

Forms of Humour Created through Maxim Flouting in *Churchill Show* Comedy Performances

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Abstract

Original Research Article

Verbal humour has presented itself as a complicated phenomenon to linguists over the years due to its inherently dissociative properties. Sometimes the very essence of humour lies in defying the rules of language usage. Language usage in verbal humour is embedded in the jokes that the comedians perform and are the mechanisms involved in maxim flouting. In the process of maxim flouting conversational implicatures arise and when it is inconsistent with what we expect, humour generates. Out of the generated humour additional information is embedded. The study examined the forms of humour that emerge as a result of stand-up comedians flouting the conversational maxims in *Churchill Show* in Kenya. The study relied on the Gricean cooperative principle and the principles of Relevance theory to explain the maxims flouted by stand-up comedians. The study adopted a descriptive qualitative research. The primary data of study comprised purposively selected utterances from stand-up comedy performances from 2011 to 2019 in *Churchill Show*. In collecting the data, the researcher applied attentive observation. Being a qualitative study, data analysis commenced during data collection. Content analyses of spoken words in the TV tape were transcribed. Classification of the data into maxims flouted was first done and discussed. The findings revealed that comedians in *Churchill Show* create different forms of humour by taking advantage of rhetorical techniques such as hyperbole, satire, irony, stereotyping and self-deprecation. It is recommended that future research should investigate the most flouted maxim by comedians in *Churchill Show* can be carried out. Additionally, another study can be conducted on rhetoric strategies that stand-up comedians employ in *Churchill Show* and which of the strategies are the most exploited.

Keywords: Maxim Flouting, Forms, Humour, Comedy, Churchill Show.

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INTRODUCTION

The creation of humour is an impulse shared by all human beings. Humour is a phenomenon which is influenced by culture. Humour produced by one culture is different from that produced by another. It is because those cultures differ in their histories, values and geography [1]. Humour, like all forms of communication, requires context to find it amusing. The audience must have certain knowledge, understanding, and values. American humour is different from other countries; even British that has the same language. The differences are due to several factors, especially culture. According to Walker [1], America, from its earliest years, has been largely a nation of immigrants, which

brings former residents of many countries together. This circumstance gave rise to humour dealing with ethnic groups, highlighting customs, accents, and other characteristics which served to distinguish one group of settlers from another.

There are different forms of humour communicated through diverse means and for different purposes. Martin [2] states that some of humour comes via the mass media. Radio hosts frequently crack jokes and make witty comments; television provides a constant diet of humour in the form of tapes, blooper shows, stand-up comedy, political satire, and humorous advertisements; and people encounter it also in newspaper comic strips and cartoons, comedy movies,

and humorous books. Humour is also often used in speeches, sermons, and lectures by politicians, religious leaders, motivational speakers, and teachers. However, most of the humour and laughter that happen in daily lives arise spontaneously in the course of people's normal interactions [2]. This sort of interpersonal humour occurs in nearly every type of informal and formal interaction in different contexts.

Martin [2] explains that individuals vary in the degree to which they produce humour in their daily interactions. Most people enjoy the positive emotion of mirth so much that they highly value those individuals who are humorous and witty. These are the people that are often described as having a good sense of humour. Some people develop such a talent at eliciting mirth in others and making them laugh that they become professional humour producers, entering the ranks of humorous authors, cartoonists, stand-up comedians, comedy writers, and actors. The billions of dollars spent on various forms of comedy each year further attest to the high value placed on the emotional pleasure associated with humour. Furthermore, Martin divides humour that occurs in everyday social interactions into three broad categories: (1) jokes, which are pre-packaged humorous anecdotes that people memorize and pass on to one another; (2) spontaneous conversational humour, which is created intentionally by individuals during the course of a social interaction, and can be either verbal or non-verbal, and (3) accidental or unintentional humour.

Jokes

Martin [2] explains that in the course of normal conversations, some people like to amuse others by telling jokes, which are short, amusing stories ending in a punch line. These are sometimes also referred to as canned jokes to distinguish them from the sorts of informal jesting and witty quips to which the words joke and joking can also refer. Moreover, Attardo [3] defines a canned joke as one that has been used before the time of utterance in a form similar to that used by the speaker, such as those which are found in books, collections of jokes, etc. Its text does not depend on contextual factors and is quite interchangeable with respect to context. For example, in this joke, a man goes to a psychiatrist who gives him a battery of tests. Then he announces his findings:

Doctor: I'm sorry to have to tell you that you are hopelessly insane.

Client: Hell, I want a second opinion.

Doctor: Okay, you're ugly too [2].

The joke consists of a set-up and a punch line. The set-up includes all but the last sentence; it creates in the listener a particular set of expectations about how the situation should be interpreted. The punch line suddenly shifts the meaning in an unexpected and playful way, thus creating the perception of non-serious incongruity that is necessary for humour to occur. In

this particular joke, the punch line plays on the meaning of the phrase second opinion, shifting the frame of reference from that of a serious, professional doctor-patient relationship to a nonsensical one in which one person is insulting another. The story is clearly playful and non-serious, conveying that the whole thing is meant to be taken as fun. There is also an aggressive element in this joke.

In everyday conversation, joke-telling is usually prefaced by verbal or nonverbal cues like in "*Did you hear the one about...*" or conforms to certain stock formats like "*A man went into a bar . . .*" that indicate to the audience that the story is meant to be humorous and that the listeners are expected to laugh. Although joke-tellers typically try to draw links between the jokes they tell and the ongoing topic of conversation, a joke is a context-free and self-contained unit of humour that carries within itself all the information needed for it to be understood and enjoyed. It can therefore be told in many different conversational contexts [2].

Spontaneous Conversational Humour

Martin [2] states that canned jokes represent only a small proportion of the humour that people experience in everyday social interactions. Spontaneous conversational humour is more context-dependent than joke-telling, and is therefore often not as funny when recounted afterwards. He explains that in such conversational humour, nonverbal cues indicating a humorous intent, such as a twinkle in the eye or a particular tone of voice, are often more ambiguous than in joke-telling, so that the listener is often not entirely sure if the speaker is jesting or being serious.

Spontaneous conversational humour takes in many different forms, and many different words exist to describe them, e.g., jest, witticism, quip, wisecrack, and gag. Long and Graesser [2] identify 12 categories of spontaneous humour, which were distinguished from one another on the basis of their intentions or uses of humour. They are irony, satire, sarcasm, overstatement, understatement, self-deprecation, teasing, replies to rhetorical questions, clever replies to serious statements, double entendres, transformations of frozen expression, pun, and contrast. Irony is a factual or embellished statement in which the opposite of what is stated is really meant [4]. A speaker expresses a statement in which the literal meaning is opposite to the intended meaning. The circumstance of irony can come in the form of a situation, action, or statement.

The irony of this statement was apparent to many members of the audience, but the FBI agent character uttered it sincerely, with no sarcastic intention. The playwright saw both the message and the metamessage, so did the elect among the audience; the characters in the play itself, however, did not. That is, irony, unlike sarcasm, may be both unintentional and

unconscious. Unintentional irony is an odd or amusing situation that involves a contrast. The intended irony is an utterance that means the opposite of or something different from what the speaker says. Hay [5] regards irony as a variety of humour. Verbal irony, according to Grice's [6] pragmatic approach, is an utterance that conversationally implicates the opposite of what it literally says. Sperber and Wilson [7], in their echo theory, claim that all verbal irony are echoic in that 'the speaker echoes a thought they attribute to someone else, while disassociating themselves from it' and 'the thought being echoed may not have been expressed in an utterance; it may not be attributable to any specific person, but merely to a type of person or people in general; it may be merely a cultural aspiration or norm' [8].

