

**ANALYSIS OF PERSUASIVE AND POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED IN
SERMONS BY PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS IN NYERI COUNTY**

ROBERT WARUI KIBUCHI

**Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in English
Language and Linguistics of Chuka University**

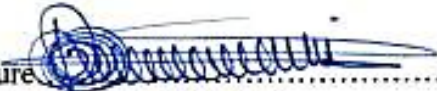
CHUKA UNIVERSITY

OCTOBER, 2025

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION


Declaration


This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for an award of diploma or conferment of degree in any University.

Signature  Date 13/10/2025
Robert Warui Kibuchi
AM13/29252/17

Recommendation

This thesis has been examined, passed and submitted with our approval as University supervisors

Signature  Date 15/10/2025
Prof. Humphrey K. Ileri
Chuka University.

Signature  Date 15/10/2025
Dr. Safari Ntalala
Kirinyaga University.



COPYRIGHT

©2025

All rights reserved. No part of this thesis may be reproduced electronically, including photocopying, recording or any information retrieval system without prior permission in writing from the author or Chuka University.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents Joshua John Kibuchi and Charity Mumbi for their support throughout my academic life. I also dedicate this research to my wife Faith Moraa for being there for me always. May God preserve you to witness the fruits of this hardwork.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work would not have been accomplished without the cooperation of many, but I cannot fail to acknowledge the assistance given by my supervisors I am indebted to my supervisors Dr. Safari Ntalala and Prof. Humphrey K. Ileri who gave me professional assistance needed in order to excel in this journey. My gratitude also goes to the other lecturers in the English and Linguistics Department who took me through the MA course.

Special appreciation to my friend Dr. Emmanuel Njuki for your support and encouragement. My friend Mr. Abraham Mugo your role in this study is pivotal. Finally, I am indebted to my wife Faith Moraa and children: Ella and Elsie for always being my source of motivation. This dissertation is yours as it is mine.

ABSTRACT

Language is used to persuade, dissuade, manipulate, and develop diverse power and political beliefs. Politicians, lobbyists, corporate experts, and religious speakers, among others, achieve enormous power, influence, and profit by skillfully employing words. This research sought to discover the persuasive strategies and politeness used by religious preachers in their discourse within the church context. The purpose of this study was to analyze persuasive and politeness strategies used in sermons by Kenyan Pentecostal preachers in Nyeri county. The objectives that guided this study were; to describe the persuasive strategies used by Pentecostal preachers to execute their persuasion agenda and to analyze politeness strategies used by Kenyan Pentecostal Preachers in Kenya. The data source was audio recordings from the sermons of three preachers. The population of study was all the sermons with politeness and persuasive strategies. Purposive sampling was used to select five sermons with persuasive techniques and politeness. The research design of this study was qualitative. A card was used in this study by isolating the persuasive strategies and politeness strategies applied in the discourse of the Pentecostal preachers. Two theories were used to analyze data. Politeness theory was used to analyze data for the first objective while Aristotle theory of persuasion was used for the second objective. The study revealed that preachers employed different persuasive techniques to influence belief, evoke emotion and t encourage action. It was also found that the preachers strategically used a range of politeness strategies and they relied on the frameworks of the negative politeness, and positive politeness, bald-on-record and off-record communication. Indirectness, hedging, apologies depersonalized addressing characterized negative politeness strategies that are oriented towards maintaining the autonomy of the hearer. the preachers strategically used a range of politeness strategies and they relied on the frameworks of the negative politeness, positive politeness, bald-on-record and off-record. The study is of relevance to sociolinguistics and pragmatics because it provides information on how politeness and persuasion works in the church discourse. In addition, the results offer helpful information to the interlocutors on the use of proper strategies to ensure successful and decent communication, where everybody during the contact feels listened to and appreciated. The results may form basis for effective sermon preparation to achieve different communicative goals. Further research can be done by doing a comparative study on the use of rhetorical devices among different denominations.

TABLES OF CONTENT

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION	ii
COPYRIGHT	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	v
ABSTRACT	vi
TABLES OF CONTENT	vii
LIST OF TABLES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	6
1.3 Research Objectives	6
1.4 Research Questions	7
1.5 Significance of the Study	7
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	7
1.7 Definition of Terms	8
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Persuasion.....	9
2.2 Linguistic Analysis of Religious Discourse	10
2.3 Previous Studies on Persuasion.....	12
2.4 Politeness.....	15
2.5 Previous Studies on Politeness.....	20
2.6 Pentecostalism.....	22
2.7 Theoretical Framework	23
2.7.1 Politeness Theory	23
2.7.2 Aristotle Theory of Persuasion	25
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	27
3.1 Study Site	27

3.2 Research Design.....	27
3.3 Population of the Study	27
3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size.....	27
3.5 Research Instruments	28
3.6 Method of Data Collection.....	28
3.7 Ethical Considerations.....	28
3.8 Data Analysis	29

**CHAPTER FOUR: PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES USED IN SERMONS BY
PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS IN NYERI COUNTY30**

4.1 Ethos.....	30
4.1.1 The Minister credibility	30
4.1.2 Credibility of the Church.....	34
4.2 Logos.....	39
4.3 Pathos	43
4.3.1 Appeal to need	44
4.3.2 Appeal to Fear	46
4.3.3 Appeal to Humour	49
4.4 Chapter Summary.....	53

**CHAPTER FIVE: POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED IN SERMONS BY
PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS IN NYERI COUNTY56**

5.1 Positive Politeness.....	56
5.1.1 Be Optimistic.....	56
5.1.2 Application of In-group Identity Markers	57
5.1.3 Seeking agreement.....	59
5.1.4 Employment of the Inclusion We.....	62
5.1.5 Giving Gifts	64
5.2 Negative Strategies of Politeness	67
5.2.1 Conventional Indirectness	67
5.2.2 Hedging	69
5.2.3 Apologies.....	73
5.2.4 Impersonalizing of S and H.....	75
5.3 Bald-on-record Politeness strategy.....	77

5.3.1 Bald-on-record (without minimization).....	77
5.3.2 Bald-on -record (with minimization).....	79
5.4 Off-Record Politeness strategy.	81
5.4.1 Applications of Metaphor.....	81
5.4.2 Giving Hints	84
5.4.3 Use of Rhetorical Questions	85
5.4.4 Ambiguity/ Vagueness	86
5.5 Summary of the Chapter	87
CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	89
6.1 Summary of Findings	89
6.2 Conclusion of the findings	90
6.3 Recommendations of Further Research	92
REFERENCES.....	94
APPENDIX.....	101
Appendix 1: Guiding Card.	101
Appendix 2: Sermon 1, What’s in Your House?.....	102
Appendix 3: Sermon 2: The Message of the Cross.....	105
Appendix 4: Sermon 3: Pillars of a Church	107
Appendix 5: Sermon 4: Mungu Atashughulikia Shida zako.....	109
Appendix 6: Sermon 5 New Creation in Christ	111
Appendix 7: Institutional Introductory Letter	114
Appendix 8: Ethics Review Letter	115
Appendix 9: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation NACOSTI License	116

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Data Analysis Methods.....	29
-------------------------------------	----

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BBC:	British Broadcasting Cooperation
CDT:	Cognitive Dissonance Theory
ELM:	Elaboration Likelihood Model
KTN:	Kenya Television Network
NIV:	New International Version
FTA:	Face Threatening Acts
DRTV:	Direct Response Television
PST:	Politeness Strategy
PP:	Politeness Principle

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Persuasion is typically defined as human communication designed to influence others by modifying their beliefs, values, or attitudes (Sari, 2019). There are requirements for the sender, the means, and the recipient to consider something persuasive. It involves a goal and the intent to achieve that goal on the part of the message sender. Persuasion is employed in most of the communication as interlocutors try to encourage others to share their attitudes, feelings, beliefs, and behavior to share in our view of the world. Persuasion originates from Greeks who emphasized rhetoric and elocution as the highest standards of a successful spirit (Sari, 2019).

The Greek philosopher Aristotle listed four reasons why we should learn the art of persuasion; it is an excellent tool for teaching, truth and justice are perfect; thus, if a case loses, it is the fault of the speaker; a good rhetorician needs to know how to argue on both sides to understand the whole problem and all the options, and finally, there is no better way to defend oneself (Sheridan & Ridolfo, 2012).

There have been academics who have studied persuasive techniques in some contexts. Sari's (2019) carried out research on Persuasive techniques used by the Prophet Muhammad in his Religious Discourse." According to her research, the Prophet Muhammad employed all three types of persuasion: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. Umi Fadhillah was a different kind of researcher. Her dissertation examined the persuasive strategy employed in Direct Response Television commercials via the lens of discourse analysis. She discovered that the DRTV ad presenters employed numerous of Gorys Keraf's theory's persuasion strategies, including rationalization, conformity, identification, suggestion, and displacement.

Persuasion is considered a subfield of discourse analysis, focusing on the language employed in communication and the addressee's role in decoding the linguistic message (Brown & Yule, 1983). To convince others, people require strategies to do so. A speaker's capacity to talk and the means to induce the interlocutors are essential qualities (Sari, 2019). The speaker should be calculative in how they articulate

statements if they want to persuade their audience to agree with them. To persuade the public to vote for them, candidates will often present evidence and arguments during their campaigns. Words and phrases are carefully chosen for campaign speeches to persuade the public to vote for the candidate. In order to get your message through, one may need to use certain persuasive techniques. Yet, persuasion does not include force or intimidation. For effective persuasion, the speaker must engage the listener. Humans communicate whenever they want to influence the actions of others by employing the transmission of stimuli (often verbal). Meanwhile, persuasion plays an important role in many facets of our life, including religion, social discourse, and politics, parenting, and marketing. The researcher will however only focus on the field of religion.

According to Aristotle, who is often cited as a persuasive thinker, there are three pillars of persuasion. These are called Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. The speaker's credibility and character (Ethos), the interlocutor's emotions (Pathos), and the speaker's arguments and facts (Logos). The church is a non-profit organization whose main objective is to transform people by persuading them to abandon their sinful life and uphold a righteous life. However, this objective is received with a lot of resistance with a big group not willing to change their ways and others not believing in religion and Christianity (Barros & Garoupa, 2002). This study analyzed how these pillars of persuasion are employed in sermons by Pentecostal preachers.

A society's language is spoken by its people (Kirby, 2013). This assertion means that a common language is required for effective interpersonal interaction which further means that persuasive language as any method or medium used to influence another person's opinion. Hence, persuasion is used in various contexts, including business, politics, and public service announcements. Hence, language is used in the persuasive process to ensure that the intended message is understood and followed. Moreover, Kirby (2013) observes that religious giving is a sensitive topic that attracts a lot of suspicion from some people. Though religious giving seems largely philanthropic, many people criticize the philanthropy and selflessness of the givers and conclude that people give for personal gain or to improve their social status in society. Persuasion is paramount if people have to give with good intentions and without coercion.

A popular program named Jicho Pevu aired on the popular T.V. station KTN in Kenya aired a documentary named "Prayer Predators," featuring a popular city preacher who allegedly performed fake miracles to multiply his membership in the church and also for his popularity to grow. This was a case study of the desperate measures taken by the Church ministers in their persuasive efforts.

Despite the preachers relying highly on the scriptures and biblical teachings, language has been identified as a very useful tool in persuasion. How a message is framed, and the speaker's word choice will determine how the hearer decodes the message and the effect the message has on the hearer. Suppose a speaker is already aware about how the receiver of the message will decode the message in question. In that case, they will frame the message so that the receiver interprets it as the speaker intended (Fadhilah, 2010).

Persuading an audience involves paying attention to four key elements: who says what, to whom, and how they say it (Lasswell, 1948). Lasswell claims that communicator variables (who), message content variables (what), audience variables (to whom), and speaking techniques together with the use of media (how) account for the differences between effective and ineffective speeches. This study analyzed sermons delivered in Kenyan Pentecostal churches to establish whether, and how, these sermons reflect Lasswell's claims regarding the elements of effective communication. Linguistically, this study falls within the domain of pragma-discourse analysis. Specifically, it aims to investigate the persuasive strategies employed by preachers and how these strategies are used to convince congregants to adopt positive values and embrace moral uprightness.

According to Brown and Levinson (1978), politeness is based on the concept of 'face', which exists in human culture and social interaction. 'Face' refers to a person's public self-image, which has two aspects: positive and negative faces.

Harris (2003) defines negative face as an individual's basic claim to territories, personal preserves, and self-determination. Face is something that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced and must be attended in an interaction. On the other hand, negative face is

the rights to non-distraction, that is, freedom of action and freedom from imposition. The two aspects of face are the basic wants in any social interaction, so cooperation is needed among the participants to maintain each other's face.

Positive politeness on the other hand is communicative strategies that are employed to establish rapport and establish a positive relationship between the speaker and the listener, by making appeals to common desires, values or membership of a group. It stresses collectivity, amiability and engagement, which is frequently done by compliments, inclusive words, jokes, or interest and approval (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Furthermore, according to Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) model of politeness, every statement has the capacity to undermine the speaker's or hearer's positive or negative persona. The two faces coexist, and everything that threatens one might be interpreted as directly bolstering the other. When speakers or listeners disregard the needs, desires, or feelings of their interlocutors, or do not want what the other wants, positive face is jeopardised. Expressions of disapproval such as condemnation, insults, accusations, arguments, complaints, inconsistencies, and so forth can cause harm to the hearer. The researcher analyzed church sermons to find out whether preachers balance the positive and negative face.

Negative face is jeopardised when someone fails to prevent their opponent from impeding their freedom of movement. It can harm the speaker or the listener and force one of the parties to give in to demands, counsel, recommendations, commands, warnings, threats, apologies, offers, promises, persuasion, acknowledging a mistake and so on (Levinson 1978). According to Brown and Levinson (1978), all rational adult members of society who are competent will want to avoid face-threatening situations or will use certain tactics to reduce them. Four primary categories of politeness tactics were developed by Brown and Levinson: There are bald-on-record, off-record, positive, and negative politeness techniques.

While a great deal of academic research has been done on politeness in a variety of social contexts including the classroom, hospital, banking, parliament, and even on TV

show characters about how different members of the community interact with one another, it is worthwhile to investigate the relationship between preachers and their listeners. Therefore, this study analyzed and described the FTAs used by the Kenyan Pentecostal preachers, the politeness techniques they used to win the hearers over to Christianity.

According to Luccie Sarr (2024) Pentecostal movements in Kenya, have recently received a lot of attention, particularly in a negative way. On April 15, 2024 police arrested Pastor Paul Mackenzie Nthengue, the leader of the Good News International Church, after several dozens of his followers were discovered starving to death in a coastal jungle. Ten days later, officials arrested Ezekiel Odero, the head of the New Life Prayer Center and Church, on charges of "mass murder".

According Parsitau & Mwaura (2010) Pentecostal and charismatic churches, fellowships, and ministries have grown considerably across the country since the 1980s, particularly in the 1990s. Kenya's Pentecostal and charismatic churches include Deliverance Churches, Neno Evangelism Ministries, Maximum Miracles Ministries, Jesus is Alive Ministries, The Happy Churches, Faith Evangelistic Ministries, Redeemed Gospel Churches, and Winners Chapel International Ministries. Kenya's Pentecostal and charismatic movements have a significant Christian following, numbering in the hundreds of thousands or millions. According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey, the Pentecostal/charismatic movement makes up more than half of Kenya's population. According to the survey, around 70% of Kenyan Protestants identify as Pentecostal or charismatic.

The growth of pentecostalism within the Nyeri County was continuous in the last 20 years as it is similar to the national trends in the growth of charismatic and neo-Pentecostal movements in Kenya. Research works by scholars like Gathuma (2020) in Nyeri town have revealed how leadership styles have changed in the Pentecostal churches and especially in youth development. It was discovered through the research that, although most churches had democratic leadership, it was not very influential in empowering the youth, and there was a gap between the structure and actual

participation in leadership. This goes together with the other results that underscore deliberate mentorship and inclusion practices in Pentecostal contexts in Nyeri. Also, local congregations tend to apply the traditional Pentecostal doctrine, i.e. the focus on the Holy Spirit, miracles, and prosperity, to the needs of their local community, i.e. the moral guidance, social support, and identity formation, particularly in the case of young adults.

The preachers of the Pentecostal faith were most appropriate in this research on politeness and persuasion due to their preaching style that is singularly described as highly emotional, spontaneous and rhetorical in application. Although use of persuasive approach by other religious leaders is also prevalent, the Pentecostal sermons tend to be more dependent on direct audience interaction, and code switching, as well as the use of expressions embedded in the culture making politeness techniques, e.g., the conventional indirectness, in-group signals, and inclusive pronouns, more apparent and more easily analyzed.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Preachers utilize churches as a means of social interaction to share their Christian beliefs. Studies on persuasion and politeness have been looked at in the field of politics and marketing. The preachers always depend on the confidence and affinity they have with the audience. Appealing statements by using polite and convincing words can make them sound familiar to the listeners but also develop a feeling of respect and togetherness. This prompted the researcher to undertake this study to investigate how preachers use politeness and persuasive strategies and how they use them.

1.3 Research Objectives

The following objectives guided this study;

- i. To establish how Pentecostal preachers in Nyeri County, Kenya, strategically use persuasive techniques to influence their congregations and achieve their communicative intentions.
- ii. To determine the role of politeness strategies in sermons by Pentecostal preachers in Nyeri County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions;

- i. How do Pentecostal preachers in Nyeri County, Kenya, strategically use persuasive techniques to influence their congregations and achieve specific communicative goals?
- ii. In what ways do politeness strategies enhance sermons delivered by Pentecostal preachers in Nyeri County, Kenya?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research is important in contributing more knowledge to theoretical and practical ways of persuasion and politeness in the church. Theoretically, this study's findings should deepen our understanding of politeness and persuasive strategies for public speaking. The research's practical implications include providing readers and students, particularly those majoring in English, with a deeper understanding on the use of persuasion in religious discourse. It is also meant to serve as a politeness and persuasive strategy resource for scholars to consult in the years to come. This study adds to the current literature in pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and linguistics in general, and the findings are valuable to scholars engaged in persuasive studies.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was limited to analysis of persuasive speech and politeness used by preachers in Nyeri County to articulate issues in the church, therefore, leaving out the biblical role or the role played by the scriptures which is also important. This was meant to avoid too wide a scope and limit the researcher on the field of linguistics, not religion. Many utterances are made in the church context. However, the study limited itself to sermons with politeness and persuasive strategies.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Church:	The term "church" refers to a group of Christians or believers who share a common religion.
Clergy:	This refers to the body of all people ordained for religious duties, especially in the Christian church.
Congregation:	This refers to a group of people gathering for religious worship at a place of worship.
Pentecostalism:	This refers to a Protestant Christian movement that emphasizes the direct personal experience of God through baptism with the Holy Spirit. The term Pentecostal is derived from Pentecost, the Greek name for the Jewish feast of weeks.
Persuasive Strategy:	It is any effort made to persuade another person or group of people to change their minds about anything by using words to express one's thoughts, feelings, or arguments.
Philanthropic:	This is the aspect of a person or an organization seeking to promote the welfare of others. It refers to being generous and benevolent.
Secularization:	This is the action or process of converting something from religious to secular possession or use.
Televangelist:	this refers to an evangelical preacher who appears regularly on television to promote beliefs and appeal for funds.
Politeness:	This refers to the strategic use of language and communicative behavior aimed at maintaining social harmony, expressing respect, and managing interpersonal relationships during interaction.
Preachers:	individuals who publicly proclaim or deliver religious messages, sermons, or teachings

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Persuasion

Most people worldwide use persuasive strategies in their daily lives consciously or unconsciously because persuasion has become a very important aspect of communication. This is because people can influence others without violence or coercion when persuasion is employed. Mastering persuasion, theoretically and practically, has become an integral part of human existence. Persuasion is derived from the Latin word *persuasionem*, which means to persuade (Meyer, 2010).

Persuasion has been defined in a variety of ways by academics. For the sake of this study, the communicative definition of persuasion was used, in which the communicator attempts to elicit an appropriate response from the recipient. In persuasion, there is always an intentional effort to influence the ideology, beliefs, and attitudes of others by freely embracing a new cognitive pattern of overt behavior of one's audience without regard to their emotional, physical, or economic status (Meyer, 2010). The use of persuasive methods by persuaders ultimately allows them to persuade their listeners of their views. Persuasion is about "capturing an audience, persuading the undecided, and changing the minds of those who oppose it." The ability to persuade others demands specific knowledge and ongoing training because only a small percentage of people are blessed with these inherent gifts (Meyer, 2010).

Bloom (2004) said that persuasion is derived from Latin, which refers to urging and advising. Persuasion influences beliefs, attitudes, intentions, motivation, or behavior. Persuasion aims to change a person's or a group's attitude or behavior towards some event, idea, object, or another person by using written or spoken words to convey information, feelings, and reasoning.

According to Renkema in Zainuddin (2010), persuasion is a complex communication process by which a group or an individual intentionally or unintentionally elicits a specific response from another individual or group through verbal and nonverbal means. Keraf (2004) confirms persuasion as an art of verbal communication with the intention to assure someone to do something appropriate to the speaker's purpose for

this moment or the present time. Brembek and Howel (2002) stated that persuasion is communication intended to influence choice. Persuasion is the art of influencing and convincing others. This knowledge has made persuasion paramount in business and political campaigns.

For every persuader to succeed in a persuasive effort, he or she must understand the existing persuasive elements. This helps shed light on what exists in a persuasive process. According to Renkema in Zainuddin (2010), message, source, channel, and receiver are the key persuasive elements.

The source can be discussed on two levels. That is source credibility or believability and source attractiveness to the receivers. A president, for example, would appoint a trustworthy person to tell people how to be a good leader. People would be easily influenced by his comments or persuasion (Meyer, 2010).

The message is another element that relates to the persuasion process. It is a key factor in the persuasion process. Every persuasive speech should transfer the intended message, whether at the beginning, middle, or end of the speech. The organization of the message is also crucial to the success of every persuasive effort. The speaker should determine which arguments to choose and which style would be more effective (Stiff & Mongeau, 2016).

Another element that influences persuasion is the channel. This refers to whether the persuader uses television, radio, newspaper, or magazine. These kinds of media are used to convince the listeners or the audience. The last persuasive element is the receiver. This refers to the person who receives the message. The receiver is the target of the persuasion that is expected to change their mind and adopt the idea in the persuasive speech (Stiff & Mongeau, 2016).

2.2 Linguistic Analysis of Religious Discourse

According to Pieterse (2009), Preaching is persuasive communication since it seeks to change human behaviour. Furthermore, Brown (2009) claims that Preaching contains knowledge that persuades and drives individuals. It should be highlighted, however,

that persuasion is not gained by forcing congregants to listen to a wrong message or by employing intimidation tactics. Instead, persuasion is accomplished through eye-level interaction.

According to David G. Myers (1993), persuasion refers to how a message triggers the change in the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. He states that persuasion may work in two principal pathways, the central one, which entails critical and reflective evaluation of the presented arguments and the peripheral one that is based on the superficial information like attractiveness, credibility, or emotional appeal of the speaker. Myers further argues that persuasion is most effective when four elements are put into consideration: The communicator, the messages, the communication channel and the audience.

Not all types of religious speech (e.g., stories and poetry, prayers, etc.) are explicitly persuasive, and multimodality plays a significant role in certain religious discourse (e.g., music, olfactory devices, costume, spatial arrangements, etc.). There is a similarity between rhetoric and religion, according to Pernot (2006), who claims that religious speech is linked to persuasion and the ancient art of rhetoric. To back up his thesis, he emphasizes the value of language. Christians use words to communicate directly with God, talk about God and our faith, and convey our innermost religious sentiments or awareness. It's possible to view all of this as a form of rhetoric. This means that most religious speech is rhetorical (Pernot, 2006). Regarding the value of language, it is conceivable to go much further. "In the beginning, we are informed, was the Word," Crystal (2018) explains, referring to the Bible's earliest texts. Regardless of how we understand that statement, it is clear that language will always take precedence in religious inquiry."

Sermons may be regarded as one of the most effective forms of religious discourse. Around the year 1200, the meaning "a discourse on a text of scripture; what is preached" was established, and this is when the word became associated with Christianity (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2019). "A lecture on a religious or moral subject, especially one given during church service and based on a chapter from the Bible," is how the Oxford Dictionaries (2019) describe sermons these days.

Sermons are "a religious rhetoric genre of immense significance and text type sui generis" (Adam, 2017). A persuasive genre at its core, from a language perspective. For example, "genre" is defined as "different forms of writings that enact distinct social situations" and "staged, goal-oriented social process" (Martin & Rose, 2003). Each genre has a certain purpose. When it comes to sermons, you may distinguish multiple roles, such as instructive or educational. Changing or strengthening listeners' or readers' thoughts and behaviours are the ultimate goals of these persuasive activities. Mostly, sermons are more topic- and purpose-focused, focusing on religion, scripture, or a particular way of life as the primary sources of material and information (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

In Protestantism, sermons are given much greater weight than in the Catholic Church's liturgical life. In the Reformation, the sermon is seen as "one of the crown jewels" (Leede, 2015). Emphasizing its importance in defining Protestantism and distinguishing it from Catholic Christianity. It's important because it's designed to "draw the connection between the world of Scripture in which God has revealed himself and the problems of faith and living confronted by the listeners in their world" (Leede, 2015). According to the Protestant perspective, it is possible to see preaching as a sacred act. According to the corpus, Protestant Preaching is more extensive than Catholic Preaching, as seen by the length of Protestant sermons. Structure and content examination of the thesis reveals that they are likewise more complex in general.

