Popular Culture and Political Repression: The Rejection of Political Repression through Language

Jacob Muiruri Murigi

PhD Candidate, Chuka Universitty, Kenya

Teacher, Department of English, St. Louis Nyagithuci Secondary School, Kirinyaga County, Kenya.

ABSTRACT

This paper does a Critical Discourse Analysis on popular songs in Kenya to show that the artists are cognizant of the evils committed by the political elite and condemn them. The paper investigates, analyzes and interprets discourse in Kikuyu popular songs to show how language has been used resist oppression by the political class in Kenya. The Kikuyu popular artists use language to represent the political leadership in Kenya, condemning them for misuse of their positions to oppress the citizenry. Popular music can be a site of political discourse, it and a field to challenge the elite's dominant ideology. People do not consume popular culture mindlessly and passively, instead they use it in their lives in innovative ways. The artists aim at emancipating the masses through their songs. To create a common ground with their listeners, the artists first categorize the leaders as greedy and selfish by highlighting their evils. The artists use language as tool to advance the welfare of the nation by castigating those in leadership. Using the analytical tools of CDA, this paper points out that popular culture is not just for entertainment but a powerful tool for advocating for proper utilization of national resources and condemning the excesses of those in authority

Key words: popular culture, critical discourse analysis, political repression, social actors, linguistic and pragmatic features

INTRODUCTION

Hall (1997) argues that popular culture as broad and understands culture as anything distinctive in regard to the way of life of a people, community, nation or a social group. For the purpose of this paper, the form of culture that shall be of importance is the artistic cultural expression and specifically the genre of music. As noted by Barber (1997), music is the first form of popular culture in Africa which has been noticed and studied outside the African continent. Keating and Duranti (2011) hold that culture can be viewed as the practices and knowledge that is passed from generation to generation, models of perceiving, relating and otherwise interpreting them, as communication or a system of signs thus a representation. From this argument, culture can be seen as a way of negotiating and production of particular world views. Culture can be described as a system of mediation and the discourses that emerge from this mediation enables social categorization.

The definition, acceptance and rejection of popular culture is itself political (Englert, 2008) and therefore the definition adopted here points to the openness of popular culture in the sense that entry barriers are relatively low and access to it not overtly institutionalized though there exists manifest monitoring by

government agencies. Nyairo and Ogude (2005) argue that though popular music can be a site of political discourse, it should not be entirely seen as a platform for the debate and challenge of the elite's dominant ideology.

Gitonga (2010) avers that popular music is produced for mass circulation in non-written form to socioculturally homogeneous group of listeners who in this study are the Kikuyu community. It is this wide group of listeners which may make an artist attempt to postulate an ideology that agrees with the commonsense view of his intended audience. As noted by Van Dijk (2003) groups act through individual members through mind control. Popular music can serve as the controlling force as it directs the masses thoughts towards a common enemy and entrench the already available mental models or member resources.

Popular culture can be understood as a site of struggle, a place of negotiation of race, gender, nation and other identities and for the play of power. Popular culture is one of the sites where this struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is engaged; it is also the stake to be won or lost in the struggle. It is the arena of consent and resistance. It is where hegemony arises and where it is secured (Dolby, 2006) thus, popular culture is a site that is an important locus of public debate and of individual and community agency.

People do not consume popular culture mindlessly and passively, instead they use it in their lives in innovative ways. The consumption of this culture which is expressed through language formed the locus of this study as it attempted to explain the linguistic features employed to express the various opinions held by the members of the community in regard to themselves and others. Depending on the moment of production and meaning attached to a song, it offers a site of resistance and asserting of authority (Mutonya, 2010).

People use language to transmit culture. Culture and Language posit that language reflects a way of thinking. There is a close relationship between language and culture. Culture is transmitted by language: what we say influences what we think, what we feel and what we believe. Grossberg argues that popular culture is a pivotal force of affective investment in people as it holds their emotions, reasoning and strongly influences the possibilities of their imagination. It is crucial to understand that there is a deep, affective human pleasure that can be found in multiple spaces, and popular culture clearly taps into that desire. Popular culture, in that sense, is deeply political as it mobilizes people to act, to care, and to discuss issues that affect them (Dolby, 2006). Popular music can thus be understood as part of culture. Gitonga (2010) argues that music is an integral part of any culture. Music communicates the beliefs, norms and values of a society and through music these may be transmitted from one generation to another.