Satire is aggressive humour that pokes fun at social institutions or social policy. It emphasizes on the beliefs held by the culture and presents them for criticism. This criticism provides social commentary and questions current cultural traditions [4]. Examples of satire include humour that highlights race relations, sexual discrimination and non-specific examples of pop culture. Satire creates humour by constructing social commentary. It makes fun of a person, idea, or institution. It is meant to make the audience think deeply of what has been said. Most political cartoons are satirical. This type of satire is called juvenalian, those that attack sacred figures or religious beliefs are called Menippean satire, and Horatian is a type of satire that makes fun of things in a soft or even loving manner. It is intended to make people think. Satire is the oldest form of social commentary. For many people, the injustices and problems in their society are too big to confront directly- one approach is comedy because by laughing at something, we can acknowledge its reality while denying it power over our reality. Satire also gets people to pay attention to social issues when they might otherwise ignore them.

There is an extremely close connection between sarcasm and irony, and literary theorists in particular often treat sarcasm as simply the crudest and least interesting form of irony [9]. Haiman explains that situations may be ironic, but only people can be sarcastic. He adds that people may be unintentionally ironic, but sarcasm requires intention. What is essential to sarcasm is that it is overt irony intentionally used by the speaker as a form of verbal aggression [9].

Overstatement is also known as hyperbole. Hyperbole is to say more than what is necessary. It can be used by a speaker to flout the maxim of quality [10]. Understatement, on the other hand, is also called euphemism. Euphemism means speaking with good words or in a pleasant manner. If someone has to say the news of death in a family, he would like to say "pass away" rather than "dead". The speaker does observe the Cooperative Principle indirectly to realize

his/her illocutionary effects. Thus, euphemism is one of the strategies of making humour by flouting of maxims of Cooperative Principle.

Self-deprecation is a humorous remark targeting oneself as the object of humour. This may be done to demonstrate modesty, to put the listener at ease, or to ingratiate oneself with the listener. Examples of self-deprecation include highlighting the flaws on one's body, speaking of past failures, and acknowledging one's mistakes, such as "I'm in shape. Round is a shape, right?" This is a form of self-awareness and the person using the humour only points out what they think are negative things about themselves, but say them aloud in a funny, joking way.

Teasing is a humorous remark directed at the listener's personal appearance, habit, and characteristics. Unlike sarcasm, the intention is not to seriously insult or offend [2]. For example, saying "Is that your face? I thought it was a Halloween mask." and "Where were you when the brains were passed out, Turkey, under the rug?" are considered as teasing.

Rhetorical questions are not asked with the expectation of a reply. Giving an answer to one violates a conversational expectation and surprises the person who posed the question. This can therefore be perceived as funny, and the intention is usually to simply entertain a conversational partner. For example: A: *Can you close the door?* B: *I think you need to get up and move around more often.* A's question is a rhetorical question that does not need an answer. B should directly close the door without making any answer to the question, but B chooses to answer the question implying that B is also lazy to close the door.

Sometimes humour is created through clever, incongruous or nonsensical replies to a statement or question that was meant to be serious. The statement is deliberately misconstrued so that the speaker replies to a meaning other than the intended one. For example: A: *Did you go to the party last night?* B: *Oh yeah! I went there with Bert and Ernie.* A: *You went to the party with Bert and Ernie without me?* B: *Bert and Ernie have a new car!* B says something that was totally irrelevant to the context at that moment. By using this strategy, B intends to divert A's attention from the previous speech context.

A double entendre is a statement or word that is deliberately misperceived or misconstrued so as to evoke a dual meaning. It means double intention or double meaning. It refers to any use of a word's multiple meanings. Double entendres, when used intentionally, can be fun and entertaining because the idea is to get a laugh both from people in the know, and from people who do not get the second meaning. Example: A: *How do you make a cat drink?* B: *Easy, put it in the liquidizer* [11]. In this example, "a cat

drink” can have two meanings; drink for a cat and make the cat to drink.

Transformations of frozen expression happens when the speaker transforms well-known words, clichés, or proverbs into novel statements, i.e., complaint of a bald man: “*Hair today, gone tomorrow.*” In contrast, a pun is humorous use of a word that evokes a second meaning. It is usually based on a homophone, a word with a different meaning that sounds the same. The jokes come from the confusion of the two meanings. For example:

Hammo: Is there anything else you need for your procedure?

Phil: Um, I think I'm supposed to have ice cream.

Hammo: Hmm. Actually, I don't.

Phil: I'm sorry. Is it a vasecto-you, or a vasecto-me?

Contrast is a rhetorical device that brings out differences between two subjects, places, persons, things, or ideas. There are two types of contrast: point-by-point contrast deals with a series of feature of two subjects and then present their contrast, discussing all points successively. Then subject-by-subject contrast where one subject is thoroughly discussed before moving on to the next. In humour creation, comedians can contrast places, towns, people, families, animals, etc. Through contrast, audience is shocked thus heightening the dramatic effects.

Unintentional Humour

Martin [2] says that there are two types of unintentional or accidental humour; accidental physical humour and accidental linguistic humour. Accidental physical humour includes minor mishaps and pratfalls such as the person slipping on a banana peel or spilling a drink on one’s shirt. These sorts of events are funny when they occur in a surprising and incongruous manner and when the person experiencing them is not seriously hurt or embarrassed. This type of humour also forms the basis of slapstick and screwball comedy.

Accidental linguistic humour arises from misspellings, mispronunciations, errors in logic, and the kinds of speaker confusions called Freudian slips, malapropisms, and spoonerisms. This type of unintentional humour occurs, for example, in newspaper headlines in which an ambiguity creates a humorous alternative meaning, e.g., “*Prostitutes appeal to pope*”, “*Dr. Ruth talks about sex with newspaper editors*”, “*Red tape holds up bridge*”. Spoonerisms are a speech error in which the initial sounds of two or more words are transposed, creating an unintended and humorous new meaning, e.g., a man said to have proposed a toast to Queen Victoria by saying “*Three cheers for our queer old dean*” [2].

Stereotypes

This is a mental concept which governs the process of perception and the individual’s feelings. It entails having preformed opinions, or impressions of a broad group, that are based on a small sample, or even no sample at all. Normally, while dealing with the world outside, the individual inevitably draws a picture or image in his mind not based on personal experience. Many of us have some idea of different factors and phenomena even before we face them in reality. We learn them from our cultures. It can also be defined as a schematic standardized representation of a social phenomenon or object usually emotionally coloured and resistant which expresses a person’s habitual attitude to any phenomenon, formed under the influence of social conditions and previous experience.

Stereotype is a fixed mental impression or pattern which is believed to represent a type of person or event [12]. Stereotyping has been serving multiple purposes in the society that include cognitive and motivational dynamics [13]. In the media industry, stereotyping is born of the need to convey information about characters in a simplified way and to inculcate in the audience expectations about the actions of portrayed characters [14]. Stereotypes are significant in comedy because they not only help to establish instantly recognizable behavioural patterns but also the portrayal of such patterns constitutes a comic relief [15].

