi FM, Hot 96 and Vuuka FM.

The three TV stations (NTV, KTN and Citizen TV) are regarded as mainstream media because they command a lot of viewership. Their style of presentation of News is similar. The main News bulletins are at 7PM and 9PM, which are broadcasted in Kiswahili and English. The three TV stations also have long form TV features that make up content as part of their News once in a while.

## **1.10.2 Sampling and Sampling Techniques**

### **1.10.2.1 Population**

Long form features come in different forms, from broadcast (TV and Radio) and print news. A few journalists specialize in producing long form features. The study focuses on journalists who produce long form TV features.

### **1.10.2.2 Target Population**

This study is very specific on the group of respondents it targets, in order to receive the required responses for purposes of analysis. From the wide population of journalists in the three media houses (NTV, KTN and Citizen TV) the researcher narrowed down to specific numbers of the population to be able to conduct the study within them. The sampling frame was therefore journalists with a specialty in producing long form features. Their input is particularly important in understanding what they go through when they are translating Kiswahili sound bites in the long form TV features to English and generating subtitles.

### **1.10.2.3 Sampling Techniques**

Fields (2005) defines sample as “a smaller, but hopefully representative, collection of units from a population used to determine truths about that population.” Based on this definition, sampling is therefore, the process of selecting units such as people, organizations from a population interest so that by studying the sample, we may fairly generalize results back to the population from which they were chosen.

The fact that producing long form TV features is a specialized field where not every journalist produced features, the researcher adopted the method of non-random sampling. Kothari (2004), says non-random or non-probability sampling is a method of sampling where, samples do not have known probability of being selected as in convenience or voluntary response surveys. The choice of this method is basically informed by the specificity required in this research.

The specific non-probability method of choice in this study is a combination of the convenience and the purposive or judgmental sampling. The researcher administered questions to respondents known to her as falling under the sphere of the study. In purposive sampling, the researcher specifically focused on journalists who produce long form TV

features and also sampled long form TV features from NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. This is because, since translating of sound bites and subtitling is not mandatory in the three TV stations, there are long form TV features whose sound bites are not translated and neither do they have subtitles. In convenience sampling, the researcher looked at the availability and willingness of the journalists to take part in the study.

### **1.10.3 Research Tools**

The study will employ qualitative research method, which will rely on questionnaires that will be distributed to journalists at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV who produce long form features. A questionnaire is a research instrument that was invented by the Statistical Society of London in 1838 for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. This approach was selected because the study focuses on feelings and experiences of journalists at the three TV stations who have a specialty of producing long form features and who chose to translate sound bites and use subtitles in their work. Through this, their feelings and experiences will be best captured from the questions they will be responding to in the questionnaires. The researcher had a one on one interview with the journalists where she asked them the ten questions on the questionnaire and recorded them. She then presented and analyzed the data (Creswell 2017).

This researcher will seek to find out the challenges the journalists undergo when translating sound bites and using subtitles on their TV features as well as get their views on what they feel they need in ensuring their subtitles communicate to their audiences, while at it, the researcher will also seek to know why the journalists (participating in the research) chose to use subtitles in their work as opposed to other types of audio visual translation modes.

Apart from questionnaires, study also used voice recording and already aired long form TV features that had translated sound bites and subtitles. The tool consists of a set of questions where respondents are required to fill in. In this study, a questionnaire with a set of ten questions was used in gathering information. The information was collected with the use of voice recording. The researcher opted to record the voices of respondents because a lot of them were shying away from filling in the forms because they believed it would be a lot of work. Apart from that, people always tend to explain themselves more verbally compared to writing.

The set of questions were designed in such a way that the journalist could retrieve information based on objective two and three of the study. They are: To find out the challenges bilingual journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites for Kiswahili to English for long form TV features at NTV and to explore strategies of appropriate translation and subtitling of sound bites for TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV.

Long form TV features that already went on air and had translated sound bites and subtitles were also sampled and analyzed for possible errors. The researcher selected a few sound bites at specific time codes on the TV features. The findings were presented and analyzed in *chapters three and four*. This fulfilled the first objective, which was trying to find out if there were errors in the translated subtitles of sound bites in long form TV features at NTV, KTN & Citizen TV.

#### **1.10.4 Data Collection**

The study aims at capturing the feelings and experiences of journalists with a specialty of producing long form TV features and at the same time incorporate translated subtitles of sound bites from Kiswahili to English. It is because of this, that they study used questionnaires where respondents answered through a voice recording. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that the questions were formulated with an aim of meeting the objectives and answering the research questions;

- Are there errors in the translated subtitles of sound bites in long form TV features at NTV, KTN, Citizen TV?
- What are the challenges journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites for long form TV features at NTV?
- What are some of the appropriate strategies that can be put to use in the translation of subtitles in long form TV features?

#### **1.10.5 Data Presentation**

The data gathered was presented in form of tables in *chapter three* where the findings were presented and explained. An in depth analysis was done in *chapter four* using the Skopos theory of translation.

## **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with an introduction of the research topic, background information of the study and research objectives. Rationale of the study as well as its scope and limitations were also discussed. An account of other related studies that have been carried out in the recent past have also been included in this chapter. The chapter concluded by a discussion of the theoretical framework within which the research was conducted as well as the research methodology that was applied.

## CHAPTER TWO

### SUBTITLES AND SOUND BITES IN LONG FORM TV FEATURES

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on in-depth subtitling of translated sound bites from Kiswahili to English of TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV and how a few journalists have gone out of their way to incorporate other types of audio visual translation modes in their TV feature such as dubbing. It will also look at the previous studies done on subtitling and why even though the craft has existed for quite some time, a majority of journalists who specialize in producing long form TV features in local media houses still do not find it necessary to incorporate it in their work.

#### 2.2 Language of TV Broadcasting in Kenya

In 2017, the CA estimated that about 4.3 million Kenyan households owned TV sets; this number is rose from 3.5 million in February 2015 after the country migrated to digital television. In 2019, the number is expected to have increased. This means that, millions of people interact daily with content on local television that also stream their content on YouTube as well as upload their videos. With the Internet coming into play, local media houses have another platform they explore when it comes to broadcasting. This further increases the number of viewers who might not be Kenyans meaning they may not be conversant with Kiswahili language and remain dependent on subtitles. In Kenya, the official languages of communication are English and Kiswahili. These are clearly outlined in the new constitution of Kenya. The new constitution, which was promulgated on 7th April 2010, identifies Kiswahili as one of the two official languages in the country and thus, Section 7 (1) of the constitution declares Kiswahili as a national language of the republic and Section 7 (2) states that the official languages of the republic are Kiswahili and English. A majority of Kenyans can effectively communicate using the two languages. It is on this backdrop that some Kenyan journalists who specialize in producing long form TV features feel compelled to translate sound bites from Kiswahili to English and vice versa to their audiences to ensure there is not a breakdown in communication. After translation of the sound bites, the next step is to transcribe – this is the process where the audio is put into written text. This is where subtitles come in. Therefore, subtitling is meant

to ensure that the message in the sound bites of long form TV features is passed seamlessly to the viewers. But, the translation of sound bites from Kiswahili to English and later work on subtitling that is placed at the bottom of the screen of the TV is not mandatory at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. There is an assumption that a majority of the population understands the two languages and therefore there is no need for subtitles.

### **2.2.1 Code-mixing**

The official languages that a majority of Kenyans especially those in urban centers communicate with are Kiswahili and English. A majority of the youth mixes a number of languages when communicating. This is known as code mixing that is mostly taken to be Kiswahili though it is not the standard Kiswahili. They usually speak Kiswahili but mixed with a few words from English and (Sheng), an informal language and at times, they may mix up with words from their vernacular languages. This will be evident in some of the excerpts analyzed in chapter three.

### **2.3 History of Long Form TV Features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV**

In the 1990's up to mid-2000's, long form TV features and documentaries were not common in Kenyan newsrooms. Then, talk shows that featured interviews with government officials hosted by news anchors were popular. With the entrant of new TV stations in the media industry (NTV, KTN and Citizen TV) in the country influenced the quality of content put out for the public to consume. Journalists from the media houses went out in search of unique content, one that would draw people to watch them. Soon, focus shifted to arid and semi-arid regions of the country that many people knew little about. Journalists started filing long form TV features from these areas whose topography was fairly new to Kenyans residing in big towns. The long form TV features opened up the country because people became aware of what was happening in the country.

This competition between the media houses (NTV, KTN and Citizen TV) sorting for content across the country birthed long form TV features which started gaining popularity because they stood out from the normal content that the Kenyan audience were used to. The competition to put out the best long form TV feature that drew masses to view the station was healthy. It put government on the spot on issues that it was difficult to see the light of day; the voice of the people was now strengthened.

In the three media houses, a few journalists picked up the challenge and began producing long form TV features. Since then, the quality of the TV features has continuously improved and there has been tremendous impact from some which has led to the government reacting and changing policies for the better. In the year 2018 and 2019, journalists from NTV, KTN and Citizen TV have produced a number of TV features that have been recognized for international and local awards. Some of the TV features have influenced behavioral change in the public, exposed some ills and inequalities in the country, put the government to task and influenced policies. All the long form TV features produced and aired on the three TV stations during the 2018 – 2019 period that were impactful had something in common. They all had translated and subtitled sound bites, which means that they had the power to reach the masses. Very few of the long form TV features incorporated dubbing instead of subtitles in the translation of the sound bites.

#### **2.4 Sound Bites**

Sound bites, which in simple terms is the voice of the interviewee in a story is what is translated and then subtitles are generated from the translated text. Renee (2011) lists three reasons as to why sound bites help tell a better story, but this study will focus on two since the third reason is not associated with long form TV features but on how experts talking of a particular subject with live audiences can market themselves. The two reasons therefore are: Sound bites help a piece be memorable which means that people can internalize and remember what a news source said concerning a particular subject over a long period of time. A long form TV feature that remains on the tongues of audiences for quite time can be deemed as successful. It only shows that the message or content was effectively communicated to its audience. The other importance of sound bites that Renee points out is that sound bites simplify your story. This is because people's attention span is short, which means your message needs to be quick and memorable. It also needs to be clear. Therefore, sound bites help a journalist deliver the story in a simplistic way as well as allow the interviewee chance to narrate their story. This helps the audience to understand the details in the story. This also helps in breaking down the monotony of listening to the journalist's voice throughout the long form TV feature. In as much as subtitling is key in communicating the translated versions of sound bites, when not professionally done, meaning is lost therefore it fails to achieve its purpose.

