

Hansard and the Problem of “The Nonverbal Code” Implications on Parliamentary Discourse

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Abstract

The chapter exposes the challenges of recording proceedings in the Zimbabwean parliament using selected cases. For years, the Zimbabwean parliament has been a discursive battle ground as mostly the MDC(s) and ZANU (PF) parliamentarians have sort dominance in the August House. Some debates and submissions have generated violent confrontations, singing, jeering and dancing thereby reducing the August House into some kind of theater. Such developments are assumed to pose challenges in the recording of the nonverbal cues that carry the crux of the meanings around the debates. What has become obvious is the mere recording of the spoken submissions with very few representations of nonverbal codes usually indicated as either laughs or simply inaudible. Using selected debates from the Zimbabwean Hansard, this chapter exposes some challenges of recording parliamentary discourses especially when the nonverbal code is called into question.