

**LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE EXPRESSIONS OF VERBAL BULLYING
IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MACHAKOS SUB-COUNTY**


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**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences in Partial
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Applied Linguistics of Machakos University**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and it has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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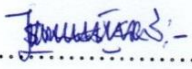
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved husband, Benson, who encouraged me throughout the course and my daughters, Prudence, Delight and Eliyana who sacrificed their comfort to ensure that I complete this course. Also, to my parents who always prayed for me and gave me moral support to pursue my dreams and to my niece, Miriam, for her words of encouragement to further my studies.

Above all I dedicate this work to the Almighty God who has been my unseen inspiration, provider and strength. Let all glory and honor go back to Him.

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at analyzing linguistic expressions of verbal bullying and its harm on students in selected public schools in Machakos sub-county, Kenya. Bullying is a worldwide problem in schools and can have detrimental effects on those children involved; however, little has been done to uncover forms and impact of verbal bullying in secondary schools in Kenya. Therefore, the study sought to find out evidence of linguistic expressions used in verbal bullying and the forms they take, describe the linguistic meanings of the verbal bullying expressions and analyze their effects on the behavior of the targeted students with an aim of mitigating their effects. The study used the descriptive qualitative design method in data collection and analysis. Machakos Sub County has a population of 60 public and private secondary schools. The study collected data in public schools only due to time limitation. Out of an approximate sample of forty six public schools, purposive sampling was used to select schools based on their categories as follows: one sub-county mixed day school, one county mixed day and boarding school, one extra-county girl's boarding school and one extra - county boy's boarding school. Students were selected randomly from each category of school with two students from form one to form four randomly picked. A total of sixteen students were selected to form the population of the respondents. The students were interviewed to collect data. Apart from the students, the teachers who were in-charge of discipline and guidance and counselling were also involved in selection of the students who were interviewed. Other tools of data collection used were observation checklist and an audio-recorder. The collected data was transcribed, sorted and grouped into linguistic forms of verbal bullying using Politeness theory and the Speech Act theory. This study found out that verbal bullying expressions such as accusations/criticisms, contempt/ridiculing, evaluations, insults, slanders / spreading rumors, challenges, interruptions/intrusion, reminders and issuing orders were used by the perpetrators against the victims. Again, the study established that verbal bullying expressions had adverse effects on the targeted. Some reported to have felt isolated from the affiliated groups; others said they felt dejected, devalued, humiliated, embarrassed, withdrawn, low self-worth and helplessness. The study suggests that, learners should be taught the importance of using more polite language in their interactions and that expressions of verbal bullying should be exposed fully. The study identified verbal bullying expressions using face threatening acts as one of the tenets of the Politeness theory. Other studies could be conducted using its other tenets like the face saving strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1967) in a school set up. It can also be carried out in the national schools in administrators and the teaching staff on how best language can be used to enhance effective administration and productivity in a school set up. In conclusion, the issue of bullying is a menace to the student world and the society at large.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION:

This chapter introduces the topic of the study, which is the linguistic analysis of expressions of verbal bullying. It gives an overview of what entails bullying and why verbal bullying is of concern in the society and particularly in schools. It systematically highlights the three objectives, the research questions that address the objectives, rationale of the study, scope and limitation of the study, terms of reference or acronyms, definition of concepts and the conclusion.

1.1 Background to the Study

The main purpose of the Kenyan education system is to offer quality education to all Kenyans by the year 2030. In order to achieve this goal, it should promote an environment in schools that promote tolerance and understanding of the other. It should also discourage alienation among students and help them accommodate each other despite their differences in ethnic backgrounds, religion, colour, status, gender and any other perceived differences. Hugh (2005:6) explains this by saying that “democracy is about living together and that Education plays a major role in teaching people about learning how to live together”. Similarly, Amy Gutmann

(1987:289) adds that, “for a society to function well in a democratic manner, education forms the main foundation for moral teaching that helps its members to co-exist. Therefore, in institutions such as schools the teachers and the curricula form the needed connection between education and citizenship”. “Schools provide a fertile ground for grooming democratic citizens”, Niemi and Junn (1998:.2-3). Thus, a good education system should foster important values such as democracy, tolerance, inclusiveness, and respect for others and discourage vices among citizens such as conflicts due to perceived differences, need to harm others and intolerance.

The Kenyan Ministry of Education and other stakeholders such as schools have been on the forefront to ensure that Kenyan schools are safe for our children. They have come up with policy documents against indiscipline in schools (Republic of Kenya, 2001). This is because schools are considered to be important in our children’s lives as they act as socialization grounds where young people learn virtues such as tolerance, respect and how to co-exist with each other. In addition, schools mold children to think as Kenyans despite their ethnic differences, their religious affiliations, or any other perceived personal differences as Olubayi, (2011:131) puts it:

To promote national peace and stability, schools will have to become the main location for teaching people to think of themselves as Kenyans and to acquire an expanded sense of empathy that includes all Kenyans regardless of ethnic or racial backgrounds. (Olubayi, 2011 p.131)

Waldron, (2012:292), urges people to live and work together despite their diversity in their ethnicity, race, appearance and religions. For a healthy society, co-existence and

living in harmony is paramount. There is therefore need for schools to teach and help learners embrace those virtues that foster tolerance, inclusivism and respect for others. This will enable the students learn to live together harmoniously because they are part of the larger society.

However, this is not what is seen in the current society and especially in schools where children spend most of their time in their formative years. For instance, using data from the current study, student A tells student B:

“You are in form four and you don’t know a form two question? What are you doing in form four?” (TEXT 15) (See Appendix IV)

The speaker expresses contempt on the hearer’s poor performance and feels that he or she is better than the hearer. This statement may make the hearer to feel intimidated, despised and unwanted and the issue may not be reported to the administrators. Many students silently suffer as a result of being stereotyped, abused, discriminated against, and threatened by perpetrators in schools. Probably, these incidents go unreported to the concerned administrators or maybe they are as normalized as harmless or worse even, they go unnoticed by teachers and parents. In addition, there may be no action taken against the perpetrators. In addition, many school administrators and stakeholders of education may not be aware of the verbal bullying language that is used by students against each other in school environs.

Generally, bullying can be direct or indirect as pointed out by Olweus and Solberg, (1998: 7). Direct bullying involves use of actions such as hitting and kicking and by using comments which are insulting, offensive, sneering and threatening. In indirect

bullying, the victims are socially isolated and excluded from a group (Olweus and Solberg, 1998:7). In both cases the victim suffers psychological effect as stated by (Ridby, 2005:26). Bullying can take three forms: Physical form which involves hitting, kicking, and pushing, Verbal form, which is characterized by issuing of insults, using offensive language and sneering comments or threats. The third one is Relational form where perpetrators isolate and exclude the victim from group membership (Olweus; Solberg 1998:7).

The current study investigated verbal bullying in selected sub-county schools in Machakos. Verbal bullying is defined by Pauly et. al. (2013:9) as “where words are used to intimidate and harm their victims by calling names, spreading rumors, threatening somebody and making fun of others.” According to this study, such incidents where words are used to threaten, harass, discriminate, prejudice and as a result inflict pain, isolate, humiliate and infringe on the individual’s right to dignity among other rights, are a type of bullying called verbal bullying (CIPESA, 2014).

The Kenyan constitution 2010 acknowledges that use of negative verbal expressions is harmful by criminalizing it. The National Cohesion and Integration Act 2013 Section 13, of the law makes it illegal to use threatening, abusive or insulting words, acts or materials likely to stir up ethnic hatred (CIPESA, 2014). Section 62 outlaws speech intended to incite feelings of contempt, hatred, hostility, violence or discrimination against any person, group or community based on ethnicity, or race. Criminalizing such negative verbal utterances in Kenyan law means that, it is a problem in the society and it can find its way into the schools.

Despite criminalizing bullying in relevant government documents, verbal bullying still occurs in high schools. This not only goes against the law but also affects the victims and the bullies in different ways. Little has been done to address this societal problem. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to investigate on the causes, manifestations and effect of verbal bullying on the victims in secondary schools and suggest ways of solving the menace.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Bullying is a worldwide problem in schools and can have detrimental effects on those children involved. It can also be a cause of unending worry to parents, guardians and teachers. Despite outlawing of bullying as stipulated in the relevant government and school documents, Verbal bullying still occurs in Secondary schools. The occurrence of Verbal bullying not only goes against the established laws in Kenya and regulations by the various organs in the Ministry of Education, but it is also disruptive to teaching and learning in Secondary schools in addition to affecting the victims and the bullies in different ways. From existing literature, the study has established that little has been done to address this societal vice. The purpose of this study is to investigate the causes of verbal bullying, its manifestations, and its effects and to suggest possible ways of tackling the menace.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study addressed the following objectives:

- i. To identify verbal bullying expressions in selected secondary schools in Machakos Sub-county;

- ii. To describe the meaning of the identified verbal bullying expressions
- iii. To analyze the effects of the verbal bullying expressions on the victims

1.4 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What types of linguistic expressions are used in verbal bullying in secondary schools in Machakos Sub - County?
2. What meanings can be deciphered from the linguistic expressions of verbal bullying in selected schools in Machakos Sub -county?
3. How do the verbal bullying expressions affect the victim's behavior?

1.5 Rationale of the Study

Research on verbal bullying may be used to suggest ways of solving the problem of verbal bullying in secondary schools. This knowledge may be of benefit to a variety of educational stakeholders. Firstly, the study may give insight to the school administrators and the teachers that verbal bullying exists in secondary schools. Secondly, it will help them identify different forms of verbal bullying expressions and how they affect the victims. It may also suggest ways of mitigating the effects of verbal bullying utterances among students as a way of improving discipline in secondary schools. The findings of the study may also inform the Ministry of Education about the existence of linguistic features used in verbal bullying in secondary schools and the forms these utterances take. This knowledge may be used to make policies in the education sector on how to solve the problem of verbal

bullying using language in schools. Moreover, the Ministry of Education who may also share the information about verbal bullying expressions with the school administrators in forums such as workshops and seminars to create awareness of the problem in schools and therefore improve on the issue polite language use in secondary schools in particular Machakos sub county schools.

The curriculum developers of guidance and counselling may also use the findings to modify the curriculum by incorporating the verbal bullying issue in school syllabi. This may create awareness of the issue as a problem in schools and look for ways of mitigating its effects.

Lastly, the findings of the research may also inform the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) and other legal bodies on whether their guidelines cater for verbal bullying problem in secondary schools adequately.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study was only conducted in four selected public secondary schools in Machakos Sub-County in Kenya. Since the schools were heterogeneous in nature, they were first stratified into mixed public schools and Boys' and Girls' boarding public schools. They were further grouped into either national, extra county, county or sub county categories. Four categories were purposively selected that is a boy's boarding extra county school, a girls extra county boarding school, one sub county mixed day school and one mixed boarding and day county secondary school.

The study limited itself to three objectives. Firstly, it sought to identify verbal bullying in selected secondary schools in Machakos Sub-county, secondly, describe

the meaning of the identified verbal bullying expressions and thirdly, analyze the effects of the verbal bullying expressions on the victims in schools in Machakos Sub County

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Disruption of learning:

Any behavior or action towards a student, teacher or the learning Space that interferes with the normal running of the institution.

Pragmatics:

The meaning of linguistic utterances in different contexts. Pragmatics was used to draw meaning of linguistic expressions used to instigate verbal bullying according to the contexts in which they were used.

Speech Act:

The use of words to do something, for example, I was hit on my forehead. By uttering the word hit suggests that the act of hitting was done.

Verbal bullying:

Use of words to attack, intimidate, threaten or insult another student or group of students affecting the students' self-worth and infringing on their rights of dignity in the school.

1.8 Abbreviation and Acronyms

FTA: face threatening acts

U: utterance code

NCES: National Center for Educational Statistics

1, 2, 3: Utterance number

NCIC: National Cohesion and Integration Commission

Summary of the chapter

In conclusion, the chapter introduced the topic of the study done in selected schools in Machakos sub county schools Kenya, which is “Linguistic Analysis of Expressions of Verbal Bullying” by giving an overview of what bullying is and why verbal bullying is of concern in schools. It brought to concern that, though a lot has been done by government and other educational stakeholders like schools to curb bullying in secondary schools, verbal bullying still exists in schools. The verbal bullying problem affects its victims negatively and therefore something should be done to solve it. From the existing literature, not much has been done to unearth the issue. Therefore, the study sought to investigate the causes of verbal bullying, its manifestations, and its impact on the victims and suggest ways of handling the problem.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter contains a body of information that is related to the study at hand. It also deals with the theoretical framework on which the study is grounded. In the literature review, discussion of the information from reviewed sources is based on the set objectives of the study. The chapter gives related literature on identification of verbal bullying expressions in selected secondary schools in Machakos Sub-county; description of the meaning of the identified verbal bullying expressions, analyzing the effects of the verbal bullying expressions on the victims and suggestions on ways of solving the problem of verbal bullying.

2.1 Identification and classification of verbal bullying expressions

Several studies were reviewed by the researcher to identify and classify verbal bullying in the society and how these expressions are also found in school set ups. Identification of verbal bullying issue started with a discussion on the umbrella term ‘Bullying’ because verbal bullying is a strand of bullying in general. Bullying is an issue that has gone through some development over the years and its progressive change over the years as manifested in different forms up to the current form under discussion.

Globally, a survey done in schools by the US Department of Education showed that 22% of students aged between 12-18 years experienced bullying in the three categories that is, verbal, physical and relational, at one time of their schooling years,

(National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES, henceforth] 2015) which was a drop from 28% in the past decade. Though the decline is a plus, there is still need to work towards a school environment where the students will be totally safe, as pointed out in a US educational report “As schools become safer, students are better to thrive academically and socially”, (Ame Dancan, 2015). This need for free school environs and safety from any form of bullying and especially verbal bullying expressions little of which is in records, prompted the current study to investigate and establish verbal bullying expressions in Kenyan schools and specifically in selected sub - county secondary schools in Machakos.

In a study done by Fekih (2017:4) on bullying among high school students and their relationship with diligence at school, at Tlemcen School in Algeria shows that girls are the most targeted when it comes to bullying. The study also revealed that name calling, humiliation, offensive teasing, being ignored or excluded from a circle of friends are some of the ways of bullying and as a result the victim of bullying can hurt physically, emotionally or psychologically (Fekih 2017:4). The current study set out to find out whether verbal bullying expressions based on sex/sexuality, economic background, age existed in Kenyan secondary schools, the mitigating measures to taken and whether such bullying expressions affected the victim’s self-worth and in particular the selected Machakos sub-county secondary schools.

In Australia, an online monthly public survey study done by *Relationships Australia* (2018) “Aspects of Bullying in schools”, reported that almost 25% of schools in Australia or an estimated 910,000 children experience bullying at some stage during their time in school, with an estimated 45 million bullying incidents across all schools each year with 218,000 being victims and instigated by around 543,000 perpetrators,

(Department of Education and Training, 2015). The current findings, with more than 1200 people responding to the *Relationships Australia* Online survey in March 2018, reported that bullying was a problem in schools and all forms (physical, verbal and social) bullying were harmful to the victims and the perpetrators. They insisted that something needed to be done to deal with the issue of bullying in schools. Alannah and Madeline Foundations (2018:7), in their report, showed that 16% of males reported they were physically threatened or hurt compared to 9% of females. 19% of males and 25% of females reported that they were deliberately left out by other students. In one way or another, 61% of students had experienced bullying in one way or the other, (Alannah and Madeline 2018:11-13). This study showed that bullying was a major problem in schools. However, the present study will not look at all the forms of bullying but will limit itself to verbal bullying since though the survey reported verbal bullying as a major issue in schools no verbal expressions that cause bullying were recorded. The study used the interview method by conducting one – on - one interview of the respondents and in this way the researcher validated the truth of the data by observing the respondents' reactions to the questions asked. Therefore, the current study sought to investigate further on the problem and especially on verbal bullying.

In Kenya, the issue of bullying is a national outcry as pointed out in a research carried out in Kenyan schools on bullying in public secondary schools in Nairobi Kenya by a group of authors (Ndeti DM; et al., 2007) which reported that bullying in Kenyan schools is higher than most trends around the world. A self-report questionnaire and Olweus bullying questionnaire of 1991 were administered to 1012 students in Nairobi Kenya. from a stratified sample of public secondary schools in Nairobi, The

stratified research, which was conducted in 17 public secondary schools found that 82% of the students had their belongings stolen, 63% had been beaten and 64% had been blackmailed or threatened, 71% had been called bad names or nasty names; 61% had had tricks played on them and 72% said that lies had been told about them. The organization also reported that bullying had become so common that it was essentially taken as part of the education system (African mental health, 2007). It is recommendable for the study to use two methods of data collection, the self-reporting questionnaire and the Olweus bullying questionnaire of 1991. However, the present study used one – on - one interview because the researcher wished to collect data in form of narratives in a natural occurrences about experiences of the victims and also see reactions of the victim on how the experiences affected them. From the non-verbal communication, the researcher was able to know whether the victims were lying or not. From the findings of the African Mental Health study, verbal bullying was evident where 71% of the students had been called nasty names. However, the actual utterances or the verbal bullying expressions are not recorded .The present study sought to identify and analyze the expressions used by the perpetrators to bully other students, the forms they take , their intended meanings and suggest possible ways of solving the problem.