At NTV, KTN and Citizen TV, there are a few journalists who have specialized in producing human-interest features that are targeted at audiences who understand English and Kiswahili. At some point, once in a while editors used to help journalists in translation of sound bites but nowadays, it is the sole responsibility of the journalist to ensure they do their translations that is if they want to. However, in as much as translation of sound bites and generating subtitles is important in the production of any long form TV feature, it is not mandatory for journalists to translate sound bites and do subtitles at the three TV stations. This is because it is often assumed that all Kenyans understand Kiswahili and English, which is not always true. Therefore, translating sound bites and subtitling them is still a craft that some journalists have embraced and others haven't.

#### **2.4.1 Translation of Sound Bites**

Audiovisual translation (AVT) is the term used to refer to the transfer from one language to another language of the verbal components contained in audiovisual works such as TV features and programs, musical, soap operas and many more. As the word suggests, audiovisuals are meant to be heard (audio) and seen (visual) simultaneously but they are primarily meant to be seen (Chiaro) 2012. However, while the verbal and visual codes in audiovisuals are linked to such an extent that the words naturally tend to rely heavily on the visuals, the translation of these products operates on a verbal level alone. Though, there are established companies and professionals whose main work is translating of sound bites in audio visual works, in Kenyan newsrooms (NTV, KTN and Citizen TV) translating sound bites is the responsibility of the journalist who chooses to incorporate them in their long form TV features.

The journalists have to sit down with a pen and paper or a computer where they have to listen to what the interviewee in the sound bite is saying and note the words down. Thereafter, they translate to English and later generate subtitles to match their translation. Some of the journalists do not follow this procedure. They listen to the sound bite, translate and generate subtitles at the same time. And while we have editors who act as gatekeepers by checking whether the scripts are up to standard before a journalists embark on editing their long form TV features, when it comes to translating sound bites and generating

subtitles, there is no one to counter check the work of the journalist to ensure whatever they put on air is accurate.

## **2.5 Subtitles & Long form TV Features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV**

Subtitling which is part of the Audio Visual Translation is still young in Kenyan newsrooms (NTV, KTN and Citizen TV). Not many journalists go a step further in translating and subtitling their sound bites in the long form TV features. This is because many of them say it entails a lot of work and therefore majority simply would not take that path. Some journalists who chose to translate and use subtitles in their work often assume that just because they can communicate in both English and Kiswahili then they have the ability to translate and put subtitles in their TV features.

Journalists who may have a fair understanding of the craft of translating and subtitling, at times are overwhelmed by trying to squeeze in words when subtitling in an attempt to ensure the screen does not look untidy. Due to this, some words that may add value or meaning in the sound bites may be omitted, through this, there is a danger of watering down the meaning from the original sound bite. Information may be passed through this method, but a lot may be lost in the long run. Journalists at times are also at cross roads when deciding whether they will translate word for word or just put meaning into context on what the sound bite is all about before subtitling.

The online Collins English dictionary (2015) defines subtitles as printed translation of the words of a foreign film that are shown at the bottom of the picture. In this case, even though film is referred to here, the meaning applies to long form TV features. In Kenyan media, subtitles are simply the words that appear at the bottom of the screen that are translations of the sound bites from the interviewee who is speaking to a language a majority of the audience who consume the content can understand. From the above definitions, we understand the sole responsibility of subtitling is to help viewers grasp the information passed across in a foreign language and therefore the importance of having subtitles in a long form TV feature cannot be underestimated.

This makes subtitling a critical factor when it comes to the production of long form TV features and Documentaries. This statement is backed by Hajmohammadi (2004), *The Viewer as the Focus of Subtitling* who says, “subtitling should not be considered a second-rate, debased form of translation, as is increasingly recognized.” Unfortunately, Hajmohammadi’s view on subtitling does not carry the same weight as a number of journalists opt not to use subtitles while producing their long form TV features.

Long form TV features and documentaries that have subtitles have the potential to reach many people compared to those that do not have subtitles. For instance, viewers who understand English will rely on the subtitles of translated sound bites of Kiswahili to English to fully comprehend what the story is about. Therefore, they can still watch and enjoy. A majority of such audiences will be lost once the language used by the journalist switches to a different one, to the one being used by the interviewee (if not translated). If the sound bites are not translated and transcribed to a language that an audience can understand, then the producer of the long form TV feature will lose a section of audience but when translated, then they have a reach of those who understand and those who do not understand the source language. Hajmohammadi (1976), *The Viewer as the Focus of Subtitling* who says, “Subtitled material attracts more and more viewers. The researcher agrees with Hajmohammadi because long form TV features that have subtitles often receive a lot of reaction from the public and therefore achieves more impact, which is essentially the main purpose of a successful production.

In most cases, the format of subtitles in Kenyan newsrooms is strategically placed at the bottom of the screen so that the words do not interfere with the pictures. Brown, 2011 on his book *Dynamic Subtitles: The User Experience* defines subtitles as closed captions on television that are typically placed at the bottom-center of the screen. He goes on to explain that placing of subtitles in varying positions, according to the underlying video content has the potential to make the overall viewing experience less disjointed and more immersive. The researcher agrees with Brown’s explanation on the placement of subtitles because if they are placed at the top or side of the screen, the viewer will have a hard time trying to concentrate and enjoy the elements of a video as well as read the subtitles.

Subtitles are not foreign to Kenyan media or other media houses that produce TV features/documentaries. Mostly, subtitles are found in English documentaries where the interviewees are speaking a different language. The Kenyan audiences who consume content from local media houses are not strangers to subtitles. Subtitles are also found in news pieces from international media houses such as Aljazeera and CNN.

## **2.6 Format of Subtitles**

There are standard guidelines that can help one when they are generating subtitles for TV. Karamitroglou (1998) has outlined some of them. The first that he mentions is spatial parameter/layout. This basically directs on the placement of subtitles on the screen, which are supposed to be positioned at the lower part at about 1/12 of the total screen height above the bottom of the screen. This helps the eye of the viewer not to travel a long distance towards the lowest part of the screen to read it. At NTV, KTN, Citizen TV subtitles normally appear at the bottom of the TV screen. Another important factor when it comes to the format of subtitles that Karamitroglou speaks about is the number of lines. The recommended format is of two lines of subtitles at a given time on the TV screen. This helps one generating subtitles to ensure that the text they type on the screen does not appear crowded. This also helps minimize the interference with the video. Text positioning is another guideline. Here, the text should be presented centered on its allocated lines. This is because most of the action in videos circulates around the center of the TV screen, which helps the eye of the viewer to travel a shorter distance in order to reach the start of the subtitles. In the above three media houses, the texts are normally positioned at the center of the TV screen. The number of characters per line is also another guideline anyone generating subtitles should adhere to. The recommended number of characters is 35 as this will help accommodate a satisfactory portion of the (translated) spoken text and minimize the need for reductions and omissions. This is foreign to a number of journalists who are not aware that there is a recommended number of characters that should appear in the subtitles.

It is also recommended that the text typed as subtitles should be colored pale white against a grey or see through background. This is because grey is neutral to the eye and gives the impression that it does not entirely block the background image. This helps the viewer be able to read the subtitles as well as watch the program on the TV screen easily.

Punctuation and letter case is also very important. If not well placed, the intended meaning may end up being distorted. For instance, three dots should be used right after the last character of a subtitle. The three sequence dots indicate that the subtitled sentence is incomplete. Full stops should also be used right after the last character of a subtitle to indicate the end of the subtitled sentence. Question marks and exclamation marks are used to indicate a question or place emphasis. The rules of the placement of commas, colons and semi colons should also be observed, failure to which, a subtitle may lose its meaning.

### **2.6.1 Process of Subtitling Internationally**

Orero (2004) outlines four methods of subtitling. They are:

- Pre-translation – Adaptation – Spotting
- Pre-translation – Spotting – Adaptation
- Adaptation – Spotting – Translation
- Translation/Adaptation – Spotting

Where, Pre-translation is the translation of dialogue list before creation of subtitles. A number of journalists in the Kenyan media who use subtitles do not have the dialogue list. They translate and subtitle on the go. This they do by listening to the sound bite, they translate and generate subtitles immediately. Already, this shows they do not adhere to the set standards and it may result to errors that appear on the TV screen. Adaptation is the separation and adjustment of pre-translated text into subtitle units. This is a very important step in subtitling that for the reason above, which is a majority of journalists lacking the dialogue list, and then they cannot have the adaptation which guides one on how to omit some words and ensure that the translation stays true to the original text. Adaptation makes work easier, this is because, and the person generating the subtitles already knows what they are meant to type. This means that, if journalists employed this method in translating and subtitling of their work, then it would be a walk in the park as it would save them time

and mistakes that might appear on air. Spotting which is another term for coding is the capturing of time codes at the time where a subtitle starts and ends. This helps in ensuring that the subtitle matches the audio of the person who is speaking (sound bite).

The four methods of subtitling above all undergo a two-step verification process. The first step is where a native speaker reads the subtitle file without watching the video. This helps in identification of incoherence and mistakes in spellings or punctuation in the subtitles. This is always not so for journalists at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. This step requires a human resource and since the media houses bank on the fact that bilingual journalists reporting in English and Kiswahili are good in the two languages, they believe that whatever product they come up with after translating and subtitling is perfect.

The second step in the verification stage is simulation. Orero (2004) says this is where the film or programme is screened with the completed subtitles to check for any errors overlooked during the previous stages. This would work if journalists working on their long form TV features would have a third eye to watch their pieces of work before it goes on air. But, this is not so. Checking for possible errors is left for the journalist and the video editor working with the journalist and since chances are that they are tired from working on the piece for days, there is a possibility that some errors may be overlooked.

### **2.6.2 Place of Subtitles in Kenyan Newsrooms**

The competition of producing long form TV features that are impactful in the media space in Kenya has led to the number of journalists who tell human interest and social issues stories to cut a niche for themselves and employ the use of subtitles and dubbing in telling their stories. This is mainly informed by the fact that a long form TV feature that has subtitles of sound bites as an element has the potential of reaching the masses compared to one that does not have subtitles.

The above argument is supported by Jan (2011) who refers to subtitling as a very important factor in people's everyday lives. This is because; it helps everyone (who may not be in conversant in one of the languages used) watching a particular long form TV feature understand the content. Long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV are mainly produced for the consumption of the public for the purposes of creating awareness on an

issue that may be affecting a number of people. The productions may also target a specific demographic in the country for example, if it is aimed at influencing government policy then the content may be directed at the office of ministry that is being targeted, the journalist may also seek for a voice from a government official.