2.3 Previous Studies on Persuasion

Persuasion is a topic that has attracted research on different fields such as linguist, communication studies, psychology and theology. The basis of knowledge of persuasive communication was laid out by classical rhetorical theory and especially Aristotle. Aristotle postulated that the persuasion would work based on three modes namely, ethos (the credibility of the speaker), pathos (the appeal to emotion) and logos (logical explanation). Such aspects still resonate in the contemporary worldview of persuasive discourse.

In terms of linguistic and discourse analysis, the Politeness Theory developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) has proven to have very significant effects with regards to the

analysis of persuasion. Their theory emphasizes the use of politeness strategies by the speakers in order to overcome the potential face-threatening acts (FTAs) in their influence over people. Speakers tend to have positive politeness strategies when speaking because they use such qualities of solidarity, approval, or friendliness, and negative politeness factors, including hedges, indirectness, and respectful space in a persuasive situation. Such tactics come in handy especially in religious cases where preachers are supposed to strike it between authoritative presentation of divine words and the pastoral care desired by members of their congregations.

The use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and more so that developed by Norman Fairclough (1995) has also contributed to the comprehension that we have of persuasion, both as applied to institutional and ideological settings. A major point made by Fairclough is that language is a social practice which reflects, and supports power relationships. Within the context of sermons, CDA has been adopted to give the understanding of the ways preachers exercise their power, create a level of intimacy with the audience, and establish certain belief systems using the authority of persuasive rhetoric.

A number of researchers studied persuasion within the religious discourse. As an example, De Villiers (2008) examined rhetoric methods in evangelical proclamations and found the practice of repetition, the use of rhetorical questions, metaphor, and emotion appeal to be the most important tools to manipulate congregants. In the same way, Mulder and Hill (2017) examined the structure of sermons and discovered that their persuasive parts are usually presented as a part of stories, which result in identification between the person who is leading the sermons and the attendants of sermons. They usually base this kind of speech on common religious experiences or Biblical narratives to inspire more people to persuade them.

Obeng (1997) carried out critical research on persuasive language in the Akan religious discourse in the African setting. His results revealed that Christian messengers often mix Christian doctrines with local politeness rules and social expectations and generate discourse, which is spiritually authoritative and socially respectful. These hybrid types

of communication guarantee that preaching messages will be received by people in the communities and be effective in supporting localized values.

The discourse of the Kenyan televangelists became a more recent subject of study in the works of Mukhongo (2020). The analysis shows that preachers tend to mix the use of assertiveness with politeness tactics so as to avoid losing interest among its listeners and to ensure they prefer avoiding being offensive when seeking contributions or tackling ethical matters. The study also remarked on what is described as the mediated performance that is based on voice modulation, gestures and visual images to deepen the persuasive effect.

Use of code switching between English and Swahili as a source of strategic value is also a key contribution in the study of Pentecostal sermons in Kenya carried by Kariuki (2019). Kariuki noted that code-switching besides increasing the sermon to reach a wider audience, also served the purpose of being politeness, and a persuasion method. Language switching also gave the preachers the opportunity to alter their tone, their clarity or to convey passion that made their message more acceptable to the listeners.

All these studies indicate that persuasion in the language of religion especially so in the Kenyan context is a delicate balance of rhetoric prowess, cultural adroitness and a calculated niceness. Preachers are not just mediators of the divine messages; they are effective communicators as well who have to make a very delicate balance between the parameters of the authority, respect, and influence. The concept of politeness and persuasion as two phenomena co-existing in sermon delivery can therefore reveal more of the nature of communication in religion in modern society.

In spite of the fact that various studies have studied the strategies of persuasion in religious discourse by applying different models of persuasion, as the Politeness Theory (Brown and Levinson, 1987), Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995), and the sociolinguistic models, there is still a significant gap in applying the classical rhetorical theory of ethos, pathos and logos to the preaching of the Pentecostal church in localized Kenyan contexts. Televangelism, code-switching and mediated performance have been studied in the context of existing work (Mukhongo 2020, Kariuki 2019), and rhetorical

devices and cultural hybridity have been examined in the context of African or evangelical more broadly (Obeng, 1997 and De Villiers, 2008). Nevertheless, none of the studies have been conducted that explicitly fits the analysis of the ways in which the Pentecostal preachers in the Nyeri County use the rhetorical appeals of Aristotle to convince their congregations, particularly in live and face-to-face sermons, where culture, language, and spirituality all come into play. This paper aims to address that gap by looking at the application of ethos, pathos, and logos by preachers at Nyeri to influence, inspire, and direct their congregations.

2.4 Politeness

The concept of politeness may be observed in how social encounters are ordered in that the speaker's face and the hearer's face are preserved via self-respect (speaker) and consideration of the other (hearer). Politeness is similar to face moderation in that it is aimed at preserving a positive public image. Lakoff (1973), Leech (1983), and Brown and Levinson (1987) are among the most significant researchers in the field of politeness studies.

Grice's (1967) work on the cooperative principle inspired Lakoff's research. To overcome the failure of the cooperative principle, Lakoff devised politeness norms. According to Lakoff, the cooperative principle does not explain why individuals talk in indirect ways. According to Lulu (2019), while the cooperative principle explains how meaning is formed and interpreted in utterances, it does not explain why interlocutors actively violate maxims in order to convey themselves indirectly. She determines that language system standards must be examined in order to determine whether a speech is polite or not. Lakoff's work extends the cooperative principle by combining Grice's dictum into one rule; be explicit, and adding another guideline; be courteous. Lakoff argued that the cooperative principle maxims of quality, quantity, manner, and relationship all fell under one umbrella rule: be explicit.

To supplement Lakoff's (1973) work, Leech's method proposes that maxims are more flexible than rules since maxims help to demonstrate how politeness operates in the social environment. Lakoff's politeness norms were transformed into politeness maxims by Leech (1983). According to Leech (1983), politeness contributes to

minimize rudeness since individuals do not always talk graciously or impolitely. Leech, like Lakoff, believes that the cooperative principle does not appear to take into account all scenarios. For example, while adhering to the cooperative principle, one might nevertheless be disrespectful.

The politeness principle is based on self and other. According to Leech (1983), the politeness principle is "minimize impolite expressions; maximize polite expressions." According to Leech (1983), the PP plays a critical function in maintaining social equilibrium and building amicable connections between interlocutors. For appropriate communication to occur, the speaker and the hearer must work together. Politeness can be thought of in terms of maxims. Leech's teachings encourage the reduction of brash remarks and the enhancement of polite views (Culpeper, 2011). Politeness is environment dependent, and it varies from culture to culture, since what is considered polite in one society may be considered impolite or weird in another.

Politeness and impoliteness are acquired via socialization rather than being inborn. The aim of PP is to strengthen amicable relationships and enforce social equilibrium, allowing us to assume that our conversational partners are cooperative (Leech, 1983.) The context in which a speech is used, not the phrase itself, determines whether it is polite or unpleasant. Leech (1983) breaks down the civility concept into six maxims. These are the maxims of tact, charity, approval, modesty, agreement, and compassion.

Tact maxim stresses minimizing words that suggest a cost to others and maximizing utterances that imply a benefit to others. The first portion is comparable to Brown and Levinson's (1987) negative politeness technique of reducing imposition, while the second part is comparable to positive politeness of attention to the hearer's interests, wants, and needs. For instance, a tact maxim may be found in the following utterance: 'let me ask you an unjust question, why did you lead the strike?' The speaker uses the phrase 'unfair question' to warn the listener that the inquiry may be irrational and hence look face threatening. This lowers the cost to the listener.

The maximum of generosity emphasizes the reduction of acts that suggest advantage to self and the maximization of statements that entail expense to self. This maxim

concentrates on the speaker. It states that we should prioritize others. According to Leech (1983), not all politeness maxims are equally significant. Tact maxim, for example, is more significant than charity maxim since politeness is more concerned with others than with oneself. For example, the speech act 'feel greatly welcome to the party' uttered as an invitation to the guest is a generous utterance that the speaker employs in the best interests of the hearer. Welcoming the listener demonstrates that the speaker values him.

Approbation maxim emphasizes the minimizing of views that reflect disapproval of others and the maximal of beliefs that express acceptance of others. It is stated that one should praise people and, if this is not feasible, to avoid the subject by giving limited answers or being mute. The first component of the maxim seeks to avoid disagreement, while the second seeks to make others feel good by displaying unity. For example, a speaker may say, 'I know you are a highly brilliant scholar and you have so many publications, would you mind editing my novel?' By complimenting the listener, the speaker employs the approbation maxim by avoiding any criticism that may depict the speaker badly and instead praising him.

The modesty maxim emphasizes reducing self-praise and emphasizing self-criticism. This adage argues that individuals should avoid praising themselves and instead focus on shaming themselves. According to Muchiri (2014), modesty is the attribute of not being excessively arrogant or overconfident in one's talents. It is the trait of not being arrogant. For example, when the speaker says, 'I am broke right now, but I will support you with some cash,' he avoids boasting about his wealth and therefore discredits himself by admitting that he is now broke even if he is in a position to help.

Agreement maxim focuses on eliminating conflicts and maximizing agreements between self and other. This is akin to Brown and Levinson's (1987) civility and avoiding dispute seeking agreement technique. Agreement happens when two or more people have the same viewpoint (Muchiri, 2014). This creates peace among the parties involved. Using this method, the speaker seeks for ways to agree or appear to agree with the listener in order to keep his pleasant face. This is evident in responses that

demonstrate the hearer's agreement with the speaker's remark, such as 'yeah,' 'sure,' and 'totally.'

According to the sympathy maxim, speakers should minimize lack of compassion between parties while maximizing sympathy between interacting parties. This contains words like congrats and condolences. This maxim is consistent with Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness method of attention to the needs of the listener. According to Muchiri (2014), the speaker feels honestly sorry for the hearer's distress/loss. Using this maxim, the speaker identifies anything nice about his/her interactant that he wants others to notice. For example, when the speaker says, 'Congratulations on passing with flying colors, you were such a fast learner.'

Communication depends on the relationship between the speaker and the listener in determining the strategy a speaker should use to communicate (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The interlocutors do not necessarily select the most diplomatic style since the selection of the politeness strategy depends on a number of social conditions. (Brown and Levinson (1987) state that the selection of politeness strategies is dependent on three important sociocultural factors: social distance, relative power, and the rank of imposition. All these have implications on the weightiness of a face-threatening act (FTA) (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The heavier is the weight, that is, the more distant socially, the more power the listener has, or the more exalted the demand, the more politeness the listener will have to put in so as to diminish the threat (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Context is also one of the major factors influencing the strategy used by a speaker (Leech, 1983). These sociocultural variables are wide and may contain some such aspects as occupation, social status, ethnicity, and the familiarity/friendliness between interlocutors (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

The social distance distinguishes between a friend and a stranger. Distance represents social closeness and refers to the social relationships between members. Brown and Levinson (1978) define distance as two close pals. Two strangers are at distance since they have no personal relationship. Because of the social distance between interlocutors, some activities may be perceived as face dangerous or non-threatening. When the social gap between interactants is higher, we tend to use politer techniques.

When addressing a stranger, negative politeness methods are typically utilized, but positive politeness strategies are used when addressing a very close addressee.

The vertical differential between speaker and hearer is defined as power (Scollon & Scollon, 1995). The speaker's relative power is lower than the hearer's. People communicate differently to their social equals than to those of greater position or rank or those of lower standing. This is known as an asymmetric relationship. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), power is the degree to which an individual imposes his or her own plans and ideas at the expense of others. For example, a manager may find it simple to urge his or her employees to reduce noise in the workplace if they are talking too loudly, while employees may find it difficult to warn top executives of a firm to stay quiet if they are chatting loudly in their office and bothering others. Dunbar (2015) observes that persons who believe they have more authority than their addressees are less concerned about other people's face requirements. Those with less authority than their addressees, he argues, are more concerned about their interlocutor's face requirements.

A FTA's rank is defined as the level of threat involved. Face-threatening behavior varies according to culture. Depending on the culture, some statements or behaviors are considered more severe than others. In one culture, an act may be more dangerous to one's face than in another. Face is more imperiled by a higher-ranking FTA than by a lower-ranking act. According to Niina (2009), the speaker's face-threatening behavior is classified as a highly threatening act in the society in which the speaker and hearer are immersed. Sociological factors alter depending on the circumstance. Ryan (2016) finds that in certain cultures, asking straightforward questions may be perceived as more face-threatening, whilst in others, directness may be perceived politer. The weight of the speech is determined by the ranking of the imposition; as the weight of the imposition grows, the speaker employs more politeness tactics. Age, social standing, the formality of the event, and the degree to which interlocutors know one other all determine the weightiness of an FTA. According to Katerina (2010), when participants in a discussion are not familiar with each other well and are participating in a formal event, they use indirect language and polite speech more than when they are familiar with each other well and are close friends.

2.5 Previous Studies on Politeness.

Kurniyatin (2017) examined the politeness methods used by teachers and students in an English class, and he discovered that teachers utilise all of the politeness tactics, despite the fact that bald on record dominated the majority of the teacher's statements. This is because teachers have greater power than their students. Teachers employed positive politeness to maximize the efficiency of their utterances. He also observed that kids utilize positive politeness while addressing their professors owing to power disparities. The kids utilise positive politeness so as not to jeopardize the teacher's good mood.

Hasmi (2013) did a pragmatic analysis of politeness methods portrayed in the Nanny McPhee film and discovered that the major characters use all four politeness tactics while interacting with youngsters. He notices that Nanny likes to utilize positive politeness methods because most of her discussions are with groups of people she knows well. Their tight friendship influences their decision to choose a politeness tactic. Hasmi discovers that social distance influences the adoption of a politeness tactic. Hasmi (2013) employs the social distance sociological variable to describe the usage of positive politeness tactics.

Muchiri (2014) uses Leech's (1983) politeness principle to demonstrate how individuals might employ politeness maxims to achieve harmonious relationships. This study varies from Muchiri (2014) in that it uses Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to identify activities that threaten face and explain how politeness tactics are utilised to mitigate the impact of face threats.

The new trends of the pragmatic field have also expanded the boundaries of the theory of politeness, especially in areas where the phenomenon closely combines the aspects of power, persuasion, and relationship control: religious communications. Research on the sociolinguistics of politeness has focused on understanding the artful use of politeness strategies in delicate communicative situations that require face-saving actions to fend off face-prone actions with the view of protecting the face equilibrium relationship between the speaker and hearer (Brown and Levinson 1987).

Current literature shows that although religious discourse is mostly hierarchical in nature, it highly utilizes a strategy of negative politeness to ensure the independence of the listener. In their reflection work on biblical words, Munthe et al. (2024) demonstrate that the religious leaders use hedges, conditional language and inclusive pronouns in order to lessen imposition and establish a feeling of joint spiritual experience. They give some insights into the twofold role of politeness in sermons: they are aimed to persuade and maintain the dignity of the addressee and, therefore, it can be used to engage without trying to persuade.

In a similar manner, Migdadi, Al-Momani and Hammouri (2025) examine Friday khutbahs in Islamic settings and reveal that the application of indirectness, disclaimers, and recourse to divinely foreordained sanctions works to mitigate moral admonition from the imams. These are rhetorical options that are associated with negative politeness strategies of affecting an avoidance of the explicit impositions on the side of providing normative messages. These results confirm that politeness plays a pivotal role in sustaining the integrity of the religious speech especially where having a belief system is personal and emotional.

Although most of the literature that has been written on the topic of politeness strategies has been based in the international environment, there is a discernible gap in localized research in Kenya generally and Nyeri County specifically. The sociolinguistic interactions at the region level e.g. the relationship between language and power and cultural norms provide a fertile source of examining the ways politeness is enacted in both every day and institutional communication. According to the research performed in Kenyan educational and religious contexts (Mutuku, 2014:), the hierarchical relationships and shared values affect politeness strategies profoundly. But little research has been conducted to determine the functioning of these strategies within the specific linguistic setting of Nyeri, where the cultural standards of Kikuyu and multilingualism can influence pragmatic decisions in a different way. This research paper aims to make contributions.

2.6 Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism began in 1901 in Topeka, Kansas. Agnes Ozman claimed to have been baptized with God's Holy Spirit and began speaking in an unfamiliar "tongue" (Anderson, 2004). Following this occurrence, similar instances occurred in other locations. Pentecostalism was an addition to the Holiness Movement (Cartledge, 2011). More evidence of "tongues" being spoken emerged in 1906 in Los Angeles, California (Robbins, 2004). Glossolalia refers to the experience of speaking in various languages (Menzies, 2009). At the Azusa Street Mission, blacks and whites united for worship, which helped expand the early Pentecostal Movement (Anderson, 2004).

Pentecostalism is said to have arisen from late nineteenth-century radical evangelical revival movements in America and Great Britain (Robbins, 2004). There was no one creator of the Pentecostal Movement; rather, scattered Christian groups were witnessing supernatural phenomena such as divine healing and speaking in tongues (Menzies, 2009). The Bible refers to these as spiritual talents. Pentecostals think that the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 still exist in the church today (Cartledge, 2011). Pentecostals never construct their own beliefs or rituals, and they believe in no other texts except the Bible. In other words, they believe that the Bible is God's Word and serves as their guidance for life (Anderson, 2004).

Pentecostalism has resulted in three major developments, or waves of activity. The initial wave of Pentecostalism gave rise to new denominations (for example, the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, and the Foursquare Church) (Robbins, 2004). The charismatic movement, which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, represents the second wave. The charismatic movement, named for its focus on the charismata, or Holy Spirit gifts, is the evolution of Pentecostal theology and practice inside mainline churches and denominations (e.g., the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church) (Cartledge, 2011). Third-wave evangelicalism, which emerged in the 1980s, is a subset of evangelicalism that shares parallels with but differs from Pentecostal theology and the charismatic movement (Anderson, 2004).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The study applied two theories: Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (1987) and Aristotle theory of persuasion (1962). The politeness theory was utilized to identify Face Threatening Acts, politeness techniques, and influencing variables for choosing these tactics. Aristotle theory of persuasion on the other hand was used to identify the utterances that have made use of persuasive strategies by identifying utterances that have employed ethos, pathos and logos.

2.7.1 Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory will be used in this study. Politeness is a statement of the speaker's desire to lessen the face threat posed by particular FTAs to the listener. The presence of speakers and listeners is the foundation of this philosophy. Being courteous might be an attempt by the speaker to save their own or the listener's face. The use of politeness allows communication between two antagonistic parties.

Politeness theory is based on three concepts: face, threatening behaviors, and politeness methods. Faces may be both pleasant and terrible. Negative face is just an antonym for positive face and does not imply 'bad'. Positive face is every member's desire for his desires to be desirable to at least some other executors (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Negative face refers to every competent adult member's desire for his actions to be unimpeded by others (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Politeness theory holds that there are acts that go counter to the desires of the hearer. Face threatening acts are what they are called. Brown and Levinson (1987) observe that speakers desire to keep each other's faces in conversation, even though they are occasionally compelled to make FTAs in order to obtain what they want. According to this theory, acts that threaten negative face include instructions, requests, jealous emotions, advices, warnings, compliments, threats, adoration, offers, promises, rage, and displays of hatred, and disgust. Politeness theory also provides activities that jeopardize interlocutors' good faces. They are insults, disrespect, accusations, challenges, inappropriate topic mention, self-humiliation, complaints, disagreements, contradictions, lack of emotional control, excessive emotional expressions, belittling,

sensitive topic mention, interruptions, misuse of address terms, boasting, apologies, being physical, accepting compliments, and confessions.

Brown and Levinson (1987) present four politeness methods that can be utilized to save either the speaker's or the hearer's face. Interlocutors with close and personal relationships use the term "bald on record." It is utilized by the speaker when he wants to do an FTA with as little impact on the hearer's face as possible. The off-the-record technique is used when a speaker approaches the matter in a roundabout way. The positive politeness method is utilized when the speaker wishes to save the listener's good face or the listener's positive self-image that the speaker claims for himself. Negative politeness, on the other hand, is a regressive action directed against the negative face of the addressees.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies are categorized into four main types, each with its own set of sub-strategies. The bald-on-record strategy is used when maximum efficiency is required, such as in greetings, farewells, direct offers, task-oriented interactions, urgent situations, or when there is a clear power disparity between the speaker and the hearer. Positive politeness strategies aim to reduce social distance and appeal to the hearer's desire for inclusion and approval. These include claiming common ground, showing exaggerated interest, making promises or offers, using jokes, seeking agreement, using in-group markers, and expressing empathy or enthusiasm. In contrast, negative politeness strategies are employed to respect the hearer's need for autonomy and non-imposition. These include indirectness, formality, expressing pessimism, showing deference, minimizing impositions, apologizing, impersonalizing language, using hedges, and referring to social norms. Finally, the off-record strategy involves indirect and ambiguous communication, leaving room for multiple interpretations.

The researcher applied this theory to examine how Pentecostal churches preachers utilize positive and negative politeness, bald on record and off record strategies. Politeness theory will also help the researcher in categorizing face threatening acts as positive or negative. Politeness tactics that help lessen risks to face will also be explored

using this theory, which will assist the researcher in categorizing politeness strategies as positive, negative, bald on record, and off record.

2.7.2 Aristotle Theory of Persuasion

According to Aristotle (2007) persuasion requires three key rhetorical elements: logos (logic and reasoning), ethos (the communicator's credibility and trustworthiness), and pathos (emotion).

Ethos can be defined as 'credibility' or 'ethical appeal'. People tend to believe and follow those they admire; therefore, the author's character is a convincing aspect in this case. To be effective, the writer must give the reader the idea that he or she is someone worth listening to, an authority on the subject of the writing, as well as someone pleasant and deserving of respect.

According to Aristotle, readers are more likely to be convinced by someone they perceive to have personal warmth, consideration for others, a decent intellect, and sound learning. In modern publishing, however, consumers do not meet writers and rarely know anything about them, so ethos must be communicated in other ways. We sometimes know something about the personalities of speakers and authors ahead of time, but the manner texts are written or spoken, as well as their substance, usually transmit perceptions of the author's personality.

According Hogan (2012) Pathos works by appealing to the reader's emotions to affect change. Emotion entails using what is known as the 'limbic system', a portion of a human being's makeup that is not totally rational but rather instinctual. Pathos is used in everything from writings to ads nowadays. Pathos entails appealing to the audience's imagination as well as eliciting emotional reactions, allowing the reader to connect with the writer's point of view and experience what the writer feels.

Pathos speaks to our feeling of self and identity; it plays on readers' prejudices to sway them in the direction of what seems good. Writers who belong to groups that readers can identify with or form themselves can come across as more captivating. Speakers and writers who try to project a favorable image of their audience in the minds of

readers can also be quite successful. In order for the speaker to seem to be the audience speaking to itself, there are narrative elements that establish an identification between the writer and reader.

According to Demirdöğen, (2010) Logos is Greek for "logical reasoning," which is used to persuade. It can be divided into two categories: deductive and inductive reasoning. This was Aristotle's preferred method of persuasion, as it was the one he employed to try to convince us about persuasion. The Greek word "logos," which means "word," describes the message's internal coherence, clarity, reasoned arguments, and potency of supporting data. The "logical appeal" of an argument is what makes logos powerful on a listener. Definitions, parallel situations, analogies, and comparisons are the foundation of logic. In addition to statistics, other relevant factors include expert opinions and testimonies from authorities. The researcher used this theory to identify utterances made by the preachers that contains ethos, pathos and logos aspects of persuasion.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Site

The utterances in this study were made in five Pentecostal churches in Nyeri county Kenya located in the central region of the country.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive approach to analyze various persuasive efforts preachers use to achieve their objectives in church. This approach was appropriate for this study because it helps to describe the state of affairs as they exist without manipulating variables, which was the study's main aim. According to Kothari (2004), a descriptive study is appropriate where the study seeks to describe the characteristics of certain groups, estimate the proportion of people with certain characteristics, and make predictions. Descriptive approaches depend on linguistic rather than numerical data and use meaning-based rather than statistical data analysis. Descriptive survey design entails gathering data to test hypotheses and answer questions about the research topics, as well as reporting things as they are. According to Mills and Huberman (1994), a qualitative research design assists a researcher in collecting data in the form of words and phrases. This study falls under the category of descriptive qualitative research since the information gathered is in form of words and not numbers.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of sermons with politeness and persuasive strategies used by the Kenyan Pentecostal preachers in Nyeri County and not any other group.

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The research adopted purposive sampling to select the sermons for the study. In purposive sampling, the researcher selects what to include based on predetermined criteria. Theoretical sampling was used to choose the utterances with persuasive and politeness strategies that were considered for analysis since that is what the researcher was interested in. The researcher used five sermons. This is comparable to previous politeness studies that have been undertaken. Kithure (2015) utilized five sermon

recordings to examine televangelist politeness, whereas Mutuku (2014) used seven episodes of the Makutano Junction video to examine language use in dispute resolution. Five sermons therefore provided sufficient data for the study. A smaller, targeted corpus can be properly interpreted in a more qualitative way, and this is absolutely necessary to analyze subtle pragmatic elements. Using more sermons was likely to produce homogenous data.

