

## To Translate or Not to Translate Interjections as Hedges: A Case Study of Kenya's Political Speeches

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### Abstract

This paper investigates the occurrence of interjections as hedges in Kenya's presidential political speeches and their translatability from English into Kiswahili from a skopos based perspective. These hedges have a significant pragmatic functionality that cannot be ignored even in translation. The paper explores the usage of this kind of a hedge in the presidential political speeches in Kenya and what effect arises from its translatability or non-translatability. As a communicative feature that carries an indirect meaning, hedges play a significant role in message delivery, a functionality that makes them important in a discussion. As opined by Lakoff (1972), hedges' functionality is beyond the fuzzy notion, carrying an important meaning that would have otherwise not possible to deliver it devoid of these hedges. Pragmatically, this linguistic feature has been referred to in different terms such as shields, indeterminants and expression of politeness (Halliday 1994, Levinson 2000). In this regard, their functionality is a necessary ingredient in communication process which cannot be ignored. This research has been carried out in reference to Skopo's theory whose tenets of purpose, optimality, faithfulness and cohesion looks at the usage of these words and their transferability from English to Kiswahili in Kenyan's political speeches since their presence in a communication process generally is and often has been viewed as nuisance. Twenty speeches from Kenya's presidential candidates in 2013 and 2017 together with their running mates were transcribed. The units of meaning with interjections were identified and subjected to translation from English into Kiswahili. It was found that translation strategies largely used were literal translation, omission and domestication although other approaches were still available in rendition of the required meaning.

**Keywords:** *Interjections, Hedges, Skopos, Source Language, Target Language, Translatability*

### Introduction

Though interjections are a vital component of expression, there has been no direct attention paid to them on their translatability. Interjections as a language feature are mostly viewed as source language makeups which have influence in the target language once translation process has been taken place (Touy, 1995). Further, "in translation, phenomena pertaining to the make-up of the source text tend to be transferred to the target text" and as such are interferences in the source texts whether written or spoken (Touy, 1995: 275). Therefore, it is deducible that, interference is a translation universal, and it is therefore worthy investigating which language features are most liable or permeable to it. Interjections, in this study viewed as hedging devices in political speeches in Kenya, are characteristically a language feature whose function is to make things fuzzier or implicit. Observed through the lenses of the modern grammar, interjections are viewed as disruptions to the normal order of a language system, defying appropriate functionality of that language through assertions which are confusing and incomprehensible to those who do not understand the functionality of the interjections used (Quirk et al., 1985).

Viewed as such, they are usually dethroned or omitted in a comprehensive language discourse especially in the process of transferal into the target text often termed as unwanted insertions, confusing accidentals on a speech, insignificant words and words which are a nuisance to the normal flow of communication process. These are some of the negative assertions that are used in reference to interjections in communication. Though these 'negative' assertions are a relatively recent

occurrence, this does not mean that interjections have no specific and significant function in an assertion. They are used for expression of emotions or feelings although they mean more than emotional expressions (Jovanovic, 2004). In recent times, although perceived as nuisance in communication, interjections functionality heighten relationship between the addresser and addressee, thus improving the communication process by keeping the conversation alive. In their usage, they act as the bridge that connects the three players of communication process, the speaker, the message and the recipient.

Derived from Latin, interjections are referred to as something that is 'thrown between'. The term Latin term 'Inter' referring to the term 'between' and 'iacere' used to farer to 'throw'. From this reference we deduce that, these are words which do not get into syntactic relation and their appearance emanates from expressions of pain, surprise or non-anticipated feeling by participant in a conversation which are just thrown into a conversation with no particular order of occurrence (Jovanovic, 2004). This should not be taken to mean that they are useless in a conversation. They play a significant role in conversations especially in political speeches where every sound or word is analysed to ascertain its functionality in such a speech whether it is used intentional or accidentally.

