Interpersonal Metafunctions in Bingu wa Mutharika's Second-Term Political Discourse: A Systemic Functional Grammatical Approach

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Abstract

Modern studies in discourse analysis have witnessed an increasing interest in presidential political speeches. The major argument has been that the presidential speeches are often ideologically loaded. Hence, analyzing such speeches would provide an insight into their hidden ideologies. This study aims at analyzing Malawi president Bingu wa Mutharika's inaugural address through the linguistic lens of Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) by focusing on choice of mood, modal auxiliary operators, and personal pronouns. Results of mood choices reveal that the address is information-centered as he opted highly for declarative and used imperative sparsely. Modal auxiliary operators of median scale turns out mostly by favoring *will*. The personal pronoun *we*, which is followed in majority by *I,* implies that the speech is exclusive as Mutharika continuously referred to himself and his administration leaving out the citizens. The analysis shows that Mutharika did not perform well on establishing interpersonal relations with the people during his second term. He created distance between him and the citizens and implied a sense of authority, making the addressee experience a feel that he and his administration were a strong team to initiate and implement any development related endeavor; and that the citizens were merely passive receivers and consumers. The study demonstrates how leaders' political discourses unearth a sort of contradictions between their ideologies at early and later stages of their leadership. It further provides sufficient proof that the grammar of speech is not merely a combinational tool of creating correct constructions, but a method of structuring information and transferring ideology.

1. Introduction

As Wardhaugh (2006) notes, when we use language, we do not just try to get another person understand our thoughts and feelings. We also use language in a subtle way to define our social relationship to one another as such we have to make constant choices of *what* we say and *how* we say it. In fact the *what* and the *how* are two sides of the same coin. The main argument is that our propositional content (the *what*) should be reflected in the manner (the *how*) we deliver it because the two work hand in hand and they remain inseparable in a speech package. This study is undertaken to investigate the political discourse of Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika on how it addresses the question *how*. The major concern is to linguistically explore how president Bingu wa Mutharika (henceforth 'Mutharika') associates with the audience in his political discourse. As most modern political discourse studies would reveal e.g. (Donella, 2010; Kondowe, 2014a; Green, 2007), the analysis of presidential discourse is a critical component in discovering and understanding particular ideologies which in turn reflects the political ideologies and realities of their nations. Scholars have realized that Presidents stand for their countries and their voice is taken as the voice of the people (Hinckley, 1990). Therefore, it is hoped that the manner in which Mutharika establishes and handles the distance between him and his audience is ideologically triggered and motivated.

2. Literature Review

Modern discourse linguists, in recent times, are gradually shifting their interest from the traditional focus on linguistic text structures to how texts construct reality in the social set-ups (Taiwo, 2007). It has been noted that the understanding of traditional linguistic aspects like syntax, morphology, and phonology of a text does not necessarily lead to the understanding of the true meanings of the text. The conscious or unconscious intents that the text designer injects in the lines of the text are equally essential and must not be ignored. The same can be said about political discourses.

Working on international campaign speeches, Donella (2010) asserts that political campaign speeches only serve as emotional triggers in which the words are misapplied adroitly to hide truths. Similarly, Orwell (1946) cited in (Abdullahi-Idiagbon, 2010), writing on the language of politics in England, observes that the political language is characterized by lack of precision, vagueness and sheer incompetence. He laments that political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible acts designed to make lies sound truthful and murder appears respectable.

Many linguistic studies have also been conducted to investigate ideological underpinnings of Obama's victory and inaugural addresses using various linguistic approaches (Horvath, 2010; Savoy, 2009; Ye, 2010; Wang, 2010; Shayegh, & Nabifar, 2012). Horvath (2010) examined the ideological standpoints in Obama's first inaugural address using Norman Fairclough's approaches by putting the study into a diachronic perspective of the outgoing President George Bush. He summarizes the speech into the following ideological key components: Pragmatism, liberalism, inclusiveness, acceptance of religious and ethnic diversity and unity.

