

Political Speeches and National Integration: A Pragmatic Analysis of Selected Political Speeches in Kenya

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Abstract

This paper analyses political speeches as a factor in national integration in Kenya. Kenya is a country characterised by diverse cultures reflected in the forty-two tribes that comprise the Kenyan people. For meaningful development to be realised, it is theorized that the Kenyan people should harmoniously work as one. From a sociolinguistic perspective, language has an ideological function in fostering national integration as an ingredient for national development. Politicians in Kenya and the world over constitute the ruling class that is characterised by use of a linguistic genre described as political discourse. This paper argues that as an elite class within society, politicians in Kenya use political speeches to influence the perceptions of the rank and file while consolidating power and influence over the people. The political ideology that the speeches inculcate among the listeners is one that weakens the national integration fabric, and consequently national development. From a Critical Language Studies perspective, the paper applies Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1986 & 1995) and Wilson and Sperber (2004) in a pragmatic interpretation of speeches by politicians in Kenya to demonstrate that, as a communicative event, political speeches in Kenya largely advance a selfish political agenda than disseminate a national agenda on integration and thus, national development. The speeches used in this study were collected through a participant-observer mode. They were captured and recorded using a high sensitivity digital recorder at political rallies during the Bungoma County senatorial by-election in December, 2013.

Keywords: *political speeches, political discourse, national integration and national development.*

Introduction

"...The problem of social disintegration is so recurrent in Africa that the existence of many of its countries as viable national entities is subject to doubt. The threats to national cohesion assume many forms, including ethnic, regional, religious and class cleavages, to name a few..."

Nik Abdul Rashid bin Nik Abdul Majid

Executive Director of Meleka Museums Corporation

This excerpt provides the basis of the central argument in this paper that Kenya, being one of the nations in Africa, is challenged in its existence as a viable national entity due to the threats on national integration. The success of a nation in inculcating the spirit of national integration among its citizens is an indicator of its advances in meaningful development. While most nations emphasize strategies towards national integration, not much attention is given to acts which sow seeds of discord among its citizens. From a linguistic perspective, this paper uses the Kenyan case to justify the argument that the language of politicians can be a destructive tool against the spirit of national integration, thus undermining national development.

National integration is a complex and elusive concept to achieve. Societies that yearn to achieve national integration have developed strategies to coarsen people into embracing national integration. In Kenya, the observance of national events such as Mashujaa day is ideologically supposed to whip citizens into a feeling of national integration. The main aim of such national events is to inculcate and enhance among the Kenyan people feelings of national unity, peace, affection and brotherhood having emerged from diverse ethnic, religious, political and economic backgrounds. Whereas these diversities should be appreciated as a source of strength for the Kenyan people to integrate, opportunists take advantage of these diversities to whip up resentful emotions

amongst Kenyans. It is from this perspective that this paper looks language use in politics as an impediment to national integration.

In Kenya, the actors of the multi-party politics have shaped partisan politics into a form that threatens the growth of national integration; that the desire by Kenyans to support competing political parties and interests during an electioneering period leaves the country more fragmented than ever before. This, according to Rashid (2013) threatens the continued existence of the nation as a viable unitary state. It is therefore the purpose of this paper to demonstrate pragmatically that political speeches in Kenya weaken the spirit of national integration.

The interaction between National Integration and National

Development The concept of national integration seems not to have been given a lot of attention by scholars given the limited availability of publications on it. The word 'integrity' originates from French *intégrité* or Latin *integritas*, meaning integral, and integrates. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines 'integrity' as the state of being whole and undivided. According to Etzioni (1965), national integration refers to a sense of territorial nationality which overshadows or eliminates subordinate parochial loyalties. Kaur (2013) observes that National integration is a complex concept with social, political, religious, regional and economic dimensions. The core principle of national integration is to create ideological unity and awareness about 'national objectives' among people who hold divergent views and perceptions on common issues of national concern. As expounded by Kaur (2013), for national integration to occur in a nation, a significant number of citizens must develop some level of identification with the nation that supersede their identification with ethnic, cultural or religious group, acquire political awareness, share common norms and values and develop attitudes favorable to the display of integrative behavior among people of different groups.

