

Tiv Political Cosmos in Songs: A Stylistic Analysis of Select-artistes

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Abstract

Democracies around the world are evolving ways to politically and innovatively influence voters' perception of candidates presented by political parties for elections. Part of these new ways is in the use of political songs, composed mainly to patronise a particular candidate. Extant studies, both linguistic and non-linguistic, have examined the use of songs for political campaigns, and have argued that songs are potent tools for marketing and demarketing candidates in a political contest. However, there are scant studies on Tiv political songs (TPS); much of these have a non-linguistic orientation. This paper, therefore, examines the Tiv political worldview in songs with a view to establishing the stylistic features of the songs. Using Leech's (2005) Grand Strategy of Politeness as the theoretical base, songs were randomly selected from three purposively selected Tiv artistes: Gabon Akuhe, Mfater Kaha and Bemdoo Kaki. Data were subjected to a qualitative method of analysis. The study identified seven functions performed by TPS: defamatory, confrontational, satirical, eulogic, prideful, condemnatory and sometimes prophetic. The study reveals that artistes are paid to compose songs that contain opponent's misdeeds, while their patrons and sponsors are stylistically eulogised, much of this is done through the use of metaphors. The study, thus, concludes that, while politics seems to be interest-driven, there should be a change of the approach in the language of composition of songs to reduce verbal abuse, political friction, hate speech, and crisis among the Tiv.

Keywords: Songs, (Im)politeness, TiV Artistes, Political campaign and worldview.

Introduction

Songs are synonymous to poetry which is a spontaneous overflow of emotions, feelings and thoughts. Songs represent undiluted sensibilities of the composers on and about their subjects. Ugbudu and Pita (2017, p.268) posit that songs are lyrical verses; and have three things in common. They are texts to decipher, a mirror of reality, as well as an expression of truth. Songs, irrespective of their genre, have a variety of meanings uniquely expressed through language; and also express cultural elements which are considered a great art among different people and cultures, the Tiv inclusive. Songs, like oral tradition, are the most effective ways of handing down traditions (Adule, 2006, p.43); as they play a lot of functions in society. For example, Adule (2006) asserts that, in Tiv land, women compose satirical songs to abuse their husbands who do not allow them to go out at will. Also, age mates put together songs to abuse their counterparts and laugh at their poverty (p.45).

From Adule's postulations, it can be deduced that songs play different roles and functions in diverse cultures and to different people as seen in the Tiv worldview. These roles could be political, spiritual, historical, literary – entertainment (satirical), therapeutic, and educational. The functions may have both negative and positive implications. Their positive implication is that they create a sense of humour only in contexts where the referent takes the message trivially and does not get provoked by it. However, where there is a provocation on a party, especially the referent, then the songs become negative. In most Africa societies, songs are a cultural way of correcting ills, and especially among the Tiv nation. Songs in Tiv land, like any other African society, are a means of telling history, enacting tradition, educating the youths on literary, satirical and even political purposes, among other roles. Therefore, the aim of the study is to identify and analyse Tiv political worldview in song-texts with a view to establishing their stylistic effect.

Empirical Review

Political songs are a lyrical genre of campaign materials deployed by politicians and their patrons to vilify and defame a political opponent while at the same time uphold and project the interest of a particular candidate whom they support. Political songs are composed specifically for use in

politics. In most cases, such songs are sponsored either by political parties or candidates vying for political offices in those parties, as these songs are tailored to favour their sponsors in praise singing. Finnegan (2012, p.72) asserts that “political songs generally function to exert pressure on others (be it equals or superiors). The songs uphold as well as suggest certain values or interests, and are also used as a means of psychological release of repressed enmities and tension”. In Tiv politics, songs play a central role; and they perform some functions such as praise singing, being confrontational, eulogising and defamation of other person’s character. The use of political songs among the Tiv has its roots in the Second Republic when Kor Shirsha composed political campaign songs for the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) (in Nyitse, 2006, p.80).