3.5 Research Instruments

The instrument that was utilized in this research was a guiding card which was applied to make sure that the chosen excerpts had politeness and persuasive tactics. The validity of the guiding card was ensured by developing it based on established theories of politeness and persuasion, thereby confirming its content validity. To increase the reliability, the instrument was pilot-tested with a sample group of sermon excerpts, and inter-rater reliability was determined based on the correspondence of two independent coders. To ensure the precision and genuineness of the data to be analyzed, audio recorder was used to record the sermons. The guiding card has been captured as appendix 1

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The main method of data collection was audio recordings from the sampled sermons. The method used to collect data was participant observation by the researcher, where the researcher sat in church and took part in the church service and, using an audio recorder, recorded the sermon, and later picked the utterances that were significant for the study and transcribed them.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher made voluntary participation and informed consent of the preachers who took part in the study. These ethical principles acted on the basis that the subjects had to participate in the research at their free will and they were also fully informed of the research procedures and any risk involved. The leadership of the churches where data collection was done also gave verbal consent to the study. Also, a research permit was obtained at the National Council for Science, Technology, and Innovation before the research started. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, no personal data,

including any names and names of the participants or churches, was noted or added to the final report. All the data was coded and kept under the guard and only the researcher could access the raw data. When analyzing data, participants in the various churches were not singled out and rather they were collectively treated as a group. This makes the conclusions given to be representative of the entire population and not a single church or individual.

3.8 Data Analysis

Analysis of data was done in order to answer the research questions of this study. The data was listened to carefully, and the data was analyzed using discussion and classification method. A guiding card was also used in order to help the researcher identify different politeness and persuasive strategies. The data was analyzed to identify politeness and persuasive strategies that had been used. The guiding card helped in separating the utterances containing politeness strategies and those with persuasive strategies. The information was then presented in reports. The conclusions were then drawn and described qualitatively.

Table 1: Data Analysis Methods

Objective	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Data collected	Method of analysis
1. To discuss persuasive strategies used by Kenyan Pentecostal preachers.	Sermons	Persuasive strategies	Ethos Pathos logos	Discussion classification
2. To explain Politeness Strategies used by Pentecostal churches in Nyeri.	Sermons	Politeness Strategies	Bald record Positive politeness Negative politeness Off record	Discussion Classification

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES USED IN SERMONS BY PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS IN NYERI COUNTY

4.1 Ethos

According to Aristotle (2007) ethos refers to an appeal to credibility in rhetoric or a character appeal. It is what a speaker or an author does to assure credibility and authority in a topic. Being credible is a good way to persuade the audience because they will take the speaker seriously.

4.1.1 The Minister credibility

According to Den Hartogh (2020), ethos in religious discourse is closely tied to the credibility held by the preacher in relation to their moral reputation, spiritual authority, and connection to the congregation. When integrity, humility, and compassion are practiced in their own lives congruent with the values and teachings they preach, a speaker enhances their ethos. The impact of their credibility is also compounded by formal religious training or ordination, which bestows perceived authority to interpret scripture and provide spiritual guidance. The congregants also believe that the speaker is called by God, which places extra-religious gravity on what he or she speaks. The sense of trust is enhanced by a regular interaction and pastoral care, by community engagement, and the compassionate communication that speaks to people and their needs. Meyer (2000) also argues that a communicator who shares the word in a friendly fashion in an articulate way and works with the scripture earnestly develops a bond with the congregation. Ethos of a church setting lies in the possibility of the preacher to reveal their religion, being a true servant, and teaching in wisdom, honesty, and spiritual power.

Example 1 Sermon 3

Years ago our preacher stood in this very pulpit not to preach merely but to soothe those hearts bleeding with truth, to bind those bodies smitten with mercies, to bring back those straying ones to a way of righteousness... To talk about service is one thing; to live that service day by day, humbly and unchanged is another thing altogether. And such is what we have been seeing and, what we are still seeing... His dedication is not motivated by what we give him or titles but it is evident that his is a calling.

The character of the preacher is not described as a person, who wants to be known by status and titles, but his authority is founded on moral, regular behaviour and service. The life of the preacher is explained as *“His dedication is not motivated by what we give him or titles but it is evident that his is a calling”* which predisposes him as a faithful and credible source who does what he must and is expected to according to the spiritual and religious requirements of the congregation. According to Gajewska et al. (2024), ethos can be useful in the persuasive discourse when the speaker is viewed as having the true character and track record of acting morally consistent. This belief is repeated in the words, *“To talk about service is one thing; to live that service day by day, humbly and unchanged is another thing altogether”* a phrase that reiterates the importance of qualifying credibility through action over time, or in other words, behavioral ethos (El-Dakhs and Ahmed 2025).

In combination with this appeal to ethos, there is also the application of the pathos panel, namely, by means of emotionally appealing wording that takes the listeners back to the sympathy and self-sacrifice of the preacher. As an example, *“Years ago our preacher stood in this very pulpit not to preach merely but to soothe those hearts bleeding with truth, to bind those bodies smitten with mercies, to bring back those straying ones to a way of righteousness”* is a technique of community building and inspiration of admiration, which is prevalent in the research methods of creating an effect of emotional resonance between the speaker and the listener (Editage Insights, 2025).

Example 2 Sermon 1

Today is a special day in our church since we are privileged to host a servant of God. Our guest preacher is a friend of this church who has worked through different ministries and I know how much he has devoted himself to the work of God. I suppose a good number of you people in this church might have already heard about his work perhaps in instances of transformed lives or in impact of his ministry outside these walls.

The utterance exhibits intentional use of ethos where the speaker sets out to prove the credibility of the guest preacher, the value he shares with the congregation and his moral

personality to win the trust of the congregation. The speaker then introduces the speaker b saying, *“Today is a special day in our church, since we are privileged to have a servant of God with us,”* which means that the guest is introduced as not a stranger, but as a person spiritually aligned with the values of the church, a person that deserves respect.

The credibility is further enhanced by mentioning about the experience and commitment of the preacher *“Our guest preacher is a friend of this church who has worked through different ministries and I know how much he has devoted himself to the work of God”*. As Gajewska et al. (2024) acknowledge, ethos has an even greater persuasion potential when audiences think that speakers have shown a long term conspicuous commitment to the pursuance of the same goals.

The utterance *“I suppose a good number of you people in this church might have already heard about his work perhaps in instances of transformed lives or in impact of his ministry outside these walls”*. Triggers the communal testimony that draws the congregation to their previous knowledge and experience of the preacher ministry. This method, which focuses on demonstrated success and vicarious authority, is a multiplying effect of ethos that gives the reader an impression that the reputation of a preacher has gone before him and that his words have already had the preceding use among people in the realm in which he operates (El-Dakhs & Ahmed, 2025).

The purpose of this speech is also to place the audience in a position of appreciating the words of the preacher by the speaker highlighting that they are blessed to receive his wisdom directly today. Ethos, too, is boosted when the speaker is and the affiliation is to an authority or institution that is trusted by the audience, normally in a direct manner, as in this case the church leadership itself. By adjusting the mission of the visiting speaker to the values of the church, namely, compassion, healing, and giving advice on spiritual matters, the speech eliminates any feeling of an outsider and builds up the same moral identity between the preacher and the audience. With this common ground, there is enhanced spiritual trust which makes the audience more open. Further, the mentioning of the transformations in lives implies that the moral authority of the

preacher is not only based upon the position, but on observable, visible results, which is what the current scholars define as result-based credibility (Gajewska et al., 2024)

Example 3 Sermon 1

I am here, not to brag or try to become famous, but I am one of the true testimonies of daily miracles that God is laying in our lives. I have watched as lives are transformed and the hopeless becoming hopeful.

The example above offers a strong appeal to ethos because it looks at the speaker as a simple, honest, and spiritually authentic person who is distinguished by credibility that is based not on rank or celebrity status, but rather, on experience and personal experience. The preacher says, *“I am here, not to brag or try to become famous, but I am one of the true testimonies of daily miracles that God is laying in our lives. I have watched as lives are transformed and the hopeless becoming hopeful”*. which is a manifestation of what Gajewska et al. (2024) refer to as experiential ethos relatability through victory, humility, and congruence with the related faith beliefs. Moreover, the preacher excludes himself of relying on worldly approval and identifies himself as a person who is not driven by the worldly mass response but by what God is accomplishing in each of them.

Example 4 Sermon 3

My name is Mary and I am standing here with a grateful heart to share with you my testimony after we made a prayer with our pastor... I remember a time when I experienced one of the saddest moments in my life. I felt that I was deserted by the world and even wished I would die. It was at this time when I went to a service by our pastor. As he spoke, his words went deep in my heart since I was facing the reality in my life that I could not bear. I felt like he was speaking direct to me, healing my pain and giving me new sense of purpose.

The testimony of Mary is also a strong appeal to ethos, based on the fact that she is the one whose underlying reality of emotional conversion, emotional healing, and a sense of renewal of faith can be used to establish the credibility of the preacher. When she says, *“I remember a time when I experienced one of the saddest moments in my life. I*

felt that I was deserted by the world and even wished I would die” Mary began with a very emotional and personal story, a story that reveals that she was abandoned by the world and she even wished to perish.

The truth of her testimony about what the preacher said to her confirms the reality of his ministry. His words entered her heart because she was witnessing what was happening in her life that she could not carry on living that way. *“As he spoke, his words went deep in my heart since I was facing the reality in my life that I could not bear. I felt like he was speaking direct to me, healing my pain and giving me new sense of purpose”* This demonstrates the preacher to be a spiritually effective individual, but a morally upright servant-leader that is highly influential in the persuasive ability of a religious figure

When she calls the audience to follow the example and fulfill their task, to believe in the man of God, have faith and you will have the same hope and comfort, the testimony is not precisely personal anymore, but it yields the congregation an opportunity to rely on the advice of the preacher through the shared identification with story related by the speaker. Editage Insights (2025) confirms its association with trust as well as strengthening the connection between the speaker and the audience on spiritual and ethical levels through such emotionally touching narration. Moreover, the fact that Mary describes the preacher in terms of his being kind to everyone, the phrase is “I have seen him helping and saying kind words to anybody who needed it,” makes his constancy of character one of the key elements of ethos.

The role of Mary as a witness is performed to not only increase the moral authority of the preacher but also to strengthen the values shared by the church community. This speech can enhance the credibility of the preacher and reinforce the spiritual atmosphere of the whole congregation by echoing the moral and emotional message of the congregation faith, endurance, acceptance and maturity.

4.1.2 Credibility of the Church

Credibility of the church is rested on the foundation of integrity and consistence between its doctrine and its practice. When a church presents itself through the strength

of its moral and ethical principles, acts as a useful congregation to society, creates an inclusive, compassionate atmosphere, it obtains trust and respect from both within and outside of its members (Adam, 2017). Leadership, financial and decision-making processes transparency are also aspects that contribute to the credibility of the church. Additionally, a church that voices its biblical views clearly on significant public issues and serves the broader community will gain public respect and ethical stature. In short, a church's credibility is not just in what it teaches, but it is also in how solidly it lives out those teachings in life (Adam, 2017).

Example 5 Sermon 1

Our church has always tried to help those in need. We believe that the greatest work of evangelism is through acts of mercy. Many members who have joined us recently did not hear about us through any kind of advertisement. I believe they got to hear us though the good things they have witnessed us doing or may be heard from other people.

This utterance shows a significant use of the ethos appeal since it introduces the church as an ethically established and reliable institution whose identity is based on service through caring and credibility through promoting a reputation of what one can do. According to the preacher, his church has always been there to assist the needy. “We believe that the greatest work of evangelism is through acts of mercy,” which clearly positions the church's ethical authority not on rhetorical preaching alone but on visible, selfless deeds. This fits the definition of collective ethos that is credibility attached to an entity when its demeanor is in line with ethical values as a group (Gajewska et al., 2024).

The allusion to new members having joined the church not because of any advertisement but by virtue of the good things they have heard or seen that we have been doing or what other people might have told them about strengthens to a greater level the power of witness based persuasion, which implies that trust in the church is not created by its promotion activities but happens by practicing actual demonstration of the mission of the church. Religious discourse is enhanced by ethical appeal when it stems naturally out of lived action and perceived by the community as such in

particular, when the actions have a communal resonance of compassion and service (El-Dakhs and Ahmed, 2025).

Additionally, focusing on the tradition of the culture of giving, the statement suggests the stability and reliability as well as the moral heritage, which, in turn, enhances the sense of integrity in the church among the existing and potential believers. As Editage Insights (2025) explains, ethos is not only about character, but also how values and practice have a perceived match. Thus, the church's reputation, rooted in sustained mercy and service, becomes a powerful persuasive force. It makes it more authoritative as a source of spiritual empowerment and commendable.

Example 6 Sermon 1

I know we have a number of members who have joined our church recently and I want to take this opportunity to welcome each and every one of you in our church. We are a church that operates under God's guidance and love. We pray, serve and random do acts of kindness together. We are not perfect but our faith is real & strong. Our church is based on integrity, love and the word of the Bible. I invite you to come and experience for yourself how God is working through our Church. You are completely welcome here in our family. And I believe that together we shall grow in faith.

This is a good example of ethos appeal since the church is described as an open, morally established, as well as spiritually true togetherness based on collective values and experience. The preacher starts by turning to the new visitors.” *I want to take this opportunity to welcome each and every one of you in our church*”, and puts the note of warmth, openness, and authenticity of relations, all the more raising the speaker credibility as the trustworthy and inclusive spiritual leader. Ethos can be the most convincing tool when the speaker indicates the collective identity that they share with the audience (Gajewska et al., 2024).

The words, “*We are not perfect but our faith is real & strong*” makes humility and genuineness stronger as the church is not associated with any moral arrogance asserting that it has a genuine faith as a spiritual mission. A combination of this admission of imperfection and unwavering faith is a strong ethical appeal, and it displays what El-

Dakhs and Ahmed (2025) refer to as vulnerable credibility, or the face of ethos that makes the audience trust more through the appeal of humanistic struggles and honest belief. the statement of the preacher. *“Our church is based on integrity, love and the word of the Bible.”* is embedding the identity of the community into ageless ethical and scriptural laws and adding it to the moral legitimacy of the community.

The values of the church can also be connected to visible, everyday activity as the phrase, *“We pray, serve and random do acts of kindness together. We are not perfect but our faith is real & strong”* The phrase also sends a message that the church is not only theoretically but constantly aware of its ideals. As Editage Insights (2025) points out, ethos works best when ethical alignment could be related not to assertion but to action. The turn to inviting people to listen to how God works through our Church, referring to a concrete experience, shifts the appeal and is no longer suggesting to believers abstract theology but offering a chance to encounter the changes oneself and support the transparency and openness of the church. Lastly, he ends by saying, *“you are fully completely here in our family”*. The speaker builds a shared identity founded on this acceptance and growth as he says, *“And I believe we shall grow together in faith,”* reinforcing the idea of the church, as it is portrayed, as a compassionate shelter and a spiritually supportive place.

Example 7 Sermon 1

.... I know there may be some today who question the church. But let me tell you from my own experience our church is about real care, truth, love and a real connection with God. I have seen lives turned around here, personally. Those who didn't feel seen or heard or felt lost or alone have been offered hope in our small acts of kindness, in our praying souls, in our ongoing support of one another... we live together, carry each other's burdens and but most times rejoice with each other.

The speech is very persuasive in terms of ethos because of simple, modest, and sincere use of words creating trust. The pastor says, *“I know there may be some here who question the church”*. He reinforces his statements with specific examples by saying, *“I have seen lives turned around here, personally”*, proving that his arguments have their basis not on ideologies but on true lived experiences. The personal anecdotes are

used that way to create a connection between the preacher and the congregation and that the preacher is fully integrated into a community where the said preacher witnesses the effects of the work done by the church. In addition, Gajewska et al. (2024) state that ethos is also fostered when speakers demonstrate a common set of values in their words and behaviors that need to be enforced by the pastor by mentioning small acts of kindness, praying souls, and unending support of each other.

This portrayal of the church as a “*living, supportive family*” that “*carry each other's burdens*” resonates with the audience’s desire for genuine care and belonging, reinforcing the church’s ethical and moral legitimacy. Such narrative strategies, according to El-Dakhs and Ahmed (2025), have to be deeply embedded into the values of humility and personal witness because the associated ability to generate a sense of audience trust is rooted in assimilating the speaker and her identity to the collective values and the everyday experiences.

Additionally, such welcoming attitude as the invitation to newcomers by the pastor, “*you are more than welcome*” and “*it is your ideal church,*” introduces an inclusive atmosphere, which gives the feeling of being accepted and having a common aim. With his given presentation of the church as a community of people, who are putting their words into action by loving and supporting one another in very real ways. The speaker validates the faith of the congregation in living, acting faith instead of just belief, which increases his credibility and makes his message more persuasive. Such a rhetorical strategy is based on honesty and hard facts, which are in line with the concepts of ethos according to Aristotle, where sound moral character and proven fairness are at the core of efficient persuasion (Editage Insights, 2025).

Example 8 Sermon 1

Before I begin today I would like to relate my own experience of membership in this church. The first time I entered these doors I had no idea what to expect, but I have come to learn that there is a true feeling of warmth and care in this church. I have witnessed our leaders, pastors and members uniting in difficult situations and reaching out to each other both in words and in deeds.

The use of a personal experience and genuine emotion by the speaker is another aspect of ethos under consideration in this statement that can advance credibility and trust among the congregation. The speaker goes straight to the point with this honest reassessment of his experience, which makes any viewer immediately develop a familiar and modest attitude to the speaker with whom they can identify: *“The first time I entered these doors I had no idea what to expect”*. The above description that he is in a place where there is a very real sense of warmth and caring since he has come to know that this church is different. This it is not an abstract statement but a real life experience and shows that the values of the church are not just theoretical ideals.

Gajewska et al. (2024), who states that speaking with ethos gets reinforced when the speakers are using personal stories that their audience can relate to at an emotional level. The outcome of the combination of the phrases like *“I have witnessed our leaders, pastors and members uniting in difficult situations and reaching out to each other both in words and in deeds”* can refer to active embodiment of the church principles, which enrich the moral strengths of the community in the whole.

Moreover, positioning the church as the one that is not merely a church but a family based on trust, honesty, and a proper connection with God strengthens the identity with an impulse to shared long-life morals as El-Dakhs and Ahmed (2025) suggest that a shared moral is stronger in forming the ethos among people. The fact that the speaker does not hide her lack of understanding at first, with the evident affection to the welcoming church grounds, makes the ethical appeal so strong that it establishes her credibility and makes her message correlate with what the congregation believes in. Since it is with such pure self-disclosure and accordance to the values of the community that ethos in persuasion communication flourishes, this test should thus make a good sample of rhetoric persuasiveness.

4. 2 Logos

The second important point in the topic of Minister Persuasion Techniques is logos. This idea explains the role of logic and reason as used by ministers in order to manipulate congregants (Aristotle, 2007).

Example 9 Sermon 3

...I would like that we set a day to help the people who are a bit needy in our community. I believe it is a bit difficult to preach to people who are worried about what they shall eat. I also urge our welfare department to identify cases of needy students whose parents are struggling with school fees and our church can sponsor several. Most churches have a ministry of caring and our church should also stand to be counted.

The statement appeals to logos due to the direct logical thinking that it offers which is directly linked to the real world issues that many of the listeners will encounter. As an example, the speaker says, “*I believe it is a bit hard to preach to a people who are worried about what they shall eat*” and that is a concrete issue the audience can relate to when trying to make a living out there. As opposed to the purely spiritual or theoretical prospects, the statement provides how the church is going to offer concrete assistance with the assistance of financial aid, especially compelling the welfare department to come up with cases of needy students whose parents are in a weak school fees position thus the church can sponsor some.

Logic is also enhanced by referring to a larger context. “*Most churches have a ministry of caring and our church should also stand to be counted,*” which places the work of the church in a universal plan of addressing the needs of a community. This can be compared to the current findings demolishing that rhetoric appeals based on practical reasoning and close-to-home problems are more convincing and credible (Gajewska et al., 2024).

Example 10 Sermon 3

...That is definitely one of the things I like about service the most. I am also inspired to support other people, not only in terms of finances but also in terms of their spiritual lives as I can see how they relate.

The statement has logic in the rational sense of offering financial as well as spiritual subsistence. The speaker adds, “*I am also inspired support other people not only in terms of finances but also in terms of their spiritual lives as I can see how they relate,*” hence an apparent logical relationship between helping and meeting the practical needs

and soon, the spiritual one. It follows this argument that solving one component, in this case the financial need, automatically goes hand in hand and assists the other component, in this case the spiritual development, to achieve not only an emotional, but also a rational, satisfaction of service system.

Example 11 Sermon 1

When it comes to finances in our Kenyan setting where most of us fear rent, food and the uncertainties ahead the relationship between our economic hardships and walk in the spirit life is very real... We cannot just offer consoling words but we need to extend a helping hand whenever it is needed.

Logos is applied to the speech so that there is a logic between the general issues people have in life and the need to seek financial and spiritual assistance. It begins with mentioning the practical problems of the community, that is, “*worrying about rent, food, the future,*” which readily connects to the problems that exist on a practical level to the congregation. This generates a foundation that has visible ground. It is followed by the speech that gives practical examples to prove the assertions. The example given by the speaker is of incidence where a sister in the neighborhood failed to feed her children and how the church went to her rescue and gave her both material and spiritual support.

This causal chain argument shows how direct positive influence on the wellbeing of the community can be attained upon satisfaction of physical needs. Rationally speaking, the faster the people are not challenged in acquiring the basic financial needs, the more effortlessly they will be able to develop spiritually and become one of the contributors of the society in all that is meaningful but not the meaningless. Additionally, “*we cannot just offer consoling words but we need to extend a helping hand whenever it is needed.*” one such statement which illuminates on how the achievement of satisfaction of material needs and spiritual advancement is mutually improving. This peaceful disposition means, without the two, the gap will be there and one of which the church will be aiming to fill. Such rational and humane appeal is in line with the work that points out to the importance of rhetoric that connects the practical needs of the

community with its spiritual evolution leading to a higher congregational participation and trust (Gajewska et al., 2024).

Example 12 Sermon 4

.... Jambo lingine ni kwamba tangu hili kanisa lianzishwe, tumeweza kushiriki katika miradi ya kuwasaidia vijana, wajane na maskini na kwangu hili ni jambo ambalo linaonyesha Imani ambayo inaabatana na vitendo

...another thing is that this church has been engaged in projects to help the youth, widows and the poor since its inception this is evidence of a living faith in action.

The preacher brings out the credibility of the church by mentioning just what the church has done, saying, “*kwamba tangu hili kanisa lianzishwe, tumeweza kushiriki katika miradi ya kuwasaidia vijana, wajane na maskini*” and making reference to the fact that the church is actually participating in the designing of programs to help youths, widows and the poor. The activities are strong evidence of good influence and the service orientation of the church to the community. The speaker does not use emotional and flabby statements, but real examples which can be seen and checked by all listeners.

This kind of evidence based argument contributes to the appeal to logos since the congregation is in a position to draw logical conclusions regarding the role that the church will play as well as the efficacy which the church will have in the society. Furthermore, the statement also presents a definite causation relationship in the sense that it states that the faith of the church is the basis of action and the action is that of service to the community. This growth is attractive to the audience who is interested in efficiency and the possibility of sound reasoning.

Claiming that, the church does not only preach the bible but also lives in it because these projects provide practical evidence that the church does what it preaches, quotes at the end of the major part of the speech: by saying, “*hili ni jambo ambalo linaonyesha Imani ambayo inaabatana na vitendo*” (*evidence of a living faith through action*). This coincides with observations that the successful rhetoric persuasion depends on

discernible actions as a highly effective method of strengthening credibility and influencing the audience in a logical way (Gajewska et al., 2024)

Example 13 Sermon 1

...In the same year, we have been able to help more students we have managed to sponsor an additional five students to join their counterparts making a total of twenty students that we are sponsoring as a church. This is the testimony that our faith is in action like I have repeated endless times here.

Logos is employed in this utterance, which presents logical and quantifiable information regarding the influence of the church within the community, saying “*we have managed to sponsor an additional five students to join their counterparts making a total of twenty students that we are sponsoring as a church*”. The use of a logical and reasonable appeal is reinforced by the inclusion of the exact numbers and by the period in time that makes this not just an abstract argument but rather an anchored argument that is not subject to opinion but it is based on solid facts. The statement is not merely inspirational but it has quantifiable evidence therefore it is compelling to the readers.

Also, the preacher connects faith and action with logical cause and effect statements by stressing, that “*This is the testimony that our faith is in action like I have repeated endless times here.*” This line of argument adds credibility to the church because it proves that their religion brings forth a noticeable change instantly and a logical minded onlooker can spot and quantify it. This is the use of evidence as rhetoric because it fits the modern concepts of the role of ethos and logos in persuasive appeal (Editage Insights, 2025).

4. 3 Pathos

The third strategy according to Aristotle (2007) is the Pathos where the emphasis is given to how the ministers and churches influence the emotions of people of how to come to their congregation, remain and change. This strategy can be identified in three aspects: the appeal to primal needs, the appeal to fear and humor as a tactic of persuasion.

4.3.1 Appeal to need

Appeal to need is the tactic of the ministers which help them to demonstrate individuals' necessity to be a part of the church and why it is necessary to be in the church and to follow the biblical principles. This kind of persuasion stresses on the work of the church in satisfying emotional, spiritual and even material needs to make people perceive that the congregation is needed in terms of offering support and a sense of belonging as stated by Adam (2017).

Example 14 Sermon 3

...I have something to say to you out of my heart. Not everything is rosy in life, we all are going through some struggles, may be it is about money, or family, or even being lost... people come here and they feel hopeless and with God and the love of this church, they have managed to feel strong again...

Pathos is more or less provoked in the excerpt by intense feelings of hope, reassurance, and belonging. It outright speaks about actual pain endured by most people, the preacher says, “*Not everything is rosy in life, we all are going through some struggles, may be it is about money, or family, or even being lost.*” and this makes the listeners able to resonate and go deep into the lyrical message. This awareness of sufferings makes a person feel safe as they focus on the fact that one is not the only person undergoing troubles and does not need to go through them on his or her own.