Mazrui (1972) identifies five interrelated approaches towards realizing aspects of national integration:

- i. The fusion of norms and cultures (including the sharing of values, mode of expression, lifestyles and a common language);
- ii. The promotion of economic interdependence;
- iii. The narrowing of the gap between the elites and the masses, the urban and rural areas, rich and poor, etc (social integration);
- iv. The resolution of emergent conflicts; and
- v. The sharing of mutual experiences so that people can discover that they have undergone some important experiences together.

If effectively addressed as national concerns, these approaches to national integration should result into members of a nation developing a strong sense of national identification. As pointed out by Rashid (2013), national identification requires the willingness to perceive oneself as a member of a national community, or to feel a sense of belonging to a country. National identification can be expressed at three different levels; the verbal, the symbolic (as with the flag, national leaders, national icons, etc.) and the affective (or emotional attachment to the country and its leaders).

Characteristically, national integration is an unstable phenomenon; and, probably, that explains why it is elusive to the human societies. Rashid (2013) and Kaur (2013) agree that national integration is a highly complex phenomenon in the sense that what is integrative on the one hand may be disintegrative on another; and it is a dynamic construct in the sense that 'once integrated does not mean always integrated'. This makes national integration a complex phenomenon encompassing an array of interrelated cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral activities. It also contains socio-cultural, economic and political dimensions so much so that when agents of development are addressing socio-cultural, economic and political dimensions of development, they also reason erroneously that they are addressing the dimension of national integration. As a result, agents of development end up addressing development concerns without directly addressing issues of national integration. In Kenya, only recently have development agents begun giving isolated attention to 'national integration'; this is after the nation experienced the adverse effects of the 2007-2008 Post-Election Violence.

In an effort to draw a relationship between national integration and national development, Drake (1989) observes that in a social system where people in different geographical areas and of different ethnic, socio-cultural, religious and economic backgrounds do not generally feel themselves to be united or function as one nation, development cannot be fully achieved. She adds that the success of a country's economic development also depends to a considerable extent on the strength of its integrative and cohesive bonds. Rashid (2013) adds that where such bonds are weak or non-existent, development is often either sluggish, haphazard, totally non-existent or simply tantamount to the satisfaction of the will and aspiration of a small minority of individuals or groups who tend to seek for themselves a greater share of the economic and political fortunes that otherwise should be used to improve the social system as a whole. Some studies like Mohanty (2006) and Rashid (2013) show that national integration and national development are symbiotically related; though the objectives of one should not be taken as the objective of the other. These studies support Tehranian (1994) who observed that the goal of national development is to achieve an increase in a social system's capacity to fulfill its own perceived needs at progressively higher levels of material and cultural well-being while the goal of national integration is to provide cohesiveness to permit constructive and development-oriented societal change to take place. Rashid (2013) concludes that national integration is a substantive part of national development. A nation needs to be integrated into one for it to achieve development goals in all sectors of social life.

As already noted in this discussion, language as a medium of communication is central to the approaches and levels of national integration; a notion that is key for national development in any society. Therefore this paper considers language as a prime vehicle through which integration can be achieved and, hence, national development. Language is central to whichever strategy a nation adopts to propel the national integration agenda. As noted by Halliday (1985), language has a communicative function that is shaped by both culture and situation in which a linguistic unit has been used. The communicative function of language is achieved through modes such as print (written), speech, electronic and semiotic. Fromkin (2007) identifies specific functions of language; to convey meaning to others, to ask questions, to give commands and to express wishes. It is within this framework of appreciating language as having a functional dimension in society that this paper is interrogating an aspect of the functions of political speeches with regard to enhancing national integration in Kenya.

The language of politics: Political speeches as a political discourse

Some scholars such as Ramney (1996), Roskin, Cord, Medeiros and Jones (1997) and Manley (2008) agree that politics is the business of power, its acquisition and its use. That politics is the game of struggling and competing for government power. At the centre of political activities is language as the sole medium of communication. The language of politics is described as political discourse. Van Dijk (1997) describes political discourse as a prominent way of doing politics. That political discourse is identified by its actors or authors; who are politicians. Atkinson and Heritage (1984), Van Dijk (1985) and Boden and Zimmerman (1991) concur that political discourse should be seen as a form of political action and as part of the political process if it is understood from the perspective that discourse is a form of social action and interaction. The simplified operational definition in this paper is that political discourse is the language of politicians for political communication.