Overview of the Location of the Tiv of Benue State

Benue State is one of the thirty-six (36) States of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that is inhabited predominantly by the Tiv, Idoma, Igede, and the Etulo people. Adejoh (2005:56) avers that what is today called Benue State is traceable to the activities of the British colonial administration in Nigeria that carved out Benue Province in 1926. According to him, as at 1946, Benue Province was made up of the Tiv, Idoma, Wukari, Nasarawa and Lafia divisions. The structure remained the same until May 27th, 1967 when the then military administration of General Yakubu Gowon created Benue-Plateau State from the then Benue and Plateau Provinces. Benue State was among the seven states that came into existence in February 3rd, 1976. It had the Tiv, Idoma, Igala, Igede, Etulo, Akweya, Ufia and Bassa as the constituent linguistic groups and had seven local government areas in its inception such as Gboko, Ankpa, Dekina, Idah, Katsina-Ala, Makurdi and Otukpo. The linguistic map of Benue State is as shown below:

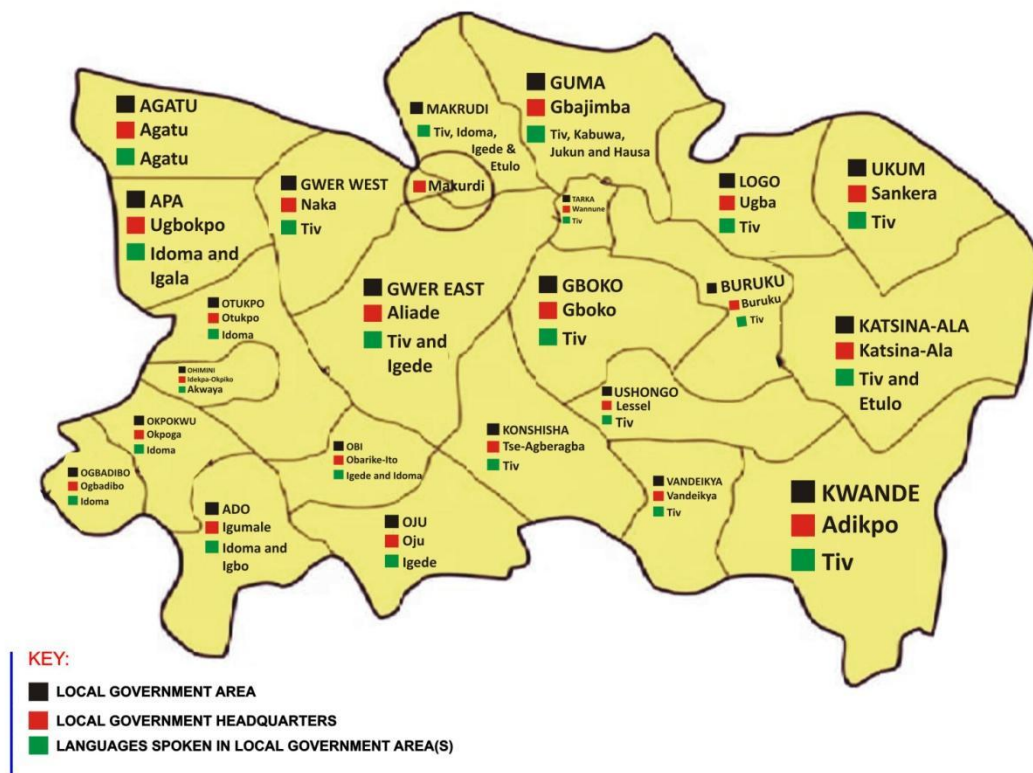


Fig 1: The Map of Benue State showing the location of the Tiv communities

Source: Online

Benue State lies between latitude 6°-8° northward and longitudes 6°-10° eastward (Eleazu, 1988). It borders Nasarawa State to the north, Taraba State to the north-east, Ebonyi and Cross River States to the south, Enugu State to the south-east and Kogi State to the west. The State also shares an international boundary with Cameroon along Nigeria’s south-east border. Its landmass is about 34,059km² and has a total estimated population of 4,223,641 people; with 2,114,043 males and 2,109,598 females (iambenue.com). This makes it the seventh most populated States in Nigeria. The State was initially known by the appellation “the Bread Basket of the Nation” (Eleazu, 1988, p.363) but is now fondly called “the Food Basket of the Nation”.