Street (2001) argues that politics involves a struggle for ideas, identities, interests and the distribution of resources. These issues are articulated in music as it does not exist free of other social, economic and political institutions (Nyairo & Ogude, 2005) or what Van Dijk (2003) refers to as the social contexts. Popular forms forge, clarify and articulate the bond between cultural issues and political phenomena. Through the thematic concerns of the songs, the events that shape people's experiences are articulated. Music thus becomes a record of events and experiences which can enable people to reminisce a particular place or specific events which form their mental models or member resources.

Fokwang and Nyamjoh (2005) opines that lyrics openly critical of politicians or politics are rare and when available, are usually very subtle or veiled in their criticism using understatement, irony, pidgin English or a mixture of broken French and English to mask the real message in Cameroon in order to escape censorship. It is this existence of censorship that makes a very strong statement about the role of popular music as that able to change the world as well as reflecting it. Music could therefore be critical of the economic crisis, government inaction and complicity in the face of social evils. In the same light, it can further a group's view of itself. Turino posits that music can represent and signify the realities aspect and events of people's

lives (Fokwang & Nyamjoh, 2005). In a related view, Cloonam (2006) claims that in pre-independence Zimbabwe, musicians were the spokesmen of their people but after independence they have been forced to transform their music from free expression to outright propaganda.

Schumann (2008) traces the role of music in South Africa's struggle for equality of races from the 1930s to the 1990s. She holds that in the early stages music was used to condemn inequalities against musicians for instance the 'night pass' and later music was used to reflect the suffering of the people. The music produced within this context reflected what was happening. As the politics of the nation took shape, protests songs became popular in South Africa and openly advocated for specific actions. She argues that the music texts carried political content to address politicians directly or condemn unjust political practices. When music is so used to attack injustices to the citizenly, it points to its own making as a societal commodity through which the masses could express themselves to the unfeeling ruling class. Popular music then being a creation of the society serves societal functions to address issues that cannot be otherwise addressed for fear of repercussions.

Social actors appropriate music with a variety of interests and the manner in which music is produced and propagated cannot be separated from power relations which could be cultural, economic, political and gendered. Musicians overtly participate in politics through the medium of their songs (Street, 2001). It is this overt participation in the medium of songs that we set out to investigate. Are the musicians consciously aware as they convey political messages in their songs? Do they just support the status quo of the political bigwigs? Do they function as the "voice" of their oppressed masses and ethnic classes or are they social commentators that make a statement against social injustices perpetuated by the rulers against the ruled? The current study shows that grammatical features such as voice are used to condemn those in positions of power.

Wa Mungai (2008) while focusing on popular musicians' mode of self-expression and the role of electronic media analyzes two prominent Kikuyu musicians and how their music entrench a culture of tribal politics in Kenya. His focus on the VCD is supported by Rosani (2013) who maintains that the new technological advancements offer an opportunity for political communication which can occur on a massive daily scale and reach all kinds of people, particularly the young as they can listen to music no matter which other business they are engaged in. Wa Mungai holds that the traditional rhetoric such as allusions to the history of Gĩkũyũ people and the use of metaphors is essential in creating a bifurcated mentality of Kenyan politics and identity

Popular Music just like media discourse is produced for mass audiences. Fairclough (1989) reckons that discourse producers must have interpreters in mind during their production and therefore must address an ideal subject. The subject positions are determined solely by the producer and thus he controls what is included and excluded as well as the presentation of events. The social actors addressed in the music could be that of inclusion and exclusion thus creating a demarcation of Us versus Them, an important ingredient of ideological theory as proposed by (Van Dijk, 1998) It is this presentation and designation of roles that needed to be examined in detail to reveal the hidden agenda that is conveyed through music as a discourse genre. Kenya, being a multi-ethnic state, national politics are viewed and interpreted from ethnic angles with various ethnicities positioning themselves and reacting in various ways and creating identities based on these interpretations

The paper exposes how these beliefs, norms and values as communicated through Kikuyu popular music are ideological; if ideology is understood in (Van Dijk's, 2002) terms as a system of shared beliefs. In this regard, popular music was examined as a form of discourse- a contextualized language use.

Purpose of the study

The study set out to

1. Identify the linguistic and pragmatic features used in Kikuyu popular songs
2. Discuss and interpret the linguistic features employed in Kikuyu popular in rejecting political repression.

