AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES
IN KWARA STATE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the background to the study. It identifies the research problem and presents the aim and objectives as well as research questions that guide the research. The chapter equally sets the scope of the study, provides justification for the study, and presents the research methodology.

1.2 Background to the Study

Culture defines the world and determines what is valued in terms of behaviour, relationships, and attitudes. It encapsulates a wide range of human activities including language. Politeness, as a form of observable linguistic behaviour, draws largely upon the cultural values of participants in a discourse (Huang 2006). Since language itself is engrained in culture, it goes without saying that politeness as a pattern of language use is culturally prescribed. Although politeness is a universal phenomenon pervasive in all human languages, politeness strategies are not universal. Rather, what is perceived as ‘polite’ differs across linguistic and cultural boundaries. For instance, in Yoruba linguacultural milieu, certain address terms are used to show endearment, respect or approval. A taxi driver may, for example, address a younger passenger as *aunti mi* (my aunty), *ore* (friend) or *iya mi* (my mother), in making a request. In English cultures, however, addressing a complete stranger this way may be considered intrusive or presumptuous.

The foregoing paragraph converges to the point that the manifestation of politeness phenomena is largely influenced by the culture of language users. Nigerian cultures places much importance on respect, linguistic etiquette, or showing of deference. Yorubas, for instance, have greetings for various situations such as when there is rainfall, when the weather is cold, when a woman has just given birth, when a long absent relative has recently arrived home, when people are relaxing, when it is sunset, among a whole lot of others. In addition, in Yoruba language there is a wide range of means, aside from greetings, through which linguistic politeness is manifested. These include forms of address such as the use of first names versus the use of titles and last names; tones of voice, discourse markers, and even morpho-syntactic structures such as the use of “o” for younger persons and “e” for one’s elders or persons with higher social status.

In multilingual Nigeria, several cultures are in operation. Thus, the conceptualisation, manifestation, and interpretation of politeness are usually influenced by at least two language systems: the language user’s first language and the target language. English as a Second or as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) speakers have to draw upon their individual cultural frameworks while also conforming to the linguistic prescriptions of English language. For ESL/EFL users in Nigeria, the manifestation of politeness is often a fusion of strategies from both English and the language user’s first language. This constitutes part of what is known as Nigerian English (NE).

Not only is politeness in communicative events in the Nigerian sociocultural milieu influenced by language systems, it is also usually considered relative to the perceived norms in a given situation. Leech (2014) describes this as the sociopragmatic scale of politeness. This scale, unlike the pragmalinguistic scale, is context-dependent and bidirectional. Hence, no linguistic structure has a constant ‘polite’ status. Along the sociopragmatic politeness scale, a single utterance may be interpreted in varying situations as “overpoliteness”, “underpoliteness” or “politeness appropriate to the situation”.

This is in consonance with a number of linguists (e.g. Fraser, 1990; Watts, 2003; Kasper, 2005) who contend that the politeness of a linguistic structure can only be ascertained when it occurs within communicative contexts. Watts (2003), for example, argues that an utterance may be interpreted as ‘genuinely polite’ or ‘insincere’, depending on the particular interaction in social practice within which it occurs. In essence, politeness is situation-dependent. Even elements such as morpho-syntactic structures that are perceived in certain cultures to have inherent 'politeness properties' could manifest otherwise in some contexts. For instance, if a superior of Yoruba origin addresses his subordinate as "*Oga mi*" (my boss) during an argument, it is most likely that he is being derisive rather than polite. Thus, politeness is entrenched in both language systems (sociolinguistic specifications of a language) and language use (particular contexts of use).

To fulfil the politeness principle, as a form of linguistic behaviour, language users make conscious and strategic choices of lexicogrammatic forms and semantic patterns. Such choices are constrained by rules known as maxims of politeness. Aside from fulfilling the general politeness principle of avoiding communicative discord and conveying an impression of politeness toward the hearer, language users also try to achieve other specific goals during communicative events. In the taxi driver example given earlier, the older man's use of polite address terms is definitely not to show deference. In Yoruba culture, one is not required to show deference to younger persons except they belong to higher socioeconomic strata. However, as a service provider, the taxi driver may use politeness strategies to convince, make demands, or appeal to his customers' better nature.

The Politeness Phenomena is particularly prevalent in business organisations and corporate bodies. This is because its strategic use is vital to the smooth running of such institutions. In various forms of organisations, workers' adeptness in the exploitation of politeness strategies can boost profitability. Hence, employers look out for these 'skills' in staffing. To properly and systematically examine and elucidate the extensive influence of sociocultural context on the manifestation of the politeness phenomena, therefore, the researcher has selected one of the largest, bustling and versatile service-providing organisations in Kwara State, Kwara State Internal Revenue Service, Ilorin (hereafter referred to by its acronym KW-IRS).

While the geographical and cultural location of the organisation is a major contributor to the prevalence of the politeness phenomenon, other non-locational, non-cultural factors account for its pervasiveness. For an institute whose vision is “to mobilize revenue for the strategic development of Kwara State,” adherence to the Politeness Principle is particularly important. KW-IRS was instituted in 2015 to manage the inadequacies of the state’s pre-existent Board of Internal Revenue Service. The previous board for internal generation of revenue had neither stringent tax laws nor adequate and strategic utilisation of generated funds. To tackle the ineffectiveness in the generation of revenue internally, the state government saw the need for a reform in the state’s IGR. The sudden wind of change was strange to the residents of Kwara State and was met with stiff resistance.

To make the state’s populace receptive and cooperative in the fulfilment of their civic responsibility, KW-IRS put in place a growth strategy two years after its establishment: PRAISE signifying “Praising and Patronizing the People”, “Re-enforcing and Re-energizing Stakeholders’ Commitment”, “Advocating and Advancing Tax Education”, “Intensifying and Improving Staff Commitment”, “Systematic and Sequential Reporting” and “Educating for Enforcing Collection”. Out of these six strategies, three are overtly directed at the prospective ‘customer’ that is, the taxpayer. In praising and patronising, educating and enforcing, adherence to the Politeness Principle (hereafter referred to as PP) is crucial.

In “Advocating and Advancing Tax Education,” for instance, like in all forms of education, the PP must be observed to ensure that the aim of the instructor is achieved. Politeness strategies may be liken to the oil that keeps two pulleys in motion without chafing. In this case, the pulleys are two interlocutors or groups of discussers. The PP insures that communication is without friction: it specifies that information is appropriately structured and properly transmitted and well received. Given the sensitive nature of the organisation's objectives, communicative discord must be avoided in order to properly implement the first, third and sixth strategies.

Only by being 'politeness-conscious' can the KW-IRS personnel persuade their 'clients' to share in the organisation's vision, cooperate by paying their taxes and consequently, contribute to the advancement and structural development of Kwara State. Ultimately, politeness is central to the achievement of KW-IRS' organisational goals. Unmistakeably, the management of the establishment recognises this as the very first growth strategy, which the entire workforce of about 1000 staff must practise in their day-to-day activities, chiefly involves politeness.

It may be surmised from the foregoing discussion that politeness operates within contexts – linguistic, cultural, social, and situational. Hence, it becomes pertinent to explore how its manifestation and interpretation is influenced by these contextual factors. Since pragmatics enables "the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication" (Crystal, 2008, p. 379), this study is situated within the framework of pragmatics.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In corporate organisations, interactions between guests or customers and staff members are usually transactional and hence, quite formal. Speech events such as requests and instructions are mostly pervasive. These intrinsically violate the politeness principle of upholding communicative congruence. Making requests impinge on addressees' freedom of action; while instructions, when not well received, tend to offend the instructees. Hence, language users tend to employ politeness strategies to mitigate the face-threatening potential of such speech events. In addition, given the sociocultural setting, manifestations of politeness are usually reflective of interlocutors' cultural background. In the Nigerian socio-cultural setting, both the manifestation and interpretation of politeness are influenced by at least two language systems: the language user's first language and the second language. Speakers of Nigerian English have to draw upon their individual cultural frameworks while also conforming to the prescriptions and expectations of the social setting.

While there is a vast body of work on politeness, adequate attention has not been given to politeness strategies employed by customers and staff of corporate, service-providing organisations. Also, transactional speech events such as requests and instructions have not been sufficiently explored. In response to this gap in the repertoire of knowledge, the present study aims at examining politeness phenomena in Kwara State Internal Revenue Service with a view to exploring the specific strategies employed by customers and staff in the corporate body in making and responding to requests and instructions.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The overarching aim of this research is to examine the use of politeness strategies among customers and staff of Kwara State Internal Revenue Service. However, the study is guided by the following specific objectives to:

I. explore the politeness strategies used by customers and staff of KW-IRS in making and responding to requests and instructions in order to fulfil the politeness principle;
II. ascertain what factors motivate the use of politeness strategies by customers and staff of KW-IRS; and
III. determine the specific goals customers and staff of KW-IRS achieve through their choice of politeness strategies in given contexts of use.

1.5 Research Questions

I. What strategic choices do customers and staff of KW-IRS make to fulfil the politeness principle during conversations?

II. What factors motivate the use of politeness strategies by customers and staff of KW-IRS?

III. What goals or aims do customers and staff of KW-IRS achieve through their choice of politeness strategies in particular contexts of use?

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research is concerned with the identification and analysis of manifestations of politeness in corporate organisations. Particularly, the study investigates politeness strategies employed by staff and customers of KW-IRS in making and responding to speech events such as requests and instructions.

Primarily, the corpus for analysis was elicited from interactions among customers and members of staff in Kwara State Internal Revenue Service, Ilorin. It includes voice recordings of 40 exchanges from real-life conversations of staff and customers of the organisation derived through participatory observation. While pragmatics serves as the analytical tool, the specific theoretical framework for data analysis was adopted from Leech's (2014) *Pragmatic Politeness*.

Using this theory, the research attempts to assess particular utterances along the sociopragmatic scale of politeness with the underlying aim of measuring how polite the lexico-grammatic forms are judged to be relative to cultural and social norms as well as situational expectations. Furthermore, the study attempts to ascertain illocutionary functions of specific real-life utterances in given contexts. In addition, the research examines the compliance of staff's responses with Leech's five constraint pairs.

1.7 Justification of the Study

There is a vast body of works on politeness as an aspect of cross-cultural and interlanguage communication. Various scholars have explored diverse facets of universal as well as language and culture-specific politeness strategies. In recent years, there have been a myriad of publications bordering on the descriptions of politeness phenomena in various languages. Researchers like Adegbija (1989), Fukushima (2000), Said (2011), Tao (2012), Jeanyfer and Tanto (2018), to mention a few have established the language-culture specificity of politeness by studying and comparing its manifestation across languages and varieties of languages such as Nigerian English, Yoruba, Ogori, British English, Japanese, Elfhoul, Chinese, and Indonesian. Nevertheless, adequate research attention has not been paid to the manifestation of the politeness phenomena within specific sociolinguistic contexts.

Majority of the researchers mentioned in the foregoing paragraph situated their study within the framework of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, which inter alia, is defective for its assumptions on the universality of face construct, and the universality of politeness strategies. Adegbija (1989), for instance, carried out a comparative investigation of politeness phenomena in Nigerian English, Yoruba and Ogori. Using Brown and Levinson's theory, he identified numerous strategies of both positive and negative politeness. In spite of being remarkable, as a result of the overgeneralisation of the universality of face construct, the findings of Adegbija's work on the nature of politeness in Nigerian English, Yoruba and Ogori are unreliable.

In Nigeria, several researches have been conducted on the dimensions of politeness that manifest in Nigerian English (e.g. Adegbija, 1989; Odebunmi, 2013; Obins, 2015; Enang, Eshlet & Udoka, 2016). A number these works examined the operations of politeness in particular social contexts. Odebunmi (2005), Adegbite and Odebunmi (2010), and Odebunmi (2013) explored the politeness phenomenon in doctor-client encounters. Moreover, Odebunmi (2009) inquired into politeness in print media political interviews in Nigeria while Kareem (2018) investigated the operations of the phenomenon in Muslim discourse and particularly, in Nigerian Friday sermons. However, the use of politeness strategies in corporate organisations has received little or no research attention.

Furthermore, since politeness is quite broad, researchers usually focus on specific speech events involving politeness. Shoshana, for example, in series of researches (1982, 1985, 1985, and 1989) focused on requests and apologies. Odebunmi (2013) concentrated on greetings while Ofulue (2014) studied address terms. There is particularly a vast body of work on requests: Fukushima (2000), Said (2011) and Jeanyfer and Tanto (2018). Also, a number of researchers – e.g. Schwab and Rosier (2013), Wijayanto, Laila, Prasetyarini & Susiati (2013), and Marocchini (2017) – have investigated politeness in complaints. However, barely any research has explored politeness strategies employed in making and responding to both requests and instructions in organisations.

In order to fill this gap, the present study contributes to ongoing theoretical discussions on politeness that challenge the Brown-Levinsonian notion of 'universality' (such as Eelen, 2001 and Watts, 2003). It equally attempts to provide empirical evidence with respect to trending conjectures that politeness cannot be studied outside the confines of a particular language or speech community; and that it should be interpreted as a notion belonging to both the language system and language use. This evidence was derived from an original body of data that has not been used by previous researchers.

The present study transcends the usual trend of discourse on politeness given that it focuses specifically on staff-customer encounters of Nigerian English users in a corporate organisation, with a view to exploring the pervasive influence of context on the manifestation of politeness. The choice of this corporate body is informed by the fact that in such organisations, the politeness principle needs to be observed to ensure the smooth running of transactions both internally (among members of staff) and externally (among staff and customers).

Pragmatics was selected as analytical tool for the corpus given that as an approach to language study that places value on contextual variables in the assignment of meaning to utterances, it provides the appropriate methodology for exploring politeness – a phenomenon which derives its meaning from context; cultural, social and situational. In addition, a functional, epistemic, systematic, and relatively recent theory, Leech's (2014) *Pragmatic Politeness* was adopted as theoretical framework for the study.

1.8 Research Methodology

Data for analysis were obtained from interactions among staff and customers of a corporate organisation: Kwara State Internal Revenue Service, Ilorin. Data were collected through the use of voice recordings during participatory observation. Six data consisting of forty exchanges were selected based on their relevance to the study at hand.

Recording interactions between staff and customers enabled the researcher to gather data that are relevant to the study. This equally ensures the gathering of authentic, naturally-occurring, and reliable data; and invariably, the validity of analysis results. The recordings underwent careful and systematic transcription into written form. For each of the corpus material gathered, the politeness conventions observed were analysed in an attempt to fulfil the underlying objectives of this research.

The study employed pragmatics, which is considered most suitable for investigating utterances situated in particular contexts, as analytical tool. Leech's (2014) *Pragmatic Politeness* was adopted as analytical framework. The framework is made up of three dimensions of Leech's theory: Sociopragmatic Politeness Scale, the Goal-oriented approach, and Maxim-based approach.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BASIS

2.1 Introduction

This section explores the concept of Politeness, the history of pragmatics, major traditions instituted by John Langshaw Austin, John R. Searle, Herbert Paul Grice, and Bach and Harnish, as well as the scope of pragmatics. It equally surveys the nexus between language and culture. In addition, the chapter examines Leech's theory of *Pragmatic Politeness* and establishes the theoretical framework that guides the research.

2.2 The Concept of Politeness

For a few decades, the notion of politeness has been an increasingly popular study point in pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Politeness is a composite concept, the essence of which cannot be completely captured by definitional assumptions. Given its multifaceted nature, the idea of *politeness* is largely ambiguous. Over the years, a myriad of models on politeness have been designed. Fraser (1990) suggests that there are four major approaches to politeness research: the *"face-saving"* view, the *"conversational-maxim"* view, the *"conversational-contract"* view, and the *"social norm"* view.

The *"face-saving"* view is largely popularised by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). Their theory of politeness has been the most influential so far although its tenets have been criticised by a number of scholars (prominently Eelen, 2001 and Watts, 2003). Their work centres on the notion of *Face*. Thus, they are largely indebted to Erving Goffman's 1955 publication on the theory of face-work. The notion of face is premised on the idea that as participants in communicative events, individuals have two kinds of face wants: they yearn to have other participants acknowledge their identity and equally desire not to be imposed upon in a disrespectful way. The former want is a wish for solidarity and is regarded as the positive face; while the latter, a wish for respect, is called the negative face. Face, according to Leech

(2014) pertains to “the positive self-image or self-esteem that a person enjoys as a reflection of that person’s estimation by others” (p.25).

During conversation, there is the underlying mutual obligation to honour the other participant’s face rather than threaten it. For instance, an employee would rather apologise to his angry boss than attempt to justify his actions. This honours the employer’s positive face. Similarly, a student’s act of conceding to rather than disagreeing with or correcting wrong assertions made by a professor in class is face-honouring. In addition, not making requests, complaints or giving instructions is an attempt not to transgress addressees’ freedom of action and thus honour their negative face.

However, in an attempt to avoid what Brown and Levinson call Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), communication and the conveyance of meaning may be disrupted; or as Goldsmith (2009) very succinctly puts it, “Avoiding any FTA would honor face, but this would severely inhibit our ability to act!” (p. 755). Gordon (2011) opines that “Politeness theory offers an explanation of why conversation includes indirectness and seems at times to develop quite inefficiently: interlocutors make efforts to show that they are honoring two universal human desires – to not be impeded (negative face needs) and to be approved of and accepted (positive face needs)” (p. 113-114).

Politeness is thus motivated by a speaker’s desire to adapt to a given communicative situation and save the hearer’s ‘face’. However, since saving face, most times, precludes meaning making, FTAs are not completely avoidable. Thus, various strategies are employed in committing them. This, in Goldsmiths’ view, is the focus of the politeness theory.

An interlocutor may choose to commit an FTA directly. This kind of strategy is known as bald-on-record. The professor-student scenario is a case in point. The student may threaten the professor’s authority, knowledge, and experience through open dissension. Such uncurbed disagreement may, however, be softened through positive redress. Positive redress strategies, as exemplified by Goldsmith (2009) include acts that honour positive face by showing approval such as “complementing the hearer, using in-group language, seeking agreement, asserting common ground, joking, showing knowledge of the other’s wants, promising something, including both people in an activity, or showing understanding” (p. 755).