Ethnic stereotyping is a misrepresentation of an ethnic group using what are thought to be representative characteristics of members of that ethnic group. Ethnic labels are the images that are used to misrepresent an ethnic group, and they relay underlying messages about cultural norms, status, behavioural patterns and group think of an ethnic group. Ethnic stereotyping is very common in ethnic comedy. Stereotyping is seen as a simplified mental picture of an individual or group of people who share certain stereotypical qualities [16]. Audience in stand-up comedy find stereotyping entertaining and the exaggerated portrayals are easy to understand.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive qualitative research design since it emphasized on the phenomenon of language use in its context by interpreting the data. It was conducted using *Churchill Show* as its object where selected performances of stand-up comedians were used. Therefore, the main data for the study was in the form of utterances taken from *Churchill Show*. The boundaries of the utterance were determined by a change of speech subject. The primary source of data was a video tape entitled *Churchill Show*. The secondary source of data was the script of videotaped *Churchill Show* retrieved from the internet. To achieve the required data, purposive sampling technique was used. The selection was limited to recent volumes of the

Churchill Show. There were 23 selected comedies from various presentations from the year 2011 to 2019 because they were the most appropriate to represent the flouting of maxims of Cooperative Principle to create humour. The study used content analysis as the main instrument of data collection and presentation. In collecting the data, the research applied *simak* and *catat* (read and write) technique or attentive observation [17]. This technique is aimed at recording relevant data that will answer the research questions. These techniques were appropriate since the research data were in form of utterances.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Use of Irony and Maxim Flouting

Irony has everything to do with the speaker's intentions. In an ironic utterance, there is a surface meaning and an underlying meaning. According to RT irony entails a specific use of echoic utterances. Echoic utterance is an utterance which "achieves most of its relevance by expressing the speaker's attitude to views he or she tacitly attributes to someone else" [7]. Verbal irony entails an expression of dissociation on the speaker's part from the views being expressed and echoed. Zhao [18] asserts that when it comes to the comprehension of irony, relevance lies in the various incongruities that exist in an ironic utterance. Ironic utterances gain attention because there is an incompatibility between the information being provided through the contextual elements and what is being explicated by the utterance. In *Churchill Show*, comedians bring out this form in many of their jokes as they flout the conversational maxims as seen in the following selected performances.

...my dad msee Nzioka Mbithi Kinego used to believe that for you to raise a child treat him like a servant. Babangu alikuwa anatake advantage of the bible saying that 'spare the rod spoil the child.' Alikuwa anatuamsha saa kumi na mbili mimi na kimondiu, anaituita sitting room halafu anarudi bedroom, anachukua kiboko anaanza kutuchapa bure, akifikia kimondiu anaanza kucomplain. Dad unatuchapia nini sasa, sisi tumedo. Mimi najua hamja do anything lakini najua nikitoka kwa hii nyumba niende mtado kitu (laughter) yenye nawapatia ni deposit, hii ni depo (laughter) akienda kimondiu anachiajilia mtaani anapigana na watoto, anatumkana wamama. Wamama wanamwambia, 'kimondiu wewe, tutakuja kuambia babako, utachapwa.' Kimondiu anawaaambia, 'elewa mimi nisha chapwa, nisha chapwa labdha akuje atupatie saucer. (Laughter). (My dad Mr. Nzioka Mbithi Kinego used to believe that for you to bring up your child well you should treat them like servants. He used to take advantage of the bible where it says, 'spare the rod spoil the child' he used to wake us up at six in the

morning Kimondiu and I and takes us to the sitting room then he goes to the bedroom and gets a cane. He would then cane us and kimondiu would ask, 'what have we done so that you cane us' dad would say, I know you have not done anything but I know once I leave this house you will misbehave so I am giving you a deposit, a depo... after he leaves the house, kimondiu would go out and fights with children and insult women. The women would tell him that they will report him to his father who will cane him but kimondiu would tell them that he has been caned may be he will give them saucer).

In this comedy, the comedian is being ironical. He begins his narrative by saying that their father used to treat them like servants only for the audience to learn that they have been woken up to receive canes not to do any manual work as servants would. Another irony is the fact that they are caned for a mistake not yet done. Their father is assuming that since they are children, they will not fail to make mistakes. From the encyclopaedic knowledge of the audience, punishments are never given prior to a mistake but after. This ironic twist creates an incongruity which leads to laughter.

The implication is that the comedian is criticizing or ridiculing their father's way of dispensing discipline. The father overdoes it and has resulted in Kimondiu being unruly in a way he is trying to do bad things to justify the punishment given earlier. Ironically, the punishment has failed and the boy seems "immunized to caning", thus the allegation that he will be given a "saucer." Normally anything that is overdone becomes counterproductive. The biblical saying, "*spare the rod and spoil the child*" has ironically become, "*use the rod and spoil the child.*" The comedian in adopting an ironic attitude seems to be telling parents not to be overbearing when disciplining their children.

According to Gricean model, irony is sldo analyzed as an overt violation of the maxim of quality. This violation forces the hearer to search for related proposition in order to save the application of the maxim. The related proposition is the opposite of what was said, which is derived as an implicature of the utterance. Relevance theory relies on the idea that irony is a form of echoic use involving an implicit dissociative attitude. It treats irony as a case of interpretive use involving an utterance that is being used to metarepresent another representation it resembles. On this view, irony is seen as a form of implicit echoic use where a dissociative and humorous attitude is conveyed. For Grice, the interpretation of irony depends on the hearer's ability to recognize that the speaker has overtly violated the maxim of quality in order to convey a related true implicature which in the case of irony is the contradiction of the proposition literally expressed [19]. The recovery of the implicature

either resolves the assumption that the speaker has obeyed the Cooperative Principle and maxims in saying what the speaker said or explains why a maxim has been flouted.

The interpretation of irony depends on the hearer's ability to recognize that the speaker is pretending to be a certain sort of person seriously producing an utterance and simultaneously expressing his/her own attitude to it and the sort of person who would produce or believe it. Cultural norms are widely represented in human minds and are always available for ironic echoing. Implicated utterances can be used to interpret someone's thoughts or a group of people's thoughts. According to Relevance theory, "these thoughts can be interpreted as the understanding of someone else as long as they achieve relevance. Speakers can also give words which make a reference to what they think – what they have in mind, what they believe or what they have heard before on a given situation" [19].

In irony, there is a discrepancy between representation and the state of affairs that it purports to represent. This is shown in the following joke about marriage where society expects the wives to cook and take good care of their husbands.

Women will agree with me when I say that you need to be treated as queens by your men. Kenyan ladies need to be treated well, kuna vile unatreat dame yako asiwahi kukuacha. For example, you work from eight to eight, wee ni mtu unaenda job. Then you find your wife hasn't cooked for you. Hajakupikia kwa sababu she was bored, the soap opera was there, the president wanted to read the cabinet lakini akachelewesha akaboeka. What you are supposed to do as a man is enda jikoni, cook for your wife, mletee chakula mezani, mpatie. Halafu akikula kuja hapo nyuma yake massage nazo... (Laughter). (Women will agree with me when I say that you need to be treated as queens by your men. Kenyan ladies need to be treated well. There is a way a girl can be treated so that she can't leave you. For example, you work from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and when you return home, your wife hasn't cooked for you. This is because she was bored; she was to watch a soap opera but it delayed because the president was to announce the new cabinet. What you are supposed to do as a man is go to the kitchen and cook for your wife, bring the food to the table, give it to her and as she eats massage her.)

This comedy has so many ironic incidents. For instance, the husband works the whole day while the wife sits and watches TV and fails to attend to her responsibilities. The husband arrives very late in the evening, and is expected to cook for his obviously lazy

wife. Then surprisingly, she is supposed to massage her as she eats. Incongruity is achieved with the echo being derived from African social expectation where the wife is expected to be the one to serve and pamper her husband. Indeed, in this story, the husband is the one who is tired from working all day and deserves a massage. The discrepancy between the state of affairs and the reality creates a punch line of the joke.