The church is presented as a supportive family, an entity that would pray with you, will encourage you, and even offer physical help, making one feel cared and included. The words, “*people come here and they feel hopeless and with God and the love of this church, they have managed to feel strong again*” brings out a sound change and rejuvenation, which provokes hope and emotional attachment. This sentimental persuasion motivates the audience to stay attached and loyal as it is evidenced by the insistence to watch your faith and believe that this church is bringing you up. On the whole, the message is highly emotion-oriented since it promises to make a person feel comfort and belonging and, thus, is more perceptible (Rivera & Thomas, 2025).

Example 15 sermon 4

Najua leo kuna watu katikati yetu waliokuja hapa wakiwa wamevunjika moyo, hawajui watoto watakula nini kesho, hawana kwa kukimbilia. Watu ambao hawana furaha ama tumaini na

maisha. Nataka kuwahakikishia kwamba tunawajali na Mungu anawajali. Nataka niwaambie kwamba mko pahali panapofaa. Tunawajali na kila siku tutaendelea kuskiza shida zenu.

I understand that some people had broken hearts when they arrived, they did not know what their children will get to eat next day, they had nowhere to hide. I want to tell you are in the right place because God loves you and has brought you to us so that as a church we may show you compassion and give you a listening ear

The moving element in this testament is also the clear confession of human hopelessness. The speaker tells that some people had broken hearts and he knows because when they came they did not know what their children will eat the following day, they had no place to hide “*Najua leo kuna watu katikati yetu waliokuja hapa wakiwa wamevunjika moyo, hawajui watoto watakula nini kesho, hawana kwa kukimbilia.*” They are emotionally loaded such words as “*amevunjika moyo (broken heart), tutakupenda na kukusikiza (we will love you and will listen you)*” are used to appeal to the people at a very emotional level.

Such a pathos appeal depicts the church as a place of refuge, as a place of refuge, that provides sympathy, belongingness, and hope, which are all much more than answers. The church is not only depicted as a worship temple but also as a healing and peace church with the ability of satisfying both spiritual as well as practical human needs. The utterance leaves the idea of an inclusive society, which is constantly displayed as caring and supportive church that will support the congregants without having to do anything in return “*tunawajali na kila siku tutaendelea kuskiza shida zenu*”.

The speaker who appeals to the primal human desire of finding a sense of belonging, finding safety, and the sense of empathy, encourages the people to view the church as the place that edifies their faith and as the means of interconnection that saves their life

in the most hopeless situations. The success of the message revolves around this emotional cords (Okello & Kamau, 2024).

Example 16 Sermon 4

Pia najua kwamba wapo miongoni mwetu waliopitia mateso ya magonjwa, na wengi wao wanajikuta wakiwa peke yao, wakiona kama hakuna mtu anayewajali.

I understand that there are people in our midst who have experienced the pain of falling sick and perhaps a lot of them feel that no one is concerned about them.

This utterance is aimed at encouraging individuals to feel that they are understood, listened to, and supported, especially those who could be struggling with some issues silently. The use of words such as “*mateso ya magonjwa (suffer illness) ... peke yao (alone)*” arouses emotional feelings, in particular, in people, who having physical problems or left alone. The preacher not only realizes this need of connectedness but he provides the church community as the source of comfort and unity. The value of the promise, namely, to stand by each other, side by side is an emotional promise which is more focused on getting mutual support and love, which many people strongly desire, especially during the hard periods.

Moreover, this spiritual aspect of the emotional appeal is also supported by the promise of prayer and miracle, which creates a hope that things will get better for them, and all that because the church is not merely a building, where God can only be experienced, but where His power and love constantly work. This appeals to pathos, which is characterized by targeting the human desire of empathy, companionship and divine intervention in a crisis. It welcomes people to believe that church can provide healing, love, and offer prayers in their most vulnerable times.

4.3.2 Appeal to Fear

Usually fear is regarded as a type of emotional appeal in Aristotelian rhetoric (pathos), but when supported by empirical data, systematic argumentation, convincing research, and logical argument, fear can also be a part of logical appeal (logos). In his Rhetoric (Kennedy, 1991), Aristotle believes inspirational rhetoric consists of conveying reality

or apparent true using rational argument, both deductive and inductive. In the context of conceptual analysis, fear can be used as a rationalizing force in situations when it is used to highlight measurable and provable danger that is backed by statistics and causal analysis.

Example 17 Sermon 2

... one day we will all stand before the Lord and one way or another, we will have to answer to the decisions that we have taken... The devil tries all he can to mislead, ...do not wait till it is too late! Repent to the Lord today and give Him your heart and walk in righteousness. Believe in His word, be firm in the faith and do not allow the world to distract you. God is kind and merciful and also fair and it is time to change to Him completely and before the last day...

Pathos is evident in this utterance as fear is applied as the driver of people which is a strong appeal in terms of emotions throughout the sermon. The preacher presents judgment, temptation, and spiritual destruction as looming realities, “*we will all stand before the Lord and one way or another, we will have to answer to the decisions that we have taken*”. These statements create an urgent sense of a personal soul-searching and even fear of eternal repercussions leaving the listeners to choose how to assess their spiritual well-being. As Den Hartogh (2020) notes, fear appeals in sermons can be used to create a sense of moral consciousness and trigger the process of repentance by challenging the listeners with the seriousness of their moral decisions.

The statement “*The devil tries all he can to mislead...*” creates a picture of a spiritual conflict that gives the listener a position of the defenseless prey unless they take a quick action. This creates emotional tension, especially through the warning: “*do not wait till it is too late!*” These words intensify the emotional connection and trigger the inner struggles. The pathos appeal is made stronger due to the feeling that there is time running out, and the possibility to get salvation is limited.

The utterances also touch on the justice and fairness of God, stating “*God is kind and merciful and also fair,*” which balances the fear appeal with an element of hope and divine compassion. Both divine judgment and mercy are two halves one that adds up to

a bigger emotional barrier and the other that provides an avenue of redemption. The preacher's appeal to "*repent to the Lord today and give Him your heart*" demonstrates emotional intensity that urges the audience toward immediate action.

The message creates concern, urgency, and individual belief which are characteristic of the presence of pathos in persuasive religious speech. According to Okonkwo and Njoku (2021), rhetorical sermons are based on the emotional sense of urgency that would lead to instant decision-making of repentance and renewal. The preacher's repetition of "*today,*" "*now,*" and "*before the last day*" serves as a call to commitment, urging listeners to place faith at the center of their lives.

Example 18 sermon 2

Again hear me my sons and daughters. Life is mainly about making decisions, yet there is a choice that will determine where you spend your eternity, and that is whether you will follow God or reject his truth. A time will come when all the souls are to appear in the sight of Lord and on that day, there will be no excuses and no second chances. I press upon you again not to wait till it is too late. The effects of sin are real even though sin might appear harmless. The devil is busy to take you out, to convince you that you have a lot of time, yet the clock is striking!

This is a direct call to pathos and it is meant to cause emotional sensitivity and spiritual thinking. A striking element of eschatological imagery used by the preacher, "*A time will come when all the souls are to appear in the sight of Lord and on that day, there will be no excuses and no second chances.*" builds a profound atmosphere of an imminent judgment and the possibility to be judged because of it. According to Chitando (2021), the use of apocalyptic imagery in Pentecostal sermons is an effective rhetorical strategy to amplify the effect on the emotions and encourage firm action.

Emotional urgency is achieved by repetition of warning, as depicted by such lines as, "*do not wait till it is too late*" and, "*the clock is striking!*" This creates an effect of time running out. This is in line with the findings stated by Ekstrm and Lundmark (2020) who note that in religious rhetoric, the emotional urgency is usually deployed to help move a listener, no longer a passive audience, but an active responder.

The fact that sin is not as dangerous as it seems to be but equals death when it comes to being spiritually dangerous, and that the devil is busy trying to take him out, only strengthens the idea of the spiritual warfare, as the believer is a helpless being, who is being hunted by the devil. Such rhetorical decisions appeal to fear, anxiety, and vulnerability that are the core elements of the persuasive pathos (Mugo, 2019).

Simultaneously, the utterance has a balance between fear and comfort and hope. The phrase, “*God loves young people and calling you to righteousness*” provides comfort and makes the youths know they are not useless in the redemption process of God. The existence of the family name, “*my sons and daughters*” increases the feeling of belonging even more, provoking feelings of intimacy, responsibility, and spiritual oneness. This can be compared to conclusions of Njeru (2022) who states that to provide commitment and the sense of belonging in the African Pentecostal preaching, it is essential to appeal to the audience through emotional identification, and he or she specifically focuses on the use of kinship metaphors.

Finally, the message has a perfect flow of the messages of judgment and mercy, of danger and deliverance, by using the pathos to create a sense of concern and to encourage spiritual action. The emotional appeal to repent and change, “*to turn to Him this minute!*” is a good example of the preacher turning to emotionally compelling attitude to generate his followers to turn to the Lord and change.

4.3.3 Appeal to Humour

Humour is an essential part of rhetoric activity. Whereas not originally documented as such within the original framework presented by Aristotle, the element of humour in the present context of rhetoric has become a legitimate and veritable driver of persuasion. According to Meyer (2000), humour has the potential to fulfil various communicative roles, which include, enhancing solidarity, venting, attacking a social norm, or softening the perceived threat of the controversial message. Through humor, speakers also ease tensions on the part of audiences and encourage them to establish a common ground. In the institutional or formal context, humour typically serves the roles of disarming negative reception, enforcing group identity, and reframing sensitive issues in a less threatening way.

Example 19 Sermon 2

... Life is very much a rollercoaster you see, where you feel like you are trying to run through a rainstorm, only to fall on a banana peel! ...God knows every fall and every tear, and he is always up to give you a helping hand that is going to bring you back on your feet. I am aware of the fact that the troubles which we are as a burden not to mention the profound interest in money as well as the home issues are so heavy that we can get lost in the worries of this world...We do not just say prayers here in this church but we say with joy... we need to be assured that there is hope and the great grace of God who is capable of turning our lives around and saving us from our sorrows...

The utterance is pathos related making the audience empathize with and have hope due to the metaphorically related representation and the caring nature of relief. The preacher compares life to “a rollercoaster” and to “a run through rainstorm, only to slip on banana peel” the images are bright, funny, but they tug at the heart given the instability and setbacks that are the mark of daily life. Mugo (2019) offers metaphorical storytelling in sermons as one of the major emotional strategies to reflect the problems of the listener in the form of the disarming and captivating manner.

The phrase “*God knows every fall and every tear*” is said with considerable emotional justification and informs the listeners that God is aware of their sufferings and understands their pain. Such a plea links to the universal human desire of recognition, warmth, and divine assistance. Such individual guarantees move about enhancing emotional involvement as it makes God less distant but closely connected with personal suffering (Davis and Rice, 2019).

The preacher also recognizes the burdens of the real life, like the money, the home problems, and states that: they are even too heavy to become trapped in the worries of this world. This sincere exploration of familiar emotional strains helps reinforce the identification with the audience and reflects the pastoral approach mentioned by Ekstrm and Lundmark (2020) since the identification of emotional pressure is not only acknowledged but given to grace as its solution.

The phrase, “... *We do not just say prayers here in this church but we say with joy...*” provides all the warmth and emotional lightness giving community identity, but not only solemn one. The effect of balance of mercy and restoration with the power of hope and the great grace of God is all brought about by the word hope which sets out to make the listener realize that there are some mercy and restoration to change the path of despair to the path of hope. According to the hypothesis Njeru (2022) gives, emotional appeal is grounded on these statements not merely in means of making struggle legitimate, but provoking it in the direction of redeeming promise.

Example 20 Sermon 2

..... sometimes I feel like our lives could be a TV comedy. It was just last week I just got out of my house with one bib shoe on because it was prayer time and I was too carried away to notice which shoe didn't match and I had to erupt in laughter when I got to church. It made me realize that it's out of our flaws that our humanness becomes real to God who even finds our mistakes funny. When we laugh at our flops, we aren't avoiding the struggles but inviting the lightness and hope that God's love provides us. So, let's hold on to these funny moments as fool proof that even in our own broken-ness, His grace & humor brings us joy...

The statement is full of pathos, captivating with the warmth, jokes, and the feeling of human imperfection common to them. The speaker describes a funny story about owning the wrong shoes (*one pair matched peculiar shoes*) and going to church; it seems to be a funny anecdote but it has a powerful emotional subtext too. This kind of approach to storytelling makes the audience ready to convert and be spiritually persuaded, as Mugo (2019) explains, by instantly disarming and developing the ethos of closeness to the audience.

The preacher, however, puts this embarrassing scene not in the category of embarrassment but as the act that reminds us that, as human beings, we are real to God when we are flawed and that the connection we can have with God is deeply connected to our inaccuracy. This explanation adds theological dimension to humor implying that light inclined sense humor brings even God amused in the face of the daily effort. It is

consistent with the fact that, according to Njeru (2022), the call to collective sins may enhance emotional identification and encourage vulnerability in religious settings.

Besides, the expression, to laugh at our flops, can be interpreted in a way that shifts the perception of weakness by turning it into a location of grace, where happiness and divine love remain available even in the brokenness. This creates a change of emotional nature, moving it into the hope spectrum, which is characteristic of an emotionally effective preaching (Davis & Rice, 2019). The laughter does not reject the struggle in life, and it turns out as a spiritual endurance act. According to the preacher, we are not shying away out of the struggles but are welcoming the weightlessness and hope that God love can offer to us.

Concluding the message with the closing line, that *“His grace & humor brings us joy...”* the preacher allows the kind of spirituality through which human sinfulness is not only pardonable but significant on a religious level. This brings to mind what Ekstrm and Lundmark (2020) term as emotional relief rhetoric, whereby in the face of suffering, humor plays a sacred role to transform the situation through reinterpretation of the same with grace.

In the end, the lightness of the story and the theology-inspired thoughts bring a strong emotional connection to the audience, persuading people to celebrate their imperfections and feel the pleasure of God with all their non-ideal mess. It is the soft but effective appeal to pathos, which makes people vulnerable, full of hope and intimate regarding God.

Example 21 sermon 4

Kuna wakati nikiwaangalia naona nyinyi ni ni kama wale watu husema ndio najua Mungu anazijua shida zangu zote kwa hivyo mimi nitaendelea tu kufanya mambo yangu bila kujali. Ni kama tu mtoto anavyosema nataka kukula chakula change lakini sihisi njaa... Lakini wapendwa naomba Tusidanganyane. Kama tunataka Mungu ashughulikie shida zetu, ni lazima tujikaze kufuata njia za Mungu!"

"Sometimes one feels that we are those people who say, "God knows my sufferings, but I want to find my own way." It's like a child says, 'I will eat my meal, but I am not hungry!' We can't cope like this. Let's not fool ourselves... If we want a blessing, we must walk in line with God!!

The humor is a technique of emotional appeals (pathos) that the preacher uses in trying to confront the discord between firmness and obedience of the congregation. With the playful parable of the child who demands to eat but whose stomach is not hungry the preacher points out at a paradox, which is humorous and suggestive at the same time.

The preacher additionally says, *"ndio najua Mungu anazijua shida zangu zote hivyo mimi nitaendelea tu kufanya mambo yangu bila kujali,"* which is what is usually in the minds of passive religiosity. By doing this, he softly challenges his reader and keeps away the defensive thinking by relational strategies of humor. According to Njeru (2022), humor within a sermon enables it to soften emotional resistance so that uncomfortable truth can be stated in an easy-to-swallow and contemplative way.

This style attracts laugh, and it evokes self-inspection as the audience looks at themselves in the joke.

The moral weight of the message is then provided by the preachers closing statement of *"tusidanganyane... ni lazima tujikaze kufuata njia za Mungu"*. Davis and Rice (2019) assert that such lightheartedness and acclamation are typical of emotive sermon, in which humor serves as a gateway to change. The manner in which the preacher delivers the message fits the definition of softening rebukes with emotional familiarity set up by Mugo (2019) equating the delivery of pastoral warmth and prophetic truth by balancing them.

4.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the findings explore how ministers and church people in Kenya use rhetoric tools namely; ethos, logos, and pathos to persuade, attract, and garner church members.

The analysis shows that these forms of persuasion do not only inform the basis of religious discourse but also form the core of the perception of spiritual authority, communal trust and individual transformation. Ethos proves especially relevant, as moral integrity and community outreach create credibility among the preachers. Their genuineness can also be substantiated by testimonies emphasizing on their observable faith and ministry based on moral strength to support their spiritual mandate to the congregants.

Logos is used in the provision of logical statements and realistic constructs to address problems faced by the congregants in the real world. By providing material support and giving some chances to improve their lives, churches meet a socioeconomic challenge connected with poverty and lack of education and, in this way, show that their faith is not only logical but also responsive. With cause-and-effect logic and practical solutions, ministers point to the unity of spiritual and material truth claiming the church can be a solution-based organization.

Pathos is applied to invite an emotional appeal through appeals to need, fear and even to humor. Ministers address the existential anxieties of their congregants which include; loneliness, sickness, financial troubles yet refer to the imperativeness of repenting and facing judgment. The strategy of humour is also added on bringing out the humanity of the preacher making a connection with the spoken word strengthening the harmony in the congregation. It is through this emotional manipulation that the emotional strategy links the individual to the community further enhancing the feeling of having a common sense of meaning and belonging.

Instead of assuming that ethos, logos, and pathos should be used independent of each other, they are frequently combined in sermons and church messages as an attempt to establish a complex communication of persuasion. Ministers who take a combination of personal experiences, rational answers, emotional touching communication, are more efficient in creating belief and stimulating behavior modification. Such interchange of the modes of rhetoric enhances the credibility and relevance of the church institution as well as the preacher.

The chapter also brings out the significance of language in the delivery of the message of religion. Linguistic expressions used by preachers are chosen intentionally to be more clear, emotional, and culturally relevant. Use of Swahili and ordinary metaphors are frequently used in order to help theological concepts to be related to and applied to real life. They fill the gap between the doctrinal and lived experience in the process so that their messages are communicated quite beyond the means of comprehension into the heart and soul.

CHAPTER FIVE

POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED IN SERMONS BY PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS IN NYERI COUNTY

5.1 Positive Politeness

Positive politeness tries to perform to the listener in terms of validation and acceptance. It touches on the demand of a person to get his wishes, actions and values appreciated. Brown and Levinson (1987) inform us that this kind of politeness is not just a response to a particular face threat but it is in fact a social accelerator that helps construct rapport between speakers. Practically, the speakers speak in a well-known tone like among good friends and they admire each other character to make them feel they are similar. The positive politeness is effective because of this warm intimate language. Brown and Levinson (1987) have worked out fifteen various strategies of positive politeness, which have been illustrated below.

5.1.1 Be Optimistic

One of the good manners of politeness that Brown and Levinson (1987) suggested is optimism. The arguments of various preachers clearly depict that the orators had optimistic anticipations related to the future of the listeners and expected good things would happen. Such optimistic utterances are shown in the examples below.

Example 22 Sermon 4

“Yes, this is a faith-filled family, I say, there is no difference whether you are in the city or at the village; you are blessed. Someone declare with his stripes I am healed. Say all that I touch shall flourish...proclaim it, all these things are mine...Declare I am not limited! Being sick, good or bad relationships, kids, and your past is not a limit on you.”

The utterance is optimistic since it motivates and inspires the congregation, speaking in terms of their possibilities and opportunities instead of restrictions. It also tells them that it respects their capabilities as they express hope and confidence in them to achieve things and prosper and beat the odds. Such statements as *‘You are blessed,’* and *‘Declare, I am not limited,’* and *‘See what others are not seeing’* help the speakers to imagine a better future of the hearers, and this is the approach that proves to be effective

in establishing the rapport and producing an encouraging environment. Phrases like this are used as a means of respecting the audience as they believe in their struggle and prove their value.

5.1.2 Application of In-group Identity Markers

In-group identity markers are the application of certain words or terms or symbols that indicate membership to a group. These symbols may consist in common words, slang, or pet names, ticks, nomenclatures or even cultural references that the group may identify with its own values, beliefs, and experiences. They act to reinforce group ties through a sense of unity, familiarity and exclusivity.

As another case in point, we may refer to the religious language in which the member of the congregation may speak of themselves as brethren, beloved in Christ, or children of God, so that a sense of communion is established. In the same way when the person is at work or at a social gathering, when they use certain tech terms that are only used by that group or when they incorporate certain slang that is unique to the group then it only enhances the concept of shared meaning and common aim.

Example 23 Sermon 4

Wapendwa, we are not people of this world we are only wapitajia, people who know the words of the foreign land. hii dunia siyo nyumbani kwetu! We are pilgrims here; lovely people we are of the world above: we are passing through. This is not our world!

In this statement, preacher uses the term *sisi si watu wa dunia hii...* (*we are not of this world...*) as a very strong in-group label. The phrase is a direct excerpt borrowed directly out of the bible (e.g. Philippians 3:20 and beyond) and into an innate theological presumption common to many Christians, that their life and identity are simply not grounded here on earth, nor foursquare, but in heaven.

Using the word *sisi* (*we*), the preacher makes it very clear that there is a sense of group belonging and spiritual oneness. This (*we*) is important; this helps to remind the congregation that they are an identifiable spiritually superior group. The moral and spiritual (The difference between this world and heaven) divide between those not

present in the faith serves to reinforce the in-groups claim to be righteous and set apart and to go to an even greater place. The concept of being *wapitaji tu* (*just passing through*) is an added wall of comfort with a sense of shared tribulation and hope. It also appreciates how life can be hard yet duly informs the people in the group that their real destination is splendid. This promotes perseverance, loyalty and being free of the worldly distractions.

Example 24 Sermon 4

Sisi ni watoto wa Agano...Mungu wa ahadi wa agano ametuahidi Baraka tele na kila neno lake si juu yetu halitarudi bure!

Objects of the Covenant we are... The promises made to us by God are our responsibility, and every word of God upon our lives will not be in vain!"

The expression that the preacher uses in this declaration is, the expression of *Watoto wa Agano*. (*Children of the Covenant*) as a term of spiritual identity. This is a very biblical term, both derived out of the Old Testament and the New Testament and is the term that describes people in some special divinely ordained relationship with God through His promises.

The collective identity is created by the use of the term *sisi* (*we*) that, at the same time, groups the audience into a chosen, safeguarded, and isolated community, which is defined by God. The word *Agano* (*Covenant*) does not only refer to spiritual history as the promises made by God to Abraham, Israel, or, through Christ but there is also strong emotional overtone, the aspect of God keeping its promises, as inheritance and as destiny.

Communicating by saying that they are covered by the promises of God, the preacher is referring to a commune system of beliefs: anything God promises to his people ought to come into fulfillment. The second one which is, the adjoining line, " *kila neno lake juu yetu halitarudi bure* (*every word He spoken over us shall not be in vain*)" strengthens the fact that such promises are trustworthy and personal, they give comfort, assurance and meaning. This speech creates a powerful in-group discourse: the flock is

not like any other, they are blessed people spiritually. There is an understanding that they are walking on a divine contract that no outsider has and hence there is a feeling that they are privileged, responsible and united.

Example 25 Sermon 4

Wapendwa, usiogope...Break-through you are about to have! Najua umehangaikia kwa muda mrefu, yet God has not yet finished with you. no! Baraka zako hazijapotea, they are just held back, not denied!"

Dear one, do not fear, your breakthrough will come! I understand how you have suffered long enough; however, God is not through with you. Your blessings are not lost just delayed not denied!

Phrases like “*Wapendwa, usiogope...*” and “*Najua umehangaikia kwa muda mrefu*” demonstrate how Kiswahili expressions are interwoven with English to create a sense of communal empathy and spiritual intimacy. According to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory, such strategies fall under positive politeness, which seeks to minimize social distance and affirm the hearer’s value. By using terms like “*dear one*” and referencing collective experiences of suffering and hope, the speaker appeals to the listener’s positive face. This approach not only softens potentially face-threatening messages but also enhances the persuasive power of the sermon by aligning spiritual encouragement with shared cultural and emotional experiences.

5.1.3 Seeking agreement

Brown and Levinson (1987), have mentioned seeking agreement as one major strategy that could be used to create common ground with the listener. This entails identification of areas where the speaker and hearer can match. It can be seen through one of the methods where an individual will talk about neutral matters such as weather as a strategy of conducting Face-Threatening Act (FTA) in approaching a new person. The other method is the technique of repetition that is evident strength of the discourse of the preachers as illustrated in the given examples.

Example 26 Sermon 5

Brother, sister, don't we have a good God? God is always merciful and God is always good! There He has brought us to the end of the week, hasn't He? He has supplied us, served us and blessed us, has He not? Say, 'Amen!'

The excerpt employs seeking agreement as a politeness strategy by using rhetorical questions and prompts that invite the audience to affirm shared beliefs, thereby reinforcing group solidarity. Phrases such as “*don't we have a good God?*”, “*hasn't He?*”, and “*has He not?*” are designed not to elicit new information but to encourage listeners to confirm what they already accept as true. This aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness strategies, specifically the tactic of seeking agreement, which aims to minimize social distance and emphasize common ground. The speaker's invitation to respond with “*Amen!*” further transforms the audience from passive listeners into active participants, strengthening the communal bond and enhancing the persuasive impact of the message.

Example 27

Wapendwa, cha ukweli ni kwamba Mungu wetu hajawahi tuangusha? Si tumeshuhudia uaminifu wake mara kwa mara?

Precious Lord when he says that God has never failed us, is it not true? Did we not see how faithful He had been and again?"

Rhetorical questions are applied here by the preacher in drawing the congregation into agreement without him actually making a claim. This is a tactful form of saying that you believe in the same thing without being dogmatic and assertive. Such phrases as a “*si kweli kwamba... and si tumeshuhudia...*” are gentle, all embracing cues presuming common grounds and understanding instead of imposing an opinion.