Research questions

To guide the study, two research questions were formulated.

1. Which linguistic and pragmatic features are used in Kikuyu popular songs?
2. How do the linguistic and pragmatic features used in Kikuyu popular songs reject political repression?

Significance of the study

The study is significant to discourse scholars as it offers an insight on how songs contribute to conscious efforts by Kikuyu popular artists in their songs to resist, rebuke and advocate against political repression. The study contributes to research in Critical Discourse Analysis which sees language as tool for getting and maintaining power and dominance as well as resistance of the same. It is also relevant to regulatory authorities by exposition popular songs a sight for political negotiations and thus cannot be ignored

METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative in design. Cres well (2013) avers that qualitative research design does an inductive analysis of its subject matter. It employs data collection methods that yield rich detailed corpus for analysis. This paper used the Purposive sampling method to identify songs that seemed to condemn political leaders by several kikuyu pop artists. Politics involves issues of power and resistance (Chilton and Schaffner, 2011). In order to categorize the political nature of discourses, they suggest "strategic functions" which include: Legitimization/ delegitimization; this involves positive self-presentation and negative other presentation perpetuated through self-praise, blames, accusations and insults. Representation and Misrepresentation; this is done through withholding and controlling discourses. The last function is coercion and resistance; which involve negative other portrayal. Following these guidelines, fifty music tracks were selected for their political content. From this first sample, a random sampling was done to come up with fifteen songs to form the corpus for the study.

Fairclough's (1989) model of analysis was employed to validate the study. The model proposes three-dimensional discourse analysis processes that are a product of three dimensions of discourse. These dimensions are:

- The object of analysis which refers to texts (verbal, visual, verbal and visual.)
- The processes by which the object is produced and received (writing/speaking/listening or viewing by human subjects.
- The social historical conditions that govern these processes (context)

Based on these dimensions, a text undergoes three processes to make it meaningful to the consumers: description, interpretation and explanation.

FINDINGS

Kikuyu popular artists use language to represent the political leadership in Kenya, condemning them for

misuse of their positions to oppress the citizenry. The linguistic and pragmatics features chosen by the artists include: euphemisms, presuppositions, speech acts especially the commissives, loaded words, evaluative adjectives, noun phrases, pronouns, verb choices and modality. The artists create an identity of the leaders that is negative in the eyes of the audience to create a common ground through which they can condemn the leaders.

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

In order to reject political repression, the kikuyu popular musicians first create rapport with the masses by highlighting the evils committed by those in authority. The rapport created enables the artist to become the mouth piece of the oppressed masses. The leaders are shown as selfish and they do not mind about the welfare of the citizens who have given them the positions of authority. As a consequence, the artists condemn this callousness in their songs by openly highlighting the evils of the leaders and rebuking them.

In text 1, the artist captures the greediness of those in political leadership by portraying them as thieves. The noun Phrase *"mũici wĩ gatũ"*- (famous thief) and the pronoun "I" refers to a politician who is said to have benefitted from the maize scam that happened around 2008 and was made public in the year 2009 (Kaberia, 2009). The politician is portrayed as causing suffering of the masses as they lack maize: a staple food in Kenya.

- Text 1:

Ndĩrarĩ mũici wĩ gatũ wa mbembe Kenya andũ marangaũka nĩ ngaragu

I was a famous maize thief in Kenya and people died of hunger

The above text highlights the selfishness of those in positions of leadership while ignoring those who have elected them. The choice of the positive statement which emphasizes the action committed is notable taken into consideration the culprit is supposed to safeguard the masses welfare yet he instigates their suffering through stealing of their daily bread.

In text 2, the leader is shown to be cognizant of the fact that his position is by the benevolent nature of the masses. The choice of the pronoun "they" in reference to the masses and allocating them the agent position is indicative that they are responsible for the position of the leader in society. The leader shown by pronoun "me" is shown as he selfish as he abdicates his role to get something for the masses but instead he seeks for personal gain shown by the verb phrase 'eating' which he does together with "my wife". The phrase "my wife" should be taken as representing all those that are close to the elected leader. Thus, the position he occupies ceases to be that of representing the masses but himself and his cronies.