The comedians in *Churchill Show* also flout the relation maxim by employing irony as a strategy. In this case, the comedian echoes a representation that will distance them from the content by overlaying it with a humorous attitude. The echoing effect means that the focus of attention shifts from the content of the representation to the attitude with which it is being echoed, i.e. humour. As Sperber and Wilson [7] argue, "Verbal irony invariably involves the implicit expression of an attitude, and [...] the relevance of an ironical utterance invariably depends, at least in part, on the information it conveys about the speaker's attitude to the opinion echoed." This is seen in the following comedy where the performer talks about known Kiswahili proverbs, explaining them in a humorous way.

Eldoret... (addresses a member in the audience) watu wa Eldoret mkienda kanisa mniombe, nikikula mchele yenu nikailamba nkatema kwa tumbo sishibii. Alafu methali zingine mnatuchanganya eti, 'uzee ni dhahabu.' Si wazee watakaa kiti ya uongozi kwa muda mrefu. Watatoka kwa kiti kweli... hawezi. Kwetu kuna wahenga pia; methali yao inalenga vijana, 'ujana ni moshi.' Tutakosa kufuta bangi! (laughter). (Eldoret... people of Eldoret, when you go to church pray for me. When I eat your rice, I don't get satisfied. Then there are some proverbs like 'old is gold.' Tell this to those in power and they will never relinquish their power. Where I come from, our wise men say 'youth is smoke'; with this will the youth fail to smoke bang?)

The comedian assigns negative connotations to the two proverbs referenced in the joke. "Old is gold" usually glorifies maturity. It means there is so much wisdom in old age. Ironically, the comedian uses it to allude to how some old and senile politicians use the proverb as an excuse to cling to power for longer than is necessary. The saying "Ujana ni moshi" (youth is smoke) has also been represented ironically. The comedian reveals his attitude towards the youth who seem to waste away in drugs. The proverb ideally expresses the fact that as a stage in life, youth is short-lived and one should spend their youthful years wisely. However, the comedian, in a comical twist, insinuates that the proverb is telling the youth to smoke bang, since youth is smoke.

In the flouting of manner maxim, irony comes about when the comedian presents a joke that the audience has to use more cognitive effort to arrive at the speaker's intentions. This is in the case of ambiguous utterances where the comedian uses the language of the joke interpretively. As Sperber and Wilson [7] observe, "any representation with a propositional form, and in particular any utterance can be used to represent things in two ways, it can represent some state of affairs by virtue of its propositional form being true of that state of affairs; in this case we will say that the representation is a description, or that it is used descriptively; or it can represent some other representation which also has a propositional form - a thought for instance - in virtue of a resemblance between the two propositional forms; in this case we will say that the first representation is an interpretation of the second one, or that it is used interpretively." The following joke exemplifies this argument.

...ukitaka kujua msichana ni mjaluo. Hasemangi hi - anatoa Samsung phone (removes a phone from his pocket). Anasema hii (smiling) (laughter). (... If you want to know a girl is a Luo, she will not tell you. Instead she will remove her Samsung phone and show it to you.)

In this joke, the state of affairs is the description of the process of identification of a girl from the Luo community. The comedian alleges that Luo girls use a Samsung mobile phone as their mark of identity and sophistication. Ironically, the phone is not exclusively owned by Luo girls. This joke describes a stereotype about the nature of the Luo community. They are stereotypically known to be proud, lavish and showy. The use of the Samsung phone in this joke is in reference to its price. The phone is relatively expensive, but it does not mean people from other communities cannot afford it. As such, the incongruous aspect in this joke is the fact that the phone is not exclusive to the Luo community.

Use of Hyperbole and Maxim Flouting in *Churchill Show*

Hyperbole is a case where a speaker communicates something in an exaggerated way. Cuddon [20] defines hyperbole as "a figure of speech which contains an exaggeration for emphasis." Comedians use hyperbole to create humour by overstating or exaggerating familiar situations. In hyperbole, the incongruity or discrepancy is between the exaggerated statement and the reality it claims to describe. As such, comedians use it to strengthen and exaggerate the truth. According to Sperber and Wilson [21], hyperbole is "the loose use of language on a continuum with approximation, category extension and other cases of narrowing and broadening of meaning." Cognitively, hyperbole uses enrichment, reinforcement, broadening and narrowing of mental processes.

Hyperbolic utterances occur when linguistically encoded meaning is broadened to varying degrees.

Comedians in *Churchill Show* often flout the quantity maxim to exaggerate some situations and thus heighten humour. In so doing, they tell the truth about society but in an exaggerated way, as shown in the following joke. The joke is about a caller to a broadcasting house. In the joke, both the announcer and the caller speak in English, but the caller has a deep Luo accent.

You know I used to hear people say Luo is a lifestyle I never understood what it meant until two weeks ago a certain Luo man made a phone call to a certain radio station.

Caller: Hello, we are on our way to Thika. We are going to support Gor Mahia.

Announcer: OK sir, how many are you?

Caller: Do not ask me how many we are; ask how many cars have we. (Laughter)

Announcer: OK sir, I am sorry. How many cars do you have?

Caller: Do not ask, ask me which models? (Laughter)

Announcer: OK I am really sorry, which model sir?

Caller: We are having 30 Mercedes and 4NZE's. That means we have 30 Luos and 4 Kikuyus.

In this joke, the caller exaggerates the questions that the radio announcer asks him. He does this because he wants to show off. He guides the announcer into asking about the models and number of the cars they were driving. The model of cars and their number is an exaggeration. He even exaggerates the model of cars driven by the other people with whom they are travelling. In so doing, he demeans those who drive cars that are considered less sophisticated. This exaggeration is important to the comedian because he is contrasting two ethnic communities who are known for their different ways of spending money and time. The Luo represented by the caller are stereotypically known for their arrogance and lavish spending while the Kikuyu are though to be enterprising but less aggressive on spending. The latter also value time for every minute must be spent making money not leisure. The audience thus inference all this from their encyclopedic knowledge of the two communities mentioned in the joke. Particularized implicature is used due to shared context between the comedian and the audience.

Comedians in *Churchill Show* also flout the quality maxim to create humour through exaggeration. For instance, in the presentation below, the comedian flouts the quality maxim by stating that Chebet scorned him when he bought her a Mercedes Benz S Class as a birthday present.

... It's a lady's birthday... here in Nairobi unmlatea surprise or you buy a gift for your

girlfriend. A guy in Nairobi ‘funga macho’ tara, tara, tara.... surprise... ‘Oh babe, oh my God umeninunulia vitz for my birthday... thank you’. I bought Chebet a Mercedes S Class thinking it was a perfect gift. Huku hatusemi tara, tara. Tunasema, ‘Chebet, Chebet, Chebet, ptoo ndio hiyo!’ Chebet’s reaction surprised me...haa! ‘Nini hii... wee mjinga sana. Hii kitu itanipeleka wapi penye miguu yangu haiwezi? Wee mjinga sana, ungeninunulia sports shoes.’ (Laughter) (During a lady’s birthday here in Nairobi the lady appreciates whatever gift a guy brings her. A guy will buy a gift then tells the lady to close her eyes then says, ‘tara, tara, tara! Surprise! When the lady opens her eyes, she sees a vitz and she appreciates. I bought a Mercedes S Class for Chebet as a gift for her birthday. Her reaction surprised me. ‘You are so stupid. Where will this thing take me where my legs can’t? You are so stupid! You should have bought me sports shoes instead!’)

It is puzzling that the comedian’s girlfriend (Chebet) preferred sport shoes to a posh car for her birthday. Of course, this is a blatant exaggeration since no amount of running or walking can achieve the distance that a car can go. Again, least effort is used by the audience as they infer that the comedian is alluding to the athletic nature of his girlfriend since she Kalenjin, an ethnic group in Kenya known for their athletic prowess. It is also from this encyclopedic knowledge that the audience infers that the athlete can afford such an expensive car.