Communication, as a process of sharing meaning between two or more parties, operates at different modes; the most basic being face-to-face communication (West and Turner, 2010). The other modes of communication include writing, electronic mediated and non-verbal. Of interest to this paper is face-to-face communication which primarily involves use of speech. In an earlier publication, Roskin, Cord, Medeiros and Jones (1997) observe that face-to-face communication is the most effective means for altering or reinforcing political opinions because it allows for dialogue unlike other modes of communication. During public political gatherings, the main mode of communication is face-to-face (speech). Given that the purpose of the speech at political gatherings is to propagate a political agenda, such speeches by political actors for political purposes are simply described as political speeches. Political speeches are therefore a part of political discourse.

At the centre of any communication process is the sharing of meaning. Meaning is what people extract from a message. West and Turner (2010) cite Martin and Nakayama (2008) as having observed that meaning in a communication process has a cultural consequence. This is because the process of communication takes place in an environment which includes a number of elements: time, place, historical period, relationship and, speaker's and hearer's cultural background. All these aspects of environment influence a communicator's psychological construct when encoding and decoding a discourse. It is within this understanding that this paper demonstrates that political speeches when delivered in certain contexts undermine the spirit of national integration and thus, national development. This preceding discussion also gives justification as to the choice of Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1986 & 1995) and Wilson and Sperber (2004) in the interpretation of political speeches.

Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (1986) is a cognitive-pragmatic communication model for interpreting and understanding utterances. It is an inferential approach to pragmatics that seeks to explain how the hearer infers the speaker's meaning on the basis of the evidence provided. The theory has been expounded in Sperber and Wilson (1995) and in Wilson and Sperber (2004).

The theory proposes that understanding and comprehension are directed and channelled by the innate principle of relevance. Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) and Wilson and Sperber (2004) argue that humans tend to pay attention to what is relevant to them and that humans form the most relevant possible representations of phenomena and process them in a context that maximises their relevance. The principle of relevance works like a filter in the mind of the communicators so that only the information that is selected by that principle leads to understanding of the meaning of the utterance. Relevance

Theory operates on three tenets:

- a) The notion of context
- b) The principle of relevance for communication
- c) The comprehension procedure of Relevance Theory Discussed below are the first two tenets which are relevant in the interpretation of political speeches in this paper:

a) The notion of context

The search for relevance in an utterance is a psychological process guided by the mental context of the communicators. Sperber and Wilson (1995:15) define context as:

“Context is a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer’s assumptions about the world.”

Schroder (2008) simplifies this as referring to some kind of encyclopaedia about the world which contains the values and norms of a society, personal belief system and cultural norms. It constitutes all the knowledge that the communicators will have stored in their mind at the time they enter a conversation. Context plays a key role in the interpretation of utterances. There are two kinds of contexts relevant for the interpretation of speech event: the linguistic context and the situational or physical context. Blass (1990) describes a linguistic context as including linguistic information that precedes the speech event while the situational context includes virtually everything non-linguistic in the environment of the speaker.

b) The principle of relevance for communication

Wilson and Sperber (2004:612) provide the following principle of relevance as being the basis for Relevance Theory as a theory of inferential communication:

“Every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance.”

This means that by saying something in the normal course of human interaction, one is telling the hearer not only that he/she thinks that what is being said is worth the time and effort the hearer will take to process it, but also that no more easily processed utterance would give the same result (utterance meaning). Thus, the principle of relevance for communication operates on the basis of cost and benefit in the mind of the communicators and it is guided by two aspects: the cognitive principle of relevance and the communicative principle of relevance.

The cognitive principle of relevance enables the hearer to single out one possible interpretation as interpretation of communicated utterances, thoughts, gestures and perceptions when information is channelled through it. Wilson and Sperber (2004:610) states that the cognitive principle of relevance is: “Human cognition tends to be geared to maximization of relevance.”