Culturally, Benue State, where the Tiv dominates, is ranked among the richest in agricultural produce in the country (Eleazu, 1988). An online source (Legit.ng) lends credence to Eleazu’s

(1988) claim when it posits that the Tiv have one of the most unique cultures in Nigeria as epitomised in their music, dance, food, marriage tradition, among other things. This richness in her culture translates into other activities like dance, masquerades, and songs, among others. According to Eleazu (1988), these cultural activities of the Tiv add glamour to the ways of life of the people. The Tiv are generally agrarian, specialising in farming, hunting and other related agricultural practices such as breeding of goats, chickens, pigs, guinea fowls, and others (Dzurgba, 2012, p.32).

However, with the advent of civilisation and politics, the Tiv who have western education get employed to serve as public/civil servants, soldiers; they trade and then get into politics too. Politics is sometimes seen as a game of influence and conflict (Odimegwu, 2008, p.56), and among the Tiv of Benue State, it has evolved, and taken a different turn. The Tiv politicians strive to maintain dominance over others through the instrumentation of songs.

The Tiv were originally farmers before the advent of partisan politics. However, when politics became a gateway to leadership positions in Nigeria, the Tiv became part of it. They hitherto practised a gerontocratic system of government which is government by the elders. Ayati (2006, p.31) asserts that electoral politics did not begin early enough in Tiv land as compared to other parts of Nigeria. According to him, what was obtainable then could best be described as selection, not election. Traditional rulers could select any of the educated Tiv sons to represent them, if they feel they would represent them creditably. This was devoid of political parties. The first of such selection was done in 1951 where Tiv sons were selected as representatives at the Northern House of Assembly in Kaduna (Ayati, 2006).

The first quasi-political party in Tiv land was the Tiv Progressive Union (TPU, hereafter). TPU was established in 1938 to promote unity and development among the Tiv (Ayati, 2006, p.34). The first political parties in Tiv land were: the Action Group (AG) and National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) in 1954 (Ayati, 2006, p.36). Later on, the Middle Belt People's Party (MBPP) was formed by most of the ethnic groups in the Middle Belt especially those with Christian majority. E.G. Gundu who was the TPU President at that time became the first leader of MBPP. Subsequently, there was the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) which had J.S.

Tarka as its leader and the Northern People's Congress (NPC). From here, the journey of political parties continued in Tiv land just as it progressed in Nigeria up to the time of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) as the ruling and major opposition parties respectively (Ayati, 2006, p.36).

In all their politicking, the Tiv believe in and uphold unity, cohesion, solidarity, stability, security and survival of their community in particular, and the nation at large (Ihundu, 2004, p.10). Even though Tiv politics is not free of selfish and 'greedy' politicians as it is in most democratic societies, the community's interest is held paramount against an individual's interest. The Tiv (even in politics) also cherish truth, justice and fairness and do not hide their displeasure when they are given a treatment that falls short of these. To this end, the political campaign songs that are composed in Tiv land to garner support for political office seekers are also expected to reveal the candidates' potentials along the values of the Tiv, while at the same time they expose the opponents' misdemeanours on the basis of disqualification.

Stylistics studies how speakers communicate meanings. This is borne out of the belief that whatever form one chooses to communicate, there is always more than one way of saying the same thing. But importantly, what is said is different from how it is said (Hickey, 1993, p.574). This is why Leech and Short see stylistics, in its shortest definition, as the study of style. Likewise, Ottoh-Agede (2022, p.32) views stylistics as a branch of applied linguistics which studies text interpretation taking into cognisance their style deployment and peculiarities in language use. These definitions tie stylistics to the concept of style, and the nature of an analysable text expresses its style. To this end, the segment below explores the nature of the Tiv political songs with a view to establishing the stylistic value of the songs.

Theoretical Orientation

Politeness theory (PT) is credited to Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson. It is a theory that is concerned with redressing affronts to people's self-esteems by doing away with the shame or embarrassment that threatens their effectiveness in claiming positive social values in social interactions. Such self-esteem is what is referred to as the concept of face. Al-Duleimi, Sabariah and Ain (2016) postulate that people use politeness to minimise the force of speech acts. Without

this, the force of speech acts would be too hard for the interlocutors to handle. For Al-Duleimi et al (2016), politeness means taking the feelings and desires of the hearers into consideration when ‘speaking and acting’. It means that politeness can be expressed both verbally and non-verbally (Leech, 1983, p.140). In a communicative act, interlocutors can exhibit politeness by considering the effects of their language on the referent and the audience, and making sure they communicate in a way that maintains decorum amongst interlocutors. Politeness theory has different strands. The study therefore adopts Leech’s (2005) grand strategy of politeness (GSP).