Negative redress strategies may equally be employed in tempering FTAs. For instance, in order not to seem imposing, a young man trying to fix a location for a dinner date with a lady he recently met asks, “How does Lakeside Restaurant sound to you?” Aside from asking questions, a speaker in a discourse might use hedges, give options, acknowledge imposition, or apologise to appeal to the hearer’s negative face.

Lastly, interlocutors may commit FTAs indirectly through off-record strategies. This way, the threat is not obvious. For example, a man struggling with bringing in luggage after a trip may say to his on-looking neighbour, “I could really use some help here.” This indirect request for help may appeal to the addressee’s magnanimity and he might choose to help. Otherwise, the speaker is in no danger of being accused of issuing a Face Threatening Act. Brown and Levinson’s model has been adopted and proved adequate by several scholars through empirical research (e.g. Adegbija, 1989).

Similar to Brown and Levinson’s stance, Leech (1983) perceives politeness as a set of maxims that guide human interactions. He posits three of such principles – the Conversational Principle (CP), the Politeness Principle (PP) and the Irony Principle (IP). Lakoff (1973) equally sees politeness as a set of pragmatic rules that underlie the choice of linguistic expressions. In similar vein, Kasper (2005) asserts that linguistic politeness is a *method* of ordering linguistic action in a way that conforms to a particular communicative event. These approaches constitute the *conversational-maxim* view on politeness.

Inherent in the *conversational-maxim* view is the stance that the politeness principle is made up of universal rules that steer social interaction and maintain social order (Adegbija, 1989; Ofulue, 2014; Maha, 2014). This idea of universality has been widely questioned. Watts (2003), for example, notes that the notion of politeness is relative to culture; thus, the idea of "universality" seems out of place, especially since Brown and Levinson (1987) base their theoretical assumptions on just three languages – English, Tzeltal and Tamil).

Rather than a set of universal maxims or principles, politeness is an aspect of social behaviour which makes for harmony among individuals, within and outside any given society (Eelen, 2001; Usami, 2002; Akpan, 2003). The notion of politeness operates within the framework of socio-cultural conventions - this is the underlying notion of the *"social norm"* perception on politeness. This view is expressly captured in the succeeding quotation from Fraser (cited in Culpepper, 2011):

> Briefly stated, [the socio-cultural view] assumes that each society has a particular set of social norms consisting of more or less explicit rules that prescribe a certain behaviour, a state of affairs of a way of thinking in context. A positive evaluation (politeness) arises when an action is in congruence with the norm, a negative evaluation (impoliteness = rudeness) when action is to the contrary (p.3).

The above submission is reiterated by Yuang (2008, cited in Ajayi and Balogun, 2014). He asserts:

> Politeness can also be regarded as a restraint…some kind of social norm imposed by the conventions of the community of which we are members. Sometimes we feel that we have to be polite in order to show that we are civilised and cultivated to such an extent that we know what to do to live up to the conventionally recognised social standards so that we will not be accused of being rude or ill-mannered. (p. 98).

Yuang's assertions depicts a socio-cultural system within the ambit of which an interlocutor must operate to remain in the "good books" of his/her hearer. To be perceived as polite, participants in a conversation must abide by certain predetermined formulae. Both Fraser and Yuang make reference to the idea of politeness versus impoliteness/rudeness. As such, politeness may be seen as representing notions such as deference, respect, good manners, and social etiquette.

Richard Watts, suggests a two-dimensional view on politeness – *first-order politeness* and *second-order politeness*. He posits that first-order politeness corresponds to the various ways in which polite behaviour is perceived and talked about by members of socio-cultural groups. This embodies 'commonsense' notions of politeness. Second-order politeness, on the other hand, is regarded as a theoretical construct; a term within a theory of social behaviour and language usage (Watts, 2003). Watts' notion of first-order politeness corresponds with the socio-cultural view. It equally presupposes that rules for polite (linguistic) conduct vary from society to society, to reflect the difference in cultural values (see Janney and Ardnt, 1992; Ofulue, 2014).

Politeness is conceptualised and manifested differently from one culture to another (Spencer-Oatney, 2000; Shahrokhi and Bidabadi, 2013). There is a wealth of evidential illustrations regarding the divergence in the conceptualisation of the politeness phenomenon across cultures. Enang, Eshlet and Udoka (2016), for instance, make a case for the cultural-specificity of politeness through the following illustration:

> An adult speaker refers to a young boy or girl as: *Kananwaan* (**old woman),** *Kanaden* (**old man),** *Da ami* **(my mate),** *Ufanami* (**my friend),** *Uyaiiden* (**fine boy),** *Uyaiiban* (**fine girl**). As can be seen, the boy or girl's self-image is being evaluated by the speaker because the speaker appreciates the addressee and approves of his/her ways. This type of polite expressions, it should be noted, may constitute an abuse or offence or a serious embarrassment to an Efik young girl or boy because it is mostly used in Anaang or Ibibio language variety of polite expressions (p. 4.).

Researchers on Asian cultures (such as Mao, 1994; Usami, 2002) also point to the importance of recognising that in some languages, interlocutors' uses of certain polite expressions (specifically honorifics) is a matter of social convention or social indexing rather than a strategic choice; thus raising another point of contention in the study of politeness – it is not always strategic or premeditated; rather individual language users subconsciously draw upon a pre-existing system of sociolinguistic and cultural convention. This is the *"conversational-contract"* view on politeness.

This is observable in languages such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc. where respect or deference is encoded in certain linguistic forms which are required when talking to one's elders or those of higher status, for instance (Watts, 2003).This is equally the case in Yoruba language. In Yoruba grammar and lexicon, social relations are discernible and overtly encoded. Sociocultural values such as deference, sincerity, consideration, honour are crucial in a Yoruba ESL (English as second Language) speaker's perception and expression of politeness.

Adegbija (as cited by Ofulue, 2014), in his study of how politeness is perceived in the Nigerian context, observes that the socio-cultural context has a pervasive influence on politeness phenomena in language systems such that speakers of NE (Nigerian English) for example, transfer politeness-related social conventions from their MT (Mother Tongue) into their English speech. Among Yoruba speakers of English, this is particularly prevalent. The foregoing validates the imperativeness of giving prior consideration to culturally and socio-linguistically prescribed deference behaviour in assessing politeness.

2.3 Pragmatics: A Historical Perspective

Relative to other disciplines, pragmatics is a young branch of linguistics. Its first appearance in academic circles can be traced to philosophical tradition in ancient Greece and Rome. The major proponents and authorities in the discipline are philosophers. They include Morris, Austin, Searle, Levinson, Leech, Grice, among others. Most of the concepts introduced by them e.g. indexicality, speech acts, presupposition – have made it into modern pragmatics and remain pivotal to studies in pragmatics.

Pragmatic studies dates as far back as the 1930s when it was treated as an aspect of semiotics alongside syntax and semantics. While syntax is concerned with the structuring of words into grammatically correct phrases and sentences, the focus in semantics is how words, phrases and sentences come together to make meaning. In his popular example: "*Colourless green ideas sleep furiously",* Chomsky (1957) exemplifies the insufficiency of syntax in accounting for every aspect of language use. This area of syntax's inadequacy, viz. the explication of how meaning is communicated through language, thus became the jurisdiction of semanticists.

Again, there were certain dimensions of meaning semantics was unable to cover. Hence, pragmatics was introduced. This new discipline accommodated aspects of meaning that are beyond the obvious. As Yule (1996) puts it, "pragmatics is the study of 'invisible' meaning or how we recognize what is meant even when it is not actually said (or written)" (p. 127). Thus, while semantics is the theory of linguistic meaning, pragmatics is the theory of language use.

Since they were "created to catch the overflow" (Unibi, 2016, p. 38) of their precursors, both semantics and pragmatics were referred to by the metaphor, 'waste basket'. Pragmatics was, in fact, regarded as the wastebasket of linguistics; thus, its position in the core of linguistics was undermined. Mey (2001) however assumes a positive stance arguing that such treatment of the discipline bequeaths upon it a distinct status in linguistic studies. Unlike other fields of linguistics, pragmatics does not just approach language as a system: it investigates the interconnectedness of signs, message, and those who transmit them. It studies "the relation of signs to interpreters" (Morris cited in Hakim 2013, p.31).

Over the years, pragmatics has evolved from being just a wastebasket and just a concept in philosophical studies. This evolution started with many of the suppositions in philosophy about words and sentences being challenged. The leading revolutionist was John Langshaw Austin and his basic argument was that words are not just *said*, they are *used* in accomplishing particular *purpose*; or put differently, we do things with words. This argument is the bedrock of one of the governing principles in pragmatics: the Speech Act Theory.

2.3.1 Austin's Contributions to Pragmatics

In his posthumous publication, *How to Do Things with Words,* J. L. Austin decried the common philosophical facade that "the business of a [sentence] can only be to 'describe' some state of affairs, or to 'state some fact,' which it must do either truly or falsely" (1962, p.1). The notion of 'speech acts' derives from his observation that certain sentences – e.g. "I hereby pronounce you man and wife"; "I name this child Christiana" – are designed to do something; here to wed and christen respectively. This kind of sentences he called performatives in contrast with constatives – the descriptive kind of utterances popularised in philosophical studies. While constatives merely state facts, assert, or describe situations, we actually 'do' something through performatives. Crystal (2008) defines constatives as "utterances which are descriptive statements, capable of being analysed in terms of truth-values" (p.104). A performative, on the other hand, refers to "a type of sentence where an action is 'performed' by virtue of the sentence having been uttered, e.g. I apologize, I baptize you . . . , I promise . . ." (p.357).

While performatives cannot be categorised along the lines of being true or false, they are analysable in terms of whether they are felicitous or infelicitous. In Speech Act theory, the term *felicity conditions* is used to refer to requirements a particular speech act must satisfy to achieve its purpose. For example, not all instances of "You are hereby discharged and acquitted" will count. For the utterance to be 'successful', it must be said by someone who is vested with the authority to exonerate, in front of persons officially assembled under authority of law, and at the appropriate time and place (i.e. a courtroom). Huang (2006) describes Austin's three felicity conditions on performatives thus:

1. (i) There must be a conventional procedure having a conventional effect.

   (ii) The circumstances and persons must be appropriate, as specified in the procedure.

2. The procedure must be executed (i) correctly and (ii) completely

3. Often

   (i) the persons must have the requisite thoughts, feelings and intentions, as specified in the procedure, and

   (ii) if consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant parties must so do.

Failure to meet any of these conditions will render an utterance infelicitous. Austin identified three kinds of infelicities: misinvocations, misexecutions, and abuses (Sadock, 2004). Some scholars show predilection for the more common terminology, "misfire" which covers the first two categories.

In the event that condition 1 is violated, a misinvocation ensues. For instance, making the statement in the illustration above ("You are hereby discharged and acquitted") outside a courtroom violates condition 1(i) and therefore will be regarded as a misinvocation/misfire. Another case in point is an attempt by a class teacher to join two of her students in 'holy matrimony' without their consent. Neither the persons nor the circumstances are appropriate, condition 1(ii) is violated; hence, a misfire occurs. Failure to meet condition2 will result in a misexecution. For instance in a formal meeting of corps members in Nigeria, the meeting has not ended until an attendee mentions their name, state code, and calls for an adjournment. An abuse is committed when condition 3 is violated. Sadock (2004) mentions insincere promises, mendacious findings of fact, unfelt congratulations, and apologies as examples of abuses.

The distinction is also made between explicit and implicit performatives. Austin suggests certain syntactic and semantic properties that distinguish one from the other. Foremost on the list is that explicit performatives contain performative verbs that mark the illocutionary force of an utterance in an explicit, overt or obvious way. In the statement (1) "I hereby solemnly promise to pay the debt next week," for instance, the illocutionary force/act is obviously *promising*. Whereas, the same act of *promising* can be performed implicitly as in the utterance, (2) "I will pay the debt next week." Additionally, the adverb *hereby* – as in example (1) above – strengthens the performative nature of the verb *promise*; thus, making it easy to recognise the explicitness of the performative. Lastly, the explicit performative is said to occur in sentences in the simple present tense, with indicative mood, active voice and with a first person singular subject of a predicate.

While these criteria are true for example (1), there are usually exceptions – as Austin himself recognises – especially in the case of the last property. This can be demonstrated through sentence (3): "You are hereby being warned to desist from activities at variance with company policies." Here, the utterance which is in reality an explicit performative contains a second person singular/plural subject and a verb in passive voice.

Later on, Austin discarded his performative-constative distinction in favour of a general theory of speech acts with various kinds of performatives and constatives as mere sub-classes (Huang 2006). His new line of argument was that both classes (performatives and constatives) are subject to felicity conditions. He observed that performatives and constatives largely overlap with respect to truth-conditional terms: while there are constatives that cannot be assessed via truth conditions, there are performatives which – by reason of being subject to truth conditions – may, at the same time, be categorised as constatives. He also noted that constatives are only a special kind of performatives. As a result, he concluded that "all utterances, in addition to meaning whatever they mean, perform specific acts via the specific communicative force of an utterance" (Huang, 2006, p.1002).

Consequently, Austin proposed a speech act trichotomy consisting of the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary act. His three-way distinction represents the kinds of things that one is doing simultaneously in the course of producing an utterance. First, there is a locutionary act, i.e. the act of making a meaningful utterance. Behind what is said or the form of the words uttered (the locution) is an intention or force, dubbed the illocution. Illocutionary acts/force; that is, what speakers are doing with their words include assuring, acquitting, ordering, warning, or as in the case of example (1) in the preceding paragraph, promising. The concept of illocutionary force is fundamental in pragmatics and is, in fact, taken to mean the same thing as 'speech act'. For every locutionary act bearing an illocutionary force, there could be a consequence or by-product, which may be intended or not. This is called the perlocution. A perlocutionary act, therefore, is the production of effect on the thoughts, feelings, or actions of addressee(s). The effect produced is called the perlocutionary effect.

Crystal (2008) makes a distinction between these three levels of speech act thus: "[Speech Acts is] a communicative activity (a locutionary act), defined with reference to the intentions of speakers while speaking (the illocutionary force of their utterances) and the effects they achieve on listeners (the perlocutionary effect of their utterances) (p.446). A single utterance might include all three levels. For example, a locutionary act "I will beat you" addressed to a five-year-old may have the illocutionary force of "warning" and produce the perlocutionary effect of "frightening" the child. It is quite easy to predetermine the illocutionary force of an utterance by relying on the existence of a system of social conventions. However, as Huang (2006) noted, perlocutionary acts and their perlocutionary effects can be neither conventionally determined nor foreseen. Hence, the distinction is often made between the intended and the actual perlocutionary effect of an utterance (Crystal, 2008).

Although Austin's contributions to the development of pragmatics are quite valuable and significant, his Speech Act theory has certain limitations. Strawson (1971) criticised Austin's supposition that speech acts such as christening, naming, baptising, et cetera typify how language works. He notes that "such illocutionary acts ordinarily take place in highly formal, ritualistic, or ceremonial situations such as ship launchings and weddings" (Sadock, 2004). While he agrees that such events do involve convention, Strawson pointedly argues that speech on such occasions constitute part of a formalised proceeding rather than an instance of ordinary communicative behaviour. Warnock (1973) and Urmson (1977) lend support to this line of argument.

2.3.2 Searle's Contributions to Pragmatics

John R. Searle's work on Speech Act Theory is usually regarded as an extension of his predecessor's. Searle was, in fact, a student of Austin: he had written his Oxford D.Phil. thesis under Austin and Strawson on Frege's notion of sense and reference. However, his conception of illocutionary force (a concept originally introduced by Austin) is believed to be traceable to Frege (Nerlich, 2006). Thus, there is a significant difference between their approaches to the theory of Speech Acts: while Austin emphasised the conventional interpretation of speech acts (or illocutionary acts), Searle emphasised a psychological interpretation. For Searle, the success of utterances is dependent not upon linguistic conventions, but on beliefs, background assumptions and practices. Bach (2008) describes the model for Austin's theory as *Conventional illocutionary acts* which, in contrast with Searle's model, "succeed not by recognition of intention, but by conformity to convention" (p.152). That is, an utterance counts as an act of a certain sort by virtue of meeting certain socially or institutionally recognised conditions for being an act of that sort.

Searle is often praised for rendering Austin's theory more precise. He, for instance, argues that Austin's felicity conditions "are not the only ways in which a speech act can be appropriate or inappropriate, but that they also jointly constitute the illocutionary force" (Huang, 2006, p.1003). In essence, he perceived the conditions as rules that guide the carrying out of speech acts rather than just backdrops against which speech acts that have already being carried out are analysed. Searle viewed felicity conditions as constitutive "rules that either regulate (preexisting) language behaviour or create or define new forms of language behaviour" (Mao, 2006, p.798). He, subsequently, introduced his own classification of felicity conditions. The neo-Austinian classification included four basic categories: propositional content, preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition.

The propositional content is the crux or subject matter of a speech act, i.e. what the speech act is about. Every complete utterance has a propositional content. It is "represented by structurally decomposable units such as the subject, predicate and their sub-categories" (Koyama, 2006, p.773). Proost (2016) states that "The role of the utterance is specified by properties of the propositional content" (p.995). The preparatory condition, according to Crystal (2008) relates to whether the person performing a speech act has the authority to do so. This is related to Austin's condition 1(ii) discussed earlier. Sincerity conditions pertain to the earnestness with which the speech act is being performed. It stipulates that the Speaker's utterance should not be a lie. Lastly, the essential condition is concerned with how committed the speaker is to a certain kind of belief or behaviour, having performed a speech act (e.g. accepting an object that one has just requested). Habermas (1998) summarises the last three conditions as Searle's proposed method for analysing "the claim to normative rightness", "the claim to truthfulness", and "the claim to truth" (p.271).

Additionally, he elaborated on Austin's speech acts and introduced his own classification of illocutionary acts. As against Austin's expositives, commissives, exercitives, verdictives, and behabitives, Searle's taxonomy includes representatives, commissives, directives, declarations, and expressives. They are briefly described here.

1. **Representatives:** In this kind of acts, speakers represent or convey what they believe to be true, e.g. asserting, describing, insisting, and hypothesising. This is similar to Austin's expositives.