Example 28

Junuiya ya Bwana, si tuko na amani kwamba hakuna jambo ngumu mbele za Mungu? Si sisi wote tuko na ushuhuda vile Mungu ametusaidia nyakati za shida

Children of the Lord are we not to believe that nothing can be too hard to God? Does not every one of us have a testimony of how God showed up when trouble came?

The preacher in this phrase incorporates rhetorical questions by use of *si...* which is a typical Swahili way of asking someone to agree with him. This is not a command or affirmation; this is the form in which the preacher tries to guide the congregation to a consensus. The phrase, “*Si kila mmoja wetu ana ushuhuda...*” makes a special remark on individual connection, which includes the experiences the congregation has lived and indirectly validating their personal faith paths. This makes the message inclusive, affirmative and respectful, which are principle of polite religious discourse.

Example 29 Sermon 4

Kwani ni kweli kwamba kila tunapomwita Mungu kwa moyo wa kweli? huwa hasikii? Si tumeona mkono wake ukifanya kazi hata pale ambapo tulikata tamaa?"

Does it not say that when we call upon God with a pure heart then he hears us? have we not watched with despair and then later with amazement at his hand when our hopes were blighted?"

The preacher talks to the congregation persuasively through rhetorical questions so as to reach a consensus, in a respectable and democratic aspect. The preacher does not simply speak and state facts authoritatively, but instead he presents a consensus with the audience in the form of questions, a style that makes it very soft and encouraging to participate. The given practice may be viewed as a kind of positive politeness since it creates the sense of shared faith as by confirming the listeners in their own spiritual life, the speaker induces them to think in affirmation.

The assumption of a common spiritual walk is based on the play of words “*si ni kweli kwamba...*” which means that both the preacher and his congregation are recipients of the responsiveness and the intervention of God in the time of need. Such an inclusive approach is reverent and affirmative, since it demonstrates confidence in the rapport of the hearers with God coupled with the affirmation of their communal identity as believers who have experienced divine fidelity. The fact that the preacher refers to the

times of despair (*tulikata tamaa*) further increases the emotional appeal and the audience falls into the state of reflection and spiritual comfort without being told insinuated what their message is. Through this, the preacher also depicts an attitude of vulnerability and unity thus the message is convincing and sensitive pastorally.

5.1.4 Employment of the Inclusion We

The other good politeness strategy used by the Pentecostal preachers in their talk is participation in the same activity by both the speaker and the hearer. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), when a speaker uses the word we, he/ she is in actual sense saying either the word you or the word me. Such kind of strategy makes use of the cooperative assumption and contributes to dissolving possible face-threatening actions. Examples of this usage are in the following extracts.

Example 30 Sermon 4

Sisi sote tunajua kwamba bila Mungu sisi ni bure, sivyo? tumepitia changamoto, lakini hatujawahi achwa-sisi ni ushuhuda wa uaminifu wake!"

As we are well aware, without God we are nothing, right? No, we would never be left behind, we are living witnesses of his faithfulness through thick and thin.

In the utterance, another instance of politeness through inclusion can also be discerned, as the preacher employs the inclusive pronoun *sisi* (*we*) to create solidarity and sense of the shared spiritual identity with members of the congregation. The preacher does not talk to people as a person on the pedestal, but he puts himself in the same league as his hearers because he is aware that he and his hearers have both had to struggle but they both had seen the faithfulness of God.

Due to this application of inclusive language, the kind of relational tone that is brought is warm, humble, and non-argumentative. The rhetorical question *sivyo?* (*right?*) is not insistent, as far as it tries to find an agreement, but it is a polite way of supporting a widespread opinion and not to impose your own will. Further, using the term congregation or *ushuhuda wa uaminifu wake* (*testimonies of His faithfulness*) supports their worth and the experience that they share with each other, not only acknowledges

their spiritual journeys but also urges them to believe that they have been noticed and are united with one another through their spiritual journeys. What this has done is created a message that is stronger, that connects, and affirms the congregation and is done by an equally respectful, and communal style showing how an inclusive language can be used as a cloaked but effective form of politeness in religious rhetoric.

Example 31 sermon 4

Wapendwa, hebu tujiulize, sisi hapa tuko, kweli ni kwa nguvu zetu tumefika hapa? Hapana! Tuko hapa kwa uwezo wa Mungu. Najua sote Kama-si Bwana aliyekua upande wetu, mambo yangalikuwa ni tofauti sana. Sisi si bora kuliko waliopoteza imani njiani, lakini Mungu ametushika mkono. Ndugu na dada zangu leo si sisi wote tuko na sababu ya kujivunia kua katika bwana? Hebu tusimame, na tukiri: Mungu ni mwaminifu!"

Now and then we must put to ourselves the question are we here today by our own sweat? No! God has brought us to this stage. I am sure we all know that had it not been that the Lord was on our side it would have been vastly different. God has not forsaken us just because many of us lost faith on the way and we are not worse than them. Now have not we something to be grateful to God about, my brothers and sisters don't we have a reason to be happy in Christ? Now then let's stand, and say: God is faithful!

According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, positive politeness aims to reduce social distance and affirm the hearer's desire to be appreciated and included. The speaker repeatedly uses "we," "sisi," and "sote" to emphasize collective experience and spiritual unity, framing divine intervention and gratitude as communal rather than individual. By asking reflective questions like "sisi hapa tuko, kweli ni kwa nguvu zetu?" and "don't we have a reason to be happy in Christ?", the speaker invites agreement and shared affirmation, reinforcing group cohesion. This strategy not only maintains the congregation's positive face but also strengthens the persuasive impact of the message by aligning spiritual truths with collective testimony. In culturally cohesive settings like Nyeri, such inclusive language is vital for building trust, reinforcing moral authority, and deepening the emotional engagement of the audience.

5.1.5 Giving Gifts

Another politeness strategy that Pentecostal preachers use in the preaching process is gift-giving. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), when using this approach, one should not simply provide material things, but portray empathy, understanding, and desire to collaborate with the listener. The examples given below are illustrations of such a strategy.

Example 32 Sermon 5

“Yes, this is a faith-filled family, I say, there is no difference whether you are in the city or at the village; you are blessed. Someone declare with his stripes I am healed. Say all that I touch shall flourish...proclaim it, all these things appertain to me!”. Do you know what it means to be prosperous and healthy? Look for something that people cannot see. Do what others did not do. Someone say I am not limited! Being sick, good or bad relationships, kids, and your past is not a limit on you.”

Based on the above, the preacher speaks of gift-giving as a politeness strategy making provision of emotional, spiritual and psychological support as opposed to the provision of tangible things. Brown and Levinson (1987) theory of positive politeness stipulates that besides giving physical gifts, gift-giving is associated with such behaviour as empathy, encouragement and being cooperative. In a number of cases, the speaker gives verbal blessings that are complemented with phrases like *“you are blessed in the city and whatever you touch shall prosper,”* which are considered as gifts to the verbal blessing that is meant to encourage and give hope to the hearer of the message.

It is shown that the speaker does not judge the listener by saying that it is possible to have some problems in their life, like sickness, family problems, or background and that they should not be restricted by them. The affirmations itself also extend to positive rhetoric where the speaker asks more than once to proclaim positive sentences, the most evidenced of which is, *“I am not limited.”* Also, inclusive language is deployed, e.g. by implying that this family works by faith, which creates a sense of belonging and belonging together or a sense of community and connected identity and offering the gift of community. In all these aspects, the speaker does a kind of positive politeness, which

revolves around giving gifts by use of words of encouragement, hope and heart balancing.

Example 33 Sermon 5

This church takes up on the right foot. You are at the top and not the bottom. You are lifted up and you are not down. The doors of your life are open, and there is nobody to close the doors. Speak out your situation by saying, this breakthrough bears my name. Be constructive and nothing will bring you down. You are not forgotten, you are selected. May you have wisdom and peace abound. May your hands be fruitful and your heart be full. Find solutions in others problems. Somebody declare, I bear greatness. Never allow fear, previous failures, unavailability of resources, and the opinions of people to characterize your path. What happened to you does not define you.

Such utterances depict gift-giving as a politeness behavior that involves language use that is uplifting and affirming with the context of emotional and spiritual support. According to the positive politeness commonly fostered by Brown and Levinson (1987), the speaker gives what they call symbolic gifts in the form of affirmation, hope, and sense of purpose. Statements such as, “*You are the head and not the tail*” and, “*Doors are opening to you*” are a kind of verbal blessings which inject hope and faith in the heart of the listener. The speaker promotes the listener to have a positive picture of self by promoting statements like, “*This breakthrough is my name and I carry greatness,*” which is a magnanimous emotional act. They also demonstrate knowledge of personal hardships as well since they suggest not being bound by fear or past mistakes and other people with their sentiments, thus expressing empathy and solidarity. Also, the inclusive tone that accompanies the generosity is perceived as walking in favor in this church. This makes it sound like a shared experience and a community, as a gift of belonging is given therein. With these strategies the speaker initiates giving gifts in the sense of reassurance, identity and motivation, giving positive politeness.

Example 34 Sermon 1

“I feel in my spirit that something has been convincing you that you are sick and you should not come; but by the grace of God you came. you will be blessed because of that

faith. I welcome you to this service today. I am praying all those people who bothered to be here. It is great joy being with you here... When the command came the jailer threw them into prison and bound them with chains on their feet. However late at night, Paul and Silas are seen to be praying and singing hymns to God and the rest of the imprisoned people were listening. The chains broke because they prayed in the middle of the night. Somebody shout Amen ”

The preacher maintains an element of positive politeness through the gift of emotional support, spiritual encouragement, and affiliations to the audience as evidenced in gift-giving behavior. The speaker starts by appreciating an inner conflict that may be present as he says, “*Something was telling you that you are sick*” and quickly follows it up with a blessing, “*but you will be blessed because you came*”. It is a sympathetic message and, at the same time, a message of hope and promise as well as a non-material physical representation of comfort and affirmation. The phrase as whispered by Jesus as We may dedicate our hearts to you is a declaration of emotional commitment and concern and enhances the feeling of collectivity and love of others. One more way of giving is prayer meant to be offered to the guests of the party to support them spiritually as this is a kind of gift of goodwill.

Requesting the audience to respond with an Amen, the speaker engages people in the process of communication and builds the friendly and relationship-rejecting environment. The actual physical proximity to the audience also increases this emotional closeness and engagement, which supports the feeling of the speaker empathizing, and the two are in the same place.

All these factors combine in order to elicit positive politeness and serve as effective tools in terms of strategic deployment of non-material relational giving. when positive politeness is applied by the Pentecostal preachers, they do portray an optimistic image, friendship and the common experiences with their congregation. They will often employ the use of their inclusive language such as the use of the word we, they will also display increased interest in their audience and what is important to them and would avoid conflict. Such tactics are useful to cushion any threatening acts to the face (FTAs) hence facilitating effective communication. Also, they indicate a lack of some

authority and interpersonal distance between the speaker and the listener. Negative politeness strategies will be discussed as below.

5.2 Negative Strategies of Politeness

Brown and Levinson (1987) report that negative politeness strategies are mostly geared towards respecting the negative face of the hearer, i.e. it is their need of freedom and space. These tactics are based on avoidance where the speaker does not intrude into the life of the listener or impose on his freedom. Negative politeness indicates to the speaker that the speaker understands and respects the desire of the listener to be left alone; hence the speaker will not deliberately interfere in the affairs of the listener or do so to the minimal.

The aim is to lessen the application of a face-threatening act (FTA), so that it does not feel as threatening. The strategy that is least non-constituent of the negative politeness and tends to be the most formal and oriented is the capacity of softening FTAs and often is expressed with the help of polite language, like phrases such as please, excuse me, or may I. There are ten strategies adopted by Brown and Levinson within the strategy to provide negative politeness: the following strategy is the capacity to be directly politely indirect, enquire, or hedge, manifesting pessimism; making imposition minimal, respect or deference, apologizing, personal and infelicity. The following section explains these strategies in brief.

5.2.1 Conventional Indirectness

The conventional indirectness is the usage of phrases or sentences that convey a different meaning as it seems in the context. This entails indirect speech acts wherein, the meaning of the sentence makes assumptions of how the sentence is structured and or how it would be carried out linguistically. Things like questions may ask information, assertions can state and command can be given with imperatives. A question such as “*Can you please pass me the salt?*” is not a direct question, it is indirect question; it is not asking the man directly whether he can pass the salt or not. Hedges are used indirectly and are therefore used in the form of speech to make the intended course weaker. Indirectness is an outcome of the principle of negative politeness that aims to

take into account the negative face of the hearer in that nothing in the face-threatening act (FTA) is assumed to be intended or wished in any way by the listener.

Example 35 Sermon 4

Ndugu na dada zangu, leo tutazungumzia nguvu za Roho Mtakatifu na jinsi anavyoweza kubadilisha maisha yetu...Tutapokea nguvu ata ya kuyashida majaribu, kuponya na kutenda miujiza. Roho Mtakatifu anakuja kwa wale wanaomwamini Yesu Kristo kama Mwokozi wao. Hebu tufuate na tumuamini Yesu, ambaye alijua kuwa bila Roho Mtakatifu, hatuwezi kutenda lolote. Kama unatamani maisha yenye ushindi, ndugu yangu, ni lazima upokee Roho Mtakatifu na kumruhusu aongoze kila hatua yako. Lazima Roho wa mungu akuongoze katika hatua zako zote.

we will talk about power of the holy spirit and how he can work in our lives. Such power is power to defeat the devil, to gain the victory over temptations, to perform miracles, to heal illness. Holy Spirit is given to those people who follow Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. This is the moment to ensure we turn towards the face of God since he desires to have us opened to serve Him. So, we should do like Jesus as he knew that without the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing. My brother, my sister, if you desire a life that is a success, you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit and He should guide you through in everything you do.

In this passage, the use of the traditional indirectness as a politeness strategy can also be observed, under the form of displaying the instructions and persuasive appeals in a culturally acceptable, less direct way. Instead of giving direct instructions, the speaker refers to indirect ones like *Hebu tufuate na tumuamini* and *Kama unatamani maisha yenye ushindi...* which puts the message in the context of an invitation or suggestion, as opposed to an imposition. The politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) explains that such typical indirectness is beneficial in saving the negative face of the listener, who wants independence, as it helps them feel that they are making their own choices, as opposed to being forced to do them. The application of conditional forms to the message *if you desire...* and common appeals *...let us...* makes the instructions less forceful and the message more acceptable and respectful.

Example 36 Sermon 5

We encounter challenges, temptations and problems that could be very exhausting on our hearts. But Jesus has invited everyone and He is saying He is providing rest to everyone who comes to Him. Jesus is never limited towards healing and restoration. I know that He can change the lives of people, we invite you today so that today most of you will be changed. Blessed be the one who can receive the love of God as they accept His call.

This excerpt demonstrates the use of conventional indirectness as a politeness strategy by presenting spiritual appeals and invitations in a softened, respectful manner. Rather than issuing direct commands, “*we invite you today*” to frame the message as an open offer rather than an obligation. According to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory, conventional indirectness helps preserve the listener’s negative face by allowing them to make voluntary spiritual decisions. The phrase “*Blessed be the one who can receive the love of God*” subtly encourages acceptance without imposing it, while “*I know that He can change the lives of people*” expresses belief rather than certainty, leaving room for personal reflection.

5.2.2 Hedging

Brown and Levinson (1987) assert that hedging is a form or manner in which language is spoken by speakers to prevent assuming that the listener can, or is ready to do something. It also prevents the speaker making firm assumptions on what their listener wants. This is normally done by use of words such as exactly, perhaps, I wonder, I am thinking, if and may be which make the statement less direct and forceful.

Example 37 Sermon 5

“When one experiences Christ, that person is not the same person any longer, because he or she is changed right to the core. However, when one is not in Christ, the same life still goes on, the old bad behaviors of stealing or cheating still goes on. Turn to your neighbor and say, all things are new in Christ. I would like to make a personal testimony that Jesus is the real savior. Again turn to your neighbor and say “if you are not in Christ, nothing has changed” and instead of so much pleading with the preacher, you better be born again because you are in the right place.

The use of hedging by the preacher is also deliberate, considering that he wants to limit the impact of his statements and this makes his statement friendlier. The politeness theory developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) lists hedging as a type of negative politeness strategy whose purpose is to protect negative face of the hearer, that is, the desire not to have his or her autonomy and freedom of action impinged. In such a context, using hedges enables speakers to issue statements that are tentative or qualify them, and this way, they are leaving their listeners a chance to construe, think, and make their own choices.

The obvious example of hedging is in a conditional expression “*if you are not in Christ, nothing has changed*” The formulation of this utterance constitutes the fact that it does not face confrontation head-on. Instead of coming on and saying that the listener has not changed or he is still in sin, the preacher sets the message as a hypothetical situation. The conditional use of the word “*if*” acts like a softener and makes such an assertion less prosy, allowing the hearer to diagnose his or her spiritual status without the feeling of being accused or pressured. This strategy qualifies as per the norms of negative politeness bearing in mind that the listener is left to make a decision on his/her own will and this increases the receptiveness to the message.

the preacher also begins with his confession of faith and he says, “*I would like to give a personal testimony regarding the fact that Jesus is the real savior.*” This phrase has in itself the right to be counted as hedging. The introduction of the testimony by the speaker is with a preface of, *I would like to*, thereby suggesting to him that this was a personal belief, and not a statement of authority. According to Kariuki (2019) By using this type of subjective presentation, the epistemic force of the statement is softened, and the sign of humility is also indicated. It eliminates the possible resistance that would be created in the situation where the message is spoon fed as a fact or absolute truth. The hedge in this case acts to curb the dominance of the speaker and maintain the interpersonal harmony between the preacher and the audience.

Example 38 Sermon 2

Perhaps you have been struggling with fear, yet you also know that you might have been bearing a burden that no one can tell. And I want to advise you to take it to Jesus

today. There is no pressure to come forward if you feel like you are not ready for it, however the open altar is yours should you choose to come. Nobody will make you do it, this is between you and God. I want you to understand that He is here, and He wants to meet you where you are."

the preacher consciously employs its hedging and negative politeness strategies to make the spiritual environment not threatening or disrespectful. Phrases like, "*Perhaps you have been struggling with fear*" is a typical examples of hedging which is a linguistics term used to weaken the power of an assertion, or an assumption (Fraser, 2010). These hedges can be used to tone down some observations made by the preacher and accept the subjective experience of the hearer without claiming to know something about his or her personal circumstances first-hand. Hypothetically probing at what emotional and spiritual burdens the audience is carrying in the attempt to free them by pointing out the fact that they should lighten their loads, the preacher is flexible and does not wish to state any serious interpretation in their inner world.

This kind of hedging is consistent with the negative politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987), according to which it is important to reduce the feeling of imposing things on the addressee and the awareness of autonomy. The speaker does not take authoritative tones but rather resorts to suggestive and indirect language in their phrases such as "*And I want to advise you to take it to Jesus today.*" These phrases are meant to be non-prescriptive and serve the purpose of gentle invitations instead of dictums and in that way enable people to think and react in their own time and way.

The preacher also adds to this non-coercive disposition with the words, "*There is no pressure to come forward if you feel like you are not ready for it.*" This is a pure call to the right of choice of the listener and there is no sign of any psychological or social compulsion here. The next statement, a shift in the locus of choice completely onto the listener, namely, the statement that no one will make him or her do it, and it is between him or her and God evokes this interpersonal distance as a part of negative politeness. It reflects heavily on the fact of religion being an individual and a very personal experience that eliminates external influences and creates an environment of trust and honesty.

Example 39 Sermon 5

pendine uko miongoni mwetu leo ukiwa na mzigo moyoni, au labda umekua ukipitia changamoto ambazo hujaweza kufungukia mtu yeyote. Nataka kukusihi ukaachilia huo mzigo kwa Yesu. Ningependa kukuhimiza, kwa upole lakini kama hujisikii ukiwa tayari kuja mbele, hilo ni sawa kabisa-hakuna atakayekulazimsha. Lakini madhabahu haya yanampokea kila mmoja ambaya ako tayari kuachilia roho mtakatifu afanye kazi dani yake. Lazima uchukue hatua kwani Mungu ako pamoja nasi na atakugiza pahali popote ulipo.

You are here with a heavy burden in your heart or perhaps you have been going through hard situations that you have not told anyone. I want to ask you very tenderly to take that load to Jesus. You need not think you are prepared to step forward because all who are doing so are voluntarily doing so and nobody is forcing. But the altar is open to the person feeling the Holy Spirit work on him. It is a choice you make with God. That is all you need to know, He is present and is available anywhere you might be.

In this extract of sermon negative politeness is expressed with a great caution in language and using of hedges and directing on the choice of a listener. Such phrases as "possibly you made your way here..." and then "There is a possibility that you have been going through..." are hedges to assume that the listener knows the situation of the speaker. This makes the process softer and not to invade the privacy and autonomy of the listener.

The utterance is *I would like to... invite you to...* is a softened request and not an order, as it is a major tactic in negative politeness. It lays the idea forth as an invitation and not as expectation. On the same note, "...Unless you are ready..." demonstrates consideration of the listener and their willingness and comfort and simply says that they have the right to make their choices without any pressure. It is also stated by the speaker that they will not force the listener and this underlines the focus of the autonomy of the listener.

The preacher ensures that this is an individual choice and not a social action, whereas he utters the statement: this is a matter between you and God. This language is not

imposing and recognizes the right of the individual to take his own time to draw his own response. All these factors help to achieve a strong spiritual message in a not-threatening manner, and that is what negative politeness is all about.

Example 40 Sermon 4

Everything in your life has been renewed when you are in Christ. However, without being in Christ, nothing has changed. I used to be blind but now I can see. Do you know what I mean? I want to speak to you if you are here today and you are not born again; I am glad that you are here. A house of god is the entrance to heaven, and you need to know that... if you love God and you are not ashamed of Him then put your hand up and clap. We believe in treating those who treat us well and now... Raise your hands, if you are a father and proud of it. You can now take your seats

This preacher includes the if clause many times as seen in the above example, to make the advice being given not so hard. Another instance is the phrase, "*Unless you are born again nothing has changed*" meaning that people need to turn to Christianity in order to change but instead of putting across the point strongly, it is done in a less direct way by means of using the conditional clause of proffered possibility of the adverb. Same with the utterance where the preacher says "*if you love God and you are not ashamed of him) put up your hands and clap*" the condition that you love God reduces the inviolability of the order to raise hand and clap.

The functions of the clause type actualized in the form of an if clause, as given by Brown and Levinson, 1987, can be seen as the manner in which the speaker offers an excuse to avoid making a direct request which can be described as an illocutionary force hedge against the commands complied to do the convert and do the clapping.

5.2.3 Apologies

Based on the findings of Brown and Levinson (1987), the practice of speakers apologizing after the execution of face-threatening act (FTA) is indicative of the fact that the speakers are not keen to impinge on the negative face of the listener, hence in part compensating their actions. Apologies may be given in different ways; they may

include recognition of the wrong, procrastination, good excuses, or requesting pardon among others. These variances of approach can be shown in the following extracts.

Example 41 Sermon 5

I want to explain something: I have not stolen money from someone, and I have not even hit my mother (pauses). Have I got it right? Pardon me but this is African English. Do you get me? turn to your neighbor and say, when we talk about sin, we were born, lame. Whosoever is not born again is lame.

This excerpt illustrates the application of apologies and clarification as a negative politeness tactic especially in how the speaker tries to avoid being imposing and offending when telling a bold spiritual message. The politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) states that negative politeness strategies are applied in order to show respect to the autonomy of the hearer and reduce imposition. The expression “*Pardon me but this is African English*” serves as a pre-emptive excuse and a mitigating force—it admits that there might be a misunderstanding or cultural difference of expression thus lessening the chance of insult. Similarly, “*Do you get me?*” wants to be confirmed, to gain insight and demonstrate respect toward the opinion of the audience. Such phrases ease the transition to a more direct and probably face-threatening statement.

Example 42 Sermon 5

I am aware that I may have offended you by what I said just before, and I am sincerely sorry I should not have done so. I did not intend to insult someone. In case you were hurt, I hope that you can realize that it was not intentional on my part. Sorry, I hope I did not go too far.

The apology is one of the most important strategies of negative politeness that is used by the preacher to demonstrate that he is aware of negative face of the listener, i.e. the wish to avoid being imposed or offended. The phrase, “*I know that I may have offended you...*” is a safe hedging of the speaker, who does not want to stretch the presumption to think that he is certainly offensive. Such a conditional language is considered a form of hedging that is characteristic of negative politeness models in that the speaker has a way of notifying the possibility of wrong doing, but not claiming that it is a given

(Brown and Levinson, 1987). This wording is so cautious that it does not allow the speaker to intrude directly into the emotional privacy of the listener.

In addition, the phrase, "*I did not intend to insult someone* helps" to soften down the perceived seriousness of the wrong in the mind of the judge by defining that it happened by accident and not through any malicious intentions. This is an act of saving face where the speaker shies away the notion of doing something purposefully detrimental instead maintaining social peace. The use of the phrase "*In case you were hurt, I hope that you can realize that it was not intentional on my part.*" once more expresses conditional and hopeful language that considers the independence of the person receiving the message.

The last request, however, is a regretful apology due to the use of a direct apology, like, sorry, and subdued signal of apologies, "*Sorry, I hope I did not go too far.*" It does not say that there is a good chance that the speaker has crossed a line but rather it is a hope that has been expressed, this is a subtle but significant distinction between the two because it still leaves the right to interpretation in the hands of the hearer. This concurs with the opinion of Brown and Levinson (1987) who expressed the view that negative politeness is based on deference, indirectness and through acknowledging the freedom of the hearer.