Wang (2010) also studied the interplay of language, ideology and power in Obama's first victory and inaugural speeches from the point of transitivity and modality. The analysis of modality shows that Obama's speech is highly dominated by modal verbs, and first person pronouns. He used the simple present tense to present to the world different American situations ranging from politics, economics, and cultural field at present. Ye (2010) conducted a similar study focusing on interpersonal metafunctions of Obama's first victory speech. He also discovered that positive declarative clauses dominate his speech followed by imperative clauses. Modal operators like *will*, *can* and *must* are highly used. The first person pronouns turned out mostly in the speech followed by second person pronoun *you*. In their analysis of Obama's interviews, Shayegh and Nabifar, (2012), concluded that Obama is a dominant character who manipulates more material process using mostly *I* and *we* pronouns, more religious statements, more persuasion, and longer turns in his interviews.

Duran (2008) also used components of SFG to investigate other American presidential speeches. He conducted a contrastive study of acceptance speeches delivered by President George Bush and Senator John Kerry to the Republican and Democratic National Conventions respectively before the 2004 Presidential elections in the United States. The analysis reveals that Bush renders himself the candidate of actions that have solved the ills of the world. He further portrays himself as the main participant, and ridicules his opponent's contradictions and indecision (Duran, 2008). Kerry points to the negative consequences of his adversary's deeds by resorting to presuppositions.

Opeibi (2005) working on hidden ideologies in Nigerian political speeches discovered that Nigerian politicians focus more on marketing themselves and directing attacks on others rather than engaging on positive issues of national interest. Omozuwa and Ezejideaaku (2007) insinuate that Nigerians consider politics as an exercise often associated with lies, deceits and propaganda through attack on party, exaggerations, vagueness, and diatribes. Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2010) echoes that Nigerian politicians take advantage of low education levels and high poverty levels of the majority of the electorates to manipulate their thoughts. In his critical discourse analysis of Nigerian presidential campaign speeches using the approaches of Huckin (1997), and Fairclough (2000), he discovered that political language in Nigeria is constructed to champion and promote individual ideologies and interests. The speeches reflect many ideological differences regarding party politics, policy formulation and personal desires.

Green (2007) analyzed the discourse of Mutharika, the Malawi president, who came into power in 2004 on United Democratic Front party (UDF) ticket but later dumped the party and formed his own, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). His study explored Mutharika's speeches made at the United Nations General Assemblies in his first term of office (2004-2007) to investigate the discursive strategies used. It was discovered that Mutharika's address employ a shift of focus through pronoun choice, the strengthening of rhetoric through lexicon and pronoun pairing, and altering the structural organization of the addresses over time to convey the then ongoing tale of the political and economic situation in Malawi (Green, 2007). A comparative analysis of these features drawn from general addresses suggest that Mutharika altered the type and number of such components in his speech in response to

political and economic events in Malawi that proceeded and became concurrent with the occasions on which he was speaking.

3. Rationale

This study would, to some extent, be viewed as an extension of Green's study in understanding Mutharika's ideology through his discourse. However, unlike Green's study, the present one seeks to explore Mutharika's ideologies of his second term of office. Kondowe (2014a) notes that as soon as Mutharika first came into power in 2004, he set out policies to combat corruption and improve the government's economic policies and investigated several prominent UDF officials who were involved in corruption-related practices and many were arrested. International donors were impressed with him and re-initiated the flow of aid, which had been stopped over claims of Bakili Muluzi's (his predecessor) mismanagement of funds. In the first term Mutharika achieved a lot and was commended locally and internationally. He was locally nicknamed *chitsulo cha njanji* ('an iron rail') to depict his strong character, *Ngwazi* ('The conqueror'), and *Mose wa lero* ('The modern Moses') a biblical allusion to imply that he fought and delivered Malawians out of hunger, one of the greatest enemies of the State (Kondowe, 2014a). He was titled Professor of Economics by East China Normal University. He was awarded Doctor of Letters (D.Lilkmktt) Degree Honoris Causa by the University of Delhi. He received an honorary Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree from the University of Strathclyde in Scotland (*Malawi Voice,* 2012). It is this popularity which led to his overwhelming unprecedented landslide victory in the general elections held on May 19, 2009.

