

**ERROR ANALYSIS IN THE TRANSLATION OF TELECOMMUNICATION  
ELECTRONICS DEVICES: A CASE STUDY OF A MOBILE TELEPHONE  
DATA**

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## DECLARATION

This dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for any award of degree in any other university.

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MUTUA DORCAS MWENDE

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DATE

This dissertation has been written and submitted for examination under our approval as university supervisors.

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DATE

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## **DEDICATION**

To my loving mum Ruth Mutua.

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## **SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

MT	Machine Translation
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
SVO	Subject, Verb, Object
TIMSS	Third International Mathematics and Science
TM	Translation Memory
TT	Target Text

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Segment/Phrase	ST	TT	Suggestion
1.	Auto-redial	<i>Piga simu tena</i> <i>kiotomatiki</i>	<i>Piga simu kiotomatiki</i>
2.	Cloud	<i>Wingu</i>	<i>Wingu la intaneti</i>
3	Home	<i>Nyumbani</i>	<i>Skrini ya mwanzo ya simu</i>
4.	Beauty mode	<i>Hali ya urembo</i>	<i>Mpangilio wa kamera wa hali ya urembo</i>
5.	Blacklist	<i>Orodha zilizozuiliwa</i>	<i>Orodha ya simu zilizozuiliwa</i>
6.	Centre	<i>Kati</i>	<i>Kati ya programu</i>
7.	Conflict	<i>Mgogoro</i>	<i>Vifaa vya simu visivyoingiana/ kumbaliana</i>
8.	Contact	<i>Mawasiliano</i>	<i>Nambari ya simu</i>
9.	Credit	<i>Sifa</i>	<i>Nambari ya vocha ya simu</i>
10.	Double Touch	<i>Mguso mara mbili</i>	<i>Gusa skrini mara mbili</i>
11.	Details	<i>maelezo</i>	<i>Maelezo kuhusu simu</i>
12.	Field	<i>Sehemu</i>	<i>Sehemu ya ripoti ya simu</i>
13.	Free	<i>Bila malipo</i>	<i>Nafasi iliyobaki kwenye kumbukumbu ya simu</i>
14.	Gold	<i>Dhahabu</i>	<i>Kiwango cha dhahabu</i>



15.	Import	<i>Leta</i>	<i>Hamisha faili/programu</i>
16.	Lock	<i>Kufuli</i>	<i>Funga kifaa/simu kwa kutumia nenosiri</i>
17.	Call	<i>Simu</i>	<i>Piga simu</i>
18.	Type	<i>Aina</i>	<i>Andika</i>
19.	SIM Card	<i>SIM kadi</i>	<i>Kadi ya simu</i>
20.	Run	<i>Kimbia</i>	<i>Kumbalisha program ya simu/kompyuta</i>

Table 3.2 Data Presentation on Semantic Errors ..... 48

Segment/Phrase	ST	TT	Suggestion
1.	Blacklist	<i>Orodha zilizozuiliwa</i>	<i>Orodha ya nambari za simu zilizozuiliwa</i>
2.	Call back	<i>Piga simu tena</i>	<i>Piga simu</i>
3.	End	<i>Mwisho</i>	<i>Kata simu</i>
4.	Headset	<i>Kifaa cha kichwa</i>	<i>Kipokea sauti cha simu</i>
5.	Home	<i>Nyumbani</i>	<i>Skrini ya mwanzo ya simu</i>
6.	Left	<i>Kushoto</i>	<i>Asilimia iliyosalia</i>
7.	Priority Interruptions	<i>Usumbufu wa kipaumbele</i>	<i>Ukatizaji wa kipaumbele</i>
8.	Log	<i>Ripoti</i>	<i>Ripoti ya simu</i>

9.	Pocket mode	<i>Hali ya mfukoni</i>	<i>Hali ya simu ya kuongezeka sauti</i>
10.	Pre-installed app	<i>Programu iliyosakinishwa mapema</i>	<i>Programu iliyosakinishwa awali</i>

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study discusses translation errors in the translated telecommunication electronics information from English into Kiswahili. It highlights and discusses translation errors in telecommunication electronics. Mobile telephone data is used as the representative sample of the study.

The study discusses the technicalities of the telecommunication electronics and how it affects the usability of the translated information in the TL. This includes analyzing the translated material in order to determine if they effectively communicate or deliver the intended message.

The study categorizes the translation errors into two categories which are discussed and analyzed as depicted in the study data. These translation errors are categorized into lexical and the semantic errors. The causes of translation errors in Kiswahili are also discussed. The study uses *Skopos* theory to analyze the data. Translated Huawei mobile phone information, from English to Kiswahili, is used for data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter delves in the following subheadings: Background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, scope and limitations, theoretical framework, literature review, research methodology and conclusion/summary.

#### **1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Translation is the process of transfer of meaning of word or text into another language (Oxford Dictionary). Translation involves transfer of a message or meaning of a text from the SL and culture to the TL and culture. Nida (1982:208) suggests that translation is the reproduction of the TL in the “closest natural equivalence” of the SL. Based on this scholar’s idea; it means that translation is not just a transfer of words in a text from one language to another but it is the transfer of a meaning from the source language to the target language. If the message is not conveyed accurately into the target language then there is miscommunication due to the mistranslation of the text.

Nida, E. A., & Taber, C. R. (2003:12) argues that translating involves reproducing a text in order to convey the ST message to the TT audience. However, the text reproduction into the TL involves various grammatical and lexical adjustments to the ST. This study totally agrees with Nida’s and Taber’s argument that, translation is not a mere reproduction of a text into the target language; but, it is essentially the transfer of meaning (accurately) into the target language. This study agrees with these scholars’ arguments that translation does not only involve rewriting a text into the target language, but also, and the most important, involves transfer of message to the target audience. And

to convey this message, a text is recreated into another language. This text must comply with the grammatical rules and the structure of target text (TT). Therefore, translation involves transfer of source text (ST) message and culture into the TT observing the grammatical rules of target language (TL) and all other cultural aspects involved.

This study focuses on specifically technical translation. Technical translation requires the translator to have a wide knowledge in the field or subject in which he/she is translating. According to Byrne (2006:16), Technical translation as a field of Translation is gaining momentum due to increased technological innovations in the industry. This scholar points out that technical translation arose due to industrial development in order to aid in translation of technical texts which mostly deal with applied knowledge from natural sciences. She also points out that technical translation is one of the most significant employers of translators. This scholar also suggests that translators should understand the challenges posed by technical texts and come up with ways of producing quality translations using both linguistic and non-linguistic means. This means that technical translation is an open avenue for the scholars to conduct theoretical investigations and research.

In addition, more and more translations in technical translation are increasing due to increase in technological and scientific innovations. This can also be attributed to trade and globalization whereby, the manufactured technical products are exported in other countries. The manuals for operation are in a few languages which call for translation of information in the products. A good example is localization of mobile phone into

Kiswahili which has been an initiative of the mobile manufactures such as Huawei and ITEL who want to penetrate the East Africa market.

Technical translation is quite different from literary translation. Hann (1992:1) argues that, “it may be acceptable for a Literature translator to remain oblivious of the simplest technical concepts throughout his/her working life, but a technical translator cannot afford to ignore the industrial world...a technical translator needs a whole library of specialized dictionaries, encyclopedias and technical literature in both languages”. This study agrees with Hann (1992) that a technical translator is not only a linguist but also should be an experienced researcher. It is very important to note that most of the technical terminology originates from the general language terms. However, in technical context, the terms take different meaning from the general terminology.

Studies have been done in various technical fields in order to facilitate communication through translation; there are still major challenges in translating telecommunication electronics guides and information from English to Swahili. Therefore, more research studies need to be carried out in order to ease communication in this field. However, this should not be the only focus of the linguists and translators. Cabre’ (1998) points out that we should develop language through developing terminology in technical and other fields in order to enhance growth of language spoken by the minorities and to make the developing countries’ industry rich with terminology.

Therefore, Cabre (1998:14) suggests that this challenge can be solved if the translators and scholars have equivalent and coherent terms for professional and technical fields. The objective of this strategy is to “replace terminology imported from languages spoken

in technologically dominant countries, thus fostering word-formation in the native languages (Cabre 1998:14)”. This study agrees with the scholar’s idea that, technical translation can only be developed if the language owns the technical terms by developing their own terminology once products have been manufactured and imported or introduced in the market especially in the developing countries.

This study seeks to analyze errors in telecommunication electronics gadgets. Most telecommunication electronics were invented in the Western world and therefore, it has been a challenge for the English-Kiswahili translators to translate the user guides or any other information once the products are imported into the Kiswahili market. In addition, there is cultural difference between SL used in telecommunication electronics products user manuals and the TL where the products are sold. Therefore, culture and differences in the SL and the TL bring a barrier of communication between the two. This has resulted to mistranslation of telecommunication electronics information from English to Kiswahili. Errors in translated telecommunication electronics guides and information may be as a result of poor rendition of the descriptive or instructional information written on the gadgets. Errors may also arise due to lack of equivalent terms in Kiswahili. This is because some telecommunication electronics terms are yet to be developed or localized in Kiswahili. Auger (1986b:20) says that the technical communication terminology should be designed to ensure that the needs of target audience product are taken into account. This clearly supports this study because mistranslation of telecommunication electronic user guides can cause accident to the user or/and the product can be damaged. For example, where the product users does not understand the intended meaning in the translated manual, if he/she violates the warning given on the user guide, he/she might



either get an accident/electric shock or damage the product. Some of the electronics users are illiterate and therefore, the translator should use simple and clear terms while translating. Telecommunication electronics users are not always the literate especially in the East Africa market.