- Text 2

Mathurire ngaringe ngũyũ ciaitĩka tũkĩrĩa na nyina wa andũ

They chose me to shake the fig tree but when the figs fell we ate with my wife.

- Text 3

Makũmbĩ ma bũrũri nĩ niĩ ndahukirie ndarĩaga ngarĩa nginya cia rũciũ

The coffers of the nation I looted misused and the future's treasure

The choice of verbs *"ndahukirie"* (looted) text 3 magnifies the greediness of the elected leaders when they

gain political office. They do nothing to benefit the masses but enrich themselves using public resources. In text 4 & 5, the pronouns "they" and "themselves" refer to those in leadership who scrabble for "us" the citizens. The usage of the verb phrase 'scrabble' hypes the greediness of the leaders who care about their welfare *"love themselves"*. "Two mouths" is euphemistic for the two leaders of Grand Coalition government in Kenya in period of 2008-2012 which means that the grabbing will be higher as the two must be feed from the sweat of the masses. The artist thus means the greed of the leaders will be increased.

- Text 4

Matũtharane tondũ nĩ mũona tũnua tũrĩ kũhinga twĩrĩ

They scrabble for us now that there are two mouths

- Text 5

Andũ meyende

People love themselves

Texts 6-8 use the declarative statements to accuse the leaders of amassing wealth instead of helping the masses. The choice of epistemic modals "are" and "is" in text 6 &7 asserts the greediness of those who have stolen and at the same time condemn them for their wickedness. In text 8, the verb "broke" should be taken as oppressing the farmers through poor returns for their labor

- Text 6

Rĩũ ũrĩ mũici mũnyite

You are a captured thief

- Text 7

Ũtonga ũyũ waku nĩ wagũtunyana

Your wealth is stolen

- Text 8

Woinire mũrĩmi guoko

You broke the farmer's hand

The choice of the verb phrases "captured thief" and "stolen" in reference to the leaders and their acquired wealth highlights the awareness of the masses that those in position of authority are misusing the wealth of the nation for personal benefit.

The noun phrase *"ũkoroku wanyu" (*your greediness) in text 9 is attributed to have caused a separation between the leaders and the ruled "us" who may be of the same tribe but of different economic statuses. Song 6, which was produced after the PEV and maize scandal, condemns the leaders for the escalating food prices which made the life of the poor become difficult (text8, song 5). It is this difficulty that has made the poor in the country to forget their tribal nuances and embrace the bifurcation of the rich and the poor.

- Text 9

Ũkoroko wanyu nĩ watũtigithania

Your greediness has separated

The choice of verb phrase *"ũkambũrũrũka" (*fume) in text 10 to show the anger of the political class when told they will be taxed together with the conditional "if" shows the dissatisfaction of the masses with the leaders who refuse to be taxed. The metaphor of "*ngui ciakũga" (*when dogs bark) in text 11 is illustrative of those speaking against the political class especially the media. The dogs are disempowered (extraction of teeth) through legislation making them ineffective in condemning those in leadership.

- Text 10

Nawe wagweteruo igoti ũkambũrũrũka

If tax is mentioned to you, you fume

- Text 11

Na ngui cĩakũga ũgacimunya magego

When dogs bark you extract their teeth

By highlighting these evils, the artists rally the masses to emancipate themselves from the grip of their rulers. The artists raise the awareness of the masses and expose the evils of those in authority by commenting against the evils committed by the leadership to the common people.

Having created a form of common ground with the masses, that their leaders are taking advantage of them, the artists employ linguistic features that would warn the leaders of dire consequences for their evil deeds. The linguistic features chosen highlight the power relations between the ruler and the ruled: that the ruled cannot directly attack those in leadership but surrenders them to a more powerful being in the form of a deity. The artists raise the awareness of the masses and expose the evils of those in authority by commenting against the evils committed by the leadership to the common people through the use of presupposition as shown in the following texts

- Text 12

Na ndutura cia rĩũ nacio nĩciohĩgire ciatũmũo itware ndũmĩrĩri igũragĩrũo njĩra

The doves of this day are wise when they are sent they are bought along the way

- Text 13

Na ngui ciakũga ũgacimunya magego na nokĩo mũrahĩtũkirie medial bill

When dogs bark you disempower them that's why you passed the media bill

- Text 14

Maitũ akĩendia ndũma ciake nĩaretio igoti nawe wagweterũo igoti ũkambũrũrũka

When my mother sells arrowroots is taxed but if tax is mentioned to you, you fume