In *Churchill Show* some comedians flout the relation maxim by exaggerating irrelevant issues or situations in their presentations. According to Relevance theory, if the utterance is not as informative as required or seemingly irrelevant, untrue, a search for a more relevant interpretation worth being processed may be activated despite the supplementary mental effort required the reward of this extra effort in processing is pleasant surprise and laughter [19]. Much as the comedian exaggerates irrelevancies, the audience will still achieve optimal relevance through their encyclopedic and contextual knowledge.

... Movie ni nini... movie ni movie... Rambo 1, Rambo 2, Rambo 3, and last but not least Rambo ka Rambo. The most [...] Soundtrack-tere, tere, ngoma, ngoma, ngori. Soundtrack ya wahindi ziko na echo (laughter) batal, batal, batal, twing, twing, twing (laughter). Ukipata movie ya wahindi usifuate utapotea, “Patel” dudu, dudu, “Patel am talking to you, Just wanted to say, good morning”. Uganda movie is the best movie ya action but soundtrack ni ya cartoon. Tweng, tweng, wee, wee..., Jamaa akienda kupiga risasi ni ‘tukulu’ (laughter). Nigerian movie utajua gun ni fake (laughter).

“Oga, I say talk now. Oga you just committed suicide, last chance am giving you and if you don’t talk I’ll shoot you with this gun” (laughter). Kenya, locally or local movie zinaanza kama action but mwizi ako pekee yake na polisi amejipoint na gun (prolonged laughter). (...What is a movie? A movie is a movie. Rambo 1, Rambo 2, Rambo 3 and last but not least Rambo ka Rambo. The most... soundtrack tere, tere, tere, ngoma, ngoma, ngori. The Indian movie’s soundtrack has echos ‘batal, batal, twing, twing’. If you get their movie don’t follow it; you will get lost, “Patel dudu, dudu, Patel, I am talking to you. Just wanted to say, good morning.” Uganda has the best action movies but soundtrack is that of cartoons. ‘Tweng, tweng...wee, wee...’ When they shoot you here ‘tukulu’... Nigerian movies you will know the gun is fake. “Oga, I say talk now. Oga, you just committed suicide. I am giving you the last chance and if you don’t talk I will shoot you with this gun.” Kenyan movies, the locally or locals start as action movies but the robber is seen alone and the police seems to be pointing the gun at himself/herself.)

The comedian in this joke exaggerates the soundtracks of movies from various countries. The audience finds this hilarious because of their encyclopedic knowledge about these movies. They have probably watched those movies and can recall the soundtracks therein. There is no narration of any movie but, as Relevance theory puts it, context or background assumptions play a crucial role in human communication process [19]. This helps the audience to make assumptions about the speaker’s intentions in the joke. The laughter exhibited in this joke means the hearer has selected the correct context to interpret the utterance; in this case, the exaggerated soundtracks being related to the movies from the countries exemplified.

Whenever an ambiguity is exaggerated at the explicit level, additional processing efforts are required for humour to be experienced. The following jokes explain this idea best:

... Ukitaka kua usiangelie Mount Kenya. (If you want to marry, do not face Mount Kenya).

In this joke, the comedian is playing with a common stereotyp about women from Nyeri, Central Kenya, which is the location of Mount Kenya. Many incidents of husband beating have emerged from this region over the years. Yet, such incidents do not imply that all the women from the region are husband beaters. However, the comedian seems to be making a final declaration to men not to ever think of looking for a wife from that region.

Use of Satire and Maxim Flouting in *Churchill Show*

Satire is a sub-category of ridicule that is used to make fun of or ridicule specific persons, institutions or events. According to Koestler [20], satire is the “verbal caricature which distorts characteristic features of an individual or society by exaggeration and simplification.” The aim of satire is to improve an individual, thing or idea by ridiculing their shortcomings or mistakes. Instead of just laughter, satire makes people reflect and make improvements.

Comedians in *Churchill Show* employ satire as a strategy to flout the quantity maxim as they ridicule the subjects of their jokes as shown in the example below.

When you get into a matatu, there are three characters; character number 1; conductor; number 2; passenger; number 3; pastors. Yaani hawa mapastors mi huwapenda sana, mi huwamiss nikiingia kwa matatu na hawako. Matatu inaenda and all of a sudden pastor anaamka anaanza kupreach. ‘Ndungu wapendwa ningependa kuwaambia kwamba hili ni wakati mwingine mungu ametujalia. Wasafiri wenzangu, bwana asifiwe. Ningependa tuangalie neno la Solomoni. Solomoni alipokuwa akitembea... inaonekana neno leo haliwasaidii. Pia mimi ninakuwa muuzaji wa madawa na niko na haka kadawa, ni kadawa la hibernation kama unasumbuana na landlord ukikunywa haka kadawa unadisappear wiki moja, bwana asifiwe.’ Akiona ni kama hamtaki kununua dawa anachange ‘... Basi inaonekana hamtaki dawa; ninakuaga agent wa maploti hapa Syokimau. Ukitaka 40 by 4 niko nazo hapa. Niko na details zote.’ Akishindwa kabisa ana give up. Pastor wa Mlolongo ni ma comedian: ‘Ningependa kuanza na introduction. Kwa majina naitwa Dogi, yaani Douglas. Leo ningependa tuangazie neno la mtume Jeroboam (laughter). Mtu aseme Jeroboam. Jeroboam alipokuwa akitembea katika mji wa Gethsemane..., Wachana kwanza na Jeroboam. Tuangalie Solomoni (laughter). Solomoni alipokuwa... Wachana na Solomoni (laughter). Tuangalie Yuda (more laughter).’ Akishindwa anafika mahali anasema, ‘Tafadhali tusienjoiane. Mmimi sijasomea theolojia. Nipatieni ile mnanipatia nikakule lunch.’ (prolonged laughter).

(When you get inside those matatus, there are three characters. Character number 1, conductor, number 2 passenger, number 3 pastors. I love these pastors and I miss them, especially when I board a matatu and they are not there. The matatu is moving and all of a sudden, a pastor stands up and starts preaching: ‘Brothers, I would like to tell you that this is an opportunity that God has given

us my fellow passengers, praise the Lord. I would like us to look at Solomon. When Solomon was walking... Seems like the word of God is not helping you today. I also sell herbal medicine and I have this medicine for hibernation. If your landlord is nagging you, this medicine will make you disappear for one week, praise the lord.’ If he realizes you have no interest in the medicine, he will tell you that he is also an agent of plots in Syokimau and anyone who wants 40 by 4 he has the details. On realizing none is interested he gives up. But mlolongo pastors are funny: ‘I would like to introduce myself. My name is Dogi (sheng for dog), meaning Douglas. Today, I would like us to look at the word of apostle Jeroboam. Somebody say jeroboam. When Jeroboam was walking in the town of Gethsamane... Let’s leave him... We look at Solomon. When Solomon was walking... We leave Solomon. We look at Judah.’ Realizing he won’t succeed, he says, ‘Please let us not enjoy each other. I have not studied theology. Just give me what you can I go have lunch’).

In the above example, the comedian shows the extent to which some people go to make money. In Kenyan public transport vehicles, especially buses, there are those who board and, in the course of the journey, begin to preach. They know that since people are travelling, appealing to their spirituality is easier. The comedian in his narration is exposing the flaws of these pretentious pastors. They have scanty knowledge of the Bible and often misrepresent facts. The first ‘pastor’, after failing to convince people on his biblical knowledge, resorts to selling herbal medicine, using a sensitive subject of rent to lure customers. The second ‘pastor’ knows nothing in the Bible. The audience’s encyclopedic knowledge of such pastors creates humour. The events referenced in the humour are common encounters in public transport. Through humour, the comedian satirizes these so-called ‘pastors’ in the hope that they would stop such practices.