This also raises the issue use of inconsistent terms as well as definitions of terms in electronics which has made localization of terminology and development of glossaries in telecommunication electronics field difficult in Kiswahili. This can be, for example, the inability to share terms and definitions across the organization, to the translators and to the users.

Mistranslation and errors in telecommunication electronic user guides may also be as a result of difference in genealogies of the English and Kiswahili. The Kiswahili structure is different from the English structure. While the English follows SVO (subject, verb, and object) order, Kiswahili does not have a definite sentence structure/order. However, as Hann (1992:1) argues translation errors occur in technical field because the technical terminology does not appear in technical literature and dictionaries. And, therefore, it is the work of the translator to determine the translational equivalence. This study agrees with Hann in that translation errors do not just occur because of use of technical terms which lack equivalence; but there are many factors behind mistranslation of telecommunication electronics information such as translator's incompetence and lack of adequate research in the field.

## **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Translation of telecommunication electronics information from English to Kiswahili is faced with challenges. The user guide is very relevant information to the users because it gives them the instructions on how to use the gadget and how to interact with different functions of the gadget. In recent times, many companies for example, IteI, Huawei, Samsung and LG (Lucky-Gold Star) are trying to penetrate the East African market and they do so by translating the mobile phone information and the user guides of their gadgets into Kiswahili. One such company is Huawei. Owing to the technicality of the language in the mobile guides, there arises challenges in translation of some message (s) and that affects the usability of such guides and the phones in general. Mistranslation of such information can result to the damage of gadgets and/or cause accident to the user. This study seeks to analyze the errors evident in Huawei mobile phone translated information from English to Kiswahili.

The translated telecommunication electronic information should be clear and precise and should adequately communicate to the target users. The main purpose of the study is to analyze if the translated information in the mobile phone communicate the message effectively. The effectiveness of the communication of the telecommunication electronics information can be altered or changed by mistranslation of the information.

Therefore, this study seeks to answer the question: Does the translated message communicate or inform the users of the telecommunication electronics? This question is answered through analysis of the translated information in order to see if message or information is changed. Due to the nature of Kiswahili language, for example, the

translation of the telecommunication electronics information into Kiswahili can be wordy and lengthy hence resulting to ambiguity. This makes instructional information within the user guide misleading and hence ineffective in delivering of the message.

On the other hand, some telecommunication electronics terminologies in Kiswahili are non-existence. Hence, the translator is left with no option other than paraphrasing the terms or the phrases.

For example, according to *Kiingereza-Kiswahili* online Kiswahili dictionary, the translation of the word HEADPHONE is *VIPOKEA SAUTI* (voice receivers). This word/term *vipokea sauti* should be contextualized and explained because it does not make sense by its own. It also needs some back up information or explanations. This is a lexical error. It can however be translated as *kifaa cha kichwa cha kupokea sauti*.

Also, the meaning of a WEB APP according to *Kiingereza-Kiswahili* online dictionary in Kiswahili is *PROGRAMU TUMIZI YA WAVUTI*. This illustrates how translated Kiswahili version texts can sometimes be too long and wordy. In some cases, this lengthy information results to a blurred and a convoluted translation. This is also a translation error. This study focuses on analyzing the translation errors depicted in the Huawei mobile phone which can result from the translator's translation techniques among other factors.

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES**

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To identify translation errors in the translated telecommunication electronics information from English to Kiswahili.

- ii. To identify the cause(s) of errors and mistranslation of telecommunication electronics information from English to Kiswahili.
- iii. To discuss strategy(s) to deal with translation errors in telecommunication domain.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the translation errors evident in the translated information in telecommunication information from English into Kiswahili?
- ii. What are the possible cause(s) of the mistranslation of telecommunication electronics guides and information from English to Kiswahili?
- iii. What are the possible remedies to the challenge of mistranslation in telecommunication electronics from English to Kiswahili?

### **1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATION**

The general purpose of the study is to analyze translation errors within the telecommunication electronics gadgets' information and user guides translated from English to Kiswahili. It seeks to identify the translation errors in the guides, to classify them and to propose possible remedies for the problem. The main subject matter of the study is to highlight and discuss errors in the translated telecommunication electronics information. The study also points out the possible causes of the translation errors within the translated information. Other topics to be discussed within the study include: classification of types of translation errors and the possible remedies to the problem in reference to other scholars work.

Electronics field is a broad subject. Therefore, this study narrows down to telecommunication electronics and specifically a mobile phone. A mobile phone is a common communicative electronic and hence it is a representative sample of the other telecommunication devices.

The study also classifies translation errors into different categories. The translation errors discussed and analyzed in the study are the lexical and semantic errors. This is because the data used for the research involves translated terms and phrases only. Technical translation literature is relevant to the study because it gives the study a foundation since electronics translation is part and parcel of technological field. On the other hand, literature on translation errors gives the study a foundation in relation to analyzing the data, pointing out critical issues in the translation of telecommunication electronic guides and also suggesting some key methods of dealing with the problem of telecommunication electronics information translation from English to Kiswahili.

The study also looks into the alternative ways in which Kiswahili speakers, scholars, enthusiasts and translators have employed while dealing with or translating telecommunication electronics guides or texts in other technical fields in order to improve the translation quality, for instance, by use of neologism.

This study uses the qualitative research method. However, quantitative research was used to statistically interpret the data findings. Data elicitation methods include document analysis. Opportunistic and convenient methods of data sampling were used. From the data several terms and phrases are translated. Errors were identified and 30 phrases were

used for illustration in the study. The data used for the study was retrieved from Huawei mobile phone. The data is human translated. From the translated mobile phone glossary, lexical and semantic errors were retrieved.

The research was conducted within a few months due to the limitation of time within which the study was to be completed. The study also limited itself to the analysis of translation errors in the mobile phones because it is the most commonly used telecommunication electronic which is used by the largest percent of the Kiswahili speakers within Kenya and East Africa in general. Therefore, Huawei mobile phone is a well representation of the data used for the study.

## **1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study uses *SKOPOS* theory of Translation to analyze the data. *Skopos* theory, in German *skopostheorie* was developed by German linguists Hans Vermeer and Katharina Reiss in 1970s. The theory emphasizes on the purpose of translation to the target audience while seeking to focus less on the source text. The function of the target text to the addressee or to the audience is the major concern of the translator. By use of the *skopos* theory, this study seeks to analyze the translated telecommunication electronic information from English to Kiswahili in order to determine if the translated information clearly meets the needs of the telecommunication electronics users. The Study also seeks to determine if the translated information fulfils the core purpose of this translation theory.

According to Vermeer (1978), *skopos* comprises the idea that translating should primarily take into consideration the target text. He further says that the TT should be internally

coherent which means that TT should be logical, grammatically correct and should have a flow. This scholar also argues that the TT must be coherent with the ST such that the TT should be faithfully translated in order to reflect the ST message in the TT.

### **1.5.1 SKOPOS RULES OF TRANSLATION**

The *skopos* rule emphasizes on the importance of the translator understanding the purpose of the text which he/she is translating. This helps to the translator to meet the needs of the target audience as the text becomes clear and relevant to them.

#### **1.5.1.1 Rule 1**

The TT must be coherent with the ST. There should be interrelation between the ST and the TT. It is from the ST where a message is reproduced into the TL. Therefore, the translator should be faithful to the ST. The message in the TT should be coherent with ST.

#### **1.5.1.2 Rule 2**

This rule states that “the target text is determined by its *skopos* (purpose)” Vermeer (1978:100). The translator should first understand the purpose of the TT as well as its audience. He/she should learn their cultural background, norms and values. The purpose of the text determines if the translator should freely translate the text or he/she will translate word-for-word.

#### **1.5.1.3 Rule 3**

The TT must be internally coherent. “The coherent rule stipulates that the target text must be sufficiently coherent to allow the intended users to comprehend it given their assumed background knowledge and situational circumstances” Vermeer (1978:100). The

translator should understand that, “the starting point for a translation is a text of a world continuum written in the source language. It has to be translated into a target language in such a way that it becomes part of a world continuum which it can be interpreted by the recipients as coherent with their situation Vermeer (1978:100) cited in C. Schaffer (1998:2). From these scholars’ arguments, the ST is replicated or reproduced in to the TT world, making it real and practical to the target audience.

The translator should ensure there is inter-textual coherence Nord (1997:2) between the source text and the target text. Inter-textual coherence in this case, means that the interrelationship between the ST and TT is maintained. As much as *skopos* theory is a functionalistic theory which focuses more on the TT text, the translator should also ensure that the inter-textual coherence is maintained by ensuring he/she does a faithful translation.

The main task of the translator is to ensure that the *skopos* of the TT is clearly defined and meaning of the ST is accurately transferred into the TT. The *skopos* theory suggests a functionalistic approach while dealing with target text. It involves the production of “functionally appropriate target text based on an existing source text” Schaffer (1998:4). The translator should however bear in mind that both the source text and the target text should be “inter-textually coherent” (Nord 1997:2). Therefore, Vermeer (1989a) does not entirely advocate for extremely free translation. Schaffer (1998:4) agrees with Vermeer (1989a) that, “Although a translation is not *ipso facto*, a faithful imitation of the source text, fidelity to the source text is one possible or legitimate *skopos*. The theory should not be understood as promoting (extremely) free translation at all.” *Skopos* theory advocates



for faithfulness to the source text and ‘extreme’ free translation is not allowed at all. This study agrees with these scholars that in translation of telecommunication electronics the translator should not be entirely bound by word for word translation. But, however, he/she should ensure that the TT reflects the TT in terms of communicating the intended meaning.