2. **Commissives:** Speakers sometimes commit themselves to a future course of action. Such acts are dubbed commissives. They include promising, refusing, threatening, vowing, volunteering, etc. This is in consonance with Austin's notion of commisives.
3. **Directives**: This kind of acts involves speakers trying to get their listeners to do something, e.g. begging, commanding, requesting, forbidding, suggesting, et cetera. This is similar to Austin's exercitives, which are acts in which speakers exercise their influence or authority.
4. **Expressives**: Through expressives, speakers express their feelings, e.g. apologising, welcoming, sympathising, praising, condoling, regretting, etc. Austin's notion of behabitives, which are acts that portray speakers' emotion or attitude, is parallel to Searle's expressives.
5. **Declarations**: Declarations bring about a change in external situation. They include acts like baptising, marrying, resigning, sentencing, naming, etc. This is akin to Austin's verdictives – acts through which judgements are issued.

Other scholars in pragmatics have come up their classifications. While Vendler (1972) suggested a seven-part classification, Bach and Harnish's (1979) a six-fold one, Allan's (1994) included just four. However, most of these different speech acts categorisation largely overlap.

2.3.3 H. P. Grice's Contributions to Pragmatics

Herbert Paul Grice's contributions to modern pragmatics have been considered quite noteworthy. Wharton (2009) asserts that although the term 'pragmatics' is attributed to Charles Morris (1938), Grice ranks highly among few scholars who are recognised for shaping (and continuing to shape) the discipline as we know it today. His notion of Cooperative Principle is particularly of great influence in modern pragmatics. He posits that interlocutors try to cooperate with one another when they talk. In particular, speakers attempt to comply with four underlying maxims of conversation: quantity (be informative), quality (be truthful), relation (be relevant) and manner (be perspicuous).

Essentially, Grice believes that “human verbal communication is a cooperative activity driven by the mutual expectation that, in general, participants will obey a Cooperative Principle and Conversational Maxims…” (Wharton, 2009, p.38). Hearers would typically assume that a speaker is following these criteria. However, as Grice well recognises, speakers do not consistently follow these maxims. Non-observance of maxims may be as a result of imperfect linguistic performance (as in the case of a young child just acquiring a language or a foreigner learning a language) or impaired linguistic performance brought about by excitement, nervousness, drunkenness, disability, etc. Alternatively, maxims may be intentionally broken in lying, or political debates; for legal or ethical reasons; or to achieve sarcasm, irony, humour, etc.

In the case of obvious or intention flouting, the hearer may make implicatures. Implicature denotes an implied meaning that is not explicitly expressed. It contrasts with explicature, a proposition that is explicitly communicated (Crystal, 2008). The nitty-gritty of this theory is that there is often a difference between what a speaker literally says when using words and what he actually means or intends to convey by using those words.

Grice’s is best known for his theory of *implicature*. A distinction is made between conventional implicature and conversational implicature. Conventional implicatures have constant implied meanings in every given context. In essence, they are not context-dependent. Instead, they are simply attached by convention to particular expressions, i.e. they are lexicalised. Below is an illustration of conventional implicatures:

(4) He is a pastor yet he lies.

From this utterance, it may be implicated that lying is contrary to what is expected of clergy. Words such as but, even, therefore, yet and a few others convey conventional implicature.

Conversely, the notion of conversational implicature (CI) is hinged on the premise that a speaker may imply an idea different from what his utterance may be conventionally or literally interpreted as. The utterances below illustrate this:

(5) Lecturer: Tola, where is your assignment?

Tola: I had a very busy weekend.

[Here, Tola is not merely notifying the lecturer of his experience during the weekend. He is implicating that he has not done the assignment.]

(6) Dayo: I will send you some money when I get back to London.

Ife: Because roses are blue.

[We know that roses are red, pink, white or yellow and never blue. Thus, Ife expresses her utter disbelief by stating an impossible idea.]

Instances such as the ones represented in the square brackets in examples 5 and 6 above are, according to Crystal (2008), “implications which can be deduced from the form of an utterance, on the basis of certain co-operative principles which govern the efficiency and normal acceptability of conversations” (p.238). During speech events (such as the ones exemplified in 5 and 6), “a hearer bridges the gap between what the speaker has said and what they have implicated…by assuming that the speaker is conforming to the Cooperative Principle and maxims of conversation (or at least the Cooperative Principle)” (Wharton, 2009, p.48).

Thus, Grice’s account of conversational implicature describes how apparent violations of the maxims can still lead to communicative success. Olaleye (2017) makes a distinction between these two categories of implicature thus: “Conversational implicatures are generated when the Co-operative Principle is violated. They exist in utterances where a speaker means more than what he says, and they are essentially like indirect speech acts....Conventional implicatures on the other hand, are lexeme-dependent” (p.24).

Grice further categorises implicatures into *particularized* and *generalized* conversational implicature. Particularized conversational implicature relies on particular conversational contexts. Thus, the same utterance may have varying implicatures depending on the context.

(7) Bisi: How's the program going to be?

Tobi: Don't eat when coming.

Assuming that the program being referred to is a graduation ceremony, Tobi's response may implicate that food will be very surplus at the event. However, if the context changes; if the program in question is a prayer meeting, Tobi may simply be implying that Bisi is expected to come fasting. Generalized conversational implicature, on the other hand, are not context-specific. Rather, the use of certain forms of words would normally generate a particular type of implicature.

(8) Stan: Temi is my brother.

The above utterance (all things being equal) will always implicate that Temi is not my friend, uncle, teacher, or any other thing but my brother.

Some aspects of Grice's approach to pragmatics have been challenged by various scholars. Bach and Harnish (1979), for instance, suggest the notion of Communicative Presumption (CP) as a replacement for Cooperative Principle. The CP is the mutual belief in a linguistic community that when a person says something to another, he is doing so with an unconcealed communicative intention. Bach, in a later work, justifies the necessity of the replacement. He argues against Grice's representation of conversational maxims as rules for successful communication. As an alternative, he suggests that they should be perceived "as presumptions made in the course of the strategic inference involved in communication (they should not be construed, as they often are, as sociological generalizations)" (Bach, 2008 p. 155). He makes the following submission to back up his point:

> The listener presumes that the speaker is being cooperative and is speaking truthfully, informatively, relevantly, perspicuously, and otherwise appropriately. If an utterance superficially appears not to conform to this presumption, the listener looks for a way of taking the utterance so that it does conform. He does so partly on the supposition that he is intended to. The speaker takes advantage of this in choosing his words to make evident his communicative intention (p.155).

Besides, Levinson (2000) criticised Gricean implicatures. He argues that Grice's generalized conversational implicatures (GCIs), unlike particularized conversational implicatures (PCIs), have little significance in the theory of pragmatics. According to Levinson, since GCIs do not rely on particular contextual assumptions, they are purely linguistic. He pointedly argues that, "a theory of GCIs has to be supplemented with a theory of PCIs that will have at least as much, and possibly considerably more, importance to a general theory of communication. It is just to a linguistic theory the GCIs have an unparalleled import" (p. 22).

While Bach and Harnish's (1979), Levinson's (2000), and Bach's (2008) lines of thought are quite significant, some of their suggestions are not viable. Bach and Harnish's Communicative Presumption (CP) does not completely substitute for the Cooperative Principle. In certain socio-cultural and linguistic contexts, there exists certain conversational maxims– whether overt or covert which serve as guidelines for how to succeed in a communication. However, there are cross-cultural observations in the observation and expression of such maxims. Various neo-Gricean views of implicatures and conversational maxims have developed over the years (e.g. Chierchia, 2004, Sauerland, 2001).

2.3.4 Bach and Harnish's Contribution to Pragmatics

Bach and Harnish's (1979) model of speech acts is called a "Unified Theory." This is because it incorporates insights from previous scholarly works: that of Austin, Searle, and particularly, Grice while introducing certain new concepts. The basic tenet in Bach and

Harnish's theory is that utterance interpretation is an inferential process. This leans towards Grice's intention-inference approach. They argue for Austin's (1962) concept of locutionary act suggesting that to ascertain a locutionary act, the hearer must know the conventional meaning of the speaker's utterance and equally make *inference* on the basis of the linguistic meaning of the utterance and contextual information.

Bach and Harnish suggest their own taxonomy of illocutionary acts. Although their categorisation defers in some ways from Searle's, they conform to his criteria for grouping illocutionary acts in terms of basic illocutionary intentions and expression of mental attitude (Korta & Perry, 2015). Two broad categories were recognised: communicative and conventional illocutionary acts. In performing a *Communicative Illocutionary Act,* the speaker has a certain communicative intention whose fulfilment consists in its recognition (by the hearer). The communal understanding that for every utterance, such communicative intention/illocutionary intent exists is known as *communicative presumption* (CP).

This notion of Communicative Presumption is an important aspect of Bach and Harnish's work, which was suggested as a replacement for Grice's notion of Cooperative Principle. The CP essentially serves as a basis for the hearer to infer the communicative intention of the speaker and thus, move from the locution to the illocutionary content of an utterance. Conversely, the interpretation of *Conventional Illocutionary Acts* is dependent on the hearer's recognition of certain conventions (rather than the communicative intention of the speaker).

*Communicative Illocutionary Act*s are further divided into constatives, directives, commissives and acknowledgements. These "correspond roughly to Austin's expositives, exercitives, commissives, and behabitives respectively, and closely to Searle's representatives, directives, commissives, and expressives" (Bach &Harnish, 1979, p.40-41). However, Searle's declaratives are discarded and taken to be basically assertives and constatives. *Conventional*

Illocutionary Acts branch into effectives and verdictives. Bach and Harnish's taxonomy is believed to be the most comprehensive and the least confusing (Hisa, 2015).

Their most prominent contribution is the Speech Act Schema (SAS). SAS provides a detailed description of the processes the hearer passes through in computing or decoding the speaker's intention(s) and thus, interpreting an utterance. Four stages are involved in this – determining what expression was uttered, ascertaining what the speaker means, determining what the speaker says and recognising the illocutionary act.

Bach and Harnish also introduced the terminology, mutual contextual beliefs (MCBs) to represent facts shared by interlocutors about the particular context of discourse or about the relationship between two parties. They opine that "mutual contextual beliefs between a speaker and his hearer facilitate the inferential process, as the inference made or expected to be made by the hearer does not depend on what the speaker says but on the contextual knowledge shared commonly by the speaker and hearer in discourse" (Acheoah & Olaleye, 2017, p.24). Bach (2008) asserts that MCBs "are taken into account by speakers in forming communicative intentions and by hearers in recognising them" (p.163). MCBs include social, cultural, religious knowledge, et cetera. In Bach and Harnish's framework, the moment the speaker's illocutionary intention is recognised by the hearer, an act is said to be communicatively successful.

In all, Bach and Harnish's work contributes many original and insightful ideas and is very useful in speech act analysis. Nevertheless, it is criticised for its intention-based approach. The recognition of communicative intention as a basis for making inferences is flawed given that utterances produce perlocutionary acts not intended by speakers (Acheoah & Olaleye, 2017).

2.4 The Scope of Pragmatics

Traditionally, pragmaticists attempt to explore extra linguistic factors that influence meaning. Morris theorises that investigations into pragmatics must take into consideration aspects of society, psychology, culture and other variables that affect symbols and their meanings (Unubi, 2016). Thus, he conjectures that contextual factors play a vital role in the interpretation of meaning. As Obins (2015) aptly asserts, “Any answer to what meaning is needs to be derived, or reconstructed, from the actions of language-users that are situated and embodied in particular contexts, such as cultural, historical, social perspectival and recollective ones” (p.12). This assertion establishes the focus of pragmatics to be the study of language use by particular people in particular contexts.

Obins further sets the scope of the discipline positing that, “Pragmatics…is basically concerned with how people use language within a context, in real life situation with the utterance as its unit of analysis” (Obins 2015, p.12). Crystal expatiates on the exact concern of pragmaticists when they study “how people use language.” He opines that the ‘pragmatics’ in modern linguistics is applied to “the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication”. Acheoah and Ibileye (2016) enunciated the following as traditional subject areas in pragmatics:

> speech acts (when we speak, we perform various actions with our words); presuppositions (in communicative events, things which participants take for granted are said to be presuppositions about the context); intentions (these are participants’ communicative goals); implicatures (implied issues in an utterance); contexts (the relevant aspects of the physical or social setting of an utterance or discourse); inferences (making logical conclusions from available contextual data); non-verbal communication (gestures, dressing and movements)” (p. 1).

These, as well as a number of other subjects, e.g. deixis and modality, have been conventionally studied by pramaticists throughout the discipline's evolution from being just an aspect of philosophy to being at the core of linguistics.

Consequent upon intensive research on and vast contributions to pragmatics, its scope has widened considerably over the past couple of years. Crystal (2008) argues that the potentially vast scope of the subject has led to the rise of several conflicting definitions. As an example, he points out:

> In a narrow linguistic view, pragmatics deals only with those aspects of context which are formally encoded in the structure of a language; they would be part of a user's pragmatic competence. At the opposite extreme, it has been defined as the study of those aspects of meaning not covered by a semantic theory (p.379).

For years, the border between semantics and pragmatics has remained a topic of contention. In an attempt to draw a line of demarcation between the two, MacMahon (2006) submits that "While both semantics and pragmatics are concerned with meaning, semantics deals with abstract and relatively stable meaning within the linguistic system, and pragmatics concerns itself with variable aspects of meaning which are derivable from utterances within contexts of use" (p.1051).

In similar vein, Riemer (2010) draws a line of distinction between sentence meaning and utterance meaning. He defines sentence meaning as "the compositional meaning of the sentence as constructed out of the meanings of its individual component lexemes" (Riemer, 2010, p. 21). The sentence meaning is the literal, non-contextual meaning of an expression. Conversely, the utterance meaning is the non-literal, context-based interpretation given to expressions. Riemer claims that utterance meaning is a topic of concern for pragmaticists. The sentence meaning versus utterance meaning dichotomy is largely accepted by various scholars (Saeed, 2003; Hurford, Heasley, & Smith, 2007; Ogbulogo, 2012). Hurford et al. (2007) argue that although both sentence (expression) meaning and utterance (speaker) meaning are important,

> systematic study proceeds more easily if one carefully distinguishes the two, and, for the most part, gives prior consideration to sentence meaning and those aspects of meaning generally which are determined by the language system, rather than those which reflect the will of individual speakers and the circumstances of use on particular occasions (p. 6).

In spite of such quite notable conjectures, the borderline between the fields of semantics and pragmatics remain rather blurry as both disciplines largely overlap. This research, nevertheless, submits that there can be no adequate study of meaning outside context – linguistic, physical, cultural, or social. Additionally, the research posits – based on inference made from the preceding conjectures – that pragmatics is a more complex, broad discipline and therefore offers more suitable and comprehensive theoretical framework for the assessment of meaning and meaning making.

As from the 1970s, the tentacles of pragmatic studies began to reach beyond mainstream linguistics. It has become a point of scholarly interest for diverse disciplines such as communication studies, psychology, conversation analysis, social sciences, and discourse analysis, among others. Thus, it has become increasingly interdisciplinary in nature. Various branches of pragmatics have evolved. They include interpersonal pragmatics, discourse pragmatics, multimodal pragmatics, integrative pragmatics, corpus pragmatics, to mention a few. Topics modern pragmaticists concern themselves with include politeness, multimodality, or the confluence between different channels and communicative codes (Payrató, 2003; Locher, 2015).

2.5 The Nexus between Language and Culture

Culture is at the heart of the notion of communality. In fact, a group of people may be regarded as a "community" only if there is the existence of a generally accepted cultural system. The earliest perception of culture by a typical Nigeria-schooled child is that culture is peoples' way of life. Rather than being nebulous, this definition encapsulates all there is to know about the concept. Like many social phenomena, the conceptualisation of culture is widely slippery. Given its ubiquitous nature, this phenomenon has received attention from numerous scholars who have deliberated on it and posited a wide range of definitions, without reaching a consensus on the total essence of it. The aim of this study is not to provide a formal definition or a compilation of facts about culture. However, an understanding of this is crucial to the topic at hand.

Primitive Culture, Edward Tylor's 14-decade-old study from which a number of scholars gained definitional fecundity, provides a rather elaborate explication of the term. Tylor (1870, cited in Spencer-Oatey, 2012) sees culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". Similarly, Mulder, M.B., Nunn, C.L., and Towner, M.C suggest that, "culture means the whole complex of traditional behaviour which has been developed by the human race and is successively learned by each generation". While Mulder's et. al definition reverberates the basic ideas presented in Tylor's, it equally introduced a new idea – that culture is transmitted through generations. Therefore, it may be influenced and modified over time.

The wide range of complex and rather problematic suppositions on the concept of culture only corroborate the initial somewhat elementary and oversimplified definition – culture is the sum total of the ways of life of a group of people. Culture refers to whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture is all-encompassing. Hence, no definition can be exhaustive. Definitions examined here converge to the notion that culture is socially-invented and transmitted, and includes a wide variety of concepts such as norms, art, beliefs, religion, food, dressing, morals, language, et cetera.

This researcher expounds that culture includes a system of knowledge shared by a group of people; socially accepted patterns of behaviour; a collective mindset that distinguishes one community from the other, and is passed along from one generation to another by communication through the instrumentality of language. The last statement in the above position forms the crux of this study. While language is regarded as an aspect of culture (since it is a shared system of knowledge), culture is also linguistically transmitted. This presupposes the inseparability of both phenomena.

Both language and culture are social phenomena. None can exist outside the confines of human society. Therefore, they cannot be divorced. This is tacitly suggested in various propositions on the concepts. Igboanusi (cited in Zakariyah & Asonibare, 2017), for instance notes that language is a "part of human social behaviour… [which] operates within a wide framework of human activity" (p. 2). With regards to culture, Ogunsiji, Farinde and Adebiyi (2012) posit that, "it is an aspect of social phenomena which refers to the complex collection of beliefs, customs, *language*, habits that give a common identity to a particular group of people at a specific point in time".

It is explicit in the antecedent submissions that language and culture are interwoven. Culture is invented, preserved and transmitted through the instrumentality of language. Ogunsiji, et al. put this more succinctly: "language is…the vehicle of culture and all forms of language (verbal and non-verbal) are involved in the creation of cultural characteristics" (p.203). This is evidenced by the fact that songs, fables, folk-tales, rituals, etc. which reflect the culture of a people are all encoded by language.