In Leech’s (2005) GSP, there are two constraints a speaker (S) should consider in order for such to be seen as polite. The first one Leech calls the major constraint and it requires the speaker to place high value on what relates to others (O), while the second constraint (the minor constraint), requires the speaker to place low value on what relates to him (Al- Duleimi et al, 2016, p.267). Leech’s grand strategy of politeness calls on the speaker to place high premium on that which relates to the interlocutors other than him but devalues that which relates to him. This, to him, is the super constraint under which all other maxims of politeness are subsumed (Al-Duleimi et al, 2006, p.268). GSP is adopted for this study because of its universal acceptability and applicability to texts, and it is used as a framework to assess the level of politeness the Tiv songs weigh in. For its universal acceptability and applicability, the Tiv worldview is interrogated through this lens. Leech (2005, p13) posits that in pursuing the GSP, S will express meanings that:

1. Place a high value on O’s wants,
2. Place a low value on S’s wants,
3. Place a high value on O’s qualities,
4. Place a low value on S’s qualities,
5. Place a high value on S’s obligations to O,
6. Place a low value on O’s obligations to S,
7. Place a high value on O’s opinions,
8. Place a low value on S’s opinions,
9. Place a high value on O’s feelings,
10. Place a low value on S’s feelings.

‘O’ as used here refers to ‘other person(s)’ while ‘S’ means ‘self’ or ‘speaker’ as earlier pointed out. A close look at the ten constraints above shows that Leech advocates that high premium should be placed on whatever relates to O by the S while the speaker should de-emphasise whatever relates to self (s); be it wants, qualities, obligations, opinions or feelings. This is used in the analyses of the songs in this study.

Methodology

The data is derived primarily from recorded songs deposited in the campaign offices of the politicians and vendors. Songs are randomly selected from three purposively selected artistes namely Bemdoo Kaki’s “Certificate Forgery”, Gabon Akuhe’s “Ortomatic Works” and Mfater Kaha’s “Dickson Ugba”. The songs are composed in Tiv and are only recorded, not in written form. They are subjected to analysis in three stages:

1. Transcription in Tiv,
2. Translation in English and
3. Validation.

The translation is validated by a language specialist in Tiv and English; more so, one of the researchers is Tiv. The songs are presented and analysed not in a particular order. The songs are selected within the periods 2011 and 2019. This is the period where politics became intensified among the Tiv of Benue State. The study adopts a qualitative design.

Data Analysis

Impoliteness as a Political Rhetoric in TPS

As a political campaign tool, political songs employ eulogic rhetorical patterns in the representation of patrons as well as defamatory ones on their opponents. Since political songs are a form of propaganda, there are also bound to be rhetorical in nature. TPS are not exempted from this form of art of persuasion. In Bemdoo Kaki’s song, the artiste impolitely defames the opposition while drumming support for the ACN and its governorship candidate, Stephen Torkuma Ugba in 2011.

Tiv Version	English Translation
a. <i>U too ikyaren i fer</i>	You used forged certificate
b. <i>U ya ishor</i>	To win election
c. <i>Mba ve lu hendan matu la yo</i>	Those driving cars
d. <i>Gema ka mbayev mba wuan a wua ior ningir</i>	Are boys who are only murderers
e. <i>Orhemen za makanta ga</i>	The leader is not educated
f. <i>Or foji u ikyaren kpa we saa u wua nan</i> certificate for you	You are bent on killing he who forged
g. <i>Barista u aiegh mough heen ne ve</i>	A fake Barrister
h. <i>I wua se ior</i>	Our people have been killed
i. <i>Mba nyin ve lam</i>	those who spoke
j. <i>Chi u ve nenege er</i>	Because they felt that
k. <i>Hemen la wase ga</i>	The leadership was bad
l. <i>I na ve ian, ve kpa vea kar</i>	They should be allowed to lead
m. <i>Or u a lu or u Aondo</i>	He who is a man of God
n. <i>Kpa mba tativ wua sha igbo</i>	Has been killed by the bullet
o. <i>I kimbi Tica ga</i>	Teachers have not been paid
p. <i>Kilimishi u kar la or ya ga</i>	No one celebrated the previous Christmas
q. <i>Or a tuhwa u kpa</i>	Even if you are insulted
r. <i>De wuan ze.</i>	Do not kill.

