ETHNIC POLARIZATION IN KENYA:

LINGUISTIC FEATURES IN POLITICAL NEWS INTERVIEWS

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ABSTRACT

Ethnic polarization is a common and growing issue in Kenya due to heightened political contentions surrounding general elections held every five years. A popular media genre employed in political communication is the 'political interview' that involves the journalist (as the interviewer) and the politician (as the interviewee). Often, several politicians representing opposing factions are engaged. This article investigates the language of political news interviews in ethnic polarization in Kenya. Critical Discourse Analysis is used to determine the linguistic features of these interviews. Among the key findings of this research is the deployment of 'naming and referencing' strategies, mainly done by interlocutors, when describing themselves and their opponents. Similar strategies are widely deployed when foregrounding and/or backgrounding the 'good traits' (in-group's) and the 'bad traits' (out-group) as well as the 'bad' or 'good' characteristics or actions of either faction. The result is aggravated ethnic polarization via the news media**.**

Keywords: Ethnic Polarization, Kenya, Political news interview, Critical Discourse Analysis.

INTRODUCTION:

The popular image of Africa is that of a continent with countries incessantly rent by ancient ethnic enmities that complicate and retard the development of national consciousness (Ogot and Okoth, 2000). Many countries in Africa such as Nigeria, Egypt, South Sudan, Burundi and Kenya have, in the recent past, experienced deep turmoil due to political instability. Conflicts in Africa are largely attributed to, among other issues, religious, political and ethical differences; unequal distribution of resources; bad politics. The media including news and social media channels, take advantage of these moments to increase their popularity but, in many instances they only aggravate conflicts when the provide negative coverage and misplaced social mobilization of the populace Many examples in Africa prevail in countries like Rwanda, Kenya, South Sudan and Egypt to mention but a few.

Whenever nations are at war, mediation takes place. In Kenya, for example, when ethnic polarization reached its peak in 2007, in a post-election violence, there was concern from the citizens and the international community that the country resolves the crisis. International mediation began where perceived symbols of peace including Desmond Tutu (South African religious figure), John Kufuor (former president of Ghana), Kofi Annan (former UN Secretary General), were invited to preside over the mediation. It was Kofi Annan's team of Eminent African personalities that gave rise to the power sharing deal that saw the creation of the Grand Coalition government (Oyugi, 2009).

While these efforts momentarily suppressed the ethnic tensions, political tension still persists through hate speech and ethnic profiling, where political leaders have been heard or quoted uttering polarizing remarks via mass media platforms such as newspapers, radio and television (see for example NTV, 2015, November 1; Citizen TV, 2015, November,4). Various media genres and/or formats such as news (broadcast and print), talk show discussions and interviews, documentaries, features and profiles are deployed for political communication and political analysis. News media channels such as television are central in political communication because politicians understand the influence of the medium to retaining power and influencing citizens (Alexander and Hansen, 2003). They further argue that television helps to create a new realty populated by spin doctors, pollsters, pundits and media consultants. Eventually political life begins to conform more closely to the image of politics that television portrays it to be. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This paper analyses the linguistic features, in selected political news interviews aired on Kenyan TV platforms during the period surrounding the 2013 General elections to identify features of ethnic polarization.

RESEARCH CONTEXT:

Kenya's media landscape has grown over the recent past, following the liberalization of airwaves in 1989. Liberalization brought with it competition amongst media organizations which have often opted to air sensational content to the public. Television political interviews are some of the sensational genres that journalists use to make their stations popular or, for some critics, unpopular. Critics blame the Kenyan media for dividing the nation along ethnic and political lines (BBC policy paper, 2010). The broadcast political interview has been defined as a formal interview involving high ranking politicians (or their representatives) as participants in a programme aimed at informing (Clayman and Heritage, 2002). It is produced in a studio or official office with, at times, a live audience. Basically, there are two roles in the political interview: interviewer (IR) and interviewee (IE). These are characteristically assumed by a journalist and a politician respectively, by virtue of their professional roles.