As Xiaoyan D. (2012:2192) puts it that, “we have to note that since the target text is produced according to the formation offered in the source text, it is expected to bear some kind of relationship with the source text. This relationship is what we call ‘inter-textual coherence’ or ‘fidelity’”. In other words, this study agrees with Xiaoyan (2012) that as much as the translator has the ‘license’ to freely translate, he/she is still bound by the very basic rule of being faithful to the ST. In relation to the above arguments, however, it is important to note that the *skopos* theory focuses more on the target text and hence it puts it above the source text.

Reiss and Vermeer (1984/1991:45 cited in Schaffer (1998:4) propose to the translators on how to translate a text if the *skopos* of both the source and target texts differ. That, in such a case, “the standard for translation will not be inter-textual coherence with the source text, but adequate or appropriate to the *skopos*” of the target text “which also determines the selection and arrangement of the content”.

Schaffer (1998:1) views the *skopos* theory as a shift from the predominant “linguistic” theory to a “functionally and socio-cultural” theory. Schaffer says “*Skopos* theory takes seriously factors which have always been stressed in action theory and which were brought into sharp relief with the growing need in the latter half of the twentieth century

for the non-literary text types, in the translation of scientific and academic papers and instructions for use...the contextual factors surrounding the text cannot be ignored pg. 1”.

Such factors include the cultural and the intended purpose of the translation as well as the needs of the target text consumers. As Schaffer proposes, the *skopos* theory is more relevant to technical translation, for example, in writing instructions such as the telecommunication electronics user guides.

## **1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study classifies translation errors in the telecommunication electronics guide according to Bussmann (1996) classification and also have a comparison with what other scholars have discussed concerning translation errors and their classification. Bussmann, for example, categorizes errors into different level such as follows: First, he discusses modality errors which are errors that occur at the level of proficiency in writing, reading, speaking and listening. In reference to Bussmann, this study concludes that modality errors can be solved if the translator has a high proficiency of both the SL and TL as well as a good knowledge of the TT culture and the field/domain.

Bussmann (2006) also discusses errors at the linguistic level. These are errors which arise as a result of breaking the grammatical rules of the TL. These errors also involve inappropriate choice of vocabulary, terminology and diction. The translator should choose the terms appropriately in order to convey the message effectively to the target audience. Third, this scholar also classifies errors in relation to their form. For example, errors which occur in the TT due to omission, substitution and insertion of words or information can result to a complete change of the intended message. Sometimes these

errors may cause a slight change on the TT and hence the reader can understand the intended meaning of the TT.

This study seeks to analyze literature and research done by other scholars in order to suggest possible solutions on how to deal with translation errors in electronics guides. Translation errors can lead to serious problems not only to the product user but also to the company. For instance, poor translated information may cause the customers to shy off from buying of the product simply because the given information is wrong.

### **1.6.1 LITERATURE ON TECHNICAL TRANSLATION**

Etienne Dolet (1540) in his Theory of Document Translation laid down basic principles of translation which up to date cannot be overlooked. He argued that the translator must have perfect knowledge of both the source and the target language. He/she must be knowledgeable about the subject matter before he/she begins the translation. Technical translation, for example, telecommunication electronics translation, can be quite challenging if the translator is not well knowledgeable about the field he/she is translating on. Hann (1992:14) describes four categories of translators and helps us to understand the better techniques of dealing with technical translations: He discusses: the “dictionary enthusiast” who is very quick at translating technical texts but omits the stage of concept recognition. His/her translations are often misleading or even meaningless and terms are wrongly rendered. This means that in technical translation, use of dictionary alone may not be helpful to the translator as the meaning in the dictionaries is not applicable in most cases, in technical translation.

The scholar also mentions the “encyclopedia devotee” who is more accurate but he may still have a tendency to render general terms wrongly. The encyclopedia is more dependable according to Hann (1992); but it is not always effective because some technical terms cannot be traced in the encyclopedia. The third translator makes the best investment as regards to speed and accuracy. He attempts to acquire knowledge of the technical language in the same way as his command of the general language and eventually to translate more or less spontaneously. But the success of this method depends on the individual himself since most technical terminology originates from outside the domain.

However, there another translator who is more effective for he/she employs computers simultaneously and uses data banks rather than printed literature only. This translator manipulates information in the systems. But other scholars such as Byrne (2006) suggests that there is more issues involved in technical translation that just finding the equivalent terminology of its technical terms such as knowing how to write texts in the technical field format.

This means that getting the equivalent terminology is not enough to produce a good translation. The translator has to undertake the task of conveying the text as per the rules and the conventions of the TT. On the other hand, Byrne (2006:16) disagrees with the misconception of many translators that “technical translation is all about terminology” though; terminology gives a text the technological properties or aspects to deliver information to the target audience. Newmark (1988) discusses that, terminology accounts for about 5-10% of a technical text. Therefore, the technical translator should take into

consideration both the terminology and the lexical items in the translation. Technical translators must have both linguistic and writing skills just like the other translators. “The translator should have enough subject knowledge in order to understand how to deal with the text and/or to be able to acquire whatever additional information is needed” Byrne (2006:18).

Byrne (2006) summarizes that a technical translator should have adequate subject knowledge. The translator should be informed about the domain/subject of translation. For instance, if he/she is translating telecommunication electronics guide, he/she should be well informed on electronics terminology and also the product users in order to package the information in a way that is useful to the target audience.

The translator should have good writing skills. He/she should be knowledgeable of the different writing styles and should have an excellent command of both SL and the TL. In addition, the translator should have good research skills. In technical translation, the translator, in some cases, is required to conduct a research about the subject/domain to translation. The translator should also research on the target audience in order for the TT to be relevant and useful to them as well as have knowledge of text types and different text genres.

The main task in transfer of technical information, for example, instruction user manual, is to ensure that the text is clear and can be understood by the TT audience. Translation in technical field is not done for the academicians and professionals only; but to its target audience which is the user of the product. Therefore, the translated text should be clear and precise. In order to translate well, a translator must clearly understand and know the

target audience (Reiss and Vermeer 1984). Robinson (2003:142) puts it clearly that, translators don't translate words; they translate what people do with words. The information is more useful to the target people and so word for word translation might alter information and hence mislead them. However, word for word translation can be applied when required.

The text should serve its communicative purpose and this should be the translator's major task to ensure that the text effectively delivers the message to the target audience. Byrne (2006:10) by ensuring that the readers can use the information in a text effectively, we make sure that the text succeeds in its primary function to instruct or rather educate. Therefore, based on Byrne arguments, the TT text is purposively meant to communicate to the target readers. If the communicative purpose of the user manual is not achieved then it is deterred.

### **1.6.2 LITERATURE ON TRANSLATION ERRORS**

Different scholars have defined translation errors however; Pym (1992:4) describes translation errors as "manifestation of defects" on the target text which may be attributed to factors such as "lack of comprehension" of the TT. He also says that these errors can be "located on numerous levels (language, pragmatics and culture)". He categorizes error into two: binary and non-binary errors. He further explains that these errors "simply describe the most elemental forms of the errors one encounters when correcting a translation binary errors earn a simple line through them ("It's wrong!"), whereas non-binary errors are graced with wavy or straight underlining and the need for further discussion ("It's correct, but..."). Based on Pym's suggestions binary errors in translation

can be categorized as errors on grammar while non-binary as errors on pragmatics. Merriam Webster dictionary defines Pragmatics as: a branch of semiotics that deals with the relation between signs or linguistic expressions and their users; or a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the relationship of sentences to the environment in which they occur. It analyzes ways in which a term, a phrase or a sentence take different meanings in different contexts. In translation, words take different meanings in different contexts. Once the translator delivers the denotative meaning of a term whereas the word has a connotative meaning (in specialized and technical fields) then a translation error occurs.

Non-binary errors may result to ambiguity in a translated text. Translation disambiguation is choosing the correct translation of a content word in context it involves choosing the correct translation of a word in a context Kikui (1999:1). Therefore, the translator should understand the different contextual meaning the terminology(s) before it is used in the TT translation. Non-binary errors in another perspective may not be errors. Non-binary errors are open to different interpretations. What is an error in one way may not be an error in another perspective. An example is the denotative and the connotative meanings of terminology. The meaning of a term in a TT may not be the implied meaning according to the ST author though the same term is correct in the general vocabulary. On the other hand, a binary error is simply wrong. For example, ungrammatical sentence construction and misspellings are binary errors. However, non-binary errors have some levels of correctness. For instance, use of a comma can totally alter a meaning of a sentence. Although, the sentence is correct, its meaning has been changed and this results to a binary error.

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Translation of telecommunication electronics information from English to Kiswahili is a challenge to most translators. Error analysis in translated telecommunication electronics information is very significant to not only the individual translators but also to the society, where the product is consumed. This study's findings are of much help to electronics users. Improved translation of the electronic guides ensures that the product users understand the intended meaning. This study is insightful to the product manufacturers as it will help them ensure the information used by the TT audience is useful to the product consumers.

The findings of this study are of much significant in Kiswahili because it is one way of promoting the language growth especially in the field of telecommunication electronics. Second, the findings of the study will inform the individual translators who probably are not aware of the translation errors. The study aims at enhancing quality translation of telecommunication electronics information guides in Kiswahili.

This study is a good experience in knowledge exploration in the field of translation to the scholar. It is an opportunity to make new discoveries, to gain knowledge and also to learn more from other scholars in relation to analysis of translation errors in the telecommunication electronics field.