5.2.4 Impersonalizing of S and H

Impersonalizing the speaker and the hearer means using the pronouns not directly: I and you. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the tactic is applied in circumstances whereby the speaker desires to spare oneself or the hearer. It deals with the way the face threatening act (FTA) is expressed by not necessarily being directed at the speaker alone as the agent of a speech act and listener alone as the recipient of the speech act. In such a way, the speaker avoids referring to direct imposing or ordering and creating an atmosphere of depersonalization or generalization.

Example 43 Sermon 5

After smiling at five individuals say, "I bless you." Turn to a fellow student and say, I got a story to tell. I was not looking so good when I prepared, but after visiting that the place, you cannot tell me to go back." When you are on your own, tell somebody that

you are not alone, you are off somewhere. And fear not. When you have Christ in you, you will not feel inferior. Shout I am born again!

impersonalization of the speaker (S) and the hearer (H) is a tactic used by the preacher to exercise negative politeness, which is minimal in terms of the possible burden on individuals in the audience. The preacher does not point his finger to the people by using terms like, you say... or you should shout... rather he uses general sentence or phrase that are words like, *tell your neighbor and tell someone*. Brown and Levinson (1987) identify impersonalization as one of the strategies that counteract face-threatening acts in bending personal agency and, therefore, leaving the negative face of the listener intact the desire not to have something forced on his or her.

The approach dilutes the commanding nature of the verbal act dispersing the responsibility of a group of people instead of their incidence on a particular person. Generalized referents that refer to the third person and a non-confrontational tone are achieved with the help of the use of such expressions *as someone, your neighbor*. It enables hearers to absorb the message as well as be involved without feeling that one is being singled out and embarrassed. These kinds of wording would go along with the non-assertive, polite, negative politeness voice, where a person does not wish to impose, where deference is important, but religious choices need to be non-coerced.

Example 44 Sermon 5

Turn to your neighbor and say, "you should not curse me." Say, "Hallelujah!" Who build the Mega Church? We are going to be united, really. Say to your neighbor, "I love my mom even more." The sky is the limit to what we can get. Do I speak to any one? Someone shout, Unity!

The speaker employs imperative sentence structure to command actions but make sure that the direct usage of the subject "you" is not implied. Instead, they employ such words as "somebody" or "someone" which is enough to avoid direct references to the listener or the indirect object of the performative verb. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that such deletion of agent is characteristic of languages such as English but especially when dealing with an imperative and other verbal forms that imply face-threatening act (FTA).

To sum up, negative politeness can be explained as the most important element of expressing respect, whereas positive as the more common or informal. Negative politeness may be taken to mean the avoidance of direct imposition and this is done e.g. in cases of indirectness, and positive politeness to mean the evocation of closeness.

5.3 Bald-on-record Politeness strategy

Bald-on-record politeness strategy identified by Brown and Levinson (1978) is a communication style whereby clarity and competence are emphasized; this strategy makes the communication less intrusive to impose redundant information and ambiguity. There is usually a tendency of stating the point in an outright manner, being clear and to the point, as suggested by the Maxims, written by Grice, such as the Maxim of Quality (tell the truth), Maxim of Quantity (give the correct amount of information), Maxim of Manner (do not be ambiguous), and Maxim of Relevance (stick to the subject).

Although these maxims are applicable general guides to communication, Brown and Levinson (1987) insist that most conversations do not necessarily fall under pertinent application of the said maxims and that all interactions are not as brutally direct and effective as bald-on-record communication. The given strategy can be split into two varieties the situations in which face-threatening actions (FTAs) are performed straightforwardly and without regard to the reduction of face threat, and the situations in which face threat is reduced indirectly by implication. The former may be in form of direct imperative such as Give me a nail, or saying such as Help! which would be of an urgent nature. The latter one reduces the risk of face threat as observed in politer or less demanding orders, e.g. when they are in the form of request for example Kindly assist me should you wish.

5.3.1 Bald-on-record (without minimization)

There is bald-on-record use without face minimization that arise where it is more important to be efficient and both the speaker and the hearer know that face redress is unessential. It usually occurs in emergency cases, such as “Help!” or “Watch out!” or when talking long distance such as shouting to say, “Come home immediately! or where the phone is bad. Clarity and speed in these settings can be achieved with the level of

directness of the bald-on-record speech. Moreover, redress-less bald-on-record speech is also possible in task-related communication, where politeness is of a secondary matter as in terms like, lend me a hand in this or open the other end. It can also be used when the speaker is stronger than the listener and they are not afraid of taking action for example “Bring me the salt.” In addition, when the topic of interest of the speaker is shelved over the need of the hearer, like in the case of issuing a warning or advice then, the speaker may also ignore their politeness strategies in order to deliver the message clearly as in the case of “Careful, he is a dangerous man” or “Your headlights are on” There can also be bald-on-record speech as part of ritual exchanges, e.g. greetings or bidding farewell, e.g. Sit down, come again. Bald-on-record, minus minimization can be encountered in preachers’ discourse in a varied number of interactions.

Example 45 Sermon 5

...You must be humble. manner. Once Christ is inside of you then you will not feel inferior. It is said that I am born again. What does that signify? Say Hello to your neighbor and ask him/her how they are doing. What is your place of birth? Speak to each other

The subject of you is not omitted here and the preacher attempts to command by using the auxiliary verb must. Quirk (1973) says that when they use the word must an obligation is implied. So, the face-threatening act (FTA) is not downplayed in this situation.

Example 46 Sermon 5

You must believe in yourself. It is not too late to take a step. With Christ in you there is not a bit of inferiority anywhere. Someone shout, I am a new creation! What does that imply? Greet your neighbor and asking them how you are doing today. What are your plans in the future?

This example involves a clear addressing of the subject of you, and we get the feeling of necessity or necessity as the preacher applies the auxiliary verb have to. Quirk (1973) finds the case with using of go as a Modal, that is why he concluded that the addition

of have to means that something is needed or mandatory so that it is easy to determine that the speaker wants the audience to do something. This impoliteness forms a face-threatening act (FTA) not downgraded, because the speaker does not moderate in the tone of voice or hedges the request. The order, to trust in self, addressed to the listener, speaks directly and provokes the idea of an apparent must to do something.

5.3.2 Bald-on -record (with minimization)

Bald on record-with minimization When the speaker minimizes the threats to their face indirectly it is called bald-on record. A key example of this use occurs in imperatives where by softening the impact of face-threatening act (FTA) the speaker hints, but does not state, whom the target of the FTA is. This notion is demonstrated by the following passages.

Example 47 Sermon 4

Move to five individuals and bless them saying, I bless you. Tell your friend, I have something to tell. I was not looking the best when I was in a preparation and when I came out of that place, you cannot ask me to go back." Say to a person, I am not alone I am going somewhere. Be not afraid. There is no more need to feel inferior especially when Christ is in you. One will say, I am born again.

The preacher applies indirectness and personalization because such a technique stands to decrease the directness with which the imposition is made and the commands undermine the sense of giving individual instructions but more of collective actions. An example can be gotten when the speaker utters, “*move to five people and say to them, I bless you,*” it comes out such that the listener would be seen to be the one blessing rather than the speaker. This cushions the blow to the command so that the speaker does not impose on the hearer directly.

Correspondingly, the command to inform somebody (only to tell) a neighbor or somebody, smoothens the command and does not address the listener directly, causing further decrease in the burden imposed. The method can be used to save the face of the speaker by evading the aspect of personal power and defining an interrelation theme that is more partnership in nature and less authoritarian.

Example 48 Sermon 4

Go to two people and tell them that God loves them. I want to testify to your neighbor. I was never as where I am today and I do not want anyone to tell me to be back where I was." Tell someone, "I cannot walk this journey on my own, I am progressing." Never fear. In the world of faith, when you believe you stand. One would say, I am empowered!

Personalization of the Speaker (S) and Hearer (H) is one of the significant strategies that the preacher uses as a negative politeness strategy in which the encroachment to the individual members of the congregation is limited. Instead of going directly to the audience with the personalized pronouns as a plan, like, "You should shout..." or, "You say...", the preacher uses the less personalized and remote expressions like, "Tell your neighbor" or, "Tell someone." As indicated by Brown and Levinson (1987), one of the central aspects of negative politeness is such impersonal constructions which downplay the risk to the negative face of the listener, which is the desire on his or her part to avoid being forced into doing things.

Avoiding a direct reference to both the speaker and to specific hearers, the preacher leaves the action to be distributed through the congregation. That dilutes the strength of the imperative and puts the directive into the perspective of a communal or general act, and not a direct personal request. With the third person references such as your neighbor or an indefinite pronoun such as someone the message can be internalized without subjecting a particular person to any embarrassment or attention.

Besides, this rhetorical decision is consistent with the religious background in which such tone that does not employ the force is critical to the maintenance of purity and spiritual integrity. The impersonalization entails the perception of voluntary participation, whereby the audience agency is preserved, but the interaction is enticed. Through this, the preacher maintains an equal balance of exhortation and respect, which is that the listener as a human being is entitled to self-determination in the common state of spirituality as well. In that sense impersonalization is a strategy that performs both politics affirmative role and persuasion, which is an element of seeking collective reflection without explicit constraint.

5.4 Off-Record Politeness strategy.

Brown and Levinson (1987) state that a communicative act can be spoken to be off-record in case when it is said in the tone, which could not be associated to one definite communicative intention. Here, the speaker will deliberately make it uncertain, onto which they will get an escape route over being responsible to a certain meaning. In so doing, the speaker is not directly liable to the act particularly in a case where they are liable to face threatening act (FTA). Rather, they make it dependent on the listener to deliver the message.

Brown and Levinson listed fifteen off-record politeness strategies. They consist of making indirect suggestions, appealing to common denominations, presuppositions, qualification or over-qualification of something, tautology including useless or circular statements, contradiction setting, irony, metaphors, rhetorical questions and being intentionally ambiguous. Ambiguity is one of the most significant aspects; it includes being vague, stating the things too generically, transferring the responsibility to the other party by putting the hearer aside, and leaving the statements unfinished with ellipsis. It is through these techniques that the speaker is allowed to present his message in a circumvent way, and thus it softens the blow of threatening the face of the hearer.

5.4.1 Applications of Metaphor

The preachers also employed metaphors in their language which can be considered as violation of conversational maxim of quality. Metaphors are not literal and indirectness of the message furthermore makes them a good strategy of communication off-record as pointed out by Brown and Levinson. According to Oxford Dictionary (2010), a metaphor is a figure of speech where a word is employed to give a description of something which it does not directly relate to. To illustrate, when an author talks of a crumbling building as the metaphor of a crumbling society, he does not mean that the building is crumbling; he is making a symbolic statement.

When a speaker employs a metaphor, one cannot tell clearly which given meaning or implication, they are referring to by using the metaphor since metaphors bear a number of set down implications. To take an example, in the English language, when one states that it was a stormy relationship, it implies there is struggle or conflict, or of emotional perturbations, like there was frequent anger or quarrels. A speaker can use this because

he would like to be indirect and thus make his message less threatening, which would be a face-threatening act (FTA), and is politer and preserves the self-image of the hearer. These metaphors were used by the preachers to a great extent as will be observed in the examples provided below.

Example 49 Sermon 5

And I thank God that you are here in service today. I pray to God that God will make you a new person. When a person is in Christ, his or her life is transformed fully, but when one is not, there is nothing changed in his or her life. in my own case I was handicapped spiritually at birth; I had been blind to the truth, but now I see. Do you get me? And whether you have had a spiritual birth yet, whether you are born again or not, I am more particularly glad to see you here to-day. Your attendance counts, since the place that leads to heaven is the presence of god, the house where you can start your trip into eternal life.

Brown and Levinson regarded metaphors as a type of quality violation, that is, the intentional violation of the Gricean maxim of quality, which presupposes that speakers should not speak what they think is not true. Metaphors are sometimes literally untrue, but at the same time, they have contextual meaning, which in turn permits the existence of several potential interpretations such that the speaker has a way out, and the hearer can make inferences without the speaker explicitly describing meaning. A good example is the phrase, “*I was lame since my mother womb or I was blind but now I see*” wherein the speaker employs metaphor in order to define a previous spiritual state, lack of knowledge, being broken, or unable to live well in the Lord, without directly blaming or embarrassing the listener.

Through the use of metaphorical language, the speaker does not threaten the positive face (the wish to be seen as good or capable) of the hearer directly, yet the message of the transformation and redemption is very strong. Metaphor is also used similarly when the idea that, the house of God is the gateway to heaven is being expressed, the importance of the church is being looked into but no specific drive towards the conversion or acceptance of authority is being exerted on the person listening. It leaves room for interpretation of a personal nature which is also a sign of off-record politeness.

Through this, metaphors are considered to be the softer side of the so called face-threatening statements (FTAs) which indirectly that is non-imposing methods of persuading a subject to change the way that person acts or believes.

Example 50 Sermon 5

Ndugu na dada angu, nilinikua kipofu, lakini sasa naona. Kwa miaka mingi, nilitembea gizani kwa miaka mingi, nikitafuta mwanga wa kweli. Lakini aliponigusa Bwana, macho yangu yalifunguka. Sasa nimeshajua njia iliyo ya kweli. Wengine wenu pia mnatembea Gizani, lakini leo Hii, Bwana yuko tayari kuwapa mwangaza wake.

Brothers and sisters, I was blind but now I see. I was walking in darkness all through many years trying to find real light. The touch of the Lord opened my eyes however. Now I understand the way of life. You can say some of you too are in darkness, yet today God wants to give you His light.

The metaphor is also an off-record politeness technique following the theory of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) according to which speakers can reject a direct confrontation and use some indirect language that will have several meanings. Metaphor is used as the preacher says, *I was blind, but now I see, I was walking in darkness, but now I see the light to speak of what he was before* (that is to say in a state of spiritual ignorance) and what he is (that is to say in a state of enlightenment). Brown and Levinson look at the meaning of metaphors as off-record since they break the Gricean maxim of quality that the meaning is not actually true, but a meaning within the context.

The preacher has also omitted direct observations which might inflict a negative face on the congregants by suggesting that they are carnal by avoiding the use of literal terms in addressing them. Rather, he powers listeners to contemplate by personal experience and symbolic depiction, offering a non-threatening setting to think about their spiritual voyage.

The appeal such as *Wengine wenu pia mnaweza kuwa mnatembea gizani* (*Some of you may also be walking in darkness*) is a subtle and respectable way of appealing to the

listener in a manner that implies to the listener to draw their own conclusions and apply it to him/her without necessarily insulting him. This strategy lessens the face-threat act that is being made, which is the entreaty of spiritual change, and remains polite and encourages interaction by empathizing and indirectness.

5.4.2 Giving Hints

When an individual is speaking something that is not directly to the subject being discussed at the time, then the listener will tend to pay attention to get a deeper meaning usually perceived. The notion revolves around the fact that the one speaking is assuming that the listener should be able to draw out true intent of the speaker out of the situation. An example is when one comments, "I still require some additional nails to complete the chicken pen" he or she is not merely stating the fact, or otherwise he or she is a hint that the receiver of the comment should pitch in by purchasing additional nails. In like manner, when one says, "What a hot day!" he may perhaps be saying that he would like to have a drink or that the person listening to him ought to offer him one. In both these cases the speaker does not literally ask something but he speaks indirectly so as to give a hint to the listener to come to the point. Further examples explaining this type of indirect communication can be found below.

Example 51 Sermon 5

Where you can carry your prayers, there are two kinds of places. To experience the results of your prayers you will have to make them based on the spirit. To make that marriage work, to have yourself healed due to HIV, cancer, etc., you must invest in God. Take a leaf out and say to your neighbor, I require divine intervention. You have to look deeper than on the surface, you have to get to the sacred place. "Hapa ni kama utamguza Mungu" (here, it seems like touching God). I remind you of what I said that you cannot follow the Ten Commandments through the flesh: you must walk in the spirit my friends.

In the excerpt, one finds yet another instance of the off-record politeness that the speaker is providing the indirect advice in rather cryptic ways instead of giving direct instructions or orders. In their theory on politeness, Brown and Levinson (1987) indicate that this strategy will reduce face-threatening action (FTA) of advising or correcting as one can give a chance to the listener to deduce the actual intention of the

speaker. The speaker also says You will not gather anything until it become of the spirit and You must come and be in the holy place and these are not direct commands but bold suggestions that the congregation should pray harder and deeper. The statement *Hapa ni kama utamguza Mungu (here, it is like you will touch God)* adds more passion and gravity to what the speaker intends the listeners to do with the spiritual aspect, without actually demanding the audience to do it.

These are explicit clues to help the listener come to a higher form of knowledge and action without taking away their freedom and challenging them. Such oblique nature indicates off-record strategy since there is room to assign meaning to it and consider the hearer, positive face, his or her desire to appear competent, spiritual, and self-governing. When hoping that the audience will get the implicated suggestion and act accordingly, the speaker has the trust that the message will reach the intended audiences.

5.4.3 Use of Rhetorical Questions

Questions that do not seek answers go against the sincerity condition of questioning. In the event that a speaker comes in with a question, the listener is supposed to answer the question posed. This sincerity condition is anchored on the quality maxim which claims that the speaker ought to be saturnine. An example to show this is given below.

Example 52 Sermon 4

Ndugu zangu, tutaendelea kufuata njia za dunia hadi lini? kwani tumemsahau Mungu aliyetutoa utumwani wa dhambi? Kama kweli tunampenda, mbona hatufuati amri zake?

Brothers and sisters, have we long to go on with the ways of the world? Have we forgotten that God who brought us out of bondage of sin? When we really love him, why do we not follow his Commandments

The preacher uses a chorus of rhetorical questions, which are, *Tutaendelea kufuata njia za dunia hadi lini? Je, tumemsahau Mungu aliyetutoa utumwani wa dhambi? and Mbona hatufuati amri zake?* The preacher uses these questions to question the spiritual

and moral conduct of the members. These questions, instead, can be expected as face-threatening acts (FTAs) according to the politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987), who recognized that face can be threatened to the negative face of the listener which is the urge to do what one wishes to do and should not involve an imposition. This is because, when the preacher challenges the obedience and faithfulness of the listener to God, he or she can be subjecting him to moral judgment which may compromise the freedom and the self-worth of the audience.

Nonetheless, the preacher controls the face threat by formulating the message in terms of rhetorical questions, which do not require a listener to answer or make some response to it, but only think it over. This indirectness serves as one of the negative politeness strategies because it does not impose relevance of the message to the listener in any way. Moreover, the adoption of the phrase *ndugu zangu* (*my brothers and sisters*) evokes the positive politeness as it appeals to a similarity of group (i.e. positive face) in order to blunt the face-threatening nature of the message. By doing so, the preacher not only places the audience in difficulties but also does not threaten the social unity, as the approach developed by Brown and Levinson, in accordance with which the concern about the necessity to do FTAs is to be balanced with the need to avoid degradation and social dissonance.

5.4.4 Ambiguity/ Vagueness

Brown and Levinson (1987) also state that ambiguity is the interference of the Maxim of Manner (1975), Grice, one that suggests that a speaker must not use ambiguous or obscure language. Another source of ambiguity that a speaker may develop is ambiguity about the person to whom he or she is talking or talking to the nature of the offense such as a criticism. It is an approach of lessening face-threatening acts (FTAs). This can be accomplished in a number of ways: through being vague, replacing the hearer, hinting, incompleteness or by ellipsis (having gaps in the speech). Nevertheless, in this work, the concepts of displacing the hearer and vagueness have been categorized in one strategy that is vagueness.

One of the avenues where vagueness was mostly employed was by preachers who would conceal the identity inside the object of an FTA like a request or command. They

would always refer to general words such as somebody, someone, anyone, or some or neighbour. Using this, the preacher does not name the person being critiqued or act like he is talking to someone who is not the real party in the hope that the intended party will come to the realization that the message is being delivered to him. This enables the speaker to go off-record and it relieves the threat or offense that might have been there.

Example 53 Sermon 5

The idea of a mega church is not our sole idea rather an inspirational idea by God. We can receive everything that we desire from our God. Does anybody here understand what I am saying? Say it someone in the congregation "unity!"

In the excerpt of the sermon, the preacher resorts to the vagueness strategy of politeness in order to perform face-threatening acts without addressing these actions in people individually, which preserves the harmony in the congregation. The preacher does not mention anyone in particular since he or she uses indefinite pronouns like somebody or someone to avoid giving a specific person or group of people in the congregation the responsibility of a response. This opens a room in which the congregants are not made to feel forced to talk. This use of the phrase, "*tell your neighbours*" tells the person being admonished, that they are out of it, thus it promotes action in low key.

Brown and Levinson (1987) believe that such vagueness deactivates the illocutionary force of the message, and respects the negative face of the listener their desire not to be imposed upon. These indirect expressions enable preacher to appeal to individual responsiveness without the message sounding alienating or accusative to a certain individual and the reason is because these indirect expressions attract the message that can appeal to everyone and not just to a given person. It is due to these strategies that vagueness assumes the form of a powerful rhetoric which promotes interaction but reduces disagreement.

5.5 Summary of the Chapter

The results of the study show that the preachers used a series of politeness strategies. According to the findings, the preachers strategically used a range of politeness strategies and they relied on the frameworks of the negative politeness, positive

politeness, bald-on-record and off-record communication. Indirectness, hedging, apologies and depersonalized addressing characterized negative politeness strategies that are oriented towards maintaining the autonomy of the hearer. These tactics usually included ritual avoidance whereby the speakers presented less pressure on the FTA.

Positive politeness strategies were also evident in the sermons of all preachers and sought to augment social unity and acceptance. These methods used expression of in-group identity markers, generic and familiar forms of address, code-switching, inclusive pronoun we, repetition, symbolic gifts. Such strategies served to reassure the hearers of their self-image and created the sense of community and helped them to counter the face threat. Bald-on-record strategies also had the preachers involving and not involving minimization were also utilized.

Cases in which the mitigation was not employed were rather rare and generally in a situation where it is more important to communicate clearly and urgently rather than to be polite and often in situations where the participants understand well each other. But bald-on-record strategies with mitigation were more frequent especially in imperative structures where the personal pronoun in the second person, you, has been avoided. The other common way was to talk to a third party (e.g. asking the hearer to talk to a neighbour) so that the imposition is displaced onto the third party, and the act became less direct.

Lastly, when it comes to the preachers, the frequent use of off-record technique, in other words an indirectness and implicature was used, hence leaving the hearer to figure out the intended meaning. The measures minimized the imposition of the FTA through creating. These were represented by metaphor, rhetorical questions, ambiguity and hearer displacement. In this instance, speakers will usually very consciously break Gricean Maxims, especially those of Sincerity and Relevance as a means of heading off any threat their utterances might indicate.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of Findings

The results of the study prove that Kenyan preachers employ the strategic combination of the Aristotelian appeal rhetorical categories used in their persuasive communication with congregants (ethos, logos, and pathos). Every one of these modes of persuasion has a different but complementary role to play for a sermon to be effective.

The mode that occurred the most was ethos since it constituted the majority (about 38.1 percent) of the observed rhetoric strategies. The preachers often focused their position in claims to personal integrity, theological education and a manifestation of pastoral concern. The factors that contributed to the credibility were live preaching and lifestyle harmony, openness of the operation of the church and long-term presence of the preacher in the neighborhood. Ethos was further enhanced by testimonials of change and conversion, and voices of members. This made the minister to be religiously sound and embedded in the community.

Logos was extensively used. Most sermons touched upon matters of real concern which included poverty, illness, unemployment and education among other issues. These problems needed practical solutions. The people in the church intervene through economic empowerment programs, educational programs and welfare programs which were documented as evidence of religious faith in action. These rhetoric appeals helped to present the church as a sensible and socially oriented institution.

Pathos also formed a significant part of the establishment of the emotional connection. Emotional appeals were directed at existential fears, spiritual desire and shared tribulation. Ministers used imagery, metaphor, and humor, persuading the audience to know and feel, create empathy and solidarity. Other appeals such as appeals to fear, especially divine judgment or the urgency of repentance were also being strategically deployed but usually blended with messages of hope, healing and divine compassion.

The interaction of these three modes of rhetoric is the concerted attempt of preachers to appeal to the spiritual, emotional, and material needs of lives of congregants. The

effectiveness of these appeals lay in their balance and contextualization, although various combinations were used depending on the nature of the audience, on the themes of a pastoral, and its intentions.

Additionally, there is the use of positive politeness strategies in lessening the gap between the preachers and the congregation. The action of using in-group identity markers, inclusive pronouns (e.g. we), and switching codes to familiar forms of language works towards a situation of a collective identity and participation. Although the congregation is traditionally passive the sermons, preachers encourage them to be engaged in the sermons and even tell them to react in some ways (e.g., clapping their hands or calling out, such as Amen) therefore, promoting participatory processes and the level of closeness.

At the same time, negative politeness strategies support the norms of autonomy and downplay the cost of imposition on the reader. preachers use traditional indirectness and tend to formulate requests in the form of questions, and prefer impersonal forms of reference (neighbour, someone). These things make use of humility and respect to the space of the listener.

Direct imperatives are a common technique employed by preachers as a bald-on-record strategy, which they then soften through minimization strategies to make their directives seem more pleasant or less offensive. This prudent harmony points to their revered position in the society as religious leaders. Due to this position, their speech is perceived as institutionally legitimate and is less prone to being confronted or offending.

6.2 Conclusion of the findings

The use of the strategies of persuasive communication that occurs in a Kenyan church environment occur in a manner that involves subtle blending and contextualizing of ethos, logos, and pathos. These rhetorical appeals are not seen by preachers as discrete or interchangeable but are seen as mutually certain things that have to do their jobs together to create spiritual power, community, and behavioral change. The success of this persuasive framework can be explained by the ability to appeal to the entire person

intellectually, emotionally and ethically and placing the religious discourse in the context of larger social realities that the congregants are subjected to.