This principle has two components: an informative component and an intentional component. The informative component is also referred to as ‘inferential communication’ in relevance-theoretical terms. It communicates the content of the message arrived at through processes such as implicatures, explicatures, disambiguation and enrichment. The intentional component communicates the intention of the speaker. It consists of verbal and non-verbal cues that a speaker builds around his/her message so that the hearer understands the message as intended by the speaker. The two components work simultaneously in the mind of the hearer and they are processed or monitored against a presumed shared context between the speaker and the hearer. The shared context will constitute the socio-cultural norms and the knowledge of the world. When the hearer fails to establish a shared context with

the speaker, then the information is interpreted against the hearer's context. In this process, the mind searches for all the mental representations for understanding of the message. This mental search is aimed at establishing the appropriate cognitive effects relevant to the information received from the speaker. The mind searches all the mental representations for understanding which leads to yielding *cognitive effects* in the mind of the hearer.

Cognitive effects are as a result of the hearer's mind trying to integrate the content of the information represented by the utterance into his/her existing mental representations. If the message meets some shared context, i.e. some older knowledge, then the understanding is high this would then mean that the message was relevant to the hearer and it is therefore sent or integrated into the mental lexicon. However, if there is no shared background knowledge between the speaker and the hearer, then little or no understanding takes place. The new information is then either rejected and thus not stored in the mind of the hearer or it is misinterpreted and stored in the mind of the hearer if deemed relevant. Therefore cognitive effects can be either positive or negative. A positive cognitive effect is a worthwhile difference to the individual's representation of the world such as a true conclusion from the speaker's information which gets integrated in the hearer's mental lexicon. False conclusions are not worth having. They are cognitive effects but not positive ones (Sperber and Wilson, 1995). Positive cognitive effects may lead to:

- i. Building contextual implications; a conclusion deducible from the input and the context together, but from neither input nor context alone.
- ii. Strengthening an existing assumption
- iii. Contradicting and eliminating an existing assumption

(Wilson and Sperber, 2004) The processing of the speaker's information in the mind of the hearer operates on cost-benefit basis. The mind tries to be as economical as possible while searching for optimal relevance. Optimal relevance is understood in terms of contextual effects and processing effort. The greater the effort the mind takes searching for contextual effects, the fewer the cognitive effects that are found, and therefore less relevant is the message. But if the processing requires less effort because the mind easily finds many shared assumptions between the interlocutors, the message will contain a greater number of cognitive effects and thus the message has much relevance to the hearer.

The communicative principle of relevance is the second aspect of the principle of relevance for communication. The communicative principle of relevance states that:

"Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance." (Wilson and Sperber, 2004:612)

This principle means that when communicators talk to each other, the relevant theoretical processes of understanding (as described under cognitive principle of relevance) is initiated. Every successful communication relies on the shared background assumptions between the interlocutors.

The process of understanding or comprehension of utterances begins with the hearer's mind interpreting the information by constructing an appropriate hypothesis about explicit content via decoding, disambiguation, reference resolution and other pragmatic enrichment processes. The interpretation arrived at is then enhanced by the mind establishing implicatures by constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual implication. (Wilson and Sperber, 2004) The next section now provides a relevant theoretical interpretation of political speeches in Kenya with regard to the spirit for national integration.

Relevance Theoretical interpretation of Political speeches in Kenya: implications on national integration

Kihara and Schroder (2012) observe that Relevance Theory has been applied to many research areas such as humour, media discourse, literature, politeness, translation, language teaching among others. They cite Yus (2010, p. 701) as

having noted that, "... these research areas which take Relevance Theory as their theoretical framework are evidence of the dynamism and impact of this cognitive pragmatics theory of communication." In this paper, this theory has been applied in the analysis of political speeches in Kenya as a factor in national integration and national development. Excerpts from campaign rallies during the Bungoma Senatorial by-election, 2013 have been used for analysis in this paper.