Song 1: An excerpt of Benjamin Bemdoo Kaki's song composed for Stephen Ugba (the ACN governorship candidate, 2011)

It is important to note that this song came shortly after the former Governor of Benue State Gabriel Suswan fell out of favour with his predecessor and political god-father, George Akume (who also doubled as the leader of ACN in Benue State). At this time, Suswan was pursuing his second term bid and his opponent, presented in the ACN brought the allegation of certificate forgery against Suswan in order to make him appear fraudulent, unpopular and unelectable among the electorate, while the ACN and her candidate are made to appear popular and electable. Though there are many other ways of canvassing support for his principal without being impolite,

the artiste's deliberate choice of words here places a high value on what relates to self, violating Leech's (2005) major constraint of politeness. There is a direct affront on Suswan, for whom the artiste described thus:

Excerpt 1:

You used forged certificate
To win election (Song 1: lines a & b)

The first part of the sentence, an alpha clause constitutes the most significant part of the message, the accusation, so to say, where the artiste did not ask the referent if the certificate was forged but rather enforces it on him; and then tells him what the certificate was used for. This is libellous and defamatory in the context of use. Was this the truth, going by Grice's maxim of quality of the statement? Is the statement credible enough to discredit the candidacy of Suswan? Certainly not! If so, Suswan would not have won the election even after this propaganda? This goes to show that, as earlier submitted, the songs are not all a representation of reality; but some are full of propagandist tendencies targeted at devaluing an opponent and an opposition party.

Bald-on-Record Strategy

Another instance is in the use of a bald on record impoliteness, where the Suswan is described as uneducated:

Excerpt 2:

I just discovered now
That the leader is not educated (Song 1: "Certificate Forgery")

This expression in excerpt 2 demeans the personality of Suswan. A build up to this captures an ugly development where those driving cars are said to be "murderers".

But when you get to town
You see that those driving cars
Are boys who are only murderers! 2x (Song 1: "Certificate Forgery")

The implication is that Suswam who was at the time yearning for a re-election had empowered murderers while government workers are left to languish in poverty with unpaid salaries. Instead of wondering why it is so, the public is presented with the reason using a simple sentence in the song, “the leader is not educated”. The aim of the message is to inform the voter-audience of the kind of leader they have, and to create an abysmal situation in which they have found themselves. Now, instead of blaming themselves for voting in an uneducated person to lead them, Kaki gives the electorate an excuse: “I just discovered now that the leader is not educated.” This means the electorate had done that as a result of ignorance but they have an opportunity to correct that by voting the candidate being patronised by the artiste.

There is yet another expression that does not place a high value on the referent or the other (O) as required by Leech’s GSP and could be tagged a hate speech or verbal abuse in this context. This is because it is aimed at denting the image (face) of O; as the song portrays him as an ingrate, a murderer and a cheat. Suswam is described as an ingrate because he is “bent on killing” the only person who helped him “forged a certificate” when he so needed it to contest an election. Though the identity of this person Suswam was “bent on killing” is not revealed in the song, it is thus inferred that the person is not the major concern here, since that would be indicting on the person; but the posture of Suswam was the interest of S. Kaki, the artiste sings:

Excerpt 3:

You are bent on killing
The person who
Forged certificate for you (Song 1: “Certificate Forgery”)

Suswam who is the referent (O) in the song is described as a killer. He is deceptive because he parades a fake certificate when he knows he does not have the certificate. Bemdoo Kaki (S), the artiste, has experimented language in a way that puts the referent (O) at logger heads with the electorate who would likely see him as an insincere person. Hence, the person who forged the certificate for him and his associates would no longer support him in his political ambition just as all the members of the committee that screened him because he had made a fool of them. All these shades of conflict are created by the impolite use of language. As if the above affronts do

not create the effects Kaki (S) desires, he chooses to threaten the face (image) of all legal practitioners in these lines from the original record:

Excerpt 4:

Barrister Adanyi is that how
You Lawyers behave
If it is not so a fake Barrister
Is out disgracing you. (Song 1: "Certificate Forgery")

After x-raying the condemnable behaviour of the referent (O), Kaki implicitly expresses his surprise at the behaviour, and decides to find out if it were in the nature of lawyers to do so since the referent "claims" to be a lawyer. He is not just out to find out the truth, he is equally out to incite lawyers against him. That is why he is quick to add: "if it is not so, a fake Barrister is out disgracing you". By this, even if the lawyers take this lightly, they would rise up to defend their profession; as preventive and restorative face measures.