In Kenyan political discourse these interjections form part of the speeches and since Kenya is a multilingual country with English and Kiswahili as the constitutionally recognized official languages and Kiswahili doubling as a national language, these interjections in English pragmatically have the potentiality of carrying implied meaning that need to be decoded for the audience to understand the information therein. Therefore, this highlights the importance of transferring the meaning carried by these interjections from the source text in order to expand readability and as an emphasis of the pragmatic meaning hidden in the interjection. Arising from this view, then there is a concern that could bother the translators of whether to translate the interjections or to leave them out all together.

In translation, the main aim is to make the message in source language text be understood by the target audience. Through this, the intended message ought to be transferred into the audience's language in an appropriate manner in order to maintain a smooth and straightforward communication process. Throughout this process, the purpose of translation which always is to expand readability by usage of equivalent meaning in the target language as it was delivered in the source language text. The Skopo's coherence in the transferred meaning is upheld and put into consideration throughout the translation process. In this, the interjections need to be noticed, identified and accorded their right role even in the translated text. This would help in upholding of the internal coherence of the translation as well as correlation of the source text and target text coherence and cohesion.

The greatest concern that a translator deals with is how to translate interjection as a hedging device in a message which carries vital information hidden in the hedging devices that would otherwise not be ignored. The meaning in these devices first need to be decoded and understood before rendering their correct meaning in the target language text.

### **Hedging as a Pragmatic Function in Speeches**

Hedges are linguistic particulars that carry meaning in a statement. These meanings may not be significant but carry very important contributions in comprehension of information in the communication process. Earlier linguists categorized hedges as words which express fuzziness, indetermination or shields in a conversation where interlocutors express lack of exactness on a point in a discussion necessitated by lack of proper information on point under review thus pragmatically acting as defense to protect the speaker (Lakoff, 1972; Halliday, 1994; Salager-Meyer, 1997). Arising from the realization that hedges are a form of a linguistic element, this means that interjections are potentially hedging devices since there is no single word that can be termed as inherently a hedging device. Thus, in human communication and due to their pragmatic functionality, that is beyond expression of feelings, interjections form another category of hedges.

Hedging strategies as one of the most important indicators of pragmatic competence in political speeches, shapes the communication effectiveness of an individual. Crampton's taxonomy of hedges

expounds on this notion widely by the presentation of categories of hedges. Hedging strategy in human communication is a revelation of pragmatic competencies in a conversation as seen in the political speeches (Hyland, 2001; Hatim, 1990; Skelton, 1988). Use of the term hedges dates back to 1973 when Lakoff's (1973:195) work referred to them as words whose purpose is to make things 'fuzzier or less fuzzy.' According to him, hedging is a means of elaboration of marginal members of the conceptual categories of a language from the main items. Extending from this notion, the term hedge has been viewed in other different perspectives such as and not limited to politeness, linguistic vagueness, rhetorical strategies, seeking to influence the decisions of the addressees and also as a personal shield against rejection in a conversation.

In the usage of hedging strategies, the interlocutor's aim is to achieve different pragmatic functionality in the texts. The functionality of these hedging devices is for modulating the speaker's commitment to the truth value of their proposition, allowance of dialogue space, acknowledgement of subjectivity, a shield from a threatening criticism, distancing oneself from the proposition due to lack of enough information of the subject matter among others when subjected to the pragmatic scrutiny (Martin-Martin, 2008; Hyland, 2001). From this view, it is deducible that there is no single word than can inherently be referred to as a hedge. Any word is potentially a hedge dependent on the context of usage and the pragmatic cues that it represents in an utterance. Thus, interjections potentially qualify to be hedges in political speeches in Kenya.

### **Interjections as Hedging Strategy in Political Speeches in Kenya**

Interjections can be viewed as part of language that portrays a lot of ambiguity that leads to lack of understanding of a message, they appear in. Due to their peculiarity, they are considered as a special and peculiar word class. A diversified scholarly works such as from Ameka (1992); Cuenca (2000, 2002a) and Goffman (1981) point out that, this class of word is peripheral to language and as such portrays nonlinguistic features in the same way as gestures and other spoken extralinguistic devices. Other scholars such as Wharton (2000), Jovanovic (2004) and Fraser (1990) puts focus and emphasis on the linguistic features of interjections and point out that, interjections have been often ramped together with other linguistic phenomena such as exclamations, discourse markers, or inserts making it quite difficult to distinguish their specificity in communication. Thus, interjections by their very nature, forms a controversial word class that seems not to been fully accounted for in terms of linguistic features and manifestations. Different researchers provide a varied understanding of what is and what is not an interjection, which further exhibits this controversial state surrounding them as a word class.