The purpose of every academic research is to solve a problem and therefore, this study discusses errors in translated telecommunication electronics information. It discusses and analyzes the errors in the translated telecommunication electronics information into



Kiswahili. This study is an avenue for other scholars to conduct more studies about error analysis in translation in telecommunication electronics and to identify knowledge gaps and come up with the solutions to fill up these gaps.

## **1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study involves quantitative research method. The study also involves use of Document analysis method of research. This method is used in collection of data.

### **1.8.1 Data Collection**

Data for the study is collected from the Huawei mobile phone glossary. The mistranslated information from English to Kiswahili is then retrieved from glossary. This study involves use of non-probability sampling method in data elicitation. The only data that is relevant for the study is used. The data sampling method involves convenient sampling method and opportunistic sampling. Data was collected from the available sources that have adequate information to be used for the research. From the data, two categories of errors are discussed i.e. the lexical and semantic errors.

### **1.8.2 Data Analysis**

This study uses the *skopos* theory to interpret the data. Conclusions about the study topic are drawn from the data. “*Skopos* is a Greek word for ‘purpose’ [...] the basic principle that determines the process of translation is the purpose (*skopos*) of the translational action...” (Nord (1997:27) cited in Jabir 2006). The study analyzes the data (translated segments) to determine if they meet the needs of the users, through communication, hence fulfilling the translation purpose. Only the necessary terms/phrases are quoted to illustrate an idea from the data. However, quoting a phrase or a segment is done where an

explanation is required. From the data, 90 translated segments were identified and quoted. However, only 30 segments were used for illustration and discussion. The study also uses the data to highlight and describe different types of errors within the translated information from English to Kiswahili. Using the data, this study seeks to identify and state translation errors, classify the errors, describe the errors and suggest possible remedies for the translation errors.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study seeks to fulfill objects stated earlier in the chapter. The main purpose of the study is to highlight, describe, and discuss translation errors in telecommunication electronics using the Huawei mobile phone translated information as the sample data. The findings of the study are analyzed using the *Skopos* theory. I would also like to recommend other scholars to research about translation errors in Information Technology in Kiswahili.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses a brief history of telecommunication electronics devices while giving reference to other scholars' work. It also tackles classification of translation errors in technical fields.

### **2.1 ERRORS IN TRANSLATION OF TELECOMMUNICATION ELECTRONICS DEVICES**

In his work, 11 Innovations that Changed History, Evan Andrews argues that since time immemorial innovations have the major catalysts behind humankind's success in the field of electronics. He goes on to outline some of the major breakthroughs that changed the course of history. These include the printing press developed by Johannes Gutenberg around 1440 in Mainz Germany which could create 3,600 pages per day and by 1600, over 200 million new books had been created which sparked the Age of Enlightenment and spread of new ideas. Another development was the transistor which is an essential component in every modern electronic gadget. It was developed in 1947 by Bell Laboratories and is used in radios, televisions, cell phones and computers to allow for precise control of the amount and flow of current through circuit boards.

Andrews also describes the development of the telegraph in the 19th century, which conveyed messages by intermittently stopping the flow of electricity along communication wires. The telegraph was the first in a long line of communications breakthroughs later to include the radio, telephones and email.

In the book, *A brief History of Modern Technology*, O-Reilly explains in chapter two how technological advancements abound through history and helped push civilization forward, faster or slower, to greater wealth and better health. The author goes through the journey from cavemen mastering fire, using rock items, the Industrial Revolution to radios, light bulbs, cars and micro-chips. The book also argues that we are currently living in the Information Age which is a period of instant and almost unlimited proliferation and access to information. Nowadays information is sought and shared freely due to breakthroughs in semi- conductors, computers, communication services and the internet all of which have played a role fostering the information Age.

Alfred D. Chandler Jr. in his book *Gaps in the Historical Record: Development of the Electronics Industry*, delves into the development of the consumer electronics and computer industries in Europe, America and Japan. Chandler explains that the industry began with radio which was later commercialized for instance by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA). Other companies joined such as the Siemens and AEG. After World War 2, RCA again took the lead in commercializing television worldwide up to 1960s. Other companies took the lead in 1970s from Japan and Europe`s Philips. Japan`s company Sony and Matsushita became the world`s foremost commercializer of products of new technologies in consumer electronics including the Walkman, Triton, Color TV, the CVR, the CD, the CD-ROM and the DVD.

By the late 1980s, these two companies had driven both the US and European consumer electronics out of their own home markets and abroad. Japanese companies such as Toshiba and Mitsubishi also lead in mass production of high- tech computers and micro-

chips. This work is resourceful especially in tracing the origin of commercialization of new science- based technologies and the unparalleled success of Japan's consumer electronics industries and their products worldwide.

In the book *The Huawei Story*, Tian Tao and Wu Chunbo offer insights to readers, allowing them to truly understand Huawei, its management philosophy and culture. The book explains how the company was formed in Shenzhen, China by ex- military officer Ren Zhengfei as a private company. The company's core missions are building telecommunications networks, providing operational and consulting services and equipment to enterprises inside and outside of China. Currently Huawei operates in 130 countries covering a third of the world population and is one of the top telecom networking equipment makers. This is important considering that Huawei has manufactured electronics goods such as mobile phones which are very popular in East Africa particularly Kenya.

A good piece of work explaining the prevalence of LG electronics in Kenya and the world market in general - *The History of LG Electronics* by UK Essays - posits that LG (Lucky- Goldstar) Corporation is a South Korean multi- national conglomerate corporation created in 1947 and it is the second largest after Samsung. It makes electronics, chemicals and telecom products. It operates LG Electronics in over 80 countries with applied new technologies in the form of mobile devices, digital TVs, micro waves, refrigerators air conditioners. The introduction of electronics in East Africa has resulted to the need for translation of the instruction manuals, software and other

information in to Kiswahili. The electronics companies must translate the information so that they may be able to penetrate the East African market.

## **2.2 TRANSLATION ERRORS**

‘Flores (2009:4) describes translation errors as “multidimensional”. The term multidimensional according to Cambridge Dictionary means “having many different features”. In relation to translation, it means that translation error involve several features, aspects and complexities. On the other hand Gyde Hansen (2015:2) says that an error usually means that something is wrong. In relation to translation, Gyde says: “If we define a translation as the production of a Target Text (TT) which is based on a Source Text (ST), a translation error occurs as a result of a relationship between two texts of different languages. If there is a faulty or lack of equivalence in the relationship between the ST and the TT, then a translation error(s) has occurred.

Flores (2009:4) again explains that a translation error is inevitable and it is not just as a result of defective translation. Therefore, no matter the expertise of the translator in the domain, translation errors are unavoidable. These errors as Flores suggests can be “be derived, among many other reasons, from the tension between translation error dimensions—broad categories of translation errors such as those related to semantics, register, or the construct being measured – and the fact that languages encode meaning in different ways” pg.4. Therefore, translation errors maybe as a result of differences in the language structure of the ST and the TT.

In such cases, where the ST and the TT language Structures are entirely different, it then becomes a challenge for the translator to encode the message into the TT effectively. For

example, where the SL and the TL do not share a common language family or genealogy the translator is likely to face a challenge in reproduction of the TT. And not just that those translation errors are as a result of differences in the language family, but also, it can be contributed by differences in SL and TL cultures.

Therefore, Flores (2004:4) defines test translation error as “the lack of equivalence between the source language version and the target language version of test items”. Flores goes further to explain that this “equivalence refers to a wide variety of properties of test items, including format and visual layout, content, and the cognitive and linguistic demands posed to test takers, among others pg. 4”. As this scholar suggests, lack of equivalence – hence resulting to translation errors – cuts across a wide variety of factors and this takes us back to the issue of translation errors being “multidimensional” Flores (2004:4). The errors arising from lack of equivalence between the ST and the TT format or style and visual layout occur when the translator does not reproduce the TT according the required text type and text genre. For example, an instructional user manual has a different layout of format from fictional texts. The voice, the tone and the person used in writing and translating these two genres of texts is also quite different as well.

Solano-Flores, G., BackHoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009:85) Explains dimensionality of translation errors: “The linguistic features of test items are interrelated. As a consequence, translation error is multidimensional. For example, the improper insertion of a comma in a sentence may violate some writing conventions in the target language (Grammar and Syntax) but it also may change the intended meaning of an idea

(Semantics). As a consequence of this multidimensionality, translation actions intended to address error on one dimension may also produce error on other dimensions”

Ervin, S., & Bower, R. (1952) agrees with Flores (2004) that translation errors cause distortion of the meaning of the TT. Ervin, S., & Bower, R. (1952:1) says that “translation distortion may arise from differences in the meanings of words, from differences in syntactical contexts, and from differences in the cultural context of the readers or hearers” of the target text. This study agrees with Ervin, S., & Bower, R. (1952) that TT meaning is distorted once the cultural norms and the syntactical and contents rules of the TL are broken. For example, Swahili language has different syntactical structure and rules from English. The translator should therefore, be able to convey the TT text in accordance to its syntactical rules and also in its cultural norms. These scholars also raise the question of reliability of translations which may contribute to the validity of the translation. Ervin, S., & Bower, R. suggest the translators should be reliable enough. It is unprofessional for a client, an organization or a company to employ untrained translators as this may result to a poor quality translation. The professional and experienced translators produce good quality translations with minimal errors. Therefore, this helps in elimination and in minimizing mistranslation.