Conversely, language is subsumed under culture, hence, culturally transmitted. To learn a language is to learn a culture. As Halliday (cited in Thompson, 2004) notes, while a child is learning language, other significant learning is taking place through the medium of language. The child simultaneously learns the meanings associated with the culture. Quoting Tucker and Lambert, Kumagai (1994) opines that a successful language learner must develop “an awareness of and sensitivity toward the values and traditions of the people whose language is being studied”. One of the most important tasks in learning a language is gaining knowledge about the rules and mechanisms which underlie appropriate use. In fact, it is arguable that learning the appropriate forms of social usage of a language is just as important as learning the linguistic forms.

Culture provides a pattern or model for appropriate linguistic usage. Brown (2000) quite aptly argues that culture is “a context of cognitive and affective behaviour, a template for personal and social existence”. For an individual to learn the culture of a people and thus be able to claim membership of that community, he must have first acquired their language. The following quotation from Halliday (cited in Thompson, 2004) provides an explicit exposition on the notion of *language as a means of cultural transmission*:

> One of the most important functions of language is its role in the construction of reality. Language is not simply a tool for communication, it is also a guide to what [Edward] Sapir terms social reality. Language has a semantic system, or a meaning potential which enables the transmission of cultural values. (Halliday 1978:109)

One’s knowledge of one’s native language is culturally transmitted. As Nordquist (2016) points out, cultural transmission is a key feature that distinguishes human language from animal communication. Yule (2010) equally asserts that cultural transmission of a specific language is crucial in the human acquisition process. Language, like culture, is acquired (though not necessarily learnt) by virtue of one’s membership in a particular society.

2.6 Pragmatic Politeness

Leech's updated model of politeness, presented, in his 2014 publication "Pragmatic Politeness" provides a more valid and useful apparatus for data analysis. While he reviewed and reworked some problematic aspects of his 1983 model of politeness, he upheld his stance on certain aspects of the old model. He reiterated that politeness principle (PP) is "a constraint observed in human communicative behavior, influencing us to avoid communicative discord or offence, and maintain or enhance communicative concord or comity." Communicative discord, according to him "is a situation in which two people, x and y, can be assumed, on the basis of what meanings have been communicated, to entertain mutually incompatible goals" (p. 87). He notes that during discourse, the onus is on the speaker to 'maintain peace'. Thus, during a given speech event, the individual playing the role of S (speaker) must prioritise the communicative needs of H (the listener).

2.7 The Theoretical Framework

A. The Scalar Approach

Leech maintained that politeness may be studied across two scales: the pragmalinguistic scale and the sociopragmatic scale. This research is more inclined towards the latter. In earlier theories, the pramalinguistic politeness scale was known as absolute scale. As explicit in its previous name, the pramalinguistic politeness is constant and unaffected by contextual factors. It registers degrees of politeness in terms of lexigrammmatical form and semantic interpretation of utterances. Unlike this scale which is unidirectional, the sociopragmatic politeness scale is bidirectional. Rather than being absolute, it is relative. Its measurement of politeness is context sensitive. Along this scale, an utterance may be measured as being overpolite, underpolite, or appropriately polite as required in a given communicative situation. The diagram below represents this:

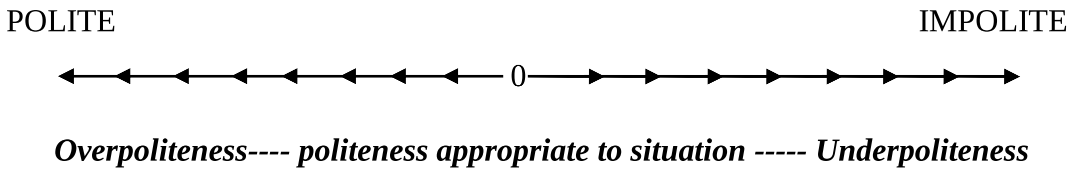

Figure 1: The bipolar scale of sociopragmatic politeness

Adopted from Leech (2014)

Underpoliteness placed on the bipolar scale of sociopragmatic politeness above, according to Leech, is in practice a kind of impoliteness. He recognises impoliteness as a violation of the various constraint pairs. The zero zone in between underpoliteness and overpoliteness represents the appropriate or normal routine politeness that is suitable for the particular context. The degree of politeness is measured in terms of certain contextually determined factors and variables along the pragmalinguistic scale.

B. The Goal-Oriented Approach

Leech equally maintains his goal-oriented approach to politeness. There are three concepts under this approach.

i. **The illocutionary goal:** This is one of the two goals that speakers pursue during linguistic interaction. It is the individual objective the interlocutor intends to achieve through a discourse.

ii. **The social goal:** The social goal is saying something in a polite manner. People pursue social goals to enhance social relations.

iii. **Illocutionary function:** Using the degree of harmony between illocutionary goals and social goals as a parameter, Leech recognises four categories of illocutionary functions that may be accomplished in speech events. These are the competitive, convivial, collaborative and conflictive.

Along the lines of this second dimension, the researcher attempted to determine whether speech events under analysis were competitive, convivial, collaborative or conflictive.

C. Maxim-Based Approach

Leech's maxim-based approach is governed by an overarching super-constraint which he calls the General Strategy of Politeness (GSP). This all-encompassing communicative strategy holds that "In order to be polite, S expresses or implies meanings that associate a favorable value with what pertains to O or associates an unfavorable value with what pertains to S (S = self, speaker)." (Leech 2014, p. 90).

GSP as a *supermaxim* subsumes ten component maxims which are paired into O-oriented maxims and S-oriented maxims. These maxims may illustrate either pos-politeness or neg-politeness. O-oriented maxims (where O includes both hearer and third-party) give value to O and gives more importance to what pertains to O; while S-oriented (speaker-oriented) maxims take away value from S by giving less importance to what pertains to S. When the opposite of this is done, it is registered as impoliteness. The table below show the five pairs of maxims:

The component maxims of the General Strategy of Politeness

Maxims (expressed in an imperative mood)	Related pair of maxims	Label for this maxim	Typical speech-event type(s)
(M1) give a high value to *O*'s wants	*Generosity, Tact*	Generosity	Commissives
(M2) give a low value to *S*'s wants		Tact	Directives
(M3) give a high value to *O*'s qualities	*Approbation, Modesty*	Approbation	Compliments
(M4) give a low value to *S*'s qualities		Modesty	Self-devaluation
(M5) give a high value to *S*'s obligation to *O*	*Obligation*	Obligation (of *S* to *O*)	Apologizing, thanking
(M6) give a low value to *O*'s obligation to *S*		Obligation (of *O* to *S*)	Responses to thanks and apologies
(M7) give a high value to *O*'s opinions	*Opinion*	Agreement	Agreeing, disagreeing
(M8) give a low value to *S*'s opinions		Opinion reticence	Giving opinions
(M9) give a high value to *O*'s feelings	*Feeling*	Sympathy	Congratulating, commiserating
(M10) give a low value to *S*'s feelings		Feeling reticence	Suppressing feelings

Figure 2: The component maxims of the GSP

Adapted from Leech (2014)

Using this maxim-based approach, the researcher tried to ascertain which of Leech's five specific constraint pairs were being adhered to or violated by interlocutors in particular speech events.

D. Pos-Politeness and Neg-Politeness

Leech further distinguished between pos-politeness and neg-politeness. This differs from the popularised Brown-Levinsonian terms – positive politeness and negative politeness. Leech submits that neg-politeness and pos-politeness may be distinguished in terms of their approaches to increasing the degree of politeness: while the former diminishes or softens the expression of (negative) value in the transaction, the latter magnifies or strengthens the expression of (positive) value.

Pos-politeness serves a positive face goal: it has positive function of placing a high value on the addressee's qualities. Conversely, neg-politeness serves a negative face goal: mitigating or lessening the degree to which the speaker's (S) goals are imposed on the addressee (H). Neg-politeness is characterised by indirect speech acts and implicit meanings.

E. Bivalent Politeness and Trivalent Politeness

Leech makes a distinction between bivalent and trivalent politeness. He perceives the bivalent and trivalent conceptions of politeness as leaning respectively toward a sociolinguistic domain and a pragmatic one. According to Leech, trivalent politeness is more central to politeness in the English-speaking world. Whereas, honorification is more prominent and richly developed in Eastern cultures in languages that have elaborate honorific systems such as Japanese, Korean and Yoruba.

Bivalent implies that honorifics are selected on the basis of two sociopragmatic dimensions – vertical and horizontal distance. In trivalent politeness, on the other hand, three parameters of vertical distance, horizontal distance, and cost-benefit are in play. Principally, trivalent politeness is relevant only to speech events that involve value transaction. It is thus also referred to as transactional politeness. While honorific usage differs from transactional politeness, the trivalent scale subsumes the bivalent. As Leech notes the two kinds of politeness are not completely distinct "*because honorific usage is one of the pragmalinguistic resources in Korean, Japanese, and other languages for expressing transactional politeness*. So trivalent politeness often involves or requires appropriate honorification" (Leech, 2014, p.109).

Other Important Specifications

Leech suggests various devices that can be applied in the evaluation of politeness appropriate to specific contexts. Those employed in this study are highlighted below.

A. Scales of Value: Along the lines of trivalent politeness, there are three scales of value used in evaluating the appropriate degree of politeness required for a given utterance.

i. **Vertical distance:** This scale measures social distance between the speaker (S) and addressee (O) in terms of status, age, power, role, etc. In the Nigerian sociocultural milieu, both status and age are particularly important as indexes of superiority on this scale. However, the method of data collection does not give the researcher access to these contextual factors. The concept of power here is taken to mean authority and this, invariably, is determined by the roles of interlocutors in a discourse. In the research population under study (KW-IRS) *role* as a contextual factor is very vital to ascertaining vertical distance. The corporate organisation has a service-providing function. Therefore, in most cases, the staff is expected to act persuasively and politely towards the customer in order to be 'patronised'. Conversely, in some situations, the customer is in need of the service being offered. Hence, polite behaviour is expected.

ii. **Horizontal distance:** On this scale, social distance between the speaker (S) and addressee (O) is assessed going from the most intimate relationship to the most distant. Horizontal social distance may be registered as intimate, familiar, acquaintance, or stranger. Familiarity can be ascertained by sub-variables such as frequency of contact, and length of acquaintance. In the data, it is assumed that interlocutors with no previous contact are strangers and the degree of familiarity increases on the basis of the frequency of contact and length of acquaintance detected. Both the vertical and horizontal distance can also be determined along the lines the kind of vocatives used.

iii. Cost-benefit Scale: This pertains to the transactional value of an exchange/utterance. It relates to the weightiness of the value transacted in a particular speech act. The goods or services transacted may be material or intangible. The data consists majorly of requests and instructions. In all these speech events, something is being transacted. In requests, for example, the *thing* being requested for – be it information, direction, assistance, etc. – has some value. Leech observes that just as some goods may be considered more valuable in one society than in another, the assessment of cost versus benefit may differ from culture to culture. The assessment of weightiness of transaction depends on such factors as the strength of the obligation S has toward O or O has toward S to perform or not perform a particular action.

B. Vocatives: Along the bivalent politeness scale, the vocative present in an utterance can be used in evaluating the vertical and horizontal distance between S and O. Vocatives are broadly divided into honorific or camaraderie.

C. Face-Threat Mitigation: Leech's Pragmatic Politeness does not completely discard the Brown-and-Levinson position on face construct. It only disproves their representation of the *whole* of politeness as a mitigation of face-threatening. Invariably, the study only disapproves the *absoluteness* of face-threat mitigation in explaining politeness. Face-threat mitigation is only one of the wide range of tools provided in this theoretical framework.

Leech recognises face-threat mitigation as a function of neg-politeness. Since competitive speech events are intrinsically face-threatening, they are softened through the use of certain mitigation strategies. The data consists mainly of requests, and instructions; all of which are potentially face-threatening. Therefore, mitigation has been incorporated into the theoretical framework. The presence of such strategies in an exchange would be considered a manifestation of a neg-politeness maxim.

D. Strategies for Directives: The data under analysis includes both requests and instructions. These are recognised as belonging to the category of speech acts Searle identifies as directives. Semantic strategies for performing directives are broadly divided into direct strategies, indirect strategies, hints and nonsentential strategies. Also, various strategies are employed in responding to directives. Responses to requests are categorised as positive when they are compliant and negative if they are refusals. Requests tend to take the form of a question or in Leech's term, a rogative. Responses to questions may be evasive, noncommittal, indirect, uncooperative or canonical.

This study adopts the scalar, goal-oriented, and maxim-based approaches for data analysis. Leech's scales of value, the occurrence of vocatives, face-threat mitigation, strategies for directives, the frequency of adherence to or violation of the five constraint pairs, as well as the performance of illocutionary functions are used in ascertaining the degree of sociopragmatic politeness along the bipolar scale.

CHAPTER THREE

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the corpus material made up of six data comprising a total number of 40 exchanges are presented and analysed. Various manifestations of the politeness phenomena discovered in KW-IRS are explored. Analysis includes an examination of scales of value – vertical distance, horizontal distance, and cost-benefit to determine the implications of the politeness strategies.

3.2 Datum 1

1) A: Good morning. Can I get direction? I want to collect my driver's license.
2) B: Go to the third office on your right.
3) A: Thank you.

Background Information

The exchanges above took place between speaker (A) who is a staff and (B), a guest. The guest has come to collect his Driver's License.

<u>Exchange 1</u>

A: Good morning. Can I get direction? I want to do my driver's license.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as a rogative	Formal greeting, Possibility question + Modal auxiliary,	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger

		Cost-Benefit: H has minimal cost S has maximal benefit

The speaker (A) initiates a conversation by greeting. This is indicative of his willingness to participate in a cooperative interaction. The greeting is a kind of pos-politeness. Through the first utterance, "Good morning" the speaker offers courteous recognition to the hearer thus fulfilling the social goal of maintaining communicative accord. This greeting also gives high value to the hearer' feelings in fulfilment of the Sympathy Maxim.

The major goal of the exchange, however, is requesting which is expressed as a rogative, i.e. a question. This illocutionary goal competes with the social goal. Hence, the speech event has a competitive illocutionary function. Requesting is potentially a face-threatening act: the speaker (A) infringes on the hearer's right to act. Hence, politeness strategies are employed.

Through the possibility question, the speaker consults the hearer and provides the opportunity for him/her to say yes or no. This is marked by the use of modal auxiliary "can" which implies that the question is about the possibility of getting what is being requested, rather than willingness. It is possible to infer from the question that the speaker is interested in getting the hearer to perform the action (i.e. provide direction). But the question of possibility can be denied without impoliteness: speaker B is given the opportunity to refuse without offending the guest that they cannot carry out A's wishes for certain reasons (e.g. lack of adequate knowledge of what the guest requires). The speaker's choice of the modal *can* over its counterpart, *will* makes for indirectness and arguably, helps in mitigating the force of imposition.

In the exchange, A has the role of a guest and supplicant. A requires a favour from B implying that B has higher authority. B thus has the highest position relative to the speaker; signalling distance on the vertical scale. The role of A as guest also suggests that there has been no previous encounter between the interactants. The horizontal social distance therefore is registered as 'stranger'. This remains constant throughout the discourse (exchange 1 – 3).

In addition, considering that he is a guest, A has the right to demand the favour from B. Correspondingly; B has the obligation to supply the requested information because this is part of her duties as a staff of the organisation. Although S has maximal benefit, H has minimal cost. Therefore, it appears that the utterance is not much of an imposition.

<u>Exchange 2</u>

B: Go to the third office on your right.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Instruction expressed as a directive	imperative, compliant response,	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

This utterance ("Go to the third office on your right") is a response to **A's** request above. In some other context, the directive may be judged as an imposition on **B**. However, in this scenario, it is a compliant response and thus, does not pose any threat to the hearer. The response is also canonical as expected in an office environment.

The goal of the speech event is instructing. This illocutionary goal is indifferent to the social goal. Hence, the speech event has a collaborative illocutionary function. The two parties are working (collaboratively) toward a common goal, for the benefit of the hearer. By reason of their role, speaker **B** is socially obligated to provide the needed information; hence, the hearer (A) has the right to information. Both parties recognise this. Hence, the cost-benefit scale is balanced.

Both instructor and instructee share the same goals: B wants A to go to the third office and A wants to do same. Thus, there is no need for B to avoid using the direct strategy. B's canonical response is positive since it provides the answer requested by A in the first turn. Through this compliance, the speaker gives high value to the hearer's wants and thus observes the Generosity Maxim.

For this discourse item, the speaker plays the role of a host. The request-granting function of utterance B also implies that the speaker possess some authority. This reiterates the superior position of B on the vertical distance scale. Since speaker B has the obligation to perform the act, B only has minimal cost while A has maximal benefit.

<u>Exchange 3</u>

A: Thank you

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Thanking expressed as an assertive	Assertive, formulaic expression of politeness	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:***

		S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

Exchange 3 is a response to the instruction in exchange 2 ("Go to the third office on your right."). It is indicative of the end of the process. The illocutionary goal is that of thanking. This is a form of pos-politeness, which signifies acknowledgement of the 'favour' done to A by B. It thus coincides with the social goal making for a convivial illocutionary function.

Through the formulaic expression of politeness, A also shows appreciation to B. A is not necessarily required to thank B, given that B has the social obligation to perform the act. The utterance ("Thank you") thus gives high value to B's obligation to A, in fulfilment of the Obligation Maxim. The appreciation again confirms the higher authority and position of B on the vertical distance scale. Also, since the act of thanking does not infringe on A's right and showing appreciation is in accord to cultural requirements for the given context; on the cost-benefit scale, A's cost is only minimal while B (the hearer) has maximal benefit.

3.3 Datum 2

1) A: We want to go to MLA.
2) B: What do you want to do?
3) A: What are they doing there?
4) B: Several things. So you have to be specific.
5) A: OK! We want to collect our vehicle papers
6) B: What's your name, please?
7) A: … [Gives name & other details]
8) B: Please, go to the third office on your right.

Background Information

As evident from the use of first person plural 'we', two guests have come to collect their vehicle particulars. The exchanges above took place between one of the guests, speaker (A) and a staff (B).

Exchange 1

A: We want to go to MLA.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as an assertive	Assertive, Directness,	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** H has minimal cost, S has maximal benefit

The goal of the statement is requesting. This illocutionary goal competes with the social goal. Hence, the speech event has a competitive illocutionary function. This calls for the avoidance of direct strategies. However, the speaker does not attempt to mask the face threat. The request is not preceded by any form of mitigation. This heightens the face-threatening tendencies of the utterance.