Bruti and Pavesi (2008) defines interjection as "an outcry to express pain, surprise, anger, pleasure or some other emotion; those interjections belong to the oldest forms of speech and represent the most primitive type of sentence." or "Interjections are generally uninflected function words and have sometimes been seen as sentence-words, since they can replace or be replaced by a whole sentence (they are holophrastic)." In yet another definition, Cuenca (2000) views interjections as "communicative units (utterances) which can be syntactically autonomous, and intonationally and semantically complete." Thus, just as there are a variety of definitions, it is evident that they are both theoretically and descriptively a challenge to language and translation. There are similar word forms or word-formation processes in all languages regarding interjections, but conditions and situations of their usage are not similar. Due to this perceived grammatical status, "interjections further viewed as idiomatic components or units, which are routinely syntactical and equivalent to a sentence" (Cuenca, 2002). By use of term equivalent, the definition thus confirms that interjections are not fully expounded to give a clear picture of their functionality within an utterance.

Further, various linguists have explained the aspect of interjections from different perspectives, presenting them as words which evoke emotions and not being part of syntactic relations. Their existence is associated with situations where interlocutors experience states of 'pain, surprise or non-anticipated feelings' and express them in a certain word in a conversation (Jovanovic, 2004). The words and expression are an indication that human beings communicate differently using different

words to express joy, frustrations, anger, aspirations, despair, sorrow and uncertainty. These words which seem to carry non significant information, often are ignored in comprehending and decoding of the message and worse still, they are purged out of a conversation during translation. It is of great essence to note that, these words are supposed to be the initial concern of any translator whenever he or she encounters them in a conversation before even embarking on the translation process. This will enable him, or her to understand their pragmatic meaning and their functionality in the utterance so that correct, appropriate, exact and accurate meaning is rendered into the target language.

Although largely viewed as emotional words or phrases that express pain, interjections have a 'semantic' propositions or conception content, that distinguishes them as having a particular semantic meaning that is deducible by hearer or the reader through usage of available pragmatic cues within a conversation, thus presenting a reflection of an intricate conceptual structures which is a revelation of how human communication is complexly achieved (Wilkins, 1992). Further, interjections are referred to as non-significant sentences that expresses lack of main components that aid formation of a complete sentence. In this, they are viewed as 'vocative' and 'elliptical' constructions or 'formulaic language.' This means that they display incompleteness in a sentence exhibited by lack of their common syntactic and phonological attributes (Crystal, 2003). There is a very thin boundary between interjections and exclamations and other fill-ups in a conversation and it is almost impossible to distinguish them due to their similarity in function and presentation within an utterance. Further, interjections possess a referential meaning and are capable of being combined with other words to elicit a certain pragmatic experience in a conversation. This pragmatic experience is the very essence of their usage in a conversation and as such, ignoring them is detrimental to the understanding of the messages and worse still when omitted during translation.

In expansion of their pragmatic functionality, interjections are viewed as a distinct class containing some particular words used in expression of certain communicative value. From this available literature, an interjection appears as single word known as 'monocable.' Their occurrence in a sentence is not accidental, rather a predetermined decision aimed at passing a particular meaning in human communication. Keenly as observable in political utterances, these interjections are a peculiar political messaging strategy that makes them a crucial lead to a certain message that cannot be ignored or under rated as found in presidential political speeches in Kenya. This upholds the notion that interjections have more functions in a conversation that are beyond expressions of emotions and pain. Therefore, confining them to emotional expressions alone would limit comprehension of their extended pragmatic functionality in the said speeches. The extra communicative value of interjections in a conversation enables us to view them as hedges which conveys meaning that would not have been comprehended optimally if they were to be viewed only as emotion and pain expression units (Biber, et al., 1999).

These words potentially can change meanings dependent on context or situation. The extended and the extra meanings emanating from interjections are experienced in situations where the speakers do not want to mention things forthrightly but chose to remain polite, gentle and appealing to the audience. Thus, viewed and treated as hedging devices, they are expressions of indetermination and face armour. Interjections as hedges, pragmatically exhibit a state of anticipation where the interlocutor is preparing to utter something and first cues the audience by use of an interjection. They also exhibit a state of non preparedness in answering a question asked by the interviewer or a voter in political context. Interjections can also be used to cool the temper of a politician when confronted with a question that would injure his or her reputation on the subject matter under of discussion. Politicians often present their messages in an implied manner, especially when they do not want to be quoted later, or not comfortable with their promise being used as reference to nonperformance on what they had promised before being elected into their offices resulting in the usage of interjections as hedging devices as means to hide from this reality. Interjections pragmatic usage in these speeches then, qualifies them to be a category of hedging devices in a commutation process. This could be seen in the following excerpts extracted from the political speeches in Kenya.

1. **Ruto: Well**, I don't think I can go beyond this point because it is not on my docket.
2. **Ruto: Yaaa**, the number that you are talking about did not come from IEBC.

Although these words in bold seem insignificant in the speech, they just do not appear on their own, rather they are consciously and constantly produced under speaker's control. These interjections are described as words, word sequences, phrases or even clauses realizable as intrusions in an utterance, thus highlighted in a speech due to their intensity of production and marked by 'stress and pitch' in a sentence. In certain circumstances intonations also marks the intensity of their production. Thus, interjections are 'convictional fixations of the natural sound and as such differ widely in their specific phonetic genius being an integral part of speech in a cultural context of human communication' (Ekersley, 1966). When used in the political speeches, their functionality in the utterances carry a specific meaning that ought not to be ignored in the translation process so that the correct meaning is transferred into the target language although due to their insignificance and being perceived as nuisance in communication, they are often omitted and discredited.

The speaker employs usage of interjection tactic as a means of alerting the audience of a non-expected information that would follow or as show of non preparedness on the subject matter. Lack of an appropriate expression or exact information on the point under discussion causes the usage of interjection to aid the speaker to reorganize the statement in his mind and then state it without provoking the wrath from the audience if at all it were to be discovered that he or she had no ready response to the obvious question. It also emanates from the state of unwillingness of the speaker to answer a particular question resulting from his or her anger, belittling of the interviewer or the opponent and also seeking to keep the information discrete and implicit in order to avoid further scrutiny. Visibly this is observable in political speeches in Kenya during mass rallies, radio or television interviews.

### Theoretical Framework

Once a translation process has been commissioned, the commissioner bears the purpose of that translation. The translation strategies and methods thus highly depend on the purpose defined by the commissioner. In this, the Skopos's theory, postulating that every translation is determined by its skopos – thus, the purpose is the guiding principle on the reason for undertaking any translation of the political speeches in Kenya. The Purpose, together with the internal and external coherence of the texts as the tenets of the skopos theory need to be upheld if at all the optimality of the translation process is to be achieved.

This Greek word '*Skopos*' that means aim or purpose was introduced by Vermeer (1984) as a way of diversifying translation in functional approach. They believe that translations vary alongside with their *skopos* and the commissioning process. Thus, for every work to be translated, the translator should at first, define a *skopos* in decision making process that will be a guide in the whole venture. In addition, there is an emphasis on the hierarchy of ST and the translator being knowledgeable enough for identification these hierarchies. These hierarchies aid in identification of the best methods, approaches and strategies to employ during translation exercise. The importance of the different parts of the ST can be evaluated before translation in order to ascertain the need for appropriation of the best approach and if the need for change is inevitable, then it should be either before, during or after the process. Therefore, first of all, translation product must be coherent and understandable to the target language readers. In reference to the notion of adequacy, Vermeer adopted a different view about the terms of adequacy and equivalence (1984). In their view, a translation is adequate only if its purpose is preserved in the target language. In fact, here the response of TT readers to the translation is important, and this response should be similar to that of ST readers, when they read the ST. In this notion, the equivalence is defined in consideration to the functional approach of any translation. 'If the TT preserves the same function as the ST had in source language, then the translation is said to be adequate and the ST and TT are equivalent.' (Vermeer, 1984). Therefore, this study employed the tenets of skopos theory in analysing the data on the translatability of the interjections in Kenya's political speeches.

### Interjections in the Kenya's Political Speeches and Translatability

Data was presented as excerpts extracted from political speeches during the election campaign period in 2013 and 2017. The excerpts were then translated to explore their translatability into Kiswahili and the best strategies to transfer their meaning from English to Kiswahili. The speeches were made by Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga and William Ruto on divergent dates of the period under investigation. In the sampled speeches, interjections were mostly found on the speeches in the interviews as opposed to the general public rally speeches by the aforementioned politicians. In the ensuing debate, some of the extracted excerpts from different speeches in 2013 and 2017 general elections in Kenya uttered by Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga and William Ruto formed the discussion on the intricacies surrounding the translatability of the interjections in political speeches in Kenya and the suitable and appropriate approaches in dealing with them in a translation process.

These sampled excerpts from the speeches are a revelation that interjections are a common feature in political speeches just as they are in daily human communication. The functionality of these interjection is depended on contextual variations appearing as hedges and as an expression of emotions at the same time. The type of the word in usage dictates the meaning that the interjection carries in a particular conversation with a specific reference of meaning. In a given context, the interjections seem to express emotions that indicate joy, sorrow, surprise, pain, dislike, scorn and many others. Used as hedges, the interjections in these particular speeches expressed had a specific function which would be, lack of topical information on the discussion, hesitation due to various reasons, disgust on the question asked as a show of dislike of the question asked, warning that the speaker is not comfortable with the information, or to warn the interrogator not to further the interrogation so as to shield the speaker from further embarrassment and also as way of belittling of the political opponent in the debate.

From the presented data, interjections used as hesitation formed one part of the functionalities of hedging devices in the political context. The indication here was that the speaker was neither ready nor willing to speak on a particular issue under the discussion and that he or she was not sure about what to say and as such used the interjection hedging strategy as a delaying tactic to buy some time to reorganize his or her thoughts before further targeted response and also to warn the audience not to take seriously what he or she was about to say (Nord, 1997). Viewed in this manner, interjection thus functioned as hedge in making the meaning implicit without offending the audience. This is the act of personal shield where speaker shielded himself from rejection due to unsubstantiated, incomplete, undisclosed or concealed information and as such cushioning himself through usage of interjections as a hedging device against vilification, rebuke or rejection from the audience. This is elaborated on the usage of interjections in the discussion bellow.

As intimated earlier, interjections appear as fully formed words or a repeat mono sounds which have no lexical meaning but carry a pragmatic meaning in a conversion. As such, use of the interjection **-well-** which is a fully formed word with lexical and pragmatic meaning, pragmatically, the audience would be cued to realise that the speaker is preparing them on some information that might be correct or not. This is also a way of expressing indetermination where the truth value of the statement under discussion is questionable as a result of this interjection as used in the utterance. Thus, the interjection used in this manner pragmatically functions as a hedging device which ought not to be viewed as a nuisance in the conversation as seen in the following excerpt.

3. **Raila: *Aaaah eeeeh*** then there was the head of the electoral commission himself who also had committed perjury.

Translated into Kiswahili as; ***Aaaah eeeeh*** hapo palikuwa na mkubwa wa tume ya uchaguzi ambaye afanya uhalifu. Also translated as; ***Nahapo palikuwa na mkuu wa tume ya uchaguzi aluyefanya uhalifu.***

4. **Raila: Well**, in defense of my brother Uhuru Kenyatta, he was just an innocent inheritor.  
Translated into Kiswahili as; *Naam*, kwa kumtetea ndugu yangu Uhuru Kenyatta, yeye alikuwa mrithi asiye na hatia. Likewise, this is translatable with omission of the hedging device as; *Kwa kumtetea ndugu yangu Uhuru Kenyatta, yeye alikuwa mrithi asiye na hatia.*
5. **Ruto: Well**, I am not sure I can answer that right now.  
Translated into Kiswahili as; *Naam*, sina uhakika ninaweza kujibu hilo sasa hivi. This is also translated as; *Sina uhakika ninaweza kujibu hilo sasa hivi.*
6. **Ruto: Well**, I believe that combined force between Uhuru Kenyatta and myself will give this country the necessary synergy that will unleash the tremendous potentials that exist in our country.  
Translated into Kiswahili as; *Naam*, nafikiria muungano wangu na Uhuru Kenyatta utafungulia uwezekano mkubwa zaidi uliopo katika nchi yetu. This is also translated with omission of the interjection as; *Nafikiria muungano wangu na Uhuru Kenyatta utafungulia uwezekano mkubwa zaidi uliopo katika nchi yetu.*
7. **Ruto: Well**, everybody is entitled to their opinion but I worked with uhuru Kenyatta in 2002. This is translated into Kiswahili as; *Kila mtu an uhuru wa maoni yake lakini nilifanya kazi na Uhuru mwaka wa 2002.*

With the inclusion of the interjection, it is translated as; *Naam*, kila mtu an uhuru wa maoni yake lakini nilifanya kazi na Uhuru Kenyatta mwaka wa 2002.

8. **Uhuru: well**, what I am saying is that if we understand and we move in the same platform, we saw a situation where for example, you have a number of candidates in a particular constituency all saying they support the same presidential candidate but yet they are on different platforms, but I said if we really want to implement the agenda that we have our new constitution with the powers that the parliament has been given having the necessary number in parliament to implement our agenda it is going to make a difference. This is translated into Kiswahili as; *Naam*, kile ninachosema ni kwamba, tukielewa na kusonga mbele kwa jukwaa moja, tuliona hali ambapo kwa mfano pale una idadi fulani ya wagombezi katika eneobunge fulani wote wanaunga mkono mgombea mmoja wa urais ilhali wako kwa jukwaa tofauti, lakini nikasema iwapo tunataka kutimiza ajenda ambayo tunayo, kwenye katiba yetu mpya na nguvu ambazo bunge limepewa, kuwepo na idadi hitajika kwenye bunge ya kutimiza ajenda zetu italetu tofauti.

This is also translated into Kiswahili as; *Kile ninachosema ni kwamba, tukielewa na kusonga mbele kwa jukwaa moja, tuliona hali ambapo kwa mfano pale una idadi fulani ya wagombezi katika eneobunge fulani wote wanaunga mkono mgombea mmoja wa urais ilhali wako kwa jukwaa tofauti, lakini nikasema iwapo tunataka kutimiza ajenda ambayo tunayo, kwenye katiba yetu mpya na nguvu ambazo bunge limepewa, kuwepo na idadi hitajika kwenye bunge ya kutimiza ajenda zetu italetu tofauti.*

Additionally, the interjection **Aaaaa**, **Mmmm**, or **Eeeee** which are repeated mono sounds in a conversation expresses indeterminateness and lack of preparedness in answering a question of which the speaker doesn't have enough information about. It would also mean that he or she has full information but revealing it would expose his/her intentions or perhaps such an exposure would be a security threat and as such use such interjections viewed as tactful ways of buying time to reorganize their mind. This would give some leeway to formulate a more acceptance answer that does not cause any harm. This is a strategy of shielding themselves against any repercussions arising from their utterances when ambushed with questions which would be technical or leading them to a trap. This pragmatic meaning is only deducible when the interjections are in the utterances. Once omitted, the utterance is deprived the pragmatic meaning which is implicitly represented by this hedging device. This is evidenced in the following excerpts;

9. **Ruto: Eeee**, Uhuru and I have vowed to unite Kenyans regardless of ethnicity or wealth background. This is translated into Kiswahili as; **Eeeee**, *Uhuru nami tumeapa ya kwamba tutawaunganisha Wakenya pasi na kuzingatia misingi ya kikabila au utajiri.*
10. **Ruto: Aaaaa, mmmm** you know the presidency of this country cannot be a negotiation of a few people. In Kiswahili this is translated as; **Aaaaa mmmm**, *wajua uraisi wa nchi hii hauwezi kujadiliwa na watu wachache.* Omitting the interjection, the excerpt is translated as; *Wajua uraisi wa nchi hii hauwezi kujadiliwa na watu wachache.*

From the data provided it is realisable that the interjections can be borrowed into Kiswahili due to their phonological order they are a repetition of a single vowel or consonant to produce a sound that has an implied meaning as revealed in **Aaaa**, **oooo**, **Eeee**, and **mmm** as revealed in the following excerpts;

11. **Ruto: Ooo yes**, we shall first and foremost, we shall address ourselves to the people of Kenya. Translated into Kiswahili as; **Ajenda hii, ooo ndio**, *kwanza kabisa tutajieleza kwa Wakenya.*
12. **Ruto: Aaaa, mmmm** I am prepared to spend money enough to take me to the rallies to explain my views and programs. In Kiswahili this is translated as; **Aaaa, mmmm niko tayari kutumia pesa za kutosha kunipeleka kwa mikutano ya kisiasa kueleza maoni na mipango yangu.** Omitting the interjections, the excerpt is translated as; *Niko tayari kutumia pesa za kutosha kunipeleka kwa mikutano ya kisiasa kueleza maoni na mipango yangu.*
13. **Ruto: As the jubilee coalition, we have mmmm**, a blueprint on how to turn around the security sector. This is translated into Kiswahili as; **Kama muungano wa Jubilee, tuna mmmm, mkakati wa jinsi ya kubadili sekta ya usalama.** In absence of the interjection, the excerpt is translated as; *Kama muungano wa Jubilee, tuna mkakati wa jinsi ya kubadili sekta ya usalama.*
14. **Ruto: Eeee**, to the best of my knowledge and of the advice of my attorneys, it is very clear that we haven't reached any of the conditionality that were attached to other **aaeee** to our trial. This has been translated into Kiswahili as; **Eeee, kwa uelewa wangu na kwa ushauri wa mawakili wangu, hatujafikia kikwazo chochote kulichowekwa aaeee kwa kesi hii.**
15. **Ruto: Oooo**, Great, I feel great! I am sure the International criminal court is run by people and I am so sure it is run by reasonable people, **alright?**  
Translated into Kiswahili as; **Oooo, vyema, najihisi vyema! Ninahakika Mahakama Kuu ya Kimataifa ya Jinai inaendeshwa na watu na nina hakika inaendeshwa na watu wangwana sawa?** Also translated omitting the interjection as; *Vyema, najihisi vyema! Ninahakika Mahakama Kuu ya Kimataifa ya Jinai inaendeshwa na watu na nina hakika inaendeshwa na watu wangwana sawa?*
16. **Uhuru: Eeeee** I told you politics for me has never been about enmity, politics is about programmes, politics is about agendas, politics is about where we want to take this country and the issues and visions that we have of this country. This is translated into Kiswahili as; **Eeeee, nilikwambia siasa hazijawahi kuwa kuhusu uadui, siasa ni kuhusu mipango, siasa ni kuhusu ajenda, siasa ni kuhusu ni wapi tunataka kupeleka taifa hili na masuala na ruwaza za taifa hili.** Omitting the hedging device, the utterance is translated as; *Nilikwambia siasa hazijawahi kuwa kuhusu uadui, siasa ni kuhusu mipango, siasa ni kuhusu ajenda, siasa ni kuhusu ni wapi tunataka kupeleka taifa hili na masuala na ruwaza za taifa hili.*
17. **Uhuru:** Of course, they are important, they are important because for us as TNA this is our real first test in in **eeeee** the electoral process. This is translated as; **Hakika, ni muhimu, ni muhimu kwa sababu kwetu sisi kama TNA, hili ni jaribio letu la kwanza dhahiri katika eeeee mchakato wa uchaguzi.** Again, in another translation, the interjection is omitted in the translation as; *Hakika, ni muhimu, ni muhimu kwa sababu kwetu sisi kama TNA, hili ni jaribio letu la kwanza dhahiri katika mchakato wa uchaguzi.*