The churches that are effective in the implementation of such rhetorical strategies show more potential to maintain members, create trust and equip themselves in the representation of morally plausible and socially valuable organizations. Furthermore, effective preaching in such environments is not only performative but also transformational and working at establishing or reaffirming belief systems, embodying the collective principles and triggering spiritual improvements as well as social activity.

Kenyan Pentecostal preachers employed face-threatening acts (FTAs) in their speech, and direct commands became the most evident one, followed by requests. Such a trend indicates that the level of imposition during the negative face of the hearers is high. However, the preachers countered these dangers by using positive politeness tactics reasonably. There was also the use of markers to emphasize the in-group identity, the use of inclusive pronoun, in this case, the word we, and some phenomena of the code-switching which helped to create a friendly and inviting communication climate. These tactics showed intimacy and familiarity, which enabled the preachers to speak to their audience with little inhibition even though they were in a highly religious and formal environment.

In spite of the fact that involvement from the audience in such places usually tends to be minimal, the preachers readily involved their audience by asking them to respond either verbally or physically through clapping, shouting at a phrase like Amen, or at the very least giving short feedbacks. This communication lessened the social distance (between speaker and audience) thus making communication more effective.

Also, the preachers utilized negative politeness strategies that are regarded as the most conventionalized deferential strategies. The strategies served the purpose of respecting and recognizing the feeling of autonomy of the audience. To illustrate; most of the time the preachers presented the request as a question, which indicated the traditional obliqueness. They also did not make any direct personal references and instead use impersonal and generalized words like, neighbour, someone, some, and everyone. The

method was applied to create a depersonalized interaction thereby limiting interaction-induced face threats and showing respect towards the audience.

The strategies that were commonly used by the preachers were bald-on-record tactics combined with minimization tactics to reduce the imposition effect of their speech acts. It occurred especially in the imperative constructions, where the directness of the message was moderated by some bit of context, or some connotation. It is a type of speech that supports the powerful status of the preachers, who are seen as immune to audience opposition, because of the institutional power of being religious leaders.

The preachers also resorted to off-record politeness policies, which further counteracted the face-threatening character of some speech acts. Such strategies are designed to be ambiguous, and therefore it is hard to point out one definite communicative purpose of the utterance. Because of this, the speaker leaves room to be interpreted in many ways, thus removing themselves directly. This enables the preachers to transfer interpretive control to the listeners who are later left to draw conclusions concerning the intended meaning. By that, the preachers not only retain their authority position but also please by accommodating the negative face of the hearers.

6.3 Recommendations of Further Research

- i. One of the potential areas of research is the comparison of different rhetorical strategies used by people of various denominations including Pentecostal, Anglicans, Catholic, and African Independent Churches.

- ii. A study should also be conducted on the application of politeness strategies in Kenyan languages beyond English, particularly within the context of religious discourse such as sermons and other church-based communication. This would involve languages such as Kiswahili and indigenous languages like Kimeru, Gikuyu, Dholuo, and others. Such studies would make a significant contribution to the existing sociolinguistic body of knowledge by enhancing our understanding of how culturally specific norms of politeness are performed,

negotiated, and interpreted across different linguistic communities in Kenya, especially in religious settings.

REFERENCES

- Abrahams, M., & Bell, R. (1994). Encouraging charitable contributions: An examination of three models of door-in-the-face compliance. *Communication Research, 21*(2), 131–153.
- Adam, M. (2017). Persuasion in religious discourse: Enhancing credibility in sermon titles and openings. *Discourse and Interaction, 10*(2), 5–25.
- Anderson, A. (2004). *An introduction to Pentecostalism: Global charismatic Christianity* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Alfian, A., Santi, C., & Sari, N. (2019). Persuasive strategies used by Dr. Zakir Naik in his speech in Oxford Union with theme “Islam and the 21st Century.” *English Language, Linguistics, Literature, and Education Journal, 1*(1), 32–44.
- Anderson, A. (2004). An introduction to Pentecostalism and Charismatics in South Africa. *Journal of Religion in Africa.*
- Ambuyo, B., Indede, N., & Karanja, N. (2011). Face threatening acts and standing orders: Politeness in the question time discussions of the Kenyan parliament. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 9*, 5–15.
- Aristotle. (2007). *On rhetoric: A theory of civic discourse* (G. A. Kennedy, Trans., 2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. (Original work published ca. 350 B.C.E.)
- Asamoah-Gyadu, J. (2016). “From prophetism to Pentecostalism”: Religious innovation in Africa and African religious scholarship. In *African traditions in the study of religion in Africa* (pp. 161–174). Routledge.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1989). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bandura, A. (2011). *The social and policy impact of social cognitive theory*. Guilford Press.
- Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2009). *Register, genre and style*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bloom, H. (Ed.). (2004). *Persuasion*. Chelsea House.
- Barros, P., & Garoupa, N. (2002). An economic theory of church strictness. *The Economic Journal, 112*(481), 559–576.
- Brembeck, W. B., & Howell, W. S. (2002). *Persuasion: A means of social influence*. Prentice Hall.

- Brown, D. (2003). *Transformational preaching: Theory and practice*. Virtual Bookworm Publishing.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cartledge, M. J. (2011). *Pentecostalism: A guide for the perplexed*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Chomsky, N., & Hall, M. (1968). *The sound pattern of English*. Harper & Row.
- Cialdini, R. B. (2001). *Influence: Science and practice*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Corbett, E. P. J. (1997). *The little rhetoric handbook*. John Wiley.
- Cox, H. (1996). *Fire from heaven: The rise of Pentecostal spirituality and the reshaping of religion in the 21st century*. Addison-Wesley.
- Crystal, D. (2018). Whatever happened to theolinguistics? In P. Chilton & M. Kopytowska (Eds.), *Religion, language, and the human mind* (pp. xx–xx). Oxford University Press.
- Culpeper, J. (2011). *Impoliteness: Using language to cause offence*. Cambridge University Press.
- Darley, J., & Berscheid, E. (1976). Increased liking as a result of anticipation of personal contact. *Human Relations*.
- Davis, A. B., & Rice, C. D. (2019). Recognition, warmth, and divine assistance: Emotional involvement in Christian preaching
- Den Hartogh, N. (2020). Fear appeals and moral persuasion in religious sermons.
- De Jong, W. (1979). An examination of self-perception mediation in the foot-in-the-door effect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.
- De Villiers, P. (2008). Persuasive discourse in evangelical sermons: A rhetorical and pragmatic analysis. *Journal of Religion and Theology*, 15(2), 45–63.
- Demirdöğen, Ü. (2010). The roots of research in (political) persuasion: Ethos, pathos, logos and the Yale studies of persuasive communications. *International Journal of Social Inquiry*, 3(1), 189–201.
- Dow, J. (2015). *Passions and persuasion in Aristotle's rhetoric*. Oxford University Press.

- Dunbar, N. (2015). Authority and face concerns in interpersonal communication: A pragmatic perspective. James Cook University Lecture Notes, Law, Society and Chan
- Editage Insights. (2025). Using emotional resonance in persuasive religious discourse
- Ekström, A., & Lundmark, C. (2020). Emotional urgency in religious rhetoric: From passive audience to active responder. Uppsala University Press.
- El-Dakhs, D. A. S., & Ahmed, M. A. (2025). Behavioral ethos in persuasive discourse: A pragmatic analysis of credibility in religious speech. Cairo Academic Press
- Fadhilah, N. (2010). A discourse analysis on the persuasive technique used in DRTV advertisement (Master's thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim).
- Fairclough, N. (2001). The dialectics of discourse. *Textus*, 14(2), 231–242.
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Stanford University Press.
- Floyd-Lapp, C. (2014). Aristotle's rhetoric: The power of words and the continued relevance of persuasion.
- Fogg, B. (2006). The six most powerful persuasion strategies. In *Persuasive technology: First international conference on persuasive technology for human well-being* (pp. 6–6). Springer.
- Fraser, B. (2010). Pragmatic competence: The case of hedging. In G. Kaltenböck, W. Mihatsch, & S. Schneider (Eds.), *New approaches to hedging* (pp. 15–34). Emerald Group Publishing.
- Friestad, M., & Peter, W. (1999). Everyday persuasion knowledge. *Psychology and Marketing*.
- Gathuma, S. M. (2020). Influence of democratic leadership style on management of church youth development in selected Pentecostal churches in Nyeri Town Sub County, Kenya. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 7(3), 1006–1018.
- Grajewska, A., Kowalski, M., & Nowak, T. (2024). Ethos and credibility in persuasive discourse: A rhetorical perspective. Warsaw Academic Press.
- Grice, H. P. (1967). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics* (Vol. 3, pp. 41–58). Academic Press.v
- Goffman, E. (1955). On face-work: An analysis of ritual elements in social interaction. *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes*.
- Harris, S. (2003). Politeness and power: Making and responding to requests in institutional settings. *Text*, 23(1), 27–52

- Hasmi, M. (2013). Politeness strategies used by the characters in Nanny McPhee movie [Undergraduate thesis, Yogyakarta State University]
- Hogan, J. (2012). Persuasion in the rhetorical tradition. In *The SAGE handbook of persuasion: Developments in theory and practice* (pp. 2–20).
- Kariuki, J. M. (2019). Politeness and power in Kenyan Pentecostal sermons. *Journal of African Linguistics and Communication*, 5(2), 87–103.
- Kariuki, J. M. (2019). Code-switching as a persuasive strategy in Kenyan Pentecostal sermons. *East African Journal of Communication Studies*, 8(1), 73–88.
- Katerina, F. (2010). *Expressing politeness in American TV programs* (Bachelor's thesis, Tomas Bata University).
- Kennedy, G. A. (1991). Aristotle: On rhetoric (G. A. Kennedy, Trans.). Oxford University Press.
- Keraf, G. (2004). Argument and narration. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Kithure, K. (2013). *Face threatening acts used by Kenyan televangelists* (Unpublished master's thesis). Kenyatta University.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). Research methodology: Methods and techniques (2nd rev. ed.). New Age International.
- Kurniyatin, J. (2017). *An analysis of politeness strategies used by teacher and students in English class at MTS Am Salem Kudus* (Unpublished thesis). The State Islamic Institute of Surakarta.
- Kirby, W. (2013). *Persuasion and conversion*. Brill.
- Lakoff, R. (1973). The logic of politeness. In *Papers from the ninth regional meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society*.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. Longman.
- Leede, B. de, & Stark, C. (2015). Protestant preaching: Its strengths and weaknesses. *Calvin Theological Journal*, 50(1), 43–58.
- Lawless, E. (1991). Restricting their lives and narratives: Spiritual life stories of Pentecostal women preachers. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, N(1), Spring.
- Lucas, S. (1995). *The art of public speaking*. McGraw-Hill.
- Martin, J. R., & Rose, D. (2003). Working with discourse: Meaning beyond the clause. Continuum.

- Mayer, W. (1998). John Chrysostom: Extraordinary preacher, ordinary audience. In *Preacher and audience: Studies in early Christian and Byzantine homiletics* (Vol. 1, pp. 105–138).
- McCall, R. (1998). *Storytelling and testimony: Reclaiming a Pentecostal distinctive*. Colombian Theological Seminary.
- McCarthy, P., & Hatcher, C. (1996). *Speaking persuasively: How to make the most of your presentations*. St. Leonard.
- Menzies, W. W. (2009). *Spirit and power: Foundations of Pentecostal experience*. Zondervan.
- Meyer, B. (2010). Aesthetics of persuasion: Global Christianity and Pentecostalism's sensational forms. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 109(4), 741–763.
- Meyer, J. C. (2000). Humor as a double-edged sword: Four functions of humor in communication. *Communication Theory*, 10(3), 310–331. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2000.tb00194.x>
- Migdadi, F., Al-Momani, K., & Hammori, I. (2025). Politeness strategies in Arabic Friday sermons. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 16(1), 123–135
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Muchiri, P. (2014). *Understanding politeness through a sequence: The case of an interview* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Nairobi.
- Mukhongo, L. (2020). The performance of faith: Televangelism and persuasive communication in Kenya. *African Journal of Media Studies*, 6(3), 101–115.
- Mugo, M. G. (2019). *Speech act analysis of selected excerpts from Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo's The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* [Master's thesis, Kenyatta University].
- Mulder, J., & Hill, B. (2017). Rhetorical techniques in evangelical sermons: Structuring belief and commitment. *Journal of Religious Communication*, 23(1), 29–41.
- Munthe-Kaas, H. M., et al. (2024). Public participation in COVID-19 decisions: A case study of Norway. *BMJ Global Health*, 9(2), e014567.
- Mutuku, E. K. (2014). *Use of politeness strategies during interaction between hotel staff and guests in selected hotels in Nairobi County, Kenya* [Master's thesis, Kenyatta University].
- Niina, R. (2009). *Softening criticism: The use of lexical hedges in academic spoken interactions* (Master's thesis, University of Helsinki).

- Njeru, A. B. (2022). Emotional identification and kinship metaphors in African Pentecostal preaching
- Obeng, S. G. (1997). Communication strategies: Persuasion and politeness in Akan judicial discourse. *Text & Talk*, 17(1), 25–52
- O’Keefe, D. J. (2006). Persuasion. In *The handbook of communication skills* (pp. 333–352). Routledge.
- Osen, G. (2024, January 31). CS Kindiki outlaws Mackenzie’s church. *The Star*.
- Parsitau, D. (2012). From prophetic voices to lack of voice: Christian churches in Kenya and the dynamics of voice and voicelessness in a multi-religious space.
- Parsitau, D., & Mwaura, P. (2010). God in the city: Pentecostalism as an urban phenomenon in Kenya. *Studia Historiae Ecclesasticae*, 36(2), 95–112.
- Pernot, L. (2006). The rhetoric of religion. *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, 24(3), 235–254.
- Petty, R., & Cacioppo, J. (1986). *Communication and persuasion: Central and peripheral routes to attitude change*. Springer-Verlag.
- Pieterse, H. J. C. (2009). Preaching as a language of hope: Studying the presence of God in sermons. Peeters Publishers.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1973). *A grammar of contemporary English*. Longman.
- Ryan, N. S. (2016). *The elements of rhetoric*. Angelico Press.
- Ridley, M. (1997). *The origin of virtue: Human instincts and the evolution of cooperation*. Penguin Books.
- Robbins, T. (2004). *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity*. Routledge.
- Sari, P. (2019). An analysis of politeness strategies in the movie Flipped [Undergraduate thesis, Widyatama University]
- Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. (1995). *Intercultural communication*. Blackwell.
- Sheridan, D., & Ridolfo, J. (2012). *The available means of persuasion: Mapping a theory and pedagogy of multimodal public rhetoric*. Parlor Press.
- Simons, H. W. (1970). Requirements, problems and strategies: A theory of persuasion for social movements. *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*.

- Smids, J. (2012). The voluntariness of persuasive technology. In *Persuasive technology. Design for health and safety: 7th International Conference, Persuasive 2012* (pp. 123–132). Springer.
- Stiff, J., & Mongeau, P. (2016). *Persuasive communication*. Guilford Publications.
- Ting, S. H. (2018). Ethos, logos and pathos in university students' informal requests. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 18(1), xx–xx.
- Sarr, L. (2024, September 10). Mistrust of Pentecostal churches in Kenya is growing, says expert. *La Croix International*. <https://international.la-croix.com/news/religion/mistrust-of-pentecostal-churches-in-kenya-is-growing-says-expert/17743>
- William, B. A. (1999). *The church in East Africa 1840–1974*. Uzima Press.
- Zainuddin, H. (2010). *Understanding politeness*. Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Guiding Card.

PERSUASION STRATEGIES	POLITENESS STRATEGIES
<p>Pathos Ethos Minister credibility Church credibility Logos Appeal to need Appeal to humour Appeal to fear</p>	<p>Bald on record Maximum efficiency Urgency for emphasis Task oriented Power difference between sr and hr Welcoming Farewells offers positive politeness Exaggerations Intensity of interest to hearer Claiming a common ground In group identity markers Seeking agreements Avoidance of disagreements Joke Offers, promises Negative politeness Being indirect Hedging and questions Being pessimistic Giving deference Minimization of imposition Being apologetic Impersonalizing speaker and hearer Using a general rule Off record strategies Giving hints Presupposing Overstating Understating Irony Use of metaphors Being ambiguous Overgeneralizing Displacing hearer Use of ellipsis Use of contradictions</p>

Appendix 2: Sermon 1, What's in Your House?

I want to take this opportunity, uh, to welcome each and every one of us to this meeting. Amen? The reason we are here today, you know, is to tell you how good our God is even though, yes, even though there are many who question the church today. I'm here, not to brag, no, not to become famous, but I am one of the true testimonies of daily miracles that God is laying in our lives. I've watched, yes, I've watched, as lives are transformed and the hopeless becoming hopeful. We don't demonstrate our faith by the number of people that follow us, no, but rather by what God is doing in all of us. The truth, yes, the truth, of the word of God builds deeper in our hearts, even in these times when the church is losing its popularity. I request you today, brethren, to stand by your faith. Let us not mind the people who doubt us, no, let us believe in the love of our Father in Heaven and His promise. We understand, don't we, that every soul that comes to Christ is a manifestation of how powerful God is at work with us. Hallelujah!

Before I begin today, I'd like to, uh, relate my own experience of membership in this church. The first time I entered these doors... I had no idea what to expect. But I've come to learn, yes, I've come to learn, that there is a true feeling of warmth and care in this church. I've witnessed our leaders, pastors, and members uniting in difficult situations, reaching out to each other, both in words and in deeds. Ours is not only a church, no, it's a family. A family founded on trust, honesty, and a real bond with God. Can I get an amen?

Now, I wish to talk about a problem... a problem which concerns each and every one of us. Our everyday suffering... and the great need to find some spiritual strength. When it comes to finances, yes, finances, in our Kenyan setting, where most of us fear rent, food, and the uncertainties ahead... the relationship between our economic hardships and our walk in the spirit life is very real. I mean, in my opinion, being of service to others implies treating the soul and the body. By helping our fellow beings with their financial needs, say, by assisting them through our ministry of compassion, we are not only enhancing our faith, but at the same time, enriching ourselves. I was a witness, yes, I saw it, when one of our sisters in the neighborhood was having a hard time feeding her children. We, as a church, got up. We didn't just pray, no, we also got down and came to her aid and supported her. That same act of kindness was a gesture that God is concerned with every detail of our lives. Our church is founded on the principle that spirituality and welfare work together. We cannot just offer consoling words, brethren, we need to extend a helping hand whenever it is needed. Amen?

I feel in my spirit, yes, I feel, that something has been convincing you that you are sick and you should not come. But by the grace of God, you came. You will be blessed because of that faith. I welcome you to this service today. I'm praying for all those people who bothered to be here. It is a great joy, yes, a great joy, being with you.

Saints of God, let's go together to the book of 2 Kings 4:1-7. It's a story many of us know, but today, today, I pray we'll see it with fresh eyes. "A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, 'Your servant my husband is dead... and the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves.'" What a situation! What a crisis! This is not a parable, no, this is real life. A grieving widow, her back against the wall, her sons about to be taken into slavery. She didn't have a fallback plan. She had no money in her purse, no favor in the market, no one to turn to except God.

Now, I want you to see, yes, see, how Elisha responds. He says, “What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?” She says, “Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil.” Beloved, there are some of us, some of us, who are in this very situation spiritually. You look at your life and you say, “I’ve got nothing. Nothing left.” But I came to tell you today, hallelujah, that what you’re calling “nothing” might just be the very seed of your miracle. God has a way, yes, a way, of turning “just a jar of oil” into overflow.

Turn to your neighbor and say, “There’s something in your house.” Oh yes! Something small, something overlooked, something you didn’t think was useful. But God, God, is about to breathe on it. That oil... symbol of the Holy Spirit, of anointing, of provision... it represents what’s already in you. You don’t need to chase everything outside. Begin where you are.

The prophet tells her, “Go, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels; do not gather just a few.” Hallelujah! God’s provision requires our participation. She didn’t argue, she didn’t hesitate. She didn’t ask, “How many should I take?” She simply obeyed. She brought the vessels, shut the door behind her, some of you need to shut the door behind the voices of doubt, and as she poured, the oil kept flowing! Brethren, God is still in the business of multiplying obedience. God’s supply does not run out until our faith does. The miracle did not depend on the size of her oil, but the size of her obedience.

Today, I want to speak not only to your crisis, but to your calling. Some of you came here today tired. Some came wondering if you’ve got anything left. But I’m here to declare to you, in the mighty name of Jesus, “You still have something in your house!” Your time is not over. Your oil has not dried up. Your story is not finished. And let me say this, child of God, our faith is not a philosophy, it is a life. It is power. When one experiences Christ, that person is not the same person any longer, because he or she is changed right to the core. But if you are not in Christ, nothing has changed. You may go through the motions, but nothing shifts. So I urge you today, don’t just sit there and wait for a preacher to plead with you. Be born again! This altar is open. The Spirit of the Lord is in this place. Amen?

Yes, this is a faith-filled family. I say, there is no difference whether you are in the city or at the village; you are blessed. Someone declare, “With His stripes I am healed.” Say, “All that I touch shall flourish...” Proclaim it! “All these things appertain to me!” Run your business by faith and you are going to win against your competitors. You will be ahead of the game. Do you know what it means to be prosperous and healthy? Look for something that people cannot see. Do what others did not do. Someone say, “I am not limited!” Being sick, good or bad relationships, kids, and your past is not a limit on you.

This church takes up on the right foot. You are at the top and not the bottom. You are lifted up and you are not down. The doors of your life are open, and there is nobody to close the doors. Speak out your situation by saying, “This breakthrough bears my name.” Be constructive and nothing will bring you down. You are not forgotten, you are selected. May you have wisdom and peace abound. May your hands be fruitful and your heart be full. Find solutions in others’ problems. Somebody declare, “I bear

greatness.” Never allow fear, previous failures, unavailability of resources, and the opinions of people to characterize your path. What happened to you does not define you.

Sisi sote tunajua kwamba bila Mungu sisi ni bure, sivyo? We’ve been through hardships, but we were never forsaken! We are living testimonies of His faithfulness. And I ask you, are we here today because of our own strength? Hapana! If the Lord had not been on our side, where would we be?

And today, as we honor God, let’s also recognize His servant in our midst. Today is a special day in our church, yes, a special day, since we are privileged to host a servant of God. Our guest preacher is a friend of this church who has worked through different ministries, and I know, yes, I know, how much he has devoted himself to the work of God. I suppose a good number of you people in this church might have already heard about his work, perhaps in instances of transformed lives or in the impact of his ministry outside these walls.

We don’t come to exalt a man, but we honor the calling he carries. As 1 Timothy 5:17 says, “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.” The Shunammite woman honored the man of God and her barren life bore fruit. God turned her “nothing” into a miracle. When

Our church has always tried to help those in need. We believe that the greatest work of evangelism is through acts of mercy. Many members who have joined us recently did not hear about us through any kind of advertisement. I believe they got to hear us through the good things they have witnessed us doing or may be heard from other people... In the same year, we have been able to help more students we have managed to sponsor an additional five students to join their counterparts making a total of twenty students that we are sponsoring as a church. This is the testimony that our faith is in action like I have repeated endless times here.

Now I ask you again: What’s in your house? Maybe all you see is “just oil.” But God sees a miracle waiting to happen. Pour it out, trust Him, shut out the voices of doubt, and watch Him multiply it. Let’s rise together and declare! God is faithful. Hallelujah!

Appendix 3: Sermon 2: The Message of the Cross

I want to take this opportunity, uh, to welcome each and every one of us to this meeting. The reason we are here today, you know, is to tell you how good our God is even though there are many who question the church today. I am here, not to brag or try to become famous, no, but I am one of the true testimonies of daily miracles that God is laying in our lives. I have watched, yes, I have watched, as lives are transformed and the hopeless becoming hopeful. We do not demonstrate our faith by the number of people that follow us, but rather by what God is doing in all of us. The truth of the word of God builds deeper in our hearts, even in these times when the church is, uh, losing its popularity. I request you today, yes today, to stand by your faith. Let us not mind the people who doubt us, and let us believe in the love of our Father in Heaven and His promise. We understand, don't we, that every soul that comes to Christ is a manifestation of how powerful God is at work with us. Amen

Beloved, the cross is not just a religious object, not just something you wear around your neck or hang on the wall. No. The cross is the centerpiece of our Christian faith. It is where love, mercy, justice, and grace intersected in the most powerful act this world has ever witnessed. But to some, it seems foolish. To some, it looks like weakness. And yet to us, those who believe and are being saved, it is the power of God. Hallelujah

You see, the cross tells a story of love, unmatched, unimaginable love. As the Bible says in John three sixteen, for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. Jesus did not go to the cross because we deserved it. No, no. He went because God is merciful. He went because He loved us, even in our mess, even when we were not looking for Him. Love held Him there more than the nails. When people mocked Him, when pain pierced His flesh, it was not human strength that kept Him on that tree. It was divine love. The cross is proof that no matter how far we fall, God's love will go even further to bring us back.

Romans five eight reminds us that God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Let that sink in. He didn't wait for us to get our act together. He died for us while we were still in sin. Jesus bore the punishment we deserved. The innocent Son of God died so that guilty people like us could live. The cross shows us just how serious sin is, and yet at the same time, how deep God's grace runs.