The assertiveness of the speaker transgresses the addressee's freedom of action. It does not provide the hearer with the opportunity to accept or refuse the request. By directly infringing on the hearer's freedom to act (without any form of mitigation), the speaker fails to evaluate highly the wishes of the hearer and thus violates the Tact Maxim.

In the exchange, the speaker plays the role of a requester. The hearer (B) is in custody of a vital information which A needs. This is suggestive of the possession of some form of authority by the hearer. Thus, on the vertical axis, A has lower position relative to B. Also, given that the exchange took place in an office space, the absence of a conversation initiating device such as greeting is indicative of the speaker's (A) unwillingness to carry on a cooperative interaction. By extension, this overt lack of concern about the addressee's feelings violates the Sympathy Maxim. This is suggestive of the lack of any cordiality between the interlocutors. Thus, horizontal distance is wide. This remains constant throughout the discourse. The role of A as requester is also indicative of maximal benefit. However, since B is socially obligated to provide the needed information, B has minimal cost. Nevertheless, A is expected to be as polite as possible.

<u>Exchange 2</u>

B: What do you want to do?

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Routine request expressed as a rogative	Rogative Directness	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal benefit,

		H has minimal cost

This utterance is essentially is an information question. Hence, there is no need for the speaker to be either polite or impolite about it. However, the routineness of this question seems to not have been recognised by the addressee and third party. As may be seen in the exchange, it appears that the guest perceived the information question as an unnecessary infringement and thus responds quite impolitely: “What are they doing there?” This reception of B’s request is reflective of how the illocutionary goal competes with the social goal of discourse. Hence, exchange 2 has a competitive illocutionary function.

The inclusion of a discourse marker ‘please’ or an honorific form such as ‘sir’ may have registered politeness and thus, mitigated the face-threatening effect of the routine request. Also, since the exchange took place in an official setting and the horizontal distance between S and O is distant, a politeness marker would have made for appropriateness. Its omission may be deliberate. Perhaps, this is speaker B’s reaction to A’s omission of a polite initiating device such as a greeting. Unlike in Datum 1, the first speaker here does not offer a courteous recognition of the hearer.

Speaker A employs a direct strategy. The question about the hearer’s purpose is an overt indicator of a directive. The question may be rephrased to include a direct performative: “*Tell* me what you want to do.” The hearer is directed to provide the speaker with an information. Hence, the speaker gives favourable value to their want thus violating the Maxim of Tact.

On the vertical distance scale, speaker B may be judged as having higher position relative to hearer A. This conclusion is premised on the fact that A has greater benefits to enjoy from the discourse. Given the host-guest role of B and A, it may be assumed that B asked the question (“What do you want to do?”) with the intention of helping A. This role leads to the assumption that A has maximal benefit. However, since B is socially obligated to attend to guests in the least face-threatening manner, B’s cost is minimal.

<u>Exchange 3</u>

A: What are they doing there?

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Response expressed as a rogative	Rogative, Uncooperative response, Indirect strategy, refusal	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has maximal benefit, H has maximal cost

Exchange 3 is a response to the routine request in the previous turn (“What do you want to do?”). The speech event here is that of refusing. In this third turn, the illocutionary goal competes with the social goal. Hence, the illocutionary function of exchange 3 is competitive. Rather than provide the required information, A responds with a question. This is an act of non-compliance – an overt refusal to oblige B. Thus, it is registered as a negative response.

A is uncooperative by giving an unfavourable value to B’s wants – a violation of the Generosity Maxim. While the question may seem like an innocent rogative, the hearer may interpret it as a direct attack. The question “what are they doing there?” could be interpreted as “what else would I want to do?” This appears to be is a sarcastic remark registering the speaker’s impatience and vexation at being probed and questioning the official's competence. This uncooperativeness registers both disrespect and disapproval towards the hearer. Thus, it poses a threat to the hearer.

This may be intended by the speaker since he probably registers the probing in turn 2 (What do you want to do?) as a negative response. Since his expectation is getting direction, turn 2 is a dispreferred response. Giving a dispreferred response is suggestive that A gives low value to B's feelings contra the Sympathy Maxim. As may be deduced from the next turn, this 'attack' must have been perceived by the hearer as an intentional one.

The distance on the horizontal scale remains consistent with that of previous exchanges. On the vertical axis, the hearer (B) is superior to the speaker (A) since the provision of the information A needs is within B's prerogative. Consequently, while the weight of the transaction lies on B, A receives the benefit. Also, the face-threatening potential of the utterance puts a heavy cost on the hearer, B. By asking the question in response to a request, A seems to be challenging B's authority to question him. Hence, A has maximal benefit and B has maximal cost.

Exchange 4

B: Several things. So you have to be specific.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Instruction expressed as an directive	Elliptical response, Strong obligation statement, Indirect strategy ,	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger

		Cost-Benefit: S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

Exchange 4 is composed of two illocutions. On the one hand, the speaker is asserting. In this follow-up turn, the speaker (B) provides an elliptical response to A's sarcasm in exchange 3. This is a form of compliance since the positive response provides the hearer with a relevant information. However, it is equally a counter to A's sarcasm. In the second utterance, "So you have to be specific," B insists on being obliged. This utterance validates the necessity of the rogative in the second turn of the speech event (exchange 2). It is an insistent reinforcement of the request in exchange 2. Contra the Maxim of Obligation, the utterance gives high value to A's obligation to B.

The use of the modal 'have to' expresses strong obligation. The strong obligation statement is an indirect strategy for directives. In addition, the choice of this as against the more face-threatening 'must' or 'should' is reflective of the speaker's attempt to remain polite while being firm. It is equally indicative that B, rather than being authoritative, is simply reporting a general obligation.

On the other hand, the utterance is an instruction. Thus, the speech event has a collaborative illocutionary function. The two parties are working towards a common goal. The instruction to be specific is for the benefit of the hearer. A's fulfilment of the obligation identified in the utterance facilitates the achievement of A's purpose. Correspondingly, since B is socially obligated to help A achieve his/her purpose, A's compliance helps in the fulfilment of B's duty/obligation. Both parties recognise this. Also, the instruction is preceded by a reason why it should be adhered to.

The horizontal value is the same as in previous exchanges. The role of B as instructor and the use of a strong obligation statement are indicators that the speaker has higher position relative to the hearer. The roles of both interlocutors and the illocutionary function of the utterance also suggest that A has maximal benefit while B has minimal cost.

Exchange 5

A: OK! We want to collect our vehicle papers.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Response expressed as an assertive	Non-sentential strategy, routine reply, compliant response, assertive, directness,	***Vertical Distance*****:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has maximal benefit, H has minimal cost

The utterance has a mixed illocution. On one end, it is a reinforcement of the request for direction in exchange 1. On the other hand, it is an assertive used to convey a piece of information. First, using a nonsentential strategy, the speaker (A) shows understanding of B's instruction in the previous turn. In the succeeding utterance, A proceeds to adhere to the instruction. Thus, the routine reply, 'Ok' also implies acceptance. This acceptance is a preferred response that to appeals B.

The declarative sentence is a canonical response that fills an information gap. It is an answer to the question in exchange 2 ("What do you want to do?") and its reinforcement in form of an instruction in exchange 4 ("Several things. So you have to be specific."). Hence, it is a compliant, positive response. A gives high value to B's want in compliance with the Generosity Maxim. The assertive has a collaborative illocutionary function; i.e. the illocutionary goal is indifferent to the social goal. Both A and B are working towards the same goal.

However, A has maximal benefit while B has minimal cost. This is because while A is the supplicant, B as a host has the obligation to provide the sort after information. The requester-host roles of A and B equally suggest that B has more power relative to A. These two factors, role and power index superiority of B on the vertical scale.

<u>**Exchange 6**</u>

B: What's your name, please?

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Routine request expressed as a rogative	Rogative politeness marker, Indirect strategy ,	**Vertical Distance:** S has higher position relative to H **Horizontal Distance:** Stranger **Cost-Benefit:** S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

The speech event in this turn is requesting. The rogative is a routine request reflective of an information gap that needs to be filled. This illocutionary goal competes with the social goal. Therefore, exchange 6 has a competitive illocutionary function. The request marker, 'please' is a neg-politeness strategy. It registers that the utterance is an indirect directive. Indirectness helps to mitigate the effect of the directive thus giving low value to the speaker's want according to the Tact Maxim. The effectiveness of B's tactfulness is evident in A's complaint response.

The horizontal distance of the interlocutors also makes necessary the use of the politeness marker. In this turn, the interlocutors swap roles. B becomes the requester, while A is the anticipated supplier to whom the request is directed. However, given that exchange 6 is a routine request and A's compliance holds benefits for A, these roles do not imply lower power of B. Thus, on the vertical distance scale, speaker B still has higher position relative to A. Invariably, B has minimal cost while A has maximal benefit.

<u>Exchange 7</u>

B: Please, go to the third office on your right.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Instruction expressed as a directive	Imperative, politeness marker, Indirect strategy	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal cost,

		H has maximal benefit

This is a positive response. It fills the information gap in both the first turn ("We want to go to MLA.") and exchange 5 ("OK! We want to collect our vehicle papers."). The illocutionary goal of instructing has a collaborative illocutionary function. The response is for the benefit of the hearer but in fulfilment of B's obligation.

Through this compliant response, the speaker gives a high value to the hearer's wants and thus observes the Generosity Maxim. Hence, the cost-benefit scale is balanced. The speech event is not face-threatening. Since it is canonical, following the norm of office discourse, there is no need for B to avoid using direct strategies. Nevertheless, some markers of politeness are employed. The pragmatic marker, 'Please' functions here as a mitigating device. By avoiding direct imposition on the hearer, the speaker adheres to the Tact Maxim. This adherence makes for indirectness in making the request. While such mitigation may not be necessary considering the routineness of the request, it plays a vital role here given the 'heat' generated by the argumentativeness of previous exchanges.

The horizontal distance is maintained as in previous exchanges. The social roles of B and A as instructor and instructee, respectively suggest that B has higher authority relative to A. These (role and power) in turn indicate the superiority of B on the vertical distance scale. B and A also have the host-guest roles. The instruction offered by B helps in the achievement of A's purpose of visit expressed in exchange 1 and 5. Hence, A, who is the guest and instructee, enjoys maximal benefit in this particular exchange. By providing the instruction, B only fulfils social obligation as host in an official environment. Hence, the weight of cost bore by B is only minimal.

3.4 Datum 3

1) A: Good morning. I have a letter for you.
2) B: OK. Let me have it.
3) A: [Hands it over]
4) B: Your name, please
5) A: … [Provides names and other details]
6) B: There you go
7) A: Thank you

Background Information

The exchanges above took place between speaker (A), a guest and (B), a staff. The guest has come to deliver a letter.

Exchange 1

A: Good morning. I have a letter for you.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as an offer	Formal greeting, Indirect strategy	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has maximal benefit, H has minimal cost

The initiator of the exchange (A) starts by showing solidarity through greeting. By greeting, the speaker offers courteous recognition to the hearer and shows willingness to carry on a cooperative communication. This illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal. However, since greeting is not the main goal here, the illocutionary function of the exchange cannot be said to be convivial. The greeting is an adherence to the Sympathy Maxim.

The expressions “I have” and “for you” seem to propose an action the speaker intends to perform for the benefit of B and at a cost to A (giving B a letter). However, the action in reality does not meet the hearer’s wants. It is to be performed at a cost to the hearer and the benefit of A. Hence, it is a request masked as an offer. This masking makes for indirectness. The illocutionary goal however is competitive rather than convivial. Thus, rather than fulfilling the Generosity Maxim, it is in adherence to the Tact constraint pair.

Also, as may be seen in the exchange, A has prior knowledge that B has the obligation and the authority to receive the letter. Rather than asking, “Where can I/to whom should I submit this letter?” he says, “I have a letter for you.” This utterance structure is indicative that submitting a letter to B is a familiar routine for A. A recognises that he has the right to the ‘favour’ or service he is demanding. Also, A is familiar with the procedures as he does not object or query any of them. It may thus be deduced from the linguistic context that A is a regular client of the organisation. A and B must have had previous encounters. This frequency of contact implies that they are acquaintances on horizontal distance scale. The roles of the interlocutor suggest that B has higher authority relative to A. Given the rights-obligation balance in this exchange, the hearer has minimal cost while the speaker has maximal benefit.

Exchange 2

B: OK. Let me have it.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Response expressed as a directive	Non-sentential strategy, Routine reply + additional material, Compliant response, Imperative, Directness	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

Exchange 2 begins with an exclamation (OK). This routine reply is a non-sentential strategy which indicates B's acceptance to oblige A. This acceptance is a preferred response that appeals to B. The additional material ("Let me have it") is a positive response since it indicates compliance of B to A's request in exchange 1. Thus, the speech event in the exchange is *offering*. This illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal; hence, the illocutionary function is convivial. The directness also heightens the degree of politeness of the statement. By obliging and using a direct form, B gives high value to A's wants in adherence to the Generosity Maxim.

By reason of B's role as host and power to fulfil A's desires, speaker B has higher position relative to A on the vertical distance scale. As established earlier, based on the existence of previous interactions, A and B are perceived as acquaintances (horizontal distance). In addition, since performing the requested act is B's obligation, B is evaluated as having marginal cost while A has great benefit since the 'transaction' is valuable to him.

<u>Exchange 3</u>

B: Your name, please

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Routine request expressed as a directive	Nonsentential strategy, politeness marker, Indirect strategy	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

Exchange 3 is a routine request through which B tries to elicit necessary information from the hearer. The illocutionary goal of requesting competes with the social goal; hence, the illocutionary function is competitive. While the request may be seem direct, the inclusion of the discourse marker, 'please' makes for indirectness and thus serves as a mitigation strategy. The use of 'please' is equally an indicator of politeness. It gives low value to the speaker's want in accordance with the Tact Maxim.

The vertical and horizontal distances remain the same as in exchange 2. The transaction is not very weighty. B is socially obligated to ask for the information as part of her duties. To be able to help A, B has the right to request for that information and A is obligated to provide it. This is recognised by both parties since as acquaintances (horizontal distance), both A and

B are familiar with the processes involved. Hence, the speaker has minimal cost and the hearer has maximal benefit.

<u>Exchanges 4 & 5</u>

B: There you go.

A: Thank you.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Response expressed as a directive Thanking expressed as an assertive	Positive response, Routine remark, Assertive, formulaic expression of politeness	***Vertical Distance*:** S 1 has higher position ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

Exchange 4 is a routine remark indicative of the end of the process. Non-linguistic background indicates that B is offering A an acknowledged copy of the letter. B acts non-verbally in a way that attends to the anticipated want of A (possibly by holding out the letter to A) and backs it up with the verbal offer, “There you go.” This illocutionary goal of offering coincides with the social goal. Hence, the illocutionary function is convivial. Through the act of offering, B gives high value to A’s wants in accordance to the Generosity Maxim. Similarly, by attributing value to A, the utterance has a face-enhancing effect and is thus an expression of pos-politeness.

A’s acknowledgement of B’s generosity in exchange 5 is an appreciative response (“Thank you”). The illocutionary goal is that of thanking. It is correspondingly, a form of pos-politeness. Therefore, its illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal. This makes for a convivial illocutionary function. A is not necessarily required to thank B, given that B has the obligation to perform the act. It thus implies that the formulaic expression of politeness, (“Thank you”) gives high value to B’s obligation. This is in accordance with the Obligation Maxim.

The offer in exchange 4, as well as the appreciation (exchange 5), validates the assumption about the higher authority and invariably, the superior position of B on the vertical distance scale. For exchange 4, the role and social obligation of B suggest that the weightiness of transaction is low. Hence, B has minimal cost while the receiver (A) has maximal benefit. Thanking in exchange 5 does not impinge on A’s right. Rather, it conforms to sociocultural requirements for the given context. For these reasons, the cost of the transaction bore by A is judged to be minimal while B (the hearer) has maximal benefit.

3.5 Datum 4

1) A: Good afternoon
2) B: Good afternoon, sir.
3) A: Sorry, I’ve come to pay.
4) B: Let me see that […a document]. What do you want to pay for?
5) A: For shop
6) B: Go to the first office on your right.

Background Information

The discourse above took place between a male guest (A) and a female staff (B). The guest has come to pay a levy.

Exchanges 1 & 2

A: Good afternoon.

B: Good afternoon, sir.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Greetings expressed as assertives	Formal greeting, Honorific	***Vertical Distance*:** A has higher position relative to B ***Horizontal Distance:*** strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** S and H have equal cost and benefit

Exchanges 1 and 2 are conversation initiators. Through greeting, A offers courteous recognition of B. B reciprocates. This appeals to both interlocutors and sets the mood for a smooth conversation. As a formulaic expression of politeness, the illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal. Thus, the illocutionary function of both exchanges is convivial. Also, "Good morning" is a form of good wish in which A expresses his wish for B to have a good morning. B responds in like manner. In both exchanges, the speakers give high value to the hearers' feelings in fulfilment of the Sympathy Maxim.

The honorific 'sir' is a vocative used by B to show pos-politeness. It registers superiority on the vertical distance scale; hence, A has higher position relative to B. By extension, the honorific as well as the formality of greeting indexes a lack of intimacy on the horizontal distance scale. It is thus assumed that the interlocutors (A and B) are strangers. The interlocutors both give and receive acknowledgement. Thus, both enjoy face-enhancement. This leads to the conclusion that the two parties give and receive equal measure of cost and benefit.

Exchange 3

A: Sorry, I've come to pay.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as an assertive	Apologetic attention signal, Assertive	***Vertical Distance*:** A has higher position relative to B ***Horizontal Distance:*** strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** S and H have maximal cost and benefit

Exchange 3 lies in the borderline between request and offer. Initially, the utterance appears to be an apology. By saying 'sorry', the speaker seems to be attempting to repay in words for an offense he committed. However, the succeeding phrase "I've come to pay" does not look like an offense. On the contrary, it would be considered as an addition of (monetary) value to the organisation and invariably the speaker; hence an offer.