Another characteristic of the broadcast political interview is that of being a staged audience event (Hutchby, 2011). Despite being technically absent (except in cases where there is a live audience in the studio) the audience; constituted as massive, overhearing and distributed (Heritage, 1995; Hutchby, 2006), is the main recipient of the event. It can be argued however, that due to technological expansion this audience is no longer 'overhearing' because they are now able to shape the structure of the interview through phone-in calls and interaction through social media platforms as is the case in the political interviews in Kenya. In line with this argument, Montgomery (2007) contends that there are pressures on the forms of broadcast news from the interaction between audiences and convergence of different news platforms such as radio, television, print and the Internet. Broadcast news audiences for example, currently get news in a variety of formats from a variety of alternative platforms. Similarly, radio and television news may be streamed to a laptop computer or downloaded as a file or podcast, and email responses of a live news programme may be incorporated into the news bulletin itself.

These interviews usually deploy strategically manipulated language. For example, journalists change the contours of public discourse and the definition of public issues (Clayman and Heritage, 2002). CDA based analyses of political interviews (see for example Bell and Garrett, 2005 and Fairclough, 1995) have examined

the specific functions regarding language production and language reception such as medialization, conversationalization and ideology. Medialization looks at the impact of mass media and reception of language; conversationalization considers the influence of mundane everyday talk in institutional discourse; and ideology is examined with respect to manifestation of different types of discourse (Cap and Okulska, 2013,p.77). In CDA, political interviews are not only examined from a top down perspective as a genre which is embedded and dialectically connected with socio-cultural contexts and with other discourses, but also as a multi-voiced encounter and media event, thus capturing the inherent complexity of the genre (Cap and Okulska, 2013, p.77) . The way language is used in political interviews is the focus of this study that views language as a vehicle for political ideology (to the audience) and for the representation of particular groups.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The study uses Media Framing theory (Entman, 1993) and the theory of Ideology (Thompson, 1995). Framing, according to Entman, is to select some aspects of a perceived reality in communicating text and make them more salient in a way that promotes a particular problem, definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment and recommendation for the item described (Entman, 1993).

 Media Framing Theory focuses on how the mass media decide what people think about. Baran and Davis (2013) explain that the Framing Theory examines the idea about how people use expectations to make sense of everyday life. Reese, Gandy and Grant (2001) also observe that framing is the way events and issues are organized and made sense of especially by media, media professionals and the audiences. The basis of the Framing Theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. This field of meaning can have an effect on the audience's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours by connecting a particular meaning or interpretation on an issue.

The theory assumes that the mass media draw the public attention to certain topics, it decides what people think about; the journalists select the topics. This is the original agenda setting 'thought'. The way in which the news is brought, the frame in which the news is presented, is also a choice made by journalists. Thus, a frame refers to the way mass media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided with (Entman, 1993) This study interrogates how framing of issues in the selected TV political interviews (using language) may lead to ethnic polarization.

An analysis of discourse is inevitably an analysis of ideology as deployed through language. Theory of ideology was therefore used in this study. Language ideologies broadly constitute the underlying associations of ways of speaking with social meanings and vice versa (Woolard, 1998, Van Dijk, 2008). Woolard (1998) further notes that language ideologies are representations that construe the interaction of language and human beings in the social world. Such representations help individuals make sense of their position and the social relations within the communication spheres that they inhabit. Language ideologies thus concern more than linguistics alone, serving as points of reference in larger questions of cultural identity, power relations and social differentiation (Ahearn, 2012). It is the mediated link between social structures and forms of talk, standing in dialectical relations with, and thus significantly influencing social, discursive and linguistic practices. As a productive concept then, language ideologies help scholars to establish connections between micro-level interaction and macro-social categories, revealing the mechanics of discursive practices and the power relations that are embed therein. Therefore, an understanding of language ideologies as representation of the relationships among linguistic form, individuals and social meanings calls to mind critical approaches to discourse that aim partly to understand the ways in which a cluster of textual features, including vocabulary and grammar can encode the representation of an object or concept designed to serve the interests of a particular group (Fairlough, 1995). This study therefore is located within the field of Critical Discourse Analysis.

METHODOLOGY:

Critical Discourse Analysis:

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the first analytical focus of Fairclough's three part model in CDA is text. Analysis of the text includes linguistic analysis in terms of vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, turn-talking, types of speech acts and the directness or indirectness of their expression, and features to do with the overall structure of interactions- as well as examples of non-linguistic textual features or visuals (Fairclough, 2001). A close analysis of texts in terms of such features can contribute to the understanding of power relations and ideological processes in the discourse of political news interviews.