Kenyan studies, again, have shown that bullying takes a more physical form where students either express their grievances by fighting each other, raping, or destroying school properties (Republic of Kenya, 2001). For instance in July, 1991, at St. Kizito Mixed Secondary School, over 70 girls were raped by the boys and in the same school nineteen girls died after their dormitory was set on fire. In addition, at Bombolulu Girls' Secondary school 26 female students died in a dormitory fire suspected to have

been started by their fellow students. Again, in March 1999, four students from Nyeri Boys High School were locked up in their cubicle by their fellow students and burnt with petrol and in May 2001, at Kyanguli Secondary School in Machakos Sub-County, sixty seven students were killed by fire when their fellow students set their dormitory on fire, (Republic of Kenya, 2001). These studies attest that the issue of bullying, whether physical, verbal or psychological, is a common problem in schools all over the world and it is a problem that is hindering the achievement of the educational goals by the educational stakeholders. Since much has been done on the physical form of bullying like hitting and destruction of property, (Republic of Kenya, 2001; African Mental Health 2007; Fekih, 2017:4; Alannah; Madeline Foundations 2018:12.), there is need to look at the verbal bullying exclusively. The most recent form of bullying is the cyber bullying which has come up as a result of technology advancement. This study did not investigate cyber verbal bullying because it was beyond its scope since the current study was limited to verbal bullying in public secondary schools' setting. Austin (1962:5-6) says that "Language involves intentional acts by speakers who employ conventional devices such as words and sentences in accordance with abstract sets of rules". In other words, Austin (1962) assumes that there should be a shared understanding of the intention or the goal of the utterance by both the speaker and the hearer. To support what Austin says, Levinson (1983:231-236) adds that "speakers are said to use utterances to perform specific acts, that is, in uttering a sentence a speaker is doing something." In other word the two agree to the fact that, when words are said by a speaker, they can perform certain actions and the effect on the recipient can be positive or negative.

Therefore, this study takes verbal bullying as a form of language that uses words or utterances with an intention to perform certain actions such as threatening, harassing, intimidating, inciting, discriminating a person or a group of people on the basis of certain characteristics such as physical size, psychological or social power, religion, ethnicity, gender, and age.

Hence, the category or the form of verbal bullying will depend on the subject matter of the utterance, that is, if the utterance contains words that threaten, or intimidate, abuse, demean and embarrass based on characteristics such as size of victim, religion, gender and the intention of the speaker in uttering that sentence or word such as with an intention to hurt, discriminate, devalue and to embarrass as pointed out by Austin (1962:2-5).

The current study also looked at legal bodies both locally and internationally and their classification of verbal bullying which they called hate speech. In the past, both international and local legal bodies have tried to classify bullying using different parameters.

The current study did a review on international legal bodies such as The UN committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD, 2013:4); The International covenant on civil and political rights (ICCPR) to examine how they identified and classified verbal bullying because these legal bodies dealt with classification of hate speech in the society.

In the African context the study looked at the Olweus (1991) model of classification of bullying. Locally, in Kenya, this study examined National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) as a legal body dealing with verbal bullying previously known as hate speech. The aim of the study was to investigate and

establish how these bodies identified what they considered hateful and their parameters are applicable in the current study. The discussion was as follows:

2.1.1 The International Bodies on Censorship of Hateful Utterances

An international study done by a group of authors Iginio et al. (2015:6): countering hate speech online, gave three broad categories of negative verbal speech grouped and identified according to the international standards by using information on two international bodies namely, International Convention On Elimination Of All Forms Of Racial Discrimination And International Covenant On Civil And Political Rights as follows:

- Speech that causes racial discrimination. the International Convention on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination calls for a ban on expressing ideas of superiority or inferiority of people categorized by” race” (ICERD).
- Speech that incites, discriminates against or causes hostility or violence on the basis of one’s nationality or religion is criminalized in terms of article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).
- Negative speech based on gender, sexual orientation or other features may be limited in term of the ICCPR (Article 19) in the interests of respect of the rights or reputations of others.

The international laws in their classification are more inclined to limiting negative verbal expressions and actions based on racism and nationality which may not give clear guidelines on how to identify and punish negative verbal utterances in school situations. This present study may not fully rely on the above international laws of

classifying verbal bullying because classification based on racism and nationality may not fully cater for the Kenyan school context because many students are locals and not foreigners from other countries. So these two parameters are limited in their scope to fully cover verbal bullying in Kenyan schools. So more in-depth models are needed, therefore the study continued to examine other legal bodies and other ways of verbal bullying classifications as follows:

2.1.2 National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC)

In Kenya, The NCIC Act 2013 grouped negative verbal utterances and actions in three categories:

1. Using Words that threaten, abuse or insult,
2. Acts, use of materials, or labels that are likely to trigger ethnic hatred,
3. Specific incitement of feelings of contempt, hatred, hostility, violence or discrimination all based on ethnicity or race.

According to this classification, pinning one down on using hateful utterances may not be easy due to need for water tight evidence as reported by Judith Musembi, a law lecturer at Nairobi University (IRIN Nairobi, 24 August 2012). Another challenge is the ambiguity in utterances at the heart of crime as pointed out by a commissioner at NCIC, Milly Iwanga. For instance, in the case of the song sung during campaign period ridiculing a famous politician, Raila Odinga, who comes from Luo community, by three Gikuyu singers, the commissioner had to engage linguistic experts to decipher the meaning of the song because it was laced with allusions whose meaning was not obvious to an ordinary listener, the words of the song, “This is the year of the hyena. “Stop chasing the wind Agwambo.” “When a man is seated he sees further than a boy on top of a tree.” The Gikuyu tribe imply that, culturally any man who is

uncircumcised is a boy. So in the song the Gikuyu singers ridicule honorable Raila who comes from the Luo tribe that does not circumcise their males because of their cultural beliefs (. He is equated to a boy and therefore unfit to be a leader.) This study examines the words of the song that have been used to bring out tribalism and use of contemptuous words that devalue the Luo tribe. Likewise, the present study sought to investigate further if tribalism and contemptuous language is used in Kenyan schools because Kenya has 47 tribes represented by students in secondary schools, specifically the selected Machakos sub-county secondary schools. It also wanted to establish if the NCIC had proper guidelines on how to identify and punish perpetrators of hateful verbal utterances in a school set up. Another review was done to unearth verbal bullying expressions as follows:

2.1.3 Dan Olweus Model of verbal bullying identification

This is an African researcher of bullying among students in schools. He is known because of his model of bullying that is used by other researchers worldwide in identifying and classifying bullying among students in schools.

According to Olweus, (1993) “school bullying, is any negative acts set deliberately by a pupil or more to harm another student frequently and all the time.” It is also characterized by an imbalance of power, with the more powerful child oppressing the less powerful one (Olweus, 1993). He groups the negative acts into three categories: negative verbal expressions such as threats, reprimands and insults. Negative physical acts, such as hitting, pushing, kicking and psychological negative acts such as facial grimacing or inappropriate signals with an aim to marginalize the victim or refuse to respond to their desire” (Olweus, 1993). Hence bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological attack or intimidation that is intended to cause fear, distress, or harm to

the victim (Olweus 1993). Previously, description of bullying has been used to identify and classify bullying. The current study acknowledges certain parameters of Olweus's bullying model, such as, the idea of imbalance of power to know who the perpetrator is; the three categories of bullying, that is, negative verbal expressions such as threat, insults and reprimands, secondly, negative physical acts as hitting, pushing and kicking and lastly, psychological negative acts like facial grimacing, isolation. However, this study borrowed the first idea of using imbalance of power to identify the perpetrator, negative verbal expressions of verbal bullying and the psychological forms of bullying and left out the physical negative acts of bullying because the study limited itself to negative verbal acts that instigate bullying and their psychological effect on the victim. This study, in addition to using knowledge from other known researchers of bullying on how to identify and group verbal bullying expressions, introduced linguistic tools as tools of studying, identifying the language of bullying and classifying it in a linguistic approach. This helped to identify types of verbal bullying expressions that existed in secondary schools. Then the study used the identified types as a benchmark to investigate and identify the forms that verbal bullying took in our Kenyan secondary schools especially in Machakos Sub - County. This study felt that more ways of classifying and deciphering meanings of verbal bullying expressions are needed. The study therefore introduced linguistic tools such as the Politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1978,1987) and Austin and Searle's (1962,1969) Speech Act theory that were used alongside other parameters in classifying and bringing out the meanings of verbal expressions used in bullying as discussed below.

2.1.4 Linguistic tools in identifying and classifying verbal bullying

The researcher did a review on Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) Politeness theory as one of the Linguistic tools used to demystify the problem of verbal bullying by identifying and classifying verbal bullying expressions in school set up.

Basically, the theory has four major elements such as the concept of face. Face is socially or interactively based, that is, it only exists in interactions with others or in social circles. (Redmond, 2015). It is a specific image we present to others; the impressions we want others to have of us which depends on the requirements of the situation or context. Our level of consciousness and intent about the face we present will vary but becomes of concern when something occurs that makes people not to believe that our face is genuine, described as face threat.

Brown and Levinson (1978:63) define face as "the want to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respects." They argue that face is two sided: it is something we want or desire from others and when people interact, they should recognize each other's' desire, to have their faces supported and give a confirmation of the same of approval by showing respect and honor. Other scholars have also defined face as "the self-image they present to others", (Craig et al., 1986:440) and "conception of self" (Cupach; Meets, 1994:3). Goffman (1967:213) define face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact". The positive social value is the desire of people to feel that they are of value to others and they should be seen as such. Others say that face is "a desire to present oneself with dignity and honor", (Domenici; Littlejohn, 2006:10). From these scholars face concept is crucial in any social interactions and human relationships. For the interactions to be fruitful and

harmonious, the interactants have certain expectations from each other; they want to be given freedom to do what they want without interruptions and they want their actions to be approved positively by others by being shown respect and honor; they desire to be seen as having social value to others and also seen as dignified and respectful and hence a person of high public self-image. In our interactions, any attempt that fails to present a specific face and contradicts these expectations either through speech acts or actions is seen to cause a threat to the face supposedly being presented by the interactant and the face of others. These face threats are called Face threatening acts. This study used this tenet of Face threatening acts to identify and classify verbal bullying expressions used to execute bullying in schools.

The second element of politeness theory is face types. In his definition, Brown and Levinson (1987) brought out two types of faces namely: positive and negative face. They define positive face as “the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable to at least some others (p. 62.)” they argued that each member in an interaction section carries with them desires or wants that they assume others will approve of. These wants range from the values we want others- to see in us as being intelligent, loving, kind, educated, competent, loyal among others to the ‘want’ to do the things we want to do and expect others to support, for example (go to school, do homework, go to birthdays).

Brown and Levinson (1987) define negative face as “the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions be unimpeded by others”. This means that the actions, or wants of the person should not be hindered or stopped from happening by others-

in other words, the person should be left to do what they want to do and also the want for things to remain the way they are (unchanged) that is, maintain status-quo.

Other communication scholars such as Lim and Bowers (1991) simplified Brown and Levinson's (1987) types of faces and came up with three types of wants which are as follows: fellowship face which "is the want to be included; a desire to be accepted by others. Secondly, competence face is the want to have one's abilities respected by others", which reflects a desire to want people to acknowledge and value what we can do. Both fellowship and competence faces are types of positive faces as they represent a want to be seen by others in a positive way. Thirdly, autonomy face is "a want to not to be imposed on (Lim and Bowers (1991:62)." which is related to claim to one's territory, personal space and rights to non –distraction that is, freedom to do what one wants and freedom from imposition. In our interactions we may fail to present a particular face as desired by others and therefore fail to satisfy their face wants and even expose our faces to be challenged or undermined. This describes situations of face threats or face threatening acts. In verbal bullying, the expressions used by the perpetrators could challenge or undermine the face of the victims and hence this brings us to discuss Face threatening acts and how applicable they are to this study. This brings us to discuss the third element of politeness theory- Face threatening acts (FTAs).

According to the Politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987), face threatening acts are "those acts that by their very nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or speaker." From his definition, face threatening acts can be performed against our positive face and/or negative face and against the others

positive faces and /or their negative faces during acts we engage in ourselves or the acts of others towards us. They came up with a list of communication acts that cause face threats such as complaints, insults, criticisms or disapprovals, contempt, accusation, disagreeing, asking for clarifications, violent emotion; mention of taboo topics; interruptions and non-cooperation and conveying bad news about the hearer and evaluations, issuing orders and making requests, giving advice and suggestions, issuing threats and warnings, envy, admirations, hatred, anger bursts, reminders, naggings, and calling in a debt.

They also highlighted that the speaker can engage in actions that threaten his [her] positive and/ or negative face as follows: those actions by the speaker which threatens his[her] positive face are apologies and confessions, accepting a compliment, misunderstanding/requesting clarifications, unintended emotional act(laugh) and unintended physical action (burp) and those actions by the speaker that threaten their negative face include: accepting an offer, accepting thanks, making a promise or an offer.

These Face Threatening Acts by Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory are performed through verbal communication in the form of utterances. The Face Threatening Acts that threatened the hearer's positive face were accusations/criticisms, expressions of contempt or ridiculing, evaluations, insults, slanders or spreading rumors and challenges; Those Face threatening acts which threatened the negative face of the hearer include: interruptions or intrusion, reminders and issuing orders. These Face threatening acts were identified in the study used as verbal bullying expressions as discussed later.

2.2 Description of the Meanings of the identified Verbal Bullying expressions

We must understand the context in which a sentence is used to understand its meaning. Pragmatics is concerned with how people use language within a context and why they use language in particular ways, (Tserdanelis; Wong, 2004).

Many authors of pragmatics commonly argue that pragmatics is a study of 'natural language,' in other words, language as used in actual or real life situations (Grice 1957, Searle 1969, Petofi 1976, Van Dijk 1976, Levinson 1983, Mey 1993, Martin 1994 and Yule 1996, Kaburise, P.K. 2005). Thus, a pragmatic analysis of language will rely on looking at the form and the function of an utterance within a given situation. This means that, an utterance in one situation could have different function and meaning in another situation all together.

In this study pragmatics was used to describe the meaning of the verbal bullying expressions identified in schools by exploring their form and the function within a given situation.

Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory was used to describe the meanings of the utterances that were used to express verbal bullying in this study. The theory attempts to explain how speakers (and writers) "do things with words". In other words they posit that language is a tool for performing actions and the meaning of the expression is not only derived from the words in the utterance, but also from the speaker's intention. Speaking of the same, Sperber and Wilson (1986:23) add that "communication is successful when the hearers infer the speaker's 'meaning' from it." Communication takes place when the speaker and hearer understand one another and they will not rely on the surface meaning of the expression as brought out by the linguistic form. The hearer will need to go beyond the literal meaning of the utterance to get the implied meaning. This will only be possible if both share a common

background of information. For example, they could both share a certain situation when uttering the words so the interpretation of the meaning by both depends on that situation. Lawal (1997:132) makes it clearer by saying that:

“Speech act theory and indeed the whole of pragmatics theory is essentially concerned with how interlocutors (speakers and listeners) understand one another in spite of their possibility of indirectness and implicitness of meaning which recommended pragmatics as a useful analytical tool in literary criticism”.

This usefulness of pragmatics could also be extended to other human communications where meaning and language use needs to be analyzed. Hence, it will be of help in demystifying the meaning of the verbal bullying expressions extracted in the study.

Speech act theory, a sub-branch of pragmatics is “a way in which a person uses an utterance to perform an act.” The act can perform certain functions such as stating a fact, stating an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction or a request, asking a question, issuing an order, giving a permission, giving a piece of advice, making an offer, making a promise, thanking somebody or condoling somebody” (Osisanwo, 2003:60). This theory was used to ascertain the meaning of acts performed to instigate verbal bullying among students in schools.

According to the theory, speakers are said to use utterances to perform specific acts. In other words, in uttering a sentence, a speaker is doing something. To identify the kind of speech act, a speaker performs in their utterances, Austin’s three tenets of the speech act theory are used (Austin, 1962:94). They are as follows:

1. Locutionary act

This is simply the act of saying something. It contains the actual meanings of the utterances (Searle, 1969). In addition, Cutting (2002:16) says that, locutionary acts “show what is said by the speaker, containing the form of the words which are uttered”. Searle (1969), in trying to expound on locutions, he says that, locutionary acts describe the literal meaning of something. He further explains that, when a speaker says something, he or she is conveying the literary meaning. For example, the sentence “it is getting dark,” means that the speaker thinks of the situation in the room which is getting dark because the day will be over. They mean what they say literally (Searle, 1969). Drawing other examples from a study by Okafor and Alabi (2017:61-72) on analyzing hate speech using speech act theory we can get the following example:

You should not be bothered with ‘cockroaches of politics.’
Cockroaches are only in the toilets even at home. If you see a
cockroach in your home crush them (*Premium Times, November 19,*
2014). The meaning of this utterance should be literary understood as
stated by the speaker.

2. Illocutionary act

This presumes that an utterance made carries with it a certain force or intention (deeper meaning) such as informing the hearer on something, giving an order, giving a warning, giving a threat. The illocutionary force of an utterance conveys what the speaker intends to do with the particular utterance. Hence, the force determines what type of illocutionary act the utterance is meant to perform. According to the theory, it presupposes that the illocutionary force is an aspect of meaning that cannot be captured in truth –conditioned semantic theory (Osisanwo, 2003:60). In other words,

Searle seems to say that meaning of a statement or an utterance is beyond the semantic level. One has to consider other factors contributing to the meaning like social factors and the intentions of the speaker. In order to bring out the intended meaning speakers in an utterance want to pass to their hearers, Searle (1969) further classified the illocutionary act into five classes namely:

- I. Assertive: The speaker represents the state of affairs whereby the utterances may be judged true or false as the aim to show the state of affairs in the world. They are speech acts that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition such as making statements (the speaker represents how things are in the world) in addition, they are acts which state what the speaker believes (include acts of stating, suggesting, boasting, complaining, (Leech, 1983:105). For example, when a speaker says: “I feel grateful”, the speaker wants to report to the hearer(s) that he or she is grateful. The utterance is merely reporting (Austin, 1962:79).
- II. Directives. They are speech acts by the speaker that attempt to get the hearer to do something. They cause the hearer to take a particular action such as requesting, asking, begging, ordering, warning, threatening, questioning, commanding, and advising, (Searle, 1969). In addition Searle gives an example, when a speaker says “Please pass the salt”, by the request the speaker gives the request to the hearer and makes the hearer pass the salt (Searle, 1969:53).
- III. Commissives. The speaker commits themselves to perform some action in the future, such as promising, threatening, offering, challenging, swearing, vowing and offering. For example, in the utterance, “I shall do my best”.