Ervin, S., & Bower, R. (1952:4) “Lexical meanings in words may or may not have objective referents. If the same objects appear in both cultures meaning may be easily translated. But even in the case of objective referents one term may have a larger range of referents than another”. This study agrees with Ervin and Bower that objects or ideas have more than one referent. In such cases, the translator should be able to understand



and use the appropriate referent which suits the TT audience. However, if the translator does not know the number of referents referring to a particular “object” then it leads to mistranslation. This takes us to “special terminology”.

In most cases technical terms are derived from the general vocabulary. Also, translators should be able to translate affective and figurative meanings. However, most translators are aware that translating affective and figurative meanings is quite challenging Ervin, S., & Bower, R. (1952). “In translations a choice must very often be made between the objective referent and a figurative meaning. It is probable that few words have exact counterparts in another language, and there are cases of meanings which cannot be expressed in certain languages at all. Ervin, S., & Bower, R. (1952:5)”. Where there is no equivalent terminology in TL it also poses a challenge of translation and it results to errors. Although, paraphrasing is an acceptable strategy of translation it results to long and ambiguous translation.

Ervin, S., & Bower, R. discusses systematic translation errors as comprising of (1952:9) “difficulties in translation due to differences in inclusiveness of terms, in range of referents, in meanings associated with terms that may have an apparent and traditional translation, problems of inclusion or exclusion of material because of syntactical requirements”. These scholars, moreover, suggest that where systematic errors occur “reliability check by itself is insufficient. The essential problem is one of validity, of assuring one's self, in so far as possible, that an equivalence of meaning has been conveyed from the original to the translated version” pg.9.

Again, Gyde (2015) sees translation errors to be as a result of factors such as misunderstanding of the translation brief and the content of the ST. This study agrees with Gyde that if the translator does not understand the ST content/information/culture then it is difficult for him/her to transfer the ST content into the TT faithfully and effectively.

However, Gyde (2005) argues that translation errors are dependent on the translation approach which the translator uses and also it is dependent on the evaluator's norms. If the translator uses the equivalence theoretical approach, the translation error is as a result of non-equivalence between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). On the other hand, if the translator and the evaluator or the reviewer uses the functionalistic approach of translation, then, a translation error is defined in accordance to the fulfillment of the TT function and/or according to purpose to the audience.

“Depending on the theoretical orientation, the evaluators’ expectations and attitudes with respect to fidelity, loyalty, equivalence, norms and acceptability differ, especially with respect to the acceptability of changes of meaning and addition or omission of information Gyde (2005: 386”. Translation memories (TMS) and machine translation (MT) as compared with human translators have “a larger concentration of specific types of errors[...]such as ‘errors’ on the text-linguistic level, for example, wrong segmentation, vague reference or co-reference or inconsistent terminology. On the semantic level, the translation of terms can be problematic as the system’s proposals can be either too general or too specific in the context” Gyde (2005:387).

Some scholars have however suggested some techniques of obtaining equivalence between the ST and the TT. Yu, Lee, & Woo, 2004 and Wang L and Lee H. 2006 suggest the use of back translation. These scholars feel that back translation can help the translator obtain TT equivalence. “The most widely used and accepted translation method for obtaining equivalence between the source language to the target language is back translation” (Yu, Lee, & Woo, 2004 cited in Wang L and Lee H. 2006:2).

### **2.3 CLASSIFICATION OF TRANSLATION ERRORS**

Solano-Flores et al. (2009:83-84) have classified translation errors into different categories. This classification is based on TIMSS (Third International Mathematics and Science) study in 1995 - TIMSS is quoted in Maxwell B. (1996). These scholars identified and classified ten different types of translation errors. These errors are classified in different dimensions and include: **Style, Format, Conventions, Grammar and Syntax, Semantics, Register, Information, Construct, Curriculum, and Origin.**

Solano-Flores, G., Backhoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009:84) say that analyzing errors can sometimes reveal features which can be either measurable or immeasurable translation errors. The measurable feature involves testing whether a translation error can alter a meaning of a text or not. On the features which are immeasurable but they are likely to affect the quality of the translated work. These include “slight variation in the size and position of an illustration. The translation of an item can be viewed as being within a certain range of acceptability rather than being entirely correct or entirely flawed” pg. 84

However, Solano-Flores et al (2009) says that, “These dimensions should not be regarded as universal. A specific set of dimensions should be established for each test translation or test translation review endeavor, according to such factors as the goals and the content of the test and the material and human resources available pg. 83”. Therefore, these dimensions cut across a wide variety of factors as the goal of test translation as well as the content of the TT and the personnel who are contacting the test. According to Solano-Flores et al (2009) classification, each dimension –translation error – comprises of several other translation errors types. For example, “there are six types of error within the Grammar and Syntax dimension: literal (word- by-word) translation, unnatural syntactical structure, inappropriate use of prepositions, and inappropriate use of tenses, collapsing sentences, and other pg. 83”.

Solano-Flores, G., Backhoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009:84) again classify the ten translation errors into three major categories. These include Item design, Language and content. The scholars further distinguish between the external and internal translation errors. The internal errors are the ones that are as a result of the work done by the translator him/herself. This include: errors of style, semantics and register. On the other hand, the external errors are beyond translators’ control. These errors include: the format of the text, curriculum and origin. These errors can be attributed by the item sampling procedure or the translated text production.

### **2.3.1 Item Design Errors**

Solano-Flores, G., Backhoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009:85) say these errors involve use of wrong style, format and conventions. “The item in the target language is written in a style that is not in accord with the style used in textbooks and printed

materials in the country. Error types: incorrect use of accents; incorrect use of uppercase letters; incorrect use of lowercase letters; subject-verb inconsistency; spelling mistakes; incorrect punctuation” etc. This is very important because the TT audience may misunderstand the message because of some minor negligence such as spelling mistakes.

At the same time the format of the original text does not match the one of the TT. Error types at the format level include: “change of size, style, or position of tables, graphs, or illustrations; change of font style; use of narrower or wider margins; omission of graphic components; insertion of graphic components” pg. 85. In relation to conventions, the TT is not in the accepted writing format of the target country or audience. The TT does not even adhere to the basic principles of writing the item. These errors include: “grammatical inconsistency between stem and options in multiple choice items; inappropriate use of punctuation to denote continuity between stem and options; change in the order of options; grammatical inconsistency between options; inappropriate use of uppercase letters at the beginning of options” pg. 85.

### **2.3.2 Grammar and Semantic Errors.**

Solano-Flores, G., Backhoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009:85) classifies these errors in different dimensions. These are errors on semantics, grammar and syntax. Grammatical errors occur when the TT has grammar errors and the syntax is unusual. The complex-long sentences result to ambiguity. Kiswahili, For example, has very long and sometimes complex translations as compared to English. These error types include: “literal (word-by-word) translation; unnatural syntactic structure; inappropriate use of prepositions; inappropriate use of tenses; collapsing of sentences” The semantic

translation errors involve mistranslation of the message conveyed in the ST at the level of sentence. “The ideas and meaning conveyed in the translated item are not the same as in the item in the source language” pg.86. This error types include: “use of false cognates; inappropriate adaptation of idiomatic expressions; change in meaning; insertion of words; omission of words; change of gender of characters; combining statements; imprecise use of terms; use of terms with multiple meanings” pg. 86.

### **2.3.3 Errors on Register.**

According to Solano-Flores, G., Backhoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009:85), the translation of TT is insensitive to the cultural and social norms of the target audience. The translation is also not based on the cultural context of the TT. “The translation of the item is not sensitive to the target population’s word usage and social contexts”. These errors include: “use of terms in ways that differ from the intended curriculum; use of terms in ways that differ from the enacted curriculum”. Translation involves a transfer of meaning of a text from the SL and culture to the TL and culture. Therefore, the translator should be careful while handling any translation in order to make sure that he/she does not violate the social and the cultural norms of the target audience.

### **2.3.4 Errors on Information.**

Solano-Flores, G., Backhoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009:85), describes these errors as the ones which “changes the amount, quality, or content of information critical to understanding what the item is about and what has to be done to respond to it”. These include: “inconsistent translation of the same term; change in the way in which numbers are written; use of a key term more or fewer times than in the original; insertion of non-

technical terms, sentences, or explanations; omission of non-technical terms, sentences, or explanations”. At the same time, wrong translation constructions may change the knowledge and skills needed and useful to the target audience. Solano-Flores, G., Backhoff, E., & Contreras-Niño, L. Á. (2009) mentions that inaccurate use of technical terms and omission of technical terms may lead to wrong interpretation of a technical text.

### CHAPTER 3

This chapter focuses on classification and the general presentation of data. The chapter discusses the translation errors in telecommunication electronic devices information in reference to the study data. The errors discussed include the lexical and semantic errors. Data is presented in the tables below. Only 30 segments are sampled and discussed in this chapter.

#### 3.0 DATA PRESENTATION

This study categorizes the data into two categories of translation errors i.e. Lexical and Semantic errors. Each category is discussed in detail.

#### 3.1 DATA PRESENTATION ON LEXICAL ERRORS

The table below presents lexical errors as evident in the study data. The specific translation error is highlighted and a more appropriate TT rendition is recommended.