The words have particular representation or ideational function and carry particular ideologies (Locke, 2004 and

Fowler, 2007). Hence vocabulary is an important feature in text analysis. Vocabulary deals with word meaning, wording, and metaphor. Word meaning relates to vocabulary. In his discussion, Fairclough (2001) notes that the same word can have a number of different meanings. This multiplicity of meanings he refers to as a word's meaning potential. He also challenges assumptions behind the dictionary meaning of a word that suggests stability of meaning potential and a lack of contradiction between meanings. Rather, he argues, the meanings ascribed to a word in accordance with its meaning are contestable. In other words, sifts in word meanings can be a key indicator of the discursive contestation and subtle changes in discursive formation. In this study a lexical analysis will be carried out to determine the type of vocabulary used. In a similar vein, Dale (1989) uses term 'sense legitimation' to describe a strategy for manufacturing consent in a group and thereby achieving the hegemony of a discourse. Van Dijk (2005) adds that words may be chosen that generally or contextually express values or norms and that therefore are used to express a value judgement.

Van Dijk (2005) argues that there is a strategy for the expression of shared group based attitudes and ideologies through mental models. This is a strategy of polarization- positive ingroup description and negative outgroup description. He identified an evaluative structure he called the ideological square where groups use language to describe themselves positively and others negatively which he described as:

i. Emphasizing our good properties or actions
ii. Emphasize their bad properties of actions
iii. Mitigate our bad properties or actions
iv. Mitigate their good properties and actions.

This emphasizing and mitigation are described elsewhere by Richardson (2007) as foregrounding and backgrounding. Thus functional moves in the overall strategy of ideological self interest, which appear in most social conflicts and actions (e.g in racist, sexists and in this study, inter-ethnic discourse) may be expressed in the choice of lexical items that imply positive or negative evaluations.

Wording also relates to vocabulary, referring to the various ways a meaning can be worded. The same experience or object will be worded differently from different perspectives which are differently discursively framed. Metaphors also relate to vocabulary. The term embraces such figures of speech as simile, personification and metonymy. As Fairclough notes, metaphors structure the way we think and the way we act. Political news interviews can use particular words, wording and metaphors in their leads, opening, argumentation and closings to play particular functions which may lead to polarization or reduce it.

Jorgensen and Phillips (2006) identify the grammatical elements of transitivity and modality. When analyzing transitivity, the focus is on how events and processes are connected with subjects and objects. The interest lies in investigating the ideological consequences that different forms can have. Analyses of modality focus on the speaker's degree of affinity with or affiliation to her or his statement. Modality can be expressed by truth, permission, intonation or by hedges. Speakers hedge when they moderate a sentence's claim and thereby express low affinity. Different discourses use different forms of modality (Fairclough, 1992). For instance, the mass media often present interpretations as if they were facts, partly by using categorical modalities and partly by choosing objective rather than subjective modalities. This study evaluated the grammatical elements used in political news interviews in Kenya to find out how the interviewers assert their authority using various formal properties and whether the responses they elicit lead to polarization. It not only looked at the presence but also at the absence of words in the data. This quantitative approach accounted for the complex linguistic choices made during the process of text production (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001)

Since political messages are transmitted via language, the study of language as used in the political media is therefore necessary. Language and politics are inseparable as it is through language that political intentions and ideologies are articulated and understood. This study, draws on Critical discourse analysis (CDA) which is concerned with how social and political inequalities are manifested in and reproduced through discourse. Critical discourse analysis extends its analytical focus (beyond texts), to examine broader features of the discourse and discursive practices (production, consumption and reproduction) of discourse (Fairclough, 1995). Van Dijk (1993) underscores the role of cognition in the understanding and interpretation of texts and discourse practices. He argues that the need to understand the role of social activities in order to understand how wider inequalities inform particular discourse in the interpretation of acts. The production of discourse structures that signal underlying bias such as impoliteness or the use of derogatory vocabulary is a consequence of activation of attitudes, and mental constructs (Van Djik, 1993).

CDA in this study involved corpus analysis of frequencies of topics and keywords, related to ethnic polarization, which were collected and analyzed quantitatively. The occurrence of other textual level aspects like metaphors, modality, nomination and reference and predication were identified and presented in frequency

distribution tables. The outcome of the analysis led to a qualitative discussion of the discursive and socio-historical practices. The descriptive discussion was used to determine if there is polarization through the use of linguistic features or not. CDA was a qualitative approach of a smaller, representative set of political interviews. Audience surveys were carried out to determine the level of polarization if present. This is due to Van Dijk's stand that a cognitive interface or mental models that enable one to relate discourse to society through the mind of participants or language users is important (Van Dijk,2009). Five interviews from five television stations in Kenya namely: Citizen, KTN,NTV, KBC, and K24 were analyzed using the CDA approach. Fairclough (1992) provides a three dimensional framework for conceiving and analyzing discourse. The first dimension is discourse as text, the second is discourse as a discursive practice and the third dimension is discourse as social practices. This paper adopts the first approach of discourse as text.