Important to note is that political speeches are topical texts with multiple functions in communication contexts. Charteris-Black (2005) notes that successful speakers, especially in political contexts, need to appeal to attitudes and emotions that are within the listeners. Speakers find it easy to communicate what they want to their audiences once they succeed in making the audience/ listener to believe that what is being addressed is what they (listeners) understand and support. As such, the speaker has to communicate at an emotional level and take standpoints that seem morally correct to the listener. In Relevance Theoretical terms, Charteris-Black's sentiments are captured within the notion of context; that the human mind searches for relevance in an utterance guided by mental context. As already discussed above, mental context constitutes the hearer's assumptions about the world - both the linguistic context and the physical/situational context. Communication is enhanced if both the speaker and hearer share the same mental context surrounding the speech or utterance. It could be by default or design that most political speakers in Kenya strive to establish some rapport with their audiences/hearers by trying to establish a shared context when making political speeches. This is achieved through allegorical anecdotes, analogies, recounting past events, metaphors and song as introduction to their intended message. Most of these are presented from the perspective of the listener; depicting the listener as disadvantaged, exploited, oppressed, and marginalized with strong undertones of a given political ideology; a speaker says:

"...today is no day like any other. We stand here to give testimony to the will of [the] people of Bungoma; to give testimony to the unstoppable movement of the people of Bungoma. To sent out a clear warning to our detractors that we shall neither be cowed nor stopped. To tell the people of Kenya that the people of Bungoma are a part of the big happy family of Kenya..."

These utterances imply that the people of Bungoma have been denied their rights; they have been segregated against from the rest of Kenya; and that they are in a movement to demand for their rightful position in Kenya; and that somebody, somewhere, is detracting them or stopping them from fighting for their freedom. These propositions come after a rallying call:

<i>Speaker:</i>	<i>CORD</i>
<i>Audience:</i>	<i>Tuko tayari (We are ready)</i>
<i>Speaker:</i>	<i>Mukotayari? (Are you ready?)</i>
	<i>Audience: Ee! (Affirmative, yes)</i>
<i>Speaker:</i>	<i>Mundu khu mundu? ([to deal with] Person to person [bare knuckled])</i>
<i>Audience:</i>	<i>Ee! (Affirmative, yes) [Amid intense applause and screams]</i>

Utterances like the ones presented above automatically stimulated the emotions of the listeners into a war-like mood while chanting, cheering, shouting, whistling and jeering and name-calling to reveal their feelings towards either the speaker or perceived opponents/enemy. Such utterances yield a strong environment of a fierce political contest to the extent that political opponents are perceived as total enemies rather than mutual competitors with a common national agenda. At a Coalition for Reforms and Democracy (CORD) rally, speaking in Kiswahili language, a speaker says:

"...tulinoa wembe, tukanoa shoka, tukanyoa watu wa Jubilee..."

(...we sharpened razor-blade, we sharpened axe, and we shaved Jubilee supporters...)

This was delivered amid cheers from a crowd which was already seeing itself at war with the members of the rival ruling coalition, JUBILLEE with its affiliates like AMANI coalition. The utterance implies that JUBILLEE and their affiliate is CORD's enemy. This is revealed in the utterance that followed:

"...musikubali hata kidogo kura zenu ziibwe na mtu..."

(...do not accept at all your vote to be stolen by somebody...)

The implied 'thieves' in this context are the supporters of ruling coalition, and the speaker is addressing his listeners as though the nation is in a state of anarchy without enforcers of law. The statement is, in a way, asking the listeners to be on the lookout to catch and discipline those who break the law by stealing their votes. This is because the perception already created is that Jubilee and its partners in the ruling coalition has thieves, thus cannot be entrusted to handle a constitutional process like a by-election. Important to note is that while such messages were being delivered at the CORD rally, at the AMANI rally which was taking place at the same time about three kilometres away, similar sentiments were being shared:

("...huko Kisumu kwa court of appeal...wakachunguza...wakapata Wetangula aliiba kura zenu...ndugu zetu CORD wasilete siasa propaganda hapa...") [with an emphatic raising intonation]

(...there in Kisumu at court of appeal...they investigated...they found out Wetangula stole your votes...our brothers in CORD shouldn't bring politics of propaganda here...)