Kaki, again, introduces another shocking revelation. He claims here that those who dare criticise the referent's leadership as well as those who nurse the ideas of contesting against him are killed. This lends credence to Kaki's reference to Suswam as a murderer. More so, Kaki goes ahead to give instances of people he claims to have been killed because of the said "offences". He said Adoor died because he spoke against this man (the pig-man) and a man of God has been surprisingly killed by the bullet.

Excerpt 5:

Our people have been killed
Those who spoke because
They felt the leadership was bad
So they should be allowed
To lead also
They have killed even a man of God
By the bullet

Adoor died because he spoke

Against the “pig-man (Song 1: “Certificate Forgery”)

This does not only call for the electorate’s refusal to vote for him, it also calls on all law-abiding citizens across the globe to reject him and what he represents. It could also trigger conflict between the deceased’s families, their associates and the referent, among others. The extent to which language has been deployed here is inciting and could lead to conflict, political crisis and unhealthy rivalry. The artiste deliberately chooses to sound daring here knowing that given the context of this song, he has poetic license as it in poetry to accuse or debase his principal’s opponents. The pig-man is used as a derogatory metaphor for Suswam who allegedly took government money to China, and when he was caught, he claimed he went to buy pigs for the State, and then he was forcefully made to import the pigs.

Lines a and b above of the Song 1 present a direct affront on the referent, Suswam who was seeking re-election as at the time the song was composed. He is said to have used forged certificate to qualify to be elected as Governor in the first tenure. Someone who occupies a lofty position as the Executive Governor of a State is expected to be honest, truthful and reliable. Unfortunately, it is the Governor’s self-esteem that Kaki attacks here. Instead of projecting the party ideologies and the manifesto of his principal, he propagates verbal abuse in the context of the song. There is no evidence in the song to justify Kaki’s claims. This is, however, his way of canvassing support for his principal.

He who drives a car is a wealthy man among the Tiv people irrespective of your source of wealth, provided it is a legitimate one. However, lines c and d vividly portray those driving cars in town (Benue) as boys; against the general expectation of men. Here, boys who have no legitimate jobs but specialise in murder are the ones found in affluence in Benue State. The implication here is that, Suswam had empowered murderers so they are the ones enjoying the good things of life instead of government workers. The reason for this rather unfortunate development is captured in line e (“the leader is not educated”). This is another way of denting the Suswam’s political face, so that Kaki’s patron may win some political points. To prove that Suswam is an ingrate, Kaki

says Suswam is bent on killing the person who “helped” him to get the forged certificate. He is also called a “fake Barrister” because he does not have the papers to show for his qualification.

Lines h to n of the Song 1 above capture the lamentations because his kinsmen have been killed. The killing is targeted at those who had criticised the government and indicated interest in contesting against the referent.

Excerpt 6:

Our people have been killed, those who spoke. Because they felt that his leadership was bad. They should be allowed to lead. He who is a man of God has been killed by the bullet

Of particular interest is the one he calls “a man of God” whom he claims has been killed by the bullet. Again, the referent is called a murderer implicitly. Another hardship endured during the referent’s government, according to Kaki is in the non-payment of workers’ salaries as typified in the teachers. Benue State, aside being agricultural, is a Civil Service State. So, the easiest way money circulates is through the civil servants, most of whom are teachers. This is why there was no celebration “the previous Christmas” because teachers were not paid (lines o & p of Song 1). In order to give the people some level of hope, Kaki urges his principal to “eradicate this hunger” and avoid killing people even if they insult him.