If the interjection were to be omitted in a translation as indicated in the examples above and below, their pragmatic meaning as hedging device would be unavailable to the target audience. As an important ingredient in the textual texture aiding the understanding of the message, their omission would lead in translation whose pragmatic meaning and the taste of the message is disregarded and consequently lost. As seen excerpts presented, one translated sentence has an interjection as the hedging device borrowed into the target language and in another sentence, it is omitted. The pragmatic function as a hedging device to make things implicit of the interjection in the sentence expresses as alluded to earlier could imply indeterminateness and doubt in the proposition. If not transferred in the target language, this implied meaning is not delivered and the audience cannot make a determination of the meaning emanating from the hedging device due to its non availability in the translated excerpt. The omission of the interjection does not affect the meaning of the sentence but the pragmatic cues provided by the device which are an additional information are missed out with a sentence seemingly expressing authority on what was said contrary to what the source text meant. This is evidenced in the following excerpts;

18. **Uhuru: Well**, what I am saying is that if we understand and we move in the same platform, we will implement our agenda as jubilee. Translated into Kiswahili as; *Naam, ninachokisema ni kwamba, tukielewa na kuendelea pamoja na kwa jukwaa moja, tutatekeleza ajenda zetu kama Jubilee.*

Further translated into Kiswahili omitting the interjection as; *Ninachokisema ni kwamba, tukielewa na kuendelea pamoja na kwa jukwaa moja, tutatekeleza ajenda zetu kama Jubilee.*

19. **Raila: Well**, let us talk about the current violence in Tana River. Translated into Kiswahili as; *Naam, natuzungumzie fujo iliyopo Tana River hivi sasa.*

Moreover, some of the interjections were translatable through domestication and accommodation strategies. This is exhibited in the term **well-** at the beginning of a sentence accommodated as *naam* in Kiswahili which is an affirmative response. In this context, it is used to mean a call for attention though not perceived as an expression of indeterminateness as perceived in the source text.

### Observations

The interjections as the hedging devices have pragmatic functionality that is beyond the expression of emotions. Further, Interjections enrich a conversation in provision of pragmatic cues as opposed to them being viewed as nuisances in presidential political speeches in Kenya. The number of the repeated mono sounds as interjection is dependent on the speaker and can vary from one speaker to another. However, in the transcription of the political speeches in Kenya, these interjections are omitted where the secondary readers are not aware if at all they were present in the speeches if they didn't hear the speaker themselves. Thus, if a translator was to translate a transcribed speech which has no interjection, the original meaning as provided by the interjections as hedging devices would be missed out by the target audience.

Translation of interjections is inevitable if their pragmatic meaning is to be realized in the target language. To appropriately translate them, translators ought to understand their pragmatic meaning and function in their contextual use. Where applicable, they are translated borrowed into Kiswahili. Though omission of interjections is one strategy in translation, if the information they carry is not transferred into the target language the audience is denied the opportunity to comprehend the message as in the source language text. Other than borrowing the interjection, a strategy of domestication is employed in transfer of meaning from the ST into TT. Interestingly, the repletion of mono sound as interjection and as a hedging device also occur in other languages as a universal communication strategy.

### Conclusion

Arising from the data presented and analysed, it is evident that interjections function as hedging devices in presidential political speeches in Kenya with their functionality in indeterminateness and expressions of doubt in a proposition. These are pragmatic functions that are beyond expressions of

feelings which can only be comprehended contextually. In transcribing the oral speeches in a political context, interjection should not be omitted because they have pragmatic meaning that need to be deciphered by the target audience. Translatability of interjections as hedges is plausible with borrowing and accommodation being the strategies for meaning transfer from English to Kiswahili. Thus, the usage of interjections in the political speeches as hedging devices is to improve the effectiveness of the speaker and to help them achieve their obvious or hidden goals through implicature.

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