The structure and style of a TV feature depends on a number of things for example every journalist has their unique style of telling a story, this means, the journalist is at liberty in choosing how they would want to relay the information in their TV feature to the public this includes deciding whether to use subtitles. This demands creativity. Another important aspect in TV features and documentaries that sets them apart from the normal day-to-day news pieces is duration. Since they are special segments, they are often lengthy, which means that they contain a lot of information. Due to this, a TV feature/documentary can only tackle one issue at a time to avoid confusing the audience.

For example, a journalist can choose to produce a TV feature that focuses on the state of education in the country. Now, for them to be in a position to produce a piece that is well informed, they will have to zero in on a particular subject area for instance the competence based curriculum then chose a location within the country that would help tell the story better. The importance of TV features for any media house cannot be over emphasized. The use of subtitles in them further adds value to the audience.

TV features and documentaries are never an accident in the Kenyan media. They are special news pieces that are well planned for meaning a journalist working on them has to start by researching on a topic they would want to document before briefing a features editor who then helps the journalists by suggesting different angles the story could take before they embark on going to the field to produce the TV feature.

This is why, once a feature is ready to go on air, the station makes a promo that contains the title of the TV feature and the time and date on when it will go on air. The promo normally plays randomly in between breaks of programs to inform the masses that the station has a special feature. Apart from that, the station also uses its online platforms and social media pages to create more noise on the TV feature. Most TV features are scheduled

for weekends, that is Saturday and Sunday. This is because, not much is happening in the two days and therefore, a TV feature can be slotted to run for 20 minutes to about an hour.

The work put towards producing TV features has resulted in some journalists shying away from them. The researcher also takes note that not all Journalists are gifted on producing TV features. This means that there are Journalists whose strength may not be in story telling but they are good at updating, which involves writing and telling short News pieces that are aired daily.

### **2.6.3 The Process of Subtitling in Kenyan Media**

Subtitles for long form TV features are the texts that appear at the bottom of the screen, which is the translation of what the interviewee is saying. There is a process that is followed before the texts appear on the screen. International media houses are known to contract a subtitling company to do their subtitles, which is normally the first step. In local media houses, subtitling of translated sound bites in TV features is normally done in house with the journalists without any special subtitle soft wares. This is mainly because of expenses the media house may not be ready to pay for.

The second step is the timing of how long a subtitle should appear on air is also critical. Jan (2011) helps put this into perspective. He says, there is an electronic time code which could be said to be an electronic clock that starts at the beginning of the documentary, which counts hours, minutes, seconds and frames. In Kenya, there are 25 picture frames to a second, which is similar to Europe. Jan goes on to say that these frames could be used as a measure of time in subtitling, representing 1/25 of a second. When one is subtitling, they have to be conscious of this factor especially when deciding how long a subtitles should appear on air. There have been cases where subtitles do not stay for long on air and so the audience does not have enough time to read, through this, meaning at times is lost.

The other step is subtitling itself. This often stems from translated sound bites. Professionally, there is a script that has texts of all translated sound bites that need to be subtitled. This is rare in local media houses. A number of journalists translate and put subtitles on the spot, through this, they are bound to make a number of mistakes. Jan (2011) says, during the process of subtitling, the person producing the subtitles has to segment

what the interviewee is saying in a logical manner before they translate to the target language. They then have to cue the subtitles onto the electronic time code so that they appear and disappear on the screen at the proper time. This last stage is known as cueing or time coding. There are a number of computer softwares that may be used in inputting subtitles such as Subtitle edit, Subtitle Workshop, Subtitle creator which lack in local media houses, the journalists utilize the Final Cut pro, which they use in editing their videos, which at times lack the basics such as timing. This means, cueing the subtitles onto the time code are done manually. This may affect the time a subtitle may appear on air.

After subtitling is complete, the journalist and the video editor have to proof read just to ensure there are no mistakes.

#### **2.6.4 Omissions & Reductions in Subtitles**

Journalists and video editors often have to be sensitive to the message an interviewee is passing in their sound bite. For instance, there are people who tend to talk for a long time before they make a point and we have other who are always straight to the point when it comes to delivering information. Translating and subtitling for the two people mentioned above is different, because one may be forced to omit some of what the interviewee while subtitling and ensure the text makes sense.

At times, sound bites of interviewees contain a lot of information, which must be condensed so that the words appearing on the TV screen do not appear cramped up. The process of trying to fit the words on the TV screen through shortening of sentences at times distorts the meaning of what the story was all about.

Grammatical errors and placement of punctuations (marks such as full stop, comma and brackets used in writing to separate sentences and their elements to clarify meaning) is another hurdle that may distort the meaning of the sound bite when subtitling.

For example, if the sound bite says... *"Let's eat, grandpa"* versus *"Let's eat grandpa"*

From the two sentences, the placement of the comma makes a big difference.

Apart from trying to squeeze words and at the same time ensuring the translations are grammatically correct, there are instances where a Journalist might misinterpret what the interviewee told them and they communicate the same through subtitling.

Another hurdle a journalist working on a long form TV feature might encounter when they are subtitling is working on them when they are already tired. Subtitling is normally done at the last stage in any production of a TV feature/documentary. In Kenyan media houses, subtitling is optional; therefore journalists who chose to use subtitles are normally not very keen so long as whatever they put on the screen is communicating a message they believe the audience can comprehend. Another challenge that props up is when a news source cracks a joke or sings. These are different literary works that require special skills in translating before the journalist comes up with subtitles, at times meaning is lost along the way.

In Kenyan Newsrooms, there is also the assumption that once a journalist has knowledge of English and Kiswahili languages, and then they have the ability to translate sound bites spoken in the two languages. The study will sample a few long form TV features produced by journalists working at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV and analyze their accuracy in translating and subtitling of the sound bites from Kiswahili to English. In the mentioned TV stations, News is normally transmitted live in either English or Kiswahili languages at 1PM, 4PM, 7PM and at 9PM. The News bulletins that carry the big stories of the day are transmitted at 7PM and 9PM.

In the day-to-day news, translation of sound bites and subtitling is never done unless there is need to (mostly in instances where the news source is speaking in a language that is neither Kiswahili nor English). This means that it is normal to encounter a narration of a Kiswahili story but the sound bites are in English (in the 7PM News) and vice versa. This normally happens because of time frame, there isn't enough time for the Journalist who has been out in the field to translate all the sound bites for a story that is going on air on the very day. This is usually not the case when it comes to TV features/documentaries. This is because the Journalist has enough time to work on their story before it goes on air. Long form features often do not have an immediate deadline.

Subtitles are normally the go to option for many journalists as compared to other forms of audiovisual translations. This is because it is affordable and does not involve a lot of work compared to other options such as dubbing. Dubbing requires someone to record the translated work and then the translated voice replaces the voice of the source language. This is normally recommended because the viewer or audience can watch the feature seamlessly and enjoy the different aspects of the video – but it is rarely used. On the contrary, when it comes to subtitling, a viewer might miss out on some elements in the video because they are trying to read at the same time watch the video. A good feature for both subtitling and dubbing is that they all enable a TV feature/documentary to reach the masses who may be not conversant with one of the languages featured in the feature or documentary. This further enhances the piece to have a greater impact and reaction from the audience.

Aside from reaching the masses, Journalists who decide to use subtitles in their features are also at an advantageous position of entering their stories for International awards. All International awards require Journalists to use subtitles in the stories they are submitting for them to be considered in the awards. This is because, the judging panel in most cases comprises of people who may not understand a particular language. This means that Journalists who use subtitles in their works are at a better position of scooping International awards and gaining recognition. As we have seen above, long form TV features that have subtitles are powerful in conveying a critical message because they not only reach the masses but they also have the ability to build one's career in the field of Journalism. A long form TV feature has a number of elements that are attractive to the eyes. This is because they have pictures in motion. Subtitles at times are seen to be in a competition with the videos. Kruger & Steyn (2013) say, eye-tracking measures (fixations and saccades) are functions of the number of standard words and word length, which provide a reliable index of reading behavior of subtitles over extended audiovisual texts. The researcher believes that the number of words and how long a word is can be a deciding factor on whether the audience attention will be captured by the TV feature and documentary. If the subtitles appear to be too wordy, the viewer might be tempted to skip some of the sentences. This will affect how they understand as they may miss important information that is being passed through the subtitles.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The focus of this chapter is subtitles and sound bites in long form TV features. The chapter begins by looking at language of TV broadcasting in Kenya, history of long form TV features at NTV, sound bites, subtitles & long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV, where the place of subtitles in the Kenyan newsrooms as well as the process of subtitling was discussed. Finally, it looked at omissions & reductions in subtitles, which might lead to loss of meaning in the subtitles. This creates the base of chapter three where there is data presentation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DATA PRESENTATION & DESCRIPTION

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the main findings of data collection, related to objectives of the study, which were to find out if there is a loss of meaning in the translated subtitles in long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV and at the same time identify errors in the translated subtitles, to find out the challenges bilingual journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites for Kiswahili to English for long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV and to explore strategies of appropriate translation and subtitling of sound bites for TV features in Kenyan media.

The primary source of data for this research study is from journalists who specialize in producing long form TV features in the mentioned TV stations and who incorporate subtitles in their productions. The study will also discuss some of the long form TV features aired at NTV, KTN and Citizen that had subtitles and analyze the errors.

#### 3.2 Data on Errors in TV subtitles

The first objective of this study was to find out if there were errors in the translated subtitles in long form TV features in three TV stations in the country. The question that the findings of this objective sought to answer was: Are there errors in the translated subtitles of sound bites in long form TV features?

This was achieved when the researcher sampled a few long form TV features that had subtitles and were analyzed to check whether there were errors from three TV stations. The researcher also realized that the interviewees in the long form TV features were not speaking standard Kiswahili. There is a lot of code mixing of languages. The interviewees would speak a mixture of Kiswahili, English and Sheng (a slang) common to Kenyans. In some instances, some interviewees had vernacular words in their interviews. The findings were as follows:

### 3.2.1 Subtitled Long Form TV Features at NTV

On 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018, NTV published an investigative feature on a quack doctor who was preying on his unsuspecting patients at Kayole estate in Nairobi. The special report revealed how the doctor took advantage of some of his patients. The TV feature titled Quack Clinic had a lot of reactions from the public, which also led to the arrest of the ‘doctor’ in question. The piece also had subtitles used in most of the sound bites. At time code 20:58 on the feature, there is a woman who used to work for the doctor testifying. The woman’s identity was been hidden for her safety. The table below has her original sound bite and how it was translated and subtitled.