On the other hand, the assertive "I've come to pay" states the speaker's purpose of visit. It is thus implicitly, a request for guidance (on how to pay). Such an illocutionary goal usually has a competitive illocutionary function. However, the information provided by A suggests a tangible (monetary) addition of value (howbeit indirect) to B as a staff of the organisation. Consequently, the illocutionary goal for this request is indifferent to the social goal. Both A and B are working towards the same goal, i.e. helping A fulfil his social obligation by paying his dues. Hence, the speech event has a collaborative illocutionary function.

The apology used in exchange 3 may be understood as an attention signal cueing in a request. The speaker's use of an apology 'sorry' in modifying a request could be seen as an expression of neg-politeness. It could have been used with the intention of mitigating the potential impingement that may be caused by the request. This apology thus gives high value to A's obligation to B in accordance with the Obligation Maxim.

The use of an apology in modifying the request has a distancing effect on the vertical distance scale: A seems to be showing deference to B. This strengthens the proposition in the previous exchanges that Speaker A and B are strangers. For this particular exchange, A plays the role of a requester while B is the host. A's request also doubles as an offer. This fact, coupled with the vocative 'sir' used in addressing A in exchange 2, indicates that B has higher position relative to A. Furthermore, there is an implicit mutual benefit for both parties in the request. Given the collaborative illocutionary function of the utterance coupled with its request-offer nature, both A and B have equal weight of cost and benefit in the transaction.

Exchange 4

B: Let me see that […a document]. What do you want to pay for?

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Routine request expressed as rogative	Imperative, Rogative,	***Vertical Distance*:** B has higher position relative to A

		Horizontal Distance: strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** S and H have equal cost and benefit

The exchange is a routine request. It has dual illocution. In the first part of the exchange, the speaker issues an imperative ("Let me see that") which is a direct strategy for directives. Hence, the utterance appears to be an instruction. However, the action proposed (to see) is to be performed by B for the benefit of A and at a cost to B; hence an offer. Through the first-person singular imperative, "Let me see that," B commits to carrying out the action described.

Since the imperative implies benefit to the addressee, it is positively polite. The illocutionary goal (offering) thus coincides with the social goal. Hence, there is a convivial illocutionary function. The act of offering gives high value to the addressee's wants (in this case, to be helped in paying his dues) in fulfilment of the Generosity Maxim.

The rogative (What do you want to pay for?) in the latter part of the exchange is an information question. B is requesting an information in order to help the addressee (A). Hence, the illocutionary function is competitive. Given the routineness of the request, there is really no need to employ politeness strategies. Also, the addressee recognises this as a routine request and an attempt by B to help him. The role of B in this exchange (one trying to help), is an index of superiority; hence, B has higher position relative to A. Since, there is no indicator that this is not the first contact between the interlocutors, A and B are strangers. The transaction is weighty. B is requesting for an information that would allow her provide A with the information needed.

This would in turn allow A pay her dues. Hence, there are equal costs and benefits for both parties.

Exchange 5

A: For shop

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Response expressed as a nonsentential structure	Canonical answer Elliptical response, Compliant Response	***Vertical Distance*:** A has higher position relative to B ***Horizontal Distance:*** strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** S and H have equal cost and benefit

Exchange 5 is a positive response that fills the information gap posed by B’s question, “What do you want to pay for?” It is an instance of pos-politeness since it is compliant and gives high value to B’s wants in accordance with the Generosity Maxim. Because this response is acceptable to the addressee, it may be likened to an offer. This illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal. The illocutionary function of exchange 5 is, therefore, convivial.

The answer is elliptical. This economy of words is suggestive of the speaker’s haste, wish to be over with the interrogative very soon, and desire to save time. The scales of value are the same as in the previous exchange. B’s role sets her on a higher position relative to A. The horizontal distance between A and B is distant and the costs and benefits are mutual.

<u>Exchange 6</u>

B: Go to the first office on your right.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Instruction expressed as a directive	imperative, compliant response,	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Stranger ***Cost-Benefit:*** S and H have equal cost and benefit

Exchange 6 ("Go to the first office on your right") is a response to the implicit request in exchange 3 ("Sorry, I've come to pay"). Given the physical context (official setting), rather than being face-threatening, the instruction has a collaborative illocutionary function, i.e. the illocutionary goal of instructing is indifferent to the social goal. The two parties are working (collaboratively) toward a common goal, for the benefit of the hearer. B has the social obligation to provide this instruction and A wants the instruction.

The compliant response gives high value to the hearer's wants in observance of the Generosity Maxim. In addition, the response is canonical as expected in an official setting. The directness of the imperative is not face-threatening. The scales of value are consistent with what has already been elaborately explained in the previous exchanges. The vertical distance is distant since the speaker has higher position relative to the hearer. The interlocutors are strangers while the cost-benefit scale is balanced.

3.6 Datum 5

1) A: Good morning
2) B: Good morning, sir. Uh…let me show you. It's because of this that I'm even here now.
3) A: Okay
4) B: I'm supposed to have been in Lagos [*presented in full in the analysis*]
5) A: [silence]
6) B: So, what will I do now?
7) A: Two things. I'll give you the form to fill and after filling the form, you're going to make a payment of ten thousand naira for late bank registration.
8) B: Please…discount. It's too much. It's too much. It's too much.

Background Information

The exchanges in Datum 5 took place between a male staff and a female customer. As may be deduced from the exchange, the guest has come to rectify the errors made by her bank.

Exchanges 1 & 2

A: Good morning

B: Good morning, sir. Uh…let me show you. It's because of this that I'm even here now.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Greeting expressed as assertive and	Formal greeting,	***Vertical Distance*:** First speaker has higher position relative to H

Request expressed as an offer	Formal greeting, Honorific, Pause, imperative, directness, intensifying adverb	***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** A has maximal cost, B has maximal benefit

In exchanges 1 and 2, the interlocutors initiate a conversation through greeting. This recognition of each other is a formulaic expression of politeness. The interactants' acknowledgment of each other through greeting coincides with the social goal. The speakers give high value to one another's feelings in fulfilment of the Sympathy Maxim. In addition, B uses the honorific 'sir' as a vocative that expresses politeness. This show of respect may be pleasing to A and prepare the ground for the succeeding request. Thus, while the entirety of exchange 1 has a convivial illocutionary function, only the first part of exchange 2 has this function.

The major speech event in exchange 2 is requesting. The discourse marker 'uh' followed by a pause is suggestive of the speaker's (B) hesitation in making a request and serves as a mitigation device. The request is masked as an offer ("let me"). Using an imperative, rather than a possibility question, is a direct request-making strategy that reduces the addressee's chances of refusing. Rather than an offer or request, the hearer, considering that he/she is not presented with any options, may interpret the utterance as a demand. He/she has to see what B has to show him/her or risk offending him/her. This directness violates the Tact Maxim.

In the next utterance, "It's because of this that I'm even here now," B proceeds to state her purpose of visit. The adverb 'even' is used as an intensifier to indicate the importance of B's purpose of visit. Again, B gives high value to her own wants contra the Tact Maxim. These violations are indicative of a clash between the social goal and illocutionary goal. Hence, the main illocutionary function of exchange 2 is competitive.

B's request accompanied by mitigation is suggestive that A has a dominant social role and authority. In addition, B's choice of an honorific registers superiority in the vertical distance. Hence, A has higher position relative to B. Nevertheless, the interlocutors are not so distant in terms of horizontal relationship. The way B starts the conversation and other exchanges in the speech event (e.g. "It was you made me to discover that it was a wrong" in exchange 4) suggests that A and B have had interactions prior to that time. Given this frequency of contact, they are acquaintances. The 'transaction' involves a request. B's violation of the Tact Maxim has great implications for the weightiness of transaction. By giving no room for A to refuse, B increases the weight of imposition of her request. Consequently, for exchange 2, the hearer (A) has maximal cost while speaker B has maximal benefit.

Exchange 3

A: Okay

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Response expressed as a nonsentential structure	Nonsentential strategy, routine reply, compliant response	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance

		Cost-Benefit: S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

Exchange 3 is a response to B's request in exchange 2. The speaker uses a nonsentential strategy to express acceptance of A's request. This is believed to be accompanied by the physical act of receiving whatever B wants to show A as indicated in the request "Let me show you." The adjective equally expresses the speaker's (A) understanding of B's request in the previous turn. The exchange is a compliant response that is appealing to B. Hence, the illocutionary function is convivial.

The lack of tact in A's request has either been unrecognised or ignored by A because of his social obligation to help B. A's compliance thus portrays the allocation of high value to B's wants in compliance to the Maxim of Generosity. The reply is routine hence, the lack of mitigation is not distasteful to B. Instead, the act of compliance is an expression of pos-politeness. The vertical and horizontal distances remain the same as in exchange 2. However, the cost here is evaluated as minimal. This is because A has a social obligation, by reason of his role and position of 'authority' to fulfil B's request. A's benefit is maximal as in the previous exchange.

<u>Exchange 4</u>

B: I'm supposed to have been in Lagos. So…I want to see what I can do about it before I… I had to go back to the bank yesterday and they had to tell me the account officer that opened my account…because I remember they gave us the form that we're going to fill for TIN that that type of account needs TIN. You know I was telling you that I have TIN. It was you made me to discover that it was a wrong TIN they did for me. I had to go back to the bank. They said the guy is no more at enh… You understand. I was very very angry. I don't joke with my documentations and things like that.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Grumbling expressed as an assertive	disfluency, pause, intensifier, assertive, discourse marker, de-familiarizer, implicit appreciation	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** H has minimal cost, S has maximal benefit

Exchange 4 is a long turn with several illocutions. The major speech event is grumbling. This has a competitive illocutionary function. B's complaint gives unfavourable value to the bank's qualities contra the Approbation Maxim. However, the hearer A is a third party; he is not the offender and bears no affiliation to the offense. Thus, the complaint has no real offensive effects on A. Instead, by grumbling, B gives favourable value to her feelings and thus violates the Feeling-reticence Maxim.

Another illocutionary goal implicit in the exchange is *thanking*. In the statement, "It was you made me to discover that it was a wrong TIN they did for me," B recognises a favour A did previously. This way, B gives high value to his/her obligation to A in compliance with the Maxim of Obligation.

As seen in the latter part, the exchange also serves a self-excusing purpose as the speaker (B) distances herself completely from the offence (i.e. late registration) that needs to be rectified. B expresses her anger towards the absent third party, repeatedly using the intensifying adverb ‘very’. This shifts the blame to the bank, ‘they’ and “the guy” referred to earlier. The familiarizer ‘guy’ used by B in the latter part of the turn has a negative implication. Rather than signal camaraderie, it is used to refer to the banker dismissively or in an off-handed manner.

The exchange, therefore, may be construed as an explanation of why it is important for A to render the service requested by B. In addition, it may be perceived as an invitation from B to empathise with him/her. Expressions like “I’m supposed to have been in Lagos,” “it was a wrong TIN they did for me,” “I was very very angry,” “I don’t joke with my documentations and things like that,” and “I had to go back to the bank” achieve this purpose. The discourse markers “You know” and “You understand” have a rapport-building function. In some parts of the exchange, there are pauses and disfluencies indicated by elliptical periods and the discourse marker ‘enh’. These are suggestive of hesitation and B’s reluctance in encumbering A with his/her complaints (since A is not the offender) and invariably, an attempt by B to supress his/her feeling. This mitigates the extent to which the Feeling-reticence Maxim is breached.

The hesitations give low value to B’s feelings and thus, discourage the expression of sympathy by A. This purpose was achieved as A shows unwillingness to show sympathy by keeping silent. A’s silence is equally suggestive of disinterest or avoidance of the subject matter. The vertical and horizontal distances remain unchanged. Again in this exchange, A bears the weight of the transaction as he is belaboured with A’s complaints about a third party. Nevertheless, the cost bore by A is only minimal as A’s mitigation eliminates the expectation of sympathy. A, on the other hand, has maximal benefit as the exchange not only provides a means for purgation of emotions (anger and disappointment) but equally serves as an explanation that might generate empathy from A.

Exchange 5

B: So, what will I do now?

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as an rogative	Question hint,	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** H has minimal cost, S has maximal benefit

Exchange 5 is a rogative which, at first glance, may be construed as general complaint not directed particularly at the hearer. However, at closer examination, it can be understood as a request aimed at getting information. "So, what will I do now?" is thus a question hint. Requesting has a competitive illocutionary function. B is not only requesting for information, his/her question is also a call for help or advice. This suggests that B believes A to have the authority and adequate experience to help him/her.

The potential face-threatening effect of the request is mitigated by B's implicit acknowledgement of A's expertise. This way, B gives high value to A's qualities. The question hint thus has a complimenting function that is agreeable to the hearer and fulfils the Approbation Maxim. The vertical and horizontal distances remain the same. The implied authority and expertise of A is suggestive of A's social role and obligation to provide help/advice in such situations. Hence, the transaction occurs at a minimal cost to A from whom advice is requested. The requester (B) has maximal benefit.

Exchange 6

A: Two things. I'll give you the form to fill and after filling the form, you're going to make a payment of ten thousand naira for late bank registration.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Instruction expressed as an assertive	Nonsentential strategy, compliant response	***Vertical Distance*:** S has higher position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal cost, H has maximal benefit

Exchange 6 is a compliant response to speaker B's request in exchange 5. A is providing a helpful information to B. Hence, this is an instance of pos-politeness. The information is conveyed as an instruction. This has a collaborative illocutionary goal since both A and B are working towards a common goal, for the benefit of B. On account of B's special competence, B is entitled to instruct A and this recognised by both parties.

The supply of instructive information by A is akin to the act of offering. Also, the phrase "I'll give you…" is reflective of an offer. **A** proposes an action he intends to perform for the benefit of B (i.e. to give). **A** thus gives high value to **B**'s wants in compliance to **A**'s request in exchange 5. This is in accordance with the Generosity Maxim. The vertical and horizontal distances remain the same. The weightiness of transaction is relatively high. The advice giver (**A**) bears only minimal cost since he is acting in accordance to the requirements of his social role as host. Since the advice is solicited, it has the dual benefit of cooperativeness and helpfulness. Therefore, B enjoys maximal benefit.

<u>Exchange 7</u>

B: Please…discount. It's too much. It's too much. It's too much.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as an assertive	Politeness marker, Nonsentential strategy, Repetition of an utterance, Pause, Indirect strategy , Intensifier	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Acquaintance ***Cost-Benefit:*** H has maximal cost, S has maximal benefit

The major illocutionary goal of this exchange is that of requesting. This competes with the social goal. Therefore, the illocutionary function is competitive. The request for a discount could be construed as a refusal to pay the exact amount requested; hence, a negative response to A's instruction in the previous turn (exchange 6). The request is expressed using a nonsentential strategy ('discount'). This is the key action being requested. It could easily be taken to mean "Please, give me some discount".

The politeness marker 'please' preceding the request serves as a mitigation device aimed at reducing the offense that would occur if B were to express the request in its bluntest form. There is also a pause preceding the request (indicated by elliptical periods). This shows the speaker's hesitation in making an imposition. All these strategies are instances of neg-politeness and make for indirectness. By employing mitigation, B gives low value to his/her wants in accordance with the Tact Maxim.

The utterance, "It's too much" is an additional material which could be understood to be B's excuse for disapproving of or rejecting some parts of A's instruction. The repetition of the same utterance "It's too much" three times serves the function of intensifying B's opinion. The repetition makes for emotive emphasis. It violates the Opinion Maxim in that high value is given to B's opinion. The scales of vertical distance, horizontal distance, and cost-benefit remain the same as in the previous exchange. The value transacted in this exchange is particularly weighty. The request marker and repetition all indicate the earnestness of B's request.

3.7 Datum 6

1) A: Good afternoon
2) B: Good afternoon
3) C: Hello
4) A: You're well done.
5) D: You're welcome.
6) A: What of err… No staff here?
7) B: [chuckles] We're all staffs.
8) A: enh? … You're all staff. Are you sure?

9) B: Yes

10) A: I’ve not been seeing your…your name on the pay roll. I’ve not even seen you before.

11) D: You even sent message to my phone yesterday. I received your message now. Kwara kini kan

12) A: Enh…enh

13) B: Yes. We have a bill for your oga, Mr Issa.

Background Information

The exchanges in Datum 6 involve 4 participants; two (A and C) of whom are members of the organisation (1) under study. They have gone on a fieldwork to another organisation (2) and have met two staff (B and D).

<u>Exchange 1 - 5</u>

A: Good afternoon

B: Good afternoon

C: Hello

A: You’re well done.

D: You’re welcome.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Greetings expressed as assertives	Formal greeting, Familiar greeting, rapport enhancer Phatic expressions	***Vertical Distance*:** Speakers A, B, C and D have equal position ***Horizontal Distance:*** Strangers

		Cost-Benefit: Equal Cost and Benefit

The first five turns are exchanges of greetings. All participants offer courteous recognition of one another. This illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal of discourse. The illocutionary goal of exchanges 1 to 5 is thus convivial. Participant A initiates the conversation with a formal greeting “Good morning” and participant B responds in like manner. The formalness is reflective of the social distance among the participants. It is assumed that they have had no previous contact.

However, C (from organisation 1) uses a familiar greeting, ‘Hello’. This signals camaraderie. It minimises the implication of the horizontal distance and improves rapport among the discussants. The expression “you’re well done” typically has the underlying implication that the addressee has achieved some kind of feat or is being commended for an activity. However, in this context no reference is made to such activity. This is suggestive that “well done” here is only a phatic expression. It functions as a rapport enhancer. Participant D’s utterance “You’re welcome” is a form of greeting that implicates acknowledgement of the guests.

All the various forms of greeting are expressions of pos-politeness. They give high value to the addressee’s feelings and thus comply with the Sympathy Maxim. Given the lack of honorifics in the exchanges and the attempt by C to establish camaraderie, the vertical distance of the interlocutors is registered as equal. The formalness of greeting as well as other evidences in other parts of the speech event suggests that the interlocutors have had no prior contact and are therefore, strangers. The transaction is not very weighty since all it involves is greeting. The exchange of value is balanced as all participants both give and receive the tokens of transaction, i.e. greetings.

Exchanges 6 & 7

A: What of err… No staff here?