- Text 14

Mwagayanirie bũrũri na ũkabila

You divided the nation through tribalism

- Text 15

Wĩ mũici mũnyite ũtonga ũyũ waku nĩ wagũtunyana nĩ thithino ya mũingĩ

You are a captured thief your wealth is stolen as it is the masses' sweat

We can deduce the following presuppositions from the above texts: "*igũragĩrũo njĩra*" they are bought along the way; politicians are corrupt, "*Na ngui ciakũga ũgacimunya magego na nokĩo mũrahĩtũkirie medial bill*" When dogs bark you disempower them that's why you passed the media bill;they are against liberal media, "*wagweterũo igoti ũkambũrũrũka*" if tax is mentioned to you, you fume; they refuse to pay taxes yet the poor pay, "*Mwagayanirie bũrũri*" they divide the nation, *" ũtonga ũyũ waku nĩ wagũtunyana nĩ thithino ya mũingi"* your wealth is stolen as it is the masses' sweat; they are greedy, horde commodities to oppress the poor and enrich themselves using the country's resources.

By exposing all these ills, the artists are in effect rejecting leadership that is not mindful of the welfare of the masses. Presupposition mainly draws from assumed background knowledge and the masses are aware of these evils, the artist creates solidarity for all those who suffer at the hands of the leaders to rise against such oppressive tendencies.

The other feature of pragmatics employed is the use of speech acts. Fairclough (1989) asserts that in characterizing part of a text as a speech act, one characterizes what the speaker does by virtue of an utterance for instance threatening, warning or promising something. There are basically five categories of speech acts as identified by (Searle, 1979). These are: representatives (what speakers believe to be the case), directives which are attempts by the speaker to make the hearer do something, commissives: the speaker's commitment to do something in the future, expressives and finally declaratives.

In Kikuyu popular music, the artists use commissives as a way of rejecting political repression, by threatening the leaders with the consequences of their actions. The consequences are: "*igũrũ mũtigaturia*" (failure to get to heaven), an allusion to the idea of paradise where the good people will go after this life, "*ũgũtwarũo nĩ rũrũ*" (drowning) which alludes to the biblical punishment of the Egyptians by God at the Red Sea. This threat draws upon the power of Egyptians to oppress and how God delivered the Israelites from them. This draws a parallel where the leaders are equated to the powerful Egyptians and how God will defend the masses here likened to the Israelites.

- Text 16

Igũrũ mũtigaturia

You will not step in heaven

- Text 17

ũgũtwaro nĩ rũrũ ta thigari iria ciarĩ cia Firauni

You will drown like the pharaoh's army

- Text 18

Kwĩ mũthĩ ũgakĩa rĩmũerekeire

A day will come when the sun will scorch you

- Text 19

Nĩ ũkũrĩa nyeki

You will eat grass

The clause *"nĩ ũkũrĩa nyeki"* (you wil eat grass) in text19 drawn from equates the leaders to Nebuchadnezzar who was punished by God for his arrogance. The speech acts are in the form of statements (locutionary act) functioning as threats and warning (illocutionary acts) with the effect of condemning and rebuking (perlocutionary acts) the leaders for their misdeeds against the citizens. These threats portray the leaders as arrogant and proud because of their power which will make them to be humbled by God.

The leaders who have been oppressive to the masses are to be punished for their evil deeds by *"nĩ acurio ihiga rĩa gĩthĩi ngingo"* (having a millstone on their necks). The use of modality shown by the use of "should" captures the obligation, a duty for the masses to punish the leaders making them account for their actions. The threat is continued as a warning that the leaders will have to pay for their actions *"mũkarĩha maita mĩrongo mĩingĩ"* (you will repay many times) in text 22. The warning shows that the masses are awake to the oppressive nature of the leadership

- Text 20

Nĩ athunire akĩherithia andũ ngiri nyingĩ ni acurio ihiga ria githii ngingo

He was mean and thousands were made to suffer, a millstone should be tied round his neck

- Text 21

Nĩatũmĩte raia nyingĩ Kenya icafe nĩ acurio ihiga rĩa gĩthĩi ngingo

He has made many citizens of Kenya to suffer a millstone should be tied round his neck

- text 22

Ciĩko cia wagi wa tha mwaneka taiguai mũkarĩha maita mĩrongo mĩingĩ

The merciless deeds you did you will repay many times

Those who use their positions to oppress the masses and benefit themselves are threatened with curses for instance *"Mũregi na mbembe aigite ikũmbĩ...egũtũra e mũrume"* (He who hordes maize, the scripture says he will always be cursed) as shown in text 23. But the agent of the verb "curse" is not explicitly mentioned.