The utterance shows that the speaker performs the act of promising as posited by Austin (1962:77)

- IV. Expressive, this is where the speaker expresses a psychological state about the experience. These speech acts express the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the situation. In other words they bring out the feelings of the speakers towards their subjects using words. They include acts such as complimenting, apologizing, scolding, greeting, thanking, complaining and congratulating. For instance when a speaker says, "I am willing to apologize", and "I am sorry to have said..." the utterance shows the act of apologizing (Austin, 1962:80-81).
- V. Declaratives: the utterances attempts to change the world by presenting it as having been changed such as baptizing, pronouncing someone guilty, pronouncing someone husband and wife, or appointing, resigning, ex-communicating, and naming. (Searle, 1969).

Searle (1969) further asserted that a speaker's illocutionary acts can also be said to be direct or indirect. In trying to differentiate the two, Yule (2006), said that direct speech acts are straightforward and often contain performative verbs while indirect speech acts require inferences on the part of the hearer or reader. Searle (ibid.) describes the indirect speech acts as "a situation where the speaker communicates to the hearer more than he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information both linguistic and non- linguistic together with the general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer," In other words, Searle attempts to show how it is possible that a speaker's utterance can mean more than

what it really means. For instance, the illocutionary act of the statement below will be as follows:

You should not be bothered with ‘cockroaches of politics.’
Cockroaches are only in the toilets even at home. If you see a
cockroach in your home crush them (*Premium Times, November 19,*
2014)

The illocutionary acts intended are: **assertive** (stating). The speaker is simply stating how things are, “You should not be bothered with ‘cockroaches of politics.’ Cockroaches are only in the toilets even at home” but goes further and gives instructions that they should “be killed “ordering) which is actually a **directive** to kill.

We can see that this statement carries with it illocutionary force of ordering, it is not just a mere statement of stating a fact (direct) but also performs an action of ordering (its indirect function).

3. **Perlocutionary act**

This is the effect or the consequence the utterance has on the hearer such as convincing the hearer about something, persuading the hearer, arousing anger or anxiety, creating fear, worry, distress, annoyance, threatening, intimidating, embarrassing and amusing (Searle. 1969). For example, the utterance, “Take a look at yourself. You are the most beautiful woman I have ever met.” The function of this utterance is to give effect of amusement to the hearer (Searle, 1969). Austin continues to argue that such effects are determined by illocutionary force of the utterance as well as the particular circumstances in which the utterance is produced (Austin, 1962). By using the previous example:

Locutionary act: You should not be bothered with ‘cockroaches of politics.’ Cockroaches are only in the toilets even at home. If you see a cockroach in your home crush them (*Premium Times, November 19, 2014*)

The expected Perlocutionary effect is incitement. The utterance “*if you see cockroach in your home, crush them*”, is an order where the hearer is supposed to take action against the opponent, hence inciting the hearer against the opponent.

Likewise, Verbal Bullying uses utterances that can be informed using the Speech Act Theory by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). The Speech Act Theory has been used as an analytical tool of the identified linguistic expressions of verbal bullying in the current study. The selected verbal bullying utterances have been subjected to the Illocutionary act analysis and specifically the five classes of acts (Searle 1969) that bring out meaning beyond the semantic level. The researcher analyzed the meanings of the victim’s utterances using directives, expressives, commissives and assertives. The Perlocutionary effects of the Locutions on the hearer have been determined from the illocutionary force of each utterance.

Quoting from a ridiculing song by the three artists from the Kikuyu community on Right Honourable Raila Odinga during one of his campaign trails, “*When a man is seated he sees further than a boy on top of a tree,*” may mean literally that. But, when you consider the context in which they were said, contending for power and leadership and in the Kikuyu cultural context, the meaning changes completely. A Man among the Kikuyu is a male who is circumcised and a boy is any male who is not yet circumcised. With that understanding, the context in which the words are said, somebody can interpret what the three kikuyu singers meant.

2.3 The effects of verbal bullying

The current study assumed that verbal bullying is harmful in the society as well as in the schools. It sought to investigate cases of expressions in words used to hurt other students in schools and the way they affect the dignity of the targeted. This is because the study assumed that if a student, for that matter an adolescent, is exposed to a speech that inflicts pain, humiliates, embarrasses, or distresses, it violates the right to dignity and respect of the targeted and can affect the individual negatively and therefore there is need to stop it in order to avoid further harm.

Several studies have looked at the harm words have on the targeted people. For instance, Waldron (2012:5) defines dignity as “the social standing, the fundamentals of basic reputation that entitle (persons) to be treated as equals in the ordinary operations of society” He further adds that, “dignity is a matter of status, that is, one’s status as a member of society in good standing and it generates demands for recognition and for treatment in accord with that status (Waldron 2012:60); it involves “intrinsically, the assurance that one will be dealt with on this basis (as an equal in rights and entitlements)” (Waldron, 2012:85). However, the harm caused by spoken words goes against this fundamental right. Hateful words result in damaging the dignity of people based on the defamation related to certain characteristics they share with the group, and this can affect the group’s dignity and disruption of social order in the society.

Recently, an American newspaper, , (2017) reported that verbal bullying and hate speech can have very detrimental effects to the targeted, especially if such speech is from a public figure in authority targeting a minority group in the community. “Reports from famous people like president Trump on deportation of illegal

immigrants especially the Muslims have affected the learners negatively. Students say that they arrive at school anxious, upset, scared, and stressed or angry. Some show signs of withdrawal, anxiety, depression or other mental health concerns. They also bring hurtful speech and actions into school, or be on the receiving end of hurtful conduct or be bystanders witnessing such disrespectful behavior”.

Having looked at the harm verbal bullying has on the targeted person(s) from the above information, it is evident that use of negative words against others can be harmful and can cause serious harm to those targeted by such speech. This harm can be physical like direct threat of violence or psychological ones, like long - term feelings of fear, insecurity and violence Mari Matsuda (1989:2329-2334)) argues that, “many forms of such speech tacitly draw on a history of violence against certain groups” .In addition to causing violence, verbal bullying can also cause feelings of isolation, loss of self-esteem, humiliation, embarrassment, withdrawal behaviors and anxiety (Delgado R., 1982:137, 146).

However, there is limited data based on research on the issue of verbal bullying and the effects on the targeted carried out in a linguistic perspective and in a school set up. Therefore, there is thus, a need to investigate on the harm verbal bullying expressions have on the victims and the proprietors using a linguistic approach.

The Speech Act theory is “a way in which a person uses an utterance to perform an act such as stating a fact, stating an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction or a request, asking a question, issuing an order, giving a permission, giving a piece of advice, making an offer, making a promise, thanking somebody or condoling somebody” (Osisanwo, 2003:60). This theory can be used to

expound on the phenomenon of verbal bullying in schools. According to the theory, speakers are said to use utterances to perform specific acts. In other words, in uttering a sentence, a speaker is doing something. To identify the kind of speech act a speaker performs in their utterances, we are going to use Austin's three tenets of speech act theory (Austin, 1962:94). He says that one can perform an act in saying something. The first one is locutionary act which is simply the act of saying something. The second one is the perlocutionary act, which is the effect or the consequence the utterance has on the hearer such as convincing the hearer about something, persuading the hearer, arousing anger, distress, annoyance, and threatening. Austin continues to argue that such effects are determined by illocutionary force of the utterance as well as the particular circumstances in which the utterance is produced. Austin called this act perlocution.

To further explain the notion of a perlocutionary act, Searle (1969:25) says that "by arguing I may persuade or convince someone; by warning, I may scare or alarm him / her; by making a request I may get her to do something; by informing her, I may convince her....".

Lastly, the illocutionary act, which presumes that an utterance made carries with it a certain force or intention such as informing the hearer on something, giving an order, giving a warning, giving a threat, this is the Illocutionary act. The illocutionary force of an utterance conveys what the speaker intends to do with the particular utterance. Hence, the force determines what type of illocutionary act the utterance is meant to perform. According to the theory, it presupposes that the illocutionary force is an aspect of meaning that cannot be captured in truth –conditioned semantic theory, Osisanwo (2003:60). In other words, Searle seems to say that meaning of a statement

or an utterance is beyond the semantic level. One has to consider other factors contributing to the meaning like social factors and the intentions of the speaker. Likewise, Verbal Bullying uses utterances that can be informed using the Speech Act Theory. The hateful speeches (the wrongs perpetuated to the hearers) can be looked at as performing the three levels of speech acts that an utterance performs. For instance, by threatening someone with an intention of instilling fear on the hearer, the speaker performs the Illocutionary act (threatening) and Perlocutionary act (the fear that grips the hearer as a result of the act of being threatened) and of course, the act of uttering the threat is the Locutionary act. The intention of such utterances (Pragmatics) can be inferred using the Speech Act Theory.

Verbal Bullying uses verbal expressions which are uttered with an intention of causing harm or hurting the targeted. Some of these hateful words have the power to damage somebody's reputation, hurting, isolating, dehumanizing, degrading intimidating, harassing as pointed out by Austin (1962, 1975) in his theory of speech act. So verbal bullying and its harm on the victim can be examined linguistically.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The current study has used two theories, Austin's (1962/1975) and Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1983 and 1987) Politeness theory. The work of speech act theory is to describe the meanings of the identified verbal bullying expressions and analyze them while the Politeness theory is used in identification and classification of the verbal utterances that constitute bullying.

2.4.1 Speech Act Theory

The theory is used to describe meanings of the identified verbal bullying expressions.

The Speech act theory as introduced by Oxford philosopher, J.L Austin (1962) in his book *'How to Do Things with Words'* is a branch of pragmatics concerned with the ways word can be used to perform actions. It was further developed by an American Philosopher, J. I. Searle (1969, 1975). Speech act theory looks at speaker's intentions and acts as pointed out by Wittgenstein (1968:43). Wittgenstein further says that language involves acts by speakers who employ conventional devices such as words and sentences in accordance with abstract set of rules. Speakers are said to use utterances to perform specific acts. Austin (1962/1975) also, asserts that we cannot examine statements alone because statements carry implications, presuppositions and entailments that go beyond the statement themselves. He meant that a total situation in which an utterance was made should be put into consideration. In his example, yelling the word "shark" in a beach is implicative because it can be a warning.

According to Austin (1962), Speech Act Theory has three tenets which can be useful in a linguistic study. To begin with, we have 'Locutionary act' which is equivalent to uttering a sentence with a certain sense and reference (Austin 1962:94). In addition, 'Perlocutionary act', which is the actual effect the utterance has on the audience (1962:101). In other words, the effect a speech act has on the feelings, thoughts or actions of either the speaker or the listener and its consequences got as a result of saying something such as intimidating, convincing, persuading, and discriminating among others. Lastly, the 'Illocutionary act' is the intended action of the speaker. In other words, the performance of an act in saying something such as informing, ordering, warning, advising etc. (Austin 1962:98)

This study looked at how words or utterances by a speaker are used to perform acts, the intention of the speaker and the effect those words have on the feelings, thoughts

or actions of either the speaker or the listener hence the researcher was interested in the performative function of words (Illocutionary act) and the impact on the listener (Perlocutionary act). The illocutionary act is divided into five classes namely: assertives such as making statements, directives such as requests, commissives such as promises, Expressive such as compliments or congratulations and Declaratives such as christening or appointing, (Searle,1969).

The current study made use of the three tenets: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. Data collected in form of sentences, or utterances of verbal bullying expressions which deals with negative utterances meant to do some wrongs on the targeted person such as threatening, abusing, discriminating using words, words that degrade among others were examined using the Speech Act theory to determine their performative function. It was used to give knowledge required to determine what such sentences meant when spoken in certain way in a particular context as said by Froser, Rintell and Walters (1980) and the consequences they elicit on the listener. Thus, the Speech Act Theory was used to shed light on the kind of linguistic expressions used in verbal bullying.

The Speech Act Theory was also used as an analytical tool of the identified linguistic expressions of verbal bullying. The selected verbal bullying utterances were subjected to the Illocutionary act analysis that is direct and indirect illocutionary acts and specifically the five classes according to Searle (1969). The Perlocutionary effects (effects of verbal bullying on the victims) of the Locutions on the hearer was also determined from the illocutionary force of each utterance.

Each speech act type was recorded and a summary done in form of a table. This made the interpretation of the data in the table clear; hence, the Speech Act Theory and

Politeness theory were used to classify the linguistic expressions of Verbal Bullying into speech acts and to determine their meanings. The Politeness theory by (Brown and Levinson (1978, 1983, and 1987), was incorporated in the study as a linguistic tool to identify and classify verbal bullying expressions. Further discussion on the theory and its contribution to the study follows below:

2.4.2 Politeness Theory

The classification of the verbal bullying expressions was informed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1983, and 1987) theory. Basically, the theory has four major elements such as the concept of face, which according to many researchers, face is socially or interactively based, that is, it only exists in interactions with others or in social circles, it is a specific image we present to others; the impressions we want others to have of us which depends on the requirements of the situation or context. Our level of consciousness and intent about the face we present will vary but becomes of concern when something occurs that makes people not to believe that our face is genuine, described as face threat and lastly face is usually displayed through behavior acts such as the way we communicate and interact with each other as asserted by Redmond, (2015).

Brown and Levinson (1978:63) define face as “the want to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respect.” They argue that face is two - sided: it is something we want or desire from others and when people interact, they should recognize each other’s desire, to have their faces supported and give a confirmation of the same of approval by showing respect and honor. Other scholars have also defined face as “the self-image they present to others”, (Craig et al., 1986 :) and “conception of self” by Cupach and Meets, (1994:3). Goffman (1967:213) define face as “ the

positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact,” the positive social value is the desire of people to feel that they are of value to others and they should be seen as such. Others say that face is “a desire to present oneself with dignity and honor”, (Domenici and Littlejohn, 2006:10). From these scholars, the face concept is crucial in any social interactions and human relationships. For the interactions to be fruitful and harmonious, the interactants have certain expectations from each other; they want to be given freedom to do what they want without interruptions and they want of their actions to be approved positively by others by being shown respect and honor; they desire to be seen as having social value to others and also seen as dignified and respectful and hence a person of high public self-image. In our interactions, any attempt that fails to present a specific face and contradicts these expectations either through speech acts or actions is seen to cause a threat to the face supposedly being presented by the interactant and the face of others. These face threats are called Face Threatening Acts. This study used this tenet of Face Threatening Acts to identify and classify verbal bullying expressions used to execute bullying in schools.

The second element of politeness theory is face types. In his definition, Brown and Levinson (1987:62) brought out two types of faces namely: positive and negative face. They define positive face as “the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable to at least some others. They argued that each member in an interaction section carries with them desires or wants that they assume others will approve of. These wants range from the values we want others to see in us as being intelligent, loving, kind, educated, competent, loyal among others to the ‘want’ to do the things

we want to do and expect others to support, for example (go to school, do homework, go to birthdays).

Brown and Levinson (1987) define negative face as “the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions be unimpeded by others”. This means that the actions, or wants of the person should not be hindered or stopped from happening by others, in other words, the person should be left to do what they want to do and also the want for things to remain the way they are (unchanged) that is, maintain their status quo.

Other communication scholars the likes of Lim and Bowers (1991) simplified Brown and Levinson’s types of faces and came up with three types of wants which are as follows: fellowship face which “is the want to be included; a desire to be accepted by others. Secondly, competence face which they argue is the want to have ones abilities respected by others” which reflects a desire to want people to acknowledge and value what we can do. Both fellowship and competence faces are types of positive faces as they represent a want to be seen by others in a positive way. Thirdly, autonomy face is “a want to not to be imposed on (Lim and Bowers (1991:62)” which is related to claim to one’s territory, personal space and rights to non –distraction that is, freedom to do what one wants and freedom from imposition.

In our interactions, we may fail to present a particular face as desired by others and therefore fail to satisfy their face wants and even expose our faces to be challenged or undermined. This describes situations of face threats or face threatening acts. In verbal bullying, the expressions used by the perpetrators could challenge or

undermine the face of the victims and hence this brings us to discuss on face threatening acts and how applicable they are to this study. This brings us to discuss on the third element of politeness theory-Face Threatening Acts.

According to the Politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987:65) face threatening acts are “those acts that by their very nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or speaker.” From his definition, face threatening acts can be performed against our positive face and/or negative face and against the others positive faces and /or their negative faces during acts we engage in ourselves or the acts of others towards us. They came up with a list of communication acts that cause face threats which can be used to identify and classify the verbal expressions used in bullying as follows: Those expressions by others that threaten the hearer’s positive face, such as, complaints, insults, criticisms or disapprovals, contempt, accusation, disagreeing, asking for clarifications, violent emotion; mention of taboo topics; interruptions and non-cooperation and conveying bad news about the hearer and evaluations.

Then there are those acts by others that threaten the hearer’s negative face which include issuing orders and making requests, giving advice and suggestions, issuing threats and warnings, envy, admirations, hatred, anger lust, reminders, naggings, and calling in a debt.

They also highlighted that the speaker can engage in actions that threaten his [her] positive and / or negative face as follows: those actions by the speaker which threaten

his[her] positive face, such as, apologies and confessions, accepting a compliment, misunderstanding / requesting clarifications, unintended emotional act (laugh) and unintended physical action (burp) and those actions by the speaker that threaten their negative face , such as, accepting an offer, accepting thanks, making a promise or an offer.

These Face Threatening Acts by Brown and Levinson's theory (1987) are done through verbal communication and seen through utterances. Both positive and negative face threatening acts were identified in this study. The Face Threatening Acts that threatened the hearer's positive face were accusations / criticisms, expressions of contempt or ridiculing, evaluations, insults, slanders or spreading rumors and challenges. The Face Threatening Acts which threatened the negative face of the hearer include: interruptions or intrusion, reminders and issuing orders as discussed below:

I. Negative face threatening acts

- a. **Orders:** According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, orders threaten the hearer's negative face of the desire to not to be imposed or the desire to be given freedom to do what they want to do. To order is to instruct or command somebody to do something. It is this coercion that threatens the hearer's negative face.
- b. **Reminders:** Boxer (2002) asserts that a reminder is a repeated request. In the study the perpetrators of verbal bullying repeatedly wanted the victim to do something or to be done for something.

- c. **Interruption /intrusion:** Negative face is “a want to not to be imposed”, Brown and Levinson (1987:62). “Which is related to claim to one’s territory, personal space and rights to non –distraction, that is, freedom to do what one wants and freedom from imposition.” Interruption or intruding on others affairs goes against this want not to be distracted on what you were doing. The desire to be given freedom from imposition and your activities not to be interfered.
- d. **Dares / challenges:** Lim and Bowers (1991:62) posit that one’s negative face which they called autonomous face is “a want to not to be imposed on.” In other words, the desire of a person not to be disturbed by others, to be left alone and have the freedom of acting. However, the act of challenging is doing or saying something in a way that invites others to disagree or argue with you. So challenges do not support the autonomous face of the hearer.

II. Positive Face Threatening Acts

Goffman (1967:213 - 215) define face as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact.” He continues the assertion that positive face is “the positive public image you seek to establish in social interactions This means that there is an impression- which Goffman (1967) calls a ‘claim’ that one desires others to have of them in their day to day interactions-if the person is a student one wants to have a claim of being seeing as intelligent, supportive, helpful, respectful, dignified and so forth. If in the course of interaction this claim is challenged or undermined by the other party through use of verbal acts, it becomes a face threat to that claim. In verbal

bullying, the victim and the perpetrators of verbal bullying use expressions that do not support the positive face the victims or perpetrators are attempting to present. Some examples of face threatening acts used by the interactants are expressions of contempt / ridicule, criticisms / accusations, evaluations, insults, spreading rumors and slandering. Their brief definitions are as follows:

- a. Expressions of Contempt /Ridicule:** According to Brown and Levisohn's (1987:62) theory "the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable to at least some others". Verbal expressions of contempt attempt to threaten the hearer's positive face - the need to impress and be liked by others; be seen to have social value to others and be respected. Contempt means the feeling that somebody is without value and deserves no respect at all.
- b. Evaluations:** Goffman calls it "The positive social value of a person, (Goffman (1967:213), further, Brown and Levinson (1987:62) define it as "the person's wants be desirable to at least some others". If the person who desires to be seen as of social value in the society, for instance, be seen as educated, sociable, intelligent etc. and his/ her wants be approved of by others and if the person's social worthy is negative perceived, we can say that they are devalued and goes against their positive face 'be seen as of social value'. The study identified verbal expressions that devalued the hearer's positive face by the perpetrator using expressions that undermine the value of the hearer in one way or another.
- c. Slander / Spreading Rumors:** Brown and Levinson (1987:65) assert that slander is "conveying bad news about the hearer." In other words, it is intentionally and maliciously spreading bad rumors about the hearer with an

intention of damaging the public image of the hearer. It is disparaging the positive face of the hearer to be seen as of less dignified and disrespectful. The defaced victim is likely to be disliked and isolated in their social circles.

- d. **Insults:** Just like slanders or rumors, insults damage the hearer's positive face of the desire to be seen as respectful and dignified. Insults, which are comments, or acts that offend makes the hearer to be seen as less dignified and someone who does not deserve respect and honor.
- e. **Accusations / Criticisms:** (Brown and Levinson 1987:62), assert that it is "the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable to at least some others." Accusations or criticisms are expressions of disapproval of the hearer's wants such as personal characteristics, beliefs, values and possession of goods. The speaker does not care about the feelings of hearer causing damage to the positive face of the hearer of the desire to be approved and accepted by others.

2.5 Summary of the chapter

Several studies on bullying such as (Fekih, 2017:4; African mental health 2007; Alannah and Madeline Foundations 2018:7) attest that bullying is a major problem that is facing the education sector. They also show that research on the bullying issue has been generally done whereby within one study the three forms of bullying that is, verbal, physical and relational are looked at. This study seeks to examine the bullying problem in schools not in a general manner but narrowed down to verbal bullying and specifically on the verbatim accounts used in bullying. This is because little is in records specifically on the negative verbal expressions used to execute bullying. This

study sought to closely examine the issue of verbal bullying by extracting the utterances that constitute bullying and the form of verbal bullying they represent.

In the Theoretical Framework, two theories, Austin's (1962/1975) and Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1983 and 1987) Politeness theory were used in the current study because they complemented each other well. Politeness theory was used to identify and classify the verbal utterances that constituted bullying while the Speech Act theory described the meanings of the identified verbal bullying expressions and analyzed them.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in the study of the linguistic analysis of expressions of verbal of bullying in schools. The research methods helped to identify, describe, classify and analyze the problem of verbal bullying linguistic expressions in schools and the harm they have on the victims. The chapter comprises the research design, target population, study area; sampling procedure, sample size and sampling procedures; data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative design, specifically descriptive research design was used because it is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in as many forms in a non-numerical state and so because the data needed in the present study is in form of verbatim accounts, the design is most applicable. It focuses on exploring as much detail as possible using smaller numbers or examples ((Blaxteret, et al., 2006:77). Verbal data in form of statements and words were collected from the respondents using a Sony audio recorder. The raw data was then transcribed by the researcher into a written form in a notebook by listening to every interviewee's narrative or experience. It was coded, that is each utterance by the speaker was coded with the letter "u", meaning utterance. each narrative or experience of verbal bullying by the victims was numbered using numbers such as text 1,2, 3 and the data was sorted and

grouped into different forms of verbal bullying expressions guided by the Politeness theory such as orders, .

Open-ended questions were used. The analysis of the data collected was qualitatively done where the linguistic expressions of verbal bullying were grouped into different forms or categories of speech acts for data interpretation and presentation.

The present study assumed that by qualitative method the researcher was able to come up with descriptive data that would give a clear picture of the research problems, that is, verbal bullying expressions used in schools and thus address the research questions in depth.

3.2 Study Area

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Machakos Sub - County. This is because the schools were familiar and accessible to the researcher. It also catered for a complete representation of all levels and categories of schools in terms of academic performance, size, and demographics. It also gave a wide field for selection by the researcher since the schools that experienced problems in the past such as bullying, unrest among others, were given the first priority. So the study sought to find out the linguistic expressions that were used to instigate Verbal Bullying in Machakos Sub-County schools and their negative impact on the learners.

3.3 Target Population

The participants in this study were 16 secondary school students because at the age of 14-19 years, they are at their adolescence crisis which could be manifested in their behaviors. Parault, et al., (2007:146) and Suvilian et al., (2004:8) affirm that the

critical age of students in aggression and violent behaviors is found at the beginning of secondary school or at early adolescence. For this reason, I chose to investigate on the use of linguistic expressions of verbal bullying among students in secondary schools particularly in Machakos sub-county schools. There are about sixty public and private secondary schools in Machakos Sub-County. The current study targeted the public schools only in all the categories represented in the two groups such as mixed boarding and day schools, mixed day secondary schools, Girls' schools and Boys' boarding schools. The study did not include the special school in the study since it was not in its scope and also the researcher was unfamiliar with the sign language and involving a third party as an interpreter may lead to data misinterpretation or exaggeration. Therefore the target population for this study was forty six public schools in Machakos Sub-County.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The sample size was reached guided by Charmax's (2006:114) claim that "a small study might achieve results quicker than a study that is broader and more widespread and targeting larger samples." In addition, Mugenda (2003) asserts that, "for descriptive study, 10% of accessible population is enough." Therefore, the study determined its sample size based on the above claims. The size of the sample was neither too large to be managed nor too small to yield inadequate findings.

Machakos sub-county schools are heterogeneous in nature that is they are categorized into sub-county, county, extra county and national schools; therefore, stratified random sampling was used to allow full representation and participation of the schools. Variables such as whether the school was mixed boarding and or day school, Boys' school or Girls' school, sub - county, county, extra county or national were

used. Moreover, the participants were further stratified using the sex variable; whether a girl or a boy and whether form one, two, three or four.

So out of the 46 public schools in Machakos sub county, the study stratified the schools into the categories such as mixed secondary schools, Boys' and Girls' boarding schools . From this sample, schools were purposively picked to form the sample for data collection. Four schools were picked and four students were randomly picked from each school that is one student per form. A total sample size of sixteen (16) students from the sampled schools were used.

Table 3.1 Sample Size

Category of the school	Types of school	Target population	Sample size	No. of students per stratum
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed day school • Mixed boarding and day 	46	2	6
	Boys, boarding	4	1	6
	Girls' boarding	5	1	4
			4	16

Out of the target population of forty six Public secondary schools, (46), the study sampled one school from every category or stratum because the researcher was interested in the utterances from the individuals. The respondents were randomly

picked across the class forms using variables such as sex, religion and socio-economic status.

The study purposively selected schools that have a history of unrest and others which did not. According to Creswell (2013), the researcher chose the sample based on who they thought would be appropriate for the study and only focused on individuals who portrayed specific attributes (Berg 2001:32). This way the researcher got valid data to address the objectives and questions of the study. Due to the nature of schools being heterogeneous, proportionate stratified sampling was done where schools were further categorized into being county, extra- county or sub - county schools and whether they were mixed boarding and or day, schools, girls' schools or boys' schools .Then a selection was made from each stratum using simple random sampling technique to get a sample for data collection. Sixteen students were used as sampled population from which data was collected for this study.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

This study used an interview schedule to collect data from the sampled respondents. Interview as a tool in data collection is a valuable means of gathering information especially in verbal form (Wells, 1994). The study used both closed and open-ended questions in the questionnaire to interview sampled students in order to clearly describe the verbal bullying phenomenon and at the same time find out its effect on the targeted. The researcher conducted one- on- one interviews on individual students who had been sampled in the various schools and the interviews were conducted in the guidance and counselling room for privacy and confidentiality. This helped the study to gather information on the kind of words perpetrators of bullying use against

their victims and how such experiences affected them by measuring the individual's feelings and thoughts towards verbal bullying (See Appendix ii).

An Audio-recorder (Sony) was used to record the respondents' conversations during interviews. This tool supplemented note taking technique in case the recorder failed and also it captured non-verbal cues loaded with information like pauses and interjections in the conversations (Creswell 1998:403).

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data was collected in form of sentences, phrases and words by using one – on_ one interviews on the respondents who were sampled from the four categories of schools, that is mixed day and boarding school, mixed day school, boys and girls boarding schools. The actual conversations were recorded on 12th march 2021 using Sony recorder to form the data, (See appendix IV). It was transcribed in written form in a notebook by listening to the conversations sorted, edited, coded, cleaned and processed. Data analysis was an ongoing process from the beginning of the study until the study was completed. This is because the researcher wanted to understand the problem of verbal bullying in the social world of the study participant. The initial data gathered and interpretations guided for further data collection and analysis, as new data were gathered they were compared with the existing data and interpretations and they were later revised to get the new information gathered.

Data was analyzed as follows: first, written texts were created from interviews in the English language and those texts in any other language were translated in English. Units of analysis were identified, like linguistic expressions of verbal bullying in form

of sentences and paragraphs, and then the data was reduced through classification or coding. Each narrative from the respondents was given a number (text 1-16) for the 16 respondents. The classified data was clustered into categories; in this case into forms of verbal bullying, such as abuses, criticisms, orders contempt, insults, and commands and then marked using another code **u** meaning **utterance**. Lastly, there were interpretations of the relationships that offered a description of the linguistic features in verbal bullying and their effect in schools.

Brown and Levinson's (1987, 1978) Politeness theory was used as a tool of identifying and classifying verbal bullying expressions in the study. Looking at the data collected from the interviews and tape recording of the respondents, both positive and negative face threatening acts were identified as examples of verbal bullying expressions.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Research Permit was obtained from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to facilitate the carrying out of the research. Again, permission was also sought from the selected secondary school Principals in Machakos sub - county and from Machakos University based on the stipulated research regulations.

The Principals of the sampled secondary schools that is, mixed boarding and day school, mixed day, girls' boarding and boys' boarding schools on behalf of the parents, were visited prior to the study by the researcher to explain the importance of the study and get permission to carry out the study in their schools. Appointments were made on when to carry out the interviews.

The participants' consent to participate in the study was sought and assurance of anonymity was given by the researcher to all the participants in the study verbally and in writing. The participants comprised of one student per form (form 1 to 4) in each school. In the mixed categories, a boy and a girl was picked to represent sex. The researcher also gave an assurance to the participants that the findings of the research were to be used for research purposes only.

3.8 Summary of the chapter

Descriptive qualitative design was used in the study of Linguistic Analysis of Expressions of Verbal of Bullying in selected Sub County schools in Machakos constituency. One – on - One interviews were conducted on the 16 students sampled from the 4 public secondary schools. The schools represented where in the following categories: one extra county girls boarding, one county boys boarding, one mixed day and boarding and one sub - county day school. The research methods helped to identify, describe, classify and analyze the problem of verbal bullying linguistic expressions in schools and the effects they have on the victims.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0. Introduction

The chapter presents the findings for each objective, analysis, and discussions on expressions used in verbal bullying in selected secondary schools in Machakos sub-county.

4.1 Identification and classification of Verbal Bullying

The identification and classification of the verbal bullying expressions was informed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) Politeness theory. The theory generally deals with the concept of face, defined as “the want to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respect. “Brown and Levinson (1978:63); the two types of faces namely: positive and negative faces and face threatening acts, According to the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987:65) face threatening acts are “those acts that by their very nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or speaker.” From his definition, face threatening acts can be performed against our positive face and/or negative face and against the others positive faces and /or their negative faces during acts we engage in ourselves or the acts of others towards us. Examples of communication acts that threaten the hearer’s positive face include: complaints, insults, criticisms or disapprovals, contempt, accusation, disagreeing, asking for clarifications, violent emotion; mention of taboo topics; interruptions and non-cooperation and conveying bad news about the hearer and evaluations.

Those acts by others that threaten the hearer's negative face are: issuing orders and making requests, giving advice and suggestions, issuing threats and warnings, envy, admirations, hatred, anger lust, reminders, naggings, and calling in a debt. The speaker can also engage in actions that threaten his or her positive and/ or negative face as follows: those actions by the speaker which threatens his or her positive face are apologies and confessions, accepting a compliment, misunderstanding/requesting clarifications, unintended emotional act (laugh) and unintended physical action (burp) and those actions by the speaker that threaten their negative face include: accepting an offer, accepting thanks, making a promise or an offer.

Both positive and negative face threatening acts were identified in this study as examples of verbal bullying expressions. The Face Threatening Acts that threatened the hearer's positive face were accusations / criticisms, expressions of contempt or ridiculing, evaluations, insults, slanders or spreading rumors and challenges; those Face Threatening Acts which threatened the negative face of the hearer included: interruptions or intrusion, reminders and issuing orders. Some of these Face Threatening Acts identified in the study data and used as verbal bullying expressions are discussed and analyzed as follows: (See appendix IV for actual data).

4.1.1 Orders

To order is to instruct or command somebody to do something. It is this coercion that threatens the hearer's negative face. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, orders threaten the hearer's negative face of the desire to not to be imposed or the desire to be given freedom to do what they want to do. In this study several

victims of verbal bullying were issued orders by their perpetrators. A few extracts from the study data have been cited. (See Appendix IV)

U 19: because you have delayed to pay (borrowed ten shillings), *you must pay it and in addition, fifty shillings.* (TEXT 9)

U 20 ...“come” *Where is my fifty shillings? When I come, when we meet again I need my fifty shillings and I won't speak again.* (TEXT 9)

The perpetrator who had given the victim ten shillings used verbal expressions in form of commands such as *because you have delayed me (to pay the borrowed money) you must bring it with fifty shillings, where is my fifty shillings, when I come, when we meet again I need my fifty shillings and I won't speak again.* This was to force the victim to pay back the money. These orders and commands seem to agree with well-known researchers on the subject of bullying using words such as Dan Owen (1993). He defines bullying as “any negative acts set deliberately by a pupil or more to harm another student”...which is characterized by imbalance of power... (Dan Owens,1993)”.in this case the perpetrator exercises excessive power over the victim when ordering the victim to refund the money borrowed, he says, “*when we meet again I need my fifty shillings and I won't speak again.* Brown and Levinson (1978:62) also support that the above expressions violate the autonomous face of the victim. They note that orders threaten the desire of the victim not to be imposed on.); the desire for freedom to choose what to do and what not to do.

Such coercive expressions do not support the negative face of the victim (the hearer). They therefore qualify to be used as bullying expressions. Another example where the perpetrator uses orders is shown in Text 14. In this text, a girl has broken a cup:

U 10: why have you broken this cup?

.... You are going to pay it.... It's a must you pay the cup.

.... come here! Come here (TEXT 14)

The perpetrator demanded to have the cup replaced by buying a new one. She ordered the victim to repay the broken cup, “*you are going to pay it, you are going to pay me the cup, and it's a must you pay the cup, come here! Come here! This leaves the victim with no choice but to obey the orders. This seems to agree with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory that the orders threaten the desire of the victim to be left alone and to be honored and respected (Brown and Levin son 1978 p. 63). Therefore giving of orders are expressions which qualify to be used as verbal bullying expressions among students as brought out in this study.*

4.1.2 Reminders

Boxer (2002) asserts that a reminder is a repeated request. In the study the perpetrators of verbal bullying repeatedly wanted the victim to do something or to be done for something. A few examples confirm this from study data in Text 13 and 15 as follows:

U 65: this girl that broke the mug, she told me.... *I want 350 or buy me another mug.*

U67: *Even today she has said that she wants her mug again. Now she is disturbing her. (TEXT 13)*

U48: I asked her, so and so *do you remember that you talked to me badly?* Then she told me mmm! *Hata sikukuongelesha vibaya (I have not talked badly to you).* Hilo haina shida, *hata tukienda campus, enda ukareport kwa lecturers (that is not a problem, even when we go to campus go and report me to the lecturers).* (TEXT 15)

In Text 13, the girl is repeatedly told to repay the mug despite her explanation that she will request her father when he comes to school to give her the money. *I want 350 or buy me my mug. Even today she has said that she wants her mug again. Now she is disturbing her.*

In text 15 the affected girl who had earlier been abused (*huyu msichana ni mkundu sana*) reminds the perpetrator on her abusive act, (*So and so do you remember that you talked to me badly?*).

The perpetrator retaliates by reminding the victim that she had not even talked to her badly, she should even report to higher authorizes in future. (*Hata sikukuongelesha vibaya. Ulireport? Hiyo haina shida, hata tukienda campus, enda ukareport Kwa lecturers.*)As boxer (2002) says, a reminder is a repeated request; in other words, it is nagging. Dan olweus (1991 p.413) makes this action clear as a bullying expression when he says that, bullying involves “a repeated action over time”. In the study, both perpetrators nag their victims over something. For instance “want another mug”, the girl said (u 65, 67) and “do you remember you talked to me badly” (u 48). These reminders put pressure on the victim’s face on the want of not to be imposed or coerced to do things on and may make the victim feel dishonored and devalued

among his or her friends (Brown and Levinson 1987:62). This in turn can provoke the victim to react negatively towards the perpetrator as seen above or even withdraw from the social circles due to the humiliation impacted on the victim. Hence reminders can also be forms of verbal bullying because they defame the victim.

4.1.3 Interruption /Intrusion

Negative face is “a want not to be imposed on (Brown and Levinson, 1987:62). “Which is related to a claim to one’s territory, personal space and rights to non – distraction that is, freedom to do what one wants and freedom from imposition. Interruption or intruding on others affairs goes against this want not to be distracted on what you were doing. This also includes the desire to be given freedom from imposition and your activities not to be interfered with. Some incidents of intrusion were cited among the students as shown in the study data in text 1 and text 8 as follows:

The victim was in class doing some revision on a certain subject when she was interrupted by another student (perpetrator).

U4: So, as I was revising, *a boy from my class appeared from nowhere and he was asking a boy next to me a question concerning that particular subject*. At that moment I clicked, because I was not understanding the topic which I was reading....the boy thought I had clicked on him. He said “you clicked and you know you get “E’s”. That made me cry.
(TEXT 1)

The undermining words the boy uses by referring to the victim as “less intelligent” undermines the victim’s self-worth while the words, “you know you get E’s” humiliates the victim. This derogatory talk goes against the virtues of respect and inclusiveness that makes it possible for people to coexist and live harmoniously as proposed in (Waldron, 2012). The affected girl may suffer psychologically by seeing herself as unworthy, less important and even end up with low self- esteem as stated by (Ridby, 2005;26). Accordingly, low self-esteem marks one of the effects of bullying. Therefore intrusion and name-calling qualify to be bullying acts.

Another example of intrusion or interruption comes from (text 8) as follows: A form three student intrudes into a group of boys eating together and causes a conflict.

U11: this form three just comes si mara ya kwanza, (not once) anakuja hata kama hajaserve anacome tunakula tu. (He comes and eats with us)

(TEXT 8)

In both texts (1and 8) above, the interruptions infringe on the victims’ negative face of the want of not to be disturbed while reading and the groups want of their privacy not to be interrupted by the boy who invited himself to the group as supported by Brown and Levinson (1987:62) a person is entitled to “a claim to one’s territory, personal space and rights to non –distraction that is, freedom to do what one wants and freedom from imposition. “Hence intrusion in this study qualifies to be a form of bullying because it denies the victims their rights of exercising their freedom of not to be imposed and also their freedom to do their things in an uninterrupted way. The girl

who was doing revision was distracted from what she was doing and the group eating together, their territory was invaded by the intruder without their permission.

4.1.4 Dares / Challenges

Lim and Bowers (1991:62) posits that one's negative face which they called autonomous face is "a want to not to be imposed on". In other words, this is the desire of a person not to be disturbed by others, to be left alone and have the freedom of acting. However, in this study data, the act of challenging or daring one another by the perpetrator intrudes on the personal space of the intruded, the victim. So challenges do not support the autonomous face of the hearer. Some examples were identified in this study as follows:

A form three student intrudes into the form four group eating together. This invites a reaction from the group members. A form four, one of the group members challenges the form three because of his act by using verbal expressions such as telling the form three that the plate belongs to him and he can take it away "*this plate is mine, you can take it and leave with it (U 17, Text 8)*" The form three responds to the challenge by another challenge, "*si you take it (U 17, Text 8)*". (Just take it). The two boys keep on issuing each other more challenges which later result to a physical fight as a result of a strong disagreement.

U 17: I said this *plate is mine, can take it and leave with it.*

U 17: This form *three confronts me, si you take it.* Then I asked, *what did you just say?*

U 20: He said *kwani what will you do?*

Another example from the study is about a prefect being challenged by a fellow student as follows:

U 42: Tuendee vitabu, tunataka kutumia (go and get for us books from the secretary). sasa wewe unasema hatuendei books na hiyo ni kazi yako (it's your work to take for us books), unataka tuandikie nini unataka tuandikie nini. Then I just kept quiet Then akaniambia hu! Unanysize aje? Unanysize aje? (Why are you looking at me like that? Sasa wewe, na mimi difference, ni white collar. (The difference between me and you is that uniform for a prefect.) (TEXT 15)

The perpetrator here challenges the other girl who happens to be a prefect and threatens the negative face of the victim of the want to be given freedom to act. This is when she demands for the books to be taken for exchange yet the victim doesn't want to go.

In both examples, the perpetrators seem to challenge the position and authority of their victims by undermining their authorities. According to Lim and Bowers (1991:62), dares or challenges deny the victim the freedom to be left alone. The challenger keeps on provoking the victim using demeaning expressions; for example, in this study data, the first example shows a boy who issues challenges to the other boy. He says, "The plate is mine and I can take it and leave". In response to the challenge, the other boy dares him by telling him to take and go with it. The aftermath

is a fight between the boys but we must realize that the words used instigate the fight because one party feels disrespected yet senior. He still wants to keep his status quo as a form four. In the other example the girl undermines the prefect's position by implying that there is no difference between the girl and the prefect. (*Sasa wewe, na mimi difference, ni white collar.*"(U42, Text 15).

This notion of sneering comments or threats by one who is powerful over another is what (Olweus & Solberg 1998:7), calls verbal bullying. Hence challenges or dares are a form of bullying using words.

Some Positive Face Threatening Acts were identified in the Study. Goffman (1967:213-215) define face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact." He continues the assertion that positive face is "the positive public image you seek to establish in social interactions" This means that there is an impression- which Goffman (1967) calls a 'claim' that one desires others to have of them in their day to day interactions-if the person is a student one wants to have a claim of being seeing as intelligent, supportive, helpful, respectful, dignified and so forth. If in the course of interaction this claim is challenged or undermined by the other party through use of verbal acts, it becomes a face threat to that claim.in verbal bullying the victim and the perpetrators of verbal bullying use expressions that do not support the positive face the victims or perpetrators are attempting to present.

The study elicits some examples of face threatening acts used by the interactants such as expressions of contempt/ridicule, criticisms / accusations, evaluations; insults, spreading rumors slandering as discussed below.

4.1.5 Expressions of Contempt/Ridicule

According to Brown and Levison's (1987:62) theory "the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable to at least some others", verbal expressions of contempt attempt to threaten the hearer's positive face, that is, the need to impress and be liked by others; be seen to have social value to others and be respected. On the contrary, contempt is the feeling that somebody is without value and deserves no respect at all. In the study data, several perpetrators of bullying used contemptuous expression towards the targeted victim as follows:

U4: Hey, you are clicking and you know you gets E" (text 1)

In U4, a girl who is revising is interrupted by the boy (the perpetrator) and the girl clicks. The boy thinks that the girl had clicked on him. He contemptuously tells her that she gets ES yet she is clicking on him.

In the second utterance (u16), the same girl comes to class having shaved her hair. The whole class laughs contemptuously and tells her that her head is "oval shaped."

U16: my head is oval shaped. (Text 1)

From the above, we can say that the perpetrator (the boy) is bullying the girl verbally because according to researchers of verbal bullying such as (Merrel; Gueldner; Ross;

2008:26-42), any use of derogatory and defaming words "head" compared to "an oval shape" by a student to another in form of name-calling, intimidating words qualifies to be termed as verbal bullying. Therefore when the girl (victim) is scornfully told that she gets "E's" in her subjects and even teased that her head is "oval shaped," is really demeaning and devaluing her worth. According to Brown and Levinson's theory, (1987:62), "it's the desire of every member in a society to be seen to have value to others." Any act that is contrary to this assumption can be said to demean the worth of such a person both to himself and to others. In the data from this study, the perpetrators undermine the girl's ability in academics and even mock at her appearance. The outcome will be manifested in the way the girl views herself; she is of no value to any one and even to herself. This can culminate to low self-esteem as pointed out by Fekih (2017:4). In his research, it was revealed that name calling, humiliation, offensive teasing, being ignored or excluded from a circle of friends are some of the ways of bullying and as a result the victim of bullying can hurt physically, emotionally or psychologically (Fekih 2017:p. 4). In another example, a student explained how she was bullied after being asked to calculate a sum on the chalk board. She had missed school the previous day. She said:

U 9: They just started calling me "*chapatti*" I don't know why. (TEXT2)

U 26: When I come to consult Math from Math's teacher they *said I just took a textbook, I copied an example and I brought it.* (TEXT2)

The victim's competence in mathematics is satirized by the perpetrators to demean his ability and his claim to be seen as a good student in mathematics, hence threatening

his positive (competence) face. They say *I just took a book, a textbook, I copied an example and I brought it.* (TEXT 2).

Another example drawn from the study data was on the father's name of one of the students:

They started calling me....the name is *Mathina*, translated as (troubles or a poor person in kamba language). I felt so bad. (TEXT 3)

(Sarcastically) *you are in form four and you don't know form two question?*
What are you doing in form four? (TEXT 15)

In this data, the boy's background- coming from a poor family –is contemptuously referenced by the perpetrators using his name “*Mathina*” which when translated in English means ‘troubles or simply poverty’. They seem to portray that since he comes from a poor home he has nothing of value to offer to them (the perpetrators). This reference does not support his want to be seen as having value to others.

According to Brown and Levinson's theory, (1987:62), “it's the desire of every member in a society to be seen to have value to others.” Any act that is contrary to this assumption can be said to demean the worth of such a person both to himself and to others. In the data from this study, the perpetrators undermine their victims' worth in various fields for example, the girl's ability in academics is questioned when she is told that she gets E grades and the boy's family economic worthiness is undermined

when he is nicknamed “*Mathina*” meaning want or lack and so forth. In conclusion, contemptuous expressions are bullying statements.

4.1.6 Evaluations

Goffman (1987) talks about the positive social value of a person to which Brown and Levinson (1987:62) assert that a person’s wants need to be desirable to at least some others. If the person who desires to be seen as of social value in the society attracts negative perception, we can say that they are devalued and this goes against their positive face. This study identified verbal expressions that devalued the hearer’s positive face by the offender using expressions that undermine the value of the hearer in one way or another. An illustration from the study data involves a male student nicknamed Otis, in one of the selected schools. Otis has a dark complexion darker, as compared to other students in the group... His freedom of socialization is impeded because he feels left out, unwanted, and isolated by the offenders who evaluate his social value based on his dark skin. Hence this act threatens his positive face of fellowship and inclusion. In an interview, he said the following:

U 6: Due to my skin color, black, so unapata kuna ile majina unaitwa majina,

U 8: Kama *Otis*, nafeel sipendwi na hao watu, .unapata sometimes like
(TEXT 6)

U 10: naka peke yangu (TEXT 6)

According to Alannah and Madeline foundation (2018:7), bullying is manifested in a range of ways such as being physically threatened or hurt, being isolated from a

group, being called nasty names among others. This boy is discriminated from the group because he is dark-skinned and perceived by the group members as different and that is why they nickname him “Otis” (Otieno). As posited by Alannah and Madeline foundation (2018), he is called nasty name “Otis” which denotes another tribe (Luo) that’s seen as dark than usual. The boy is isolated from the group members. This is also shown by the famous bullying researcher Dan Olweus (1991:413) who describes bullying as saying nasty and unpleasant things about someone and also talking about the person in a teasing manner (Olweus, 1991). This boy’s situation can be taken as verbal bullying because of the nasty name-calling and the lack of inclusion feeling the boy is exposed to by the group members.

U6: a girl in school who *thinks she has a lot of money than me.* , she gave me top bread, (*the crust of the bread.*). I think she abused me because I came from a *poor family.* (TEXT 12)

In this extract the girl is given the bread crust by the other girl because of their social class differences (there is a girl in school who *thinks she has a lot of money than me.*). The girl who buys the bread thinks that the other girl cannot afford to buy hers. Her evaluation of the other girl’s background is brought out by her act of giving her bread crust. She thinks the other girl comes from a poor home and therefore she has no money to buy a piece of bread. This scenario is well illustrated by the researchers such as Roland and Idoe, (2001:447) who assert that bullying occurs when the bully exercises more power over the victim either verbally, physically or relationally with an aim of causing fear, distress or harm. In the above, the girl who has money to buy bread can be said to be economically powerful over the less fortunate in terms of

economic power. That is why the more endowed financially girl oppresses the other by sending her to buy the bread and later gives her the crust to imply that the victim deserves the crust since she cannot afford a loaf of bread. . This imbalance of power with the more powerful child oppressing the less powerful one is also a characteristic of bullying (Roland; Idoe (2001:447).

All these verbal expressions qualify to be used to instigate verbal bullying because Brown; Levinson (1987:62) theory supports this assertion by saying that it is the desire of everyone to be of use to others, “the person’s wants be desirable to at least some others.” If others do not recognize your usefulness to them in any way and even use words such as used in this study data as “Otis...(Black)...bread crust (cannot afford to buy for herself bread), then the words and actions qualify to be expressions of bullying because they intimidate, hurt and devalue the victims self- image (Brown and Levinson (1987:62)

4.1.7 Slander / Spreading Rumors

Brown and Levinson (1987:65) assert that slander is “conveying bad news about the hearer.” In other words it’s intentionally and maliciously spreading bad rumors about the hearer with an intention of damaging the public image of the hearer. It is disparaging the positive face of the hearer to be seen as of less dignified and disrespectful. The defaced victim is likely to be disliked and isolated in their social circles.

Here are a few examples of different situations where false information or rumors about the victims were spread by the perpetrators to others. These rumors damaged the positive image the victim wanted to keep and display to others.

U22: They started abusing me because I was weak due to sickness. They started *asking me if I had AIDS*. (TEXT 12)

U 10: hurting words. They were saying I am pregnant, some said I was raped; others said I aborted a child, that is why I am having those signs of walking alone (TEXT 13)

U 16: Some girls in class were saying that *I have slept with a manI am .a prostitute...I am having those kind of symptoms of a pregnant woman. And because naturally I have a big stomach, they are have said I am pregnant and they told me in three months' time they will just see the stomach protruding* (TEXT 13)

Text 12 and 13 talk about two different girls who are faced with the issue of rumors spread about them by others. In text 12, the rumor of her having AIDS is spread without the rumormongers ascertaining the truth of the news. This news does not support her desire to be included in the group and be seeing as a morally upright person.

Moreover, Text 13 talks about the same issue of spreading bad news about the hearer. The perpetrators speculate that the girl's infection and her walking style is due to her immoral behavior (*I have slept with a man*) they even observe her big stomach and conclude that she is pregnant. (*I am having those kinds of symptoms a pregnant woman. And because naturally I have a big stomach, they are have said I am pregnant and they told me in three months' time they will just see the stomach protruding*) yet all these are assumptions and the news have not been verified by any

authorized personnel. This amounts to verbal bullying because they damage the girl's self-image. The victim cannot associate freely with other students.

Another example of slander is about a girl who plays handball. A player *began* speaking from nowhere that, she and the other games captains, had said that, "*watu wa 'bake' (basketball players) will not go outside the school to play because they will compete for boys, (hatutaki "compe"-competition)*". Thereafter, students formed to talk about this particular girl. They could say, *unajiona we ni high class, unajiona hivi*, (you think you come from a well-off background; you are this proud!). These rumors brought a lot of distress to the girl. Look at the utterances that follow:

U 8: So when we were choosing the team, rumors began from nowhere.

That, I and the other games captain, had said that, *watu wa 'bake' (basketball) hawataenda games hatutaki "compe"-competition*, (TEXT 16)

U 8: They could say, *unajiona we ni high class, unajiona hivi, You will be demoted because of your words.*

U 12: We! Unapata mtu anakuongelesha ni mmoja marafiki wako wamekutotoroka

(Friends deserted her.) (TEXT 16)

Text 16 is another example about a girl who is a handball player in her team. The perpetrators accuse her of spreading rumors about basketball team members. She is accused of having said that the other girls in basketball will not go for games because they will compete for boys with the girl's team (the hand ballers.). These rumors cost

her her friends. They deserted her. “Wee! Unapata mtu anakuongelesha ni mmoja. Marafiki wako wamekutotoroka” and also her gossipers brought a rift between her and her teachers. The victim was psychologically affected. She did not have any one to associate which had a negative feeling and impact.

Maliciously spreading bad rumors about the hearer with an intention of damaging the public image of the hearer is verbal bullying as posited by Brown and Levinson (1987) as it disparages the positive face of the hearer to be seen as of less dignified and disrespectful. The defaced victim is likely to be disliked and isolated in their social circles as Olweus (1991:413), says that bullying is “an experience where one is excluded from a group or an activity, locking someone up in a room, gossiping or spreading rumors about someone or refusing to respond to their desires. So from the study data above using data in texts 12, 13 and 16 support that spreading rumors or slanders are a way of bullying using words. In Text 12 and 13 rumors are spread that the girl is HIV positive, she is immoral, pregnant and so forth. In Text 16, the girl is accused of spreading rumors that the other team is after boys when they go for basketball competitions. The girl is isolated by both teams and badmouthed as a rumormonger. She is isolated and disliked by the two teams which characterizes bullying according to Olweus (1991:413).

4.1.8 Insults

Just like slanders or rumors, insults damage the hearer’s positive face of the desire to be seen as respectful and dignified. Insults which are comments or acts that offend and make the hearer to be seen as less dignified and someone who does not deserve respect and honor. Here are some cases in the study:

U 6: The boy just called me a “*Kimbu*” (meaning chameleon) because one of my left leg was swollen (TEXT 5)

U 15: My second name is *Muteti* So walitranslate wakaniita.... Wakaanza kuniita “*muthiti*” (*anus*). (TEXT 5)

She went into the cube and started saying “*huyo msichana ni mkundu sana*” (*mkundu*) abusive word mentioning taboo words of the private parts- anus). (TEXT 15)

The boy who is the victim is abused severally. At first he is called a kimbu (a chameleon) since he was limping when walking due to a swollen leg. Secondly, he is insulted using a body’s private organ (anus) by changing his father’s name *muteti* to sound *muthiti* (anus a private body part). This is derogatory, hence shaming.

The same case applies here. The girl is abused by the perpetrator and called ‘mkundu’ when the victim does not do what the perpetrator wants “*huyo msichana ni mkundu sana*.”The victim is embarrassed and infuriated also because of the perpetrators verbal expressions.

U10: “*huyo msichana ni mkundu sana*” (“*mkundu*”) abusive word mentioning taboo words of the private parts- anus). (TEXT 15)

According to Olweus and Solberg (1998:7), bullying involves use of actions such as insulting, (abuses), using comments which are offensive, sneering and embarrassing.

4.1.9 Accusations / Criticisms

Brown and Levinson (1987:62), assert that it is “the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable to at least some others.” Accusations or criticisms are expressions of disapproval of the hearer’s wants such as personal characteristics, beliefs, values and possession of goods. The speaker does not care about the feelings of hearer. This causes damage to the positive face of the hearer and the desire to be approved and accepted by others.

In this study data, accusations or critical language is used by the perpetrators of verbal bullying towards their victims in different situations.

For example, in text 3 below, a boy is accused of being a traitor because he stopped associating with the group members in their activities “So they started calling me names....yah...That I *am a traitor* (silent), I *betrayed them*, (TEXT 3)

In Text 4, the boy’s character is criticized. He is accused of having many girlfriends because girls hover around him during games competitions. He is nicknamed ‘*kathembo*’ which means hyena which according to the accusers, implies that he is an immoral person.

U4: There is this Kamba word “*Kathembo*” so that means in Kiswahili we can say “*Fisi*” you see now. They started saying I have many girlfriends yeah. So that *name Kathembo* will be my nickname (Text 4)

In text (11) the boy's character is also criticized. His nickname Ubwa Koko symbolizes a person whose character is indecent and undesirable. Just like an indigenous dog (Ubwa Koko) lacks discipline and behaves indecently, so is this boy's behavior depicted by the perpetrators. This criticism of the boy's character damages his image to be seen as a person of good moral standard. This act threatens his fellowship face (positive face) of being accepted by others in their social circles. See the utterance below:

U11: It was in form one when people gave me a certain name, of someone who completed in 2014, "Ubwa Koko" (u 1 2, text 11)

Looking at the above illustrations on criticism and accusations, we can say that these forms of verbal bullying expressions exist in our schools. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:62), accusations or criticisms express disapproval of the hearer's wants such as personal characteristics, for instance the boy's over-socialization with girls is criticized by others and he is branded the name "Fisi" which could mean that the boy's character is questionable, he is immoral (text 4 u 4). The perpetrators therefore do not want to associate with him yet according to Brown and Levinson (1987:62), it is "the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable to at least some others." He is isolated by them because his behavior is unacceptable by the group. This creates what Brown and Levinson call face threat or damage of public image (1978:63) he defines face as "the want to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respect." In addition, it is everyone's "desire to present oneself with dignity and honor", (Domenici and Littlejohn, 2006:10). Therefore Criticisms

and use of disapproval of the victim's characters in this data is a sign of dishonor, disrespect and disapproval of their value and worthy to the group. Therefore accusations or criticisms are verbal expressions that can be used in bullying.

In verbal bullying, both positive and negative face threatening acts in form of verbal expressions and actions have been used in this study as discussed earlier. The study also attempted to bring out the different meanings of these verbal bullying expressions and their effect on the victims in the proceeding section.

Having looked at the three ways of classifying negative verbal expressions (Olweus, D. 1993; Gagliardone I. et al, 2015:6; NCIC act 2013), that constitute bullying, the researcher feels that there is need to come up with another perspective of grouping negative verbal utterances in schools. This model is be guided by two things to come up with the form of bullying. Firstly, the content and meaning of the utterance and secondly, the targeted victim. For example, student A tells student B "you are as fat as a pig because of eating 'Ngumus' yet your parents have huge school fees balances". Student 'A' feels that they are economically better than student 'B' by looking at the content of the utterance "your parents have huge school balance implying that they are poor. Researcher's category is be based on the financial status of the victim, hence the name economic form of bullying. Having looked at what other researchers have done to come up with the categories of bullying, the researcher slightly modifies the categories based on the content and meaning of the utterance and the situation of the targeted person. So verbal bullying expressions can also be categorized as follows:

- Gender disparity form of verbal bullying

- Religious form
- Tribal form
- Academic form
- Age based form of bullying
- Disability form
- Economic form of verbal bullying

4.2 Description of the Meaning of the identified verbal bullying Expressions

An utterance made carries with it a certain force or intention (deeper meaning) such as informing the hearer on something, giving an order, giving a warning, giving a threat, Austin and Searle's Speech Act theory(1969,1978) which is the Illocutionary act. The illocutionary force of an utterance conveys what the speaker intends to do with the particular utterance. Hence, the force determines what type of illocutionary act the utterance is meant to perform. According to the theory, it presupposes that the illocutionary force is an aspect of meaning that cannot be captured in truth – conditioned semantic theory, Osisanwo (2003:60). In other words, Searle seems to say that meaning of a statement or an utterance is beyond the semantic level. One has to consider other factors contributing to the meaning like social factors and the intentions of the speaker. In order to bring out the intended meaning speakers in an utterance want to pass to their hearers. Searle (1969) further classified the illocutionary act into five classes namely:

- I. Assertive: The speaker represents the state of affairs whereby the utterances may be judged true or false as the aim to show the state of affairs in the world. They are speech acts that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition such as making statements

(the speaker represent how things are in the world) in addition, they are acts which state what the speaker believes (include acts of stating, suggesting, boasting, complaining, (Leech, 1983:105).for example, when a speakers says “I feel grateful” the speaker wants to report to the hearer(s) that he or she is grateful. The utterance is merely reporting (Austin, 1962:79).

- II. Directives: They are speech acts by the speaker that attempt to get the hearer to do something. They cause the hearer to take a particular action such as requesting, asking, begging, ordering, warning, threatening, questioning, commanding, and advising, (Searle, 1969). In addition Searle gives an example, when a speaker says “ please pass the salt”, by the request the speaker gives the request to the hearer and makes the hearer pass the salt (Searle, 1969:53)

- III. Commissives: The speaker commits themselves to perform some action in the future, such as promising, threatening, offering, challenging, swearing, vowing and offering. For example, in the utterance, “I shall do my best”. The utterance shows that the speaker performs the act of promising as posited by Austin (1962:77).

- IV. Expressive: this is where the speaker expresses a psychological state about the experience. The speech acts express the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the situation. In other words they bring out the feelings of the speakers towards their subjects using words. They include acts such as complimenting, apologizing, scolding, greeting, thanking, complaining and congratulating. For instance when a speaker says, "I am willing to apologize", and "I am sorry to have said..." the utterance shows the act of apologizing (Austin, 1962:80-81).
- V. Declaratives: the utterances attempts to change the world by presenting it as having been changed such as baptizing, pronouncing someone guilt, pronouncing someone husband and wife, or appointing, resigning, ex-communicating, and naming. (Searle, 1969).

Searle (1969) further asserted that speaker's illocutionary acts can also be said to be direct or indirect. In trying to differentiate the two, Yule (2006), said that direct speech acts are straightforward and often contain performative verbs while indirect speech acts require inferences on the part of the hearer or reader. Searle (ibid.) describes the indirect speech acts as "a situation where the speaker communicates to the hearer more than he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information both linguistic and non- linguistic together with the general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer," In other words, Searle

attempts to show how it is possible that a speaker's utterance can mean more than what it really means. Verbal Bullying uses utterances that can be informed using the Speech Act Theory by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969).

The Speech Act Theory has been used as an analytical tool of the identified linguistic expressions of verbal bullying in the current study. The selected verbal bullying utterances have been subjected to the Illocutionary act analysis and specifically the five classes of acts that bring out meaning beyond the semantic level. The researcher analyzed the meanings of the victim's utterances using directives, expressive, commissive and assertive. The data collected in the current study was analyzed as shown in the following texts:

Directive: a directive tries to make the hearer do something Searle (1969) there are several utterances from the present study data that could be said to be directives. Examples of such utterances are as follows:

U 19: because you have delayed to pay (borrowed ten shillings), you must pay it and in addition, fifty shillings. (TEXT 9)

U 20 ...“come” Where is my fifty shillings? When I come, when we meet again I need my fifty shillings and I won't speak again. (TEXT 9) the speaker uses the word must in utterance 19 when he is demanding for the fifty shillings. She also orders the hearer to go where she is “come”. The hearer has to move and again answer the question asked “Where is my fifty shillings?”

U 10: why have you broken this cup?

.... You are going to pay it.... It's a must you pay the cup.

.... come here! Come here (TEXT 14)

Again the speaker uses imperatives to force the hearer to pay the cup, “*come here! You pay the cup*”

Directives can be inform of reminders or repeated requests since they require the hearer to respond to the request.

U 65: this girl that broke the mug, she told me.... *I want 350 or buy me another mug.*

U67: *Even today she has said that she wants her mug again. Now she is disturbing her. (TEXT 13)*

U48: I asked her, so and so *do you remember that you talked to me badly?* Then she told me mmm! *Hata sikukuongelesha vibaya.* (I have not talked to you badly.) *Hilo haina shida, hata tukienda (that's not a problem even when we go to campus go and report me to the lecturer) campus, enda ukareport Kwa lecturers. (TEXT 15)*

The words even today, she is disturbing, shows the feelings of the hearer after being nagged to pay the mug. That nagging is what makes it a **directive** because the hearer has to do something.

Directives are also inform of challenges or dares. The speaker challenges the hearer to do something. Look at the following conversation:

U 17: I said this *plate is mine, can take it and leave with it.*

U 17: This form *three confronts me, si you take it.* Then I asked, *what did you just say?*

U 20: *He said kwani what will you do?*

The speaker's words "*kwani what will you do?*" is a challenge thrown to the hearer. This makes the hearer either react physically or psychologically to it. In this case the two boys fought.

Another example from the study is about a prefect being challenged by a fellow student as follows:

U 42: Tuendee vitabu, tunataka kutumia (go and get for us books from the secretary). Sasa wewe unasema hatuendei books. Hiyo ni kazi yako (it's your work to take for us books), unataka tuandikie nini unataka tuandikie nini. Then I just kept quiet Then akaniambia hu! Unanimize aje? Unanimize aje? (Why are you looking at me like that? Sasa wewe, na mimi difference, ni white collar. (The difference between me and you is that uniform for a prefect.) (Text 15).

The speaker challenges the prefect's position. She tells the prefect that they are different because of the prefect's uniform.

"Sasa wewe, na mimi difference, ni white collar." (U42, Text 15).

Expressive, according to Searle (1969), expresses the psychological state about the situation or the subject by the speaker. The speech acts express the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the situation. In other words they bring out the feelings of the speakers towards their subjects using words. They include acts such as complimenting, criticizing, accusing, ridiculing, insulting apologizing, scolding, greeting, thanking, slandering, complaining and congratulating. For instance, when a

speaker says, “I am willing to apologize”, and “I am sorry to have said...” the utterance shows the act of apologizing (Austin, 1962:80-81).

From the source data, some expressives were found as shown below:

U4: *Hey, you are clicking and you know you gets E” (text 1)*

U16: *my head is oval shaped. (Text 1)*

In U4, a girl who is revising is interrupted by the boy (the perpetrator) and the girl clicks. The boy thinks that the girl had clicked on him. He contemptuously tells her that she gets grade E’s yet she is clicking on him.

In the second utterance (u16), the same girl comes to class having shaved her hair. The whole class laughs contemptuously and tells her that her head is “oval shaped.”

In the above two utterances (u16 and u4) the speaker uses despising words “you get E’s and your head is oval shaped” they express the speakers attitude towards the victim, that of despising and demeaning. Look again at the following utterance:

U 9: They just started calling me “*chapatti*” I don’t know why. (TEXT2)

U 26: When I come to consult Math from Math’s teacher they *said I just took a textbook, I copied an example and I brought it.* (TEXT2)

They started calling me....the name is *Mathina*, translated as (troubles or a poor person). I felt so bad. (TEXT 3)

In utterance 9 and 26 above are also expressives. The boy’s head is likened to the shape of chapati and go ahead to tell him that he just copies mathematics assignments. They question his intelligence and ability to understand math. This expresses their contemptuous attitude towards the victim.

Another incident is given where the speaker in a sarcastic tone tells the victim

“You are in form four and you don’t know form two question?

What are you doing in form four?” (Text 15)

The perpetrator degrades the victim academically. She feels she is better than the victim.

Expressives are also shown by the word black skin below. The speaker calls the other black as compared to the light skinned ones as shown:

U 6: Due to my skin colour, black, so una pata kuna ile majina unaitwa majina,

U 8: Kama *Otis*, nafeel sipendwi na hao watu, .unapata sometimes like (TEXT 6)

U6: a girl in school who *thinks she has a lot of money than me.* , she gave *me top bread, (the crust of the bread.)*. I think she abused me because I came from a *poor family*. (TEXT 12)

U22: They started abusing me because I was weak due to sickness. They started *asking me if I had AIDS*. (TEXT 12)

In text 12 (u22, 6, and text 13, u10, 16), it is talking about the same girl. Though speakers are different but both portray a low opinion about the victim. They express their low valuation of the girl’s status in terms of money and character. The act of giving the girl breadcrumbs connotes their

low opinion on her, that she is poor. The other speaker does not empathize with the victim when sick. She even rumormongers that the victim is pregnant and HIV victim.

U 10: hurting words. They were saying I am pregnant, some said I was raped; others said I aborted a child, that is why I am having those signs of walking alone (TEXT 13)

U 16: Some girls in class were saying that *I have slept with a manI am .a prostitute...I am having those kind of symptoms of a pregnant woman. And because naturally I have a big stomach, they are have said I am pregnant and they told me in three months' time they will just see the stomach protruding* (TEXT 13)

U 8: So when we were choosing the team, rumors began from nowhere. That, I and the other games captain, had said that, *watu wa 'bake' (basketball) hawataenda games hatutaki "compe"-competition,* (TEXT 16)

U 8: They could say, *unajiona we ni high class, unajiona hivi, You will be demoted because of your words.*

Another expressive utterance is on u8 above. The speaker is accusing her of feeling better placed than them “unajiona we ni high class” and all her friends desert her in u12. They bring out hatred emotions and even isolate the victim leaving her alone.

U 12: We! Unapata mtu anakuongelesha ni mmoja marafiki wako wamekutotoroka

(Friends deserted her.) (TEXT 16)

The name 'kimbu' is an insult translated chameleon and 'mkundu' and "muthiti" translated anus below are derogatory. They express the speaker's dislike towards the victim. They embarrass the victims and demean them as cited below:

U 6: The boy just called me a "*Kimbu*" because one of my left leg was swollen (TEXT 5)

U 15: My second name is *Muteti* So walitranslate wakaniita.... Wakaanza kuniita "*muthiti*" (*anus*). (TEXT 5) She went into the cube and started saying "*huyo msichana ni mkundu sana*" (*mkundu*) abusive word mentioning taboo words of the private parts- anus). (TEXT 5)

Criticisms or accusations bring out speakers negative attitude towards the victim. For instance, the utterances below the victim is accused of being a traitor and the other greedy fellow for women that is immoral whom they nickname "hyena".

"So they started calling me names....yah...That I *am a traitor* (silent), I *betrayed them*, (TEXT 3)

U4: There is this Kamba word "*Kathembo*" so that means in Kiswahili we can say "*Fisi*" you see now. They started saying I have many girlfriends yeah. So that *name Kathembo* will be my nickname (Text 4)

Expressive comments can be positive or negative. Thanking, condoling, apologizing are positive ones and negative ones like, criticizing, insulting, slandering, ridiculing, and evaluating negatively.

In the above findings, the speakers who are perpetrators of verbal bullying used negative expressive words that show their negative feelings and attitudes towards their victims. Explanations drawn from Cruse (2000:329) make one understand more about Searle's five classifications of speech acts namely; assertive, directives, commissives, declarative and expressive. According to cruse (2000), "expressive speech act of attitude is an acquired or predisposed mental state regarding an object with some degree of positivity or negativity which is perceived from a social or personal stimuli or a relational mental state connecting a person to a proposition. Attitude is the way one thinks and feels about someone or something. It causes one to behave in a certain way towards people and sometimes to be aggressive". In the above analysis of the data, different attitudes have been portrayed by the speakers towards their victims and mostly negative ones like criticizing, insulting, degrading, despising, negative evaluations and ridiculing.

In conclusion, speakers that is, perpetrators of verbal bullying, mostly used both directive speech acts that cause the victim to do something such as ordering, challenging, requesting, asking, begging, ordering, warning, threatening, questioning and commanding. They also used negative expressive speech acts that show their negative attitudes and feelings towards their targets to perpetuate verbal bullying in

schools. Such expressions include criticizing, accusing, ridiculing, insulting, scolding, slandering and complaining.

Table 4.2 summary of verbal bullying expressions identified in the study

Directives	Negative expressive
ordering, challenging, requesting, asking, begging, ordering, warning, threatening, questioning and commanding	Criticizing, accusing, ridiculing, insulting, scolding, slandering and complaining.

4.3 The effects of Verbal Bullying expressions

Perlocutionary act is the effect or the consequence the utterance has on the hearer such as convincing the hearer about something, persuading the hearer, arousing anger or anxiety, creating fear, worry, distress, annoyance, threatening, intimidating, embarrassing ,amusing etc.(Searle, 1969). For example, the utterance, take a look of yourself. You are the most beautiful woman I have ever met.” The function of this utterance is to give effect of amusing to the hearer (Searle, 1969). The Speech Act Theory has been used as an analytical tool of the identified linguistic expressions of verbal bullying in the current study. The selected verbal bullying utterances have been subjected to the Illocutionary act analysis and specifically the five classes of the act that brings out meaning beyond the semantic level. The researcher analyzed the meanings of the victim’s utterances using directives, expressives, commissives and assertives and the effects determined as follows:

TEXT 2 A 19 Year Old Form 4 Male Student from a Public Mixed Sub-County Day School.

Locutionary act

The teacher call me to do mathematics in front.

They just started calling me “*chapatti*” I don’t know why.

There is another experience that really hurt me.

When I come to consult math from math’s teacher they *say I just took a book, textbook I copied an example and I bring it.*

Perlocutionary act

I was angry but didn’t show them

Told them...just leave you to God

I am used to it

I hate myself because I wonder why they used to tell me such things.

May be I will prove them wrong one day

The Perlocutionary effect is annoyance, resignation, unworthiness. The boy says that he was angry at them but left them to God may be to deal with them. This indicates that he felt helpless and then concludes that one day, he will prove them wrong.

The boy felt bad, and sensitive that they were talking about his background, that his name ‘Mathina’ translated poverty denotes his background. Therefore, the perlocutionary effect is low self-esteem and feeling unworthy.

TEXT 3 18 Year Old Form Four Male Student from a Public Mixed Sub-County Day School

Locutionary act

The other experience is my father's name.

They started calling me....the name is Mathina, translated as (troubles or a poor person).

Perlocutionary act

I feel so bad

Feel it's like they are talking about my background

I just understand them

The boy felt bad, and sensitive that they were talking about his background, that his name 'Mathina' translated poverty denotes his background. Therefore the perlocutionary effect is low self-esteem, unworthy.

TEXT 3 18 Year Old Form Four Male Student from a Public Mixed Sub-County Day School

Locutionary act

We had a group of friends.

So we were doing a lot of things together but I saw some things were not helping me.

I decided to move (pull out) from the group.

So they started calling me names....yah...That I am a traitor (silent) I betrayed them.

Yes and I did not feel so good.

Perlocutionary act

I did not feel so good

I decided to leave the group

Felt bad

The same boy 'Mathina' (problems) is accused of being traitorous in another group. Then he isolates himself from the group.

The perlocutionary effect is Withdrawal and sadness. "I felt bad, I decided to leave the group"

TEXT 4 18 Year Old Form 4 Male Student from a Public Mixed Day School

Locutionary act

So when the girls see me, they used to come to me, hug me, you see.

There is this Kamba word "Kathembo" so that means in Kiswahili we can say "Fisi" you see now. They started saying I have many girlfriends yeah. So that name Kathembo will be my nickname

Perlocutionary act

At first I didn't like it

I was very sad

I was not able to interact with them

The perlocutionary effect is Withdrawal, isolation and sadness. The boy says that he was sad and he was not able to interact with them later after the nickname" Fisi-a hyena"

TEXT 6 A 18 Year Old Male Form 4 Student from a Public Mixed Sub County Day School Locutionary act

Due to my skin colour, black, so una pata kuna ile majina unaitwa majina, Kama Otisi, like kwanza hiyo Otisi imespread... (Nicknamed Otisi-Otieno due to his black skin stereotyped to Luo tribe who have dark-skinned color)

Perlocutionary act

nafeel sipendwi na hao watu,(He feels unloved by the perpetrators)
Sometimes nakaa peke yangu. (I isolate myself and stay alone)
ina affect my mental psychology(affects me mentally)
ushaona kila mtu ako against you,(I feel everybody is against me)
utaanza kufeel hadi hii shule naeza acha (feel like not going to the same school)

The boy feels unloved, he isolates himself, and says that he can quit schooling here, therefore_the_perlocutionary effect is that of unworthiness, discrimination, and withdrawal.

TEXT 8 An 18 Year Old Male Student from Public Boy's County School

Locutionary act

This form three just comes si mara ya kwanza, anakuja hata kama hajaserve anacome tunakula tu

I said this plate is mine, can take it and leave with it.

He says si utake (just take) it.

Perlocutionary act

The boy intruding says you can take your plate,

Questions him is your food here?

Becomes angry and orders him to leave. Just go, leave

What will you do?

Both push each other charged to fight. Eventually they fight

The boy becomes angry and orders the other to leave.

The Perlocutionary effect is aggression, “both push each other charged to fight.”

TEXT 8 A 18 Year Old Male Student from a Public Boy’s County School

Locutionary act

We are having our lunch and then this form three just comes.

He eats si mara ya kwanza, anakuja hata kama hajaserve anacome tunakula tu.

We are having our lunch, and then I made a joke with one of my friends there,

I said this plate is mine, can take it and leave with it.

This form three confronts me, si you take it.

Then I asked, what did you just say?

He said ai! kwani what will you do?

I asked, what did you just say?

This form three, wants to make me look weaker in front of my friends, since we are friends...

He is a form three.

I am a form four.

I asked him, is your food here?

He said no.

But have the audacity to talk to me the way you want?

Kindly just leave;

Don't eat here. Just leave.

The Perlocutionary effect is humiliation, agitation and aggression. The boy feels disrespected by the action of the other boy's actions of daring to challenge him before his fellow form fours, "this form three wants to make me look weaker in front of my friends, and you have audacity to talk to me the way you want? Don't eat here, just leave."

TEXT 9 A 19 year old Form 3 Male Student from a Public Boy's Boarding County School

Locutionary act

Because you have delayed me (to pay the borrowed money) you must bring it with fifty shillings,

Where is my fifty shillings, when I come, when we meet again I need my fifty shillings and I won't speak again,

Perlocutionary act

Wondered fifty shillings...how will I raise fifty shillings if ten shillings is a problem?

The thing that affects me most is that we don't speak nowadays and we are in the same school. Feel...emotionally disturbed. I just ignored

Perlocutionary effect is fear, anxiety and helplessness. The boy could not come to terms that he couldn't associate with the other boy freely, he says "the thing that affects me most is that we don't speak...I feel emotionally disturbed."

TEXT 11 A 16 Years Old Form 3 Male Student from a Public Boy's County School

Locutionary act

It was in form one when people gave me a certain name, of someone who went, completed in 2014, "Ubwa Koko."

They gave me that name then because they said we looked alike

Perlocutionary act

I told them I can't accept it because it's not mine

I just left them to do what they want

I felt very bad

I didn't report because those people were very furious they would have thrashed me seriously.

The Perlocutionary effect is that at first, the boy was in denial; he didn't accept the nickname (I told them, I can't accept it). Later, when they couldn't stop calling him the name he became resigned and hopeless (I left them to do what they want) and lastly he was fearful and helpless because he was threatened to be beaten if he did so (I didn't report...those people were furious, they would have thrashed me seriously).

Therefore the effect is fear, resignation and helplessness.

TEXT 12 A 15 Year Old Form One Female Student from Public Girls Extra County School

Locutionary act

I met with my friends who are here in school.

They started abusing me because I was weak due to sickness.

They started asking me if I had AIDS.

Perlocutionary act

Just felt stigmatized

I just forgave them

I shared with my brother who advised me

The perlocutionary effect is Stigmatization, unworthiness and, resignation, she says, “ I felt stigmatized, I forgave them, “ she feels that she has no power over the situation and therefore surrenders by forgiving them just to lull the harm.

TEXT 12 A 15 Year Old Form One Female Student from Public Girls Extra County School

Locutionary act

There is a girl in school who thinks she has a lot of money than me.

I come from a poor family. So the girl sent me some bread to buy for her.

When I went back to class, she gave me top bread, (the crust of the bread.

Perlocutionary act

I was traumatized

She abused me because I come from a poor family

I felt ashamed (broke down)

And also isolated

Belittled

The perlocutionary effect is traumatization, humiliation, and withdrawal, she says, “I was traumatized, ashamed, isolated and belittled.”

TEXT 13 A Sixteen Year Old Form 1 Student from a Public Extra County School

Locutionary act

January this year, I got the infection again.

Now some girls in class were saying that I have slept with a man

I am having those kind of symptoms a pregnant woman have.

And because naturally I have a big stomach, they are have said I am pregnant
and

They tell me in three months' time they will just see the stomach protruding.

Perlocutionary act

I felt bad

The effect is that the girl feels bad hence the perlocutionary effect is emotional
disturbance and low self-esteem.

TEXT 13 A Sixteen Year Old Form 1 Student from a Public Girls Extra County
School

Locutionary act

There was a girl who came to our class with a bucket that is not usual
(expensive).

Then there is girl who has like the smallest bucket.

So she just came and passed the bucket in front of her face

She said, 'can you afford a bucket like this one'?

Perlocutionary act

Went out and she became shy started crying and timid

She never wanted people to know her

She waits for people to shower then goes with her small bucket

A girl broke a mug of another girl, you know...Expensive....,

She was told her, I don't care where you come from, and I don't care, if you don't have anything (money).

I want 350 or buy for me another mug.

Perlocutionary act

The girl started crying

Asked where will I get 350 shillings

My parents never gave me pocket money

The perlocutionary effect is helplessness and humiliation. She could not afford the money to pay back the cup, "where will I get three hundred and fifty shillings? My parents never gave me pocket money"

TEXT 13 A Sixteen Year Old Form 1 Student from a Public Girls Extra County School

Locutionary act

I don't care where you come from, I don't care, yaani, anything that you have, yaani anything that you have that you don't have,

I want 350 or buy me my mug.

Even today she has said that she wants her mug again. Now she is disturbing her.

Perlocutionary act

Disturbed

Made me cry

I felt bad

People would think I am a bad person

The girl felt disturbed, emotionally overwhelmed, and conscious on her self-image, she says “I felt disturbed, it made me cry, people would think I am a bad person”. Therefore the effect is low self-esteem, unworthiness.

TEXT 14 A 15 year old Form 1, Female student from public girls boarding extra-county school

Locutionary act

Why have you broken this cup?

You are going to pay it, you are going to pay me the cup, and it's a must you pay the cup, come here! Come here, it's urgent

I do not have the money

Okay I will pay it

Perlocutionary act

Became emotional

It made me cry

I felt bad

People would think I am a bad person

The Perlocutionary effect is helplessness and embarrassment. She doesn't know how to raise the money to buy the broken cup, “I don't have the money”. Again she is sensitive on how people would think of her, as a bad person.

TEXT 15 A 19 year old Form 4 Female student from an extra county girls' boarding school

Locutionary act

(Do you remember that you talked to me badly?).

The perpetrator retaliates giving a challenge

(Hata sikukuongelesha vibaya. Ulireport? Hiyo haina shida, hata tukienda campus, enda ukareport Kwa lecturerHata sikukuongelesha vibaya

Ulireport?

Hiyo haina shida, hata tukienda campus, enda ukareport kwa lecturer (even when we to college go and report me to the lecturer)

Perlocutionary act

The Perlocutionary effect is that of don't care. The girl doesn't show any remorsefulness even after wronging the other one," even I didn't talk to you badly...when we go to campus, go and report to the lecturers."

TEXT 15 A 19 year old Form 4 Female student from an Extra County Girls Boarding School

Locutionary act (actual words of the message)

Tuendee vitabu, tunataka kutumia. sasa wewe unasema hatuendei books na hiyo ni kazi yako, unataka tuandikie nini unataka tuandikie nini. Then I just kept quiet Then akaniambia hu! Unanize aje? Unanize aje?

Sasa wewe, na mimi difference, ni white collar. (The uniform for a prefect.)

Then she said, hata sijamuongelesha vibaya,akitaka siaende kwa deputy.

Perlocutionary act (hearer's reaction to speaker's message)

I felt bad then I just kept quiet.

Nikamwangalia tu.

Nikaachana nay eye

I felt bad, held my eyes and cried.

The perlocutionary effect is humiliation and helplessness. The girl says “I felt bad, I looked at her and cried, I left her alone”

TEXT 15 19 Year Old Form 4 Female Student from an Extra County Girls’ Boarding School

Locutionary act

(Sarcastically), you are in form four and you don’t know form two question?

What are you doing in form four?)

(sasa wewe unasema hatuendei, books, na hiyo ni kazi yako, unataka tuandikie nini?)

Nikamwangalia tu.

Then akaniambia hu!

Unanize aje? Unanize aje?

Sasa wewe, na mimi difference, ni white collar).

Perlocutionary act

I felt that I could not withstand her in that case

So I decided to pull out of the group

The perlocutionary effect is that of withdrawal and low self-esteem, she says, “I decided to pull out of the group, I felt that I could not withstand her.”

TEXT 15 A19 Year Old Form 4 Female Student from Girls’ Extra County Boarding School

Locutionary act

“huyo msichana ni mkundu sana” (Mkundu) abusive word mentioning taboo words of the private parts- anus).

Perlocutionary act

I felt bad

I even cried

Just decided to keep it to my self

I pulled out from the discussion group we had with the girl.

The girl says that she was sad, she even cried and she pulled from the group.

The perlocutionary effect is Sadness, emotional disturbance, and withdrawal.

TEXT 16 A 15 Year Old Form 2 Female Student from a Public Girls’ Extra County

School Locutionary act

(Rumors began from nowhere.

That, I and the other games captain, had said that, watu wa ‘bake’ (basketball) hawataenda games hatutaki “compe”-(competition).

That was the hardest time I ever faced in my life.

So groups were formed to talk about you.

They could say, unajiona we ni high class, unajiona hivi,

You will be demoted because of your words, see)

Perlocutionary act

That was the hardest time I have ever faced in my life

Marafiki

wanakutoroka(friends deserted me)

Teacher I cried

It was so hard

The perlocutionary effect is unworthiness, withdrawal, anxiety. She says that friends deserted her, and she even cried.

4.4 Summary of the effects of verbal bullying

From the findings above most victims were negatively affected by the expressions of verbal bullying. They reported to have feelings of unworthiness, withdrawal, anxiety, Sadness, emotional disturbance, low self-esteem, and humiliation, helplessness, emotionally overwhelmed, over-conscious on one's self-image, traumatization, Stigmatization, resignation, fear, annoyance, agitation and aggression.

These effects may affect the victim negatively. They alter the behavior of the victim. The victims may isolate themselves from group members as some reported, may show signs of fear even going to school. Delgado (1982:137, 146) supports this assertion by saying that "verbal bullying can also cause feelings of isolation, loss of self-esteem, humiliation, embarrassment, withdrawal behaviors and anxiety". The effects can be summarized in a table as follows:

Table 4.3 effects of verbal bullying expressions on the victim

feelings of unworthiness, withdrawal, anxiety, Sadness, emotional disturbance, low self-esteem, and humiliation, helplessness, emotionally overwhelmed, over-conscious on one's self-image, traumatization, Stigmatization, resignation, fear, annoyance, agitation and aggression.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings from the research, draws conclusions, makes recommendations and suggests areas of further studies.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study focused on linguistic expressions used in verbal bullying among high school students between the ages of (14-20) specifically in selected secondary schools in Machakos Sub-County, Kenya.

The objectives of the study examined were, to identify and classify verbal bullying expressions, secondly, to describe their meaning, and lastly, to show the effects of

verbal bullying expressions on the victims in selected secondary schools in Machakos sub-county.

The researcher randomly sampled sixteen students from four schools. Two students were picked from each of the four schools selected from the sub-county schools in Machakos Sub County. The respondents were interviewed and also tape recorded because the researcher was interested in the utterances from the individuals that constitute verbal bullying. From the data, the researcher identified and classified verbal bullying expressions using Olweus (1993) model bullying classification and Brown and Levinson's(1978,1987) Politeness theory, described the meanings of the identified verbal bullying expressions using Austin's speech act theory and examined the effects of the identified verbal bullying expressions using Searle's (1969) five classes of illocutionary acts.

5.1.1 Identification of verbal bullying expressions

From the literature review, Olweus (1993) came up with negative verbal expressions such as threats, insults and reprimands and psychological negative acts like facial grimacing and isolation. Apart from the literature reviewed, in the current research, the researcher used Brown and Levinson's (1987, 1978) politeness theory to identify verbal bullying expressions. Looking at the data collected from the interviews through tape recording of the respondents' narratives on verbal bullying, both positive and negative face threatening acts were identified as verbal bullying expressions. The Face Threatening Acts that threatened the hearer's positive face were accusations/criticisms, expressions of contempt or ridiculing, negative evaluations, insults, slanders or spreading rumors and challenges. Those Face Threatening Acts

which threatened the negative face of the hearer included: interruptions or intrusion, reminders and issuing orders.

The present study found out that verbal bullying expressions such as insults, use of offensive language, threats, issuing commands, accusations, ridiculing, and evaluations were used by the perpetrators to bully their victims. Again, the study established that verbal bullying expressions had great effects on the targeted. Some of the victims reported to have felt isolated from the affiliated groups, others said they felt dejected, devalued, low self-worthy, humiliated, and embarrassed.

It is important to note that expressions that threaten both the positive and negative face of the hearer can be used in verbal bullying.

5.1.2 Meaning of the linguistic expressions identified as forms of verbal bullying

Out of the selected verbal utterances from the data, nine forms of verbal bullying expressions were identified namely: insults, orders, reminders, contempt/ridicules, intrusion/interruptions, slanders/rumors, evaluations and challenges/threatening/darling.

Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) Speech Act Theory was used to bring out the intended meaning of the identified linguistic expressions of verbal bullying. The selected verbal bullying utterances were subjected to the Illocutionary act analysis and specifically the five classes of illocutionary act as further classified by Searle (1969) namely: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives. The Perlocutionary effects of the Locutions on the hearer were also determined from the illocutionary force of each utterance. The findings were as follows:

The nine forms used both direct and indirect illocutionary acts. They were majorly expressive speech acts and directive speech acts. The later, demanded the victims to do something against their will. This challenged the negative face of the victims hence constituting verbal bullying. They carried a force of ordering/commanding, challenging/dares, requesting, and threatening. The expressive acts brought out the negative attitude of the bullies towards their victims in their speeches. They used expressions such as criticizing/accusing, ridiculing, insulting, negatively evaluating the worth of the victim and slandering.

Among the identified verbal expressions, new forms of verbal bullying were established in the present study as compared to ones in the literature review such as negative evaluations, accusations/criticisms, challenges/daring, interruptions or intrusions, and reminders as opposed to the usual existing ones such as slanders, isolations, insults, and threats.

Lastly, the Perlocutionary effects of the Locutions on the hearer were determined from the illocutionary force of each utterance. Most of the victims who were exposed to the identified utterances were negatively affected. Many felt humiliated, emotionally disturbed, withdrawn, isolated, sad, helpless, resigned, stigmatized, unworthy, anxious, degraded, unloved, and discriminated. A few retaliated and became aggressive, agitated, care-free and annoyed.

We can say that words are not used for the sake in communication; they are intentionally used and can have different interpretations if used in different contexts.

5.1.3 The effects of Verbal Bullying expressions.

The study found out that most of the victims who were exposed to the identified utterances of verbal bullying were negatively affected. Many felt humiliated,

emotionally disturbed, withdrawn, isolated, sad, helpless, resigned, stigmatized, unworthy, anxious, degraded, unloved, and discriminated. A few retaliated and became aggressive, agitated, care-free and annoyed.

The study found out that the effects of the utterances on the victim came out clearly by using the Perlocutionary act which is the third tenet of Speech Act theory.

5.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the findings:

Verbal bullying expressions still exist in secondary schools in form of face threatening acts such as contempt or ridicules negative evaluations, insults, slanders or spreading rumors, Accusations/criticisms, challenges/daring, interruptions or intrusions, and reminders and they negatively affect the victims. Many victims reported to have felt humiliated, isolated, emotionally disturbed.

The present study concludes that expressions that threaten both the positive and negative face of the hearer can be used to execute verbal bullying in schools.

We can say that words are not used for the sake in communication; they are intentionally used and can have different interpretations if used in different contexts.

Though speech act theory was used to get the meanings of the verbal bullying expressions, only two of Searle's (1969) classes were used, that is, directive and expressive acts. A more comprehensive grammar theory would be incorporated to complement speech act theory in future.

Again expressions of verbal bullying affect the victims negatively. If unchecked, they destroy the victim's self-image and change their behavior in school. The victims can

isolate themselves, feel unworthy, feel less enthusiastic towards life and in class and in turn affect their overall academic, social and mental life. New forms of verbal bullying are coming up such as negative evaluations, challenges, intrusion, criticisms and reminders. This shows that the issue of verbal bullying is becoming a threat to education.

Therefore, it is worth noting that verbal bullying is a big problem to a life of a student in secondary school, hence it should be dealt with.

The present study also concludes that, there is laxity in schools when it comes to taking measures against verbal bullying or there may be no clear rules and regulations against verbal bullying and if there are, there is a problem in their implementation.

5.3 Recommendations

This study is pragmatic because it analyses the language use and its meaning in relation to a speech context or situation. The study recommends that, one must consider the language use by the speaker according to the social context of the conversation so as to conclude that their verbal expressions can be considered as verbal bullying.

The study also recommends that learners should be taught the importance of using more polite language in their interactions in the curriculum for both teachers, trainers and students.

School administrators, ministry of education and other educational stakeholders like parents should put measures in place to deal with verbal bullying in schools and implement them.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

- The study looked at the verbal bullying expressions that cause face damage of both the hearer and the speaker in a school set up using students in selected schools in Machakos Sub-County. Therefore, the study suggests that further research can be done to see how the face of both the hearer and the speaker can be saved because from the current study, the self-image of the hearer is damaged, the researcher suggests that ways of using words to remedy the self-image should be taught to save already damaged face (face saving strategies) using the Politeness theory by (Brown and Levinson, 1967) in school set ups.
- The present study suggests that research be carried out in Machakos County secondary schools, and secondary schools in different parts of the country since the researcher limited the study to selected schools in Machakos Sub-County because other areas were outside the scope of the study. Time was also limited.
- There is need for a study on school administrators and the teaching staff on the best language that may be used to enhance effective administration and productivity in a school set up.
- Research to be done in special school since the current study did not because the researcher was unfamiliar with the sign language and involving a third party as an interpreter may lead to data misinterpretation

or exaggeration and the special category of schools were out of the study's scope.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview Schedule for Students on Linguistic Analysis of Expressions of Verbal Bullying in Machakos Sub - County Secondary Schools

Bullying has been a major problem in schools all over the world. This questionnaire will seek information on the linguistic expressions in verbal bullying in secondary schools in Machakos Sub-County in order to help establish the forms they take and their effects on the victim students. The information collected will be treated with confidentiality and will be used in the efforts to try to identify and eradicate verbal bullying in schools in the Sub-County or the County level by the stakeholders. You are kindly requested to provide responses to these questions as honestly and precisely

as possible. Your name will not be indicated anywhere in the questionnaire. The responses will be treated as confidential.

Section 1: Background information

Gender -----class-----age-----

Category of school----- (Public mixed, or Boys'/ Girls' and if its sub county, county or extra county)

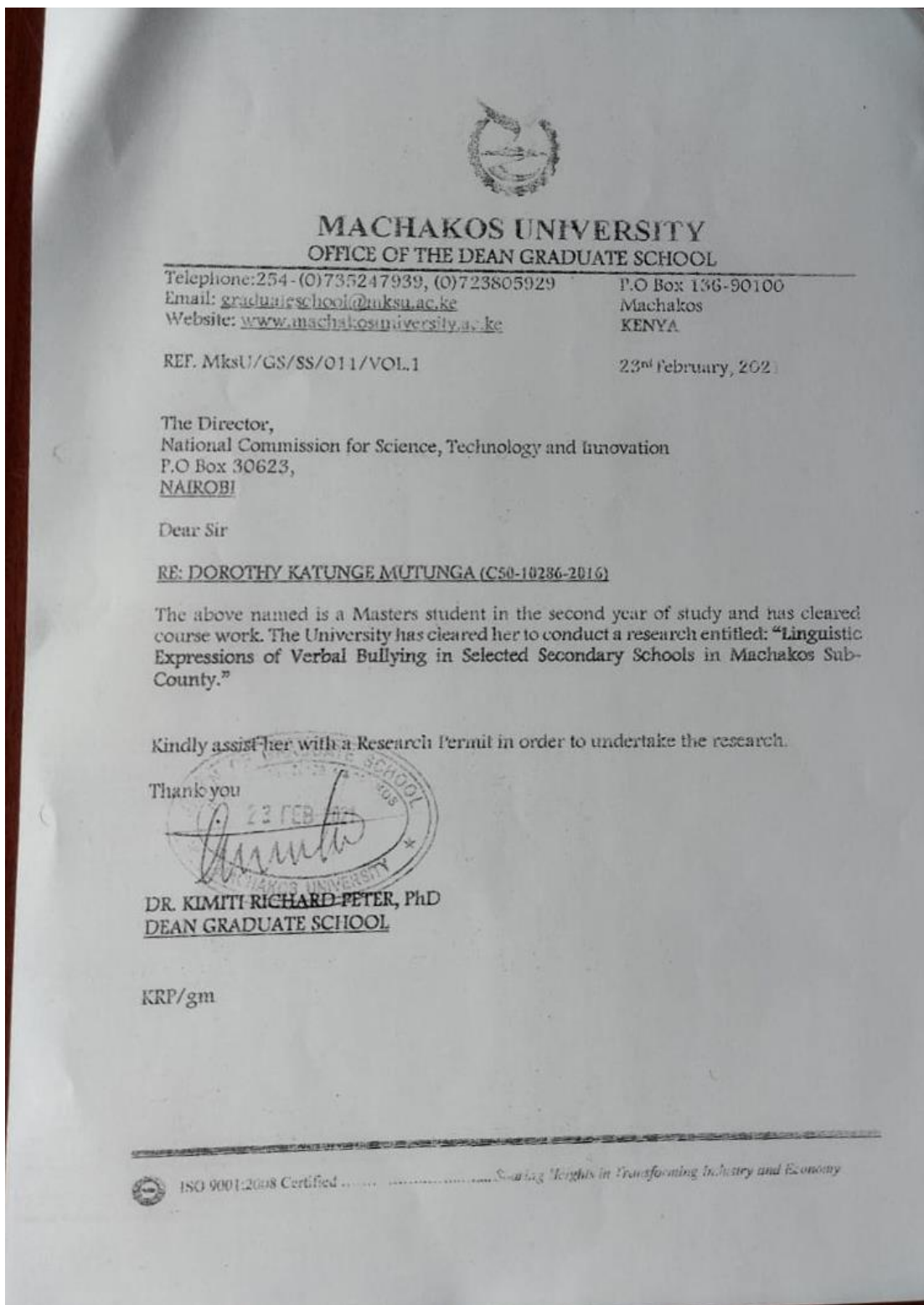
Section 2: Verbal Bullying at School

It is called Verbal Bullying when somebody is repeatedly being called names or teased, rumors spread about that person, being threatened, or being made fun of or is isolated so that he/she is lonesome and don't have any friends.

1. Have you ever been bullied while in school?
2. Please give a vivid narration on what happened and how you felt after that experience.
3. Have you seen any written forms of bullying either on exercise books, text books and so forth?
4. If yes what was their content?

Appendix II: Request Letter for Research Permit from Graduate School

Machakos University to NACOSTI



Appendix III: Research License from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)



THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is Guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period
2. The License any rights thereunder are non-transferable
3. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) within one year of completion of the research
8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice

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Appendix IV: Sample Actual Data from the Respondents

The actual narratives were recorded using Sony audio-tape recorder and the transcribed as follows in a note book:

Text 2

Background Information

School : Public Mixed Sub-County Day School

Interviewee : 20 years old Form 4 Female Student.

Transcript

1. **Dorothy** : Have you ever been bullied using words here in school?
2. **Interviewee** : yeah, I think I have been bullied several times (hesitates).
3. **Dorothy** : Ehe... Are you able to narrate that experience? How you were bullied, how it was. Just start the story. Feel free we have all the time.
4. **Interviewee** : Okay.... I was in class, then this particular subject we were revising so that we may do that paper .So, as I was revising, a boy from my class just from outside just appeared from nowhere and he was asking a boy next to me a question concerning that particular subject and at that moment I clicked, because I was not understanding, to me, I clicked because I was not understanding the.....nini the topic which I was reading and the boy thought that I have, I've clicked on him; he was like; "Hey, you are clicking and you know you gets E", in fact that ka-feeling hey, eish..... Made me almost cry.
5. **Dorothy** : How did you feel?
6. **Interviewee** :It was....(hesitates)

7. **Dorothy** : How can you explain using words? How did you feel?
8. **Interviewee** :The feeling was so bad and a.....(interrupted)
9. **Dorothy** : Not encouraging.
10. **Interviewee** : Actually, I felt much isolated. So, to me I just told the boy that, you are the best people who are blessed to get As and B's, we who are not blessed we believe to God that one day one time not only ah..... not only exams which makes people to survive but only out there here are exams of life, so I just said, (clicked) I only felt shame of myself as a lady, and.....

Text 3

Background Information

School : Public Mixed Sub-County Day School

Interviewer : Dorothy K. Mutunga (Researcher)

Interviewee : 18 year old form four male student

Transcript

1. **Interviewee** : The other experience is my father's name.
2. **Dorothy** : So students make fun of it?
3. **Interviewee** :Yah, they started calling me....the name is **Mathina**, so they call me troubles
4. **Dorothy** : Does it affect you?
5. **Interviewee** : Yes I feel so bad.
6. **Dorothy** : Sure?
7. **Interviewee** : I feel so bad
8. **Dorothy** : Laughs (Okay) so you wouldn't like somebody to can you by.... by that name or may be to make fun using your father's name?

9. **Interviewee** : Yes

10. **Dorothy** : Because it means trouble?

11. **Interviewee** : Yes

12. **Dorothy** : Oh, does it.....is it associated with your background or?

13. **Interviewee** : Yes somehow.

14. **Dorothy** : Somehow, eh!

15. **Dorothy** : So you feel it's like they are now talking about my
background something...or

APPENDIX V: Observation Checklist on the behavior of the victims while narrating their experiences

Any notable use of nonverbal cues during the victim's narration of the experience that help to give more information on the feelings, attitude of the victim towards verbal bullying experience?

Which one? Facial expressions, tone variations, gestures, mimicry, dramatization and pregnant pause.

At what point in the story was it used?

Appendix VI: Informed Consent Form

Please read the following informed consent on this page carefully before continuing.

If you have any questions or comments about the study, please email
dmutunga1975@gmail.com

Machakos University

Linguistics and language department

School of humanities and social sciences

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

STUDY TITLE: LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS EXPRESSIONS USED IN VERBAL
BULLYING IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MACHAKOS SUB-COUNTY

Researcher: Dorothy K. Mutunga

Introduction/purpose

You are being requested to participate in a research about linguistic expressions in verbal bullying. The purpose of this research study is to investigate how linguistic verbal expressions are used to carry out bullying among students in schools. The information gathered from this study will increase your understanding of the linguistic expressions that are used to bully others.

Procedure

As a participant in this study you will be asked to perform one or more of the following tasks.

Interviewing

You will be asked by the investigator to narrate your experience on an incident you were bullied or witnessed others being bullied using hateful language or utterances in the school and how you felt after that. Responses to these questions will be recorded by an Audio- recorder.

Your participation will take up to 20 minutes. This research will be conducted on one on one interview to enable the researcher get the experiences of the respondents in a narrative form.

Risks

Your participation in this study does not involve any physical risk to you. Since the probing procedure is repetitive, you may find it somewhat boring and intrusive.

Alternatives

You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study.

Confidentiality

Participation in this study will not result in a loss of privacy since the investigator will keep your identity anonymous and the information given will only be used for research purposes.

Persons other than the investigator might view your results, since results of this study may be used for teaching, research, publication, or presentations at scientific meetings.

If your individual results are discussed no reference can be made with regard to your personal identity.

Financial information

You will not be charged for any study related procedures.

Subject's rights

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.

Contact person(s)

Any question you may have about this study may be directed to
dmutunga1975@gmail.com

Consent

By proceeding with the questionnaire, you consent to the following:

“I have read this form. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form on request.”

Signature -----Date-----.