B: [chuckles] We're all staffs.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as a rogative and Response expressed as an assertive	Question hint, elliptical structure, pause, disfluency discourse marker, Declarative, Compliant response	***Vertical Distance*:** H has higher position relative to S ***Horizontal Distance:*** Strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** B has minimal cost A has maximal benefit

Exchange 6 is a request expressed as a rogative. This has a competitive illocutionary function. The latter part of the rogative does not correspond with the initial wh-structure. This, as well as the hesitation, is suggestive of a change in the speaker's intention. As may be deduced from exchange 9 ("I've not been seeing your…your name on the pay roll. I've not even seen you before."), speaker A is familiar with some members of organisation 2 and is surprised not to see any one of them there. His initial move was to ask after one of the staff. Hence, exchange 6 may be taken as a hint, i.e. a question hint expressing a request to see a staff. The pause, indicated by the discourse marker (err) and elliptical periods, suggest that A thought better of his first move. Instead, he requested to know if the present participants (B and D) were staff.

The change from the wh-structure, and the pause also signal disfluency. In addition, the information question is elliptical. It could be expanded as “Are there no staff here?” Both the disfluency and ellipsis are indications of speaker A’s hesitation and reluctance in bringing up a matter of B and D’s identity. The question, in its full form, could have being construed by B and D as a direct attack on their right to be at the location of the discourse (i.e. the organisation). This potential threat is mitigated by the ellipsis and hesitation.

B’s positive response accompanied by a chuckle shows that no offense has been taken. The declarative “We’re all staffs” is a compliant response. Hence, it is an expression of pos-politeness. This coincides with the social goal. Exchange 7 therefore has a convivial illocutionary function. As a response to a question, it is canonical. By filling the information gap in exchange 6, speaker B obliges to a request and thus, gives high value to A’s wants in compliance with the Generosity Maxim.

The horizontal distance remains the same. A’s role as requester sets him at a lower position on the vertical distance scale. In both exchanges, the transactional value is weighty. In 6, A is requesting an action (i.e. giving of information) at a cost to B and at a benefit to A. In 7, B performs the action and hence, bears the cost while A enjoys the benefit. Since this information is important to the continuation of the discourse, B has some measure of social obligation to provide it. Also, B is the host and is thus expected to act politely towards A. Based on these variables, it is assumed that B bears only minimal cost while the requester and guest (A) enjoys maximal benefit.

Exchanges 8 & 9

A: enh? … You're all staff. Are you sure?

B: Yes

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as a rogative and Response expressed as an assertive,	Pause, disfluency, discourse marker, rogative Nonsentential strategy Declarative, Compliant response	***Vertical Distance*:** S has lower position relative to H ***Horizontal Distance:*** Strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** B has maximal cost A has maximal benefit

While exchange 8 has a competitive illocutionary function, exchange 9 has a convivial illocutionary function. The discourse marker, 'enh' followed by a question mark is suggestive of a prompt for repetition. However, after a pause (indicated by elliptical periods), A repeats the information received ("You're all staff"). This indicates that A actually heard B in the first instance and there might be other reasons for requesting for a repetition. A's question "Are you sure?" suggests disbelief and a request for an affirmative answer. This has a potentially face-threatening effect as it may be perceived by the hearer (B) as impolite. The entirety of exchange

8 shows incredulity. The implication of this is that A does not think B and D could occupy the position they claim. This scepticism may be as a result of extralinguistic factors such as B and D's appearance or comportment.

A's scepticism may be construed by B and D as an insult; hence, a violation of the Approbation Maxim. The demand for a repetition, especially when the message was clearly received, also violates the Tact Maxim since it gives a favourable to the speaker's (A) wants. B however does not seem to have taken any offense. Her response is compliant; hence, an instance of pos-politeness. The positive response implicates the giving of high value to A's wants in compliance with the Generosity Maxim.

The vertical and horizontal distances are the same as in exchanges 6 and 7. The weight of the transaction here is solely bore by B who not only ignores a potential offensiveness but also indulges a demand. B has maximal cost while A enjoys maximal benefit.

Exchange 10

A: I've not been seeing your…your name on the pay roll. I've not even seen you before.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Explanation expressed as an assertive	Grounder, Pause	***Vertical Distance*:** Speakers A, and D have equal position ***Horizontal Distance:*** Strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** S has minimal cost,

		H has maximal benefit

In exchange 10, A gives a reason for his disbelief. This serves as a mitigation for the face-threat in exchange 8. On one hand, exchange 10 may be construed as an apology since it contains a form of grounder, i.e. an explanation of what brought about the offense. It may be extended to read: "the reason I disbelieved that you were staff is because I've not been seeing your…your name on the pay roll. I've not even seen you before." A perceives that he owes B and D an explanation and goes ahead to provide that. Hence, favourable value is given to A's obligation to B in compliance with the Obligation Maxim. This way, the exchange has a convivial illocutionary function since the goal is to ensure social congruence.

On the other hand, however, the grounder may be equally perceived as a justification for the offense; a self-excusing act especially since it contains no direct, explicit apology such as 'sorry'. D's sudden contribution to the exchange is suggestive that exchange 10 may have be taken by D as an attempt by A to sound more agreeable and make the offense seem smaller. The vertical and horizontal distances remain the same. In exchange 10, A has a minimal cost since he/she owes the addressees an explanation while B and D enjoy maximal benefit.

Exchange 11

D: You even sent message to my phone yesterday. I received your message *now*. Kwara *kini kan*.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Response expressed as an assertive	Assertiveness, Complacence	***Vertical Distance*:**

		Speakers A, and D have equal position ***Horizontal Distance:*** Strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** S and H have minimal cost and benefit

Exchange 11 is produced by D who has kept silent in the previous exchanges (except for the greetings). D's silence is suggestive that he/she may have taken offense with A's implicitly undermining act in exchange 8 ("enh? … You're all staff. Are you sure?").

The assertive in exchange 11 provides evidence that B and D are staff. Exchange 11 may be read as "Of course I'm a staff since you even sent a message to *my* phone yesterday." The illocutionary goal of the assertive response is indifferent to the social goal. Hence, this utterance has a collaborative illocutionary function. However, the latter part of the exchange, the discourse markers, *now* and *kini kan* are indicative of the speaker's complacence. D's complacence gives high value to her qualities; in this case, her importance indicated by the fact that she received a text from the organisation. Hence, D violates the Maxim of Modesty.

Here, *now* does not serve the adverbial function of indicating the present time. Instead, it is reflective of the speaker's nonchalance towards the message received, or its sender. *Kini kan* is a Yoruba term for an object whose actual name the speaker does not remember. It literally translates as *one thing*. It is suggestive of D's indifference towards the content of the message. The vertical and horizontal distances remain unchanged. In exchange 11, D's assertion with the function of clearing up the air and smoothing the discourse is considered weighty. Since the utterance has both face-threatening and face-enhancing features, both speaker and hearer bear minimal cost and minimal benefit.

Exchange 12

A: Enh enh. We have a bill for your oga, Mr Issa.

Speech Event	Strategies	Scales of Value
Request expressed as an assertive	Pragmatic marker, Statement Hint, Third person honorific, Title + surname	***Vertical Distance*:** Speakers A, and D have equal position ***Horizontal Distance:*** Strangers ***Cost-Benefit:*** H has maximal cost, S has maximal benefit

Exchange 12 begins with a pragmatic marker "Enh enh" produced with a rising intonation typical of questions. It may be understood to mean 'really?' a form of agreement with or acceptance of D's previous assertion. The speech event type is requesting. This is expressed as an assertive, "We have a bill for your oga, Mr Issa." This may be taken as a hint for either B or D to receive the bill on behalf of their boss. The illocutionary goal here competes with the social goal. Thus, exchange 12 has a competitive illocutionary function.

The use of a hint rather than a direct statement mitigates the potential distastefulness of the act. This, coupled with the pragmatic marker "Enh enh," makes for indirectness. Speaker A also employs honorifics. 'Oga', a Yoruba term which could be translated as 'boss' signifies superiority. Similarly, the title + surname formula in "Mr Issa" shows deference. These vocatives signal vertical distance and superiority in terms of horizontal distance. However, the target of politeness is not the addressees but a third person who is not present, i.e. Mr Issa who is the boss of the organisation. Nevertheless, by showing politeness towards the non-present boss, A might equally sound appealing to his workers.

By employing these strategies, A gives low value to his wants in adherence to the Tact Maxim. The scales of value are similar to the previous exchange. In making a request, A stands as the beneficiary in the transaction while B and D to whom the request is addressed bear the cost. The addresses' cooperation is important to the fulfilment of A's (and C's) social role and purpose of visit. The imposition implied by the request (that of receiving a letter on behalf of Mr Issa) is also weighty. Hence, the addressees have maximal cost while A's benefit is also maximal.

CHAPTER FOUR

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a quantitative analysis of the corpus material. The strategies that register politeness and their occurrence in the data are clearly outlined. A pie chart showing the percentage of occurrences is presented. The percentage of performance of illocutionary functions is examined. The rate of adherence to maxims as opposed to violation is equally examined.

4.2 Classification of Politeness Strategies

The politeness strategies discovered across the 40 exchanges of the 6 data examined in the previous chapter have been broadly divided into eight categories. Their frequency and percentage of occurrence are presented below.

S/No	Politeness Strategy	Frequency of Occurrence	%
1	Appreciation	3	3/58 x 100 = 5
2	Compliant Response	9	9/58 x 100 = 16
3	Hints	3	3/58 x 100 = 5
4	Mitigation (Pause and disfluency, indirect strategy, grounder, apologetic attention signal)	18	18/58 x 100 = 31
5	Phatic Expressions (formal greeting, familiar greeting, acknowledgement/rapport enhancer)	11	11/58 x 100 = 19
6	Politeness Marker (please)	4	4/58 x 100 = 7
7	Questions	6	6/58 x 100 = 10
8	Vocatives (title + surname, honorific)	4	4/58 x 100 = 7
	Total occurrence of politeness strategies	**58**	

Figure 1: Categorisation and Occurrence of Politeness Strategies

The percentage of occurrence is derived from the frequency of occurrence of each politeness strategy divided by the total occurrence multiplied by 100. The results of this simple percentage analysis are represented by the pie chart below:

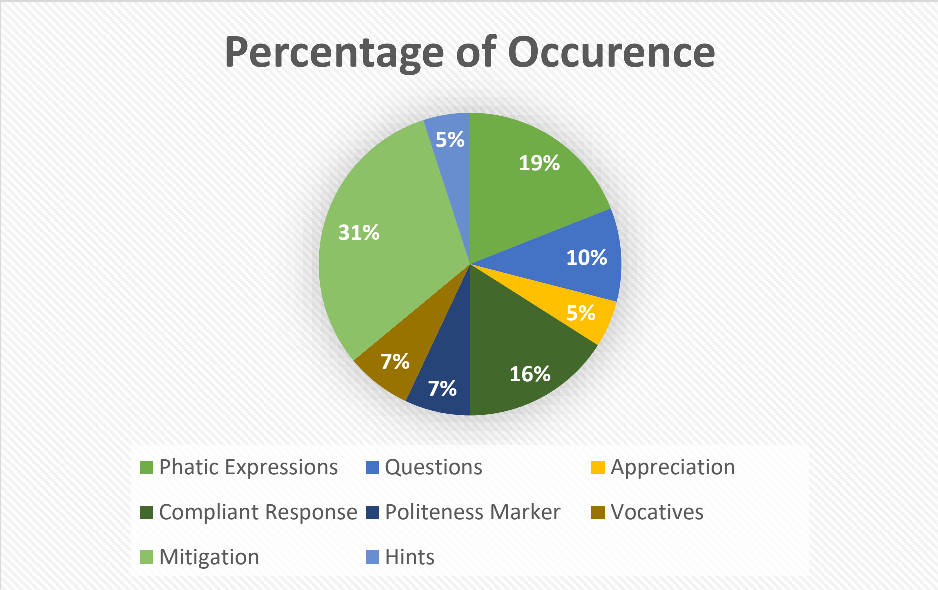

Figure 2: Percentage of Occurrence of Politeness Strategies

Strategies in Order of Frequency of Occurrence

1. **Mitigation**

The chart shows that mitigation devices are more frequently used. Pauses in discourse reflective of hesitation are represented by elliptical periods while disfluencies are marked by pragmatic markers ‘uh’, ‘enh’, and ‘err’. While ‘uh’ is identified in the English dictionary as signifying hesitation, the two latter discourse markers ‘enh’, and ‘err’ appear to be peculiar to the Nigerian context. Pauses and disfluencies occur 9 times in data 5 and 6 across 6 exchanges. 4 of these exchanges are requests, 1 is grumbling and the last is an explanation.

The indirect strategy for directives is registered by other strategies including ability question + modal auxiliary, the politeness marker ‘please’, masking a request as an offer, and pause. It is employed in 8 exchanges across data 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. While 6 of these exchanges are requests, including 1 routine request; 2 are instructions. The grounder – an explanation of what brought about an offense – occurs once in the tenth exchange of datum 6, an explanation. Similarly, the apologetic attention signal occurs only 1 time in the third exchange of datum 4 which is a request. It is registered by the adjective ‘sorry’. These incidents of mitigation constitute 31% of the total occurrence of politeness strategies.

2. **Phatic expressions**

Phatic expressions are next in frequency of occurrence. They are used 9 times in the data. Formal greetings occur more often. They appear 6 times across data 1, 3, 4, and 6. In exchange 3 of datum 6, the familiar greeting ‘hello’ is used to enhance rapport among the interlocutors. Also, the acknowledgements, “well done” and ‘welcome’ are used to promote cordiality among interlocutors in datum 6; exchange 4 and 5 respectively. These instances of phatic expressions constitute 19% of total occurrences of politeness strategies.

3. **Compliant Response**

Responses that are compliant are considered positive. Compliance is suggestive of the speaker giving high value to the hearer’s want(s) in adherence to the Generosity Maxim. Compliant Responses appear 8 times in the data – 4 times as instruction, twice as response to a request, once as an offer and 1 time as a response to an offer. They appear across all 6 data. This constitutes 13% of total occurrences of politeness strategies.

4. **Questions**

Questions occur 6 times in the data, excluding hints that appear in question form. Three categories of questions are recognised. The first category, possibility question occurs in the first exchange of datum 1. There are 4 occurrences of wh-questions across data 2 and 4. The last category, yes-no questions occur 1 time in datum 6. With the exception of exchange 3 of datum 2, all 6 occurrences of questions are requests. This make up 13% of politeness strategies in the data.

5. Politeness Marker

Participants in the analysed discourses use the politeness marker ‘please’ 4 times. 3 of these occurrences are in requests. The politeness marker appears twice in datum 2 and 1 time each in data 3 and 5. These occurrences make up 7% of politeness strategies in the data.

6. Vocatives

Broadly, two categories of vocatives are employed in the data. In data 4 and 5, the honorific ‘sir’ is used. In these cases, superiority is registered on the vertical distance scale while distance is registered on the horizontal scale. In the 12th exchange of datum 6, two vocatives are used – an honorific and a title + surname formula. These are used as address terms referring to a third person who is absent. The term, ‘oga’ is a borrowed term from Yoruba. Its nearest English equivalent is *boss*. The four occurrences of vocatives constitute 7% of politeness strategies identified across 40 exchanges.

7. Appreciation

There are two exchanges in the data that are explicitly appreciation – exchanges 3 and 5 of data 1 and 3 respectively. In both instances, the formulaic expression “thank you” is used. In exchange 4 of datum 5, appreciation is implicit. Through the expression “It was you made me to discover that it was a wrong,” the speaker attributes a ‘redemptive’ act to the hearer; thus covertly thanking him. These three incidences of appreciation constitute 5% of politeness strategies employed throughout the corpus material.

8. Hints

Hints are a category of strategies for directives. This strategy, in its instances of occurrence in the corpus material, makes for indirectness. Question hints are used once each in data 5 and 6 while the statement hint is employed in the 12th exchange of datum 6. All three exchanges are requests. These occurrences make up 5% of politeness strategies in the data.

4.3 Performance of Illocutionary Functions

Chapter three included an examination of the interaction of social goals and illocutionary goals. Across the 40 exchanges, only three illocutionary functions were discovered: convivial, competitive, and collaborative. The frequency of these illocutionary functions are vividly represented in this section.

S/No	**Illocutionary Function**	**Frequency of Performance**	**Speech Event**
1	Convivial	19	Greeting, thanking, response, explanation
2	Competitive	14	Request, response, grumbling
3	Collaborative	7	Instruction, response, request

Figure 3: Frequency of Performance of Illocutionary Functions

The percentage of illocutionary function performed is derived from the frequency of performance of each illocutionary function divided by the total number of exchanges multiplied by 100; that is 19/40 x 100. The result of this simple percentage analysis is presented in the pie chart below:

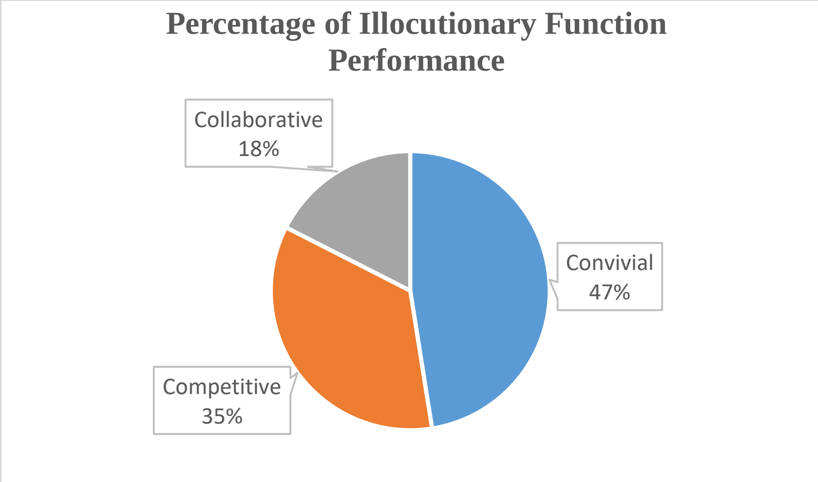

Figure 4: Percentage of Illocutionary Functions Performed

4.4 Frequency of Adherence and Violation

The adherence to and violation of politeness maxims (which constitute the General Strategy of Politeness) have serious implications for the evaluation of politeness in the organisation under study. This section provides detailed and easily assessable graphic representations of the frequency of adherence to and violation of the politeness maxims and their implications.