These utterances are delivered after a recount of events preceding this rally in which the speaker depicted CORD as spreading tribal sentiments. He says:

"...akasema [Wetangula] serikali imetumia huyo jamaa [High Court Judge Gikonyo] kwa sababu ni mkikuyu abanduwe Wetangula kwa sababu ni mtu wa CORD..."

(...he [Wetangula] said the government has used that guy [High Court Judge Gikonyo] because he [Gikonyo] is a kikuyu who will [pass judgement] to remove Wetangula [from senatorial seat] because he [Wetangula] is a CORD person...)

Therefore, within this context, the two separate audiences which both constitute participants from the same nation are being fed on information which sets them against each other and therefore does not promote ideals for national integration. With tribal connotations and instilling of the feelings of mistrust, whoever that wins such election will be representing a community in which a section of its people perceive him as a 'thief' by the rival camp. This goes against Mazrui's (1972) suggested approaches towards realising national integration; that there should be focus on resolving emergent conflicts, and enabling people share mutual experiences so that they can discover that they have undergone some important experiences together. In essence, the speeches at these rallies were deepening an already established conflict preceding the by-election exercise rather than correcting a past mistake and making participants feel they are one people.

There is a deliberate attempt by politicians to create a class society in their speeches. The class society so created by the political speeches subverts the

social order to create one in which they (politicians) belong to one social class with their listeners. Though this may be interpreted as a further attempt to create a shared context between the speakers and listeners, it is also a sympathetic move to seek belonging; that they as political leaders are in the same social class with the poor whom they lead. That the poor are suffering, and they too are suffering. A speaker says:

"...democrasia...haitahujumiwa na wale ambao wanafikiria walizaliwa kuongoza wengine. ...wanaofikiria watakaa kwingine na ku-control nchi yetu na remote control. ...wanaofikiria kuwa na pesa ndio kuwa mtu mzuri. ...na wale wanaofikiria watatutawala miaka kumi na mwingine miaka kumi..."

(...democracy...will not be frustrated by those who think they were born to lead others. ...those who think will sit elsewhere and control our nation by remote control. ...those who think that to have money is to be a good person. ...and those who think they will rule over us for ten years and another one ten years...)

From this excerpt, the speaker tries to identify himself with his audience. Given that majority of the listeners at political rallies are the ordinary people who are poor, the speaker tries to subvert the social order by creating an impression that he belongs to this group of people. This is an aspect of manipulation of language to misrepresent the reality. However, language use in this is creating an ideological concept that the 'haves' are dominating the 'have not' and there is a determination by the 'haves' who are in power to dominate the 'have not' for a period of twenty years. Indeed this seemed to succeed because at the end of these utterances, the crowd was getting irritated. It seemed to be a psychological game to twist the emotions of the listeners into bitter dislike of the ruling coalition and its leaders. This contravenes Mazrui's ideology that for national integration to be realised there needs to be a deliberate attempt to narrow the gap between the elites and the masses, the urban and rural areas, and rich and poor towards social integration. From the perspective of Relevance Theory, this manipulation of language to misrepresent the truth is an attempt to fulfill the principle of relevance: that human mind is geared towards understanding what is relevant to the hearer. This analysis agrees with Beard's (2000) argument that a political speech is not necessarily successful (to its audience) because it is correct or true, but because it has been presented with valid arguments.

Speakers at political rallies are driven by a passion to achieve specific political goals. And more often their agenda is at the expense of issues of national concern such as national integration. Driven by a political goal, political speakers package and repackage their political outfit as the alternative leadership that will solve the problems of their listeners/electorate having already created a context that appeals to the listeners' emotions. In such circumstance, the speeches depict the rival political outfit as incompetent. A speaker says:

"...wale wanaJUBILLEE wameshindwa na utawala. ...si mnaona bei ya bidhaa inapanda kila siku! Sasa wanasema wanataka kuleta sheria ya polisi kupiga raia na bunduki, mtakubaliana na hiyo?"