The comedians also flout the truthfulness (quality) maxim to satirize certain persons, institutions and events as shown in the following joke.

...Shule za Karen eeh... mwalimu wa hesabu akiingia anafunza na vigour inarelate mpaka mtoto anakuwa encouraged. Mwalimu anaingia na kusema, ‘Good morning class’ today is all about mathematics, all about ...mathematics. All about addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. John, let me ask you, if I give you ten million shillings and you want to buy a Range Rover Sports for ten million. You go to the buyer and he tells you it is ten million, and you negotiate and the buyer agrees to sell the car to you at 9.5 million. How much are you remaining

with?' John answers 500 thousand. 'Very good.' In Kiambu, mwalimu anaingia na kusema, 'Habari zenu. Leo ni hesabu, kuongeza, kutoa, kumultiply. Njoroge hii sawli ni yako personally. Tukipatia baba yako one thousand (laughter) kama jana, akunywe mia nane (laughter), alipe hamsini mutura, akose kumi, apigwe apelekwe hospitali, alipe mia moja, atabaki na ngapi?' (prolonged laughter). (In Karen schools, teachers teach with passion till the child is encouraged. When a teacher goes to class he starts with greetings, then the subject like, 'Today is all about mathematics, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.' And he uses live examples. For example, 'John, if I give you 10 million to buy a Range Rover Sports. You go to the buyer, negotiate and he agrees to sell the car to you at 9.5 million. How much do you remain with?' John answers 500,000. The teacher reinforces positively. In Kiambu... the teacher doesn't even greet the learners warmly: 'How are you? Today it is mathematics. Njoroge, this question is yours personally. Suppose I gave your father one thousand yesterday. He drunk 800 shillings, bought some mutura for 50 shillings and failed to pay 10 bob, he is beaten up and ended up in hospital where he pays 100 bob. How much will he remain with?')

In this comedy, the two schools are compared in order to satirize how pupils are taught in the rural areas. Schools that handle children from rich homes in Nairobi are shown do better at teaching than those in rural areas. The teacher in the rural school is satirized for not teaching properly. The rural teacher has no respect for his pupils. Since he knows Njoroge's background (especially his drunken and irresponsible father), the teacher chooses to humiliate the pupil during lessons. The encyclopedic knowledge of rural schools in the audience creates humour. The humour message in this joke is conveyed by searching for optimal relevance, which is made possible to the audience through contextual effects. Huang [22] asserts that cognitive effect is the outcome of interaction between the newly impinging stimulus and the subset of the assumptions that are already established in a cognitive system. In the joke, the newly impinging stimulus is the way the humorist mocks how learners are humiliated by their teachers in rural schools. To understand the satire, the audience must go through the processing effort to yield satisfactory interpretation resulting in laughter.

The *Chruchil Show* comedians also flout the relevance maxim to critique some issues in the society. This is seen in the following joke.

.... Mtu wa taa niwakashie taa kwa DJ (laughter). Wasichana....eeh... (laughter). Mnaona... Hebu tumisie kitu hapo (a song is

played). Sasa on huyu anaitwa DJ E, lakini uso inakaa A. E ni failure hebu kwanza bado nimulikie: kipara inamulika 2019. Wasichana wachaneni na sura supu, mmesikia community husbands: ndio hii. Hawa ni wale wanakupenda wiki mbili, wiki ya tatu wanachukuwa roho yako na kukanyagia mpaka inakaa minced meat. Talking of community husbands, kuna hawa wasichana wanasoma news, nawapenda, ni warembo, lakini wanakuwa na temporary memory loss kadogo tu. After news kuna kuintroduce the guest. Tuseme the guest ni president, 'And our guest today you all know him. He is the fourth president of Kenya, son of the first president of Kenya, married to Margaret, and together, have three children.' Alafu anapindukia president na kusema, 'Karibu, introduce yourself.' Aseme nini! Shida inakuanga ni nini? Producers hamuandikiangi au nini? (laughter). (The person in charge of lighting, please turn on the lights at the DJs. Ladies...Please. DJ mix some song for us. Now look at this one; he is called DeeJay E, yet his face looks like A. E stands for failure. Wait, please more light. His baldness lights 2019. Ladies don't be taken in by good looks. Such men are called community husbands. They are those who love you for only two weeks and the third week, they break your heart to pieces. Talking of community husbands, there are these beautiful ladies who broadcast news. It's like they have temporary memory loss. After news they normally have a guest. Let's say the guest is the president. They will say, 'Our guest today, you all know him. He is the fourth president of Kenya, son of the first president of Kenya, married to Margaret Kenyatta and together they have three children.' Then she will turn to the president and say, 'Please introduce yourself.' What do you want him to say? What is the problem? Is it with the producers who don't direct them well or what?

In the above performance, the comedian satirizes those men who are considered handsome and who have relationships with multiple women. She calls them community husbands to mean they are never satisfied with one woman. They break women's hearts mercilessly. She cautions ladies against such men. According to Relevance theory, humans choose to find the relevant information from the humour utterance produced by the speaker [19]. During communication, the speakers are open to a great amount of contextual information. As such, this comedy makes sense to them since most members of the audience may have been heartbroken by such men. In the last part of the joke, the comedian criticizes how newscasters take time to introduce studio guests. The encyclopedic knowledge of

the audience on such happenings leads them to optimal relevance: laughter. The audience shares in ridiculing the newscasters who make such blunders on air.

Satire and Flouting of Manner Maxim

Through flouting of maxim manner, *Churchill Show* comedians are also able to critique various societal issues, as shown in the joke that follows.

...kama mwanaume... I fell in love kadame anaitwa Shiko. Baba yangu akasikia rumours niko na dame. Baba akaiingia kwa nyumba, "Matanga ni kesho, matanga ni kesho, matanga ni kesho" (laughter). "Hatuwezi changanya masomo na mapenzi, ni mtu achague. Njoro, uko na girlfriend?"

"Ndio baba."

"Anaitwa nani?"

"Shiko."

"Masomo ama mapenzi!"

"Baba, masomo"

"Wanjiku anaishi wapi?"

"Baba yake ni nani?"

"Ni chomelea."

"Chomelea garai, masomo ama mapenzi."

"Ako na kazi ingine?"

"Ni fundi wa mbao."

"Masomo ama mapenzi."

After sometime nikafall in love na another beautiful lady Veronicah. Rumors ikafikia baba yangu. "Mazishi ni kesho, mazishi ni kesho. Masomo ama mapenzi."

"Baba ni masomo."

"Veronicah ni nani?"

"Veronicah, baba yake ni lawyer na mama yake ni daktari. Veronicah ndio anajenga hizi flats. Baba yake ana three buses za kuenda Mombasa, trailers tatu za kuenda Zambia."

"Love is blind... amka."

(... As a man I fell in love with a girl called Shiko. My father heard rumors that I had a girlfriend. He came to the house and said, "Tomorrow will be somebody's funeral, tomorrow will be somebody's funeral, tomorrow will be somebody's funeral. We cannot mix education with love affairs. On must choose. Njoro, do you have a girlfriend?"

"Yes, father."

"What is her name?"

"Wanjiko"

"Where does she live? Education or love?"

"Education."

"Who is her father?"

"He repairs old items like basins and sufurias."

"Does he have another job?"

"Yes, father he is a carpenter."

"Education or love!"

"Father, education."

After sometime, I fell in love with a beautiful lady, Veronicah. Father heard about it again.

He came home and said, "Burial is tomorrow. Education or love?"

"Father, education."

"Who is Veronicah?"