Table 3.1 Data Presentation on Lexical Errors

Segment/Phrase	ST	TT	Suggestion
1.	Auto-redial	<i>Piga simu tena</i> <i>kiotomatiki</i>	<i>Piga simu kiotomatiki</i>
2.	Cloud	<i>Wingu</i>	<i>Wingu la intaneti</i>
3	Home	<i>Nyumbani</i>	<i>Skrini ya mwanzo ya simu</i>
4.	Beauty mode	<i>Hali ya urembo</i>	<i>Mpangilio wa kamera wa hali ya urembo</i>
5.	Blacklist	<i>Orodha zilizozuiliwa</i>	<i>Orodha ya simu zilizozuiliwa</i>
6.	Centre	<i>Kati</i>	<i>Kati ya program</i>



7.	Conflict	<i>Mgogoro</i>	<i>Vifaa vya simu visivyoingiana/ kumbaliana</i>
8.	Contact	<i>Mawasiliano</i>	<i>Nambari ya simu</i>
9.	Credit	<i>Sifa</i>	<i>Nambari ya vocha</i>
10.	Double Touch	<i>Mguso mara mbili</i>	<i>Gusa skrini mara mbili</i>
11.	Details	<i>maelezo</i>	<i>Maelezo kuhusu simu</i>
12.	Field	<i>Sehemu</i>	<i>Sehemu ya ripoti ya simu</i>
13.	Free	<i>Bila malipo</i>	<i>Nafasi iliyobaki kwenye kumbukumbu ya simu</i>
14.	Gold	<i>Dhahabu</i>	<i>Kiwango cha dhahabu</i>
15.	Import	<i>Leta</i>	<i>Hamisha faili/program</i>
16.	Lock	<i>Kufuli</i>	<i>Funga kifaa/simu kwa kutumia nenosiri</i>
17.	Call	<i>Simu</i>	<i>Piga simu</i>
18.	Type	<i>Aina</i>	<i>Andika</i>
19.	SIM Card	<i>SIM kadi</i>	<i>Kadi ya simu</i>
20.	Run	<i>Kimbia</i>	<i>Kumbalisha program ya simu/kompyuta</i>

### 3.1.1 Lexical/Terminological Translation Errors

Terminological/lexical translation errors arise due to adoption of the wrong lexicon in the TL. Therefore, this changes or distorts the meaning of the TT.

### Segment 1 – example 1

ST: Auto-redial

TT: *Piga simu tena kiotomatiki*

Auto-redial is a mobile phone feature that allows the phone to automatically redial a phone number if the previous call did not get through the first time. It is automatic because it does not require the phone operator's to redial. It is the opposite of the manual phone dial. The TT translation is long and nonsensical. This feature allows the mobile phone to redial the number as many time times as possible. The TT translation is long; this makes its meaning blurred and convoluted. TT illustrates how the nature of Kiswahili results to long and paraphrased translations hence it results to a translation error. This segment can be translated as *piga simu kiotomatiki*.

### Segment 2 – example 2

ST: Beauty mode

TT: *Hali ya urembo*

This is a camera capture mode that beautifies people's faces. It is the way in which the captured photos are portrayed, formatted and displayed. The TT translation also depicts terminological errors in Kiswahili. The TT segment conveys an inaccurate equivalence of the ST. *Hali ya urembo* when back translated results to a different thing: the state of beauty. It can be translated as *mpangilio wa kamera*.

### Segment 3 – example 3

ST: Blacklist

TT: *Orodha zilizozuiliwa*

Blacklist is a mobile phone setting done on the phone contacts in which some contacts are not allowed to call/message you. This is the opposite of white list. The blacklisted contacts are denied access from reaching the intended mobile phone recipient. Blacklist is also a list of countries which are denied access to international community benefits. In most cases, they are sanctioned and denied travel visas. The ST implies blacklist in the context of a mobile phone. The TT translation is incomplete and hence it does not deliver the original meaning of the ST author. The segment *Orodha zilizozuiliwa* is ambiguous. The TT audience will not be able to comprehend which list the author is referring to. A more appropriate translation is: *Simu zilizozuiliwa*.

Segment 4 – example 4

ST: Bluetooth

TT: Bluetooth

Bluetooth is a wireless technology standard for exchanging data over short distances (using short-wavelength UHF radio waves in the ISM band from 2.4 to 2.485 GHz [2]) from fixed and mobile devices and building personal area networks (PANs). Bluetooth allows one to send information, in short distance range, from one mobile or computer device to another. This term has not been translated. At the same time, it does not have an equivalent term in Kiswahili. It is a foreign language in Kiswahili and therefore, the TT audience might have difficulties in comprehending its meaning.

Segment 5 – example 5

ST: Centre

TT: *Kati*

The term centre takes a special meaning when it comes to telecommunication electronics and specifically to the mobile phone. In relation to the phone usage, a centre is a special zone in an app which combines all things related to a topic. On the other hand, the denotative meaning of the term is a central position from a circumference of a circle or from a sphere. The meaning used in the TT is ambiguous and hence the mobile phone user can misinterpret the translation to mean the middle point in a phone screen while on the other hand it implies a different idea. A more specific translation can break this ambiguity, for example, *kati ya programu*.

Segment 6 – example 6

ST: Cloud

TT: *Wingu*

A mobile cloud is an internet based-data and application which can be accessed through smart phones and computers. The term cloud can be described as parts of the Internet that allow online processing and storage of documents and data as well as electronic access to software and other resources. Data stored on the cloud allows users to access their data anywhere anytime. Huawei's HiCloud is a tool for users to upload their data to the cloud. At the same time, cloud is a visible collection of particles of water or ice suspended in the air, usually at an elevation above the earth's surface. The TT translation is very general and it does not differentiate between the above two meanings hence resulting to ambiguity. In addition, the translation is very literal and an additional explanation of what

a *wingu* is could somehow make the meaning more understandable. Also, some more information can be added on the TT in order to differentiate the above two meanings, for example, *wingu la intaneti*.

#### Segment 7 – example 7

ST: Conflict

TT: *Mgogoro*

Conflict is the incompatibility or interference, as of parameter, address, settings, or activity with another. The incompatibility can be at different levels such as devices incompatibility. The TT translation i.e. *mgogoro* is not an equivalent translation of the TT. Although, it portrays disagreement it does not put it in the context of telecommunication electronics, in this case a mobile phone device. Therefore, the TT results to ambiguity because it does not put the TT into the appropriate mobile phone context. It can be translated as: *Vifaa vya simu visivyokubaliana*.

#### Segment 8 – example 8

ST: Contact

TT: *mwasiliani*

The term contact has several meaning. It can be used to mean a communication between persons. On the other hand, in the mobile phone context, a contact is an entry saved on the contacts app. This entry includes the phone number of a person, and sometimes an email address, among others. This second definition of contact is the exact meaning of the ST. TT translation in this segment depicts the first meaning according to the above

definition; hence it becomes a translation error. This results to both lexical and semantic errors. Instead the translation, *nambari ya simu* is a more appropriate translation.

Segment 9 – example 9

ST: Credit

TT: *Sifa*

Credit is used to pay for communication services. Users can add two kinds of bank cards on their phone and credit card is one of them. This kind of bank card allows users to draw more money than what they actually have. Also, credit is the ability of customers to obtain goods and services without an immediate pay. Payment is done in the future. The translation of the TT segment, however, does not convey the intended meaning in the ST. The translation *sifa* is not contextualized in to the telecommunication electronics field. Instead, it implies the general meaning of ‘attributes’ or ‘traits’ of someone or of an object. It can be translated as *nambari ya vocha ya simu*.

Segment 10 - example 10

ST: Data

TT: Data

A data is an internet connection offered through smart phones and computers. It is known as mobile data because it is generated from your mobile phone, and can be connected to any other device including a tablet and a computer. Therefore, data refers to network traffic generated from your mobile internet connection, hence, "mobile data." The TL does not have an equivalent terminology for the term data. It has been imported into

Kiswahili directly from English. This can result to a terminological problem which can influence the TT audience interpretation of the term negatively.

Segment 11- example 11

ST: Double touch

TT: *Mguso mara mbili*

Double touch is the act of touching something on the phone's screen twice in a quick succession. It is also known as screen double tap. The translation of the TT is ambiguous and this is as a result of lack an appropriate and equivalent term in Kiswahili. The TT *Mguso mara mbili* does not convey the exact meaning of the ST segment. It should be more clear to show how and where the phone operator will touch/click. A closer equivalent translation is: *gusa skrini mara mbili*.

Segment 12 – example 12

ST: Details

TT: *Maelezo*

Details are descriptive information on the phone subject such as contact, location, app activity among others. On the other hand, details can be descriptive information of someone or something. Therefore, this term has been borrowed from the general vocabulary into telecommunication electronics. The translation of the TT *maelezo* is insufficient in meaning delivery to the target audience. It is also incomplete. This results to both lexical and semantic errors in the TT. A translation *maelezo kuhusu simu* is more appropriate.

### Segment 13 – example 13

ST: Field

TT: *Sehemu*

In relation to mobile phones a field is a record of information which is treated as one unit.

It is one or more related characters treated as a unit and constituting part of a record, for purpose of input, processing, output, or storage by a computer. On the other hand, a field is a piece of land. It is also used to describe specialization in a certain domain of study, for example, electronics field as part of Engineering. The TT translation conveys the general or the literal meaning of the term field. It is also ambiguous. It can be translated as: *sehemu ya ripoti ya simu*.

### Segment 14 - example 14

ST: Free

TT: *Bila malipo*

The term free takes different meanings in different context. In phone and computers it means that there is an available space in the device's storage. Free is used to indicate the unoccupied space in a phone memory. On the other hand, the term free can be used to describe something or a product acquired without a payment i.e. an offer to somebody. In this translation, the TT conveys the second meaning as described in this paragraph. This is not the intended message to the TT users. It can be translated: *nafasi iliyobaki kwenye kumbukumbu ya simu*.