The textual analysis of the sampled five interviews was done using Richardson (2007) tools of linguistic analysis. One interview was taken from each of the five TV stations. These stations were selected based on the popularity index given by Communication Authority of Kenya (2012). Therefore this paper gives an analysis of the formal properties or linguistic features as deployed in political news interviews by both interviewers and interviewees.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

This section provides a discussion of these levels of analysis and their significance in the analysis of the discourse of political interviews. As indicated in table 1, 'Naming and Referencing' strategies are the most frequently used at the rate 341 times (36%), followed by 'Modality' at the rate of 296 times (26%). 'Rhetorical Tropes' were also deployed 210 times (20%), while 'Transitivity' and 'Lexical' strategies are the least deployed at the frequency of 94 (9%) and 90 (8%), respectively. These frequencies are discussed and their implication given.

NAMING AND REFERENCING:

Referential strategies were used most frequently (see figure 1) in the political news interviews under this study and they include: *our government-the opposition, we-they, we have…-they have not..; we- you.*
These are used in sentences such as:
'And if you look, our manifesto is very clear on what we really wanted to achieve.'
'And we have made tremendous effort towards that through the referendum we had and the new constitution which is really something we have been agitating for the very many years, to know we want change in governance a structure in Kenya'
'These people are empty. These people have nothing to offer. These are people who are, People who are permanently crying wolf of stolen elections'
First of all, let me put it that we were aware that they would bring another claim of 3 billion
'Let me tell you, if we formed the government, we would make sure we would have gone to Province A .'

Richardson (2007) identifies referential strategies of naming and referencing as used in newspaper discourse. The use of such reference strategies in the political news interviews seemed to show a clear division between one political faction and the other (between one party and the other as well as between the government and the opposition). Given that these interviews were sampled from a period that is thought to have been potentially polarized because of heated campaigns, it is evident that speakers used such referential strategies to isolate themselves from one group and identify themselves with another group. This finding is supported by Van Dijk in Bell and Garett (2005) who state that the many ideologies involve the representation of 'self' and 'others', 'us' and 'them'. Many therefore seem to be polarized by saying that 'we are good and they are bad'. This is identified by Richardson (2007) as foregrounding and backgrounding.

In referential strategies, foregrounding and backgrounding are often used as naming strategies. Journalists have to provide names for the people in the events they report and this naming always involves choice. And logically, by choosing one category over another, they include them within a category and exclude them from other different categories or perhaps choose to foreground other social categories over other equally accurate alternatives. (Richardson, 2007); Reisgil and Wodak (2001) have called these naming options a text's referential strategies. In this study, different referential strategies were employed not only by the journalists but also by the interviewees who represented different political wings. Journalists used them to describe to the audience the interviewees who were appearing in their shows. The interviewees also used the same strategies to describe themselves or members from the opposing sides.

Van Dijk in Bell and Garrett (2005) developed a conceptual tool he called 'the ideological square' which he suggests determines choices between referential terms. He adds that the ideological square is represented by a positive self representation and a simultaneous negative other representation. The ideological square predicts that 'outsiders' of various types will be represented in a negative way and 'insiders' will be represented in a positive way. It happens by foregrounding 'other' negative characteristics. Conversely, it involves foregrounding 'our' positive characteristics and backgrounding 'other' good characteristics. The researcher in this study developed an ideological square modeled on Van Dijk's tool to determine how foregrounding and backgrounding took place in the interviews.