And I beg you in the name of the Lord to consider how you have walked with God in this life. The world we are living in these days is full of things, so many things, that put us off the path to truth in God. And to tell you the truth, one day we will all stand before the Lord and one way or another, we will have to answer to the decisions that we have taken. According to the Bible, the people who turn against His ways will be judged. We must not be casual with our faith and believe that we will have more time. The devil tries all he can to mislead, to convince us that sin is not a serious issue to pursue, yet it is what destroys our inner person. Do not wait till it is too late. Repent to the Lord today. Give Him your heart and walk in righteousness. Believe in His word, be firm in the faith, and do not allow the world to distract you. God is kind and merciful and also fair, and it is time to change to Him completely and before the last day.

You may be wondering what kind of power is in the cross. First Corinthians one eighteen says that to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. Yes, the world sees it as weakness, but the cross is where Satan was defeated. Through that rugged cross, chains are broken. Addictions are destroyed. Lives are restored. Eternal destinies are changed. Glory to God

Life is very much a rollercoaster, you see, where you feel like you are trying to run through a rainstorm, only to fall on a banana peel. But God knows every fall and every tear, and He is always up to give you a helping hand that is going to bring you back on your feet. I am aware, yes I know, that the troubles we bear are a burden. Not to mention the profound interest in money, as well as the home issues that are so heavy that we can get lost in the worries of this world. But listen, we do not just say prayers here in this church, we say smile. Because we need to be assured that there is hope, and the great grace of God is capable of turning our lives around and saving us from our sorrows.

Again, hear me, my sons and daughters. Life is mainly about making decisions, yes, but there is a choice that will determine where you spend your eternity. And that is whether you will follow God or reject His truth. A time will come, yes it will, when all the souls are to appear in the sight of the Lord. And on that day, there will be no excuses and no second chances. I press upon you again, don't wait till it is too late. The effects of sin are real, even though sin might appear harmless. The devil is busy, busy trying to take you out, to convince you that you have a lot of time. Yet the clock is striking. God calls you to Himself today. He loves young people. He is calling you to righteousness, to a holy life. Turn to Him this minute. The Lord is merciful and just, and each one of us is going to be called to answer.

Sometimes I feel like our lives could be a TV comedy. It was just last week, I just got out of my house with one big shoe on because it was prayer time, and I was too carried away to notice which shoe didn't match. And I had to erupt in laughter when I got to church. It made me realize that it's out of our flaws that our humanness becomes real to God, who even finds our mistakes funny. When we laugh at our flops, we aren't avoiding the struggles, we're inviting the lightness and hope that God's love provides us. So, let's hold on to these funny moments as foolproof that even in our own brokenness, His grace and humor bring us joy.

Perhaps you've been struggling with fear. Yet you also know that you might have been bearing a burden that no one can tell. And I want to advise you, take it to Jesus today. There is no pressure to come forward if you feel like you are not ready for it. However, the open altar is yours should you choose to come. Nobody will make you do it. This is between you and God. I want you to understand, He is here, and He wants to meet you where you are.

Beloved, the message of the cross is not complicated. It is this. God loved you enough to die for you. He sacrificed everything to bring you home. He has the power to change your life. And He wants to walk with you again. Today, you can choose life, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Don't wait. Don't delay. The altar is open. But more than that, His arms are open. Come to Jesus.

Appendix 4: Sermon 3: Pillars of a Church

Beloved, the church of God is not just a building. It is a living body, a house with pillars. And today, I want to speak to you about those pillars that uphold the church. The first being the man of God. The servant of God is not just a figure standing behind a pulpit. He is a vessel chosen and anointed by God. And the Bible says in First Timothy five seventeen, let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. When we honor the servant of God, we are not exalting flesh and blood. No. We are recognizing the mantle, the divine calling, and we are, in truth, honoring God.

Think of the Shunammite woman in Second Kings chapter four. She saw Elisha pass by and perceived he was a holy man of God. She didn't wait to be asked. She made room for him in her house. Not out of obligation, but out of honor. And what happened? God made room for her miracle. In her barrenness, she received a son. And later, that same son was raised from the dead. My friends, when you make room for the servant of God, God makes room for your miracle. Can I get an amen

Today, we are here not only to fellowship but also to reflect on the unfailing faithfulness and tireless service of our man of God. His life has been a light that burns clear, a voice of hope to the lost, a comfort to the broken. I remember the many times he stood right here on this altar, not just to preach, but to soothe bleeding hearts with truth, to bind smitten bodies with mercy, and to restore straying souls to righteousness. Every utterance he has made from this place has never been in vain. It comes from a life of genuine service, a calling that has revealed itself through care for the weakest among us.

To speak of service is easy. To live it every day, humbly and unchanged, is a divine assignment. And that, church, is what we have seen and continue to see in this servant of God. He has walked with us in joy and in distress. He has knelt with the grieving, reached the victims, encouraged those who had lost the will to keep fighting. His service is not bought by money or driven by titles. It is powered by God's own anointing. And we have witnessed it. In the lives transformed, in the souls healed, in the love poured out over every person who walks through these doors. This church is more than a place of worship. It is a healing place. It is a home. And it is that because of a preacher who leads not only with words but with action. Man of God, we honor you today. We recognize your sacrifices. We are blessed to walk in your example, to serve with compassion, to bring light in darkness, and to uphold the faith that binds us.

And church, let us not forget this calling is not limited to one man. Each of us is called to stand with the man of God. Whether you are new here or have been here for years, you are part of this family. You have a role to play. And today we are blessed as we welcome a guest preacher, a dear friend to this house, one whose work in ministry has touched many, whose impact has gone far beyond these walls. Many of you have heard of him. Today, we are privileged to receive from him directly. Let us honor him as one sent by God.

The second pillar of the church is the people. The burden bearing believers who make up the body. Second Timothy two twenty to twenty one says, in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some

for dishonor. The difference lies in their sanctification, their willingness to cleanse themselves, to be useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work.

Years ago, our preacher stood in this very pulpit, not to preach merely, but to soothe those hearts bleeding with truth, to bind those bodies smitten with mercies, to bring back those straying ones to a way of righteousness. To talk about service is one thing. To live that service day by day, humbly and unchanged, is another thing altogether. And such is what we have been seeing, and what we are still seeing. His dedication is not motivated by what we give him or titles. It is evident that his is a calling.

I speak from experience. When I first walked into this church, I didn't know what to expect. But what I found was warmth. Real care. A family grounded in honesty, trust, and a deep bond with God. I have seen our leaders, pastors, and members unite in times of trouble. I have witnessed their willingness to reach out, not just in word but in action. Our church believes in evangelism through mercy. We don't rely on ads or campaigns. People come because they've heard of the good things happening here. They've seen it in the lives we've touched. They've felt it in the kindness shared, in the prayers offered, and in the hands extended in times of need.

There is a blessing in honoring and believing in the man of God. I want Mary here to testify what God has done in her life. (calls Mary to the front)

My name is Mary and I am standing here with a grateful heart to share with you my testimony after we made a prayer with our pastor. At some point my faith had really gone down, seeing myself always struggling with unending difficulties of life. But by His grace, I got some hope and power in the words of our pastor whom I love very much. I remember a time when I experienced one of the saddest moments in my life. I felt that I was deserted by the world and even wished I would die. It was at this time when I went to a service by our pastor. As he spoke, his words went deep in my heart since I was facing the reality in my life that I could not bear. I felt like he was speaking direct to me, healing my pain and giving me new sense of purpose. I can only pray that God bless our pastor and fulfill the desires of his heart. I have seen him helping and saying kind words to anybody who needed it. He has been a humble and selfless person that has made a lot of positive changes in a lot of lives, mine included. Through his sermons, I got to know that it is our faith that heals us. I am here today to tell you that you should believe in the man of God, have faith, and you will have the same hope and comfort. I hope that, like me, you also receive answers to your prayers.

To our new members here today, let me say this. You are welcome. Truly welcome. We are a church led by God's love. We pray together. We serve together. We are not perfect, but we are real and our faith is strong. We invite you not just to attend, but to belong. Let this become your family too. And yes, I know there are those who question the church. But I tell you, from where I stand, I have seen lives turned around right here. I have seen the unseen finally noticed. The lonely embraced. The hopeless restored. Through our little acts of kindness. Through our quiet prayers. Through our burdens carried together and our victories shared.

We are called to evangelize to them that don't understand the work of the cross. But as we do that, we should show acts of love and mercy to people we preach to. I would like that we set a day to help the people who are a bit needy in our community. I believe it is a bit difficult to preach to people who are worried about what they shall eat. I also urge our welfare department to identify cases of needy students whose parents are struggling with school fees, and our church can sponsor several. Most churches have a

ministry of caring, and our church should also stand to be counted. That is definitely one of the things I like about service the most. I am also inspired to support other people, not only in terms of finances but also in terms of their spiritual lives as I can see how they relate.

So if you're wondering whether this is where you belong, let me say it clearly. This is your church. This is your home. These are your people. And together, we will grow in faith. Together, we will bear one another's burdens. Together, we will continue to be the living pillars of the house of God.

I have something to say to you out of my heart. Not everything is rosy in life. We all are going through some struggles. Maybe it is about money, or family, or even being lost. You are not required to do it on your own however. Our church is here to walk with you, to empower you, and to tell you that God sees you and He loves you. This is a family that will pray for you, and will encourage you, and even give you practical assistance when you join it.

Appendix 5: Sermon 4: Mungu Atashughulikia Shida zako

Leo tumekusanyika hapa katika Nuru ya Matumaini, tukikumbuka kuwa kanisa si tu jengo tunalosoma ndani maneno ya Mungu, bali ni mahali pa matumaini. Katika enzi hizi za changamoto, tunahitaji kuona kanisa kama taa isiyozimika, uwanja wa ukuaji, na chemchemi ya imani kwa wale walio na shaka.

Kanisa linapokuwa na moyo wa kulea na huduma, linatupatia sababu ya kuendelea kuamini. Ndio, magonjwa huja, umasikini hutupata, huzuni hutugusa... lakini ndani ya nyumba ya Bwana, tunapata pumziko. Tunaona kwamba bado kuna wema, bado kuna upendo, bado kuna sababu ya kusonga mbele.

Hapa, kupitia mafundisho ya Biblia, tunapata tumaini lisilo na kikomo. Kanisa linatufaidi kuwa sehemu ya familia pana. Tumeunganishwa kwa roho, si kwa damu tu. Tunaweza kuona matumaini katika nyuso za ndugu, shukrani katika nyimbo tunazoimba pamoja, na nguvu tunapoabudu kwa pamoja.

Na leo, wapendwa, ninataka tuanze kwa kutambua jambo hili: hata kama moyo wetu umechoka, kanisa lina uwezo wa kutuponya. Ni chanzo cha nuru, tupate kuona njia tunayotembea. Tumaini linatupatia msukumo wa kuungana kikamilifu, kutetea, kupenda, na kusimama kwa pamoja. Amina

Kuna wakati nikiwaangalia, naona nyinyi ni kama wale watu husema, "Ndio, najua Mungu anazijua shida zangu zote, kwa hivyo mimi nitaendelea tu kufanya mambo yangu bila kujali." Ni kama tu mtoto anavyosema, "Nataka kula chakula changu lakini sihisi njaa." Lakini wapendwa, naomba tusidanganyane. Kama tunataka Mungu ashughulikie shida zetu, ni lazima tujikaze kufuata njia zake. Sivyoo wapendwa?

Wapendwa, we are not people of this world. We are only wapitajia, watu wanaojua maneno ya nchi ya mbali. Hii dunia siyo nyumbani kwetu. We are pilgrims here. Lovely people, we are of the world above. We are just passing through. This is not our world.

Sisi ni watoto wa Agano. Mungu wa ahadi, wa Agano, ametuahidi baraka tele. Na kila neno lake si juu yetu halitarudi bure. Tuseme Amina

Sisi sote tunajua kwamba bila Mungu sisi ni bure, sivyo? Tumepitia changamoto, lakini hatujawahi kuachwa. Sisi ni ushuhuda wa uaminifu wake. Wapendwa, hebu tujiulize... sisi hapa tuko, kweli ni kwa nguvu zetu tumefika hapa? Hapana. Tuko hapa kwa uwezo wa Mungu. Najua sote, kama si Bwana aliyekuwa upande wetu, mambo yangekuwa tofauti sana. Sisi si bora kuliko waliopoteza imani njiani, lakini Mungu ametushika mkono. Ndugu na dada zangu, leo si sisi wote tuna sababu ya kujivunia kuwa katika Bwana? Hebu tusimame, na tukiri kwa sauti: Mungu ni mwaminifu. Sema, “Mungu ni mwaminifu!”

Pia najua kwamba wapo miongoni mwetu waliopitia mateso ya magonjwa. Wengi wao wanajikuta peke yao, wakihisi kama hakuna anayewajali. Tunakuomba, mpendwa, ukaeze kumjua Mungu, kumuamini, na kujiunga nasi. Kwa Mungu kuna upendo wa kweli. Tutasimama nawe.

Pengine uko miongoni mwetu leo ukiwa na mzigo moyoni. Labda umekuwa ukipitia changamoto ambazo hujaweza kufungukia mtu yeyote. Nataka kukusihi, mpendwa, ukaachilie huo mzigo kwa Yesu. Ningependa kukuhimiza kwa upole. Lakini kama hujisikii tayari kuja mbele, hilo ni sawa kabisa. Hakuna atakayekulazimisha. Lakini madhabahu haya yanampokea kila mmoja aliye tayari kuachilia Roho Mtakatifu afanye kazi ndani yake. Lazima uchukue hatua. Mungu yuko pamoja nasi na atakuguza, pahali popote ulipo.

Jambo lingine ni kwamba tangu hili kanisa lianzishwe, tumeweza kushiriki katika miradi ya kuwasaidia vijana, wajane, na maskini. Na kwangu, hili ni jambo linaloonyesha imani ambayo inaambatana na vitendo. Imani hai bila matendo ni nini? Ni imani ya kweli tunayoishi.

Asubuhi hii, Mungu ametupatia nafasi nyingine ya kuishi na kusimama imara. Ninyi nyote mko hapa kwa sababu Mungu ana maneno ya baraka, ya faraja, na ya nguvu kwa kila mmoja wenu. Tunapitia changamoto nyingi katika maisha. Kazi ngumu, magonjwa, matatizo ya kifamilia na kiuchumi. Lakini wapendwa, mambo haya ni fursa za kukua kiimani. Usijihisi uko peke yako. Roho Mtakatifu yuko ndani yako. Anakupa nguvu ya kushinda vizingiti vyote.

Huu ni wakati wa kutafakari. Kufungua mioyo yetu. Na kusema kwa ujasiri, “Msiogope, kwa maana Mungu yu pamoja nasi.” Mungu hafanyi kazi tu kwa wale walio na nguvu nyingi, bali kwa wale waliovunjika moyo na waliokata tamaa. Ndiyo maana anasema, “Mioyo iliyopondeka sitaitupa.” Mungu anatembea na waliovunjika moyo. Anawainua tena. Amina

Sasa fungua macho yako. Tafakari changamoto zako. Sema moyoni mwako, “Mungu, nifungulie njia.” Roho wa Mungu yuko tayari kujibu. Tunapomwita kwa unyenyekevu, tunaponyamaza kimya mbele zake, tunasikia sauti yake ya faraja na maelekezo. Wakati mwingine tunatafuta msaada kutoka kwa watu au vitu, lakini nguvu halisi zinatoka kwa Mungu peke yake.

Unapokuwa karibu na Mungu, huzuni hubadilika kuwa furaha, hofu kuwa imani, na majonzi kuwa matumaini. Leo, chukua hatua ya imani. Tembea kama mtu aliyejaa tumaini. Si kwa sababu hali zako zimebadilika, bali kwa sababu umejua kuwa Mungu hajawahi kukuacha hata mara moja.

Dunia inahitaji watu wa aina yako. Watu ambao hawapotezi matumaini hata katika giza. Watu ambao wanachagua kusamehe badala ya kulipiza kisasi. Watu ambao wanachagua kusema neno jema badala ya la laana. Kila mmoja wetu ana nafasi ya kuwa chanzo cha uzima kwa wengine. Leo, sema neno la faraja kwa jirani yako. Mpe tumaini mtu aliyekata tamaa. Mpe mkono wa msaada kwa mwenye kuanguka.

Haijalishi umechoka kiasi gani. Mungu yuko tayari kukurudishia nguvu zako. Kama mti uliokatwa, bado una nafasi ya kuchipuka tena. Kama moyo wako umevunjika, bado unaweza kuponywa. Kama ndoto zako zimeharibika, bado zinaweza kujengwa upya. Maadamu uko hai, Mungu bado ana mpango na maisha yako.

Najua leo kuna watu katikati yetu waliokuja hapa wakiwa wamevunjika moyo. Hawajui watoto watakula nini kesho. Hawana pa kukimbilia. Watu ambao hawana furaha ama tumaini na maisha. Nataka kuwahakikishia kwamba tunawajali. Na Mungu anawajali. Nataka niwaambie kwamba mko pahali panapofaa. Tunawapenda. Tunawajali. Na kila siku, tutaendelea kusikiliza shida zenu.

Appendix 6: Sermon 5 New Creation in Christ

Praise God, Church! I'm really glad you're here today. Honestly, I thank God for every one of you. Because stepping into this house, the house of God, is not something small. Hii siyo jengo tu – this is where heaven touches earth. This is where your journey can change. Hapa ni kama utamguza Mungu. Now, let me tell you something straight when you're in Christ, everything about your life becomes new. But if you're not in Him, nothing really changes. You can change your hairstyle, your friends, your clothes but deep down, you remain the same. And I say that with love, because I've been there.

I would like to bring to you a powerful word of God. In the bible we read that he said that come up to me you who have been wearied and heavy-laden and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28). Now, friends and sisters, I understand that life does get hectic at times. We encounter challenges, temptations and problems that could be very exhausting on our hearts. But Jesus has invited everyone and He is saying He is providing rest to everyone who comes to Him. And if you feel weary today and you have burdens that you must take to Him, I want to simply urge you to put them down tonight before Him. Supposing you have it in your heart that God is telling you to go out to be prayed over, just do so. There is no need to wait until the right time or believe that you are not welcome to God; God is always ready to embrace you in His arms. Come, believing, believing that He is willing to meet you wherever you happen to be and bring you the peace that comes only of Him. It is up to you, dear ones, but this is something you need to know: Jesus is never limited towards healing and restoration. I know that He can change the lives of people, and I am sure that today most of you will be changed. Blessed be the one who can receive the love of God as they accept His call.

Ndugu na dada angu, nilinikua kipofu, lakini sasa naona. Kwa miaka mingi, nilitembea gizani kwa miaka mingi, nikitafuta mwanga wa kweli. Lakini aliponigusa Bwana, macho yangu yalifunguka. Sasa nimeshajua njia iliyo ya kweli. Wengine wenu pia mnamtembea Gizani, lakini leo Hii, Bwana yuko tayari kuwapa mwangaza wake. “Leo mambo yatabadilika.”

Now I know, sometimes I say things a little directly. Pardon me this is African English. Laughs. But do you get me? I want to explain something clearly: I haven't stolen money, and I've never even hit my mother. Pauses. Have I got it right? And if anything I said earlier offended you, I truly apologize. I didn't mean to hurt anyone. If my words went too far, forgive me. Sometimes, truth hits deep, but it's still truth. Now let's warm this place up a little. Look at five people around you and smile at them. Then say, “I bless you.” Yes, bless them! And if you're sitting next to a friend, tell them, “I've got a story to tell.” Because the truth is I didn't look the best when I was down, when I was struggling, when I was far from God. But when I encountered Jesus, everything changed. You can't ask me to go back to that place.

I'm not alone anymore, and neither are you. You're going somewhere. Say that to someone near you: “I'm not alone. I'm on my way somewhere.” And listen, if Christ is in you, there's no reason to feel inferior. Say it like you mean it: “I am born again!” Shout it: “I am born again!” Let me ask you do you love God? Are you proud of Him? Then show it! Put your hands up and clap like you mean it! Yes, yes! And if you're a father and you're proud to be one, lift up your hands and give God thanks. You can now take your seats. Church, there are two kinds of places in this world ordinary places, and sacred spaces. And when you need real answers healing, breakthrough, peace you've got to go deeper. You can't live on the surface. Tell your neighbor, “I need divine intervention.”

You see, to fix your marriage, to overcome that illness, to break free from that addiction you need to invest in God. You can't obey God's commandments by trying harder in the flesh. You must walk in the Spirit. Now, let's talk unity. The dream of building a Mega Church didn't come from man. It came from God. And if we stand together, there's no limit to what He can do. Someone say: “Unity!” Again “Unity!” And we believe in honoring those who honor us. In this house, we build each other up. So go ahead, greet your neighbor. Ask them, “How are you doing today?” Then ask them, “Where were you born?” Speak to one another. Don't be strangers.

Brother, sister, don't we have a good God? God is always merciful and God is always good! There He has brought us to the end of the week, hasn't He? He has supplied us, served us and blessed us, has He not? Say, ‘Amen!

And as we speak of building remember, humility is key. Stay humble. Speak with boldness, yes but with love. When Christ is in you, you walk tall not with arrogance, but with confidence. Say it out loud: “I am empowered!” Listen to me: it's not too late to take that step. You can still start afresh. Tell your neighbor: “I'm a new creation.” And ask them, “What are your plans for the future?” That's right God wants to be part of those plans. Now get up and go to two people. Tell them, “God loves you.” Not in passing say it like you believe it. Because someone here needs to hear it today. And as we close, testify to someone near you. Tell them, “I'm not where I used to be. And I

refuse to go back.” Say, “I can’t walk this journey alone but I know where I’m going.” Shout it one more time: “I am born again!” Hallelujah!

Everything in your life has been renewed when you are in Christ. However, without being in Christ, nothing has changed. I used to be blind but now I can see. Do you know what I mean? I want to speak to you if you are here today and you are not born again; I am glad that you are here. A house of God is the entrance to heaven, and you need to know that... if you love God and you are not ashamed of Him then put your hand up and clap. We believe in treating those who treat us well and now... Raise your hands, if you are a father and proud of it. You can now take your seats

Where you can carry your prayers, there are two kinds of places. To experience the results of your prayers you will have to make them based on the spirit. To make that marriage work, to have yourself healed due to HIV, cancer, etc., you must invest in God. Take a leaf out and say to your neighbor, I require divine intervention. You have to look deeper than on the surface, you have to get to the sacred place. "Hapa ni kama utamguza Mungu" (here, it seems like touching God). I remind you of what I said that you cannot follow the Ten Commandments through the flesh: you must walk in the spirit my friends.

You must believe in yourself. It is not too late to take a step. With Christ in you there is not a bit of inferiority anywhere. Someone shout, I am a new creation! What does that imply? Greet your neighbor and asking them how you are doing today. What are your plans in the future?

This church takes up on the right foot. You are at the top and not the bottom. You are lifted up and you are not down. The doors of your life are open, and there is nobody to close the doors. Speak out your situation by saying, this breakthrough bears my name. Be constructive and nothing will bring you down. You are not forgotten, you are selected. May you have wisdom and peace abound. May your hands be fruitful and your heart be full. Find solutions in others problems. Somebody declare, I bear greatness. Never allow fear, previous failures, unavailability of resources, and the opinions of people to characterize your path. What happened to you does not define you.

“Yes, this is a faith-filled family, I say, there is no difference whether you are in the city or at the village; you are blessed. Someone declare with his stripes I am healed. Say all that I touch shall flourish...proclaim it, all these things are mine!” Run your business by faith and you are going to win against your competitors. You will be ahead of the game. Do you know what it means to be prosperous and healthy? Look for something that people cannot see. Do what others did not do. Someone say I am not limited! Being sick, good or bad relationships, kids, and your past is not a limit on you.”

Appendix 7: Institutional Introductory Letter



CHUKA

UNIVERSITY

Knowledge is Wealth (*Sapientia divitia est*) Akili ni Mali

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Telephones: 020-2310512/18

Direct Line: 020-268 7625

postgraduate@chuka.ac.ke

P. O. Box 109-60400, Chuka

Website: www.chuka.ac.ke

REF: AM13/29252/17

30th June, 2025

CHUKA UNIVERSITY ETHICS COMMITTEE

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: ROBERT WARUI KIBUCHI PROPOSAL

The above-named person is a *bona fide* student of Chuka University pursuing Master of Arts in English and Linguistics, proposal titled:– **Analysis of the Persuasive and Politeness Strategies used in Sermons by Kenyan Pentecostal Preachers in Nyeri County**

Mr. Kibuchi has defended at the Faculty level and is now expected to conduct research. Any assistance accorded will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Moses Muraya, Ph.D.

DIRECTOR

BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix 8: Ethics Review Letter



CHUKA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Telephones: 020-2310512/18

P. O. Box 109-60400, Chuka

Direct Line: 0772894438

Email: info@chuka.ac.ke,

Website: www.chuka.ac.ke

18th June, 2025

REF: CUIERC/ NACOSTI/785

TO: Robert Warui Kibuchi

RE: Analysis of the Persuasive and Politeness Strategies Used in Sermons by Kenyan Pentecostal Preachers in Nyeri County

This is to inform you that *Chuka University IERC* has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is *NACOSTI/NBC/AC-0812*. The approval period is 18th June, 2025 – 18th June, 2026.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by *Chuka University IERC*.
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to *Chuka University IERC* within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to *Chuka University IERC* within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to *Chuka University IERC*.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://oris.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely


Dr. Benjamin Kanga
SECRETARY




Appendix 9: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) License

Republic of Kenya
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 962891

RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that **Mr. ROBERT WARUI KIBUCHI** of Chuka University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nyeri on the topic: **ANALYSIS OF THE PERSUASIVE AND POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED IN SERMONS BY KENYAN PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS IN NYERI COUNTY for the period ending : 12/July/2026.**

License No: NACOSTI/P/25/4176189

962891
Applicant Identification Number

Ag-Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions