Projecting Voice in Political Discourse: A Study of Saulos Klaus Chilima's Discursive Strategies, Malawi

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Abstract—The study takes a stance to explore the political discourse speech in Malawi as the country draws closer to the May 2019 general elections. This is a war-like zone period with different political figures pursuing, negotiating, and struggling for power. We specially mount our research to investigate how Saulos Klaus Chilima strategizes to get the winning card by exploring his voice and voice projection techniques during the launch of his party. We have hence borrowed insights from Heffer's (2013, 2018) Voice Projection framework (VPF) and used Nvivo 11 Pro software in the analysis. The study discovers that his launch speech is highly authorizing, persuading, converging, and highlighting with very few instances of centring, and indexing which made the speech more powerful, stimulating and impressive. The study brings a different dimension of analyzing political discourse by shopping a theory from Forensic discourse.

Index Terms—voice projection, political discourse, Saulos Klaus Chilima, accommodation, authority, discursive voicing

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Politics is the struggle for power; and language has become central as politicians pursue, enhance, negotiate, and struggle to achieve their goals. Every political action is prepared, accompanied, influenced and played by language (Horváth, 2009; Fairclough, 1995). But how exactly does language serve that purpose? And how actually do politicians use language to influence course of actions? An attempt to answer these questions eventually led to the emergent of a new field of political discourse analysis, a sub-field within Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk, 2006; Fairclough, 1995). Political Discourse Analysis deals with the reproduction of political power, power abuse and domination through discourse. In this study, we intend to investigate how politicians use language and other semiotic means in an attempt to have voice, to make themselves be understood by others; and their capacity to project their perspective effectively by using data from Malawi. It is noted that politicians are people's representatives; hence, they arguably speak for their people (Kondowe, 2014a). Political speeches strengthen and renew the covenant between the people and their leaders. Be it inaugural address or campaign speech, politicians outline their perspectives and conduct that shape their people in the way they understand the system of their party or government at both theoretical and functional levels (Kondowe, 2014a). Therefore, the voice of politicians is taken as the voice of their people. The political voice embodied in their speeches and addresses can be seen to reflect the realities of their people. However, regardless that political discourse has provided rich data for researchers and scholars interested in discourse analysis, little attempts have been made to link the concept of voice and its impact on political speeches. The notion of voice projection is a metaphorical extension from the physical notion of actors throwing their voice out to their audience. If an actor succeeds in projecting their voice, their lines will be understood. If they succeed in projecting their metaphorical voice, their perspectives will be responsibly understood by the audience (Heffer, 2018b). In this study, we look at Saulos Klaus Chilima, Malawi's political actor, on how he projected his metaphorical voices during the launch of his United Transformation Movement party by analyzing his first speech that threw him into the front line of politics.

Saulos Klaus Chilima and his Transformation Movement Party

Saulos Klaus Chilima became the Vice President of Malawi in June 2014 after contesting as a running mate for Arthur Peter Mutharika (APM) and won the May 2014 presidential elections under the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) ticket. Before joining politics, Saulos Klaus Chilima (henceforth "SKC") held key leadership positions in companies like Unilever (1995-1998), Leasing and Finance Company (1998-2001), Coca-Cola (2002-2006) and Airtel Malawi (2008-2010; *Malawi Voice,* 2014), and became the first Malawian Chief Executive Officer for Airtel (Ngwira, 2014). He obtained his Ph.D in Knowledge Management from the University of Bolton in the United Kingdom in August, 2015. He obtained Master of Science (Economics) and Bachelor of Social Sciences (Economics) degrees both from the University of Malawi-Chancellor College in 2003 and 1994 respectively (*Malawi Voice,* 2014). As a student, he played a pivotal role in championing multi-party democracy when he was the president of Students Union at

Chancellor College (SUCC). Besides the vice-presidency, SKC served as a minister for disaster relief and public events. He had also been a stern critic of corruption in politics (Nhlane, 2018) and the citizens' blind loyalty towards their leaders, personalization of offices, victimization of others and nepotism (Malenga, 2018).

As the nation drew closer to the May, 2019 tripartite elections, tension grew between APM and SKC in the party's build-up towards the convention. Among others, it was noted that SKC was being sidelined in many government activities and was left out on some foreign trips and that the president was sending Minister of Foreign Affairs instead (Mpaka, 2016). Callista Mutharika, the former First Lady, was the first to come in the open to endorse SKC to be the DPP presidential touch-bearer at the expense of the incumbent APM (her brother-in-law), whom she said is aged. This worsened the working relationship between APM and SKC. This scenario seemed to repeat the history of bad blood between presidents and their Vice Presidents in Malawi. For example, President Elson Bakili Muluzi fell out with his Vice President, Justin Malewezi. Likewise, late Professor Bingu wa Mutharika also ran into conflicts with his Vice, Cassim Chilumpha just like Joyce Banda crossed her path with Khumbo Kachali as they went into May 2014 general elections (Mpaka, 2016). Therefore, the battle between APM and SKC camps were simply proving a curse running in Malawi political history.

Political tables turned around on 6th June, 2018, when SKC held a press conference in Lilongwe where he openly declared his lack of interest to contest as a presidential candidate for the DPP. He also announced his departure from the DPP but that he would continue serving as the VP of Malawi until the end of his term in May 2019 (Kalungwe, 2018). On 21st July, 2018, SKC launched his United Transformation Movement (UTM) in Lilongwe which later became registered as the UTM Party in readiness for the May 2019 elections. In early February 2019, UTM went into negotiations to form an electoral alliance with former president Joyce Banda's People's Party (PP), however the deal did not yield any fruit as the two parties failed to agree on the choice of running mate which led to PP's publicly withdrawal from the alliance (Kumbani, 2019). Therefore, when UTM party went to submit their presidential nomination papers to the Malawi Electoral Commission on 6th February, 2019, SKC revealed his running mate to be Dr. Michael Usi, the decision that received a mixed reaction and sparked a huge debate on social media (Kumbani, 2019).

II. STUDIES ON POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

As defined by Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (2006), political discourse analysis (PDA) is a subfield of critical discourse analysis (CDA). PDA deals with the reproduction of political power, power abuse and domination through discourse. Such analyses deal with the discursive conditions and consequences of social and political inequalities that result from such domination, and such analyses must also answer genuine and relevant political questions (van Dijk, 2006). Such a discourse is identified by its actors or authors who are in this case politicians. There is a vast bulk of data that has documented presidential rhetoric across the world especially in the USA where there is huge literature on the discourse of presidential aspirants, senators, and president-elects with Barack Obama holding the number one spot (Ye, 2010; Horvath, 2010; Wang, 2010; Shayegh & Nabifar, 2012). Furthermore, Horváth (2009) examined the persuasive strategies in Obama's inaugural address using Fairclough's approaches, where he discovered that ideologically, the speech demonstrated pragmatism, liberalism, inclusiveness, acceptance of religious and ethnic diversity and unity. His speeches have also been looked from the point of Hallidayian Systematic Functional Grammar (Wang, 2010; Ye, 2010; Shayegh & Nabifar, 2012) by analyzing transitivity, mood, modality, and his choices of personal pronouns. Much has also been documented on the rhetoric of Donald Trump. Relative to this, Kayam (2017) worked on identifying the readability and simplicity of Trump's speeches and debates, and it was discovered that unlike other candidates, he uses sentences and words that are shorter, less complex and can easily be understood even by 9-11 year-olds. Bonilla (2016) analysis also focused on the way the self/other-representation and mystification strategies are combined with conceptual metaphors in the construction of Trump's ideological discourse. Darweesh and Abdullah (2016) likewise looked at Trump's sexist ideology on how he negatively represents and underestimates women.

Faki (2014) also explored linguistic elements in political discourses of some contemporary African leaders such as Joseph Kabila (Congo), Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe), Thabo Mbeki (South Africa) and John Atta Mill's (Ghana), using Transitivity Model and Speech Act Theory, as well as semantic representations appearing in their political speeches. In Malawi, of all the presidents, it has been observed that only the speeches of the third President, Bingu wa Mutharika are the ones that have been thoroughly explored. For example, Green (2007) investigated the discursive strategies Mutharika used at the United Nations General Assemblies (UNGA) during his first term of office from 2004-2007. In addition to this, Mutharika's 2009 inaugural address was also analyzed using the Theory of Transitivity by Kondowe, (2014a) and Interpersonal Metafunction by focusing on choice of mood, modal auxiliary operators, and personal pronouns (Kondowe, 2014b). This aside, the speeches by the other four Malawi presidents and their VPs have not adequately been analyzed, hence the need for this present study.

Rationale

This study intends to address a number of gaps in the current literature on political discourse. Even though some efforts have been made to document events of Malawian presidents which are available in some scholarly journals Green, (2007) ; Kondowe, (2014a); Kondowe, (2014b) and Kondowe *et.al.* (2014), little efforts have been made to document speeches of vice presidents. Most of the available information on the VPs merely exists in electronic formats on YouTube, Wikipedia, and some online journalistic articles which report on topical issues of the day as they emerge.

It is hard to get reliable published works about VPs speeches from credible sources such as scholarly journals. Even then, those studies that have documented Malawi's presidential speeches and those across the world, most of them have focused on inaugural and campaign speeches. It is also difficult to find published works that have analyzed speeches on party launching or those made during the establishment of political parties. However, what is more interesting in this study is that SKC formed his UTM Party while he was still serving the Malawi Government as VP. Now, it would be more interesting to see how he mobilized people to join his party, and how he craftily managed to attack his own government.

III. "HAVING VOICE" AND THE VOICE PROJECTION FRAMEWORK

In discourse, to 'have voice' is to have the capacity to project one's perspective effectively, the capacity to produce meanings and make oneself be understood (Blommaert, 2007). This, therefore, requires both an opportunity to voice your perspective and make that perspective be understood and get absorbed by your audience. Voice originates in the body as the articulation of sound in speech. And, that voice can be used to describe the characteristic tones of an individual speaker (Heffer, 2013, 2018a, 2018b). By extension, voice becomes the discursive style of the individual speaker or writer or even the style of a professional role, which becomes the speaker's voice, writer's voice or reporter's voice respectively. In other words, voice is also seen as an individual and social resource, as a capacity to be heard and understood ('have voice'). According to Hymes (1996), voice is not about freedom of speech but the 'freedom to have one's voice heard'. It is an unequally distributed resource that a speaker has more or less in a given context (Hymes, 1996). Every human being naturally has a voice, but in this context 'having a voice' is understood as an intrinsically social process with clear connections to social structure, history, culture, power and other resources. Some resources will, of course, be exclusive, others will be democratic; some will mark superiority, others inferiority; some will function well across different social contexts while others will be locked into specific niches of society (Blommaert, 2007). Powerless groups, for instance, will mostly lack voice and capacity to be heard and be understood. It is generally assumed that powerful figures have plenty of voice, and often times tend to be heard and understood in the process influencing a course of action (Heffer, 2013). Some institutions, in particular, tend to "freeze" the conditions for voice' so that you do not speak or write in the normatively imposed way, you will fail to be heard (Blommaert, 2007). Conversely, Heffer (2013, 2018a) further notes that having a voice does not automatically lead to one being heard, hence there is need to analyze the extent to which voice projection might lead to being understood in a given context. This leads us to our next discussion of Voice Projection Framework, and this is the model we have used in this study.

Heffer's Voice Projection Framework (VPF) models how one projects his/her voice to the intended audience in a given context. He proposes that voice comprises three key elements: perspective, projection and understanding. The VPF and the model focus on how the voice gets from perspective to understanding, the process he calls Projection (Heffer, 2013, 2018a, 2018b). According to the VPF, an individual or group's perspectives which are in form of a set of ideas, identities or styles get projected to an audience, who understands it to a greater or lesser extent. As such, successful projection leads to responsive understanding (Heffer, 2018a). The model aims to permit a nuanced understanding of projection that can help explain how individuals and groups lack/lose the voice and or gain that voice for it to become a powerful and effective tool of communication. In Figure 1, the diagonal line connecting perspective, projection and understanding indicates a simple theoretical sequence. Thus in order to have voice, one must have a perspective to project and the projection must lead to some form of understanding (Heffer, 2013).

In this model, perspective broadly covers the ways of being (Identity), ways of thinking (Ideas) and ways of speaking (Styles) that the speaker or group of speakers projects to a listener or an audience.
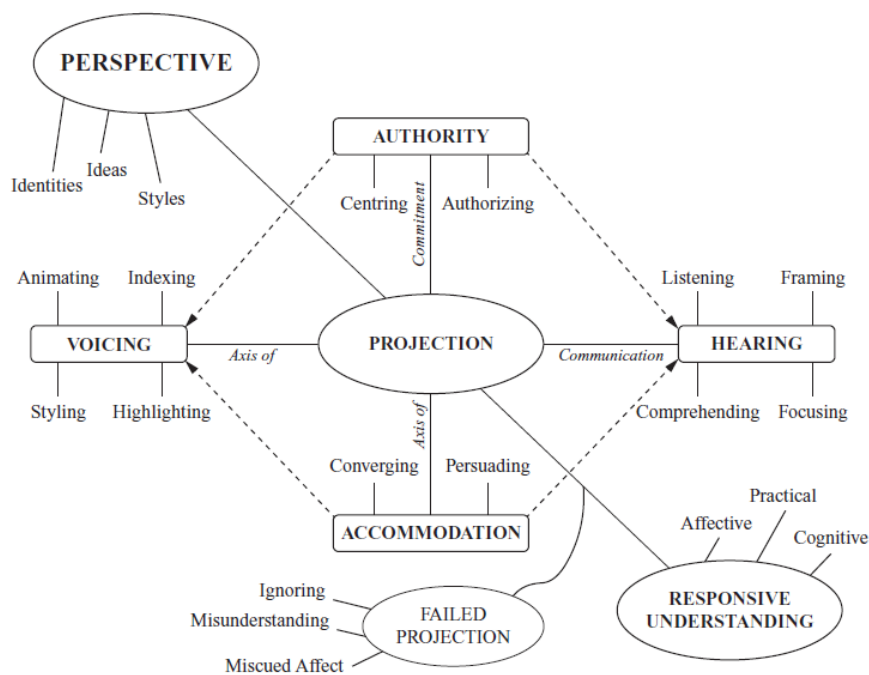
Figure 1: The Voice Projection Framework: Adopted from Heffer (2018a, p. 211)

Understanding is what we want to achieve from the audience; a pragmatic and active responsive understanding. Projection is the way voice is both actively and passively projected to the audience through voicing (sounding, styling, indexing, and highlighting), authority (centring and authorizing), and accommodation (persuading and converging; Heffer, 2018b).

We have chosen this model in our current study for a variety of reasons. Firstly, besides being a new model in discourse analysis, the VPF provides handy tools that are easier to use and apply to a given text. This model provides an ideal approach for identifying SKC's political voice about Malawi and the strategies he uses to project the perspective to his audience. Secondly, in the development of the model, he (Heffer) draws data from courtroom discourse using 'Vicky Pryce' Heffer, (2013) and a 'Dumb Jury' cases, Heffer, (2018a). This study, therefore, tests the strength of the model and its applicability to other forms of discourse like politics.

Research Questions
This study is motivated to answer the following questions:
i. What is SKC's perspective (voice) about Malawi in line with political developments?
ii. What discursive strategies have SKC used to project his voice to his audience?

IV. THE DATA AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The speech under study was downloaded from YouTube in a video format. In order to make meaningful and informed analysis, we made the following steps: 1) the speech was translated from Chichewa (a local language) into English. 2) We thoroughly read it and highlighted key issues (the voices) that SKC wanted to project to the audience. 3) We then parsed the speech into clauses and identified key strategies employed at every clause level. These clauses were entered into Nvivo 11, qualitative data analysis software for themes and subthemes identification. To identify the perspective and the strategies used in the speech, we followed an inductive bottom-up approach allowing themes to emerge directly from the speech. Results of the findings have been visually presented in Figures 2 and 3.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussions have been presented in line with the two research questions. The perspective (the voices) represents SKC's normative center that he intends to project to his audience as he mobilizes the people to join his newly formed political party which has no any structures on the ground. Therefore, we shall present his voices first then discuss the strategies he used later.

A. SKC's Perspective of Malawi (the Voices)

As already alluded to in the previous sections, we shall use the term perspective to refer to "his ideas" about the country. The study, therefore, identifies a polyvocality of perspectives presented sequentially through **highlighting** (to be explained in **section 5.2.3**) that we have grouped into three: i) Malawi in acute problems, ii) the need for reformation, and iii) building a better future for the country. His voices oscillate between the past and future Malawi by taking the audience back and forth, recalling their experiences regarding what the country has gone through from colonialism

through all the regimes to the current leadership and state of affairs. He promises his audience to see better Malawi should his UTM Party be given chance to rule Malawi after the May, 2019 general elections. Through **highlighting** the metaphor "Malawi on fire", which is the crux of his address, SKC vividly brings to the fore mental experiences about how Malawians have suffered economically and socially in the previous and current regimes due to selfish leadership and poor governance. He deliberately repeats the idea that since democracy, the leadership has been inconsiderate and selfish, trying to accumulate wealth through corrupt and nepotistic practices. Current and former leaderships have taken advantage of the country's weak structures to loot and plunder public resources even when the masses were languishing in poverty and hunger.

SKC implores every Malawian who has reached the voting age to go register and vote for his UTM party so that they can change the status quo. He strongly appeals to everybody to take out the fears, and join the efforts of the UTM in order to transform Malawi. He inspires everybody not to be threatened by any other politicians. He does so by citing some of the brave acts done by some notable citizens in the past for the love of their country. In rebuilding the country, he highlights key steps in the reformation process: changing and tightening some policies of governing the country, and working towards developing everyone regardless of political or regional affiliations. He finally concentrates on the theme of rebuilding the country by eliminating key problems facing Malawi as he outlines his plans once in power. To change some government policies and tighten principles which are weak, he singles out the provision of food security, good health facilities, good education, proper housing, reliable electricity, good security, proper land distribution, and creating jobs for the citizenry among others. He also promises to create bursaries for students during the first six months in power, create one million jobs in the first year, make sure all leaders who embezzled government funds return the money and get imprisoned for looting just to mention some. Therefore, in the subsequent section, we shall explore key strategies that he used to project his voice, how he delivered the speech and how he made himself be heard and understood.

B. SKC Voice Projection Strategies

We shall now give an analysis of the strategies SKC uses to project the above political ideological perspectives. We do so by looking at Heffer's strategies as outlined in the VPF, and examine how SKC employs these strategies in his speech. However, we have not exhausted all the strategies in the VPF as others are not relevant to this study. We have only focused on those that relate well to the speaker's style (Authority, Accommodation, and discursive voicing). This study does not take any interest in physical **voicing** and **hearing** since the latter mostly concerns the audience side while the former deals with sounding which is physical and not a result of style. Therefore, we mainly attempt to analyze how SKC executes his institutional power as the VP of Malawi, and as the presidential aspirant (Authority), how he adapts his speech to meet the diverse needs of his audience (Accommodation), and how his speech conforms to the standards.
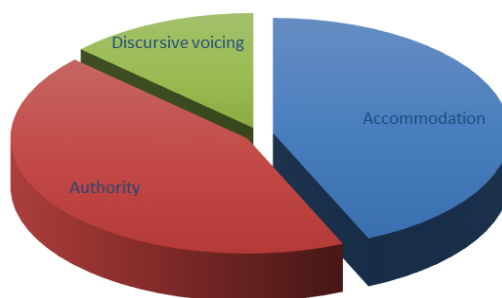

Figure 2: SKC's Voice Projection Supper Strategies

In examining the three super-strategies, results indicate that Accommodation and Authority strategies rank highly by occurring 197 times (43.4%) and 198 times (43.6%) respectively, Discursive Voicing strategies come last with 59 occurrences (13%), as Figure 2 reveals. However, this does not imply that there are a total of 454 clauses identified from the speech. The analysis noted a lot of overlaps as some clauses have more than one built-in strategy, which were counted as two when entering into Nvivo, while other clauses do not contain any notable strategy. The analysis further notes that the speech is mainly oriented towards authorizing (42.29%) and persuading (33.70%). Styling strategies appear 03.52%, converging 18%, highlighting 09.96%, indexing 05.28% and centring 01.32%

Figure 3: SKC's Voice Projection Detailed Strategies

1. Accommodation strategies

Accommodation is defined as the extent to which the speaker adapts their speech to the audience by **converging** and **persuading** (Heffer, 2018a, 2018b). Converging is the adaptive communicative norms of the speaker. It can facilitate both comprehension and solidarity, and thus help project the voice. Hence, speakers of public discourse like politicians need both the capacity and motivation to converge with everyone. Persuading, on the other hand, is being rhetorically efficacious (Heffer, 2003). Successful voice projection requires an orientation to **persuading** rather than simply informing the audience. Going through SKC's speech, we have noted different aspects of converging where he moves his power status towards everyday discourse norm. In order to project his voice, he tries to narrow the gap between himself and the different groups of individuals in the audience. In his speech, SKC converges with the religious believers by citing the Bible (7 times), God/Jesus (5 times), and Quran (twice) as a way of appealing to the hearts of the faith community.

1. <13> Don't fear any human being. <14> **We should only fear God**

2. <100> [...] we should **read our Bible** Mathews 11:12, where **Lord Jesus** is saying since the days of John the Baptist until today, the **kingdom of heaven** is like war, and only those who are brave will be able to conquer.

3. <104> Even the **book of Quran** says no one can find something good until he works for it with dedication.

He also converges well with the elderly, by recalling the history of Malawi. He lists the martyrs and the events that surrounded the freedom fight for the country to gain independence from colonization, through one-party era, to multiparty democracy.

4. <119> **Even our colonizers**, who had all the necessary resources, they were defeated by armless people. **The one-party era,** which also had too much power, came to a downfall by the ordinary voices, poor people, people who loved their country, people who had no money.

5. <123> **In 1992**, there came our friends who fought for **democracy**. <124> **In 1964,** Mr Mwale and his friends **fought with the colonizers** when they were still young and they didn't fear **the whites**.

Most of the voters today, who are mostly young below the age of 25 years, did not experience the struggles SKC highlights. Therefore, he projects himself as someone who is well versed with the history of the country, and that he is a true Malawian. Such strategies help him project his voice successfully. Malawi is said to have been led by *matchona* (people who have spent much of their life in diaspora) who have no idea of how people suffered during the struggle for independence. SKC takes advantage of that to project himself as a different crop, a true Malawian the people must associate with. He also narrows the discourse gap by converging with the poor and takes himself as one of them by citing real-life examples that the poor experience in such an ailing economy:

6. <55> We are in a situation where **our children are failing to finish their education due to lack of finances,** and any other related resources **that can support their education**;

7. <56> when we have mud wall structures **that are killing our children in schools**, when **we have drug scarcity in hospitals.**

SKC uses his strategic competence that speakers require to get a 'pass' from members of different social groups as men of the people. He tries to assimilate and penetrate the minds of many people by citing real examples that different members of the audience experience. As noted by Sibande (2018), SKC adopts a strategy of simulation of strength, a legendary strategist giving a deceptive appearance that he suffers together with the poor (when actually he does not); hence the need for change and have a better Malawi. Such converging with different members of the local community's discursive norms is likely to facilitate the audience's comprehension and association.

Just like Obama, SKC also highly uses rhetoric questions as a **persuading** accommodation strategy. However, unlike Obama's questions that do not call for answers from the audience (Horváth, 2009), SKC's rhetorical questions are in form of polar interrogatives also known as yes-no questions. They have all the elements already specified, and the

audience is only expected to supply a truthful value, by either answering '*yes*' or '*no*' (Harris, 1984; Stivers, 2010). Generally formed by placing the verbal operator (i.e. *be*, *have* or *do*, or a modal verb such as *can, may, must, will,* etc.) before the subject. Consider the examples:

8. <14> We should only fear God. <15> **Do you understand?**
9. <38>…that you are tired and you are hungry to see things change. <39> **is it not so?**
10. <113> We people are mostly cowards and we are quick to say "it's impossible, the ruling party doesn't lose". Eh! <114> **A ruling party can't lose? <115> Are we sure they don't lose?**

As noted by Heffer (2013:15), successful voice projection generally requires an orientation to rhetoric, to persuading rather than simply informing the audience. By being rhetorically efficacious, SKC wants his speech to speak to the minds of his audience by involving them in the dialogue as an extrinsic motivation. This makes the speech powerful and impressive as he orients it towards being heard, a strategy which might eventually lead to active responsive understanding and boost the launch hype.

2. Authority strategies

Authority comes as a result of institutional power, and it influences voice projection by discursively imposing such power in their readers and listeners through discourse. A person is said to have authority over another in the degree that s/he is able to control the behavior of the other (Thomas, 1995). It is a ranking status or social stations of two groups of people, and it is nonreciprocal in the sense that both cannot have authority in the same area of behavior. In discourse, authority can be projected in two ways: through the practices of **centring** (working centripetally towards increasing normativity) and **authorizing** (conferring authority and legitimacy on speakers and discourse). SKC has legitimate authority over the audience in his capacity as VP of Malawi. In our analysis of SKC speech, we have not discovered much of the centring strategies apart from his preference to use a local code (Chichewa) as he openly stated in clause <45> *I will speak in Chichewa* than English which could hinder his voice projection to the illiterate audience which is mostly in majority. We have identified a series of authorizing strategies as he confers his authority as VP of Malawi and leader of UTM which are spread throughout the speech but highly as the speech progresses towards the climax.

As VP, SKC provides numerous examples of massive corruption and looting in government, as he cites real-time examples of how government's money gets stolen leaving people miserable. This is also clearly exemplified in his metaphor "the country is on fire" which he repeats about five times.

11. <81> The problem is that the **principles that govern the running of this country are weak**, <82> so when parties go into power, <83> **they just take advantage of the weak system and start mishandling things**.
12. <56> Our leaders are busy **giving each other business contracts**. <57> They do so by **inflating the costs of the contracts** so that <58> they share the excess and buy luxurious cars, and build mansions in town

However, some political commentators note that by projecting massive corruption and plundering of public resources as one of his voices, SKC is simply repeating same old stories already told by his opponents and this sounds like a cliche (Sibande; 2018). Sibande (208) also argues that SKC was not supposed to launch his political party with ordinary perspectives and highly repetitive messages. However, of interest to our findings is how SKC makes his voices to be believed more than anyone else before by taking advantage of his authority as VP to offload the main cause of corruption (weak governing principles), how it is conducted (bogus contracts) and how it can be prevented (tightening principles of governance). We believe that without such authority, it would be hard for him to unearth such details and be believed. He further assures the people that as VP, he knows that the country has enough money for any development and that through him, he will make sure that all those who are corrupt will be made to return the money once he gets to power.

13. <173> Some of you might be asking, where shall you get the money? <174> To all of you who are here, my fellow Malawians, <175> **I am the Vice President of this nation.** <176> I am telling you that **we will find money.**
14. <149> Even if it's about constructing hospitals, <150> **there is money for that in this country**.
15. <158> Here is the message […] all the money that you have been looting, our request is <159> **"start returning it".** <160> Some might be tempted to say they will **hide the money** in foreign countries, <161> let me tell you this. <162> We will **get that money from the foreign countries** back to our country.

In projecting his authorizing voice in the above clauses about rebuilding the nation and reclaiming all the stolen money, SKC manages to intimidate the ruling DPP by inducing fear and making them panic and possibly inducing disorder in their camp. He further warns the alleged looters in the DPP to start returning the money, and that he will arrest them should they fail to return it within the 300day Amnesty period he will give them once he becomes president. Even though some people may look at it as bluffing, it is quite convincing and impressive in the manner in which he executes his authority and simulates his strength in his clauses. He goes further to talk about the planned rigging by the ruling party:

16. <356> There is a **machine that has been bought in this country** to spy on our telephone conversations. <357> Those of you who have bought this machine, <358> We know! [...] <361> And you want to **use that machine to rig elections**. <362> You have goofed! [...] <365> You are **TOO YOUNG** to rig elections.

By calling the ruling DPP "TOO YOUNG", SKC projects himself as a better and stronger candidate than the DPP, and the one better to protect and rebuild Malawi. He even goes further to assure the people that he will "eliminate quota

system", and plans to "create one million jobs" in the first year once in power, improve electricity generation among others.

3. Discursive Voicing (Styling) strategies

As opposed to physical voicing (**sounding**), discursive voicing (**indexing, highlighting, styling**) is the one that relates well to the discursive/metaphorical projection. **Indexing** involves guiding the audience's interpretation by pointing to particular ways of reading and listening. It relates well with Halliday's notion of cohesion in textual metafunction in **framing** listeners' understanding. On the other hand, **highlighting** is concerned with stressing the salient elements to enhance the audience's **focusing**. Different aspects of indexing (05.28%) are used strategically in the speech to point to important points and hold the discourse parts together and build cohesion and coherence. For instance, <25> *let me begin*, <1> *let us remind each other*, <397> *I am repeating for the last time*, <398> *allow me to conclude* are all indexing devices that guide the audience in **framing** the discourse. As explained in **section 5.1**, cases of **highlighting** through high repetition, are the ones that have helped identify SKC's voices, where he stresses on encouraging the audience to be strong, reminding them that the country is on fire that he will arrest the looters, about the need to change, amongst others.

Styling is the degree to which the speaker conforms to the standards and/or creates individuality in a talk (Heffer, 2013). In the first part of the speech (Clause <1> to <142>), SKC employs a variety of clauses that are ground-setting and uses a number of strategies to put the people at ease. He shows conformity to the political speech traditions, by opting for clauses that express gratitude to the masses, recalling the past and recent events before laying down his UTM agenda.

17. <25> **Let me begin** by **acknowledging** all the leadership that has worked so tirelessly to establish the UTM. <26 > **Words only are not enough to thank you,** because you have done this by yourself. <27> You spared your time, your personal money and other resources. <28> You have been ridiculed, threatened, but you didn't relent.

18. <30> I also specially **recognize** the former first lady Madam Callista Mutharika who was the first one to come in the open, asking this country to review its leadership. <31> This clearly showed you have a deep love for this country and its people, and that you didn't even mind that you are putting your life at risk. <32> May God continue blessing you with wisdom and the courage He gives you.

The above clauses demonstrate the extent of SKC's **conformity** to routine patterning and formulaic language common in everyday political discourse as a habitual ritualistic genre. Such **conformity** is likely to project one's voice successfully as it facilitates listeners' understanding since they are already exposed to various political discourse texts. A diversion to such a norm may lead to frustration, confusion and consequently loss of voice. As the political speaker "*acknowledges*" <25>, "*recognizes*" <30> his working associates, he eventually builds morale in the team while winning the heart of the audience simultaneously. However, Hymes (1996) sees stylistic conformity as a form of linguistic oppression. It blocks creativity and uniqueness and becomes a barrier to develop a voice worth hearing. It makes someone look lazy of thinking in coming up with their own strategies (Sibande, 2018). Nonetheless, SKC does not only **conform** but he also **creates** his individual style that he has now come to be identified with by his high sense of humor and frequent use of proverbs. He jokes that the thieves are even stealing right now as the rally progresses, that they have even become fat with their teeth too, that they have learnt to wear a neck-tie which they did not know initially; all this curtsey of the tax payers' money. Such jokes appeal to the mental needs of some individuals as some members of the audience come to rallies to be entertained. The jokes also helped maintain a positive connection with the people, and manage to climax into a higher emotional experience which made the audience leave the rally in high spirits (Sibande, 2018). Proverbs also project him well as they package folk wisdom heavily in just a single sentence. Consider the following:

19. <20> *Mbewa ya pampani siwopa moto.* (a dying mouse does not fear death)

20. <93> *Sikadza kokha, kamawopa kulawula.* (nothing comes on a silver platter)

21. <212> *Zaeni kunyozetsa koma zathu zimene tazipeza tokha.* (Ones' labour begets dignity while begging brings about contempt).

SKC uses clauses <20> and <93> to encourage people to be courageous and not fear death, to be strong and remember that nothing comes out of nothing. If they want things to change, they have to be agents of change. Proverb <212> instills the spirit of patriotism and hard-work in the people. They must not depend on assistance from elsewhere but they have to work hard to gain joy and dignity in the end. SKC is able to communicate a huge chunk of messages in just a single proverb.

VI. Concluding Remarks

The study intended to explore SKC's voice and strategies he uses to project his voice to the people of Malawi as the nation draws closer to the May, 2019 general elections. The analysis has discovered that SKC oscillates his voice from the past and takes the audience through the current leadership to the imaginary better future Malawi. He recalls all the economic hardships the people have experienced in all the regimes hence his call for change and build a better Malawi. He manages to do so by authorizing, persuading, converging, and highlighting salience in his voice. The study has presented a different perspective of analyzing political discourse by rescuing Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), one of the abused theories in political speech analysis. Heffer's Voice Projection framework (VPF), a theory

shopped from forensic discourse has provided useful insights in unearthing SKC's political perspective, and his speech delivery strategies. If used strategically, words have the power to mobilize and manipulate people towards a course of action. The study is a step forward in documenting events surrounding political atmosphere in Africa and Malawi in particular given that such discourse has often appeared transient in journalistic articles, and rarely in scholarly journals. Results of this study will benefit researchers in politics and linguistics as they seek to bridge the gap between the two fields. The results are also very helpful in extending VPF realms of applicability from forensic discourse to political speeches.

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