

Visual Rhetoric: A Pragma-Linguistic Analysis of Kenyan Political Editorial Cartoons in the Daily Nation Newspaper

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Abstract

This paper aims at analyzing rhetorical pragma-linguistic features used in political editorial cartoons of Kenyan newspapers in the portrayal of their political leaders and communication of political issues. The study adopted a descriptive design. Twenty political editorial cartoons were selected from the Daily Nation and Sunday Nation Newspapers from October 2013 to October 2014 and analyzed using a pragma-linguistic model incorporating linguistic pragmatic features and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework. The findings reveal that editorial political cartoons not only provide entertainment, information and education but also provide additional insights on first, language and power relations and second, rhetorical linguistic multimodal communication strategies used in media discourse. The study has implications on place of language in the media curriculum and need to incorporate linguistic criteria in research evaluation methodology on effect of online media content on readers.

Keywords: editorial political cartoons, pragma-linguistic analysis, Daily Nation newspaper, rhetoric, political issues