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TOO YOUNG TO MARRY: IMPOLITENESS STRATEGIES IN NOLLYWOOD'S *WIVES' ON STRIKE*

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Abstract

This study investigates the impoliteness strategies encoded in women's fight against forced early girl marriage as portrayed in *Wives on Strike* by Steve Sodiya. The study adopts an eclectic theoretic approach as insights are drawn from Clupezper (1996, 2005) Watts (2003) and Bousfield's (2008) impoliteness strategies and face attack works. Thirty-three excerpts from *Wives on Strike* constitute data for analysis. It is discovered that in the fight against gender violence, positive impoliteness and face attack, Negative impoliteness, Bald on record impoliteness are exploited by interlocutors to register their dissatisfactions. From the study, it is discovered that males' impoliteness strategies are designed as impositions for violence while the females' impoliteness strategies are deployed as agents of offence to attack the face worth of offenders and put an end to violence against the girl child. It is recommended that since women can constitute a formidable force to stop some societal ills, they should be allowed a voice in both national and international affairs.

Key words: Domestic violence, impoliteness strategies, early marriage.

Introduction

This paper investigates the impoliteness strategies deployed by women to fight domestic violence especially forced early child marriage. Gender based violence grows astronomically each day ranging from forced early marriages to physical

battering, mental and sexual assault directed at girls and women inspite of the daily campaigns against these acts. Onoja (2019) laments that “gender-based violence (GBV) is a horrifying reality for many of those affected by conflict and crises, particularly women and girls. He further asserts that gender-based violence is widespread. Displacement, limited access to services, prevention and disruption of livelihoods greatly exacerbate the risk of GBV. Women, girls and boys report having to engage in survival sex for money, food and permission even to move about. Kishor and Johnson (2006) define domestic violence as violence against women. Violence on the other hand is action that causes victims injury, pain, sorrow, anguish or even death.

This paper studies *Wives on Strike*, a Nollywood film, a sub-genre of drama that articulates women’s fight against their daughter’s forced early marriage for fear of its attendant negative health condition. One of the negative outcomes of early child marriage/pregnancy is vesicovaginal fistula (VVF), an abnormal fistulous tract, extending between the bladder (vesica) and the vagina that allows the continuous involuntary discharge of urine into the vaginal vault. The expressive function of language is very essential as language is deployed to express man’s likes and dislikes. Man’s resentment towards issues, negative cultural demands and phenomena, are addressed and reacted against through language. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the impoliteness strategies employed by women in the fight against the imposition of husbands on under aged female children. Language is an expressive communicative mechanism used by all. Udoh (2013, p.38) observes that language is an extremely important aspect of a community, as well as an important index of identity; and it is used for all communicative functions that a community requires”. The concerted fight against

the cultural and patriarchal stronghold in the film is conveyed with language and determined action. Literature like every other organization or body contributes its quota to the fight against gender-based violence.

Literature according to Eko (2013, p.22) is about man... since literature encompasses the thought, culture, history and sociology of a people, its creative art is for knowledge and for the pleasure of man". Literature is for truth as well as beauty and so fights for the well-being of man. The phenomenal growth and popularity of the visual industry has lent vividness to the realities of domestic violence. This justifies the use of Nollywood film for this study since it is in English Language.

Objectives of the Study

This study sets to examine the positive impoliteness strategies in the *Wives on Strike*, highlight the negative impoliteness in the fight against early girl child marriage and assess the bald on record impoliteness in *Wives' on Strike*.

Conceptual Framework

Domestic violence has been explained in various ways to depict intimidation that affects physical, mental and psychological well-being of victims. Anadi, Offor, Anadi, Anadi and Anadi (2016, p.1) see domestic violence as old as marriage and family institutions. Many men in our society still support the notion that it is okay to use physical violence towards a woman if her behaviour or freedom threatens his power or standing in the family hierarchy (Sartin, Hansen & Huss, 2006). Kishor & Johnson (2006) affirm domestic violence as violence against women." This can be understood from the point that men are often the perpetrators of domestic violence while women are the complacent victims.

To Ukiri-Mudiare and Idris (2018, p.283) domestic violence is no respecter of anyone. Husbands, wives, children, grandparents, house helps, the elderly, the young, men and women are subjected to some form of violence or the other. They further narrowed domestic violence still to reflect spousal violence ‘skewed towards women whether as spouses, house helps or as trafficked persons’. They illustrate a case of a man having an affair with his house help and when his pregnant wife discovered and confronted him, he strangled her to death. They also point out that at the horizontal or intra-generational level, violence manifests among couples, ‘whether cohabiting or married, heterosexual or homosexual’. They conclude that “domestic violence is a situation whereby one person in a relationship dominates and controls the other. Where one gender perpetrates violence against another which most often is, males against females, then, it is gender-based violence. MC Donnel (2003) laments that “Nigerians do not talk about domestic violence because it seems to be an acceptable part of marriage, and found out that 40% of the urban women in research conducted in Lagos and Ibadan claimed that they have been victims of domestic violence. However, a behaviour of one which causes another pain, injury, sorrows, anguish, disfigurement and even death can never in the true sense of it be considered as an acceptable part of marriage.

Mudiare (2013c p.239-258) corroborates the earlier view stating that ... “cultural norms do not condone women being aggressors and when this happens in some Nigeria cultures, women have to carry out sacrifices to appease the gods and ancestors”.

The study text rather portrays a situation where women irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds, summed up courage to challenge the cultural norms in the Northern Nigeria where early girl-child marriage is the accepted norm. They also fight the

restriction of women from working. Speaking makes the outside world hear their voices and come to their aid. This study perceives early marriage as a form of domestic violence since the child's life is endangered and hence the justification for the fight against such malicious act.

Factors that can cause domestic violence include: cultural precaution / structures, low levels of education, drug and alcohol abuse, religion, witnessing domestic violence of one's mother, unemployment, patriarchal structures, gender roles, socio-economic status among other things

Effects of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence can lead to deformity - loss of eye or other permanent deformity, negative health condition, death and psychological trauma. Evidence abounds to prove that many women have died in the course of their spouses battering them. Early marriage or child marriage is a union between two people in which one or both parties are younger than 18 years. It is before the age of 18. It is regarded as a harmful practice that not only forces the girl to marry against her wish in some cultures but also endangers the girls' health and life. Such child marriage is branded "Girls not Brides" UNICEF records instances of girls that marry at ages of 13, 14 and 15 in Northern part of Nigeria and advocates an end to such practices and offer of quality education to both sexes. Early marriages account for 70% of the cases of VVF.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts an eclectic theoretical approach as insights are drawn from Culpeper(1996,2005,Watts,(2003) and Bousfield (2008) until recently, works on impoliteness have been sparse and at the same time took politeness frameworks as point

of departure (Culpeper 1996, Bousfield 2008).Watts (2003) argues that greater attention should have been accorded impoliteness because it is specifically impolite behaviour that is more likely to be commented and judged in verbal interactions(p.5).Culpeper is regarded as the chief proponent of impoliteness strategies being the first scholar to discuss it in 1996.He described the term impoliteness to mean “communicative strategies designed to attack face, and thereby cause social conflict and disharmony”(2003,p.1564).

Bousfield (2008,p.72) sees impoliteness “not as failed politeness but strategy to attack face”. He further argues that “impoliteness constitutes the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal Face-Threatening Acts (FTAS) which are purposefully delivered (1)unmitigated in contexts where mitigation is required, and/or, (2) with deliberate aggression, that is, with the face threat exacerbated, boosted or maximized in some way to heighten the face damage inflicted. He concluded that the major difference between politeness and impoliteness is a matter of intention : whether it is the speaker's intention to support face (politeness) or to attack face (impoliteness). The major observation is that in particular contexts, certain impoliteness activities are regarded as essential part of communication process. From all indications, politeness strategy serves to enhance face to avoid conflict while impoliteness strategies serve to attack face and cause social disharmony.

Culpeper (2009, p.1) defines impoliteness as involving

- a) An attitude comprised of negative evaluative beliefs about particular behaviours in social contexts and
- b) The activation of that attitude by those particular in-context behaviours”. He tries analysing the nature of that attitude, its

ontology, its relationship with emotion, what counts as “negative” (such as what beliefs, cultural contexts, emotions, what particular behaviours are involved, and how behaviors and contexts interact to activate that attitude.

Culpeper adduces that current definitions of impoliteness adopt such concepts as face, social norms and rights, intention and emotion. They generally lean either towards the notion of face or the notion of social norms. With regard to face, Quality face (personal positive value), (Spencer-Oatey 2008) turns out to be overwhelmingly the most important type of face relating to impoliteness. Social norms as authoritative standards of behaviours are the basis of sociality rights. Morality, he points out, is an important feature of impoliteness. Intentionality is also criteria in impoliteness. It is one notion by which people try to understand impoliteness.

Emotions again are key to impoliteness. Culpeper (2009) strongly holds that emotions flowing from the violation of face are self-conscious emotions including embarrassment whilst the violation of sociality rights are oriented to moral emotion including anger and contempt. Having defined impoliteness as the use of strategies to attack the interlocutor's face and create social disruption he proposes five super strategies that speakers use to make impolite utterances such as;

Bald on record impoliteness

Here, the Face threatening Act (FTA) is “performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way where face is not irrelevant or minimized. This strategy is however, different from Brown and Levinson’s Bald on record in which little face is at stake and it is not really the intention of the speaker to attack the face of the hearer.

Positive Impoliteness

This entails the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants which can be realized through:

- ignore, snub the other, fail to acknowledge the other's presence
- exclude the other from an activity
- disassociate from the other-for example, deny association or common ground with the others; avoid sitting together
- be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic
- use inappropriate identity markers- for example, use title or surname when a close relationship pertains, or a nickname when a distant relationship pertains
- use obscure or secretive language -for example mystify the other with jargon, or use a code known to others in the group ,but not the target
- seek disagreement-select a sensitive topic. Make the other feel uncomfortable-for example, do not avoid silence, joke ,or use small talk.
- use taboo words-swear, or use abusive or profane language.
- call the other names-use derogatory nominations (Culpeper, 1996, p.357)

Negative Impoliteness

- The use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants. This can be done through:
- frighten-instill a belief that action detrimental to the other will occur
- condescend, scorn or ridicule-emphasize your relative power, be contemptuous, do not treat the other seriously, belittle the other (e.g .use diminutives)
- invade the other's space – literally (e.g. position yourself closer to the other than the relationship permits) or

metaphorically (e.g. ask for or speak about information which is too intimate given the relationship).

- explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect-personalize, use the pronouns 'I' and 'you'
- Put the other's indebtedness on record-with a negative aspect, put the other's indebtedness on record (Culpeper, 1996 p.358)

Withhold Politeness

This depicts the absence/withhold of politeness work where it would be expected. For example, failing to thank somebody for a present may be taken as deliberate impoliteness (Culpeper, 1996:8-9).

To Culpeper, politeness has to be communicated, and the absence of communicated politeness may be taken as the absence of a polite attitude.

Bousfield (2008) elaborated on Culpeper's super strategies of impoliteness with four super strategies which do not conform with Culpeper's (1996) model. Bousfield believes that impoliteness is the opposite of politeness because rather than "seeking to mitigate face-threatening acts (FTAs), Impoliteness constitutes the issuing of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face-threatening acts (FTA's) which are purposefully performed unmitigated, in contexts where mitigation is required and/or with deliberate aggression, that is, with the face threat exacerbated, boosted, or maximized in some way to heighten the face damage inflicted. The four strategies are:

- Criticize – Dispraise hearer, some action or inaction by hearer, or some entity in which hearer has invested face.
- Hinder/block – physically (block passage), communicatively (deny turn, interrupt)

- Enforce role shift
- Challenges. (Bousfield, 2008: 125-134)

Culpeper, (2005) in defining impoliteness as communicative strategies designed to attack face and cause social conflict and disharmony later amended his earlier theory which constitutes a useful framework and proposes the super strategies of politeness and impoliteness.

Politeness	Impoliteness
<p>Politeness is defined as using communicative strategies to create and maintain social harmony. This can be done in various ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being contextually appropriate • Following social and cultural norms • Being socially positive by addressing face needs 	<p>Impoliteness is defined as using aggressive face-work in various contexts to cause social conflict and disharmony. This can be done in various ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speaker uses strategies that attack face • The listener perceives the speaker's attack • Both of the above.
<p>In order to save face, people have the opinion to use politeness super strategies with FTAs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bald on record is not attempting to minimize the face threat. • Positive politeness is showing you value someone so minimizing the threat to the positive face. • Negative politeness is not impeding on someone so minimizing the threat to the negative face 	<p>There are also impoliteness super strategies which can be used with FTAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bald on record is showing unmitigated intent to attack. • Positive impoliteness is attacking the positive face of someone you need by not showing you value someone

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off record is avoiding responsibility for the FTA often by being indirect • Withhold is not performing the FTA 	<p>include criticisms, disagreements etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative impoliteness attacking the negative need by impoliteness someone. Examples: orders, threats, requests • Off record is using indirect offence such as sarcasm, banter • Withhold is failing to perform when it is expected
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Furthermore, Culpeper (2005, p.40) proposes four different types of face attack in consonance with Spencer-Oatey's (2005) theory of face that can be attributed to both individual and group-based phenomenon. They include:

- 1) Attacks on quality face
- 2) Attacks on social identity face
- 3) Attacks on equity rights and
- 4) Attacks on association right.

Types of Face Attack

Attacks on	Definition of	Impoliteness strategies
Quality face	Desire to be evaluated positively in terms of personal qualities.	Attack the other's appearance; attack the other's ability/work.

Social identity face	Desire for acknowledgement of our social identities or roles	Condescend, scorn or ridicule.
Equity rights	Belief that we are entitled to be treated fairly by others	Frighten / threaten, hinder or block the other physically or linguistically, challenge the other, impose on the other.
Association rights	Belief that we are entitled to associate with others in accordance with the type of relationship	Ignore or snub the other, disassociate from the other.

Culpeper, (2008, p.2-3) summed the strategies by postulating what he called conventional impolite expressions which include:

- Insults (name calling , etc)
 - Personalized negative vocatives
 - Personalized negative assertions.
- Dismissals
- Silencers
- Threats
- Condescension's
- Challenges (usually rhetorical questions: why do you make my life impossible).

The impolite strategies, face attacks and conventional impolite expressions will serve as the aspects of the theoretical frame works that will be used for data analysis in this works. The

angry women deployed impoliteness to drive their points home so that social harmony rather than disharmony is attained in the end.

CONTEXT

Baba Amina intends marrying off Amina, his thirteen year old daughter, to Alhaji so that Alhaji will help solve the financial and other social needs for them. His wife is so worried and under the emotional trauma, a car hits her. Mama Ngozi intervened and Mama Amina cries confiding in her best friend that she would have preferred the car to have crushed her to watching the thirteen year old Amina, her daughter, get married to an old man.

Mama Amina has pleaded with her husband to exercise some patience so that the girl will at least turn eighteen.

Text 1 Mama Amina: But Amina, our thirteen year old daughter, will be his wife. Don't you understand? She will sleep on his bed. How can that old man be sleeping with our daughter? Papa Amina think it through. Please don't kill me. How would I go to bed at night knowing my daughter is not happy?

Text 2 Papa Amina: Who told you she won't be happy? She will be in one big fine house. Alhaji will take her round the world. You should be glad that Alhaji chose Amina. He's a rich man. He's a very rich man. He can solve our problems.

Text 3 Mama Amina: So we are selling our daughter?

Text 4 Papa Amina: Who told you she won't be happy? I don't understand why you are so blind! Alhaji will marry Amina on Saturday and that's final.

Text 5 Mama Amina: I'm not even upset about that! Of course Amina will marry in the end. She's already been betrothed to him. We can't even change that. I'm just saying she should get mature. She's not running anywhere. I promise! She should get eighteen. When she's a woman, Alhaji will enjoy her more like that as a wife.

Text 6 Papa Amina: Who told you? I have spoken. Amina gets married to Alhaji on Saturday and that's final.

When Mama Amina discovers that no amount of pleading from her can change her husband's decision, she begs Mama Ngozi to plead with her husband to talk to Papa Amina.

Papa Ngozi does not want to meddle in the family affair of a couple and explains to the wife that he can't since it's the culture of their people.

Text 7 Mama Ngozi: My husband, you say you can't? Why?

Text 8 Papa Ngozi: Because it doesn't concern me. Papa Amina that wants to give out his daughter at this age has his reasons. I hate getting involved in things that don't concern me.

Text 9 Mama Ngozi: A thirteen year old girl is about to be given off as wife to an old man and you say it doesn't concern you?

Text 10 Papa Ngozi: Papa Amina is the head of his home. Before taking such a decision, he would have thought it through. Men don't just make

decisions. See, it's their culture, mind your business!

Papa Ngozi refuses to get involved in the affairs of Papa Amina's household. By not advising Papa Amina, Mama Ngozi gets into a revolutionary and recalcitrant tempo. She initiates the wife's strike - sex denial for all husbands. All the women have an agreement and the crossed arm is the symbol of their resolution. It is against this backdrop that this study highlights and examines the pragmatic forms especially the impoliteness strategies deployed in the fight to stop early girl-child marriage as portrayed in Nollywood's *Wives on Strikes*. Bousfield; (2008) and Culpepper's (2005) impoliteness strategies provide the framework for analysis of data extracted from the film to portray the exploitation of impoliteness principles to cause offence and fight for the freedom of the girl-child from early marriage. Spencer Oatey's (2005) theory merged with Culpepper's (2005) provide the framework for face attack.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Positive Impoliteness and Face Attack

One prominent pragmatic strategy evident in the discourse on *Wives on Strike* is positive impoliteness which attacks the positive face need of interlocutors by insults, criticisms and disagreements as can be seen in the texts below;

Text 11 Mama Ngozi: A Thirteen year old girl is about to be given off as wife to an old man and you say it doesn't concern you? All you can say is that it doesn't concern you. Really?

Text 12 Mama Ngozi: This is what is spoiling Nigeria. We are all minding our business. The Bible says we should be our brother's

keeper. If we can't help our neighbours close to us, how can we change Nigeria?

Papa Ngozi, how can we change Nigeria? So, if someone comes to marry Ngozi, you will give Ngozi to them as wife? That's when you will know you got married to a mad person!

Text 13 Papa Ngozi: If you are talking, mind yourself. You can use yourself as an example, leave Ngozi out of this. A man will tell me he wants to marry Ngozi at that age, is he crazy? Won't he be killed?

Text 14 Mama Ngozi: Oh! so it's good enough for another person's child but not good enough for your daughter?

Text 15 Papa Ngozi: Why are you talking too much? What did I say that is making you run your mouth taratara tara. You want to gather the neighbourhood for something that doesn't concern you?

Text 16 Mama Ngozi: How did I run my mouth? Who heard me? Papa Ngozi, don't talk this way. This is an abomination. Please think it though. You can't say it doesn't concern you my husband please.

Text 17 Mama Ngozi: (Rejecting her husband's advances). Please don't try it. Stay on your lane. Don't cross here! (Separating their spaces with a wrapper).

The discourse is between a couple, Papa Ngozi and Mama Ngozi. Mama Ngozi pleaded with Papa Ngozi to talk to Papa Amina to dissuade him from marrying off his thirteen year old daughter. Because of Papa Ngozi's refusal to intervene, an argument ensues in which both deploy some linguistic choices characterized by linguistic impoliteness. Utterances 11 & 12 are confrontational. Mama Ngozi accuses her interlocutor partner of unpatriotism which is face-threatening. Interrogation as blunt confrontation is adopted. "How can we change Nigeria?"