Response: *Hakuna baba (emphatically)*

"...those members of JUBILLEE are defeated with administration. ...you can see prices of goods are increasing every day! Now they are saying they will bring a law for the police to shoot people with guns, will you accept that?"

Response: No way father. (Emphatically)

These utterances imply that the speaker's political coalition (CORD) is the alternative political outfit to offer good governance to Kenyans. The inferred contextual conclusions from these utterances are that JUBILLEE is an oppressive regime; it does not mind the survival of the masses; and that people should fight back at draconian policies. Such is a divisive talk setting people against their own regime and it weakens the bond of national integration. As observed by Kaur (2013) and Rashid (2013), once the bonds of national integration are weakened, people lose the sense of belonging to the

nation. The above utterances are delivered after the speaker has used allegorical statements implying that the ruling coalition is in power illegally:

"...katika bibilia Mungu alionya Herode, akamuambia: Herode, si halali kuchukua bibi ya mwenzako. Lakini Herode akachukua bibi ya mwenzake. Huyo mtoto walizaa, Mungu alilaani, sio?"

Response: *Eee* (Affirmative)

(...in the bible, God warned Herod, [and] told him: it is not acceptable to take a wife of your colleague. But Herod took the colleague's wife. That child they gave birth to was cursed, isn't that so?)

Response: Yes.

In Relevance Theoretical interpretation, the speaker's intended meaning is arrived at through enrichment of the literal meaning with interpretive meaning of the imagery in the utterance within the shared socio-cultural context of the speaker and the hearers. The success in sharing intended meaning is confirmed by the speaker through the question and answer strategy. In that context then, it is finally understood that the ruling coalition is illegally in power yet putting in place oppressive policies. This weakens the spirit that bonds people and their leadership to achieve unity, hence national integration. Such utterances instill a sense of insecurity among the people; that the government in place is an illegal one with malicious intentions and this weakens the spirit of integrating into one.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to show that political speeches in Kenya are a factor in weakening the spirit of national integration, and hence, national development. It has been established in this paper that politicians in Kenya employ certain aspects of language use in their political speeches with an intention of achieving political agenda. This paper has established politicians make a deliberate attempt to influence the emotions of their listeners by establishing a shared background. The shared background that they establish depicts the politician as existing in a pseudo-world in which they share a social class with the listeners and therefore the politician finds it easy to manipulate the emotions of the listener while addressing sensitive issues relayed from the perspective of the hearer. Such a shared background effectively acts as the context upon which messages are delivered to the target audience. The political messages can be understood through an inferential approach within Relevance Theory in interpretive process such as implicatures, reference assignment and enrichment. All such processes reveal that politicians use manipulation of language to either represent or misrepresent reality in an attempt to stir up the emotions of the hearer.

The paper has established that messages in the speeches by politicians in Kenya are tailored towards fulfilling the political agenda of the speaker; acquisition and/or expansion of political power. Politicians do this at the expense of building the spirit of national integration. Most of the political speeches carry messages that weaken the bonds needed for national integration. In their messages, politicians make the hearer feel exploited and marginalized by those in political leadership. The messages portray a rival political outfit as a composition of thieves, murderers and untrustworthy leaders. Such messages do not strengthen bonds of national integration. As explained by Mazrui (1972) and Rashid (2013), national integrations can thrive in circumstances where there is deliberate narrowing of the existence of social classes, resolving existing conflicts and enabling people understand that they have a common history and they should have mutual existence. Apparently,

this is not what political speeches in Kenya do; instead they enhance the existing conflicts and inculcate hate towards a section of Kenyans. As observed by Mohanty (2006) and Rashid (2013) national integration is a part of national development. The ability of a nation to integrate into one accelerates it advances in development. In this regard, therefore, political speeches in Kenya, by the very fact they do not enhance national integration, so do they impede advances in national development. This conclusion finds support in Drake's (1989) observation that neglect of any one component of national integration leads to disintegrative forces setting in to destabilize the continued existence of a nation resulting into issues of national development becoming moot. It therefore imperative that politicians in Kenya, as opinion-shapers in key spheres of the nation, must use political speeches not only to advance personal political agenda, but most importantly, advance the national agenda on integration and development.

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