Foregrounding our good- FGUG

Foregrounding other bad- FGOB

Backgrounding our bad- BGUB

Backgrounding other good-BGOG

Foregrounding our bad- FGUB

Backgrounding our good-BGUG

It then follows that interviewees are more likely to highlight the negative side of the opponent's side and highlight the positive side of the interviewee's side as FGUG was done 20 times while BGUB was mentioned 20 times. Interestingly, it is only in three instances where the opponent's side's positive characteristics were mentioned and only one example where the negative characteristics of the speaker's side was mentioned. In cases where there were two coalitions or parties represented, this led to serious contestation and frequent use of stereotyping and predication strategies. It implies then that the use of such kinds of referential strategies is likely to ignite ethnic emotions. Van Djik (2005) equally states that this strategy of positive in group description and negative outgroup description is polarizing. He says that this strategy appears in most social conflicts and actions and are expressed in the choice of lexical items that imply negative and positive evaluations. He adds that opinions may be organized following ideological pattern that polarizes ingroups and outgroups, *Us* vs *Them*. He related the usage of such dual ideologies in the Western superiority and Arab inferiority whereby Western nations are associated with positive values such as democracy, rationality and non-violence and Arab nations are associated with dictatorship, violence and irrationality. The Us vs Them in the Kenyan political news interviews where one group emphasizes its good actions and other bad actions and mitigates its bad actions and other good actions are seen to polarize members of the audience.

MODALITY:

Typically, modality is shown through the use of modal auxiliary verbs and modal adverbs. In this study, modality was seen to be used to mean different things but more especially to enforce one's side or one interviewer's or interviewee's beliefs (see figure1). Adverbs that expressed certainty in the statements they were used in were more than those in which speakers seemed to be less forceful.

Modality expresses certainty or vagueness, high or low commitment to propositions on the part of the speaker as expressed through mood, verbs, modal adverbials (Wodak and Kryzanowski, 2008). Locke (2004) also adds that this property refers to the strength with which a particular proposition or statement is endorsed.

Politicians and journalists used forceful or high affinity modalities. Examples of forceful modalities that were used in the political interviews include: most, should, cannot and others as used in the expressions that follow:

-*You must invest in people and then you must put people into productive use.*

-*You do not need to reinvent the wheel.*

-*God can give ability but you must be able to transform that ability to something tangible.*

-*They cannot hide anywhere else apart from the president and the deputy president positions.*

-*All the 47 counties could not find their way to the cabinet.*

- *The two cannot and will not be out of the picture. They will go to the supreme court, Willy Mutunga will ask for the interpretation of the law and Willy will look at it and by the time he is making a ruling, it will be too late.*

Such expressions were used in a forceful manner to show that the speaker had firm stances or beliefs. Politicians would show their authority by using such modalities. Journalists also used forceful modalities in making their narrations or assertions or asking questions to maintain their authority and appear objective as well as accurate. This observation goes hand in hand with Fowler (2007) who states that truth and obligation modalities are used to show the strength of a proposition. Truth modalities always imply that the speaker is committed to the truth or otherwise of the proposition he/she makes. Such modalities were used forcefully by the interviewees and interviewees and they set a platform for argumentation. These arguments indicated firm stances that were used to show support or opposition towards a particular action. Likewise, the obligation

modalities were used forcefully. Fowler (2007) and Halliday (2004) argue that the when used, obligation modalities indicate that the participants in the proposition ought to perform the actions specifiedby the proposition.

In some few instances, politicians adopted a soft stance and would express themselves using polite markers or less forceful modalities. These are referred to as permission or desirability modalities and often indicate a neutral stance (Fowler, 2007).

If…… then,

 Maybe,

I would

May

According to Locke (2004) politeness is a property that relates to force. It is built around an idea that participants in an interaction tend to operate in ways that no party 'loses face'. CDA practices show that certain politeness conventions implicitly evince particular social and power relations. Since politeness markers were rarely used, it shows that politicians were not concerned in saving face for the opponent. This implies hen in this study that the IR and IEs were not committed to saving each other's face but were determined to cause embarrassment, opposition and this had an effect on their respective supporters.

Rhetorical Tropes:

These were the third commonly used in the political news interviews studied. Thompson (1996) that journalist are not able to provide reports of events that are entirely true and objective; they therefore employ rhetorical strategies aimed at persuading others to adopt their point of view. In this study, rhetorical tropes were employed by both the interviewers and the interviewees. The tropes studied in this study include metaphors, metonyms and neologism. Mainly the metaphors were used as compared to other types of tropes. Beard (2000) indicates that metaphors analogy and metonyms form part of political language and the sources include sports and war conveying a sense of toughness and aggression. Additionally, Ferrari (2007) notes that metaphors preside over the expression of certain kinds of emotive state as a way of conceptualizing it. He adds that the metaphor chosen to express a given emotion has consequences of persuasion and polarization as seen in this study.

A list of the rhetorical tropes used in the political interviews under study is shown in Table 1.