### Segment 15 – example 15



ST: Gold

TT: *Dhahabu*

In Huawei, gold is a membership level in which phone users enjoy different privileges. Users have different membership levels based on the device they use and the activities they join. Users enjoy different privileges at different membership levels. Gold membership is a relatively high level. At the same time gold is a mineral which has a very high value. The TT translation signifies the inaccurate translation. This term has been mistranslated in that; it does not convey the intended meaning of the ST to the TT audience. It is open to different interpretations and this result to an error. It can be translated as *kiwango cha dhahabu*.

Segment 16 – example 16

ST: Import

TT: *Leta*

To import means to download data from another source to your current device. It means to bring a file into the program you are using or working on from another program. Also, to import means to bring goods from a foreign country into your own country. The translation of the TT segment is lexically incorrect. The translation *leta* when back translated, it means ‘bring’. Therefore, it does not convey the intended meaning of the source text to the target audience. It can be translated as *hamisha faili/programu*.

Segment 17 – example 17

ST: Landscape

TT: *Mkao mlalo*

It is to hold a phone so that the longer edge is horizontal. It is the horizontal view of a screen; certain functions on the phone are only capable of being done in landscape view. The opposite of landscape is portrait. It also means a **view of a piece of land**. The translation *mkao mlalo* is inaccurate. The meaning of the term is not contextualized. It can be translated as *mpangilio wa simu katika upana*.

Segment 18 – example 18

ST: Lock

TT: Kufuli

To lock a phone device involves turning the device into black whereby you or any other person cannot perform actions. It is a synchronization to limit access to the phone files, data or any other information. To unlock the phone, one is required to enter a password if you had set it on your device. Device is usually locked when users do not need to use it. At the same time a screen lock and app lock on the device allows the user to lock the screen or a certain app when a special condition is met so as to save battery, protect privacy among others. The TT translation of the term lock is ambiguous and also, it is not an equivalent of the ST. *Kufuli*, in English, it is a padlock. Once back translated, it completely loses its original meaning because as it is, it does not make sense contextually to the TT audience. The meaning implied by the TT translation is: a mechanism of fastening something or an object especially using a key. This is a wrong translation. The translation *fungua kifaa/simu kwa kutumia nenosiri* is more appropriate.

#### Segment 19 – example 19

ST: Call

TT: *Simu*

A phone call is made to verbally communicate with someone in a different location. It means to communicate with someone through a telephone. An example in a sentence is: Make a call to the company's managing director. The TT translation, however, does not imply the ST original message. To some extent, the TT is mistranslated and hence misleading and this may be due to omission of some information in the translated segment. The TT translation i.e. *simu* implies a mobile phone gadget contrary to the intended meaning which is: to make a call. This segment should be translated as *piga simu*.

#### Segment 20 – example 20

ST: Type

TT: *Aina*

The word type has different meanings depending on the context or domain in which it is used. It means a category of people, objects or organisms with similar characteristics. In the mobile phone and computer context, the term type means to enter characters on the keyboard or other electronic devices, used often in giving instructions. For example, the phone user can be instructed to type/enter password. The TT translation depicts the general meaning of the terminology and this resulted to a translation error. The meaning of the TT segment is portrayed as 'a category' unlike 'to enter' which is the intended meaning of the ST. The translation: *Andika/weka...* is more appropriate.

### 3.2 DATA PRESENTATION ON SEMANTIC ERRORS

The below tables is a presentation of semantic errors as evident in the TT. It shows both the ST and the TT rendition in the data. It also gives a column of a more appropriate TT translation.

**Table 3.2 Data Presentation on Semantic Errors**

Segment/Phrase	ST	TT	Suggestion
1.	Blacklist	<i>Orodha zilizozuiliwa</i>	<i>Orodha ya nambari za simu zilizozuiliwa</i>
2.	Call back	<i>Piga simu tena</i>	<i>Piga simu</i>
3.	End	<i>Mwisho</i>	<i>Kata simu</i>
4.	Headset	<i>Kifaa cha kichwa</i>	<i>Kipokea sauti cha simu</i>
5.	Home	<i>Nyumbani</i>	<i>Skrini ya mwanzo ya simu</i>
6.	Left	<i>Kushoto</i>	<i>Asilimia iliyosalia</i>
7.	Priority Interruptions	<i>Usumbufu wa kipaumbele</i>	<i>Ukatizaji wa kipaumbele</i>
8.	Log	<i>Ripoti</i>	<i>Ripoti ya simu</i>
9.	Pocket mode	<i>Hali ya mfukoni</i>	<i>Hali ya simu ya kuongezeka sauti</i>
10.	Pre-installed app	<i>Programu iliyosakinishwa mapema</i>	<i>Programu iliyosakinishwa awali</i>

### 3.2.1 Semantic errors

The study discusses semantic errors as portrayed in the translated mobile telephone data. These errors include use of terminology(s) in the TT which has more than one interpretations hence resulting to ambiguity.

Segment 1 – example 21

ST: Blacklist

TT: *Orodha zilizozuiwa*

Blacklist involves a category of phone contacts which are blocked in order to prevent any kind of communication whether through a call or a text message into your device. These are contacts that are not allowed to call/message you. On the other hand, a blacklist is a list of individuals or countries that are denied access and travel permits in another country. The blacklisting may occur due to various reasons including insecurity issues among others. The translation TT *orodha zilizozuiwa* leaves the TT audience with unclear information and unanswered questions such as: what list? The translation is incomplete and this alters the message of the TT. A more appropriate translation can be *orodha ya nambari za simu zilizozuiwa kufanya mawasiliano*. Although the translation is long, it communicates to the TT audience to some extent.

Segment 2 - example 22

ST: Call back

TT: *Piga simu tena*

Call back is a term used to directly call back a number that the user could not get through to. The TT translation is ambiguous. It depicts two meanings. It has more than one interpretation i.e. it can be interpreted as to redial a number. At the same time, TT translation can be interpreted as to return a phone missed call. More than one interpretations of a translated text especially in technical and specialized fields' result to ambiguity hence a semantic error occurs. It can be translated as *piga simu*.

Segment 3 – example 23

ST: End

TT: *Mwisho*

The term end in mobile phones and in computers takes a different meaning from the general meaning. Most general terms have different meanings in the technical field and therefore, the translator should be able to understand the 'special' meaning a terminology takes in that particular field before he/she begins translation. The above segment has both the denotative and the connotative meanings. The general meaning implies the final point of something. However, this is not the meaning portrayed in the ST. The ST segment implies the termination of a particular phone activity. For example, termination of phone calls. On the other hand, the TT translation does not differentiate between two definitions of the term 'end' and hence it results to ambiguity. It can be translated as: *kata simu*.

Segment 4 – example 24

ST: Headset

TT: *Kifaa cha kichwa*

Headset is a set or a pair of headphones used in phones, computers and also in radio communication. It has microphones which transmit voice to the user and therefore, he/she can capture the information from the connected device. Headset has another meaning which is: the joint of the bicycle front fork to its frame. The TT is ambiguous and incomplete. A back translation of the TT is: the head device, which is not the exact meaning of the terminology. It can be translated as *kipokea sauti cha simu/kompyuta*.

Segment 5 – example 25

ST: Home

TT: *Nyumbani*

A home is the first screen which appears on the phone when users want to access a device or any app in the phone. The home page provides features and entries of all the available apps in a phone or in a computer. A home is also an institution with people who need a professional care, for example, a nursing home. At the same time a home page is the initial web page that appears on the screen of the phone which provides access to the other pages. On the other hand, the term home generally has the obvious meaning of the place where someone permanently lives, especially a member of a family. The translation *nyumbani* is ambiguous bearing that the phone is a telecommunication electronic gadget that is used by all people, both the professionals and the unprofessional. The translation implies both the denotative meaning and the connotative meanings. It has multiple interpretations. This can be translated as *skrini ya mwanzo ya simu*.

Segment 6 – example 26

ST: Left

TT: *Kushoto*

The term left has multiple meanings. First, it is used to indicate the left hand/west side of a person if he/she is facing north. It also means a group of people who support radical views; liberals and socialists. It also indicates that someone has gone away among other meanings. When it comes to a mobile phone device, the term left is used to indicate that something is remaining. An example is when a phone battery is changing or you are downloading a file from the internet, it will always be indicated on the phone screen: 30% remaining to complete – this is an example. It shows the remaining part of a whole and it indicates what is needed before something is complete. The TT translation implies a completely different meaning and this results to a semantic error. The translated segment *kushoto* is not an appropriate translation because it gives the TT audience wrong information hence breaking the fidelity rule of the translation. It can be translated as *asilimia iliyosalia*.

Segment 7 – example 27

ST: Log

TT: *Ripoti*

A log is an official record of events. It also means a trunk of a cut tree. In relation to the mobile phone context a call log is a record of phone calls i.e. missed, rejected, dialed and received calls in a mobile device. On the other hand, an app log records all the app activities in the device and can also help locate issues when they happen. The TT translation is ambiguous and therefore, it has more than one interpretation. This is a semantic error. When back translated, the TT segment gives back a different meaning.



*Ripoti* - back translate - a report and hence it does not convey the meaning of the source text. However, more information can be added to the translated segment to make it a more appropriate and an equivalent TT translation, for example, *ripoti ya simu*.

Segment 8 – example 28

ST: Pocket mode

TT: *Hali ya mfukoni*

Different modes in mobile phones give the user an opportunity to select the mode which he/she want e.g. the silent mode, vibration, among others. The pocket mode is the one that gradually increases the ringtone volume and vibration intensity of incoming calls, so that users don't need to worry about missing important calls when their phones are in the pocket hence the name pocket. The translation of the term pocket mode into Kiswahili gives a very different meaning from the ST. *Hali ya mfukoni* which means ‘the state of the pocket’ gives the TT phone users incomplete information. A more appropriate translation is *hali ya simu ya kuongezeka sauti ya simu*.