Also, in Gabon Akuhe’s song (“Ortomatic Works”) below, the stylistic expressions portrayed, in the use of figurative language, paint a worldview of the political landscape of the Tiv:

	Tiv Version	English Translation
a.	<i>Yan ityo yam mo Minda</i>	My kindred Minda once
b.	<i>Za kuve kwase</i>	Embraced a woman
c.	<i>Yem u numben a min sha vanger</i>	And got busy playing with her on the chest
d.	<i>Or Jemgbagh</i>	of Jemgbagh
e.	<i>Kor shin iwenge</i>	Held her at the waist
f.	<i>Nzuul se akaa</i>	And caused confusion for us

<i>g.</i>	<i>Or u yange lu hendan</i>	He who was riding
<i>h.</i>	<i>Se wan jaki ve lu nongon</i>	our donkey almost
<i>i.</i>	<i>Ape sombom ikyongough</i>	Broke its backbone
<i>j.</i>	<i>Kpa hegen ityo i Minda</i>	But now Minda people
<i>k.</i>	<i>Za va zenda or la kera</i>	Have sent him packing
<i>l.</i>	<i>Matu wase Minda ka Toyota</i>	Our car was a Toyota
<i>m.</i>	<i>Kpa gema ijin</i>	But the engine
<i>n.</i>	<i>U yange lu kimi lu</i>	That was in it was
<i>o.</i>	<i>Ijin u Mitsubishi</i>	Mitsubishi engine
<i>p.</i>	<i>Shi se tor mesenja</i>	We again employed the messenger
<i>q.</i>	<i>U Miyati Allah</i>	Of Miyatti Allah
<i>r.</i>	<i>Tema driva</i>	As a driver
<i>s.</i>	<i>Henda se sha ibyume</i>	He drove us recklessly
<i>t.</i>	<i>Shima vihi Minda</i>	Minda became angry
<i>u.</i>	<i>Tsua ijin ta kera</i>	Removed and threw away the engine
<i>v.</i>	<i>Moo zenda driva</i>	And sacked the driver
<i>w.</i>	<i>Hile yam ijin u he wa</i>	Then bought and fixed a new engine

Song 2: Gabon Akuhe’s Song for Samuel Ortom of PDP, 2019

Gabon Akuhe’s (S) song was composed for Samuel Ortom (O¹) of the PDP in 2019. The song stands out in the use of analogies, proverbs and wise sayings which are used specifically to describe two others (referents) being Ortom (O¹) and the unnamed other inferred to be George Akume (O²). Akuhe euphemistically lampoons O² (Akume) for whom he uses personified object of a car engine to portray his rejection by the Tiv. The text is loaded with feminine, in-grouping/ethno and automobile metaphors: “My kindred once embraced a **woman** (feminine metaphors)”, lines a & b, “And got busy playing with her on the **chest of Jemgbagh** (feminine metaphors)”, lines c & d, “We again employed a **messenger of Miyatti Allah** (in-grouping metaphors) as **driver**, he drove us recklessly (automobile metaphors)”, lines p, q, r & s), euphemisms (“He who was **riding** our donkey almost broke his backbone”, lines g, h, & i), personifications (“Our car was a **Toyota** but the **engine** that was in it was a **Mitsubshi engine**,

lines l, m, n, & o), metonymy (the use of **Jemgbagh** and **Minda** as symbols for two prominent Tiv kindreds in the context of the song as in lines d, j & t of Song 2) and other figurative expressions. The lyrics in Song 2 communicate one message using three analogies aimed at tarnishing the image of one of the referents, O², while representing the other referent (O¹) as a saviour of the people. The implication of the use of coded language, mostly proverbial is to hide the meaning, which is to be decoded only by those for whom it is written, the Tiv nation.

Literarily, the lines a - f present a story involving three characters: Minda (O¹'s kindred), the Jemgbagh (O²'s kindred) and an unnamed woman (the office of the Governor of the State). The symbol of the woman (the position as Governor) is at the centre of the analogy, while Minda and Jemgbagh are at opposing ends. It was Minda (O¹) who first approached and embraced the woman and was playing with her at the chest region. The Jemgbagh (O²) held the woman at the waist, the centre of attraction and is said to have caused confusion.

From a generally point of view, men value the chest region of women because the region is where the breasts are located. This is an important place for foreplay in a sexual intercourse. However, in the instance where the woman is sexually aroused, the waist region becomes more important because it houses the vagina. In the context of Song 2, it was O¹ who first embraced the woman (the office of a governor). But something bizarre happened, as another man, identified as the O² held the same woman at the waist (which is the reason for embracing the woman after all) and is said to have "caused confusion" among the Benue people.