The artist uses the election cycle in Kenya to threaten the leaders that they will not be re-elected to their offices. The promises of *"tũkamũikia na kiano" (*we shall throw you out) in text 24 and *"nongakumagaria"* (I will escort you) in text 25 means that the leaders have lost favor with the electorate and their positions will be taken from them. The use of the plural pronoun "we" is exclusive and refers only to the masses that have the *"gatua ũhoro"* (decider) the voter's card, which they will use to reject the leaders at the ballot.

- Text 23

Mũregi na mbembe aigite ikũmbĩ ta iguai mandĩko marauga egũtũra e mũrume

He who hordes maize the scripture say he will always be cursed

- Text 24

Mĩaka ĩna ĩgĩthira tũkamũikia na kĩano

When four years are over we shall throw you out

- text 25

Tondũ gatua ũhoro ndĩrĩonako mũhuko mĩaka ĩno ĩna ĩgĩthira nongakumagaria

As the decider is in my pocket after four years I will escort you

The leadership is also described by using loaded words which evaluates their character. When one allocates value system to something, its desirability or undesirability is determined which can allow one to accept or reject it (Fairclough, 2003). The evaluation in texts is achieved through the use of adjectives, verbs, adverbs and modality.

In text 26, the adjectives *"wĩkirithĩtie"* (You have been calm) and *"mũndũ mwega ma" a* (very good person) are negated by the use of the conditionals "as if" which means that the person being talked about is neither calm nor good. The negativity attributed to the person is captured by the adjective *"nĩ athunire"* (he was mean) text 27 and the passive sentence form "thousands were made to suffer" presumably by him. This in effect leads to his rejection as a leader.

- Text 26

Wee nawe ngundi njirũ wĩkirithĩtie hau ta wĩ mũndũ mwega ma

You Black-Fist you have been calm as if you are a very good person

- Text 27

Nĩ athunire akĩherithia andũ ngiri nyingĩ

The use of the evaluative adjective "good" in "mũrĩithi wa mbũri mwega" (a good shepherd) in text 28 and wise in "mũkami mũgĩ" (a wise milkman) in text 29 is a way of condemning those in leadership as the implications of the words are that they are bad and foolish. The positive meaning of the adjective good is negated through implication in text28 that some sheep are limping and hungry while the adjective wise is negated by the use of "but" in text 29. Having painted a negative image of the leader, the artist leaves the

audience to make a decision on how to deal with such a leader. The use of the phrases: *"ũkoroku wanyu"* (your greediness) in text 31, *"kĩrĩa-marĩ"* (Treasure-eater) in text 32, and *"hiti kĩonero"* (greedy hyena) in text 30 to talk about the leaders connotes their selfishness at the expense of the common citizens and hence the implied interpretation is that they should not be allowed to continue holding their positions as they do nothing to help the citizens but only to benefit themselves. He was mean and thousands were made to suffer

- Text 28

Mũrĩithi wa mbũri mwega nĩ ũrĩa ũtigagĩrĩra ciothe nĩ hũnu na gũtirĩ ĩrathua

A good shepherd ensures all are satisfied and none is limping

- Text 29

Nĩ arĩa marĩ wenji na ũkuri no mũkami mũgĩ nĩoĩ njau

By the greedy but a wise milkman allows the calves to suckle

- Text 30

Kĩndekie niĩ ndĩtware ũkĩrĩa warĩ owiki hiti kĩonero mũthikani ũtathikwo

Let me walk alone, you ate alone, greedy hyena, undertaker who will never be buried

- Text 31

ũkoroku wanyu nĩwatũtigithũkania

Your greediness has separated us

- Text 32

Kĩrĩa marĩ waagĩtuire njũgũma ĩno yaku yũragage mbũri no ti yakũraga hiti.