Segment 9 – example 29

ST: Pre-installed app

TT: *Programu iliyosakinishwa mapema*

A pre-installed app or software is the one that has been put into the mobile phone by the manufacturer before it is send to the customers. It is the opposite of the installed apps which are installed by the phone user or owner after they have made a purchase. Therefore, pre-installed apps are that which are natively installed on the device from

factory setup. This type of apps cannot be removed from the device. The translation of the TT segment has an error which somehow alters the meaning of the segment. This involves the mistranslation of the term ‘pre’ in the ST. This term is represented by term *mapema* in the TT. In Kiswahili, the word *mapema* means early. The TT can be replaced by the term *awali* which means ‘before’ in order to help clearly illustrate the intended meaning of the ST. The translation should therefore be: *program iliyosakinishwa awali (kwenye kiwanda)*.

Segment 10 – example 30

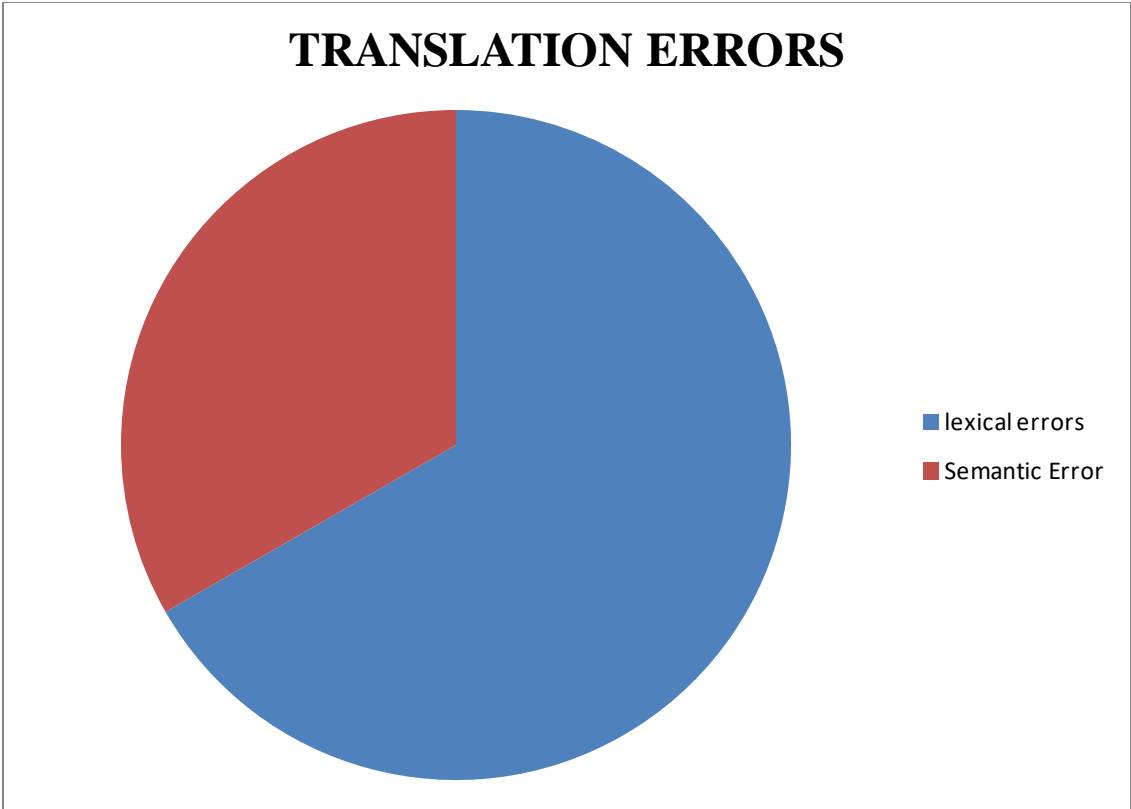
ST: Priority interruptions

TT: *Usumbufu wa kipaumbele*

Do not disturb mode is a mobile phone setting which blocks notifications, calls and messages from ringing, vibrating or lighting up the screen when it is locked. However, the mobile phone user can also make some changes on the settings which allows some notifications to still come through even when the ‘Do not disturb mode is enabled’. These notifications are called priority interruptions in Huawei mobile phone. The translation *usumbufu wa kipaumbele* is nonsensical and hence it does not convey the meaning intended by the ST author. The TT translated can be interpreted as priority disturbances (*usumbufu*) and this makes it sound ‘negative’ to the Swahili mobile user. It can be translated as *ujumbe wa muhimu*.

### **3.3 Quantitative Presentation of Data**

This study also analyzed the data quantitatively in order to help in statistical interpretation of the research findings in relation to the data using the study theory. The study used pie chart to illustrate the percentage of translation errors in the Huawei mobile phone. The classification of the translation errors is based on the two categories of errors discussed in the data i.e. lexical and semantic errors. The lexical errors are at 66.7%, while the semantic errors at 33.3%. The lexical errors take a higher percentage than the semantic errors. Below is the data representation using a pie chart.



**Figure 3.1 Translation Errors**

## CHAPTER 4

### 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter analyzes data findings of the study. The data comprised of Huawei mobile information translated from English into Kiswahili. The study analyzed two categories of translation errors from the data. These include lexical and semantic errors. The data used for the study is human translated. According to the study data the most common translation errors were the lexical errors.

This study found out that the most common and frequent translation errors within the telecommunication electronics are the lexical or the terminological errors which are at 66.7%. According to the data, these errors occur at different levels. There are some which are as a result of adoption of the wrong lexicon for example, example 2 and 14 while others are completely un-translated yet they are used in the TT exactly as they are in the ST, for example, example 4 and 10 as discussed in chapter 3. On the other hand, semantic errors according to the data are at 33.3%. The semantic errors are half lesser than the lexical errors. In some cases, a lexical error automatically led to a semantic error. For example, in example 23 – ST: end; TT: *mwisho*, the TT is lexical and semantically wrong. The semantic errors result to ambiguity since they give more than one interpretation of the TT. These meanings include both denotative and connotative.

The translation errors depicted in the English-Kiswahili translation of telecommunication electronics can be attributed to several factors. First, the lexical errors which take the highest percentage are as a result of lack of equivalence terminology in Kiswahili. Most telecommunication electronics terminologies are not localized and therefore they are

explained in the Kiswahili translations. The nature of Kiswahili structure is different from the English structure. Therefore, ‘explanation’ strategy of translation also results to long and convoluted segments. For example, in example 22 ST: call back, TT: *piga simu tena*; and example 1 ST: auto-redial, TT: *piga simu tenakiotomatiki*. This takes us back to the issue of localization.

For Translation errors in telecommunication electronics to be eliminated, terminology in this domain in Kiswahili should be localized. Newmark (1998) suggests that use of neologisms and coined words can be used in translation of technical terms. In telecommunication electronics, use of neologisms and coined words is an appropriate solution to the issue of mistranslation. However, the translation must be clear and coherent as proposed in *skopos* theory. If terminologies are not localized therefore, it means that the target audience has a challenge interpreting the information discussed, the illustration given and the instructional information given on the electronics.

Vermeer (1978:100) says that the TT must be “internally coherent”. Example 11 in chapter 3 does not fulfill this *skopos* rule. ST: Double touch; TT: *Mguso mara mbili*. This segment is not coherent as well as it does not have a flow. Therefore, based on this theory’s tenet, the study argues that the semantic errors as discussed in the data are as a result of lack of coherence and logic in the TT. This means that the TT did not fulfill the *skopos* rule. Vermeer (1998) also argues that both the ST and the TT must be coherent. This implies that the TT should be an equivalent of the ST in meaning delivery.

This study, therefore, concludes that the lexical errors discussed in chapter 3 are evident because the TT does not comply with the Vermeer's "inter-textual coherence" (1978:100) rule. For example, example 14 ST: Free, TT: *bila malipo*; and example 13 ST: Field, TT: *sehemu*.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives a summary of the study. It also discusses recommendations to translators, terminologists and lexicographers. And, finally it gives recommendations for further research and study.

#### 5.1 SUMMARY

The study looked at translation errors in telecommunication electronics devices in order to analyze the usability and relevance of the translated information to the product users. Data for the study comprised a translated Huawei phone glossary from English to Kiswahili. The study analyzed two categories of errors i.e. lexical and semantic errors.

The study only focused on the mobile phone i.e. Huawei mobile as the study sample since telecommunication field is quite broad. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The data was analyzed using the *skopos* theory. The data used was translated by professional translators.

The study findings indicate that the most common translation errors in telecommunication electronics are the lexical errors. In most cases, an inaccurate translation of terminology resulted to a semantic error. Therefore, the most common challenge in translation of telecommunication information from English to Kiswahili is to accurately produce equivalent TT terminologies. Therefore, some terms and phrases end up partially translated.



## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the study findings, I recommend to translators, terminologists and lexicographers to pay more attention on telecommunication terminology in Kiswahili. More terminology should be developed and documented in order to aid communication in the field and also to promote the growth of Kiswahili. Telecommunication electronics devices are western inventions and they are a necessity to us and to the entire East Africa. The only way to maximize their use and to benefit us is by ensuring that they are delivered to the consumers in the language they can understand. Therefore, in order to provide a solution to this problem, terminologies in this field should not only be developed but it should also be documented in specialized field Kiswahili dictionaries.

### **5.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

The study recommends further study on:

- i. Localization of mobile telephone terminologies in Kiswahili
- ii. Analysis of syntactic translation errors in telecommunication electronic devices

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