**Table 1: Quack Clinic in Kayole**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Hiyo mashini ya scan haifanyangi kazi, hata it does not work, yuwaka but hakuna kitu inashow for real, hata hizo results/conclusion zote zinawekwanga out of guess work, ziko tu hapo for display, na ziko hapo kuleta pesa.	The machines in the clinic don’t really work. They are just for display to make money.

On analysis of the above testimonial, the interviewee is not communicating in standard Kiswahili. She is mixing up a bit of Kiswahili, English and Sheng (local slang) which is normal for a majority of Kenyans especially those from urban centers. Whatever she is saying can be understood by a number of people but an important part of the information was left out when the journalist was working on the translation and subtitle. The woman starts speaking in Kiswahili then switches to English then Kiswahili. But, her Kiswahili is not fluent though a majority of Kenyans can understand what she is saying. To break it down; her first words are in Kiswahili, then she throws in a word in English and she continues mixing them up. Code mixing is common in Kenya.

The woman spoke of patients' results that are never real but are arrived at out of guesswork. This piece of information is key. It means that there are patients who visited the clinic in question who were not correctly diagnosed and may have been put in the wrong medication. A viewer watching the investigative piece and they have knowledge of English, Kiswahili and Sheng will get the message but if the viewer only understands English, then they stand to miss out on some pieces of information. The journalist who worked on the investigative feature understood the message of the interviewee but he failed to capture some important information. The journalist who worked on this piece is journalist number two who answered a questionnaire that sought to find out challenges bilingual journalists undergo when translating and subtitling. The same journalists pointed out that time factor and pressure to beat deadlines were among challenges he faced during translating and subtitling. This could mean that the mentioned challenges could have contributed to the fact that he chose to render the interviewees message the way he did and subtitled it.

9<sup>th</sup> June 2019, NTV aired another powerful but disturbing feature that was titled Predator Guardians. The report chronicled the stories of young children who had been defiled by their guardians in Makueni County. On time code 25:38, is a narration of a woman who recounted how her two boys had been sodomized. The woman speaks standard Kiswahili that can be understood by any Kiswahili speaker. Unlike the interviewee in Table one, this one in this feature does not mix us any language. She only speaks Kiswahili.

**Table 2: Predator Guardians**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Ujumbe nilipata na watoto wangu, wakienda kwa choo, hiyo choo yao ilikuwa na damu...wakatuambia mmoja alilala na yeye mara tatu na mwingine mara mbili, nikawauliza mlilala na yeye kweli? Wakasema ndio...alikuwa na nyumba pale chini na akawaita, kuja nikupe kazi...mmoja akienda, yule mwingine kwa kitanda, akimaliza huyo mwingine anaenda kwa mboga na yule mwingine anakuja kwa kitanda...tukaenda hosipitali Mbooni wakatuambia walifanyiwa hivyo kitambo hawawezi kuonekana lakini walifanyiwa, tukapitia polisi na ikaishia hapo.	When they would go to the toilet they would bleed a lot. He has a piece of land and he had offered them work. When two of them were working one would be with him in the room...and then after some time he would return and the other would go to the room. We went to hospital and it was confirmed that they had been sodomized, We reported to the police station but nothing has been done.

From the interviewees' narration, she reveals that one of her children had been sodomized three times and another child went through the ordeal twice. This was a critical piece of information that had been shared but it was lost during translation and therefore it did not appear in the subtitles. For a viewer who only understands English missed out on the crucial point. The journalist who worked on this feature is journalist number six who also participated in responding to questions in the questionnaire. To understand why she chose to translate and subtitle this piece of information the way she did, in the questionnaire she says that when subtitling, she tries to make it short and crisp so that her audience can have the time to appreciate the pictures even as they read the subtitles. She also believes that too long subtitles become messy on the TV screen. This could have informed the manner in which she translated and subtitled this section, which at the end, she left out bits of information that were important.

At time code 26:38, one of the boys' narrates...

**Table 3: Predator Guardians**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Tukilima anatuita hapo nyumbani anatutoa suruali na anaanza kufanya hivi, halafu akianza kufanya anatuambia twende nyumbani na tusifanye na tukisema atatukata na panga.	He would call us remove our inner wears and he would do it. He would then threaten us that if we tell on him he would kill us.

The boy interviewed spoke standard Kiswahili that is easily understood by any Kiswahili speaker. The journalist who worked on translating and subtitled of this section tried their best in ensuring the message is not lost, however the only part that is missing is how the perpetrator got the children. Apart from that, the journalist failed to clearly state that the children were being sodomized. Obviously, from the excerpt above, the child could have felt embarrassed in describing what happened to him.

That is why, the child used Kiswahili words such as *“anaanza kufanya hivi, akianza kufanya..”*

Though, the journalist understood that the child was speaking of sodomy, she failed to bring it out clearly. Instead, she translated and subtitled the above phrases as, *“he would do it”*. This could pass the wrong message to anyone who depends on the subtitles. They would not really understand that the message being passed across is of a child who had been sodomized. Another piece of information that was summarized in the above excerpt is when the child says... *“na tukisema atatukata na panga”* the journalist translated this as, *“he would kill us”*. The boy's narration captured the threatening words from his perpetrator that he was going to slash them with a machete, which paints a picture of how the boys were scared. The depth of this threat was diluted when the journalist opted to summarize it.

In 2016, there was a special TV feature that highlighted experiences residents in some parts of Kitui county encounter as a result of poisonous snakes that encroach their homes. Some lost their lives and others are living with scars from snakebites. The feature titled *Deadly vipers terrorizing residents of Kitui / Snakes in the plains* had interesting sound bites that needed to be translated from Kiswahili to English, but the journalist had a hard time translating sound bites that were humorous. At time code 07:55 one of the interviewees cracks a joke while trying to describe a snake. He says...

**Table 4: Snakes in the Plains**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Chandetto tunaeza sema ni cha story yaani ni kinyoka cha story yaani kinapenda story hivi...udaku udaku vile kama waandishi wa habari...si nyinyi mnachukua hapa na mnapeleka pale? Na yeye pia anapenda story sana hatujui anapelekea nani wapi, lakini anapenda story sana.	‘Chandetto’ is a snake that enjoys the company of people...we can compare it to you journalists because it loves stories...journalists gather and spread information but in the case of ‘Chandetto’ we do not know where it spreads the stories.

The man interviewed mixed vernacular from the Akamba community and Kiswahili. This is also common in a number of Kenyans. The man speaks of a certain type of snake he refers to in his vernacular as “*chandetto*”. He is not sure of how the snake is known in English or Kiswahili. The journalist maintains the word “*chandetto*” in translation and subtitles. This is one of the many challenges journalists encounter while they are out in the field recording interviews. To the rest of the viewers that speak English and Kiswahili, they would be left with no option than to go with the translated version of the description of the snake. The journalist also felt like she could not achieve the desired effect on the audience as humor was diluted during translation and when it was translated and subtitles were used. This is because, how the message came out in Kiswahili, it was funny. The interviewee was trying to equate the snake to journalists but how he brought it out was lost in the translation. Journalist number six who responded to questionnaires captured this fact when

she said that... *”there are some words if translated into English the meaning gets watered down and it may fail to communicate the intensity of the meaning of the situation or word therefore the story loses the feeling of the story because feelings and emotions cannot be communicated through text.”*

18<sup>th</sup> August 2019, there was a special feature titled Toxic flow that aired on NTV Kenya. The feature investigated the causes and effects of pollution in the Nairobi River basin. It caused uproar from the public who demanded the government to take action against companies that were polluting the rivers. As a reaction the National Environment Management Authority swung into action and closed a number of factories in the country, which directed their untreated waste into the public sewers and rivers.

The long form TV feature that was about 45 minutes long had translated sound bites and subtitles.

At time code 08:42 there is a man speaking about his vision of Dandora falls which is on Nairobi River. He says...

**Table 5: Toxic Flow**

Original Sound bite	Translated & Subtitled
Si vision yenye tuko nayo, tunataka ikuwe ni park, park yenye hati si lazima mimi saa zile nataka kutembeza familia yangu ati nitoke hapa niende places zingine, naweza leta mtoi wangu hapa na afeel ako ndani ya community yake, lakini coumminity yenye iko sawa	The vision that we have is to turn this area into a park. A park where I can be able to bring my family and enjoy being part of this community.

From the original sound bite, there is code mixing. The interviewee is mixing up Kiswahili, English and Sheng. This again, is how a majority of Kenyans would communicate. They tend to mix up words from different languages but in the end they make meaning. Table 5 presents a classic example of how a journalist listened to the interviewee, understood what

he was saying and captured it all when translating and subtitling. The translation was not done word for word and at the same time meaning was not lost.

At time code 13:28, of the above TV feature, there is a woman who recounts how the polluted river has affected her life...

**Table 6: Toxic Flow**

<b>Original sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
<p>Hatuwezi kusema ati ni kazi mzuri, hapana. Tunasema hii maji ni mbaya, surely ni mbaya hata ukiinua hivi ukiangalia si ni ya green. Hiyo green niambie wewe ukienda ukiweka kwa karai uone ni green uoge, unaweza? Enda usafishe vyombo? Unaweza kusafisha naye? Kwa hivyo, hii maji kusema ukweli haitusaidii hata, kwa sababu kama inatusaidia hata saa hii ningekuwa na nyumba ya mawe lakini saa hii niko na nyumba ya matope na niko kwa mto inaweza kunisaidia niwe tajiri</p>	<p>This is not a profitable endeavour, this water is unfit for human use, it's clear by just looking at the colour. Can you use it to take a birth or wash your utensils. This means this water is useless to us because if it was of any benefit I would be rich.</p>

The journalist tried to reduce the number of words in the sound bite because the interviewee used a lot of words in expressing herself. In translating, not much is lost. The only piece of information that was not captured is when the woman says she lives in a house made out of mud and if the river was beneficial to her, she would be living in a house made of stone. The journalist summarized it all and translated it as the woman would be rich if the river would be of benefit to her. Not being rich and living in a house made out of mud could mean different things. For instance, for a viewer who only understands English and they rely on the subtitles to make sense of what the interviewee is saying missed out on the

living conditions the woman is trying to explain. Like a number of sound bites selected for this study, this one also has a mixture of Kiswahili and English words.