"Veronicah her father is a lawyer and her mother is a doctor. Veronicah is the one building these flats. They have three buses going to Mombasa, three trailers going that go to Zambia."

"Love is blind, you can stand up."

In this comedy, satire comes out when the comedian fell in love with Veronicah who comes from a rich family. The comedian all along has been restrained as his father insists that his son must choose between learning and pursuing love. His first girlfriend comes from a poor family. The punchline of the joke comes when the audience realizes the incongruities between the comedian's father's denial of Wanjiko and the acceptance of Veronicah, the rich girl. The encyclopedic knowledge that no one can resist material wealth, education notwithstanding creates humour. In this joke, relevance is achieved when the audience get the twist in the events of the utterance that the comedian's father is materialistic and not one who wants his son to complete his education first before falling in love.

Use of Stereotypes and Maxim Flouting in *Churchill Show*

Stereotypes are mental concepts that govern the process of perception and the individual's feelings. They are preformed opinions or impressions of a broad group, which are based on a small sample or even no sample at all. Stereotypes serve many purposes in society, including cognitive and motivational dynamics [13]. In the media industry, stereotyping is born of the need to convey information about characters in a simplified way and to inculcate in the audience expectations about the actions of portrayed characters [14]. Stereotypes are significant in comedy because they not only help to establish instantly recognizable behavioural patterns but the portrayal of such patterns also constitutes a comic relief [15]. In stand-up comedy, the audience finds stereotyping entertaining and the exaggerated portrayal is easy to understand and easily lead them to achieve optimal relevance.

The comedians in *Churchill Show* flout the quantity maxim by exaggerating the qualities of some characters from certain ethnic groups in order to create humour as shown in the following datum. In the example below, people from the Kenyan coast are stereotyped.

...you people from the coast are too wordy. I went looking for my friend and I decided to ask a lady for direction. 'Am looking for Runa's residence'.

Lady: the one whose brother died of drug abuse? That one even his wife ran away from him.

I was asking if you could direct me to his residence.

Lady: not only that. (laughter). He was dismissed from the Port. (laughter). He is no longer working at the Port. (laughter).

You talk for one hour and then she tells you, "Or I accompany you" (laughter).

In this excerpt, the women from the coastal region are stereotyped. He is looking for a friend's house but the lady from the coast gives him information he did not need or ask for. She is portrayed as the typical gossiper or idler who claims to know too much about other people and is ready to reveal unsolicited information. The audience laughs because of the encyclopedic knowledge of the coastal women and their stereotypical nature of wasting away time engaging in idle talks. The stimulus is relevant, which is why there is so much laughter throughout the performance. This connects with the fact that an input becomes relevant to a person if it connects with background information already available to the audience by answering a question he had in mind, improving his knowledge on a certain topic, setting a doubt, confirming suspicion or correcting a mistaken impression [21].

The comedians in *Churchill Show* flout the quantity maxim by distorting the truth about the characters they are stereotyping, as shown below.

Mi husema ukitaka mboch enda Ukambani. Wanakuwa wapo sana. Wanafanyana kazi wakiimba. Lakini zile nyimbo wanaimba zina make sense, juu wanaimba venye maisha kwa nyumba iko. Imagine scenario wageni wanaingia kwa nyumba, mboch anafanya kazi akiimba, 'Boss wangu ni matope, bibi yake muanyaji asi...' Usicheze' (laughter). (I normally say that an Ukambani housegirl is the best, because they work as they sing. Their songs make a lot of sense in that they portray how they are treated in that home and their attitude towards her employers. Imagine a scenario where visitors are in the house and the housegirl breaks into her usual songs, 'My boss is trash and his wife is adulterous asi...' Don't joke.)

In this joke, the comedian stereotypes househelps from Kamba land as the best. However, it is evident that the comedian is cautioning the audience to treat these maids well since they are known to embarrass their hosts. The incongruity in this comedy comes when the audience is surprised by the maid saying nasty things about her employer in the hearing of house guests. From the audience's encyclopedic knowledge, such utterances are embarrassing and shameful. According to Yus [23], community members

share cultural assumptions with greater or stereotypical quality that belong to their mutual cultural environment. However, audiences from different backgrounds may obtain different degrees of humour or even fail to get the point of the joke. Stereotypes have inter-cultural validity. In this joke, audience members from the Kamba community may find the joke more hilarious than those from other communities.

The comedians in *Churchill Show* further create stereotypes in their jokes by flouting the relevance maxim, as shown below.

... Mombasa is fun. Matangazo ya mpira from Mombasa FM kati ya Man U na Everton huwezi boeka. Unaweza skiza the whole night. 'Haya sasa Rooney huyo, kampa nani; bado nani... niwie radhi (kwa studio). Hello Halima ... sasa niko na uhondo.... Mama Khadija kaondoka.... Baba Khadija ndio huyo... kapatikana ng'o! Nani... mmee...mmee! Ah Rooney ashafunga (laughter). (... Mombasa is fun. Football commentators from Mombasa FM, a match between Manchester United and Everton. You will never get bored. You can listen to them the whole night. 'Now Rooney there, he has passed it to whom? Still whom? Oh, excuse me... Hello Halima. I have some gossip. Mama Khadija left the house and baba Khadija there with someone [...] Was never caught. Mmee, mmee. Oh, Rooney has scored).

This comedy is a stereotype of the people from the coast who seem to love idle talk so much that they even do it on serious platforms like a radio station. The commentator in this joke forgets he is on air and starts gossiping with a lady. The comedian seems to be suggesting that nothing else matters when someone from the coast has something to share with a friend. The audience's encyclopedic knowledge of the people from the coast leads them to achieve optimal relevance leading to laughter.

In *Churchill Show*, comedians also use stereotypes through flouting manner maxim. This mainly happens when their utterances are ambiguous. In the comedy piece below, an ethnic group known for witchcraft is stereotyped.

... Ukienda kwa night club, kwanza uliza mrembo utakayepata jina lake. Akisema Nduku au Mwendu mwambie, 'Acha nifike hapa kidogo.' Halafu toweka kwa sababu akiwa ni bibi wa mtu tutakusoma kwa gazeti. (laughter). (...When you go to a night club, first ask the name of the lady you will find there. If she says Nduku or Mwendu, excuse yourself and then disappear because if she is someone's wife, we will read about you in the newspapers).

This joke targets the Kamba community who are stereotypically known for practising witchcraft. There is fear when one hears that you have befriended a Kamba woman. In this joke, the comedian warns men to avoid a Kamba married woman because their husbands will use witchcraft to punish those who seduce their women. Since the audience has already inculcated the stereotypes, they decode the intended message in the joke leading to laughter. The contextual knowledge of the Kamba being known for witchcraft enables the audience to get the intended interpretation of the joke.

Use of Self-deprecation and Maxim Flouting in *Churchill show*

Self-deprecation is a type of funny remark targeting oneself as the object of humour. This may be done to demonstrate modesty, to put the listener at ease, or to ingratiate oneself with the listener. Examples of self-deprecation include highlighting the flaws on one's body, speaking of past failures, and acknowledging one's mistakes. The comedians in *Churchill Show* resort to this strategy to render themselves as objects of ridicule in their jokes. Successful self-deprecation makes the audience recognize their own foibles and laugh at themselves because self-deprecation often tends to turn into shared ridicule.

Some comedians in *Churchill Show* self-deprecate by flouting the maxim of quantity. They exaggerate certain facts about themselves in a bid to create humour. In the following performance, the comedian uses himself as one of the characters in the joke.

...my dad msee Nzioka Mbithi Kinego used to believe that for you to raise a child treat him like a servant. Babangu alikuwa anatake advantage of the bible saying that 'spare the rod spoil the child.' Alikuwa anatuamsha saa kumi na mbili mimi na kimondiu, anaita sitting room halafu anarudi bedroom, anachukua kiboko anaanza kutuchapa bure, akifikia kimondiu anaanza kucomplain. Dad unatuchapia nini sasa, sisi tumedo. Mimi najua hamja do anything lakini najua nikitoka kwa hii nyumba niende mtado kitu (laughter) yenye nawapatia ni deposit, hii ni depo (laughter) akienda kimondiu anachiajilia mtaani anapigana na watoto, anatumama wamama. Wamama wanamwambia, 'kimondiu wewe, tutakuja kuambia babako, utachapwa.' Kimondiu anawambia, 'elewa mimi nisha chapwa, nisha chapwa labdha akuje atupatie saucer. (Laughter). (My dad Mr. Nzioka Mbithi Kinego used to believe that for you to bring up your child well you should treat them like servants. He used to take advantage of the bible where it says, 'spare the rod spoil the child' he used to wake us up at six in the morning Kimondiu and I and takes us to the

sitting room then he goes to the bedroom and gets a cane. He would then cane us and kimondiu would ask, 'what have we done so that you cane us' dad would say, I know you have not done anything but I know once I leave this house you will misbehave so I am giving you a deposit, a depo... after he leaves the house, kimondiu would go out and fights with children and insult women. The women would tell him that they will report him to his father who will cane him but kimondiu would tell them that he has been caned maybe he will give them saucer).

In the above example, the comedian uses his story to create humour. This makes his joke sound authentic for the audience are able to identify with him. He is a normal human being brought up in a family and equally being disciplined by his parents whenever he makes mistakes. Through this joke, the audience can see their own weaknesses as parents, the incongruities notwithstanding. This encyclopedic knowledge enables the audience to achieve optimal relevance of the joke leading to laughter at various intervals of the joke.

In failing to observe the truthfulness maxim, comedians also deprecate themselves. In the example below, the comedian violates societal expectations by alleging that his girlfriend seduced him.

Something interesting about that girlfriend of mine is that, sio mimi nilimkatia ni yeye alinikatia. Serious ...I was walking in town and then all of a sudden nikasikia... 'kss, kss'. Kuagalia nyuma ni dame. Dame akaniambia 'Sasa Chipu, aki Chipu unakuanga mfunny, unakuanga muhilarious imagine nakutaka.' Then all of a sudden nikaingia box yake. (... Something interesting that girlfriend of mine is that she approached me, I did not approach her... Serious. One day I was walking in town then I heard, 'Kss, kss'. Looking back it was a girl. The girl told me, 'How are you Chipu. Chipu you are funny and hilarious. Imagine I love you and I want you.' I accepted just like that).

The comedian uses his own experience to create humour. He gives room for people to ridicule him. He presents himself as a coward who cannot approach a girl, something unheard-of. The man is expected to approach and wins over the girl. The incongruity comes about when the comedian says that he accepted the girl's proposal 'just like that'; this creates humour. From the audience encyclopedic knowledge, it is not the girl's responsibility to seduce a man. As such, they are aware the comedian is taking them for a ride and this creates a twist in their expectations.

Comedians also self-deprecate when they include irrelevancies in their comedies as shown in the following comedy.

...nakwambia niko treasurer ya chama yetu. Wakanipa 10 thousand nikaweka kwa mfuko ya right na nilikuwa na 10 thousand yangu kwa mfuko ya left. Nikaenda kufanya window shopping kwa supermarket. Nikaona vitu mzuri na nikaenda kwa counter kuilipia. Nikashika kwa mfuko nikatoa 10 thousand hii ni gani? Ya chama? (laughter). Nikatoa 10 thousand moja nikafanyia window shopping, ya right nikafanyia shopping. Kufika tu hivi watu wa chama walikuwa wanataka pesa yao... umewahi changanyikiwa? Ngoja niende nipadilishe hii pesa sipendi kujichanganya. (I tell you I am a treasurer to our merry go round group. They gave me ten thousand shillings. I kept it in my right pocket. I had my own ten thousand in the left pocket. Then I went window shopping at the supermarket. Then I saw nice things and went to the counter. I didn't know which money was for the group. I used the money from the right pocket. When I reached home, the group members were there. They wanted their money. I realized I had used their money, which I had put in the right pocket. I did not want to look confused. I ask them to give me a minute and then I went and changed the money from the left pocket to the right.)

In the above example, the comedian recalls how he got confused on realizing he had used the group's money which he had placed in the pocket on the right side of his pair of trousers. The question is does it matter which pocket one places money? The comedian portrays himself as being foolish. The audience laughs at the comedian's absurdities. From their encyclopedic knowledge, it does not matter which pocket one places the money, provided it is safe. Besides, both pockets have the amount of money needed by the group members; so, there was no need for the comedian to panic since the money was safe.

The comedians also flout the maxim of manner by using their own examples. In the example below, the comedian tells the audience about her struggles to lose weight.

...2018 imeiisha. Resolution yangu ilikuwa 'lose weight' (laughter). This is three years in a row. Nimeamua niachane nayo kabisaa...mwili yangu ni kama relationship, sitawai ingilia (prolonged laughter). Lakini turudi kwa relationship, wanaume mnatudanganya...sindio wasichana... Wanasema ni colour blind lakini wanajua wasichana light-skinned...Turudi kwa weight loss. Shida nisilose weight ni mkate. Kwanza sliced naona hizo slices mbili ni kama

wananipigia makofi na kuniambia kuja. Nikipata nakula sana na ndio mimi huyu. (... 2018 is over. My resolution was to lose weight. This is three years in a row and I have decided to abandon it completely. My body is like relationships, I will never enter into any. But let us go back to relationships. Men you deceive us, is it not so ladies? They say they are colour blind, yet they like light-skinned women... Let us go back to weight loss. The reason I cannot lose weight is bread. I love bread, especially sliced. The two pieces seem to be clapping for me and saying 'come', and I find myself eating more, and this is me.)

In the above example, the comedian, perhaps like every member of the audience, has set resolutions each year, which she fails to achieve. In 2018, she had resolved to lose weight and still failed. She is sincere in the sense that no matter how hard she tries, she can never succeed because of her love for bread. She likens her bid to lose weight to matters of relationships, which she says she will never try. In so doing, she alludes to frustrations that are common in love relationships and with which everyone in the audience could probably relate. The encyclopedic knowledge on how difficult it is to keep resolutions and maintain love relationships lead to the incongruity in this comedy and thus laughter.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Comedians in *Churchill Show* create different forms of humour by taking advantage of rhetorical techniques such as hyperbole, satire, irony, stereotyping and self-deprecation. Stand-up comedians in *Churchill Show* exaggerate issues that touch on the lives of their audience in order to pass certain lessons concerning the issues. The use of hyperbole renders the humour more obvious and this increases the laughter. Irony is used by the comedians in *Churchill Show* to create discrepancy between what is real (true representation of the world) and what is expected (as represented by the meaning of the utterance in question). Stereotyping is the most exploited device as well. The comedians flout the four conversational maxims as they make fun of various ethnic communities in Kenya. Ethnic humour is a rich area for comedians in humour creation. Satire as a rhetoric device is used by the comedians to create humour. Satirical jokes come from the weaknesses of the characters chosen by the comedians in their jokes. Self-deprecation is exploited by some comedians in this study when they use themselves as objects of their jokes. They seem to be telling the audience that even they are vulnerable and can make mistakes. Through this, the comedians render themselves ridiculous. In future research, a study on the most flouted maxim by comedians in *Churchill Show* can be carried out. Additionally, another study can be conducted on rhetoric strategies that stand-up comedians employ in

Churchill Show and which of the strategies are the most exploited.

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