These tropes are part of human conceptualization and not just linguistic expressions. The use of metaphors signaled the political context in Kenya as well as the regional and global political contexts (see table 2). They are also pointing to some historical issues. For example ' The South Sudan way' alludes to the war in South Sudan because President Bashir of Sudan is an ICC suspect, thus the phrases 'small Bashir' and 'Big Bashir' pointed to the fact that the Kenyan ICC suspects would always be sought by the international court.

The phrase 'tyranny of numbers' was made by a renowned political analyst to explain how Kenyans vote. This fact sparked a lot of debate from the audience where they felt that the remark was creating leadership supremacy and making it sound like leadership is a preserve of particular people. Such tropes were employed with an aim to show firm support on issues but simultaneously served an ideological function.

Rhetorical tropes used reflected the sociological and political histories surrounding Kenya. In many cases invoking such histories would cause some groups to feel stereotyped, hated and thus lead to polarization.

Transitivity:

When analyzing transitivity, one focuses on how the events and processes are connected or not connected with subjects and objects. Hence interest lies in the different ideological consequences that forms may have (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). Mayr (2008) adds that the description of the ideational strand of meaning involves the major category- that of transitivity. He says that the idea behind analyzing transitivity is to explore what social, cultural, ideological facts determine what process type or verb is chosen in a particular type of discourse. Relations of power may implicitly be inscribed in the relationship between the actor and the goal. All verbal types were employed equally. Verbs indicating verbal processes, mental processes, relational processes and material processes were used.

Of interest to this research was how the participants, processes and circumstances associated with the processes mentioned above were used. This necessitated an analysis of the sentence types in the manner of organization of the actors, the process, the goals and the circumstances.The analysis that follows includes cases where the agent is omitted and other cases where the agent is included Cases where the agent was omitted

I think the former vice president is being judge harshly.

It is true names are associated with particular regions and certain political inclinations.
That was a political conference where politics was being discussed.
Remember this was being done to save the country.
The motion was withdrawn from the house
The government already undertook what should have been done to initiate the project.
The matter was taken to court.
There is criticism that the assigning of commissioners has taken us back to then KANU days.
Cases where the agent was included
It is really unfortunate for the former president to have made such an unfortunate remark.
We were aware they would bring another claim of 3 billion.
Gambia was held hostage by a bunch of young fellows.
They did a coup.
The West have told us..
The two guys are not mad
The prime minister has made a very good move.
From the data above it is clear that both forms (where agent is omitted and where it is not omitted) were used to perform ideological functions. There were instances where the agents were left out especially those involving unpleasant happenings pointing to one group, in defense, the agent was omitted. Equally, there were instances where the agent was not omitted especially where one group wanted to vilify the other group and give credit to itself. This was also achieved by use of different referential strategies. As the different parties argued for themselves and against others, they used both forms.

Lexical Analysis:

Vocabulary or word choice is important in CDA. In this study, the lexical analysis focused on words with denotative meaning. Fairclough (2002) notes that the same word can have a number of different meanings. The multiplicity of meanings he refers to as a word's meaning potential. Dichotomies suggest stability in word meanings but this is not so; rather meanings are ascribed to a word in accordance with its meaning potential are often contestable. Therefore, shifts in word meanings can be a key indicator of discursive contestation and subtle change in discursive formation. Dale (1992) uses the term sense legitimation to describe a strategy for manufacturing consent in a group thereby achieving the hegemony of a discourse.
Words with denotative meanings were used in the political interviews while alternative labels would have been used to mean the same thing.
The following words were seen to bear value judgements which sparked reactions from the audience:
These people are **empty.**
We are joking with something called **fire** because ethnic passions are destructive.
This kind of a **tokenistic** nature is not going to help.
This is where the president and his deputy have **failed**.
Politician 1 is likely to **hide** him than politician 5.
If politician 1 wins, they will be **boiled**.
The words 'empty, fire, tokenistic, failed, hide and boiled' are among the words with denotative meaning that were used in the political interviews. As seen in the sentences in which they are used, the meanings communicated are not the denotative meanings the words bear. They were used to paint the 'other' group as bad, ineffective or as failures. Halliday indicates that vocabulary or lexis is a major determination of the ideational structure (that is the function of language that allows language users to embody in language their experiences of their internal world, their consciousness, reactions, and cognitions). Interviewers and interviewees employed the use of chosen lexical items as opposed to other choices in order to fulfill their functions in the interviews. They were there to defend their interests.
It is clear in the interviews that each group wants to emerge superior at the end of the broadcast event and hence they use derogatory remarks, euphemisms, high tone, adversarial argumentation, exaggeration and many other ways of language manipulation to suit their agenda.

CONCLUSION:

It was found out that indeed language use in the media has an ideological effect. The linguistic features in the political news interviews in Kenya lead to polarization during the period of study. Naming and referencing was widely used. It is a strategy used to characterize and classify political actors. The referential strategies used

were divisive. For instance, the politicians were seen to foreground their good characteristics and the other group's bad characteristics. Equally, they used backgrounded their negative aspects and the other group's positive aspects. All these were aimed at the audiences who obviously have their leaders as the IEs representing opposing sides. These referential strategies served to reinforce false or true beliefs about groups. Modalities were used to show the level of affinity of the speaker to particular propositions. It was found out that high affinity modalities were reinforce different stances on an issue.

Therefore it is evident that even though, there are other factors that may lead to polarization, the framing of issues, choice of interviewees and the overall use of language in the political interviews lead to ethnic polarization.

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Table 1: Strategies deployed in the Political interviews

Position	Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
1	Naming and Referencing	341	36%
2	Modality	296	26%
3	Rhetorical Tropes	210	20%
4	Transitivity	94	9%
5	Lexical	90	8%

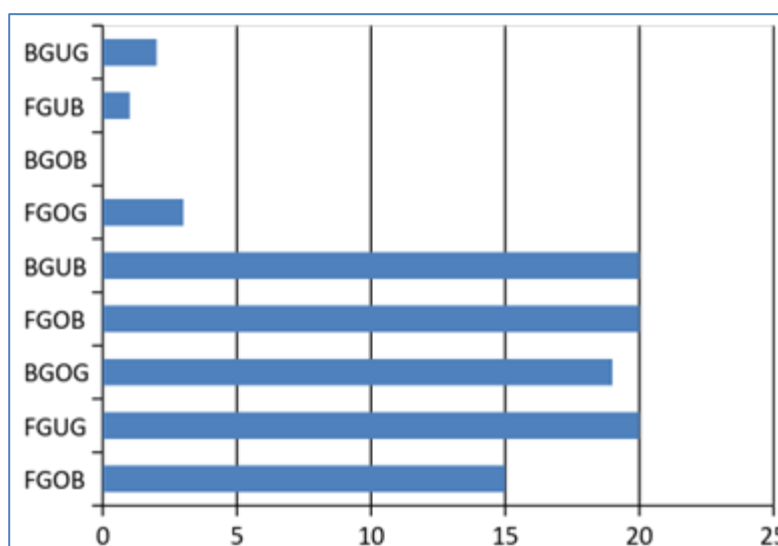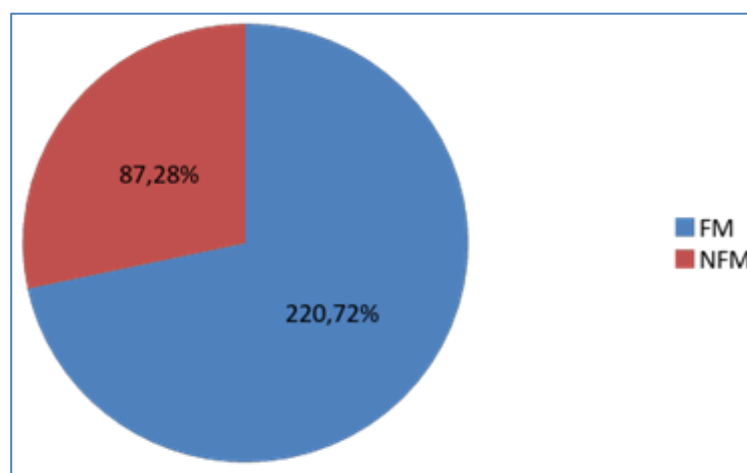**Figure 1: Naming and Referencing techniques used**

Figure 2: Distribution of Modals

Key
FM- Forceful Modalities
NFM: Non forceful Modalities

Table 2: List of tropes used in the political interviews

Tyranny of numbers
Small bashir
Big bashir
Cry wolf
The heart of the country
A rag from beneath
Who handed them to the dogs?
Plane sight
The big white house
Westerners
Pen and paper
The house (parliament)
Elephant in the room
The Jubillee government
The south Sudan way.
When you want to kill a dog, you first give it a bad name