At time code 23:32

**Table 7: Toxic Flow**

Original sound bite	Translated & Subtitled
<p>Hii maji inakuwanga chafu, saa zingine unaweza pata mtu amekuja na hajui kama kunakuwanga na kuna kisima za kuchukua na kutumia maji, anakuja anakunywa hii, halafu inadhuru afya zake. Ukioga unasikia si poa, juu unawashwa sana, unajigwara sana, mpaka kesho yake ndio uwache kusikia hiyo maneno</p>	<p>We use this water to drink to bathe and to do our laundry but the water is too dirty. When you bathe with this water, you'll get itchy all over.</p>

The journalist failed to observe the rules of punctuation. The first sentence in the second column is exactly how it appeared on the TV screen. The sentence is too long and for it to make sense immediately, it needed to be properly punctuated. These are some of the mistakes that go on air because Newsrooms lack that second eye to help in editing of the translated sound bites and subtitling. On whether the translation and subtitled text made meaning, it did. But the interviewee speaks of someone's health being affected because of drinking water from the river. This information has been left out. The interviewee also speaks of itchiness and that it ends the following day after one takes a bathe in the river. This has also been left out. The omitting of pieces of information that are important is always a raw deal served to viewers who depend on subtitles to make meaning of what the sound bite is about. Even though the speaker is not using standard Kiswahili, he tends to use a lot of the language mixing it with a little bit of sheng.

Another omission of important pieces of information can be found at time code 25:46

**Table 8: Toxic Flow**

<b>Original sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Nyakati hizo maji ilikuwa safi sana. Ilikuwa hata ukiiangalia huwezi kushindwa kunywa, lakini wakati huu ukiangalia unaona hii maji ni kama sio mzuri kwa kunywa	The water was clean then, but now, not so much.

The sound bite is in standard Kiswahili, one that can be understood by anyone who speaks basic Kiswahili. The interviewee speaks of how the water from the river was drinkable but now, no one can drink it. The journalist missed this important information when they were translating and subtitling. The information gives anyone watching the TV feature a picture of how the water used to be clean. The subtitles used after translation failed to capture this information.

### **3.2.2 Subtitled Long Form TV Features at KTN**

Hardship academy is a special feature that was aired by KTN on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2017. The center of the feature was in Baringo County where the journalist narrated the devastating state of education for children attending the early childhood development education in the region. The journalist went an extra mile and translated and used subtitles for sound bites that were not in English.

At time code 06:25, is a sound bite of a teacher saying...

**Table 9: Hardship Academy**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Hatuna darasa, tuna darasa pale mnaona na tulijengewa na CDF kwa pesa kidogo ambaye tulipewa na tumepata kujengewa hiyo darasa, room ingine tumebadilishiwa kuwa store na ofisi.	We have one class, which was constructed by CDF, We have converted the other rooms to a store and office.

The teacher speaking mixes Kiswahili and English. Though she uses standard Kiswahili that is easily understood, she mixed it up with CDF as an abbreviation, which means Constituency Development Fund. On translating and subtitling of the above section, the journalist tried their best in ensuring that everything the interviewee was speaking about had been captured. But, she left out the information where the teacher said that they had no class.

At time code 07:08, a teacher says...

This is how the sound bite was translated and subtitled...

**Table 10: Hardship Academy**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Nilianza kufunza preschool 1987, nikaenda course Elgeyo Marakwet TT nikamaliza 89 nikaanza kufunza nursery upande wa Tangulbey, nikaendelea na watoto namna hiyo nikalipwa na county council kwa period kidogo tu like 3 years nikaanza 500 nikaendelea namna hiyo hata ikawa 3,000 alafu wakasimamisha sisi Baringo mzima au Kenya sijui halafu sasa nikakaa tu kidogo kidogo kwa sababu nilikuwa nimesomea jinsi ya kufunza watoto wananchi pia hawakuniwacha wakasema tu sasa kuja saidia sisi.	I started teaching pre-school in 1987, I completed teaching course in 1989 then I was employed by the county council for three years, I was earning between sh.500 and sh.3,000 then our contract was terminated.

Code mixing is clearly visible in the above excerpt on table six. The interviewee mixes Kiswahili and English when responding to the journalist.

The interviewee uses a lot of words while expressing himself. He speaks of when he started teaching pre-school, the college he went to, history of how much he used to be paid, how his contract was terminated and how he went back to teaching.

The journalist tried to compress the words opting to ignore some information while translating, the piece of information that was lost during translation is where the interviewee went to school and how parents went for him after his contract was terminated and now he depends on the parents to pay him. This information would have added value in the story as if it had been translated and subtitled, the audience who rely on the subtitles

would know the teacher’s level of education and how it did not match to his salary and eventually why parents went looking for him even though he lost his job from the government.

Culture Quest: Turkana was a special feature that was produced and aired on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2018 on KTN news. The feature showcased the traditions of the Turkana tribe including how they conduct their weddings. The feature had translated sound bites and subtitles...

At time code 05:34, is a sound bite of an elder saying...

**Table 11: Culture Quest, Turkana**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
<p>Kijana mtrukana anapozaliwa akiwa mvulana anaanza kwa kuchunga watoto ya mbuzi akishaongeza miaka kumi na kitu, kumi na moja anaenda kuchunga mbuzi enyewe tena akiendelea na miaka kumi na tano, kumi na sita anaendelea kukuwa pengine mchungaji ya ng’ombe ama ngamia, kwetu punda tu ndio hatuchungi, zinajilisha zenyewe na kukuja nyumbani...eeee wanaenda ngoma, wakicheza huko mpaka saa sita saa saba usiku wanarudi, pale kwa ngoma vijana wanaanza kujuana na wale wasichana wanaaza kujuana, wanaanza kupata bibi kutoka kwa majirani halafu sasa anaeleza wazazi yake pengine wazazi wanaweza kungeuza wakisema si hiyo family chukua kutoka family fulani ama watoto ya mzee Fulani bibi anaweza kuwa hapo.</p>	<p>A male Turkana child looks after kids (goat offspring). At the age of 11 years, he starts to look after mature goats. As he grows he is entrusted with cows, camels, sheep...we do not heard donkeys, they graze and return home on their own....between 16 to 20 years he is now allowed to attend the night dance with friends and look out for a suitable girl to start a family</p>

The man being interviewed stuck to one language that anyone speaking Kiswahili can comprehend.

How translation and subtitling of the above example was done is similar to the one on table 6 six where the journalist tried to summarize the information, which appeared to be too bulky. In the process, some information was lost especially where the parents have the power to refuse a suitor that their son brings home.

13<sup>th</sup> December 2014, KTN had a special feature on the aftermath of the Baragoi Massacre that resulted to the death of 42 police officers and reservists in Samburu County. The officers met their deaths at Suguta valley while on a mission to recover stolen cattle from rustlers.

At time code 03:50, one of the interviewees says...

**Table 12: Baragoi Massacre**

Original sound bite	Translated & Subtitled
<p>Sasa venye tulikuwa tuna advance, tulikuja sasa tuka nini..tukasikia risasi imepigwa kumbe tumekaribia mahali wako...wao wanatuona lakini sisi ujue hatuwaoni</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the cattle rustlers could see us but we couldn't see them.</p>
<p>At time code 05:33...he goes on to say... Nika kaa pale, nikatulia pale, sasa saa hizo niko pekee yangu hata sioni mtu, ile watu nimeona nikikimbia ni watu wameangushwa chini</p>	<p>I could not see any of my fellow officers. I only saw the dead ones.</p>

The first part of the original sound bite is a testimonial of one of the police officers who survived the massacre. He too mixes Kiswahili and a bit of English in his speech. The interviewee speaks of how they were advancing against the cattle rustlers. This piece of information is missing from the subtitles. The same also happened when the police officer talked of how he hid but the journalist also omitted this when he was translating and subtitling.

16<sup>th</sup> October 2014, KTN had a special feature titled Sword of Death. The 10 minute TV feature told of a disturbing story of how Nairobi county officers attacked more than twelve hawkers around Ngara Estate. The hawkers accused the county officers of stabbing them using knives in a bid to scare them away from streets.

At time code 03:23, one of the witnesses says...

**Table 13: Sword of Death**

Original sound bite	Translated & Subtitled
<p>Sisi tunajua vizuri Kenya tuliintrodusiwa kitu inaitwa community policing, na tunafaa saa hii tukienda tukipiga ripoti about watu wetu wanaumizwa na askari yeyote Yule anafaa anaenda anashikwa na anapelekwa mahakamani</p>	<p>In Kenya, we have community policing. The Askaris who assaulted us should be arrested and taken to a Court of Law.</p>

The speaker mixes up bits of Kiswahili, English and sheng in his speech. The interviewee speaks of how they always report harassment from the county officers. This was not captured. The speaker also mentions ‘askari’ to mean county officer. The journalist used it the same manner in the subtitles, meaning he did not translate it. For any viewer who only understands English may get lost as to what ‘askari’ means.

At time code 03:55, another witness says...

**Table 14: Sword of Death**

<b>Original sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Watu watatu ndio wamepigwa risasi huko kwa soko sasa hii iko next na kwa matunda. Kuna mama na mtoto ndio walipigwa risasi hapa chini, na kuna mmoja ameuawa..	Three people were shot by police that very day. A woman and her baby were shot dead on the other side of the market.

Code mixing can also be seen on this sound bite as the interviewee uses Kiswahili and English when communicating. In the interview, the witness recounts that a woman and a child were shot and that one of them died. But the message from what was translated and subtitled said that both the woman and the child died. The subtitles pass conflicting reports from what the interviewee said, for someone who understands Kiswahili and English, they may be left wondering what was the actual truth. But, for someone who only understands English then they would be take the message as it is from the subtitles not knowing that it was conflicting with what the original sound bite was saying.

At time code 05:46, the interviewee says...

**Table 15: Sword of Death**

Original sound bite	Translated & Subtitled
<p>Gari ya kanjo ndio imeenda imekuwa ni koti yetu, hiyo ndio imekuwa court ya kwenda kujudge hawker, na hawker akifikishwa pale hata hapewi chance ya kwenda kusema yes or no, hapewi chance ya kusema nimekubali au nimekataa tunasema vile tumeumiziwa watu, watu wetu wamedungwa na kisu, na watu wetu wengi wakienda kureport central, ukifika huko unaenda unaambiwa na uko na bahati sana haujauliwa, kwa hivyo sasa imefika pahali pengine sasa hawker amekuwa si mtu.</p>	<p>Nairobi county vehicles have become our courts. The work of the Askaris is to stab us. At Nairobi Central Police Station, the police officers there only ridicules us. Hawkers are no longer human beings</p>

The interviewee is also mixing up Kiswahili and English languages. Some of the information such as how the hawkers are not given chance to defend themselves has been lost in the translation and subtitling. The journalist also uses ‘askari’ in the subtitles which might fail to communicate to a viewer who only understands English.

