Preface

Global trends in the analysis of discourses have recognized political discourse as an important area of discourse, which deserves scholarly attention given the concerns of politics in human social interaction. It is therefore necessary to clearly delineate what constitutes political discourses, so as to avoid confusion that may arise as a result of the polysemous nature of the word politics. The term ‘political discourse’ is potentially misleading because it could mean discourse that is political, wherein all discourses that have political intents are included. This perspective includes all fields of human endeavours, medical, media, soccer commentary, family discourse etc. This is because, politics surfaces in everything we do as human beings. Our relationships with one another involve politics which ordinarily is a matter of preference by individuals.

The second perspective which the current collection of chapters adopts is the dimension that interprets political discourse in relation to governance. This translates to speeches of political actors; activities that are done within political processes to achieve political gains, such as election, campaign and protest, etc. Though this is a reductionist approach, the book has put together a wide collection of contributions whose scope includes: media representations; political violence; terrorism; war rhetoric; parliamentary discourse; and many more.

In this recognition, the book, Political Discourse in Emergent, Fragile, and Failed Democracies could not have come at a better time than now when different countries in the world are experiencing different forms of political harmony or political unrest as the case may be. The book therefore, presents analyses of data on political discourses from interdisciplinary perspectives thereby pointing towards different shades of governance in the world.

In the last decade, many countries have embraced the system of democratic governance as alternative to other forms of governance. However, this did not happen without a price; it has led to unprecedented polarizations among different groups in many countries; each group making serious attempts to out-smart the other rhetorically. There is no doubt that democratic system of governance gave rise to several forms of political discourses characterised by peculiar social and political discourses. These emergent discourses, therefore, call for scholarly investigations in order to unveil the different forms of political discourses in such countries.

In addition to uncovering the forms of political discourses, the book also provides an analysis of political situations that have given rise to the ensuing discourses. While we cannot authoritatively say that the experiences of each country in terms of democratic gains are similar, there is a string of connections in terms of roles performed by various discourses in emergent, fragile, and failed democracies across the globe. Contributors from Africa, Europe and Asia have presented papers mainly touching on the representation of media about political issues and events, and their role in influencing the attitudes and sensibilities of the people in such fragile democracies.
Ukraine’s post-independence history has revealed a series of political instability dating back to the last century and a half. Prominent among these crises are: ‘Tapegate or Kuchmagate’ in 2000; the orange revolution from November, 2004-January 2005 which was a series of protests on the alleged electoral irregularities in Ukrainian presidential election; and the latest 2014 Euromaidan demonstrations and civil unrest which ultimately led to Ukrainian revolution. The revolution was believed to have been fuelled as a result of widespread government corruption, abuse of power and violation of human rights. These are the backgrounds that informed Natalia’s paper on Sarcasm and irony as a political weapon in Ukraine.

As for the experience in Afghanistan, it emerged from the many civil wars. In recent times, such unrest includes ISA/NATO involvement against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, and Afghan operations against Taliban, Al-Qaeda and ISIL insurgencies, with aid from NATO. Amidst all these wars was the 2009 Afghan election which was believed to have been marred by series of electoral malpractices which resulted into a second round run-off vote. The representation of that election by media is what Christopher’s paper addresses.

In Zimbabwe, the political experience is different from Ukraine and Afghanistan because it is more of ethnic rivalry between two tribes, Shona and Ndebele. However, the year 2000 marked another page in the history of Zimbabwe politics when the constitutional referendum was discarded and that triggered widespread violations of human rights, political violence, politicization of supposed independent arm of government and other sectors, such as the judiciary, military, police force, etc. This background informed the different political discourses that are presented in this collection from Zimbabwe.