However, despite having successfully served Malawi in his first term, Kondowe (2014a) notes that Mutharika's political image dramatically worsened both locally and internationally at the helm of his second term. His record on good governance, human rights, and political tolerance significantly worsened, and public wrath towards him grew stronger. The study, therefore, takes a special enquiry stance into his discourse to explore how he established interpersonal relations with the citizens. The second inaugural address has been chosen for analysis as his first address that opened the door to his second term; hence it is believed that the address will embody some ideologies that governed him during the second term.

4. Theoretical Framework

Halliday's interpersonal metafunction has been chosen to be the theoretical backbone for the study. The main argument in the theory, as observed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), is that grammar of language is a resource not only for talking about our inner and outer experiences of the world but also for communicating our attitudes towards and expectations of those with whom we interact. So in ideational metafunction, language is a way of reflecting; in interpersonal metafunction a way of acting. Interpersonal metafunction deals with people's use of language to relate to their audience. When people communicate, they deliver more than just content or information, they also communicate their role *vis-à-vis* their partners in the talk exchange. This includes the various ways the speaker enters a speech situation and performs a speech act. In English, interpersonal function is realized in many aspects, but this study focuses on three components only: mood choices, modal auxiliaries,

and personal pronouns.

5. Research Method

The speech is downloadable on the Malawi government website (www.malawi.gov.mw), which provides a complete archive of Mutharika's presidential addresses. The speech has been converted into a user friendly format and the analysis takes the following four steps: 1) the text has been parsed and labeled into its constituent clauses because as Halliday (1994) notes, it is at the clausal level where meanings get materialized in miniature scale. 2) Clauses have been manually isolated and their mood types have been determined. 3) At a later stage, the address has been converted into Text-File format. All lexico-grammars have been detected using *AntiConc* concordance software, a recent tool which is highly used in corpus-related discourse studies. Kondowe (2014b) notes that the tool is fast, effective, and time saving with high ability to detect words, phrases, and clauses with their frequency in the data. Each lexico-grammar has been entered individually to observe its occurrence in the three speech sections: the introduction, main body, and the conclusion. Finally 4) the results have been tabulated and a discussion follows immediately.

6. Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Analysis of Mood Choices

Halliday 1994) observes that most of the clauses in English are construed around declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives. The choice of mood depends on the role the speaker selects in the speech situation and what role he assigns to the addressee. Declarative mood typically gives out information, interrogative expresses a question-typically asking for information, and imperative expresses a directive (Thompson, 2004).
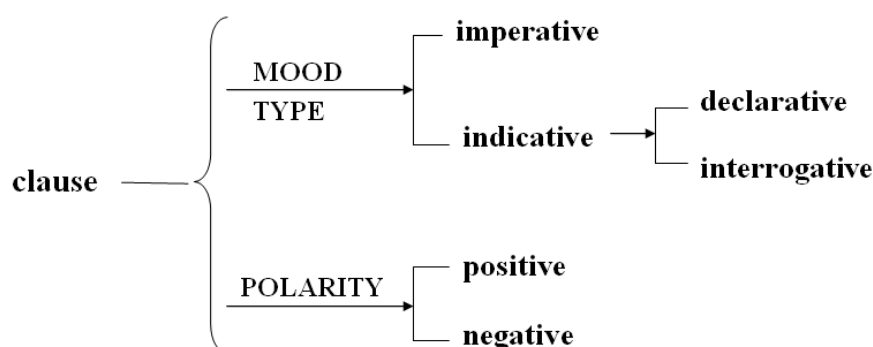

Figure 1. The hierarchical organization of English mood structure, adapted from (Wang, 2008:55)

In English, the mood consists of **Subject** and **Finite**. The Subject supplies the reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied. The Finite refers to the first functional element of the verbal group (Thompson, 2004). The ordering of Subject and Finite in the clause plays an indispensable role in signaling speech roles and it indicates whether the

clause is declarative (Subject^Finite)[1], interrogative (WH^Finite or Finite^Subject), or imperative (Subject "let's") (refer to Figure 2).