### **3.2.3 Subtitled Long Form TV Features at Citizen TV**

April 28<sup>th</sup> 2019, Citizen TV had a special feature titled Garbage Rivers. It documented how the Nairobi and Athi rivers were polluted and how several attempts by the government to stop the pollution always failed. The journalist who worked on the feature used subtitles in some of the sound bites.

At time code 12:07, one of the interviewees says...

**Table 16: Garbage Rivers**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Hii mto inabeba vitu mingi sana...hii mto inabeba...hadi maiti zupita hapa, kama imejaa unaona mwili ya mtu ikipita unaona tu ikienda, yaani imebeba uchafu nyingi yani bado watoto wadogo wale wame abortiwa	We see even bodies of dead people flowing through the river...I have found three myself

The interviewee speaks more of Kiswahili and a little bit of sheng when responding to the journalist's questions. An example of sheng is when he says... "*wale wame abortiwa*" to mean children who have been aborted.

On the other hand, the journalist applied the rule of summary while translating and subtitling. The interviewee speaks of fetuses that are at times found dumped in the river. This piece of information is lost during translation, which is evident from the subtitles. On the other hand, the subtitles gives out information that is not on the sound bite of the interviewee. The journalist writes that the interviewee said he found three dead bodies in the river; this information is missing from the sound bite. This is a risk. For an observant person who understands both English and Kiswahili, they will notice the discrepancy. This is because; the information being shared is not accurate. But for someone who understands only English, they have no option other than take the information as it is.

At time code 14:54, another interviewee says...

**Table 17: Garbage Rivers**

<b>Kiswahili sound bite</b>	<b>Translated &amp; Subtitled</b>
Uvundo mbaya sana, tena sio uvundo wa kawaida, ni uvundo wa sumu, sumu, sumuu...poison na kisungu	This is poison

The person being interviewed above has a mixture of Kiswahili and English. He tries to paint a picture of how the environment has been polluted to the extent that there is a strong stench in the area. He repeatedly says that the stench is so bad. But, the journalist summarizes the information in the sound bite by using only three words. In the translation and subtitles, the journalist fails to capture the description of stench. This is a raw deal for a viewer who only understands English.

### **3.3 Presentation of Findings from the Questionnaires**

The researcher recorded interviews from ten journalists from NTV, KTN and Citizen TV who produce long form TV features and at the same time translate and use subtitles for the sound bites in their features. The questions were tailored in such a way that the findings would be able to derive responses that would look into objective number two and three which sought to find out the challenges bilingual journalists encountered when they are translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English for long form TV features in the mentioned TV stations and to explore strategies of appropriate translation and subtitling of sound bites for TV features.

From the ten journalists who were interviewed, eight were female and two were male. This reflects that a majority of male journalists do not specialize in producing long form TV features. Most of them tend to lean on the side of political reportage. From the questionnaire, six of the ten questions were specifically meant at looking into objective one and two of the research. Eight of the journalists interviewed have more than six years' experience in the profession, only two have been in the profession for four years. This

sample helped capture the information needed in the research because they are an experienced group whose opinions would reflect the situation in most newsrooms when it comes to translating and subtitling for features.

### **3.3.1 Findings from the Questionnaires**

#### **Journalist 1**

Like the rest of the other journalists interviewed, journalist one says they do translate and use subtitles but at times due to pressure of delivery they opt out as it is not mandatory at NTV to incorporate subtitles. The journalist says they chose to translate and use subtitles as they feel it is professional as it enables all audiences to understand the content in her features. This is because she assumes that not all audiences in the country can speak Kiswahili and therefore subtitles help to bring everyone on board to be on the same page, it also makes her work appear tidy. The journalist believes that she is good at translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English as well as subtitling.

She says while at work, she tries to translate meaning as opposed to doing it word for word and therefore she might not be able to translate everything the interviewee says. She does this by first understanding what the interviewee is saying then puts it into context. The difficulties the journalist faces when translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English is when she comes across terms from other professions such medical and legal. According to her, there are certain words that are difficult to translate.

She gives an example of *'malalamishi'* a Kiswahili word which could be translated as someone who is complaining in English, but in legal terms it takes another form which could be rendered as *'petition – an official complaint that is written and presented to a court of law'*. The challenges she faces when translating also double up in subtitling because she at times is confused on the write texts to type as it stems from the translation she already did.

The journalist believes that translation challenges journalists face can be solved when one reads a lot of books which helps one have a good command of language, taking time to understand a certain language pattern, talking to people who are experts in a language. On subtitling, the journalist recommends that her colleagues should be free in consulting each

other in the newsroom as well as looking at what their counterparts in the international media houses are doing. This also applies to translating.

## **Journalist 2**

The second journalist has worked for over ten years and he specializes on producing investigative pieces. He notes that Kenya has a diverse audience (some are expatriates), at the same time, NTV streams news online, which further expands the audience who might be watching from different parts of the World. These are some of the reasons he translates his sound bites from Kiswahili to English and use subtitles. Since he is a bilingual journalist, he feels that he is good at translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English as well as subtitling.

Even though he feels he is good at it, he acknowledges that Kiswahili is a poetic and flowery language; the depth and weight of it at times is lost when he tries to translate to English. Another difficulty he encounters is when the interviewee's pace is fast in Kiswahili and subtitling has to march what the person is saying, he says there are times when the audience complain that they read what the person intends to say before they do so. When it comes to subtitling, the journalist pointed out that time factor is a huge challenge. He says, it takes a lot of time because of editing, durations and pressure to beat deadlines. He says it is a tedious job. Another challenge is when trying to ensure the tenses and punctuations are right.

He believes that employing technology would go along way in solving challenges faced by journalists when translating. He uses soft wares such as grammarly where he can upload his script, which corrects him and saves him time. The software also gives him technical options to words he would want to translate. This is a personal initiative as he has subscribed to it. Having a second eye is also important. He advises journalists to read through their work.

He also encourages journalists to gives themselves enough time when subtitling so that they can reduce the number of errors that might appear on the TV screen.

### **Journalist 3**

The third journalist has specialized in producing health features. She also feels compelled to translate Kiswahili sound bites to English because does not only target the local audience but a wider audience since all features are uploaded on YouTube which makes it accessible to a wider audience who may not have an understanding of Kiswahili. She believes she is excellent at translating Kiswahili sound bites to English because Kiswahili is her first language and she was once a Kiswahili journalist when she was working for QTV (a Kiswahili TV station). On challenges she faces when translating Kiswahili to English is that Kiswahili words and sentences are longer compared to English. At times she loses meaning especially on expressions, some vocabularies in Kiswahili tend to have more than one meaning in English she gives an example of '*nakupenda*' in Kiswahili, which can mean 'I like or I love'. This can distort meaning.

On subtitling, she says she is constrained by time in most cases, then the space or frames that subtitles have to run on the screen. This she has to deal with by ensuring the subtitles are not wordy and that they are visible. She at times is drawn to focus more on the visibility than the content.

She recommends that every newsroom should have experts in the two languages or proofreaders who can help out the journalists in putting the right translation into perspective so that meaning is not lost. This is because editors only go through the main script but they never look at the translated script for sound bites. The journalist also feels like newsrooms need professional subtitlers to help the journalists, which can help to reduce the burn out on the journalists therefore reducing the number of errors that might appear on the TV screen.

### **Journalist 4**

For the purposes of professionalism, this journalist feels it is good to translate and subtitle your sound bites in accordance to the language being used in the news bulletin. For example, the 9PM bulletin at KTN is in English; therefore all sound bites should march up to that or be translated and subtitled. Since she is a bilingual journalist, journalist number four believes she is good at translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English and she rates

herself as average on subtitling because it is an art she picked up in the newsroom since she started producing TV features.

When she translates, she says the difficulty she faces is when words and meaning are lost in translation. On subtitling, the intensity of work is a major hurdle. It takes a lot of time according to her and it is very easy for one to make grammatical mistakes.

The journalist believes newsrooms need a software that can help in translating or have a professional translator. She also suggests that newsrooms can also employ professional subtitlers who can help out, this option also provides a second eye/opinion of someone who has not interacted with the feature from the beginning, which means they won't have any biases.

### **Journalist 5**

This journalist has been in the profession for fifteen years producing long form TV features. She translates her Kiswahili sound bites to English and uses subtitles because she would not only want to reach out to locals but also expatriates in the country. This helps every viewer to understand the content in the story, using subtitles also makes one's work appear neat and complete.

The journalist believes she is good in translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English and subtitling but a challenge she faces is that at times some interviewees can express themselves using a lot of words, which can make it difficult when translating because one would need to summarize. In subtitling, the journalist says she experiences difficulties because she finds it hard to include everything the interviewee said in subtitles. Therefore to ensure that the TV screen does not appear too wordy, she sometimes removes some words, which may distort the intended meaning from the interviewee. On subtitling, she says it entails a lot of work, which is boring. She gives an example of a journalist who is working on a 40 minutes story who has to listen to what the interviewee is saying word for word, then they type the texts that appear as subtitles, this she says it consumes a lot of time which can take hours.

She believes the best way to tackle challenges that come as a result of translation is to have a translator to help the journalists. This can be achieved if media houses see the need of having translators and therefore employ them. They can help in tightening the translation of sound bites and subtitles. In solving challenges that stem from subtitles, it has always been her hope that she gets to interview people who can only speak in English, which is impossible especially in rural areas.

### **Journalist 6**

Journalist number six says she translates and uses subtitles because she is alive to the fact that there are people who are in the country who do not understand Kiswahili and so for their sake so that they also get to follow the story, she translates. She also feels that not translating and using subtitles is also not fair for such audiences who may be missing bits and pieces of the story because of language of barrier. The journalist believes she is good in translating and subtitling because there is always room to improve. She says when subtitling, she tries to make it short and crisp so that her audience can have the time to appreciate the pictures even as they are reading the subtitles. This is because if the subtitles are too long, then the audience might miss out on some aspects from the pictures.