Nigeria has its own share of democratization challenges with several military incursions since 1966 before the rebirth of democratic dispensation in 1999. Since then, political issues such as electoral irregularities, ethnic marginalization, and poor leadership characterized the Nigerian nascent democratic system of governance. Lately, terrorism has added to her problem in the form of Boko Haram in the north eastern part of the country. Nigeria has therefore got to battle with insecurity from terrorism alongside other remnants of political problems such as corruption.

In Kenya, the experience is somewhat similar to Zimbabwe where ethnic and tribal feud have locked one tribe against another. Accusations of electoral irregularities, violence and harassment have also been rampant in Uganda’s political experience in recent time, specifically from 2001 under the National Resistance Movement (NRM). All the chapters in this collection exemplify political discourse in different contexts around the world and how the various political situations have been scholarly deconstructed in this book. Besides, the patterns that distinguish the political discourses of emergent, fragile, and failed democracies are what this collection provides some answers to. This is in a bid to present a holistic coverage of what political discourses are around the world. The book would benefit scholars working within Critical Discourse paradigm, media experts, political analysts, policy makers on media and political issues and people who are interested in understanding the various shades of political and media discourses around the world.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK**

Chapter 1 examines ‘The Verbal Fuel for Ethnic Hatred and Political Violence in Kenya’. It looks at how hate speech has ignited violent political conflicts in Kenya over the last two decades and advocates for a solution that transcends elections and rhetoric in order to end political conflict.
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Chapter 2 looks at the benefit of communicative tools, such as sarcasm and irony in the hands of different political groups in Ukraine and discovers that both facilitate increased memorability and create self-image. They are used in mocking and offending opponents and appear more effective than direct straightforward messages.

Chapter 3 analyses the political discourse of anti-state popular songs of Shona expression, as it comments on state performance in Zimbabwe in the period, 2000-2015. The chapter focuses on the thematic pre-occupations of the songs, closely analysing their language – various constructions (verbal, nominal, adjectival, among others) and figurative language (metaphors, idioms, epithets, innuendos, rhetorical questions and interjections). It ascertains the extent to which the songs, composed and performed by pro-opposition artists, realistically and objectively capture the post-2000 Zimbabwean crisis and the nature of the state’s response to it.

Chapter 4 addresses ‘Real-Name Registration Regulation in China: An Examination of Chinese Netizens’ discussions about censorship, privacy, and political freedom’ It specifically looks at the real-name registration regulation, in relation to other Chinese censorship and control mechanisms on the Internet and the reactions and discussions of Chinese netizens about these emerging censorship and control systems.

Chapter 5 analyses the notions of journalistic ‘objectivity’ in Zimbabwean newspapers comparatively. The focus of analysis here is news reports of these factional politics within the ZANU PF political party, specifically with regards to the demise of the political career of former Vice President Joice Mujuru and how it is framed within these factional wars.

Chapter 6 examines the state of democracy in Nigeria as emergent from the point view of the semiotic properties in the emblems of different political parties in Nigeria. The chapter contends that political parties’ emblems communicate a positive evaluation of political democracy and participation in Nigeria and construct a scenario in which social actors rise to power through appeals of a better future as communicated or represented in their emblems to the electorate.

Chapter 7 is about Argumentation and appraisal in divergent Zimbabwean parliamentary debates and it explores the different valid and fallacious strategic maneuverings employed by members of Zimbabwe parliament in resolving, in their favour, issues and debates that border on difference of opinion.

Chapter 8 examines news stories about Afghanistan’s 2009 presidential election from six Afghan news sources. Drawing on Herman and Chomsky’s (1988/2002) Propaganda Model and Fairclough’s (1989/2001) critical language study, it characterizes the overall topic selections of Afghan news sources, their election-focused topics, and some of the ways that election stories are framed for readers.

Chapter 9 demonstrates that Declaration of Emergency Rule by President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria is indeed an example of political discourse. It reveals that political powers are symmetric and asymmetric whereby the president may sound authoritative in one instance and may sound appealing on the other.

Chapter 10 examines the linguistic strategy used by ISIS as a means through which it creates the concept of the Muslim Ummah, which seeks to emphasize the unity of an international Muslim community based off the power of Islam. The chapter applies a Critical Discourse Analysis for the study of Baghdadi’s sermon on 4 July 2014 where he declared the establishment of the Caliphate and himself as the Caliph.

Chapter 11 is on metaphors used in Chinua Achebe’s memoir, ‘There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra’. The author construes the concepts of nation and the (Nigerian civil) war in the memoir. Theoretical insights were drawn from Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Primary metaphor theory and Conceptual blending theory to analyze the metaphors identified. Two central metaphors were used
by the author to construe the concept of nation, namely, the dysfunctional family and the scapegoat metaphors. Metaphors for war included war as nightmare, as a triangle game, and as a series of violent crimes respectively.

Chapter 12 examines the multilayered political systems and the politics of monitoring local government programmes for engendered service delivery. The author situates the study in a local government which is controlled politically by the opposition party, UPC and tries to examine how the UPC led local government in Apac district relates with the NRM led central government in service provision from a gender perspective. It observes that the two parties want to be the face of successful service provision thereby undercutting each others’ support by sometimes sabotaging, delaying or failing service provision. The chapter concludes that this has created room for NGOs to step in to do the monitoring so as to help the communities access services to a good degree of success.

Chapter 13, from the perspective of insecurity as one of the challenges facing Nigeria Democracy, examines the ambivalent roles of local vigilante groups in combating the menace of Boko Haram insurgency. The author observes that vigilante groups are alternative security in the fight against the insurgency through their traditionally made mechanisms in form of charms and he concludes that in post-war against the insurgency, the vigilante groups could also pose a great threat to the nation as they are likely to be used by politicians to front their political aspirations.

Chapter 14 discusses ethnic stereotyping from a social media perspective. It examines ethnic stereotyping on blog sites in Kenya’s 2013 political elections and his findings reveal that ethnic stereotyping revolves around thematic areas such as marriage and ethnicity, culture and ethnicity, communal aggrandizement and ethnic divide and arbitration. The chapter concludes that there is need to eschew such stereotypes during elections because they are not anchored on facts, but misrepresentations.

Chapter 15 analyzes multimodal realisation of Nigerian politics from a critical view point by considering political party images which are constructed and exploited in Nigerian politics to guarantee sustenance of interests by party stalwarts. The methodology consists of, first, outlining the political images and slogans; then socio-culturally and linguistically interpreting the symbols, and finally drawing effects of imaging on the ‘ideology’ and affiliation of political parties in Nigeria.

Chapter 16 presents the framing of arguments used in debating the Constitution of Kenya Amendment Bill 1982 and the Election Amendment Bill 2012 with the aim of analyzing elite conceptualization of the institutionalization of political parties in Kenya. The former bill led to an overinstitutionalized party system making KANU the de jure single party in Kenya. The later bill upheld the underinstitutionalized party system by undermining greater discipline and fidelity to parties.

Chapter 17 examines media coverage of political processes in Shades of GNU in Zimbabwe (2009-13): Linguistic representations of transitional politics in the media. The chapter is a comparative study of two Zimbabwean newspapers concerning the different shades of Zimbabwe’s GNU with regards to two main issues of contention – the Zimbabwe Sanctions Debate and the constitution making process.

Chapter 18 analyses the media representation of the Nigerian 2011 Post-presidential election news reports and concludes that the media is still being controlled and driven by government and that this may spell doom for a struggling democracy like Nigeria.

Chapter 19 outlines the recurring challenges and possible solutions to revolutionary violent politics using the oral performance of semiotics with a view to finding a lasting solution to Nigeria’s democracy to progress to higher heights.

Chapter 20 investigates the current criminal procedure for cabinet and parliament members in Greece and concludes that it contains a very specific, highly protective process that ends up being totally uneven.
REFERENCES