The analysis of clauses in the speech regarding the order of Subject and Finite has shown that Subject^Finite is the most common pattern to have dominated Mutharika's address, which signals that most of the clauses in the speech are declaratives (see Figure 2). Statistically, out of 369 major clauses identified in the speech 365 are declarative, which constitute 98.9%. The remaining four clauses are imperative, while no interrogative clause has been found in the analysis. These results are in tandem with Ye's (2010) assertion that declarative clauses generally dominate in political speeches; followed by imperatives, while interrogatives usually come last.
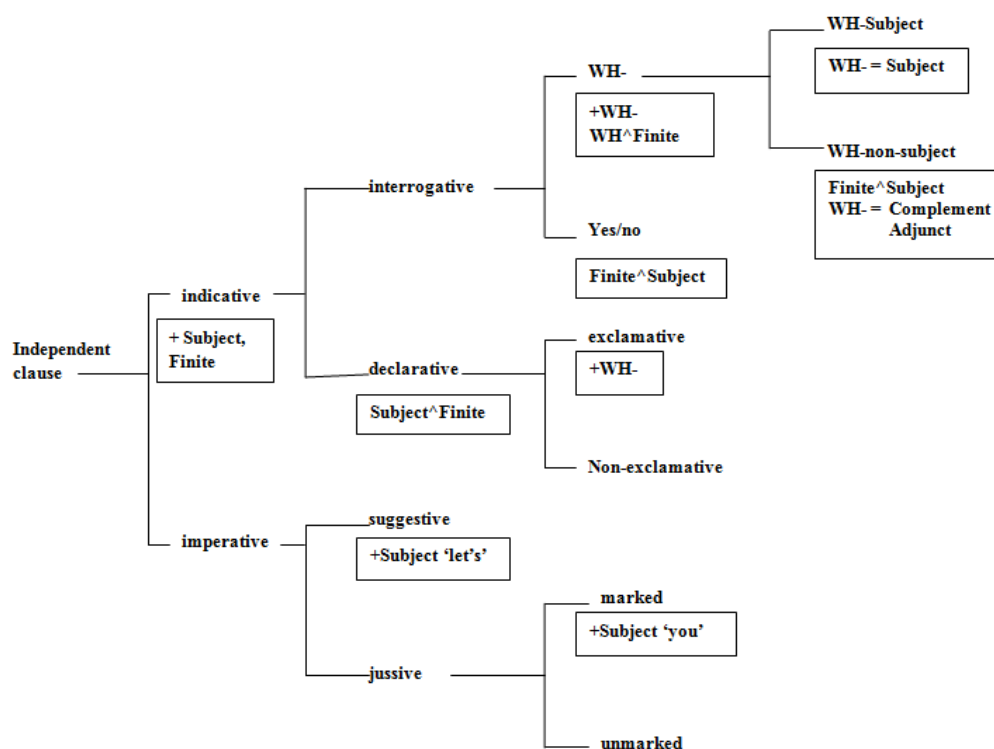

Figure 2: The ordering of subject and finite in the mood system, adapted from Thompson (2004:58)

Declarative clauses are highly preferred in most discourse because they give as much information as possible to the audience. Mutharika succeeds in opting for declarative clauses in expressing his gratitude to the masses, recalling his past events, and foreshadowing future plans in laying down his development agenda while inspiring the audience. Having won the first elections under his DPP, he was expected to convince the electorate of the strongholds of his party and government ideologies, which could be achieved by using declarative clauses.

On the use of imperative clauses, Halliday (1970) states that imperatives convey two main different kinds of messages. The first one expresses command while the other invites the

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[1] Sign ^ is used to mean *followed by*

audience to join the speaker in performing a particular action. The latter is always effected by *let us* mostly contracted as *let's*. Imperative clauses found in Mutharika's inaugural address clearly fall under the latter category of inviting the audience: See the following clauses:

1. <9>***Let us*** *work together with a common sense of purpose for the good of our nation*
2. <58d>***Let us*** *make democracy a beacon of hope and a symbol of our country's survival*

However, contrary to most studies which have recognized such clauses for its potential to build up a mutual reliant relationship and to shorten the distance with the audience, the four clauses identified in the speech are not enough to make us draw similar conclusion. We observe that imperative clauses in this speech, which only appear in the introductory section, are used as emotional triggers to capture listeners' attention and to arouse their feelings in order to ease the rift that was caused by the campaign and to encourage the public to move together as a nation and see life beyond the elections.

Mutharika completely ignores interrogative clauses because they make a speech less convincing and less persuasive. Being an inaugural address, it is less expected that audience should respond to rhetorical questions and party slogans which are often very common in campaign speeches. Therefore, leaving out interrogative clauses renders the address more serious and action-oriented.

6.2 Modality Analysis

Modality is another aspect of interpersonal metafunction of clauses which shows the degree to which a proposition can be said to be valid (Wang, 2010). It refers to the space between "yes" and "no", showing the speaker's judgments of the probabilities or the obligations involved in what s/he is saying. In English, modality is commonly realized through modal verbal operators (also known as modal auxiliaries) of the finite verbs (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). Modality involves degrees and scales about the validity of a proposition, which is referred to as modal commitment. There are three values of modal commitment: high, median and low on the scale and they lead to different meanings (Halliday, 1994).

Table 1. Modal auxiliaries and their degree of commitment

POLARITY	MODALITY		
	Low	**Median**	**High**
Positive	can, may, could, might, dare	will, would, shall	must, ought to, need, has/had to
Negative	needn't, doesn't/didn't	won't, wouldn't, shouldn't, isn't/wasn't to	mustn't, oughtn't, couldn't, hasn't/hadn't

Source: Modified from Wang (2010: 259)

The analysis focuses on modal verbal operators as another useful mechanism in investigating Mutharika's level of commitment: the degree to which he commits himself to the validity of what he says. As such, all modal auxiliary operators are placed in a table depending on their

level of modal commitment. The choice of each of the three values leads to a different meaning of a text. Results can be seen in Table 2:

Table 2. Scales of modal commitment identified in the address

| | Modal commitment scale | | | | | | |
| | High | | Median | | Low | | Total |
	Freq (#)	Perc. (%)	Freq (#)	Perc. (%)	Freq (#)	Perc. (%)	
Intro	-		**9**	90%	**1**	10%	**10**
Body	**1**	2%	**52**	94%	**2**	4%	**55**
Concl	**3**	50%	**1**	17%	**2**	33%	**6`**
Total	**4**	6%	**62**	87%	**5**	7%	**71**

It is evident from Table 2 that modal auxiliary operators of median scale dominate the speech. Out of the total 71 modals, 62 are of median scale, which constitutes 87%. High and low auxiliary modals have a minor relative representation of 06% and 07% respectively. Having defeated seven of his competitors with a wide margin, Mutharika needs to be very tactical in presenting his development agenda to the local and international masses. It is imperative to tone down his commitments to avoid risk of overt oppositions and criticisms which have been a tradition in Malawian and African politics.

It is worth noting the distribution of these modal scales across the speech. It can be amply observed from Table 2 that 55 modals, of the total 71, are identified in the main body. 10 are identified in the introductory section, while conclusion has only 6 modals. However, despite that the main body has the majority of modal auxiliaries; the choice on the scale is unbalanced. The speech favors the use of the modal *will* by employing it 48 times. The following subsection is, therefore, dedicated to illustrate important functions the modal *will* performs in the speech.