The journalist believes the Kiswahili language is richer than English in that there are some words if translated into English the meaning gets watered down and it may fail to communicate the intensity of the meaning of the situation or word therefore the challenge she faces is losing the feeling of the story because feelings and emotions cannot be communicated through text. Some jokes are also lost in translation. In subtitling, the dilemma she faces is when she is trying to make it short and this might end up diluting the meaning and when you type a lot of details, you risk losing your audiences because they are also attracted to video. Too long subtitles become messy.

The journalists say some challenges cannot be done away with such as when trying to capture an emotion in text, which always proves to be futile. She recommends that journalists should practice the art of summary when working on subtitles as well as try to perfect both Kiswahili and English through reading widely to increase their vocabulary which helps in selection of the right words during translation. She also advises journalists to consult widely; this is because no one has a monopoly of knowledge. On subtitling, the

journalist advises media houses to conduct periodic training of its staff, which will eventually pay off on the quality of content, put on air.

### **Journalist 7**

The journalist chooses to translate sound bites as well as use subtitles so that his long form TV features can reach out to a wider audience. The journalist says since he is bilingual, he doesn't have a hard time working with both Kiswahili and English when translating and generating subtitles. The challenges the journalist encounters during translation lies in some Kiswahili terminologies are difficult to render to English and so in most cases, he consults his editors.

In subtitling, the journalist often has to decide on whether to translate word for word or achieve meaning through summary. This is a challenge he always faces. Like journalist number six, this journalist says media houses should invest in training of their staff and at the same time there should be a guideline. According to him, Kamusi and dictionaries may help but they are not enough because they are general.

The journalist gives an example of a parliamentary committee hearing, a task force and a commission. These terms require specific terminologies for Kiswahili for instance '*jopo kazi*' for task force and '*kamati*' for committee. In many instances, journalists mix up these terms.

The journalist believes that workshop trainings would go a long way in introducing journalists to the art of subtitling which would save media houses the embarrassment of errors glaring on the screen.

### **Journalist 8**

Like the rest of her colleagues, journalist number eight translates and uses subtitles for reach. She also uses them for clarity when there is a problem with the quality of sound. As a bilingual journalist, she believes she is good in both translating and subtitling. Some challenges she faces when translating is when she lacks an equivalent of certain words from Kiswahili to English. Time is a challenge when it comes to subtitling because it involves a lot of work.

The journalist believes newsrooms needs professional translators to help out journalists in translation of sound bites. This can drastically reduce the time journalists take when they are editing their TV features, translating and subtitling.

### **Journalist 9**

Apart from reaching out to audiences who may neither understand Kiswahili and English, this journalist translates and uses subtitles to cater for the needs of people who may have hearing impairment. Since Kiswahili is her first language, she believes she is excellent at translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English. Time is a challenge when translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English especially if she is trying to beat deadline. There is also difficulty in translating of proverbs and idioms from Kiswahili to English. On subtitling, she has a problem with shortening the words of the interviewees so that they can fit in two sentences on the screen. This is because Kiswahili is too wordy.

The journalist believes that if it were not for tight deadlines, then she is comfortable in translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English. Having enough time can also help in ensuring one generates quality subtitles.

### **Journalist 10**

The journalist rates herself as average when it comes to translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English because there are some words that she has encountered that have proved to be a challenge. The journalist also points out that translating demand a lot of time from listening, translating to subtitling. Space is also a challenge when subtitling, which at times forces her to squeeze some words on the TV screen which may lead to loss of meaning. She believes, media houses should have a in-house translator to help out the journalists who can help in reducing the time of piecing up the TV feature. Training is another recommendation the journalist believes it can be used to solve the challenge she faces on translating and subtitling.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

Data was presented in this chapter in the form of short excerpts retrieved from some of the long form TV features that had subtitles that aired on NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. Additionally, data obtained from a questionnaire containing ten questions answered by 10 journalists who specialize in producing TV features from the three media houses was also presented. The same data forms the basis for analysis in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings of the study as captured from the response to questions on the questionnaires by journalists NTV, KTN and Citizen TV who specialize in producing long form TV features and incorporate translated subtitles in their work. Not all journalists in the mentioned TV stations produce long form TV features. The questionnaires were distributed to ten journalists. The chapter further discusses the findings in a broader sense towards fulfilling the objectives of the study.

The findings are further analyzed and tested against the Skopos theory, which was the theoretical framework adopted to answer the research questions outlined in chapter one of this research. The main objective of this study was to find out if there were errors in the translated subtitles of sound bites in long form TV features in three media houses, with the other objectives being to find out the challenges bilingual journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English for long form TV features and to explore strategies of appropriate translation and subtitling of sound bites for TV features. At the end of every objective, a determination is made based on the findings and discussions.

#### 4.2 Loss of Meaning in Subtitles of Long Form TV Features

The findings in tables presented in *chapter three* show just how errors can occur in the translated subtitles in long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. The researcher also looked at how the journalists from the three media houses translated their sound bites from Kiswahili to English and how they put to use subtitles. This means that the challenges of translating and subtitling are experienced across the board in the Kenyan media. The number of errors appearing on the subtitles also shows that just how much meaning might be lost and how viewers who do not understand Kiswahili and rely on the English subtitles might be missing some important information in the process. A further analysis on the findings from the above tables show that a number of journalists face a similar problem;

that of trying to reduce the number of words from Kiswahili when they are translating to English.

This is informed by the space constraint on the TV screen, the number of frames and the time the viewers have to read the subtitles. This challenge is normally encountered by journalists because they do not use the appropriate software for subtitles but they put to use a program within Final cut pro (a video editing software) not recognized as a professional software for subtitles.

The analysis from the tables further reveals that most journalists were torn in between translating word for word or summarizing the translation of the sound bite in order to put it into context and give meaning.

#### **4.3 Testing the Findings against the Skopos Theory**

The first objective of this research was to find out if there were errors in the subtitles of the translated sound bites at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. The language the research was looking into was translation from Kiswahili to English, though some of the interviewees did not speak the standard Kiswahili. The findings presented above were analyzed using the Skopos theory as mentioned in chapter one. This theory introduced in the 1970s by Hans J. Vermeer and Katherine Reiss deals with the purpose of the act of translating which helps to determine the strategies to be used in the process of rendering a piece of work from a source language to a target language.

The first rule of Skopos theory stresses on the result of the translation, which should be determined and guided by its purpose. To achieve this, the translator ought to understand the intention of the work, which will act as a guide on how they will approach it. From the findings in the above tables in chapter three, the journalist had to first listen to the sound bite of the interviewee, understand the message before acting on it by translating and later use subtitles. At times a journalist may fail to accurately render the message from source text to target text which affects the final product.

In the TV feature on the Quack clinic that aired on NTV, the journalist missed out on a crucial point, the interviewee talked of patients' results that are never real but are arrived at out of guesswork.

The exact sound bite of the interviewee was...

*“Hiyo mashini ya scan haifanyangi kazi, hata it does not work, yuwaka but hakuna kitu inashow for real, hata hizo results/conclusion zote zinawekwanga out of guess work, ziko tu hapo for display, na ziko hapo kuleta pesa.”*

And this is how it was translated...

*“The machines in the clinic don’t really work. They are just for display to make money.”*

From the translation, a piece of information was left out as it was evident from the subtitles. A viewer watching the investigative piece and they have knowledge of English and Kiswahili will get the message but if the viewer only understands English, then they missed out on the information. Such errors are common in local media houses especially since journalist who report on both Kiswahili and English are deemed to good at translating in between the two languages. As a result, meaning is lost in the process therefore the results of the translation is placed on the litmus paper which could be the first rule of Skopos, theory, it fails as it was not guided by its purpose. Another challenge that could have led to the translation not delivering the message of the source language could be from the fact that the journalist omitted some words so that the subtitle could appear neat and not crammed up with words.

The same challenge can also be spotted in table 8 of Garbage Rivers. The journalist in trying to ensure that he sticks to two sentences format of subtitles on the TV screen, he ended up omitting some words that diluted what the interviewee said..

The sound bite in Kiswahili was..

*“Hii mto inabeba vitu mingi sana...hii mto inabeba...hadi maiti zupita hapa, kama imejaa unaona mwili ya mtu ikipita unaona tu ikienda, yaani imebeba uchafu nyingi yani bado watoto wadogo wale wame abortiwa”*

This is how it was translated...

*“We see even bodies of dead people flowing through the river...I have found three myself”*

Again, the journalist while applying the rule of summary while translating and subtitling he lost out on crucial information. For example, the interviewee speaks of fetuses that are at times found dumped in the river. This piece of information was left out during translation, which is evident from the subtitles. On the other hand, the subtitles have information that is not on the sound bite of the interviewee. The journalist writes that the interviewee said he found three dead bodies in the river; this information is missing from the sound bite. For an observant person who understands both English and Kiswahili will notice the discrepancy but for one who understands only English will take the information as it is. Skopos theory argues that the result of the translation should be guided by its purpose. From the above examples, the purpose of the message of the source text was not taken into consideration that is why some vital information was left out.

Another example of this, is on table 9 of the Garbage rivers. One of the interviewee's says...

*“Uvundo mbaya sana, tena sio uvundo wa kawaida, ni uvundo wa sumu, sumu, sumuu...poison na kisungu”*

This is how it was translated...

*“This is poison”*

The journalist decided to use only three words in translating what the interviewee said which was not long. The translation was not well done, it could have been done better. The result of this translation could be perhaps because the journalist was tired as journalist 2, 3, 4 and 5 said translation and subtitling involves a lot of work, it is tedious and at times the journalist does not have enough time to deliver their best because of deadlines.

Skopos theory also argues that there is no translation that is 100% accurate and even if a back translation is to be done, the reverse would never be 100% accurate. This is because languages do not have 100 percent lexical equivalence whether at conceptual or connotative level. This supports some of the sentiments from journalist 1 who outlines some of the difficulties she faces when translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English. She mentions that there are certain words that are difficult to translate.

She gives an example of *'malalamishi'* a Kiswahili word, which could be translated as someone who is complaining in English, but in legal terms it takes another form, which could be rendered as *'petition – an official complaint that is written and presented to a court of law'*. Due to this, mistakes are bound to happen as some words in Kiswahili may lack their equivalent in English. Even though, this rule may exempt some of the errors on translations, there are mistakes that could be avoided that some journalists get away with.

For example, table 9 of Garbage Rivers, the interviewee says...

*"Uvundo mbaya sana, tena sio uvundo wa kawaida, ni uvundo wa sumu, sumu, sumuu...poison na kisungu"*

This is how it was translated...