Treasure eater you decided your club will kill the sheep but not hyenas

It is illustrative to point out that the texts were was produced during the reign of the Grand Coalition led by Mwai Kibaki as the President and Raila Odinga as the Prime Minister as well as during President Moi's era but they are all captured as minding their own welfare disregarding the masses. Thus, the artists help in rejecting bad governance whether of the Kikuyu or other tribes.

The use of the statement "mũthikani ũtathikwo" (undertaker who will never be buried) in text 30 as a name of a leader points to the ruthlessness of the leader (who uses his club to kill the sheep) "waagĩtuire njũgũma ĩno yaku yũragage mbũri" in text 32. A leader should protect those under him but here the leader is shown as the killer of the sheep which should be understood as the citizens.

Through value judgment, the artists enlighten the masses to reject their oppressive leaders. This is in agreement with Mutonya (2010) who opines that music provides a site to challenge and weaken the repressive power of those in authority.

CONCLUSION

From the preceding discussion, it can be seen that the artists aim at emancipating the masses through their songs. To create a common ground with their listeners, the artists first categorize the leaders as greedy and selfish by highlighting their evils. This is primarily done by using grammatical features like pronouns "they" and "us" to evoke the notion of leaders versus citizens. The "they" are portrayed as self-seeking oppressors who use the "njuguma" – club to kill the sheep which metaphorically refers to the citizens. The artists use pragmatic features such speech acts and presupposition to threaten and accuse the leaders as a way of marshaling the masses to reject them at the ballot. Moral evaluations are also done through the usage of adjectives and loaded words to highlight the wickedness of the leaders thus portraying them negatively to the citizens who then through presupposition are meant to vote them out.

It can therefore be conclusively argued that the artists use language as tool to advance the welfare of the nation by castigating those in leadership. Popular culture is therefore not just for entertainment but a powerful tool for advocating for proper utilization of national resources.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

REFERENCES

1. Barber, K. (1997). Readings in African popular culture. London: International African Institute
2. Cloonam, M. (2006). Popular music censorship in Africa: An overview. Retrieved fromhttp://www.ashgate.com/pdf/SamplePages/Popular Music Censorship in Africa Ch1.pdf
3. Creswell, J. W. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. Sage Publications
4. Dolby, N. (2006). Popular culture and public space in Africa: The possibilities of cultural citizenship in Africa. African Studies Review 49(3) 31-47
5. Englert, B. (2008): Popular music and politics in Africa. Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien 14(8) 1-15
6. Fairclough, N. (1989). Language and power. London, Sage
7. Fokwang, J. & Nyamjoh, F. B. (2005). Entertaining repression: Music and politics in postcolonial Cameroon. African Affairs Journal 104/415, 251-274. Oxford University press
8. Gitonga, P. N. (2010): Music as social discourse: The contribution of popular music to the awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS in Nairobi, Kenya. Unpublished MA thesis, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
9. Hall, S. (1997). Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London. Sage
10. Keating, E. & Duranti, A. (2011). Discourse and culture. In: Van Dijk, T. (Ed.), Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction (pp. 331-356). London, Sage
11. Mutonya, M. (2010). The beat goes on: performing postcolonial disillusionment in Kenya.Human del Sur, 5(8),47-66
12. Nyairo, J. & Ogude, J. (2005): Popular music popular politics: Unbwogable and the idioms of freedom in Kenyan popular music. African Affairs Journal, 104(415), 225-249. Oxford University Press
13. Rosani, S. (2013). Resistance music and politics in Africa: Some introductory remarks. Stichproben Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien, 14(8).
14. Schumann, A. (2008). The beat that beat apartheid: The role of music in the resistanc against

apartheid in South Africa. Stich proben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrika studien 14(8) 17-39

15. Searle, J. R. (1979). Expressions and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts. CUP
16. Street, J. (2001). Rock, pop and politics. In Frith, S., Will, S. & Street, J. (Eds.), Pop and rock. London, Cambridge University Press.
17. Van Dijk, T. A. (2003). Ideology and discourse: A multidisciplinary introduction. Barcelona, Ariel.
18. Van Dijk, T. A. (2002). Discourse and racism. In Goldberg, D.T. & Solomon, J. (Eds.), A companion to racial and ethnic Studies (pp.145-159). Oxford, Blackwell.
19. Van Dijk, T. A. (1998). Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
20. Wa Mungai, M. (2008). Made in River wood": (Dis) locating identities and power through pop music. Journal of African Cultural Studies, 20(1), 57-70. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group