6.2.1 Functions of the auxiliary *will*

As evident from many studies on modality e.g Hannibal (2007) and Halliday (1994), *will* performs two main functions in the speech. Firstly, it is used to mark future tense. Mutharika uses this auxiliary 14 times to mark tense of future events. Consider the following:

3. <88> *In belief that the centers **will** spur development by encouraging investment*
4. <91b> *the transformation of rural communities **will** help the country attain sustainable development.*
5. <107a>*This **will** include a comprehensive review of the curriculum of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.*

Mutharika has chosen such clauses to predict his next tenure and make his audience focus on the future Malawi.

Secondly, *will* is used in the inaugural address as a modal verbal operator to illustrate Mutharika's strong wish and desire to continue developing Malawi. This modal has been

adopted 34 times in the speech body alone.

6. <78a> *We **will** remain committed in ensuring that our current food production levels increase further*
7. <105> *We **will** continue to construct more school blocks*
8. <127a> *We **will** create National Youth Development Service*

The modal operator *will*, which signals a relative higher degree of certainty about the validity of proposition, is successful in showing Mutharika's strong desire and determination to lead Malawi for the better. However, we have noted that the distinction between the two functions of *will* discussed here may not be discrete and clear-cut since this modal is most often likely to perform the two functions inherently.

6.2.2 Use of High and Low Modals

As seen in Table 2, overall, high and low modals have been highly dispreferred in the speech, with a low occurrence of 06% and 07% respectively. Hickel (2009) notes that high scale modals like *must* indicate full commitment when used in discourse, hence they may not be an ideal modal choice in inaugural addresses because they make the speaker sound over determined. Furthermore, his avoidance of such high commitment modal might be deliberate to avoid personal accountability and create a leeway in case he fails to live by his promises. Mutharika seems to be cautious that most political leaders make strong promises that are often empty and never get fulfilled (cf. Mozuwa and Ezejideaku 2009).

However, the analysis discovers that Mutharika does not ignore high scale modals wholesomely; he still employs 55% of them in the concluding paragraphs by preferring *need to*.

9 . *<179>We **need to** cultivate a culture of patriotism*

10. *<180>We also **need to** move one direction as a nation*

11. *<181>and we **need to** put the destiny of this country into our own hands*

Unlike *must* which is very strong in advancing commitments and propositions, the modal *need to* is preferred in the conclusion section merely to unite the masses. Mutharika wants to bring together the nation that was torn apart during the electoral process.

On the use of low modals, Hickel (2009) observes that these modals indicate lack of speaker's confidence in the truth of the propositions which is being advanced. However, Mutharika still uses the modal *can* in his address. As noted by Kondowe (2014b), *can* often serves to mark possibility and likelihood, and politeness in discourse. For instance:

12. *<140b>We **can** promote irrigation farming to supplement the…*

13. *<141>We **can** make farming an all-year round exercise*

In the speech, *can* has been used to refer to matters of personal beliefs, and to express his hope, possibility, and likelihood that his development plans are likely to be achieved by taking into account the current state of affairs.

6.3 Personal Pronouns

Apart from mood and modality, personal pronouns also have the interpersonal function in discourse. They establish a certain relationship between the addresser and the audience in a speech. The choice of the first personal pronouns *I* and *we* and the second personal pronoun *you* may provide different meanings in the interpretation of the text. Therefore, the choice of pronouns is also assumed to be ideologically driven.

In the study, personal pronouns are grouped depending on the distance they establish between the addresser and the addressee. There are first person singular pronouns *I* and *me,* and first person plurals *we* and *us*. As evident in many SFG analyses e.g Mulderrig (2011) and Thompson (2004), the former pronouns are always exclusive, while the latter are usually inclusive. Traditionally, first person singular pronouns are exclusive because they refer to the addressers themselves leaving out the audience, while, in most cases, first person plurals are inclusive because they include both the speaker and the audience in the propositions being advanced. Second person pronoun *you* is a loner in the group and it is mostly exclusive because it directly refers to the person(s) being addressed. Third person pronouns *he, she* and *they* have not been of interest to this study because they are not central in the speech interaction.

Data analysis has revealed a total of 154 pronouns used in the speech. First person singular pronoun *I* is used 43 times, while its allomorph *me* is only used eight times accounting for 28% and 05% respectively. Pronoun *we* which marks first person inclusiveness is discovered to be by far in majority used 94 times (61%) while its counterpart *us* only constituted 03% of the total. Second pronoun *you* was sparsely used, only four times with a marginal percentage of 03% throughout the address.

Table 3. Distribution of personal pronouns

	Personal pronouns										Total
	First Person singular (Exclusive)				First person plural (Inclusive)				Second person		
	I		Me		We		Us		You		
	Freq. (#)	Perc. (%)	Freq. (#)	Perc. (%)	Freq. (#)	Perc. (%)	Freq. (#)	Perc. (%)	Freq. (#)	Perc. (%)	
Intro.	**32**	51%	**06**	09%	**20**	32%	**03**	05%	**02**	03%	**63**
Body	**-**	-	**01**	02%	**61**	96%	-	-	**01**	02%	**63**
Conc.	**11**	39%	**01**	04%	**13**	46%	**02**	07%	**01**	04%	**28**
Total	43	28%	08	05%	94	61%	05	03%	04	03%	154

As Table 3 shows, the distribution of these pronouns has varied from each section of the

speech to the other. The pronoun *I* has taken a big share in the introduction, with 51% of the total pronouns in the introduction, followed by *we* with 32%. *Us* has come third with 05%. In the main body, *we* has highly dominated with 96% of all the pronouns in this section. *Me* and *you* share an equal insignificant percentage of 02% each, while the other personal pronouns have a zero representation. In the concluding paragraphs, the pronouns *we* has also been highly preferred with 46%, followed by *I*, with 11%, while *us* ranks third with 7%.

6.3.1 The use of *I*

The study observes that the speech prefers the pronoun *I* in the introductory paragraphs. This might be Mutharika's political desire to attribute the success of his first five years to himself.

14*. <75>**I** pledged to reduce price of fertilizer*

15*. <83a>**I** declared "zero tolerance" on corruption*

Mutharika's choice of such first person singular pronoun *I* in the introduction can be understood as his desire to portray himself as a hero having defied all odds taking into consideration the rough political atmosphere he operated against. His decision to abandon UDF, the party that ushered him into power, and form his DPP, subjected him to political torture during his entire first tenure. The opposition which comprised of UDF and MCP attempted to frustrate his minority government in parliament by tabling the then famous Section 65[2] juxtaposed with impeachment motion. Therefore, preponderance of *I* projects him as a man who could stand up and make impressive tremendous steps against all the pressures. His famous slogan *Let the work of my hands speak for me*, which appeared in numerous billboards in the country, has also been made the title of his address to emphasize his championship.

6.3.2 The use of *we*

Contrary to many discourse studies that have commended collective pronoun *we* for its inclusiveness e.g Wang (2010, Savoy (2009), findings of this study agree with Ye's (2010) and Mulderrig's (2011) observations that this pronoun is functionally complex. Its meaning can be two-fold. It can be used for inclusiveness to include the audience, but also for exclusiveness to refer to only the government or only to the speaker like in the royal/divide *we*.

Having analyzed the clausal environment of every instance of *we,* the study discovers that Mutharika uses the pronoun *we* in majority for exclusiveness for 71 times (76%) while the inclusive function appears 23 times (24%). This big disparity further enhances his exclusive government. Characters of the exclusive *we* are so vivid in the main body in which he uses the pronoun to refer to himself and his administration. Because this is the main section in which he lays down his political principles that would govern the nation in the next five years, he distances his plans from the people and commits that *we* (him and his administration)

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[2] Section 65 of the constitution of the Republic of Malawi empowers the speaker of the National Assembly to declare vacant seats of those parliamentarians who have crossed the flow in the parliament.

would solely be responsible.