The Minda in question refers to Ortom who is from the Minda extraction of Benue State, while the woman he holds is his position as the Governor. The Jemgbagh man is his then political god-father (George Akume) who is from the Jemgbagh, Benue State. The song portrays that although Ortom was the Governor of Benue State at that time, the person governing was actually Jemgbagh who holds the waist of the woman. Therefore, the Jemgbagh man should be blamed for the failure of Minda.

Lines g - k build on the previous analogy. Akuhe (S) provides a reason for the people to trust O¹ and to re-elect him, saying that the person who almost broke the camel's backbone by recklessly riding it has been sacked (O²). Akuhe foresaw that Benue people of which the Tiv is a majority

may not be comfortable re-electing Ortom because he was not in charge when he was given the first mandate. Thus, Akuhe decides to blackmail and devalues Akume's face, accusing him of not allowing Ortom to work independently.

In lines i - w, Akuhe posits that their car is Toyota (PDP) but its engine is Mitsubishi (APC) and the driver (Akume) who drove them recklessly was an ally of the enemy (Miyatti Allah) and was erroneously hired so the car owners (the Benue people) drove him away and replaced the mismatched engine so the car had no problem again. This alludes to the face-off between Ortom and Akume. As has been implied, Akume is again presented as the one "governing" Benue and leading the Ortom, who is supposedly the governor, astray. But when Ortom realised his mistake, he refused acting according to his dictates and decamped to another political party, the PDP. This is what the artiste imply by saying the driver has been sacked and a new engine has been bought and fixed on the car. Ortom was originally in the PDP (Toyota) but decamped to APC (Mitsubishi) when he could not secure the nomination of the party, having fallen apart with the leader of the APC, he returned to his Toyota. Akuhe exonerates Ortom of all wrong doings and heaped the blame on Akume by labelling him bad.

In Song 3 below, Mfater Kaha describes the referent impolitely as one who is good at selling government lands as a Commissioner of Lands, and then warns that "House of Representatives (parliament) is not land sales" (line: a- c):

Tiv version

English Translation

<i>a. Idyu ka inya i teen ga</i>	The parliament is not land sales
<i>b. Komishina u teen nya</i>	Commissioner of land sales
<i>c. Hide se a inya yase</i>	Bring back our land
<i>d. U ngu or u dedoo ga</i>	You are not a good man
<i>e. Oryuhwev ornima</i>	Envious umbrella man
<i>f. Ezwa tswen u Tiv</i>	The lone-mouthed of Tiv
<i>g. Ityo venda komishina u teen inya</i>	The kinsmen have rejected land-selling commissioner
<i>h. Emmanuel jime de zaan kasua a ivo</i>	Emmanuel Jime do not take a goat
<i>i. I i vande choon ashe ga</i>	That is already pulsed to the market

expressions of hate, defamation of character, and unverified allegations against the Commissioner. This shows the political worldview of the artiste.

Findings and Conclusion

Political songs like other genres of songs are a reflection of society, and Tiv political society have been examined in song, and found to exhibit this unique character of representing the people's worldview. The study which selected songs from three prominent artistes (Gabon Akuhe, Mfater Kaha and Bemdoo Kaki) of Tiv extraction of Benue State revealed that Tiv political songs reflect the Tiv worldview in politics as culturally portrayed in their sharing formula policy and self-credibility. Selected songs examined and analysed identified the character of impoliteness, bald-on-record strategy, debasement, verbal abuse and affront in the artiste's use of language. The study indicated that most of the issues raised in the songs may not be true in reality, but have been able to curb and control excessive leadership threats, as the artistes hide under the cultural licence to lampoon, to cast aspersion and make libellous expressions on political opponents while at the same time celebrate and uphold the integrity and credibility of a candidate they seem to patronise. These songs might have been composed to market a particular candidate; however, they have some negative implications on face defamation of the candidates, while they also hold a positive face value implication of restoring integrity of others, as well as checking the government policies. Given the analysis here, it is the view of this study that the artistes should control their language deployment in the TPS to prevent impoliteness and to avoid being inconsiderate to others' self. This will drastically help to reduce tension and verbal violence in the Tiv politics.

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