Utterance 14 is judgmental and condemnatory. A thirteen year old girl is about to be given off as wife to an old man and you say it doesn't concern you? Oh! so it's good enough for another person's child but not good enough for your daughter? Impoliteness is intentionally issued gratuitously with unmitigated verbal aggression. The face threat deployed is exacerbated as the interlocutor dispraises the action of her interlocutor partner. Interrogatives employed in this discourse deviate from their usual information eliciting roles but serve as strategies for defacing the other. Her criticism depicts seek disagreement to cause offence.

Mama Ngozi accuses her husband of insensitivity and nonchalance to other people's plight. The non-avoidance of disagreement is in use. The pragmatic goal of the use of impoliteness strategies here is a portrayal of dissatisfaction with the interlocutor partner's complacency. Mama Ngozi extends the positive impoliteness to excluding her husband from sexual activity and disassociation from him in Text 17 (Rejecting her husband's advances). **"Please don't try it. Stay on your lane. Don't cross here!"** (Separating their spaces with a wrapper).

The interlocutor partner is made to suffer an attack on equity rights. She blocks her husband both physically and linguistically. Papa Ngozi is speechless and feels uncomfortable.

Text 17 is a positive impoliteness that excludes the interlocutor partner from an activity. Mama Ngozi is at the same time unsympathetic and disinterested. The imperative “don’t cross here!” reflects breaches of co-operative and politeness principle to imply:

- defiance
- protest
- antagonism
- non-disagreement avoidance

The interlocutor manipulates ‘block’ and ‘exclusion’ as weapon of offence designed to attack the interlocutor partner’s quality face to register her dissatisfaction with the husband’s refusal to join the fight to stop child marriage.

Other instances of positive impoliteness and face attack include the following excerpts

Text 18 Christy: I’m tired of this issue. That’s how they destroy these little girls’ lives and other small girls around... I watched on TV that the Senate were discussing the passing of a bill so that these dirty old men can marry little girls.

Text 19 Mama Ngozi: That’s a lie! Christy you lie! The people in the Nigerian government! Are they so jobless that they will start discussing such issues?

Text 20 Madam 12:30: Haven’t I said it? I have said that one day the monkey will go to the market, but will not return. So this is their problem?

Christy criticises the activities of the senate in text 18 for supporting early marriage. She uses impolite derogatory tags - ‘dirty old men’ to demonstrate her contempt for them to marry

girls young enough to be their grand children. Text 19 is an attack on quality face and insult on the Nigerian government “the people in the Nigerian government! Are they so jobless that they will start discussing such issues? The interlocutor’s perplexity is expressed in that interrogative which is condemnatory and unmitigatingly defacing. The Senate’s job is ridiculed and trivialized - 'so this is just their job (text 20) Madam 12:30 is also astonished that such a body as senate should be little itself and be concerned with how to turn small girls into wives thereby constituting their agents of death rather than saving them. She dispraises the action of the Senate. The interrogative “so this is their problem? is contemptuous, satirical and attack their quality face/quality of work. Impoliteness strategies are exploited as satire in this context.

Negative Impoliteness

Negative impoliteness entails “attacking the negative face need by imposing on someone.

Text 21 Madam 12:30: What? Mama Ngozi. This is an abomination. What are you saying? Do you mean all the women alive are not enough? A man wants to marry a thirteen year old that hasn’t even developed breasts?

Text 22 Mama Ngozi: God forbid! You need to see how Mama Amina was crying and throwing herself on the ground. That’s why I came late for work. The way she was crying. You would think someone died.

Text 23 Madam 12:30: It’s enough to cry as if someone died. Mama Ngozi, don’t you know there’s

a disease that attacks children that are married off before they are developed? It's a big English word. I can't remember it but they will start urinating even when walking. They will be smelling. It's a death sentence for these. If they near my daughter, I will just grab his penis and cut it off.

Text 24 Christy: So of all the problems in this country, their concern is how to turn little girls to wives? We don't have electricity! Do we have electricity in these parts? For a whole year, we don't even have good roads.

Text 25 Mama Ngozi: Do we even have good hospitals? Weren't we all here when Mama Caro died during *Child birth*? If any man looks at Ngozi, I will kill the man so fast he won't even believe it.

Text 26 Christy: Mama Ngozi, please don't remind me of Mama Caro. It will not be well with them!

Text 27 Mama 12:30: I have been saying that anyone that's stealing the money that is meant for the development of the country, Holy Ghost Fire!

In text 21, Madam 12:30 is scornful of men who will condescend so low to marry a thirteen year old girl whose breasts are not yet formed. In Text 23, she adopts 'frighten' and instills a belief that action determined to the girl will occur and extends it to the treat of cutting off men's penis.

Text 23 - "Madam Ngozi, don't you know there's a disease that attacks children that are married off before they are developed?

It's a big English word. I can't remember it but they will start urinating even when walking. They will be smelling. It's a death sentence for these.

Madam 12:30's linguistic choices heighten the deadly consequences of early marriage - the risk of suffering from Vesigo - Viginal fistula (VVF).

Text 24 to 27 are attacks on the Senate's misplaced priorities. They lament the lack of infrastructural activities that led to pregnant women's death. The condemnatory interrogatives are designed to attack the government's quality face.

Text 24..."Do we have electricity in these parts?"

Text 25 "Do we even have good hospitals?"

"Weren't we all here when Mama Caro died during child birth?"

There is attack on social identity face as the government's role is concerned. The governments inadequacy at the neglect of the masses' needs is ridiculed. Nobody talks about maternal mortality as a result of lack of hospitals but attention is given to passing a bill to marry off young girls which is ludicrous.

Text 28 Papa Amina: I don't understand why you are so blind.
Alhaji will marry Amina on Saturday
and that's final

Papa Amina deploys negative impoliteness by imposing on his wife with the order / imperative. He insists and forces it down Mama Amina's throat that Amina must get married to Alhaji in spite of Mama Amina's plea. Conflictive verbal face-threatening act is issued unmitigated. This particular impoliteness triggered off the conflict in the discourse. All the women that constitute Mama Amina's friends from different ethnic groups teamed up to fight Papa Amina's decision and save the little girl from harm and impending doom. The wives strike stems from this

impoliteness - attempt to force a thirteen year old girl to marry an old man for money. The impoliteness is resisted with counter impoliteness by Mama Amina's friends. All the women decide to starve their husbands of sex to save their young daughters.

Text 29 Cali: Paulo, warn your wife to leave my wife alone. They formed a useless club that they are on strike and they won't have sex with their husbands anymore... I'm from Warri. You know me. I will scatter!

Text 30 Cali: She should scatter the club! My wife is still on strike. Every time I want to have sex, she'll say they are on strike. I want to have sex / Jangolova and I must have sex. If your wife don't scatter that club.

Text 31 Paulo: Cali, my wife didn't force your wife like a kid. Is your wife a kid?

Text 32 Cali: You know who I am!

The women's gang up to deny their husbands sex is creating serious conflict that the men are addressing with the impoliteness strategies of threats impoliteness and others.

Bald on Record Impoliteness

Bald on record impoliteness entails the intention of an interlocutor to attack the face of the hearer in a "direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way" as can be seen in the utterances below.

Text 33 Mama Amina's Friends: (Clapping their hands in Alhaji's face, pushing him)

Oleh! Oleh! Oleh! Thief!
Thief! Thief! You want to
steal a mere child that
should be your

granddaughter. A child that has not formed breast, well, well. Leave her alone! You should be ashamed of yourself. Shame oooh! Shame ooo! Shame ooo (Hitting him, removes his cap and throws it to dust). We shall kill you if you disturb the child again.

An unmitigated intentional face attack is registered in text 30. Women, Mama Amina's friends - Mama Ngozi, Christy and Madam 12:30 invade Alhaji's space. They snatch Amina from Alhaji's grips and save her from the doomed marriage. The women attack him physically and verbally. Some hit him, remove his cap. He runs to save his clear life. Alhaji's suffers a clear direct and unambiguous attack on social identity face, equity rights and association rights. Personalized negative vocatives are hauled at him. The interlocutors intentionally attack the male's faces to stop violence against women. They exploit the 'block strategy to stop Alhaji and it works.

Text 34 Mama Ngozi: (Hissing) So someone will come that they want to marry my daughter and you'll be here. If there ever comes a time like that, you will see what I will do to you!

Text 35 Papa Ngozi: Please don't use my daughter. Use your name as an example. Is that person crazy? Is the person mad?

Text 36 Mama Amina: So we are selling our daughter?

In text 33, Mama Amina's interrogative serves as an unmitigated intentional face attacks. She is distraught and engages the withhold impoliteness strategies. The pragmatic import of that interrogative "so we are selling our daughter" is a disagreement and accusation that the child is being given off as their means of sustenance.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined how utterances depicting strategies are deployed for fighting violence against girl child in forced early marriage using Culpeper (1996; 2005) Watts (2003) and Bousfields' impoliteness strategies and face attack. Impoliteness strategies perform many functions in the study. Positive impoliteness is deployed by Mama Ngozi to criticize her husbands' nonchalant attitude in advising Papa Amina against marrying off his thirteen year old daughter. Mama Ngozi convinced other women to join the wives' strike which involves starving their husband of sex.

Other impoliteness strategies exploited to fight violence against young girls include negative impoliteness which frightens invades the other's space, ridicules and scorns the negative other. Bald on record impoliteness which entails face-threatening acts performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and unmitigated manner is deployed to intentionally attack the Alhaji's quality face, social identity face and equity right to save Amina from early marriage. There are also attacks on social identity face, equity rights and association rights in order to stop violence against the girl child and women are directed to other men to accomplish their aim.

Interrogatives are adopted as face attack in the discourses on fight against forced child marriage. Intentionality is a strong force in the women's impoliteness strategies.

From the study text, it is concluded that the women's impoliteness strategies are designed to stop violence against the girl child especially forced early marriage. Impoliteness in the women's linguistic choices is designed to fight against cultural and patriarchal stronghold. The women deployed impoliteness to drive their point's home and social harmony rather than disharmony is created at last. Language here performs the social and expressive roles that enable interlocutors use language to express how they feel about things and others.

In conclusion, this study records that, impoliteness can be adopted with the intention of stopping social ill, violence against the under aged as well as women in general. Language can be used to cause offence for a purpose.

It is recommended that women should be allowed a voice in both national and international issues.

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DOING THINGS WITH WORDS: NIGERIAN-CAMEROON FACEOFF OVER BAKASSI PENINSULA

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Abstract

Words have the power to start wars, end wars, save lives, and ruin lives. Austin used this understanding to write the well-known *How to Do Things with Words*. The resolution of the Nigeria-Cameroon Bakassi crisis was lauded by all and sundry. But how did they do things with words before the eventual compromise? The purpose of this research is, therefore, to subject various utterances made during these periods to speech acts theory. To achieve this, speeches made in the English language by diplomats of the two countries were selected. Our findings show that assertives, commissives, expressives were predominant in the discourse. The minor difference in the number of times they occur suggests that diplomatic discourse contains functional overlap between speech acts.

Introduction

The nations that made up the sovereign nations of Africa have never existed in isolation since pre-colonial times. They established one type of relationship or another with countries in far-flung geopolitical contexts (Ani, Kinge and Ojakorotu, 2018). This relation was somehow marred by words: both countries were claiming ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula and making utterances that support their claim. Utterances can be interpreted

in a variety of ways. Ludwig Wittgenstein, an Austrian-British philosopher, laid the groundwork for what we now call a ‘speech act’. Wittgenstein stated in one of his lectures that the meaning of language is determined by its actual use, and that "words are deeds" (Wittgenstein, 1966).

Doing Things with Words

In his work, *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin (1962), however, became the first person to clearly suggest that by making statements, we also perform acts such as stating a fact or an opinion, confirming or denying something, asking a question, issuing an order and so forth. He classified the speech acts into locutionary (the act of saying something or what is said), illocutionary (what is meant by what is said), and perlocutionary (the effect of what is said). Austin’s speech act theory later paved way for many other studies, one of which was John Searle’s (1969) indirect speech acts. Searle asserts that it is possible to perform one illocutionary act by performing another. Searle introduced the term ‘indirect speech act’ when he gave an example with the sentence Can you pass the salt? which can be interpreted as a question on the hearer’s ability to pass the salt or a request to pass the salt (in Ezirim, 2020). In other words, we can say one thing and mean something else.

John Searle’s contribution, however, has received a huge commendation. Searle believes that speech acts perform five general functions. These functions are assertives— acts that commit the speaker to something like boasting, suggesting, concluding, and swearing, directives— acts that try to make the speaker perform an action like inviting, ordering, and begging, expressive —acts that express how the speaker feels about a situation like welcoming, thanking and apologizing, commissive —acts that commit the speaker to do something in the future like

promising, vowing, and betting and declaratives —acts that can change the world via the speaker's utterance like christening (Searle, 1969). Expanding on Searle's 'indirect speech acts', Clark further identified the multiplicity of meaning, the logical priority of meaning, rationality, conventionality, politeness, and purposefulness as the six attributes of indirect speech.

Thus, the term speech act does not refer simply to the act of speaking but to the whole communicative situation, including the context of the utterance (that is, the situation in which the discourse occurs, the participants and any preceding verbal or physical interaction) and paralinguistic features which may contribute to the meaning of the interaction (Badriah, 2015 in Ezirim, 2020). In his popular book *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin states that "...issuing of the utterance is the performing of the action" (6). In other words, by saying something, we have done something. For elucidatory and explanatory purposes, Austin further categorized speech acts into locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. Following Searle's contribution, Yule further expanded the discussion on direct and indirect speech: acts that show the way a speaker uses various linguistic forms with certain functions (54-56). Yule narrates that there is a relationship between the three structural forms (declarative, interrogative, imperative) and the three general communicative functions (statement, question, command or request). For example, a speaker uses a declarative form to express a statement, an interrogative form to express a question, and a command or request ifor imperative. Clark and Clark (1977) in a later study distinguished between direct and indirect speech acts. Direct speech acts appear when there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function; it is used by a speaker to deliver the literal meaning that the words conventionally express. Indirect speech acts, on the other hand, are

somehow complicated and can subject a discourse or speech to multiple interpretations. This ability to convey two or more messages at the same time makes it an efficient tool of communication, especially in political discourse.

Previous Literature

Recent research on African borders has tended to focus on either the growing number of state-to-state border disputes or frontier locations that are supposed to provide local residents with a diverse variety of economic prospects (Konings, 2005). Border skirmishes and battles between African states were relatively infrequent for a long period after independence, and governments more or less stuck to the sanctity of the boundaries inherited from colonial times. However, as countries began to gain global exposure, the need to verify the authenticity and ownership of various communal lands increased. The mineral reserves in the Bakassi peninsula heightened the tensions between Nigeria and Cameroon. When a man is dissatisfied with certain conduct, words are usually the first means of expressing his dissatisfaction. In the instance of the Nigeria-Cameroon dispute, those who made statements appeared to have a greater impact on the probability of inciting inter-country war. The argument is this: if a speech act is assertive, it is more likely to come across as forceful or hesitant to take full responsibility, which can lead to increased resistance from the hearer(s).

Waya and Nneji (2013) identified specific pragmatic features in Goodluck Jonathan's victory and inaugural speeches. They observed that Jonathan employed more assertive words than other speech acts, implying that he never full responsibility for the government's operations or the promise of transforming Nigeria. Similarly, Rayahd and Zina (2015) explored the use of speech acts in the language of five political propaganda texts provided by

Barack Obama during the election period. They study discovered that assertives are the most commonly employed speech act, with a variety of rhetoric techniques being used for persuasive, metaphorical, repetitive, and manipulative purposes.

An inaugural speech, which expresses the agenda of an elected candidate's reaffirmation of the electioneering campaign promises and the goals, is made on the occasion of the official inauguration or swearing-in of the candidate. Thus, speeches of presidents and heads of states have always been subjected to linguistic and non-linguistic analyses. The first inaugural addresses of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (2011) and America's Barrack Obama (2009) as presidents were then compared by Ubong and Sifonde (2012). The results demonstrate that the speeches are similar because each speaker speaks for his country, regardless of the political party, and both speeches contain a large number of "representatives" and "commissives." President Jonathan's commissives, on the other hand, employ modal verbs to communicate intention more frequently, whereas President Obama's commissives use modal verbs and infinitive clauses to project volition and intention.

However, President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech has not enjoyed much-documented analysis, perhaps because of its recency. Osisonwa (2017), nonetheless, examines the use of words by the president from a pragmatic perspective in order to identify the pragmatic acts involved and the goals of the acts. Applying aspects of Jacob Mey's (2001) pragmatic acts theory for descriptive analysis, and statistical details for quantitative analysis, he identified nineteen acts from the total of the ninety-nine (overlapping) acts in the speech. Each of the acts achieved a specific goal. For example, while proposing, promising, stating and assuring achieved the goal of revealing intention; acknowledging,

thanking, remarking, saluting achieved the goal of admitting and appreciating; appealing, reminding, instructing/calling, advising, hoping, charging, informing, extending achieved the goal of direction/directives; and identifying, describing and defining achieved the goal of giving details on issues. The study also indicates that pragmatic acts were marked with some pragmatic tools, including shared situation knowledge, relevance, reference, inference. In a similar study, Bushra (2017) used the four commissive acts (promise, threat, guarantee, pledge) to analyze specific selected American political speeches. He studied the speeches of four American presidents: George Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Interestingly, Bushra, for example, concentrated on the issue of applying the speech acts theory to political speeches, demonstrating how these acts overlap. By extracting some semantic rules for the Speech Act of threatening, guaranteeing, and pledging and taking into account John Searle's general framework, he seeks to change John Searle's felicity conditions and semantic rules of promise for the acts of threatening, guaranteeing, and pledging. However, he was unable to offer and advocate for a particular classification for the acts that would eliminate the "overlapping and ambiguity."

Methods

The qualitative approach was used in the study with the target group identified as Nigerian and Cameroonian government presidents of state, their foreign affairs ambassadors, or anyone else authorized to speak for and on behalf of the government. However, only speeches that are linked to the two countries' dispute were selected. The researcher also employed a purposive sample technique to choose the speeches because not all speeches made by the selected population qualifies as diplomatic discourse.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In order to capture the individual acts and ascertain their suitability in the classifications, we have presented both the data and the analysis side by side. Following Bushra (2017) argument that a single speech act can overlap and have multiple meanings, I have numbered the data to enable one to know when such data is re-captured in another illocutionary act (See the appendix for the data). The analysis covered the five illocutionary acts: assertive, commissive, expressive, directive and declarative.

Table 1: Speech Act Analysis

Assertive Acts		
Speech Act Type	Data Number	Analysis
Assertives	1	In the first sentence, the speaker performed an assertive act by conveying the information that the agreement between Nigeria and Cameroon is ‘a great achievement.’
	6	Here, the speaker began with an assertive act of stating: ‘as the ICJ itself recognised and as we indicated after the verdict’, and moved to another assertive act of describing: ‘human beings are involved’.
		This statement began with a claim (an assertive act) that ‘The

Assertives	7	maritime boundary by the verdict of the ICJ is less problematic' before the speaker suggested (assertively) that a physical demarcation of the boundary would help forestall problems in the future.
	11	The first sentence is captured via the use of an assertive illocutionary act.
	15	An assertive of insistence was deployed when the speaker averred that: 'On Bakassi, we have to negotiate'.
	16	Here, the speaker assertively states that 'the fate of its people affected by the judgement of ICJ', not the boundary, is her utmost concern.
	18	This speaker used an assertive act in the first sentence to describe how unfair the Bakassians were treated.
	20	'We have been sacrificed for the world to have peace' assertively suggests that the speaker and/or his people were unfairly treated.
	26	This speaker assertively claims that by adhering to the judicial verdict, they have made history

		that would continue to be remembered in the future.
	28	‘By ceding Bakassi, we have shown what respect for peace and rule of law is all about’ is an assertive act.
	30	Sequel to the International Court of Justice judgment, this speaker used the assertive act of describing to express the feat.
	32	This speaker used assertive act of stating to describe why they ceded the contested land- which he referred to as ‘artificial border’.
	33	A descriptive assertive act was used to state the preference for peace over war.
	36	The speaker’s disappointment on the decision and judgement passed by the ICJ was shown and captured via the use of assertive claim.
	40	Assertively (swearing), this speaker deployed the use of degree adverb- ‘absolutely’- as a linguistic tool for encouraging his people and strengthening their trust of his commitment and assurance.

	41	When this speaker said, ‘Bakassi has never been in dispute’, he was assertively stating what he believed was the truth.
	42	In this utterance, our speaker suggests (assertive act) that problems do not solve themselves.
	47	This utterance is replete with the assertive act of stating.
	50	This speaker assertively insisted that local and regional conflict resolution commission be allowed to play their role before involving the international communities
	51	Here, the speaker simply asserted by reminding his hearers their commitment to their bilateral relationship.
	54	Here, the speaker insists (assertive act) that Bakassi has not been fully ceded to the Cameroonians since the ‘determination of the land boundary’ has not been undertaken.
Total Assertive Acts	21	

Commissive Acts in the Data		
Commissives	1	The clause ‘I dare say’ is a commissive act which was used by the speaker to express his view of extending his directive act above to the world.
	2	As a response to the speaker in data 1, Biya used a commissive illocutionary act to inform both parties that he is resolute to ensuring that the peace treaty is sustained.
	3	A commissive illocutionary act of vowing was performed by the speaker to reassure the Bakassi settlers of their safety.
	4	By accepting the verdict of the court (a passing declarative act), the speaker has successfully adopted an indirect commissive act.
	5	A commissive act of promise was used when the speaker said that <i>‘it will continue until all Nigerians in the area who wish to be resettled are resettled’</i> . This commissive act was used as an act of reassurance.

	6	An illocutionary act of promise (a commissive) was performed via the expression: 'their interest will be protected'.
	8	'Nigerian troops will withdraw within the next 60 days...' is a commissive act of promise.
	11	a commissive act of promising (we will scrupulously implement it) were performed after the speaker had used both assertive and expressive acts in the preceding sentences.
	14	This speaker, supporting the previous speaker, used a commissive act of promise to reassure the two parties of their willingness and commitment to ICJ verdict.
	24	Here, the commissive act of intention and promise were used by the speaker.
	31	'We were only forced' suggests a commissive act of threatening which is inevitable and thus guaranteed peace in the battled demography.
	34	Our speaker here used both commissive acts of promise and vow to reassure Nigeria Bakkasi settlers of their safety.

	35	The statement contains an indirect threat (commissive act) or reluctance to accept the judicial verdict.
	37	The introduction of the act of help to 'strengthen' the 'brotherly relations' of the two countries makes the utterance commissive
	39	In this utterance, the clause 'I reassure them' captured a commissive illocutionary act of promise, vow and commitment to future action.
	43	After making an expressive act, this speaker went further to promise, in the form of threat (a commissive act), that until the federal government of Nigeria does something, Nigerian citizens will continue to be wasted.
	44	Here, the expression, 'we will not leave it' captured a commissive act of promise and vow.
	49	'Nigeria and Cameroon will find a workable diplomatic solution' was a commissive act of promise used to reassure the Bakassians of the commitment made by the government of the two countries.

	52	‘We want to sit down and work things out’ - is a commissive act of promise used as a tool for reassuring the people and shows the willingness of the leaders to adhere to the ICJ verdict.
	53	The speaker’s statement of developing an acceptable mutual diplomatic solution to the dispute is a commissive act.
Total Commissive Acts	20	
Expressive Acts in the Data		
	9	The speaker began by thanking both the governor of Cross River state and ‘Nigerians living in Bakkasi’ – an expressive act. He went further to promise them that they ‘will never let them down’.
	10	Similar to Data 9, the speaker continued with expression of thanks (expressive act): ‘I thank all Nigerians...’ and ‘...the international community.’
	11	After using an assertive act in the first sentence, the speaker here used an expressive act of

Expressive		welcoming ('we accept it wholeheartedly')
	12	'I must not end this address without thanking' has both the assertive act of telling and an expressive act of commendation.
	13	The expressive act of 'thanks' is being used here again.
	17	In a move to ease the challenges of Nigerians living in Bakassi, the speaker used the expressive act of warning to plead with the Bakassians not to pass any judgement over their fate.
	19	Our speaker here expressively deplores what he claimed is the feeling of Nigerian settling in Bakassi.
	21	This statement captures an expressive act where Nigeria is described as adherents of rule of law and thus, should be commended.
	22	Through this statement, the speaker used expressive act to condemn the insensitivity of the colonial powers in creating the demography of the conflicting nations.

	23	‘I greet you all’ is an expressive act which in this context is congratulatory.
	25	By thanking, ‘the government of the UK, USA, France and Germany’, an expressive act has been performed.
	27	The speaker used expressive acts of thanks, when he commends the Bakassians for adhering to the verdict.
	29	‘Nigeria will continue to pursue its obligation...’ is an expressive act of promise, indirectly implying a commitment.
	35	This speaker applied the expressive act to deplore and condemn the judgement passed by ICJ
	42	After the utterance implying that problems do not solve themselves, this speaker, thus, encouraged that some inevitable problems are welcomed (expressive act).
	48	In this statement, an expressive act was used to commend the two leaders for choosing the path of peace and jettisoning war and/or anarchy.

	50	The assertion here indirectly approved the credibility of ‘Joint Commission’.
Total Expressive Acts	17	
Directives in the Data		
Directives	1	A directive act was performed when the speaker requested that the model be used as a template in resolving conflicts in other crisis prone African countries.
	18	In the speaker’s second sentence, a directive act of defying was performed when the speaker said that they ‘are not in any way bound by the decision of ICJ.’
	41	After the first sentence, this speaker used the directive act of challenge to re-emphasize his innocence.
	45	‘Judgement on Bakassi is an international legal fraud’ is an utterance which dares and defies (directive acts) the pronouncement made by the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Total Directive Acts	4	
Declaratives in the Data		
Declaratives	4	Accepting the verdict of the court is a passive declarative act
	46	According to this speaker, the ICT sentence (declaration act) did not re-christen Nigeria Bakassi settlers as Cameroonians. They are still Nigerians.
	54	From the speaker's statement, Cameroon is certain that they would reclaim the land. This is evident by the declaration they made while a case is still on.
Total Declarative Acts	3	

Discussion of Findings

The different speakers employed all five of Searle's illocutions: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative, each one a different number of times. The speakers performed a total of 66 illocutionary acts (assertives, 22, commissives, 20, expressives, 17, directives, 4 and declarative, 3). Assertive acts

were the most common, appearing 22 times out of the total acts. Diplomats' commitment to future action is one of their distinguishing characteristics or major linguistic style. The most common communicative presumptions utilized in diplomacy are promise, threat, warning, and refusal.

Commissives which occurred 20 times (2 times less than the assertives) are a special kind of illocutionary act because the speaker primarily intends to bring about a special perlocutionary effect in the addressee, namely that H (hearer) will believe A (speaker). This is dominant in diplomatic language. Specific language choices are made by the speakers, as seen in the analysis like promising. These speakers do not bother themselves on whether or not the hearers believe these promises. Their major goal is to keep to their mode of communication. It is now left for the hearers to either believe them or not.

The expressive, directive and declarative acts occurred 17, 4 and 3 times respectively. Thus, while commissive and expressive acts represent 14 per cent and 12 per cent of the illocutionary acts respectively, directive acts which account for 7 per cent of the acts were used the least. Primarily, the expressives are used to express one's attitudes and/or feelings about objects and facts. This illocutionary act occurred 20 times in the data with expressions of thanks, welcoming and congratulations being dominant. The number of expressive acts that occurred in the data is not all that surprising because, normally, when the commissive acts by the same speakers are positive, our result becomes its effect. Again, the data reveals one of the major features of diplomatic language: mutual acceptance depicted or captured via the language of affinity and friendship. Unlike the directives and declaratives which occurred 4 and 2 times respectively, the affinity shared by the number of occurrences of commissive, assertive and

expressive act (each separated by a difference of two) reveals their status in diplomatic discourse.

Conclusion

This study investigated the different pragmatic features of diplomatic discourse. The researcher did this by putting the diplomatic conversation through a speech act test. Because negotiations are a process of interaction and exchange, pragmatic discourse analysis assisted us in examining the most fundamental aspect of these interactions and exchanges: the language and speech used and their various subtleties. This case study yielded useful insights about the use of language in diplomatic discourse and negotiations in particular, which can assist diplomats in a real context, but it also demonstrated the importance and viability of a discourse-theoretical approach to the problem. This case study gave some insights on the use of language in diplomatic discourse and negotiations in particular which can help diplomats in specific situations. More importantly, it showed the vitality and viability of a discourse-theoretical approach to the study of diplomatic negotiations.

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Appendix

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oEYiYoUMdPxtKhr6oF6VFGPP6KZuIx_QOVch4jYnb08/edit

**CHAUVINISM IN NIGERIAN PROSE FICTION: AN
APPRAISAL OF CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S
PURPLE HIBISCUS AND SEFI ATTA'S *EVERYTHING
GOOD WILL COME***

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Abstract

Literature is part of our cultural heritage which is freely available to everyone, and which can enrich our lives in all kinds of ways. It is a means of impacting lives and documenting the past for the future to create a new vision. Through a comparative study, we will be able to understand chauvinism and its impact on the Nigerian culture to the extent that it culture still strives to do away with it. This paper looks to expose and rehabilitate a confused culture of chauvinism. A male who patronizes, disparages and denigrates females in the belief that they are inferior is a chauvinist. Chauvinism is an attitude that the members of your own sex are always better than those of the opposite sex, it is the belief that your country, race, etc is better than any other and this confers undue partiality or attachment to a group or place to which one belongs or has belonged in time past. It is an attitude of superiority toward members of the opposite sex; also behavior expressive of such an attitude. This study examines by looking at the Nigerian prose fiction particularly Chimamanda's *Purple Hibiscus*.

Keywords: Chauvinism, Culture, Sexism, Attitude

Introduction

In Nigeria like other parts of the world women suffer various form of discrimination contend that women's discrimination include the provision operation powerlessness poverty and hopelessness Nigeria's gender policy listed the discrimination against women to include widowhood practices rights inheritance rights the land tenure system and female genital mutilation amongst others gender stereotype is a cultural creation which place is 16 above the other the story focuses on male chauvinism and social religious program in the niger Delta he discusses male children as a cultural construct in the niger Delta is also consider the ripple effects of this custom on the main female folk as it relates to marriage widowhood title to land and here it is finally Norman Fairclough (2001) points out that ideological power plays an important role in manipulation. He further posits that violence, especially physical violence, is exercised by those who have power. He opines that those who have power can exercise it and keep it: through coercing others to go along with them, with the ultimate sanctions of physical violence or death; or through winning others' consent to, or at least acquiescence in, their possession and exercise of power. In short, through coercion or consent. (Fairclough 33)

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ideological power plays an important role in manipulation. He further posits that violence, especially physical violence, is exercised by those who have power. He states those who have power can exercise it and keep it: through coercing others to go along with them, with the ultimate sanctions of physical violence or death; or through winning others' consent to, or at least acquiescence in, their possession and exercise of power. In short, through coercion or consent. (Fairclough 33)

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The world over, women suffer several practices of discrimination. Aganwu (2011) citing Osakwe (2010) argues that “women’s discrimination includes deprivation, oppression, powerlessness, poverty and hopelessness”. The Nigerian gender policy states the discrimination against women to comprise widowhood practice rights, inheritance rights, the land tenure

system and female genital mutilation, among others” (FGN, 2006). Obodoegbulam (2011) posits that “gender stereotype is a cultural creation which places one sex above the other”.

Another term closely related to chauvinism is sexism but mostly related to the disposition that tends to discriminate against women on the social stream. Thus, it is easy to say that Sexism of men against women is the problem of Feminism. Urgan (2004) citing Virginia Woolf (1928) talks about the philosophical concepts that give modern feminism some legitimacy, equally dwells on this issue of chauvinism. Ultimately what one sees is many cases of unfavourable social values that exist against women in our social systems.

The concept of chauvinism deals with several aspects of human interactions, these aspects includes, male chauvinism, female chauvinism and also, chauvinism as nationalism. All the arguments on male chauvinism are based on extrinsic factors while women’s indispensability in the society are based on intrinsic qualities. Agbakuru and Opara (2011).

Obodoegbulam (2011) describes male chauvinism as relatively new to literary discourse mainly considering how extensive feminism has been in existence. Since the 1960s, Gender equality has progressively improved in work places Tanimu (2009); Male chauvinism largely designates behaviours that portray famous views on gender role in the workplaces, societies, religions etc. This research is basically about Male chauvinism, which is closely associated with sexism and misogyny, and other forms of believe male superiority of women in the context of intellect. Female chauvinism is the symmetrical attitude that women are superior to men; this form of chauvinism is very rare, especially in African continent where some cultures and traditions include females’ subjugation to the males.

Statement of Problem

We have often talked about oppression, subjugation of the women folk but most times we overlook the salient aspect where discrimination is taken to a new level-chauvinism. The society is highly chauvinistic but not much is said about it because the Nigerian society sees nothing wrong in the assertion that women are inferior to their men in aspects of human endeavours hence this work is coming out to interrogate this aspect of the culture which dictates that women are eternally subservient, inferior to men.

Significance of the Study

The study aims at showing how women are being subjected to men or are being dominated by male. This work is significant as emphasises how women can take up major positions in the society too and how their contribution on such position would make an effective positive result, and also how being not seen as inferior would give them the joy of being among.

Scope of the Study

The study will focus on Chimamanda's *Purple Hibiscus* with emphasis on how the author reflects our past and present societal happens on gender.

Aim and Objectives

The study is aims at enlightening the ignorant females in the society that power can be attained by any one, irrespective of the gender. This study also elaborates the importance of female's contribution both intellectually, and other forms of proving female intelligence. The objectives include to:

1. Examine deprivation and suppression of women as portrayed in Chimamanda's *Purple Hibiscus* .

2. Investigate strategies deployed by women to combat male oppression as depicted in Chimamanda's *Purple Hibiscus*.
3. Discuss the Chimamanda's apparitions on gender in the Igbo society advanced in *Purple Hibiscus*.

Methodology

This research utilizes Chimamanda's *Purple Hibiscus* novels as the main source of primary data and cross-textual analysis, steered by the belief of Womanism. The text being mirrored from Womanist context and analysed based on complementation, conciliation, collaboration and consensus achieved through several characters in the novel. Also, examination of events and scenes, analyses of characters and language serve as data for this study and are used to establish the key arguments of the study. Through close textual reading of the piece, changing circumstances of the characters, plot and the narrators' view point, we explore methods used by the author point out the pathway for emancipation of her characters.

Analysis of the concept of Chauvinism in the Nigerian Prose

Literature helps us to mirror the society so that human's experiences far and wide are captured often used prose works to sustain the belief that men are superior to women. This line of reasoning is supported by Esther I. Jamgbadi when she says;

The traditional role of the women in Africa has been that of a wife and a mother and any women who does otherwise is labelled a failure. This is the representation of the female character in African the female character in African literature especially the novel since the late fifties (138)

Male superiority injected into male writers portrayal women in their works. often time, male prose authors are guided by their chauvinistic ego when depicting their female characters.

Women in works by Nigerian male authors hardly enjoy good roles. They are presented as gossips or kitchen martyrs. The negative ways men employed in the presentation of their female characters have forced many women into writing. Women now write with the view to correcting certain impressions male authors attach to the characterization of women in their works. In his comment, Helon Habila at the back cover page of *Everything God will Come* commends the effort of Sefi Attah. He sees a new light in the characterization of Enitan when he says “This is a courageous story about friendship and self-discovery.it is a rallying cry to women to speak out in a world that tries to muzzle them”.(text cover page).

In conclusion, the portrayal of women in prose works by men is based on chauvinistic position of men. Women are treated both in reality and literature with contempt. A possible explanation of this gender abnormality can be traced to men’s effort to keep dominating the society. However, women under the guide of feminism have rejected their portrayal by male authors. *Everything Good will come* by Atta and *Purple Hibiscus* by Adichie give a new diirection to the depiction of chauvinism and women’s reaction. This assertion is captured by Yetunde Akorede:

The works of African female writers endeavour to recreate women as they are in history, in life, and in their own realities. Being female themselves help them to reflect the deep feelings, desires and the hurts that the female experiences. The portrayal of the female characters by the female writer is usually more authentic and is usually a

departure from the male writers' image of women. (128)

What Akorede say is exactly the situation that leads many women into writing. They write to correct men's chauvinistic view about the female folks and press for women liberation.

Women in Nigerian Female Authored Novels.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Atta's *Everything Good Will Come* are departure from male prose authors' characterization of women. The two vibrant female prose authors use their novels to deconstruct bias depiction of female characters by male authors.

This assertion is captured by Yetunde Akorede:

Purple Hibiscus, a female authored prose work carefully debunks male chauvinism by highlighting its destructive effects on homes. Adichie uses the homes of Uncle Eugene and Auntie Ifeoma to show the weakness in patriarchy and the strength in matriarchy.

In his bid to ensure patriarchy and chauvinism are upheld, Uncle Eugene, the father of the heroine Kambili uses iron hand in raising his children and brutality to correct and love his wife. For example, after a church service, mama kambili refuses to follow her husband to the priest's parish house. It is a Pentecost Sunday; a day Uncle Eugene is expected to be filled with the Holy Spirit. After lunch that day, and he punishes his wife with violent swifts. This costs mama her pregnancy for she suffers an instant miscarriage after the beating. Uncle Eugene's addiction to violence anytime he faces his family members shows the weakness of chauvinism. He cuts off Jaja's finger nail for not taking the first position in his catechism class. He dips Kambili's legs into hot water for staying in the same house with a pagan (papa Nnukwu) his father. The double standard of Uncle Eugene shows the mockery of chauvinism.

While Adichie portrays men and chauvinism in her novel as destructive agents, she presents her female characters as fountain of love and stabilizing factors at home. For example, during the lunch on Palm Sunday, Jaja who is sick of his father's domineering attitude walks out on him. This rebellious act which is a direct consequence of Eugene's over disciplinary act on Jaja fuels his outrageous mind. He moves to beat him but Mama Kambili pacifies him. Mama's submissiveness and motherly affection shows that women saviours of most homes guided with chauvinistic drive. The character of Mama Kambili demonstrates the fact that women save most homes with chauvinistic doom.

In a similar way, Adichie uses the home of Auntie Ifeoma to show that women are good home makers. Auntie Ifeoma all alone plays the role of father and mother to her children. She grooms her children well with her limited finances. Unlike her strict brother Eugene who is consumed in his chauvinistic ego, Auntie Ifeoma is able to control her home well with great measure of respect for her children. As against iron hand, Auntie Ifeoma recognises the need to raise well informed children and she gives them the right freedom to grow into individuals. As a good home maker, she sees her children and people around her from their own points of view. This really helps her to manage her home very well. During their visits, Kambili and Jaja notice a difference between a home governed by chauvinistic rules and that under control of a women:

Laughter always rang out in Auntie Ifeoma's house, and no matter where the laughter came from, it bounced around all the walls, all the rooms. Arguments rose quickly and fell just as quickly. Morning and night prayers were always preppered with songs, igbo praise songs that usually called for

hand clapping. Food had little meat, each person's place the width of two fingers pressed together and the length of half a finger. The flat always sparkled. (148)

It is amazing that a woman is the head of this home and everything there is rosy. Adichie presents a stable home under the headship of a woman and contentious home under the headship of a man who is blinded by his chauvinistic ego. Indeed, the comparative study of the two homes shows that chauvinistic driven homes often bring ruin to their family. On the other, women can build a happy home free from any form of chaos we see in Eugene's house.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to look at how male chauvinism is depicted in Nigerian prose. Chauvinism deals with male superiority and how women are perceived in a society ruled by men. Attention is given to how male prose writers depicts the image and status of women through their female characters. To have a balanced view of this study, the way Nigerian female prose writers characterize their female characters are examined. This is done from the perspective of Sefi Atta's women in and that of Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*.

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REVISITING THE KEY CONCEPTS IN POSTCOLONIAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Postcolonialism as a theory emerged due to colonialism, especially European colonialism and it dwells on colonialism and its aftermath. Postcolonial discourse is out to kick out all Eurocentric ideas, and this study makes reference to some of the terms used in analyzing colonialism. The study maintains that colonial discourse existed before the emergence of postcolonial discourse. Colonial discourse has emanated from the Eurocentric views of the coloniser, as they portrayed the natives as savages. Colonial discourse tarnished the reputation of the natives in a bid to justify colonialism. Postcolonial discourse is out to redeem this negative image of the colonised people and strongly disagree with all the issues put forward by the imperialists. This study identifies abrogation, appropriation, representation, transformation, translation as key terms in postcolonial discourse. The study notes that the issue of language—whether to use the colonisers language or not—is a contentious one as postcolonial theorists and critics recommend abrogation while others call for appropriation of the coloniser’s language. This study concludes that appropriation of the coloniser’s language in postcolonial nations is easier than abrogation. Abrogation which calls for the total rejection of the coloniser’s language may not be possible in multilingual nations.

Keywords: postcolonialism, colonial discourse, abrogation, appropriation,

Introduction

Postcolonialism dwells on the event of colonialism, especially European colonialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and its aftermath. Colonialism affected the colonised nations negatively, especially the emergence of hybridity—biological, linguistic and cultural hybrids. To be able to justify colonialism, the imperialists claimed that the natives were savages and heathens without a culture. The imperialist's claim of pacifying the natives is an issue that is seriously contested in postcolonial discourse. Colonial discourse which demonized the natives, harbored Eurocentric issues and ideas must now be set aside as baseless clichés. Postcolonial theoreticians and critics are out to refute this wrong impression created in colonial discourse.

Postcolonialism is a counter discourse that has emerged to debunk the Eurocentric ideas inherent in colonial discourse. Postcolonial discourse has some key concepts which shall be analysed so as to point out the loop holes in colonial discourse. Postcolonial discourse has for instance maintained that the continuous use of the language of the coloniser is an extension of colonialism. They call for the abrogation (rejection) of English in all postcolonial nations but the English language can only abrogated in nations where a single mother tongue exists. This study has set out to revisit the concepts in postcolonial discourse so as to contribute to the existing debate on postcolonialism and its impact in the postcolonial nations.

Postcolonial Discourse

Postcolonial discourse according to Stein Olsen is the “interpretative vocabulary [of postcolonialism]” (155). Postcolonialism itself is a reaction to colonialism and it employs some terms in analysing colonialism which Olsen here refers to as interpretative vocabulary. In *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies*, Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin and Gareth Griffiths observe

that the word “discourse” was used in the past to “describe any kind of speaking, talk or conversation, but became increasingly used to describe a more formal speech, a narration or a statement of any subject at length, a treatise, dissertation or sermon. More recently, discourse has been used in a technical sense by linguists to describe any unit of speech longer than a sentence.” (70) Postcolonial discourse actually classifies and interprets the cultural practices of the postcolonial nation. Andrew Aba takes time to examine the place of postcolonial discourse in literary aesthetics and he concludes that presently,

Post-colonial discourse is more accessible to the reader. The level of difficulty in grasping it may, therefore, be less than that of theory. Still post-colonial discourse cuts out the post-colonial mode of theory and criticism, as an alien field that exacts a rigorous “catching up,” on the part of even literary aficionados who, are not abreast of the most recent trends in the field (35).

The analysis of postcolonial discourse must begin with colonial discourse which existed before it. This is the reason why Ashcroft, Tiffin and Griffiths in *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies*, trace the origin of postcolonial discourse back to the concept of “colonial discourse” introduced by Edward Said who adopted the concept of discourse as earlier put forward by Michael Foucault. They add that Said had seen that “Foucault’s notion of a discourse as valuable for describing that system within which that range of practices termed “colonial” come into being.” (41). Foucault had theorized that discourse refers to a set of statements through which the world can be known. He had opined that discourse refers to the system by which people or groups of people

in a society maintain a field of truth that imposes disciplines, knowledge and values on a group of dominated (colonised) people.

Colonial discourse is dominated by the belief that Europe is the centre of the world and the superiority of European modernity, language, literature and technology. Colonial discourse also deals with that which is said or can be said about the colonised people and that which is said about the colonising nation as well as the relationship between these nations. Colonial discourse in most cases is generated by the imperial nation but becomes the discourse within which those who are colonised are made to see themselves as inferior to the colonial masters. Ashcroft concludes that colonial discourse is always partial or in favour of the imperial nation because,

colonial discourse tends to exclude, of course, statements about the exploitation of the resources of the colonised, the political status accruing to colonising powers, the importance to domestic politics of the development of an empire, all of which may be compelling reasons for maintaining colonial ties. Rather it conceals these benefits in statements about the inferiority of the colonised, the primitive nature of other races, the barbaric depravity of colonised societies, and therefore the duty of the imperial power to produce itself in the colonial society, and to advance the civilization of the colony through trade, administration, culture and moral improvement. (*Key Concepts*, 43)

It is obvious from the views of Ashcroft Bill, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin on colonial discourse that, it preceded postcolonial discourse and that postcolonial discourse has emerged as a reaction to colonial discourse. Ashcroft's analysis of colonial discourse as

seen here also sheds light on the concept of postcolonial discourse as well. Andrew Aba sums it up that,

Postcolonial discourse is a code or register for theorizing on human and organizational realities in ways that help the colonised to order the colonial space according to his image and purpose. Postcolonial discourse is therefore, the counter-action to colonial discourse, whereby the indigene redefines, restructures and reverses colonial discourse to his/her purposes. (36)

Some of these terms commonly used in post-colonial discourse are, abrogation, appropriation, transformation, representation, translation, filiation and affiliation. What follows is a brief examination of some of these commonly used terms in postcolonial discourse.

Abrogation

In postcolonial discourse, abrogation refers to that conscious effort by those who are colonised to set aside the language of the coloniser and replace it with an indigenous language. The issue of language and how it is used by the coloniser and the colonised has always been a crucial one. English is even seen as the language of the oppressor. The issue of language is a primary concern of the postcolonial theorists, considering the difficulty of expressing the experiences of the oppressed in English—the language of the coloniser. Ashcroft Bill, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin identify language as one of the features that can be noticed in association with imperial oppression. The imperialists, right from the beginning of colonialism exercised control over language in the colonies. They add that, “the imperial education system installs a “standard” version of the metropolitan language as the norm and marginalizes all “variants” as impurities”

(*Empire Writes Back*, 7). Language is a means through which a structure of power is “perpetuated and the medium through which conceptions of “truth,” “order” and “reality” become established. Such power is rejected in the emergence of an effective postcolonial voice” (*Empire Writes Back*, 7). This means that with the attainment of independence, a postcolonial nation may choose to abrogate the language of the coloniser. Postcolonial discourse is built on the rejection of the special privilege accorded the language of the imperialist.

Moreover abrogation is seen as important in postcolonial discourse because of the issue of alienation. The acquisition of the knowledge of white culture and language leads to what is known in postcolonialism as linguistic alienation. Ashcroft Bill goes further to explain that, “imperialism which results in a profound linguistic alienation is obviously the case in cultures in which a pre-colonial culture is suppressed by military conquest or enslavement.” (*Empire Writes Back*, 10). Postcolonilism frowns at this linguistic alienation and calls for a set of intellectuals who will abrogate the language. Postcolonialism seeks to restore the pre-colonial cultural practices and this includes the task of reviving and revaluing local languages in the once colonised nations. Today, the communication of the elite is dominated by the use of the language of the coloniser (English) which acquired its power from the historical event of colonialism as the largest empire and its use by United States of America. Realizing the importance of the indigenous languages, postcolonial theorists call for a return to the indigenous languages and culture. Ashcroft Bill, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin add that,

in postcolonial societies in which alternatives exist, it has been suggested that a return to indigenous languages can restructure attitudes to

the local and the indigenous cultures, and can also form a more effective bridge to the bulk of the population whose lives have continued to be conducted largely in their mother tongues. (*Key Concepts*, 57)

So many postcolonial writers call for the abrogation of the English language as the language of the coloniser and a return to native languages. For instance, Ngugi wa Thiongo's bitter renouncement of English language and his decision to write his novels in his native Gikuyu amount to abrogation. As a matter of fact, Ngugi considers Chinua Achebe's usage of English as an "Afro-European" act of betrayal and complicity with the imperium. "Ngugi Wa' Thiongo has also argued that the continuous use of the language of the coloniser is a form of self-inflicted neo-colonisation". (cited in Bentens, 195). However, other writers do not accept Ngugi's view on abrogation as the only means of "decolonising the mind". Andrew Aba for instance opines that abrogation is not the only way out because a language like English is the language of the coloniser but

Post-colonial writers and critics have transformed it into a means of self-expression. For that reason, the way forward is not to abrogate these resources but for colonised societies to adapt them to local needs, and value them as providing control over their future. They go as far as adding that the resources have enhanced self-representation. (43)

Moreover some indigenous writers in the postcolonial nations have no other option than to continue writing in English. They realize that they have acquired the knowledge of English and may not effectively use other languages as a medium for writing their books. Nigerian writer, Chinua Achebe clearly indicates why

he must prefers writing in English. “For me, there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it” (62). Abrogation is also very difficult as other postcolonial writers argue that the indigenous people have different languages and may not understand each other when using their native languages. English becomes a common language that they can use and as a matter of fact cannot do without. This difficulty in abrogating the language of the coloniser in some postcolonial nations is what leads to the concept of appropriation in postcolonial discourse as discussed below.

Appropriation

In postcolonial discourse, appropriation is closely related to abrogation which has been discussed above and this is based on the fact that both have to do with a reaction of the colonised people to the language of the imperial nation. Appropriation is seen as the process of adapting to the coloniser’s language or effecting variations in such a language and no longer holding onto the coloniser’s view that “marginal variants” or “dialects” are inferior to the “standard” or “correct” form of the language as used by the native speakers.

The process of appropriation is sometimes used to refer to the coloniser’s strategy by which they take up a territory or culture that has been surveyed and invaded. Appropriation may also describe the ways of usurping cultural domains however the concept of appropriation is more useful in postcolonial discourse with regard to how “the dominant language and its discursive forms are appropriated to express widely differing cultural experiences, and to interpolate these experiences into the dominant modes of representation to reach the widest possible audience.” (*Key Concepts*, 19).

Appropriation as a postcolonial discourse is seen as a powerful concept and this point is established as Ashcroft mentions Achebe who quotes James Baldwin who observes that when the coloniser's language is appropriated, it is made to "bear the burden of another experience" (*Key Concepts*, 19). This means that the coloniser's language is made to adapt to its new environment instead of using it exactly as the coloniser uses it. In their analysis of appropriation in postcolonial discourse, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin note the fact that Ngugi who is a Kenyan writer insists that the English language should be abrogated yet "Ngugi continues to appropriate the novel form itself, and it has been argued that the very success of his political tactic of renouncing English has relied on his reputation as a writer in that tongue." (Key Concept, 19). This observation by Ashcroft is a clear indication that abrogation is not easy to hold onto. Ngugi wants to abrogate English but still finds himself translating his stories in English so as to attract patronage which he will not have access to if his novel remains untranslated. Aside from that, he still holds onto the English novel form which means he actually appropriating English instead of abrogating it as he claims.

Postcolonial writers and critics who have now chosen to take part in the appropriation of English and other ex-colonial languages argue that "although language may create powerful emotive contexts through which local identities are formed, and whilst the use of non-indigenous languages may, as a result, appear to such communities to be less authentic than texts in indigenous languages, such languages do not, in themselves, constitute an irrecoverably alien form, and they may be appropriated to render views that are just as powerful in constructing anti-colonial texts." (Ashcroft, *Key Concepts*. 20). This point of view is based on the fact that when a language like English is appropriated, the writer

may even achieve more that way than when a native language is used. The English language enjoys a wider coverage than local or native languages. Pramond K. Nayar emphasizes the fact that English language is important and useful to both the coloniser and the colonised. The language should therefore, be appropriated instead of trying to set it aside. He concludes that,

In each case the postcolonial writer asserts her identity not in an abandonment of the former European master's language, but in its appropriation. A postcolonial identity is forged, in many cases, not in a return to pre-colonial language or a 'pure' form, but in a hybridisation where political independence means that the postcolonial is empowered through the colonial past to fashion a new identity. While it is possible to argue that this makes postcolonialism a derivative discourse and form, it is also clear that, hybridisation is an act of agency and freedom where the writer creatively uses English in order to show how the crucial weapon of colonisation can become a weapon of the postcolonial as well. (85)

Appropriation of the coloniser's language is upheld in postcolonial discourse since it is seen as a strategy that affords the formerly colonised nations the opportunity to participate in international or what we may call dominant discourse and even sell their culture and tradition to the world. Appropriation of English enables the writer to use it to describe the realities of his nation to a wider audience of readers.

Translation

Translation according to Rushdie “comes, etymologically, from the Latin “to carry or bear across”(81). Translation is fundamental to the establishment of a colony as the imperial nation sets out to acquire new territory. According to Andrew Aba, translation is important in “the first instance whereby a “facsimile” or miniature of a place on the coloniser’s home map is “reproduced” or “recreated” in the colony.” (36). Translation then is the process of establishing a colony as the coloniser translates his own territory to the target territory. Robert Young draws an analogy of translation by comparing postcolonial translation to “textual translation”, using the distinction between “original” and “copy” to clarify the crossbreeding involved. Young explains that in this process of translation, the “copy” which is intended to correct, or at least mitigate the felt “deficiencies in the native version” (139-141) is made to appear as more authentic than the original. This can be understood against the background or the belief that the “barbarian” subject is tamable only through education which may also be understood as the transfer of Anglo-Saxon culture. Again this process of educating the colonised (barbarian) is reinforced by the impression of the colonised as a child that needs to be transformed into an adult “self”. This can be seen then as a translation from childhood to adulthood designed to overwrite the “child’s sense of reality and value. To Young, translation is a “discourse for how languages, people and cultures are transformed while in operation and also by changing their sense of self and of their place in society” (138). He further describes the process as:

The closest to central activity and political dynamic of post-colonialism [...which analysis is] centrally concerned with... linguistic, cultural and geographical transfer, [and] transformation of

positive and negative kinds, changing things into things which they are not. Or showing that they were never that way in the first instance (138 - 9).

Young also observes that translation was first practiced by the imperialists unilaterally in order to hold onto its benefit, but thanks to the dynamic nature of man, and human organization, it later turned into “cultural interaction and re-empowerment” (142). Though this change is said to have occurred from the counter action of the subject people, the coloniser still managed to manipulate the situation for imperial profit. Young sees “creolization” as a classic case of this occurrence because it implies “displacement, transformation of dominant culture [the empire’s] into new identities that take on material elements from the culture of their location [the subject’s]” (142). It may be observed that the transformation or positive change that both the coloniser and indigene hope to make from the process of translation eventually do not amount to much gain since Young too acknowledges that some aspects of the indigenous culture remain “untranslatable” (140), which means that they literally remain impenetrable to foreign access and manipulation, even to interpretation and comprehension. Closely linked with this condition is what Young calls, “false translation” or “diplomacy” (141). This involves either individual or group behaviour which Homi Bhabha describes as “Sly civility” (Young 141). The colonised resort to diplomacy so as to, distort the coloniser’s understanding of the colonial space. It is carried out through misrepresentations, lies, betrayals and all manner of pretentiousness, undermining, if not sabotaging, the colonial project.

A good example of false translation is Shakespeare’s portrayal of Caliban in *The Tempest*. Caliban is bent on using his knowledge of his Master’s language, English, to “curse” both

Prospero and his daughter Miranda, instead of employing it for a more beneficial purpose for himself and his society. Caliban tells his master Prospero that, “you taught me language and my profit on’t/Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you/For learning me your language!”. Critics have over the years argued that Caliban’s comment cited here is a symbol of indigene reaction to “centuries of linguistic and cultural control” (Ashcroft, *On Post-colonial Futures*, 96). The portrayal of Caliban’s relationship with Prospero/Miranda has, evolved as a metaphor for the subject-coloniser relationship though Shakespeare’s creative imagination did not actually set out to capture the future impact of imperialism on colonised people.

Different opinions exist on Shakespeare’s presentation of the character, Caliban. Vaughan Allen and Vaughan Virginia opine that up to the mid-1900s, some critics were of the opinion that Caliban was blameworthy for failing to appropriate the coloniser’s language (166). However, in 1960, George Lamming opined that Caliban is not to blame since language is the symbolic key to the perennial underdevelopment of the subject—“the very prison in which Caliban’s achievements will be realised and restricted.” (110). He maintains that Caliban was taught English mainly for domestic purposes and that “Caliban can never be regarded as an heir to that language since his use of language is no more than his way of serving Prospero; and Prospero’s instruction in this language is only his way of measuring the distance which separates him from Caliban” (110).

Translation as a postcolonial discourse is very crucial to the natives who write in the language of the coloniser. Maria Tymoczko postulates that translation is always involved in one way or another when a colonised person writes in English. She further explains that, “the act of writing in English is not ‘merely’ one of

translation of an Indian text into English language, but a quest for a space which is created by translation and assimilation, and hence transforms all three [the Indian, the English and the context]" (qtd. in Fraser, *Post-colonial Fiction*, 40). This means that the postcolonial writer who writes in English or any other imperial language is involved in translation as he/she writes to transform his own nation by countering the Eurocentric notions of the coloniser that had existed in colonial discourse. Such writer also appropriates English so as to use it in such a manner that it bears the native culture and language.

Andrew Aba in his analysis of translation as a postcolonial discourse identifies Achebe as one postcolonial writer who makes use of translation by "acculturating English with his Igbo linguistic and tonal inflexions, and with idiomatic and folkloric masterstrokes, he does, in fact, bridge the gap between the two languages." (42). Aba opines that the use of appropriation enables Achebe as a writer to avoid or reduce the cultural alienation that may have emerged between the colonised and the overlord. Based on this, he concludes that, "translation involves the process of appropriation by which English is manipulated in ways that evade the dominance of western canons. Indeed, post-colonial discourse is entirely centered on autonomous, "national" literatures in all forms and pedigrees of the colonial linguistic canon which in effect, substantiate the periphery's claim that its literatures are not branches of the imperial vine"(42).

Transformation

Transformation as a postcolonial discourse is closely related to translation as it shows the ability of the colonised to seize the coloniser's language, discourse, and technologies and convert it as an avenue or means of self-empowerment. The colonised transforms or restores the image of his/her nation by using the

language of the coloniser to debunk some if not all Eurocentric notions put in place by the coloniser in colonial discourse by writing in that imperial language making use of appropriation. In addition to this, the technology of the coloniser gets into the hands of the colonised who can as well hold onto it and use it to transform or restore the image of his own nation which had been tarnished by the coloniser. Transformation as a postcolonial discourse is put in place to accommodate new insights into the postcolonial cultural evolution of the colonised people. Edward Said explains that,

The central strategy in transformations of colonial culture is the seizing of self-representation (ie taking charge of how one is projected). This is why post-colonial theory regards the phenomenon of culture as so important... the struggle over representation underlies all economic, political, and social resistance and occurs in language, writing and other forms of cultural production. Colonial representation is so powerful in its effect that it can [determine the self-concept of the colonised]. This can affect all social and political exchange. (qtd. in Ashcroft, *On Postcolonial Futures*, 7).

Transformation in postcolonial discourse can be done through self-representation and to illustrate this, Andrew Aba identifies Chinua Achebe as a postcolonial writer who achieved much in the area of appropriation and transformation in his writing. Aba further explains that “in Achebe’s transformation (via self-representation) he tries to strike a balance, for example, in character or situational portrayal, objectively exposing the complex underbelly of a problem. It matters little to him whether this approach shows his people in a bad light, or makes him seemingly self-contradictory.”

(44). The point is that the postcolonial writer sets out in pursuance of self-representation and restoration of the lost image of his nation in the wake of colonialism but should not fail to acknowledge the fact that his/her society also had its imperfections before the arrival of the colonial masters. Achebe himself explains that this is very important because “we cannot pretend that our past was one long technicolour idyll. We have to admit that like other people’s past, ours had its good as well as its bad sides.” (qtd. in Innes and Lindfors, 70). The postcolonial writer should not just glorify the past and fail to identify those aspects of the past that need to put right. Kofi Awoonor a popular African poet also holds onto this point as he criticises negritude for instance because the movement known as negritude had glorified the African past without seeking ways in which that past could be made better. Awoonor presents his argument as follows:

While they [negritude writers] are interested in the past for the sake of glorifying the past, I think our concern is for an interest in the past which will illuminate the present, so we are not going to be locked in the past. The writers of negritude talk about the Golden Age of Africa. Every people who create a Golden Age are going to suffer from a sense of narcissism and self-hypnotism. Well, we have had empires, princes and queens, and so on; that’s fine, but what’s going on now? There was a lot of confusion in those days also. I will not take the same position as Yambo Ouologuem in his *Le Devoir du Violence*, which tends to exaggerate the corruption of Africa... but we have to be critical of ourselves at the same time. (qtd. in Morell 148).

Representation

Representation is a term that denotes a range of meanings or interpretations. Noel Salazar explains that “etymologically, representation can be understood as a presentation drawn up not by depicting the object as it is but by re-presenting it or constructing it in a new form and/or environment.” (172). He then explains how in ancient times, the concept of representation played an important role in studying and understanding literature, semiotics as well as aesthetics. Salazar further explains how representation is used in socio-cultural and postcolonial discourse,

In socio-cultural representations it is often difference that signifies by creating binary oppositions. Within this dichotomised relationship, one pole always tends to dominate (e.g male over female, us over them, high over low), bringing issues of dissimilarity and power to the fore within a representation.... Representation [which] enacted and reproduced the asymmetries of power in the colonial world has enhanced the significance of cultural politics in the academic field of postcolonial studies. The focus on culture and representation is not necessarily a diversion from the political realities of postcolonial struggle; culture and representation can even be used to inform the understanding of those colonial processes. (171-173).

The fact is that in colonial discourse, the coloniser had presented the colonised peoples as barbarians, and unenlightened savages. Postcolonial discourse therefore seeks to represent the colonised in a different light completely. There exists much postcolonial scholarship which is informed by theories that dwell on the politics of representations. Edward Said is one of the influential

postcolonial scholars who demystifies the process of constructing “the Other”. Said noted that native people or populations were represented in colonial texts as primitive so as to create the impression that the British had a modern or well developed culture and justify the notion that the colonial adventure of Europe was valid and necessary. He further observes that,

Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-avis the Orient; translated into his text; this location includes the kind of narrative he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kind of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text—all of which add up to the deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient and finally representing it or speaking on its behalf. (20).

It is important to consider Said’s analysis of how the Orient is represented in Western texts and it must be noted that Edward Said had employed “a Foucaultian conception of the power/knowledge nexus and the politics of representation, Said’s seminal book *Orientalism* established how the “West” (especially Britain, France, and the United States) through an academic, literary and philosophical endeavor executed by Western intellectuals, was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-enlightenment period” (Salazar 173). This means that Said presented the linear pattern that led to the presentation of the Orient as the other by the West and it also became the basis for colonial oppression as well build and strengthen the culture and identity of the West. Since the West had presented the Orient as the inferior Other, Said had seen the need

to represent the Orient in a more positive manner. This is the reason why Salazar further explains that,

Said eloquently demonstrated how the representations of Orientalism pervade the writings of European and North American literature icons such as Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, Henry James, and Thomas Hardy as well as modern-day media reports about the developing world, particularly the Islamic world. Although Said's arguments have been challenged and extended, his work is still the governing voice that leads scholars in anthropology, literature, mass communication, and postcolonial studies to critically analyse representations that demarcate "us" versus "them." (173).

Aside from Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak is another postcolonial scholar who also contributed to the concept of representation as a postcolonial discourse. She is known for her article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In this article, she dwells extensively on how representations, of groups of people from developing countries who are marginalised. According to Salazar, the crux of Spivak's argument is that the representations of the developing world conflate two related but discontinuous meanings of representation. One meaning is "speaking for" in the sense of political representation, and the second is "speaking about" or "re-presenting" ... while Spivak recognises that representations cannot escape "Othering", Spivak argues for us to be scrupulous in so doing, especially in the case of unequal power relationships, when representing

the West's Other (the developing world) and the developing world's Other (the Subaltern). (173).

A conclusion can be drawn, reflecting the fact that representation as postcolonial discourse is out to present the colonised in a new light as opposed to how they were represented in colonial discourse by the colonial masters. The colonised is therefore, re-presented to the imperial masters so that they too may now see the colonised differently. The discourse of representation is out to make the coloniser see that which he had deliberately refused to notice about the people they colonised. Thus Lalitha Velautham concludes that, the "Knowledge of the represented creates the represented in the minds of all who come in contact with the discourse and images of the represented." (44). Representation is therefore, an important concept in postcolonial discourse.

Conclusion

It has been established here that colonial discourse came into existence before the emergence of postcolonial discourse. While the former was put in place by the colonialists or imperial nations, the latter has come into existence based on the effort of the colonised people to counter the wrong and Eurocentric ideas or issues put forward by the imperial nations. Based on this, we may conclude that postcolonialism itself is a counter discourse. It is out to counter colonial discourse. If colonial discourse had seen the colonised peoples as barbaric, unrefined savages, postcolonialism represents these people as an enlightened people with a culture and a glorious past as well as a promising future.

The issues of language and culture dominate postcolonialism and are represented in concepts like abrogation and appropriation. It is obvious that abrogation—complete rejection of the colonizer's language in favour of an indigenous one—is the best option as far as postcolonial discourse is concerned but it is

not possible in multilingual nations. It is recommended that appropriation—the use of the colonizer’s language but with variations or slight changes to make it more suitable in a postcolonial nation—is the right option and many postcolonial scholars attest to this. Postcolonial discourse will surely do away with colonial discourse or render it outdated, and of no consequence.

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“WHEN HANDSHAKE GOES BEYOND THE ELBOW”: IMPOLITE BEHAVIOUR IN COURTROOM PROCEEDINGS

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Abstract

Considering the consensus of scholars on the adversarial nature of courtroom interactivity and the expedience of certain face-aggressive acts, this paper extends a culture-based Yoruba code of acceptable behaviour, *Omoluabi*, to courtroom cross-examination for the purpose of delimiting the scope of context-specific impoliteness resources in litigants' language choices. Data were excerpted from the transcripts of two cases conducted in the High Court of Osun State, Southwest, Nigeria: *Ibikunle vs. Irawoosan* and *The State vs. Idahosa* which were conducted orally and transcribed by court officials. In analysing salient culture-based face-aggravating behaviour as impolite acts, which it likened to a “handshake beyond the elbow”, the study was guided by relevant aspect of Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness super-strategies and Watts's (2003) relational work theory. It was revealed that culture-based courtroom impolite linguistic behaviour manifest in falsehood, name-calling, contempt and impolite imperatives. This finding expands the scope of negatively marked verbal behaviour and, consequently, the size of courtroom impolite acts.

Keywords: politic; power; impoliteness; facework; *Omoluabi*

1.0 Introduction

The Nigerian judiciary is hierarchically structured in order of the seriousness of cases each court has the jurisdiction to try. The grading is as follows: Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Federal Court of Appeal, High Court of Appeal, Sharia Court of Appeal, Customary Court of Appeal, Magistrate Court, District Court and Area Court. There are also a few courts of concurrent jurisdiction with the high court, Industrial Court and *ad hoc* Special Tribunal(s). Nigeria operates an adversarial legal system, a model it shares with England and Wales, which involves a “battle” that each party tries to win.

Adversity involves storytelling and evidence by opposing parties that attacks the other side’s case (Monsefi, 2012:45). In this context the “pragmatic function of attorneys’ questions becomes dominant [and] differs according to the intention behind them” (Monsefi, 2012:45). At the phase of cross-examination, the prosecutor or plaintiff is expected to present factual evidence that is not favourable to the defendant, the defence counsel attempts to move it in the opposite direction in support of the defendant. Cross-examination is intended to test the testimony of the witness and is aimed at discrediting the case of the prosecution. It is a phase in the trial where leading questions are allowed and answers may be contradicted by subsequent evidence.

Hobbs (2002:484) has presented the expedience of verbal aggression in cross-examination:

Cross-examination encapsulates the drama of trial; thus the tense confrontation between an aggressive attorney and a vacillating witness or profusely sweating defendant is a staple of television and motion picture courtroom scenes. However, although actual cross-examinations are ordinarily (at least on their surface) considerably

more mundane, the ability to conduct an effective cross-examination is considered critical to success at trial.

The desire for victory often makes the engagement of parties in hot verbal exchange inevitable. Justice, fair-hearing and social harmony (particularly in a society with culture-sensitive code of conduct) may be impaired in a situation where the scope of the face-off exceeds societal expectation on the one hand and the norm of expectation in the courtroom activity-type, on the other. Such abnormal situation may be likened to a joke taken too far or, succinctly in the Nigerian parlance, “a handshake [that goes] beyond the elbow”.

Handshake, a paralinguistic activity in the form of hand-to-hand cuddling which comes in the course of exchanging pleasantries, is used figuratively in this study. The hand is bounded by the wrist while the latter is separated from the elbow by the “long” arm. Normally, handshake should not extend to the wrist while its extension to the elbow, is unimaginable. Invariably, the allowable aggression in the courtroom should also not exceed a tolerable proportion as may be measured by court rules as well as the constraints imposed by a societal code of conduct. The proverbial handshake extending beyond the elbow is a metaphor for labelling excessive courtroom hostile verbal acts and their categorisation as impolite.

Aside the display of power arguments in the degree of formality as institutionalised framework increases the possibilities that the locus of power will weigh heavily in favour of the powerful participants, courtroom discourse significantly exemplifies the function of language as a powerful instrument for the management and resolution of conflicts. The legal domain is a critical institution where the maintenance of social order is primary. It

relies heavily on appropriate discursive processes in its proceedings and justice delivery.

The Osun State courtroom is unique to this study for its language situation as a mix of the English language with that of the homogeneous Yoruba language, thereby resulting in the reflection of the norms of the courtroom as community of practice. Secondly, language in the courtroom is further used in giving expression to the cultural preferences of the Yoruba race, some of which are prescribed by the unwritten code of acceptable social behaviour.

Various studies that describe the language of law (Adetugbo 1990); discourse strategies and courtroom discourses (Opabi 2012); and politeness strategies in courtroom proceedings (Ayansola 2016); have engaged the attention of Nigerian scholars. Adegbite (1996) and Opeibi (2003), in turn, were pre-occupied with discourse features rather than the pragmatics of the Nigerian courtroom im/politeness resources. For a change, this study, from a pragmatics orientation and guidance from the Yoruba cultural peculiarities, extends the scope of impoliteness and categorises certain linguistic behaviour in the courtroom as impolite notwithstanding that its form of activities is latent with verbal aggression.

Teilanyo and Ayansola (2017:1) further evaluated the pragma-linguistic strategies through which the goal of the courtroom is achieved notwithstanding the divergence of interests among the participants taking into cognisance the social power relations in the courtroom situation with the averment that the performances of FTAs in the courtroom manifest in “behaviour reflective of distance, power and control, expedient face-enhancing strategies and constraints of roles and professions”.

Teilanyo and Ayansola (2017:1) insisted that these pragmatic strategies are linguistically indexed in the form of sanctioned verbal aggression, bald-on-record FTA, conventional directness, justifiable verbal disagreements and the performance of certain directive/commissive acts which are reflective of the linguistic choices allowed by the courtroom situation and purpose culminating in the dispensation of justice. However, the study only glossed over what a politic behaviour is in the courtroom without situating the cultural nuances behind the acts, a lacuna the present paper has addressed with the emphasis that there is a limit to the allowable verbal aggression in an adversarial context such as the courtroom. Such acts are negatively marked as impolite or as suggested by the title of this study “a handshake that extends beyond the elbow”.

From western perspectives, Berk-Seligson (1999) dwelt on the categorisation of question types such as Yes/No questions, prosodic questions, and truth questioning questions, and so on. Gibbons (2003), in turn, investigated courtroom verbal attributes of relatively less powerful participants such as hesitations, hedging, uncertainty, intensifiers, use of “sir”/ “madam” honorifics, time taken, and mitigation of mild face-threats. The study reiterates the asymmetry nature of courtroom interaction in which the powerful participants, notably the counsel, are more likely to dominate the discourse and perform face-threatening-acts or outright impoliteness.

Impoliteness has traditionally been glossed over as a secondary product of social interaction which is often conceived as a simple deviation from certain politeness principles (Watts 2003; Culpeper, 2005). The contemporary shift in attention to impoliteness, “the disruptive side of social interaction” and its exploration from another perspective (Limberg, 2008:155), is the

aftermath of Brown and Levinson's (1987) facework-based theory of politeness.

This paper is pre-occupied with interactional impolite acts in the courtroom. This becomes pertinent since scholars, for example, Archer (2011) and Harry (1984) have often portrayed courtroom aggressive verbal performances as appropriate with the underlying assumption that impoliteness cannot be ascribed to certain verbal aggression no matter how serious it may be. Their position is understandable considering that the studies only relay western biases which may not account for the Nigerian cultural peculiarities, in particular the Yoruba concept of *Omoluabi*.

In making case for impoliteness, Culpeper (2005:38) has argued that "impoliteness comes about when: (1) the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/or constructs behaviour as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2)". Culpeper (2005:86) described impoliteness as a type of aggression and that the courtroom is a "legitimate form of [that] verbal aggression" since "prosecutors are licensed to aggravate a witness's face". In an earlier study, Culpeper (1996:359) insisted that "impoliteness is not always a haphazard product of say heated argument" in a particular context, but may be enacted "in a systematic way [by lawyers] as part of what they perceive to be their job.

From the foregoing, it is pertinent to ask if systematic impoliteness is a norm in the context of the courtroom. Would parties in the courtroom, where conflictive talk plays a great role, ascribe impoliteness to verbal aggression? Is the neutralisation of impolite acts in the western courtrooms a universal phenomenon? At what point does the *Yoruba* proverbial handshake extend beyond the elbow? How is impoliteness enacted pragmatically in the courtroom? In providing answer to these questions, this study

relied on two representative cases: The State vs. Idahosa and Ibikunle vs. Irawoosan which were conducted in the High Court of Osun State, Nigeria over twenty sittings.

The State vs. Idahosa was a criminal case which had its setting in a Nigerian university. It involved a group of students led by one Idahosa who was charged with murder and conspiracy arising from some cult-related violence which resulted in the death of several students including members of the Students' Union Government (SUG). This situation pitched the cultists and a segment of the SUG against the school authority.

Ibikunle vs. Irawoosan in turn was a civil proceeding on land dispute which emanated from an agrarian community where a high premium is placed on land for both economic and cultural reasons. Some high profile lay-participants, including the Oba (the traditional ruler) were involved in this case, a situation that constraints the linguistic choices of those who were in opposition to the Oba. This is as a result of certain cultural obligation that compels his subjects to defer to him at all times.

The choice of cases was informed, firstly, by their display of a high level impolite verbal behaviour being the pre-occupation of this research. The second reason is attributable to their profiles which include media interest, the personalities involved, and the quality of legal representation with the resultant intensity of legal fireworks which in all cases necessitated appeals beyond the high court - a court of superior records according to the *1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*.

As is the norm at the high court, litigants spoke through their respective counsel as lay-participants were hardly heard with the exception being the phase of cross-examination when they were led in evidence by the plaintiff counsel and defendant counsel, in that order. The categorisation of impoliteness in this

study, therefore, takes into consideration counsels' negatively marked speech acts to as well as similar behaviour by their principals as well as other courtroom participants.

2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Watts's (2003) theory of relational work (RW) and the relevant part of the impoliteness model by Culpeper (1996), in particular, the proposal on positive and negative impoliteness super-strategies which were adapted from Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-based politeness model, have been adopted for the analysis of courtroom negatively marked verbal behaviour which may be adjudged as impolite. There is hardly a consensus on a methodological approach to the discursive the notion of impoliteness as the subject is fiercely contested by different scholars. However, the common denominator is that impoliteness is rooted in face-aggravation in a particular context.

For example, Tekourafi's (2005:45) argument that "judgements about politeness or impoliteness/rudeness are not always automatic but may be reached after some deliberation[s] about the speaker's intention" is at variance with the position of Locher and Watts (2005:77) that impoliteness should be evaluated as "a judgement made by a participant in an interaction with respect to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the social behaviour of co-participants".

The divergence borders on the hearer's inference and whether or not impoliteness is intended by the speaker or whether the behaviour could be evaluated as impolite judging by the interlocutors' frame of expectation made after a consideration of the allowable linguistic conduct by the norm of the activity-type. In his defence of the participants' judgement, Watts (2003) made provision for several levels of [im]politeness including normal,

appropriate, unmarked as well as (positively and negatively) marked behaviour which are operational in different contexts.

Alleged impoliteness, such as imperatives and interrogatives as canvassed by Brown and Levinson (1987) may be interpreted as appropriate behaviour in Watts's RW depending on whether or not such performances are in conformity with the frame of the participants' expectations in the community of practice. For example, the presiding judge in shouting "objection overruled", may have performed a face-threatening-act (FTA) but certainly not an impolite act. Such act falls within the participants' frame of expectation and the ambit of the speaker's social power. Hence, it is a neutralised or politic verbal behaviour.

Politic behaviour is an unmarked "linguistic behaviour which is perceived to be appropriate to the social constraints of the on-going interaction" (Watts, 2003:19). RW is a concept which covers the "continuum of verbal behaviour from direct, impolite, rude or aggressive interaction through to polite interaction, encompassing both appropriate and inappropriate forms of social behaviour" (Locher, 2004:51). Watts insisted that "polite and impolite" are not necessarily opposite and there are no clear boundaries for what constitutes politeness or impoliteness.

Penman (1990) and Culpeper (1996) were unanimous in their recognition of prevalence of facework in the courtroom, thereby underlining that verbal warfare is an interactional requirement in court proceedings. Whereas Brown and Levinson (1987:1,51) perceived the courtroom as self-regulatory and capable of curtailing verbal hostilities, thereby ensuring "communication between potentially aggressive parties", Penman (1990:18) argued that facework in courtroom engagement may manifest in the form of face-aggravation or enhancement. The inevitability of facework in antagonistic situation, courtroom

inclusive has informed Culpeper's (1996:41-42) impoliteness super-strategies. This study is, however, restricted to the analysis of positive and negative impoliteness in courtroom interactivity. The super-strategies are summarised below:

Positive impoliteness: strategies that are designed to damage the addressee's positive face want (his desire to be appreciated and liked). Example: name-calling or uttering taboo words.

- (1) Negative impoliteness: strategies that are intended to damage addressee's negative face wants (the desire to have freedom to act as he chooses and not imposed on or impeded by others). Example: scorning or threatening the other.
- (2) Sarcasm or mock politeness: insincere or surface politeness strategies. Example: You are a friend indeed!
- (3) Withholding politeness where politeness would be expected.

While the first and the second super-strategies are relevant to this study, it is worthy of note that the entirety of Culpeper's categorisation is not sacrosanct, the validity having been questioned particularly the overlapping between positive impoliteness and negative impoliteness. An example is "scorning", an item which may offend both the positive and negative face of the hearer. Bousfield (2008:136) noted that bald on record impoliteness "cannot and does not exist outside of the theorist's vacuum" as they are "superfluous [and] simply describes formal aspects of utterances and does not account for the functional aspects of those utterances." He concluded that Culpeper's model "has no place in a model of impoliteness that attempts to capture real-world interactions".

It should be noted that impoliteness plays out against the notion that power equation plays a role in all social interactions. It is “discursively negotiated and is always latently present in every instantiation of social practice” (Locher and Watts, 2005:86) and linked to the evaluation of im/polite behaviour. In the courtroom, power relations are skewed in favour of the counsel who enjoys the luxury of framing the questions to his advantage through varying communicative strategies like “being ambiguous to targets, causing them to misunderstand and, therefore give the appearance of guilt”, blocking, interrupting, overlapping with speech and changing topic before the addressee has got the chance to answer (Shuy, 2005:34).

Meanwhile, the proposal by Locher (2004:39-40) that power is given expression through language and cannot be explained without contextualization is apt. This is because power is relational, dynamic and contestable and involves a latent conflict and clash of interests which can be obscure because of societal ideologies, hence the affirmation by Locher and Bousfield (2008:9) that “even interactants with hierarchically lower status can and do exercise power through impoliteness”.

The exercise of power is latent with face-constituting and face-aggravation. Impoliteness is an exercise of power and has effect on the hearer, thereby altering the future action-environment of the addressee. Impoliteness, whether understood as intentional face aggravation (Bousfield, Culpeper) or not (Tekourafi), is inextricably tied up with the concept of power because “an interlocutor whose face is damaged by an utterance suddenly finds his or her response options ... restricted” (Locher and Bousfield 2008:8). Such restrictions enforced through face-aggravating behaviour in its impolite form can be observed in confrontational settings such as the courtroom.

Notwithstanding certain reservations, Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies are germane to the analysis of impoliteness to the extent that they capture those acts which extend beyond the realm of normalcy in a particular context, courtroom inclusive. The conceptualisation of impoliteness as acts that exceed participants' frame of expectation has been validated by Tracy (2008) in her exploration of the possibility of interlocutors making use of contextually-sanctioned verbal aggression which she termed "reasonable hostility". The study drew upon the communicative conduct of interlocutors in school governance meetings to show how FTAs play a necessary role in the proceedings.

Tracy's concept of reasonable hostility is applicable to the courtroom since "prosecuting lawyers will often attempt to appear" (Archer, 2011:8) "incisive, tough [and] even aggressive" in the performance of their work, while steering clear of gratuitous offensiveness (Bousfield, 2008:18). The current study evaluates how "reasonable hostility", which is synonymous to politic linguistic behaviour, manifests in the Nigerian courtroom. It however goes a step further by constructing certain behaviour that goes beyond the norm of expectation in the community of practice as impolite.

Based on Culpeper's impoliteness super-strategies, Archer (2008:204) re-assessed the application of impoliteness in the English historical courtroom context. He reiterated Levinson's argument that the courtroom "typifies institutional talk in that the linguistic contributions of the various participants were determined by the roles assigned to them". Archer (2008) insisted that the asymmetric nature of the courtroom interaction is defined by power relations and that in such context, power should be considered as an issue for verbal aggression rather than one of its

affiliates. In such situation, power tended to be exerted or challenged through verbal aggression rather than impoliteness.

As proven by this study, Archer's (2008) insinuation of a dichotomous relationship between verbal aggression and impoliteness is unnecessary since they are interdependent with one rooted in the other. Granted that there can be aggression without the speaker not being necessarily impolite, verbal aggression is a potential recipe for impoliteness as it is easy to cross the thin line of separation into the impolite zone particularly in an adversarial courtroom context as may be influenced by the Yoruba cultural preferences.

Impoliteness research on adversarial genre has not received commensurate attention. Furthermore, the notion of what counts as polite and impolite are always contingent on the situational context, thereby prompting Locher's (2004:90) argument that "[im]politeness cannot be investigated without looking in detail at the context, the speakers, the situation and the evoked norms". This study, with focus on the evoked Yoruba norms of acceptable behaviour in the western courtroom model, has come to fill the void.

2.1 THE YORUBA CONCEPT OF ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Social interaction is inevitable to humans. It is an activity in which the enactment of im/politeness is integral. Notwithstanding the universality of interactivity, Odebunmi (2015) should take the credit for reminding us that the "linguistic and discursive means of achieving it [interactivity] are sometimes specific to particular speech communities". This underscores the existence of mutual contextual beliefs on the notion of what is an

acceptable social conduct among Yoruba, a homogenous ethnic nationality in Southwest Nigeria.

The conformity or otherwise of the individual members of a speech community to the expression of localised forms of deference, greeting, appreciating and complimenting (to mention but a few), notwithstanding that they are universal formulae, determines the rating of their actions as acceptable or not to the societal norms. This is because, the way these universal cultures are enacted vary by “societal expectations, preferences and realities” (Odebunmi, 2015). Any member of the society that is properly oriented to the local variants of expressing appropriate behaviour is regarded as *Omoluabi* by the Yoruba.

Below is Odebunmi’s (2015) encapsulation of the concept of *Omoluabi*:

Omólúàbí is a high-context cultural concept, encapsulates the idea of a good Yorùbá person, and is thus impactful in determining the Yorùbá identity. It rests on the principles of good behaviour, social harmony and integrity ..., which form the approximate size of the notion of politeness, itself defined as a demonstration of socially appropriate manners. Omólúàbí is grounded in the linguistic expression of respect and social warmth, which is manifested in greetings, morally-induced encounters and socially-ingrained exchanges. These qualities are interpreted as indices of love, hospitality, communality and good upbringing among the Yorùbá in all areas of life.

From the premise of the concept of *Omoluabi*, the analysis of impoliteness in courtroom discourse requires that the attitude

of the society to the conventional court is taken into consideration against the reality that the same culture which values the concept of *Omoluabi* has an aversion for pro-western legal model and its associated hostilities. The adversity of the western court may have informed the Yoruba parlance “*a kii ti kootu de sore*” (I cannot be a friend with the individual with whom I had engaged in litigation).

The pre-colonial Yoruba community has its traditional means of settling civil and criminal cases. The courts were manned by traditional rulers with the Oba at the apex of certain jurisdiction depending on the magnitude of the case. The presiding authority wields relational powers that are comparable to those of the conventional courts, thereby informing the appellation of the Oba as *alase ikeji orisa* (one with unquestionable power next only to God).

The presiding judges, litigants and other participants in the traditional Yoruba court were guided by the convention of *Omoluabi*. The concept of a legal counsel with the licence to perform impoliteness on the courtroom lay-participants was alien to the largely inquisitorial court. Consequently, the traditional court was devoid of intentionally orchestrated face-aggression that often characterises cross-examination in western courtrooms. Deference was the norm as the system gives allowance for post-litigation and societal harmonious relationship.

Colonialism has changed the norm of the traditional judicial system. The modern society while retaining the *Omoluabi* tenets has accepted the modern court with measured scepticism. Notwithstanding its being subjected to a modern judicial system by the reality of the modern government, the Yoruba litigants often conform to the cultural principles of *Omoluabi* in the midst of adversarial courtroom restraining factors, culture being a way

of life. The foregoing underscores the notion of im/politeness as culture-bound as well as genre-sensitive, a situation that makes cross-cultural investigation of impoliteness such as this a worthwhile exercise.

It is worthwhile reiterating that in the courtroom, participants' status and roles are a determinant factor not only in the distribution of power but it is crucial in the categorisation of what amounts to impoliteness. Power equation plays a role in all social interaction. It is "discursively negotiated and is always latently present in every instantiation of social practice" (Locher and Watts, 2005:86) and is linked to the evaluation of impolite behaviour.

In this situation, power relations are skewed in favour of the judge and the counsel with the latter enjoying the luxury of framing the questions to his advantage through varying communicative strategies like "being ambiguous to targets, causing them to misunderstand and, therefore give the appearance of guilt", blocking, interrupting, overlapping with speech and changing topic before the addressee has got the chance to answer (Shuy, 2005:34). In cross-examination, counsel may effectively use their discursive resources in manipulating what the witness would testify and consequently what the jury can learn from him, a position that has further been clarified by Hobbs (2002:413-414):

Cross-examination provides a classic setting for confrontational speech, in which the witness may be explicitly challenged to admit that he is lying, or mistaken, or both. More often, however, such challenges remain implicit, and result from inferences created by a series of questions in

which the cross-examining attorney attempts to imply a version of the evidence that is contrary to the witness' testimony, a process that Drew [1992:516] refers to as 'constructing contrasts' because the questions "convey to the jury a contrast between the witness's account of what happened, and what is likely in fact to have happened". Far from being neutral requests for information, such questions are themselves freighted with meaning, building a description of the relevant events that favours the position of the attorney's client.

Validating the relationship in power, distance and speech acts, Mick Short (1989) noted that "a servant cannot, given normal circumstances, threaten a master. If he does so in a play, it signals a change in their relationship. Commands, like threats, are not accessible to all of the participants in a particular speech situation, and therefore, mark clear social relationships" (142). From a related perspective, Locher (2004:62) observed that "A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's initially perceived interests, regardless of whether B later comes to accept the desirability of A's actions".

Wartenberg (1990:85) argued in the same vein that "A social agent A has *power over* another social agent B if and only if A strategically constrains B's action-environment". Meanwhile, Locher (2004:39-40) has proposed that power is given expression through language and cannot be explained without contextualization. It is relational, dynamic and contestable while the exercise of power involves a latent conflict and clash of interests which can be obscured because of a society's ideologies.

There is consensus that power is not static; rather, it is dynamic, fluid and negotiable. Locher and Bousfield (2008:9) crucially observe that “even interactants with hierarchically lower status can and do exercise power through impoliteness”. Chikogu (2009:73-89) reported the fluidity in power relations and that “language is [a] potent instrument in sustaining or effecting a change in the power structure of the society”. This is demonstrated in an analysis of the linguistic choices made by an area boy, Sanda, in Wole Soyinka’s *The Beatification of an Area Boy*, “in the mould of speech acts, turn taking and topic control for the change of the dynamic of power and social relations”, these being the strategies through which he wrestled men and material to his beck and call, from the erstwhile powerful and superordinate characters including a military officer.

The exercise of power is latent with face-constitution or aggravation the speaker may instantiate depending on the direction that suits him and in consideration of the interactional purposes and other situational factors. It is pertinent to note, however, that face-aggravating behaviour by the superordinate courtroom participants can hardly be classified as impolite/rude. Such behaviour, except when it is made obvious against the norm of expectation by the participants, may be considered as appropriate on the scale of social power relations.

Conversely, any such behaviour from the subordinate courtroom language users is not only rude and impolite, but may be interpreted as contemptuous with its attendant risk of sanctions. Culpeper (1996) and Bousfield (2008) are unanimous in connecting power with the use of impoliteness and that it is most likely to occur when the speaker is more powerful than the addressee.

When the speaker is in a higher position, s/he can use impoliteness more freely, thereby activating some aspects of relative power or challenging someone over their assumption of power since s/he can prevent retaliation from the hearer or threaten more severe retaliation should the less powerful participant be impolite (Culpeper, 1996 and Bousfield 2008). Bousfield (2008:15) however states that when a person uses power, it does not mean that s/he is always impolite in doing so. Consequently, conventional directness, bald-on-record FTA, is not considered to be impolite when the speaker enjoys a higher status than the hearer (Culpeper, 2011:186-194).

Impoliteness is one way of exercising power and control since such behaviour as argued by Wartenberg and Watts has an effect on the hearer, thereby altering the future action-environment of the addressee. Impoliteness, whether understood as intentional face aggravation (Bousfield, Culpeper) or not (Tekourafi), is inextricably tied up with the concept of power because “an interlocutor whose face is damaged by an utterance suddenly finds his or her response options ... restricted” (Locher and Bousfield, 2008:8). Such restrictions, enforced through face-aggravating behaviour in its impolite form, can be observed in confrontational settings such as the courtroom.

The categorisation of impolite acts is, therefore, guided by isolating courtroom allowable aggression or politic verbal behaviour, as a fall-out of social power relations, from negative speech acts that fall outside the politic zone. In addition, culture-bound impolite acts are evaluated from the participants’ linguistic adherence or otherwise taking into consideration the mutually-contextual notion of *Omoluabi*.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Two cases with culture-bound impolite acts, one criminal and the other civil were purposively selected for this study. The cases were conducted orally in the Yoruba language in situations where the lay participants could not communicate in English. The oral forms were subsequently documented in English by the court stenographers for ease of storage. The transcripts constitute a reliable source of data since they substantially reflect the discourse structure as well as retain the markers of the spoken form as was attested to by senior court officials. The methods of analysis were descriptive/inferential statistics and thematic content analysis. This was done as the study looked for occurrences of impolite verbal behaviour taking into consideration certain cultural nuances and the norms of the community of practice. The research relied on the discursive theory of Relational Work (Watts, 2003), a modification of the facework-based theory of politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and the proposal on Impoliteness Superstrategies (Culpeper, 1996) to describe how impoliteness is enacted by court interactants in order to promote their legal interest. By so doing, specific context-sensitive impoliteness paradigms and the pragmatic meanings they conveyed were identified.

4.0 PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

Culture-bound face-aggravating impolite verbal behaviour in the Nigerian courtroom were enacted through the peddling of falsehood, name calling, contemptuous behaviour and impolite imperatives which were unambiguously directed at maligning the opposition in order to gain legal advantage.

4.1 Peddling of falsehood

The peddling of falsehood violates the target's positive and negative face as it makes the alleged liar feels unwanted and unreliable. Nobody likes to court a liar. Falsehood is a "statement made by one who does not believe it with the intention that someone else shall be led to believe it" (Isenberg, 1973:248). This may take the form of giving a false account which is intended to mislead the court. Saxe quoted by Kornet (1997:2) believes that anyone under enough pressure will lie and that lying is integral to many occupations. Courtroom environment provides enough pressure and incentive for false narratives and face-saving devices which are intended to gain discourse advantage.

Lying is face-threatening albeit a face-enhancing mechanism to the speaker and has perhaps informed Ayansola's (2017) averment that "lies are neutralised in the likely event of their employment as face-constituting devices, self-preservation and as instrument of advancing the speaker's legal interest". As exemplified below, lies may not be sustainable in which case; liars may recant under the weight of cross-examination:

Example 1:

Plaintiff: About six years ago as I was clearing the [disputed] land, Lasun came and challenged me. I now say that Lasun did not challenge me on the land. He only greeted me when I was working on the land (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:8).

In a defiant posture, the witness reversed himself while admitting that he had lied that Lasun challenged him whereas the latter "only greeted me when I was working on the land". Lasun had only fulfilled a cultural obligation by greeting the man whose falsehood was intended to portray Lasun as the aggressor. In similar circumstances, the plaintiff also recanted when the issue of who

reported the alleged trespass on the disputed land to the Oba was being determined:

Example 2:

Plaintiff: All the plantains and the banana I planted on the land were destroyed. I then reported the incident to the incumbent Oba. He also invited the defendant to the palace who did not answer to the invitation (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:8).

While being cross-examined, the speaker made a U-turn:

Plaintiff: I went to Oba ... when the defendant claimed the land and reported me to him. The Oba sent for me and I went there (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:9).

The above volte-face was significantly noted by the judge during the delivery of judgement and may have partly been responsible for his loss in court:

Judge: He [the plaintiff] stated that the 1st defendant reported him to the current Oloba. He then changed and stated that it was he who reported him to the Oloba (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:37).

The judge's observation is indicative of the harm that inconsistent submissions, being the height of impoliteness, can do to a case.

In "Conspiracy", the first accused peddled some falsehood which he later recanted.

Example 3:

First Accused: X told me told me the school authority gave them some money to deal with the SUG. And even the VC is[sic] involved in the plan. I got this information from him and so he also try[sic] to entice me with money so I could join the plan (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:17).

Probed further, the speaker recanted on the premise that: “I was seriously manhandled to a state of coma which made me to tell the students and press what I told them.” According to him:

First Accused: I don’t have any link with the Prof. I only know he is my VC.” The reason I said in my former statement that Prof. ... was involved is that the SUG who caught me asked me [whether] it is true [the] VC is the patron to Black Axe? I answered yes just because of the beating and I don’t [sic] want to die. The VC has no hand in the killing of the students but why I told the students that he was involved is that I was almost dead in their hands (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:2).

As indicated below, lies may be peddled in the courtroom as face-saving strategies and as a lee-way of escaping untoward judicial decisions.

Example 4:

Plaintiff: I was in my house when the Oba sent for me ... and the defendant to his palace. At the palace, Oba investigated the dispute. The defendant claimed the ownership of the land and I also claimed the same. It was not settled that day (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:8).

Oba: The parties stated their case before us. I discovered that my predecessor had settled the matter before. He had made a boundary for them. I directed my chiefs who went with the parties to the land to re-demarcate their boundaries. . . . This is my terms of settlement for the parties (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:16).

Defendant: I only demarcated the boundary between me and the plaintiff as decided by the chiefs with survey beacons only. The plaintiff and I agreed to the demarcation of the disputed land when the late Oba intervened (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:21).

The Oba, as corroborated by the defendant, refuted the plaintiff's claim that he had not agreed to a settlement with him. Not only is the Oba an omoluabi, his status and reputation demands that he is neutral in this circumstance, hence his account appeared more credible rather than that of his subject.

Falsehood is glaring and may be unsustainable from the example below:

Example 5:

Plaintiff: When Awakan begged for the land to plant leaves from my father, my father was reluctant to give it to him because he might claim the land in future. But Awakan stated that he would not dare claim the land in future. Awakan had died childless. He did not plant any cash crop on the land. He planted only ... leaves. My father planted the cash crops. The defendant did not plant anything on the land (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:15).

The account above became unsubstantiated as the speaker contradicted his earlier stance.

Plaintiff: I cannot now remember the name of our father who allowed Awakan to use the disputed land. I do not know whether or not the late Oloba intervened in the land. I do not know whether or not the present Oloba intervened in the land. I got to the land about 5 years ago when the plaintiff

completed his building (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:15).

There are blatant unsustainable lies discernable from the above report. Noticeable is the change in the singular possessive pronoun “my father” in the initial extract to “our father” in the second extract. There is also a kind of hedging which is opposed to the confidence that was exuded in the speaker’s earlier account. Equally significant is the transition to the refrain: “I cannot now remember...”, “I do not know...” (used twice in the negative) by a man who was initially full of confidence as opposed to his first narration. His status as a liar is further unveiled through the hedging “I got to the land about 5 years ago when the plaintiff completed his building on it.”

It is unbelievable that a man who was categorical in reporting that his father had leased a certain portion of land to Awakan who had, in turn, complied with the agreement that no permanent crop should be planted on it [the land] could feign ignorance of the land until there was a ceremony five years prior to the trial. Earlier accounts had indicated that the traditional rulers had intervened in the crisis yet the witness curiously feigned ignorance of such attempt at reconciling them apparently in order to justify the basis for the on-going trial.

The status of the speaker as a liar was further established from the judge’s remarks as presented below:

Judge: The plaintiff claimed that his great grandfather tilled and farmed on the land. Two crucial questions arise for consideration. He has failed to plead the names of his great grandfather, his grandfather and even his father through whom he claimed to get unto the land. Also, he has woefully failed to plead how his said great

grandfather got to the land. The intentional or otherwise omission of these preferential material and relevant issues has done a devastating blow to his claim. His case is like a building erected on nothing which will inevitably collapse like a pack of cards (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:49).

Courtroom abhorrence for lies may have partly informed pre-trial act of oath-taking as well as the filling of relevant affidavits by litigants. Such precautionary measures underscore the importance that is attached to factual presentation of accounts to the court. Certainly, the peddling of falsehood is not envisaged as part of the activities of the courtroom as a community of practice, a situation that qualifies such verbal activity as impolite in the tradition of Watts (2003). Falsehood is in addition a violation of the target's negative face.

4.2 Name-Calling

Calling the other names is a marker of positive as well as negative impoliteness in line with the proposal by Culpeper (1996). Name-calling is frequent among courtroom interlocutors and is often perpetrated directly or through veiled references. It is universally face-damaging to the addressee's positive face-wants and underscores the adversity that unarguably characterises the courtroom verbal interactivity. Ample illustrations are provided below:

Example 6:

Plaintiff: All the plantains and bananas I planted on the land were destroyed. I then reported the incident to the Oba. He invited the defendant to the palace who did not respond to the invitation. The damage done to my crop is N70.000.00 (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:8).

The speaker insinuated that the defendant was responsible for the destruction of his cash crops, an allegation that borders on a criminal infraction known as arson. The derogatory name of an arsonist in the Yoruba culture is “apa” or “baseje” (destroyer). The plaintiff further informed the court that the respondent was a deviant and disrespectful to the authority of the Oba in not honouring the latter’s invitation. It is instructive, however, that the allegation made by the speaker through his preference for a passive construction was discreet.

Meanwhile, the plaintiff further labelled a witness an aggressive impersonator who allegedly claimed to be the Chief Imam of their community and had disturbed the plaintiff while [he the speaker] clearing the disputed land:

Example 7:

Witness: He is not the Chief Imam of Oba Ile. The dispute arose when the plaintiff went to clear the land and the defendant disturbed him (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:8).

Another witness also named the defendant a liar.

Example 8:

PW2: I never joined the emissary to visit the disputed land. It is not true that Gbodogi leaves are planted under cocoa trees alone. They can be planted anywhere. It is not true that Oyafunke, father of the defendant was the first settler on the disputed land. He never at any time settled on it. The disputed land is not called Oyada. It is called Aliiri (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:13).

This testimony which was supportive of the claim of land ownership by the plaintiff speaks eloquently about the character of the defendant as a liar who perhaps among other acts of lying

wilfully distorted the name of the disputed land as *Oyada*, rather than *Aliiri*.

Another instance of name-calling was recorded by the defendant, albeit indirectly.

Example 9:

Defendant: There was no controversy on the land when my father was alive. There was no trouble during the life of the plaintiff's father (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:20).

In Yoruba culture to which the combatants belong, the male child is believed to take after his father. He is expected and bound to honour every accord voluntarily entered into by his forbear as well as maintain unquestionable integrity which is innately bequeathed on him. The defendant appeared to have accused the plaintiff of not following after the father's qualities in the pursuit of peace. The insinuation being that the target is not an *omoluabi* as he bore no resemblance with his acclaimed father. This is short of calling the plaintiff *omo-ale* [a bastard in the Yoruba parlance]! This is a serious face-aggravation in this situation and a crude form of impoliteness even in a confrontational setting like the court.

In the next two extracts, the defendant christened the plaintiff counsel a war-monger whereas the plaintiff counsel, in turn, named another witness an interloping busybody.

Example 10:

Defendant: It is the counsel who instigated the plaintiff against me. There was no dispute between us until Chief Goke Ajiboye instigated the plaintiff against me (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:21).

The defendant had accused the plaintiff counsel as fuelling the ember of discord in an otherwise harmonious family, arguably for his selfish interest.

Name calling featured consistently in “Conspiracy” particularly in the account of the witness:

Example 11:

Witness: I had a meeting with the VC. The cultist confessed that the VC is[sic] their sponsor (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:74).

By making reference to fellow students as “cultist”, it may be concluded that the speaker was unfair or impolite. It is equally worrisome considering the speaker’s categorical reference to the VC as the sponsor of cultism in his own University! The damaging insinuation being that the VC is “irresponsible” and “unfit” to hold the exalted office of the Vice Chancellor.

There was also a counter name-calling of murderer in “Conspiracy”:

Example 12:

Witness: The 3rd accused ... had order to terminate [the] lives of the student[sic] executive (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:80).

The innuendo above was targeted at the VC, who had previously been accused of sponsoring the campus killer-squad. Is it then out of place to conclude that the VC was the referent of murderer? In a dramatic twist of fate, the prosecution witness became defensive when he in turn was named a terrorist, murderer, liar, and corrupt, thereby prompting his rebuttal that:

Example 13:

Witness: It is not true that I led violent attacks on campus. The VC is not our life enemy. We have no bitterness against him. There is no disagreement between us about N500.000.00. We were not given N500.000.00 as alleged. I am not a liar. It

is not true that I ordered anybody to be tortured
(*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:83).

Name-calling is a form of negative impoliteness since the target that may have been so named could have his/her space restricted when it comes to social interaction with other members of the society. It is also a form of positive impoliteness since target could be deemed to have been precluded from the speaker's in-group membership. These acts are further classified as impolite since they exceed the norms of the civil language that is expected of the Yoruba norms of acceptable social conduct or the courtroom allowable adversarial activities. Granted that the speech acts are latently indirect, there is no mistaken the message they convey to the hearers face.

4.3 Contemptuous Behaviour

Contempt, a form of Culpeper's (1996) negative impoliteness, is a variant of impoliteness manifesting in the culprit acting in a manner that is disrespectful and accompanied with the feeling of disdain for the targeted individual or institution. Contempt is a form of challenge as it calls to question the authority or power that is wielded by the target. Contempt is not only a punishable offence by the court, traditional or modern, such behaviour is against Yoruba's *omoluabi* culture-based code of conduct as illustrated below:

Example 14:

Plaintiff: I then reported the incident to the incumbent Oba.
He also invited the defendant to the palace who
did not answer to the invitation (*Ibikunle v.*
Irawoosan 2005:8).

There is no greater breach of the African culture and a demonstration of impoliteness than for a subject to decline the invitation of the Oba! Such action is contemptuous of a revered

institution with vested traditional powers and attracts far-reaching consequences. The plaintiff in “Land” is another culprit of contemptuous behaviour against the Oba.

Example 15:

Plaintiff: The Oba decided that I should give a portion of the land to the defendant but I disagreed (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:10).

It is sacrilegious for a subject to openly disagree with the Oba. In the Benin tradition, for an example, the Oba owns the land (*Obayan otor*). This tradition, albeit, in varying degree is replicated in other part of Nigeria and Africa. The far-reaching power of the Oba was being rudely challenged by the subject.

The defendant curiously showed disdain for the traditional institution:

Example 16:

Defendant: The plaintiff’s great grandfather was the Oloba of Oba Ile. He was a close associate of my father who was the Eesa[a palace chief]. It was my father who granted the adjoining land to the disputed land to his friend, the great grandfather of the plaintiff (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:18).

There is hardly any tradition to support the defendant’s claim that his father, a chief, bequeathed a portion of land to the Oba. The Oba in a traditional setting, as presented in “Land” owns the land and apportions it to his subjects and not the other way round. This is also in force at the old Benin Kingdom, thereby prompting the expression, *Obayan otor* (meaning, the ownership of land is vested in the King)! It is interesting that this “heresy” was subsequently contradicted by the defendant’s own witness who had been invited to advance the interest of his principal but ended up puncturing his claim.

Example 17:

DW1: It has not happened to my knowledge for a chief to grant land to an Oloba. . . . The disputed land was between Akirun and the then Oloba of Oba Ile. I know the disputed land. The land belonged to Oloba. The Oloba only allowed his subjects to farm on the land but he owned the land (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:23).

It is insulting, therefore, for the defendant to have labelled the Oba as a beneficiary of his father's kindness. The defendant's witness, knowing the implication of this had to mitigate such rudeness by contradicting his principal's impolite act. This is an attestation that the defendant was rude to have usurped a role that is the exclusive preserve of the Oba to a subordinating chief whose well-being or otherwise is at the Oba's discretion according to tradition.

Whereas a horizontal contemptuous behaviour instantiated against fellow lay courtroom participant may be rated as impolite, it is more intensifying when such behaviour is extended by the witness to either the counsel or the judge with whom he ranked low in social power relations.

Example 18:

PC: Tell the court whether or not Awakan had children.

DW2: I knew Awakan. Awakan farmed on the disputed land in his life time. I do not know whether or not he had children. Only his relative can tell the court (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:23).

The account of DW2 contains element of disrespect to the counsel and to the court. He may pass for what is technically known in legal parlance as a "hostile witness" for not only withholding vital

information from the court by insisting that he did not know whether or not the man (Awakan) he claimed to know had children or not, he surreptitiously instructed the interrogating counsel to direct his question elsewhere! This is an example of Culpeper's "off-record impoliteness". From his response, inference may be drawn that the counsel is being described as unintelligent by posing questions to the speaker rather than the relation of Awakan.

In the case of "Conspiracy", the Student Union President was contemptuous of the school authority by parading himself as President after the dissolution of the students' body.

Example 19:

President: I was elected leader in 1998/1999 session. The Student Union was dissolved after the swearing-in. I was sworn-in on 20/11/98. Student Union was still on even though it was dissolved. By the students I am still the president but by the authority I am not recognised (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:82).

The conduct of the President by his own admission is contemptuous, rude and disobedient to the university's management. By his self-confessed reprehensible conduct, he has additionally performed self-face-threatening acts since whatever actions he performed in his illegal duties as President are null and void. Other examples of contempt by the SUG President are shown below:

Example 20:

President: I had a meeting with the VC. The cultists confessed that the VC is their sponsor and I confronted him. A week after the meeting with the VC the University was closed down because

students boycotted classes. ... The cultists were released by the Magistrate Court. The cultist came back to the school the student frowned at it (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:74).

The insinuation from the immediate extract is that the blame for the release and invasion on campus of the dreaded cultists is at the door of the Magistrate court! Whereas the court had acted within its discretionary power, the speaker has veilingly called to question the power of the court in a manner that is contemptuous of the court, a misdemeanour that was also extended to the school authority. The SUG President had also accused the Vice-Chancellor of culpable as an accessory to cultists' activities.

4.4 Impolite Direct Communicative Acts

Impolite acts that are succinctly communicated to the hearer fall within Culpeper's (1996) "on-record impolite" super-strategy. A good number of verbal activities are performed in the courtroom through direct speech acts or imperatives with no consideration for politeness strategies. Whereas the presiding judge and the counsels can be categorical in their speech on account of their professional and institutional privileges, the same cannot be said of courtroom laymen. Having observed that power is neither static nor the exclusive preserve of any of the parties to an interaction, the fluidity of power is exemplified when witnesses resort to declaratives as an intentional face-attacking mechanism.

Example 21:

PW5: I know the plaintiff and the defendant. I know the disputed land. The plaintiff owns the land. I knew Awakan. He was the junior brother of Oyatoun (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:14).

The witness in this instance did not mince words in attributing wrongdoing to the defendant through salient declaratives. Each declarative commenced with the active noun phrase: “I know” (thrice); “he was”; and so on. Such strategies, which gave weight to his account and more importantly to the argument of his principal, were however unhelpful, adversarial and damaging to the negative face of the addressee.

A similar strategy played out in the report of the next witness:

Example 22:

PW3: I know the parties in this case. I know the disputed land. It is called Aliiri. The land belongs to the plaintiff. He is my boundary man. The defendant has no land in that area. His land is at Fapo area (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:13).

We notice that direct speech acts are more offensive to the hearer after the speaker had claimed “a moral ground” through the employment of the verb “to know” presupposing that the speaker is an insider who can guide the court in appropriating its verdict. Direct speech acts becomes excruciatingly painful when the speaker used it against his own principal. Example 23:

DW2: I am the third in rank to the Oloba of Oba Ile. I do not know how the parties granted each other land. We are concerned about the boundaries between them. It has not happened to my knowledge for a chief to grant land to an Oloba [contrary to the claim of the defendant]. Everybody has custody of his father’s land everywhere (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2002:22).

One can hardly decipher from this speech how the speaker has advanced the course of the defence. Rather, this high-ranking

chief has, through the use of declaratives, hurt the face of his principal who had curiously argued that it was his father who gave the disputed land to the Oba. The speaker has categorically faulted the defendant's earlier claim that it was his father that gave a portion of the disputed land to the king.

Impoliteness is intensified when it is enacted by a family member. The plaintiff's witness performed this role in the next example.

Example 24:

PW1:

I know the plaintiff and the defendant. The defendant has the same parents with the mother of my father. My father's mother was Oyatohun. Awakan had no child. I know the disputed land. Awakan begged for a portion of the land to plant "gbodogi" leaves. Neither Awakan nor any of Oyafunke's children has land on the disputed land. Awakan did not plant cocoa, kolanuts or palm tree on the land. He planted only "gbodogi" leaves. The defendant is my uncle. He never planted anything on the disputed land, because he is not the owner of the land. The disputed land belongs to Adekunle, the grandfather of the plaintiff (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 2005:11).

PW1 while testifying against the defendant, his self-acclaimed uncle, tried hard to assist the plaintiff achieve a legal victory. This he did through his all-knowing approach to every question ranging from his knowledge of the disputants, their genealogy, Awakan's childlessness as well as the post-rental status of Awakan's farm which, according to him, the defendant could not lay claim to. He was so unequivocal in his presentation

that there it will be difficult to fault the authenticity of his testimony.

With the direct impolite communicative acts, the speaker did not give consideration for diplomacy or any such attention to the face-needs of the target. There was neither the use of indirectness nor hedging in his narrative style, notwithstanding that the victim of the verbal assault was a member of his family, a situation that may prompt the court to believe his account as credible and non-partisan. It is the height of impoliteness to the defendant and a punch below the belt as PW1 appears to have assumed the power of the court through the utterance:

“He never planted anything on the disputed land, because he is not the owner of the land. The disputed land belongs to Adekunle, the grandfather of the plaintiff.”

The above submission was judgemental and all-encompassing as the speaker underscored his “hostility”.

Excerpts in example 8 above contained imperatives that were used to undermine a defence witness who claimed to be the Chief Imam of Oba Ile. The speaker using imperative speech acts vehemently punctured such claim: “He is not the Chief Imam of Oba Ile. ...” (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 8). Also in example 11 above, the defendant in accusing the plaintiff counsel as fuelling the ember of discord in an otherwise harmonious family did so to the hearer’s face: “It is the counsel who instigated the plaintiff against me. There was no dispute between us until Chief Goke Ajiboye instigated the plaintiff against me” (*Ibikunle v. Irawoosan* 21). The weight of the impoliteness was heavier considering that the addressee is a lawyer with some considerable social power.

A similar scenario is presented in “Conspiracy” where speakers frontally confront one another with reckless unmitigated face-attacks.

Example 25:

Witness: The 3rd accused is the go-between the cultists and the VC (*The State v. Idahosa* 75).

While this is a face-attack to the accused, it was directly confrontational and rude to the VC. In another account and in an attempt to justify the arrest of some alleged cultists, another witness for the state, PW3, gave the following account:

Example 26:

PW3: We found in the person of the 1st accused with a nylon bag. It contains shirt (brown) sandal a picture of a lady Police Officer and T. Shirt ... We recovered a bag from x. This is the bag. It contains black trouser black T shirt and a black jean. All the things found in the bag are wet. We took these straight to the campus to the President of SUG. When we got there, he told us to take it calmly that he would tell us all he knew about it (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:91).

The extract above is far-reaching in its content of face-aggravation which was immeasurably impolite to the hearer. The narrative is filled with point-blank accusation that unarguably denotes the referent as cultists thereby increasing the likelihood of the court pronouncing him guilty. Our concluding example in this section is the presentation of the investigating police officer who provided us with yet another example of direct illocutionary impolite acts:

Example 27:

Police: During our investigation it was established that the accused persons belonged to secret cult in the campus called Black Axe (*The State v. Idahosa* 2002:97).

It should be noted that direct impolite communicative acts in this situation is reinforced by the speaker's professional power. Furthermore, in the courtroom situation, such acts are performed as face-constituting mechanism of enabling the speaker to showcase his due diligence in the performance of his professional responsibilities.

5.0 Conclusion

This study evaluated genre and culture-sensitive impolite verbal behaviour in the courtroom which manifested in falsehood, name-calling, contempt and impolite imperatives. The universal aggression in the use of language in courtroom is, in this situation, toned down by Yoruba culture-based code of acceptable conduct, *Omoluabi*. Consequently, certain sanctioned face-aggravating behaviour as proposed by Watts (2003) becomes salient, marked and categorised as impolite. Culturally defined excessive behaviour in this study is likened to a “handshake that goes beyond the elbow”, thereby expanding the scope of negatively marked verbal behaviour and, consequently, the size of courtroom impolite acts.

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LE STRUCTURALISME : LE TEXTE ET LE PROCESSUS D'ACTIVITE PRODUCTRICE

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Résumé

Du point de vue structuraliste, l'activité de la lecture est indispensable pour la réalisation finale du texte. C'est seulement à travers et dans cette activité que celui qui lit l'œuvre littéraire (ou le texte) peut le sentir. Le texte donc constitue un double processus de production lui-même (pendant l'écriture) et processus qui mène à une activité productrice de signification. C'est cette activité productrice dans un travail intellectuel qui constitue ce que l'on peut appeler la contribution du lecteur à la production du texte. Cette communication vise donc à relever l'interface entre le texte et le processus qui mène à la signification.

Introduction

Selon Barthes, on ne peut vraiment sentir le texte littéraire que dans l'activité productrice de la lecture. Le texte provoque ce travail intellectuel chez le lecteur qui le mène à produire; c'est-à-dire à participer à l'activité de lire, à contribuer ainsi à sa production : « le texte n'est senti que dans une activité de production - la lecture » (« De l'œuvre au texte », 157).

Comme la nouvelle forme de musique ou l'interprétation de l'exécuteur ou de l'instrumentaliste joue un rôle très important, le texte littéraire demande au lecteur une collaboration pratique. La lecture n'est plus un acte passif de consommation mais une activité de production dans laquelle le lecteur devient le

producteur ou le créateur du produit qu'est le texte (Barthes, « De l'œuvre au texte », 163). Le lecteur ne reçoit pas tout simplement dans un geste indifférent et irresponsable. Mais il reçoit et contribue en même temps. Sa responsabilité réside dans le fait qu'il devient un participant dans le processus de la production du texte. Il passe d'un statut d'observateur passif au statut de participant actif.

En ce sens, la production du texte, la production qu'est le texte, n'a pas de but précis ou connu à l'avance. Elle commence, et finit là où elle arrive. La raison pour laquelle Barthes, dans *Le Plaisir du texte*, opine :

Le texte, lui, est atopique, sinon dans sa consommation, du moins dans sa production. Ce n'est pas un parler, une fiction, le système est en lui débordé, défait (ce débordement, cette défection, c'est la signifiance). De cette atopie il prend et communique à son lecteur un état bizarre : à la fois exclu et paisible. Dans la guerre des langages, il peut y avoir des moments tranquilles et ces moments sont des textes (...).
(49)

Mais le texte ne s'arrête pas simplement au stade du processus. Il est plein de substance, ce qui constitue sa positivité. Il produit nécessairement parce qu'il amène le lecteur à un certain acquis. C'est-à-dire qu'il effectue un apport chez celui qui le reçoit ou qui le "consomme". C'est cette substance qui donne le plaisir dont parle Barthes dans *Le plaisir du texte* :

Certains veulent un texte (un art, une peinture) sans ombre, coupé de l'idéologie dominante, mais c'est vouloir un texte sans fécondité sans productivité, un texte stérile (...). Le texte a

besoin de son ombre ; cette ombre, c'est un peu d'idéologie, un peu de représentation, un peu de sujet: fantômes, proches, trainées, images nécessaires: la subversion doit produire son propre clair-obscur. (53)

Cette ombre dont parle Barthes est la substance du texte, nécessaire pour donner du plaisir au lecteur.

Les points de vue de Todorov

Pour Todorov, structuraliste aussi, le processus d'utilité productrice se nomme "l'énonciation". Il le définit ainsi: « *L'aspect matériel d'un énoncé appartient à un ensemble d'éléments qu'on appelle le procès d'énonciation* (Todorov, *Littérature et signification*, 19). En d'autres termes, l'énoncé est la base de la communication linguistique (ce que techniquement constitue l'œuvre littéraire). Aussi tous les éléments constitutifs du procès d'énonciation (émetteur, récepteur, acte d'émettre l'énoncé et l'acte de recevoir l'énoncé) peuvent-ils contribuer à un changement dans la signification de l'énoncé. L'énoncé a, en même temps, par son existence même, un sens global. Selon la classification de Todorov, les interlocuteurs, Émetteur et Récepteur, constituent les éléments essentiels de ce procès. Un émetteur est nécessaire et obligatoire pour chaque énoncé. Son existence de l'émetteur est donc significative. Si l'émetteur est absent, « *le récepteur lui-même se trouve dans un rapport étroit avec l'énoncé* » (Todorov, *Littérature et signification*, 19).

Jakobson se rapproche de la perspective de Todorov, étant comme lui, membre de l'École de Prague. Formalistes tous les deux, ils mettent l'accent sur la linguistique de la communication. Jakobson considère le langage comme essentiellement un acte de communication et établit un modèle de discours basé sur six

facteurs constituants cardinaux que voici: contexte, message, destinataire, destinataire, contact, code.

La conception de Jakobson veut que toute communication consiste d'un message initié par un destinataire, dont la destination est un destinataire. Le message, qui a besoin d'un contact entre le destinataire et le destinataire, peut être oral, visuel, électronique ou autre. Il doit être formulé en termes d'un code (la parole, les numéros, l'écriture, les formations du son). Enfin, le message doit se référer à un contexte qui soit compris par aussi bien le destinataire que le destinataire, ce qui permet au message de 'signifier'. Le point central de l'élaboration de Jakobson est que le message seul ne peut donner toute la «signification» de la transaction, mais la bonne part de ce qui est communiqué dérive du contexte du code et du moyen de contact. Ce que Barthes appelle autrement "l'ombre" du texte. Fidèle à la dévotion fonctionnelle de sa formation de l'École de Prague, Jakobson insiste que chacun des six éléments impliqués dans l'événement de la communication a un rôle fonctionnel distinct. Ainsi, à ces six facteurs constituants correspondent six fonctions, et la prédominance de n'importe quelle des fonctions détermine la nature du message: Référentielle, Poétique, Émotive, Conative, Phatique, Métalinguistique.

Avec Todorov, cependant, on passe de l'accent mis sur la littérature comme écriture, telle que nous l'avons vue chez Barthes, à un accent marqué sur l'activité concomitante de la lecture. Il dit que toute œuvre, tout roman, raconte à travers son réseau d'événements l'histoire de sa propre création, sa propre histoire.

« La signification d'une œuvre réside en la possibilité de se raconter, de parler de sa propre existence (Todorov, *Littérature et signification*, 49). Et nous pouvons ajouter, de se

reproduire. L'œuvre se crée au fur et à mesure qu'elle raconte une histoire. C'est comme si Todorov souligne ce que dit Barthes: que le texte littéraire est production et produit littéraire en même temps.

Un deuxième point à retenir à propos de Todorov est que pour lui, « *le texte est capable de subvertir le système linguistique qu'il hérite: il n'exhibe pas simplement les formes caractéristiques du langage qu'il contient mais s'étend aussi et modifie ce langage* » (Todorov, *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*, 91). Après tout, en poursuivant la logique de Todorov, l'écriture, la matière ressource de la lecture, n'est pas la même chose que le langage. Donc,

La littérature est dans le langage, ce qui détruit la métaphysique inhérente dans toute langue. L'essentiel du discours littéraire est de dépasser le langage (sinon, elle n'aurait aucune raison d'être): la littérature est comme une arme dangereuse avec laquelle le langage se suicide (Todorov, Introduction à la littérature fantastique, 91).

Le texte en tant que produit

Nous pouvons considérer le texte littéraire, non seulement comme un processus de production ou comme une activité productrice, mais également comme un produit: le résultat des rapports qui s'entretiennent parmi les composantes de l'activité littéraire. Cela touche aux problèmes d'une science de la littérature telle que Barthes le formule dans sa *Critique et Vérité* :

Du moment où l'on admet que l'œuvre est faite de l'écriture (et tire les conséquences de cette admission), alors une certaine science de la littérature devient possible ... Ceci ne peut être

une science du 'contenu ... mais une science des conditions du contenu, c'est-à-dire une science des formes (56-57).

Cela veut dire qu'on a affaire à des conditions, à des rapports qui ont rendu et qui rendent possible ce contenu; en effet, aux conditions de la production du texte.

Pour Todorov, c'est l'un des trois types de travail sur le texte (selon sa distinction) qui considère le texte littéraire comme produit. Il parle ainsi de la projection, du commentaire et de la poétique comme les trois types de travail possibles sur un texte. L'objet de la poétique est constitué par les propriétés du discours littéraire. D'après lui,

la poétique, comme la projection, considère l'œuvre individuelle comme un produit (...) mais pour la poétique (et voici la différence entre les deux types), le texte est le produit d'un mécanisme fictif et pourtant bien existant, la littérature (Todorov, Poétique de la prose, 242).

On dirait que Todorov entend la même chose que Barthes: le texte est le produit de l'écriture littéraire ou de la littérature; pour l'un, (Barthes) il s'agit du procédé, pour l'autre, de la matière. Mais tous les deux semblent être d'accord sur l'objet de la poétique ou d'une science de la littérature qui soit "*constitué par les 'procédés' littéraires, c'est-à-dire par les concepts qui décrivent le fonctionnement du discours littéraire* (Todorov, Poétique de la prose, 243).

Il importe donc, à ce point, de poser la question fondamentale que pose toute étude du texte littéraire: qui est le producteur du texte, ce "produit" littéraire? Si nous acceptons que le texte littéraire constitue une activité productrice aussi bien que

le produit même de la littérature, nous admettons du même geste par implication, qu'il y a un producteur du texte; qu'il y a une source d'où sort le texte car le texte n'est pas tout simplement.

Le texte et son producteur

Une réponse à la question : qui est le producteur du texte? Résoudra la problématique de l'autorité dans le texte. Celui qui produit est à même de réclamer l'autorité du texte. C'est lui qui contrôle, non seulement le jaillissement du texte, mais également sa progression et enfin sa destination éventuelle. Le producteur du texte, en effet, maintient un double contrôle; d'abord sur l'activité productrice et ensuite sur le produit même de la littérature, le texte. Mais qui est ce producteur du texte?

Lorsque Barthes conçoit le texte comme production, il entreprend faire du lecteur, non plus un consommateur passif mais un producteur actif, participant, Le texte, dans une telle optique, doit mener le lecteur à produire, à collaborer dans la pratique de la production, c'est-à-dire, dans le texte. Comme le dit bien Barthes, lui-même,

L'enjeu du travail littéraire (de la littérature comme travail) c'est de faire du lecteur, non plus un consommateur mais producteur du texte. Notre littérature est marquée par le divorce impitoyable que l'institution littéraire maintient entre le fabricant et l'usager du texte, son propriétaire et son client, son auteur et son lecteur (Barthes, S/Z, 10).

Autrement dit, comme c'est le lecteur qui est visé dans le texte en tant que récepteur éventuel du produit littéraire, il jouit de ce statut privilégié et n'est pas obligé de lire le texte. Même s'il le lit, il n'est pas obligé non plus de le lire jusqu'au bout. Il serait donc indispensable que le texte retienne l'intérêt du lecteur jusqu'au

bout de sa lecture. Puisque dans ce sens le lecteur retient l'achèvement du texte dans ses mains, on peut dire que c'est lui qui le produit. Le texte ne peut se lire; il a toujours besoin d'un lecteur.

Le lecteur de Barthes qui soit producteur du texte ainsi l'est du statut que lui accorde le texte, celui d'usager. Il n'est pas, comme le lecteur traditionnel, 'plongé dans une sorte d'oisiveté, d'intransitive'. Ce nouveau lecteur peut :

Tout dire, de sérieux : au lieu de jouer lui-même, d'accéder pleinement à l'enchantement du signifiant, à la volupté de l'écriture, il ne lui reste plus en partage que la pauvre liberté de recevoir ou de rejeter le texte : la lecture alors n'est qu'un référendum (Barthes, S/Z, 10).

Barthes considère de surcroît que le lecteur d'un texte doit, non seulement venir à l'acte de lecture avec un esprit vif, mais y contribuer une part de son intelligence lorsqu'il essaie de saisir l'intelligibilité du texte.

Car le lecteur de Barthes est passé du temps de la simple compréhension et de l'explication; du temps de 'Homo Sapiens' dont l'intelligence se conserve dans sa capacité de lire et de comprendre ('l'homme riche de certains sens'), pour devenir aujourd'hui 'Homo Signifiants' - l'homme qui rend intelligible : « l'homme fabricant de sens » (Barthes, *Essais critiques*, 218).

La lecture est un travail que le lecteur entreprend tout en faisant appel à ses propres qualités humaines et capacités intellectuelles. Le lecteur ne se cherche pas dans le texte mais y subit tout de même une perte de sa personnalité qu'on ne peut lui

compenser puisque sa position vis-à-vis du texte ne peut être que relative. Ce travail du lecteur est fait dans le langage et grâce au langage; c'est un travail sur le langage. Le lecteur meut et provoque la translation de la systématique du texte dans un fonctionnement qui aboutit à une découverte des sens qui l'amènent vers d'autres sens. De cette façon, le lecteur nomme ces sens et les sens en évoquent d'autres jusqu'à ce que nous ayons une nomination des métonymies.

Voilà pourquoi Barthes proteste que :

Lire n'est pas un geste parasite, ce complément réactif d'une écriture que nous pavons de tous les prestiges de la création et de l'antériorité. C'est un travail (...) et la méthode de ce travail est topologique: je ne suis pas caché dans le texte, j'y suis seulement irréparable (Barthes, S/Z, 17-18).

Autrement dit, dans la lecture, ce que nous avons est une opération inlassable de nomination, d'association, de transformation, et de signification éventuelle. D'après Barthes :

Les noms s'appellent, se rassemblent et leur groupement veut de nouveau se faire nommer: Je dénomme, je renomme: ainsi passe le texte : c'est une nomination en devenir, une approximation inlassable, un travail métonymique (Barthes, S/Z, 17-18).

Le lecteur de Barthes, donc, pour être un véritable fabricant et créateur de sens doit travailler le texte; il doit pouvoir dépasser la surface pour découvrir les sens en profondeur. Autrement dit, lire c'est manipuler le texte de sorte qu'on puisse saisir et comprendre son fonctionnement. C'est avec la compréhension de la systématique ou du fonctionnement du texte que le lecteur peut atteindre sa signification.

Par ailleurs, si nous prenons le texte comme un récit, il nous appartiendra aussi de trouver la réponse à la question que pose Barthes : qui est le donateur d'un récit? Mais tout d'abord il faudrait déterminer s'il y a un donateur ou non du récit pour ne pas répéter les concepts. Barthes donne la réponse affirmative qu'il y a un donateur du récit : *"il y a un destinataire du récit...il ne peut y avoir de récit sans narrateur et sans auditeur ou lecteur* (Barthes, « Introduction à l'analyse structurale du récit », 18).

Le texte en tant qu'écriture

Pour Barthes, la langue et le style sont des objets et l'écriture est une fonction. L'écriture est le rapport entre le créatif et la société. En effet, elle est *« le langage littéraire transformé par sa destination sociale, elle est la forme sociale, elle est la forme saisie dans son intention humaine et liée ainsi aux grandes crises de l'Histoire »* (Barthes, *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture*, 14). Si l'écriture est une fonction, il va de soi que le texte lui-même, communique : il a la fonction de communiquer, c'est-à-dire de *« donner une information (sociale sous forme linguistique) à un autre »* (Barthes, « Introduction à l'analyse structurale du récit » 18). Elle est destinée à la société dont elle est issue sous forme du langage, Mais cette information est intégrée dans sa systématique et le lecteur ne parvient à l'information qu'en découvrant ses sens. Comme le dit Barthes, il doit pouvoir percer l'ombre du texte pour atteindre sa substance et donc sa signification.

C'est d'ailleurs ce que pense Genette pour qui *"le langage, ou plus précisément la langue est elle-même d'abord une écriture* (Genette, *Figures III*, 17). Il cite également Sollers qui dit que *« la question essentielle n'est plus aujourd'hui celle de l'écrivain et de l'œuvre mais celle de l'écriture et de la lecture »* (Genette, *Figures II*, 17-18). Voilà un point de vue structuraliste qui

transmet l'importance de l'auteur au lecteur, dans son statut de producteur du texte, et donc de producteur de signification.

Mais tout de même on doit se demander s'il s'agit d'une seule écriture qui préside sur un texte ou si l'on a affaire à un texte avec des écritures multiples, ou même s'il s'agit d'une écriture répandue dans plusieurs textes?

Le texte en tant qu'une multiplicité d'écritures

Comme réponse à des questions ci-dessus, Barthes dit que « *qui parle (dans le récit) n'est pas qui écrit (dans la vie) et qui écrit n'est pas qui est* » (Barthes, « Introduction à l'analyse structurale du récit » 20). Il réfute en même temps l'une de ses conceptions sur le donateur du récit : l'auteur. Disons tout de suite que qui écrit dans la vie (l'auteur) n'est pas qui parle (dans le récit: le narrateur) comme qui écrit (l'auteur) n'est pas qui est (le lecteur). Et Barthes semble corriger l'impression erronée qu'il donne en disant ailleurs dans ses écrits que dans le texte, 'c'est le langage qui parle, pas l'auteur'. C'est-à-dire que le texte n'est que la mise en œuvre d'une écriture et non la 'citation' fidèle d'une personne vivante. Comme le dit bien Barthes lui-même :

Nous savons maintenant qu'un texte n'est pas une ligne de mots relâchant une seule signification 'théologique' (le 'message' de l'Auteur-Dieu) mais un espace pluridimensionnel dans lequel une variété d'écritures, aucune d'elles originale, se mêlent et se heurtent (Barthes, « La mort de l'auteur », 146).

On peut avoir plus d'une signification dans un même texte selon la manière dont le lecteur conçoit ce qu'il reçoit. C'est-à-dire que les multiples lectures se trouvent dans les capacités culturelles

et intellectuelles du lecteur, et non dans le texte. Pareillement, l'existence totale de l'écriture réside dans le fait qu'un texte

Est fait d'écritures multiples, tirées de beaucoup de cultures et entrant dans des relations mutuelles de dialogue, de parodie, de contestation (...) mais il y a un endroit où cette multiplicité est centrée, et cet endroit est le lecteur, non comme se disait jusqu'ici, l'auteur (Barthes, « La mort de l'auteur », 148).

Le lecteur est donc le lieu de rencontre de toutes les possibilités de lecture si la multiplicité d'écritures est centrée sur lui.

C'est dire donc que le texte ne peut être singulier; il est, de sa nature, pluriel. Selon Barthes, ceci n'est pas pour dire simplement qu'il accomplit le pluriel même de la signification : un pluriel irréductible (et non simplement acceptable). Et il explique ce qu'il entend par ce 'pluriel irréductible': « *c'est-à-dire que le texte n'est pas une coexistence des significations mais un passage ; un sur traversèrent; ainsi il répond à une explosion, à une dissémination* » (Barthes, « De l'homme à l'œuvre », 159). Barthes doit penser à cette pluralité de significations du texte lorsqu'il proclame dans *Critique et Vérité* qu'une œuvre est

Eternelle' non parce qu'elle impose un sens unique à des hommes différents, mais parce qu'elle suggère des sens différents à un homme unique, qui parle toujours la même langue symbolique à travers des temps multiples : l'œuvre propose, l'homme dispose (51).

Autrement dit, l'œuvre littéraire est « *la fusion en un seul langage de la multiplicité des sens possibles* », C'est-à-dire qu'il est question pour le lecteur de découvrir un sens nouveau chaque fois

pour arriver à une nouvelle signification. C'est le processus de 'nomination en devenir', d'approximation inlassable' et de 'travail métonymique' que représente la lecture. Ce que fait le lecteur, c'est exploiter le langage à fond jusqu'à ce qu'il en dispose les sens.

Dans le domaine littéraire donc, la multiplicité de signification, comme le souligne Doubrousky dans *Pourquoi la nouvelle critique*, implique qu

Une grande œuvre (ou un bon texte littéraire) est celle qui, par la texture de son langage, l'agencement de ses thèmes, le déploiement de ses images, le jeu subtil des énoncés et des sous-entendus, bref, par l'appareil d'une rhétorique complexe, évoque, pour nous et par nous, le sens global que peut prendre, à tout moment de l'histoire, ce mystère absolu que reste, pour l'homme, sa propre existence (197-198)

C'est ainsi dire que pour le lecteur, pour chacun de nous, le texte littéraire n'existe vraiment qu'au niveau de nos capacités.

Conclusion

Nous avons, tout au long de cette communication, essayé de faire un tour d'horizon sur le texte et le processus d'activité productrice, c'est-à-dire le texte comme acte d'écriture. Le texte, parfois, est conçu comme un pacte, ou comme un contrat 'signé' par les composantes de la production littéraire. Chacune des composantes accepte de jouer un rôle à l'intérieur du procès ou d'y apporter quelque chose. Aussi Barthes dit-il que le récit est « monnaie d'échange, objet de contrat, enjeu économique, en un mot marchandise - dont la transaction, qui peut aller, comme ici jusqu'au véritable marchandage » (Barthes, *S/Z*, 95). Il n'est plus « limité au cabinet de l'éditeur mais se représente-elle elle-même

en abyme, elle-même, dans la narration»? Selon Barthes celle-là est la question que pose peut-être tout récit.

Puisque le texte est ainsi vu comme un échange économique, bref, une marchandise; le lecteur, pour tirer la richesse du texte, ne peut que participer au marchandage: il a intérêt à ne pas rester passif en face de la marchandise et pendant la transaction. Sinon, il subira une perte et l'on ne pourra alors parler d'un échange ni d'un contrat.

Par contre, il semble que le contrat est à l'avantage du lecteur puisqu'il a la prérogative de recevoir ou de rejeter le texte. Il n'y aurait pas de signification sans sa collaboration. Cependant il est encouragé à participer au marchandage pour satisfaire à sa curiosité naturelle et intellectuelle.

Barthes continue dans la même œuvre pour affirmer que *"le récit est, par une astuce vertigineuse, la représentation du contrat qui le fonde (...). Le récit est à la fois produit et production, marchandise et commerce, enjeu et porteur de cet enjeu"* (Barthes, *S/Z*, 95). Mais le récit n'est pas isolé dans ce caractère contractuel. Le monde lui-même s'opère sur des termes de contrat ainsi que tout ce qui exprime le monde : le signe, la langue, le récit et la société. D'après Barthes, dans *L'Empire des signes*, tous ces éléments constitutifs du monde

Fonctionnent par contrat, mais comme ce contrat est le plus souvent masqué, l'opération critique (le travail du lecteur) consiste à déchiffrer l'embaras des raisons, des alibis, des apparences, bref tout le naturel social, pour rendre manifestes l'échange réglé sur quoi reposent le marché sémantique et la vie collective (149).

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