In a study of George Bush political ideologies, Korzi (2004) notes that Bush emphasized that government is not the answer to the nation's ills, rather it is individual's actions and responsibilities that can make America at "its best". To him, the role of government is to create an environment where people themselves can act to handle the problems they face. This study reveals that Mutharika depicts himself and his administration to have 'answers' to the people's need- a trend that perpetuates the culture of laziness and reliance on handout among the citizens which has been so common in the African politics. Consider the clauses below:

16. *<77> My administration will continue to prioritize agriculture and food security. <78a>We will remain committed in ensuring that our current food production levels increase*

17. *<79>We will also implement the Green Belt Initiative along Lake Malawi*

18. *<104>My administration will continue to invest heavily in the education sector. <105>We will continue to construct more school blocks, girls' hostels and teachers houses throughout the country.*

Use of pronoun *we*, in these clauses, creates distance between him and the citizens and implies a sense of authority, making the addressee experience a feel that he and his administration are a strong team to initiate and implement any development related endeavor and citizens should be merely passive receivers and consumers.

On the other hand, the pronoun *we* is sparsely used in the speech, mainly in the concluding paragraphs, to refer to *I* and *you*. Mutharika has done this merely to bond himself and his audience by portraying that they share common objectives. Consider the following clauses:

19. *<180> We also need to move one direction as a nation*

20. *<189b> We are, first and foremost, Malawians*

21. *<189c> We need to put the destiny of this country into our hands*

22. *<190> We look to the future with new hopes and expectation*

Mutharika uses the pronoun *we* in these clauses simply to hold the nation together, to remind the audience that they are all Malawians and that everyone should have a sense of patriotism as he ends his speech with a message of hope and unity.

Just like the functions of *will* discussed above, the distinction in the functions of *we* made here is equally not always clear and straightforward. There are likely to be many overlaps. However, its variability in meaning and use is not merely a technical issue, but of considerable analytical significance. Mutharika might have used the pronoun *we* to, in Martin's (1991) term, 'bury' the true meanings, whereby the intended meanings of some of his statements, together with premises that constitute the logical scaffolding of such statement, are hidden through abstraction. Therefore, unpacking the dual functions of *we* has helped to

recover the abstract information that might be lost on the common surface.

7. Conclusion

This paper has taken deliberate steps in examining various elements of interpersonal meaning of Mutharika's inaugural address. The analysis has focused on choice of mood, modal auxiliaries, and personal pronouns. Results of mood analysis reveal that the address by far opted for declarative clauses for their potentials in providing as much information as possible and imperative clauses rank second. However, his address is devoid of interrogative clauses which make the speech more serious and information-oriented. The audience is strictly at the listening end and do not take any part in the speech interaction. Modal auxiliary operators of median scale hugely dominate the address. High and low auxiliary modals come at a distant far. The auxiliary *will* which dominates in the address serves to illustrate Mutharika's strong wish and desire to continue developing Malawi. First person exclusive pronoun *we* dominate the address by far followed by *I* to show himself as a hero and distance his achievements and plans from the citizens. Inclusive *we* is used simply to bond himself and the audience by portraying that they share common objectives. The analysis shows that Mutharika did not perform well on establishing interpersonal relations with the people.

The study has demonstrates how leaders' political discourses unearth a sort of contradictions between their ideologies at early and later stages of their leadership. The study further provides a sufficient proof that the grammar of speech is not merely a combinational tool of creating correct constructions, but a method of structuring information and transferring ideology. We, therefore, recommend that further political discourse research is needed in other countries particularly in Africa where democracy is a new phenomenon, and where the field of Systemic Functional Linguistics is not widely institutionalized. Furthermore, there is need for presidents and their speech writers to be aware of the ideologies appended in their choice of lexico-grammar.

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