*"This is poison"*

The omitting of some words in the above sound bite during translation was unnecessary. This is because what the interviewee said was short and it did not have terms that lacked an equivalent in the English language. Therefore, it should have been one of the translations that the journalist should have achieved 100% accuracy.

Skopos theory also points out that the fact that the purpose supersedes everything does not mean that the target text should have no logical flow. It should be written in a logical sequence and coherent manner, to ensure that the message is clearly understood as intended in the text. A number of translation in the long form TV features miss out on this fact.

Table 8 of Garbage Rivers is a good example. The journalist omits some vital information from what the sound bite says in Kiswahili and adds some words that are not on what the interviewee says.

The sound bite in Kiswahili was..

*"Hii mto inabeba vitu mingi sana...hii mto inabeba...hadi maiti zupita hapa, kama imejaa unaona mwili ya mtu ikipita unaona tu ikienda, yaani imebeba uchafu nyingi yani bado watoto wadogo wale wame abortiwa"*

This is how it was translated...

*“We see even bodies of dead people flowing through the river...I have found three myself”*

The journalist writes that the interviewee said he found three dead bodies in the river, information that is not there in the interviewee’s sound bite.

Table 3 of Predator Guardians, is another example of a translation that did not follow a logical sequence and was not coherent. It at the same time showed that the journalist could not state clearly that the children were being sodomized as evidently see on the choice of words she used in translating.

The interviewee says...

*“Tukilima anatuita hapo nyumbani anatutoa suruali na anaanza kufanya hivi, halafu akianza kufanya anatuambia twende nyumbani na tusifanye na tukisema atatukata na panga.”*

This is how it was translated...

*“He would call us remove our inner wears and he would do it. He would then threaten us that if we tell on him he would kill us.”*

This can also be argued that perhaps considering the culture the journalist is from, she found difficult to clearly state that the children were being sodomized. For a viewer who depends on the subtitles to understand the information in the TV feature, they might miss such information. When looked at against rule number two of the Skopos theory, which states that a target text is an offer of information in a target culture and target language concerning the offer of information in a source culture and source language, meaning, for a translator to effectively communicate the message to the target audience, they must be conversant with the culture and language of audience. Considering that the title of the TV feature was Predator Guardians, the journalist fully understood what the interviewee was saying but she did not accurately render the message in English. The above information was also not in line with rule number five of the Skopos theory. The rule states that a target text must be coherent with the source text. This means that even if the purpose determines

the target text, the target must remain coherent with the source text in terms of clarity and accuracy of message. The purpose determines the approach to be taken, but the message must always remain the same as that in the source text. This further pokes holes in the translation of sound bites that are done by journalist who opt to translate and use subtitles in the long form TV features. Most of the translations have a problem with accuracy, as they tend to omit some words.

Journalist number 10 defends her style of translating and subtitling by saying that space is a challenge she usually has to grapple with. This is because she at times is forced to squeeze some words on the TV screen, which may lead to loss of meaning. On the other hand, journalist number eight says one of the difficulties she encounters that messes with the accuracy of her translation is when she lacks an equivalent of certain words from Kiswahili to English. Meanwhile, journalist number seven says the difficulties he faces when translating stem from some Kiswahili terminologies that are difficult to render to English and so in most cases, he consults his editors.

In table 14, the interviewee who speaks a mixture of Kiswahili and English, he says...

*'Watu watatu ndio wamepigwa risasi huko kwa soko sasa hii iko next na kwa matunda. Kuna mama na mtoto ndio walipigwa risasi hapa chini, na kuna mmoja ameuawa..'*

And this is how it was translated and subtitled.

Three people were shot by police that very day. A woman and her baby were shot dead on the other side of the market.

From the above example, going by one of the rules from Skopos theory that insists that target text must be coherent with the source text meaning that the target text must remain coherent with the source text in terms of clarity and accuracy of the message. Coherence was lost during translation and subtitling because, in the interview, the witness recounts that a woman and a child were shot and that one of them died. But the message from what was translated and subtitled said that both the woman and the child died. The subtitles pass conflicting reports from what the interviewee said, for someone who understands Kiswahili and English, they may be left wondering what was the actual truth. But, for someone who

only understands English then they would be take the message as it is from the subtitles not knowing that it was conflicting with what the original sound bite was saying.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

The above chapter was concerned with an in-depth analysis of selected excerpts of translated subtitles obtained from long form TV features that went on air at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. These excerpts were analyzed upon the basis of the objectives of the study as well as Skopos theory. Data obtained from questionnaires was similarly analyzed in accordance to the objectives of the research. The questionnaires were aimed at establishing the challenges journalists encounter when they are translating sound bites for long form TV features at NTV as well as looking at the appropriate strategies that can be put to use in the translation of subtitles in long form TV features.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the study through revisiting the statement of the problem, research objectives and questions, the methodology and data collection. It also looks at the findings of the research on the each of the objectives and they were presented. The chapter also looks at the analysis of data collected and presented, what they mean for the objectives, and how they answered the four research questions and made conclusions.

This chapter then summarizes the findings of the study and answers to the research questions. It then makes recommendations for further studies based on the findings on the study.

#### 5.2 Conclusion

This research was looking at the possible errors in translated subtitles of sound bites that may lead to loss of meaning appearing on sound bites of long form TV features from Kiswahili to English at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. The study commenced with an introduction in *Chapter One*, in which a background to the research was provided, followed by a statement of the problem that indicated the research gap that the study sought to fill. Objectives of the study were subsequently outlined and justification for the research was also provided. The boundaries within which the research operated were explained in the scope and limitations section. The literature review looked at other pertinent studies that have been carried out in the recent past including aspects that were not addressed by these studies, which have been addressed in this study. The theoretical framework that guided this research was Skopos theory of translation, which was briefly discussed. The chapter then had the methodology of research, which also discussed how data was collected and analyzed.

*Chapter Two* entailed a detailed discussion of subtitles and sound bites in long form TV features. The place of subtitles, process of subtitling which also includes omission and reduction in subtitles. This chapter also explored the languages used in TV broadcasting as well as the history of long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. All this critical

topics in this research were discussed in detail with the aim of providing background information that is key to the study.

The focus of *Chapter Three* was presentation of data. Selected sound bites from long form TV features that aired on NTV, KTN and Citizen TV were presented side by side in a two-column table that had the original bite and how it was translated and subtitled. Additionally, data obtained from questionnaires, each containing a total of ten questions which were answered by ten journalists from NTV who specialized in producing long form TV features was presented in a narrative form in which their responses for each question was indicated. The data presented in this chapter was also used in the subsequent chapter, in which it was analyzed in detail.

*Chapter Four* dealt with the analysis of the data presented in *Chapter Three*. This analysis also used Skopos theory. It was determined that there was indeed errors in the translation of sound bites from Kiswahili to English by journalists from NTV, KTN and Citizen TV. It was also established that some of the errors can be avoided, if only the journalist took time to understand the source text before translating and subtitling. The analysis of subtitles in the long form TV features vindicated the hypothesis that there is loss of meaning in the translated subtitles of long form TV features at NTV, KTN and Citizen TV and at the same time there are errors in the translated subtitles. Findings from questionnaires determined that bilingual journalists at NTV encounter challenges when they are translating and subtitling sound bites for long form TV features. The journalists also recommended ways to deal with the challenges.

The results of this study therefore confirm that journalists in local media houses face similar challenges when they are translating and subtitling Kiswahili sound bites to English. It also confirms that there is loss of meaning in some of the subtitles as well as errors.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

This study contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of translation as it related to subtitling of translated sound bites in long form TV features. The research is therefore useful in creating awareness on errors that may occur subtitles on long form TV features. Furthermore, the knowledge acquired from this study would act as a guide for journalists who chose to translate sound bites and use subtitles on how to best cater for the needs of their audience who rely on subtitles to get information. This research focuses on translation of Kiswahili sound bites and subtitling to English. In the course of this research, the issue of sound bites gathered from the field by journalists from people who do not speak Kiswahili and English arose. For purposes for further studies, it may be interesting to undertake a deeper study of how sound bites from vernacular languages are rendered to a language that can be understood by many people and some of the challenges journalists face when confronted by such situations. Another challenge that some of the journalists mentioned in passing was when they have to translate terms from specific professions such as law and medicine. Consequently, it would be interesting to carry out further studies on difficulties journalists go through when translating terms from such professions.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Introduction Letter

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: LOSS OF MEANING IN TRANSLATED SOUND BITES IN SUBTITLING FOR TV FEATURES FROM KISWAHILI TO ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY OF NTV

This is to let you know that I am a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi, pursuing a Master of Arts in Translation. I wish to research on the loss of meaning in translated sound bites in subtitling for long form TV features from Kiswahili to English: A case study of NTV.

Attached is a list of questions, which will help in my study. Kindly answer by ticking or explaining where appropriate to the best of your knowledge and be assured that the information given is only for academic work and will be highly valued and treated with utmost confidentiality. Any report out of this study will not disclose individual names or any other information that may identify you as an individual.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Sharon Barang'a

**Appendix II: Questionnaire**

1. How many years have you worked as a journalist?
  - a) 1 to 5 years
  - b) 6 to 10 years
  - c) More than 10 years
  
2. Do you specialize in producing long form TV features?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
3. If Yes, do you translate sound bites and use subtitles as in your long form TV features?

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4. Why do you choose to translate and use subtitles for your long form TV features?

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5. How do you rate your competence when translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English?
  - a) Poor
  - b) Average
  - c) Good
  - d) Excellent

6. How do you rate your competence when subtitling?

- a) Poor
- b) Average
- c) Good
- d) Excellent

7. Outline challenges you have faced when translating sound bites from Kiswahili to English.....

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8. What challenges have you faced when subtitling?

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9. How best do you believe the challenges you face when translating sound bites can be tackled?

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10. How best do you believe the challenges you face when subtitling can be solved?

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Thank you for your participation.

**THANK YOU**

### **Appendix III: TV Feature Links**

#### **NTV**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-ULL7QHrak>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvGL0caYaC4>

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCKvJVmrmno&t=101s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkgdGhqQVek>

#### **KTN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2cDv5mCe9Y&t=361s>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVx0\\_Ctj9Bk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVx0_Ctj9Bk)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mniw4\\_O6CZs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mniw4_O6CZs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJ86TZX9J1c>

#### **CITIZEN TV**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnSvnwYjjI4&t=35s>