S/No	Maxims	Frequency of Adherence	Speech Event	Kind of Politeness Registered
1	Generosity	12	Instruction, request, offer, response	Pos-politeness
2	Tact	7	Request, instruction	Neg-politeness
3	Approbation	1	Request	Pos-politeness
4	Obligation	4	Thanking, request, explanation	Pos-politeness
5	Sympathy	11	Greeting	Pos-politeness
	Total Occurrence of Adherence	**35**		

Figure 5: Frequency of Adherence to Maxim

S/No	Maxims	Frequency of Violation	Speech Event	Phenomenon Registered
1	Generosity	1	Response	Impoliteness
2	Tact	4	Request (lacking migration) Routine request (directness)	Impoliteness
3	Approbation	1	Request (suggestive of distrust)	Impoliteness
4	Modesty	1	Response (showing complacence)	Impoliteness
5	Obligation	1	Instruction (using strong obligation statement)	Impoliteness
6	Opinion-reticence	1	Request (involving repetition of S's opinion)	Impoliteness
7	Feeling-reticence	1	Grumbling	Impoliteness
8	Sympathy	2	Request (lacking of conversation initiating device), Response (conveying refusal)	Impoliteness
	Total Occurrence of Violation	**12**		

Figure 6: Frequency of Violation of Maxims

The frequency of adherence versus violation is derived from the total occurrence of either divided by the total occurrence of both multiplied by 100. The total occurrence of both adherence and violation is 47. Hence, percentage of adherence is 35/47 x 100 while percentage of violation is 12/47 x 100. The results of this simple percentage analysis are represented in the chart below:

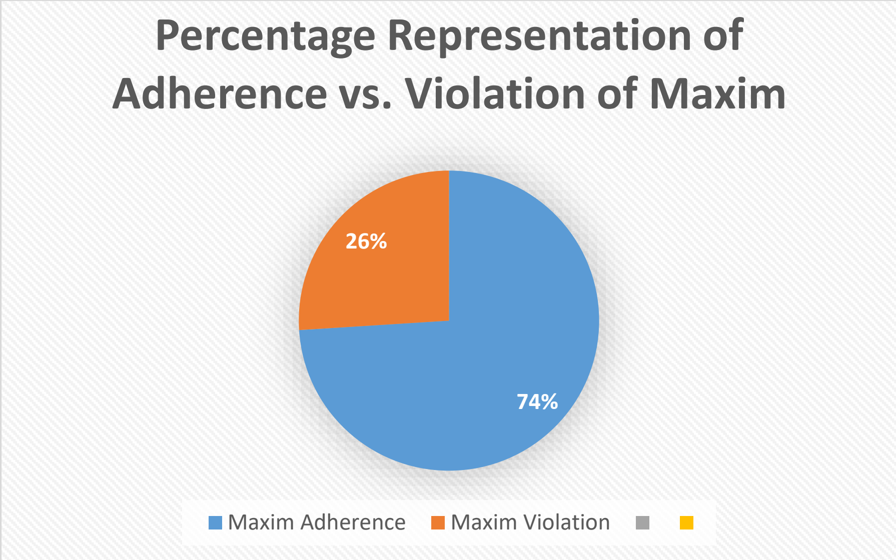

Figure 7: Percentage Representation of Adherence vs. Violation of Maxim

4.5 Discussion of Findings

Through the quantitative data analysis, 14 requests (including routine requests) and 5 instructions were detected. 9 exchanges are categorised as responses to these. Other speech events that came up as reactions to or facilitators of the two major ones are thanking (2) explanation (1), greeting (8) and grumbling (1). Some responses are categorised as offers.

An analysis of 6 speech events consisting of 40 exchanges reveals that the use of politeness strategies is pervasive in KW-IRS. Formal greeting, familiar greeting, acknowledgement/rapport enhancer, pause and disfluency, indirect strategy, grounder, apology, possibility question, wh-question, yes-no question, the politeness marker 'please', honorific and a title + surname formula, appreciation, and hints are strategies employed throughout the corpus material. Mitigation devices, constituting 31% of politeness strategies employed, have the highest occurrence.

The occurrence of pauses and disfluencies as well as the indirect strategy is also relatively high. They occur 8 times each in requests, instructions, explanation, and grumbling. These strategies, in most cases, are indicators of the speaker's hesitation and reluctance in bringing up a subject matter. They are found in only two speech events – requests and grumbling. In exchange 2 of datum 5, for instance, speaker B uses all three strategies in the utterance “Uh…let me show you”. The discourse marker ‘uh’ coupled with the pause (indicated by elliptical periods) is suggestive of a premeditation by the speaker on the appropriate way to present her request. The phrase “let me” is suggestive of B carrying out an action for the benefit of the co-interactant. However, rather than being an offer, the utterance is, in actuality, a request – an invitation for A to see something (probably a document) and take necessary action. Speaker B’s masking of a request as an offer thus makes for indirectness.

Similarly, in exchange 4 of datum 5, the speaker makes several pauses as she complains about a third party. In the latter part of the exchange, speaker B, employs both pause and disfluency in the utterance “They said the guy is no more at enh… You understand.” The incomplete statement, followed by a discourse marker “you understand” signifies hesitation of the speaker to further belabour the hearer with her complaints. Speaker B thus rushes to put an end to her grumbling. Again, in exchange 7 of the same datum, speaker B pauses as she issues a request. This particular speaker uses these strategies the most.

The entirety of exchange 10, datum 6 is a grounder. It is a supporting move for the request in the speaker’s previous turn in exchange 8. By uttering the statement, “I’ve not been seeing your … your name on the pay roll. I’ve not even seen you before,” speaker A justifies the implicit request in “enh? … You’re all staff. Are you sure?” The grounder also functions as a mitigation device as it reduces the tastelessness of incredulity and request for affirmation suggested in exchange 8. The apology found in exchange 3, datum 4 has a similar mitigating function. The expression ‘sorry’ is a *preparator* used to cue in the request “I’ve come to pay.” It thus has the additional function of an *alerter* used to request for the hearer’s attention. Furthermore, it makes the request more polite, friendly, and persuasive.

Phatic expressions precede all 14 requests found across the 6 data except in datum 2. They function as conversation initiators. Since they are agreeable to the hearers, phatic expressions register pos-politeness. They also help to prepare the ground for the requests that succeed them. Thus, most requests in the data were ‘successful’ in that 6 out of the 8 responses to requests are positive/compliant responses. An uncooperative response, which is evaluated as negative, is found in exchange 3 of datum 2; while the complacent response in exchange 11 of datum 6 is neither positive nor negative.

Phatic expressions discovered across the data are mostly formal greetings. *Good mornings* and *Good afternoons*, sometimes accompanied by the honorific ‘sir’, appeared 8 times throughout the data. This is indicative of the formalness of the social setting. A familiar greeting ‘hello’ appeared once in exchange 3 of datum 6. Acknowledgements e.g., “You’re well done” and “You’re welcome” occur twice in the data. These informal forms of greeting function better as rapport enhancers than formal ones. 19% of politeness strategies employed throughout the corpus analysed are phatic expressions.

9 compliant responses are found in the data. 3 of these occur in instructions while 6 occur in responses to requests, instruction and explanation. All instructions are evaluated as compliant responses to requests and rogatives. In exchange 7 of datum 2, for instance, the host (that is, the staff of KW-IRS) issues the instruction, “Please, go to the third office on your right.” While it is an instruction, it is equally a compliant response to speaker A’s request in exchange 1 (We want to go to MLA.) reiterated in exchange 5 (OK! We want to collect our vehicle papers). Also, the response “We’re all staffs” (exchange 7, datum 6) is considered compliant since it provides a positive answer to the previous speaker’s request in the form of a rogative “What of err… No staff here?” (Exchange 6, datum 6).

Furthermore, questions are used as strategies for making requests and as response to a request. In datum 1, exchange 1 for instance, the possibility question “Can I get direction?” is a polite request. Conversely, the wh-question question in exchange 3 of datum 2 is a response to the previous speaker’s request in exchange 2. It is implicitly a refusal to provide the requested information. Hence, it achieves indirectness which mitigates the offensiveness of the question. In exchange 8 of datum 6, a yes-no question is used in a making request for repetition. The question “enh? … You’re all staff. Are you sure?” elicits the response, “Yes” (exchange 9 of datum 6).

The expression ‘please’ appears 4 times in the data: three times in a request and once in an instruction. In exchange 6, datum 2, ‘please’ in the routine request “What’s your name, please?” has dual function. It functions both as a discourse marker and as a politeness marker. While it registers politeness, it also sets the utterance apart as a routine request. Similarly, in exchange 7 of the same datum (“Please, go to the third office on your right”), the use of ‘please’ registers politeness. This politeness strategy may not be particularly necessary since the instruction is at a cost to the speaker and for the benefit of the hearer. However, B may have chosen to use ‘please’ to mitigate the instruction considering that speaker A has perceived similar routinary expressions (requests) in previous exchanges as offensive. This makes for communicative confluence.

Vocatives are also employed in the discourses analysed. They appear in requests and greetings. While in some instances vocatives serve as a tool for evaluating the vertical and horizontal distances in a discourse; in most of their occurrences, they only function as politeness strategies with no implication for distance. In datum 6, for instance, the title + surname formula and honorific used in exchange 12 (We have a bill for your oga, Mr Issa) are third person vocatives. Hence, they do not imply superiority among the interactants. Instead, by showing respect to the absent boss, speaker A appeals to the present addressees. In the second exchanges of data 4 and 5, the case in different. The usage of the honorific ‘sir’ suggests the superiority of the addressee on the vertical distance scale and equally registers politeness.

Appreciations are reactions to a perceived favour. In datum 1, exchange 3 speaker A uses the formulaic expression of politeness “thank you” in response to an instruction which is perceived as a compliant response to A's request. Similarly in exchange 5 of datum 3, A's usage of the formula is a reaction to B's compliant response. Conversely, in exchange 4 of datum 5, thanking is only covert rather than explicit. In the utterance, "It was you made me to discover that it was a wrong TIN they did for me," speaker B makes reference to how an act performed by A saved her from further error. Thus, B tacitly appreciates A.

Two kinds of hints were also found in the corpus material. They are all used in making requests. For instance, in exchange 5 of the fifth datum, the question "So, what will I do now?" hints at a request for help or advice. This hint is decrypted by A who replies with an instruction. Correspondingly, the rogative "No staff here?" is implicitly a request to see a staff of the organisation. Again, this is decoded by one of the addressees who affirms that all the hosts are staff. In the 12th exchange of datum 6, speaker A expresses a statement hint, "We have a bill for your oga, Mr Issa." Since it is obvious that Mr Issa is not a participant in the discourse, the statement is implicitly a request that the letter be received on his behalf.

The goal-oriented analysis revealed that the discourse items mostly had convivial illocutionary function. In exchanges with the major illocution of thanking or greeting, illocutionary goals overtly overlap with the social goal of maintaining communicative accord. Responses which expressed compliance (e.g. datum 4, exchange 5; datum 5, exchange 3; datum 6, exchange 7) have the implicit illocution of offering. This illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal. Also, an explanation may be regarded as a treaty aimed at 'smoothening' communicative rapport. Consequently, 19 exchanges, with the illocutionary goals of greeting, thanking, offering, and explaining are classified as having convivial illocutionary function.

All requests, except for one, have competitive illocutionary function. The illocutionary goal of requesting characteristically competes with the social goal of communicative confluence. This is because requests impinge, in different degrees, on the right to act of the addressees. Uncooperative responses as well as grumbling equally have competitive illocutionary function. Both acts are potentially disagreeable. In the third exchange of datum 2, for example, speaker A asks the question, "What are they doing there?" in response to a request for information. This response challenges the addressee's sense of judgement in asking the question ("What do you want to do?"). Also, it indirectly expresses a refusal to oblige the request. In the act of grumbling, by belabouring the addressee with her negative feelings, the speaker is, to some extent, disagreeable.

All 5 instructions in the data have collaborative illocutionary function. The social goal is indifferent to the illocutionary goal since, by issuing an instruction, a speaker is working for the benefit of the hearer. In the statement, "Go to the third office on your right" (datum 1, exchange 2), the instruction benefits A in that it corresponds with A's desire to get direction expressed in exchange 1 of datum 1 ("Good morning. Can I get direction? I want to collect my driver's license"). By the same token, the instruction "So you have to be specific" (exchange 4, datum 2) issued by speaker B enables him/her to grant A's request (in the first exchange of that discourse: "We want to go to MLA").

The response to this instruction ("OK! We want to collect our vehicle papers") is equally evaluated as having a collaborative illocutionary function. This is because it provides the clarification sort by B. The elucidation enables B to grant A's request. The common goal is getting A to MLA. The only request performing a collaborative illocutionary function in the data is one in which the common goal (of both speaker and addressee) is to facilitate the fulfilment of the requester's social obligation. The statement, "Sorry, I've come to pay" (exchange 3, datum 4) underlines the central function of KW-IRS. Hence, by granting the request, the addressee will be fulfilling her primary duty.

None of the 40 exchanges has a conflictive illocutionary function. The one that comes closest to being conflictive is the third exchange of datum 2 ("What are they doing there?"). However, since it is not overtly a threat or an accusation, it is categorised as having a collaborative function. By asking a question rather than blatantly refusing to oblige B through a declarative answer, speaker A achieves mitigation of the offense.

Relatively few speech events exclude politeness strategies in the data analysed. Instances where politeness strategies are omitted suggest flouting of politeness maxims. Invariably, such occurrences of violations are classified as registering underpoliteness/impoliteness. 12 incidences of such are recorded throughout the corpus material. As shown in figure 5, there are 35 occurrences of adherence to five politeness maxims. While 28 of these occurrences register pos-politeness, 7 are instances of neg-politeness. Seven different times, the interlocutors make use of various strategies in adherence to the Tact Maxim. These adherences occur in roughly two kinds of speech events – request and instruction.

There are 12 occurrences of violation of eight politeness maxims. These violations occur across four kinds of speech event – response, request, grumbling, and instruction. As may be observed in figure 5 and 6, while the highest number of adherence is recorded in requests; requests also have the highest number of violations. 8 out of the 12 incidences of violations occur in requests. This is 67% of the total occurrence of violation. Thus underpoliteness occurs mostly in requests. Half of violations (50%) in requests occurred when the Tact Maxim in flouted. This ranks the Tact Maxim as the most important that must be taken into cognisance in making requests. The statistical analysis presented in chapter four enables clear and easily assessable scalar representation of the manifestation of politeness in Kwara State Internal Revenue Service.

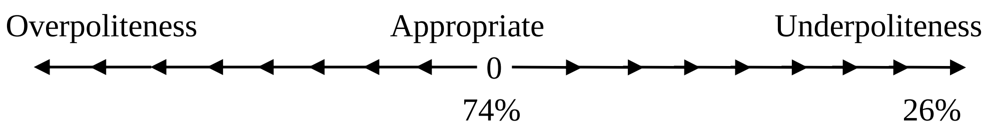

Figure 8: Bipolar Scale of Sociopragmatic Politeness

The diagram above shows that 74% of 40 exchanges across the six data are appropriately polite; whereas, 26% of the data fall to the negative end of the scale. These register underpoliteness and invariably, impoliteness.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the summary, findings, and conclusion of the study.

5.2 Summary

This research examined the prevalent phenomena of politeness with a view to exploring specific strategies employed by customers and staff of Kwara State Internal Revenue Service (KW-IRS), Ilorin in making and responding to requests and instructions. Chapter one provided a general introduction to and established the focus of the research. The Background to the Study, Statement of the Problem, Aim and Objectives of the Study, Research Questions, Scope of the Study, Justification of the Study, and Research Methodology were all provided.

In chapter two, there was a thorough review of literature considered relevant to the work and an establishment of the research's theoretical basis. This involved considerations of the history of pragmatics, scope of pragmatics, the concept of politeness, the nexus between language and culture, Leech's (2014) Pragmatic Politeness and the research's theoretical framework.

Quantitative and qualitative analyses in chapters three and four respectively provided thorough investigation of the manifestations of politeness in KW-IRS. Analyses made clear the remarkable impact of politeness in achieving communicative confluence and achieving the objectives of discourse in formal social settings. The examination of politeness strategies, politeness maxims, and illocutionary functions of discourses in KW-IRS particularly showed the significance of politeness in service-providing corporate bodies.

5.3 Findings

. On account of both qualitative and qualitative data analyses in chapters 3 and 4, respectively, the following submissions are made:

1) Conversations in formal settings such as KW-IRS are characterised by a higher percentage of appropriate politeness than underpoliteness. This may be attributed to the transactional nature of the context. In each speech event, both interlocutors have some measure of benefit to gain. Thus, it is in the best interest of interlocutors to carry on a smooth and successful discourse.
2) In KW-IRS, the context is highly transactional. Thus, a wide range of politeness strategies is employed particularly in making requests.
3) More often than not, conversers in service-providing organisations such as KW-IRS adhere to politeness maxims. This suggests that there are implicit conversation maxims in both the physical and cultural context.
4) More politeness strategies, employed by participants in discourse, register pos-politeness than neg-politeness. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that adherence to maxims of generosity, approbation, obligation and sympathy are more frequent than adherence to the Tact Maxim. The dominance of pos-politeness strategies (as against neg-politeness) indicates that in transactional contexts and in the Nigerian sociocultural context, priority is given to aspects of politeness that suggest deference and respect.
5) There are fewer instances where the guest is perceived as violating the Tact Maxim than there are for Sympathy, Generosity, Feeling-Reticence, Opinion, and Modesty maxims. This indicates that there are few instances where the host in KW-IRS evaluates a request as being offensive. This is as a result of the situational context. In a service-providing organisation like KW-IRS, members of staff have the social obligation to meet their customers' needs. Therefore, requests are politely obliged.
6) By extension, given their roles and obligations, there are fewer instances where the host in KW-IRS violates politeness maxims. Out of the 12 instances of violation, 8 are made by guests. This is suggestive that the Nigerian cultural context as well as the situational

context (service-providing organisation) places demands on the host to be more polite and forbearing.

7) Phatic exchanges in the data are, in most cases, initiated by the guest. This appears to be reminiscent of the Nigerian sociology; particularly in Yoruba culture in which it is expected that the guest greet first. This belief is expressed in a Yoruba saying that, "a guest that refuses to greet the host has lost his right to a 'welcome'". Except in Datum 5, throughout the data, the guest initiates greetings. This is also reflective customers' sense of urgency in making of requests.

8) Factors that motivate the use of politeness strategies include the following:

   I. The degree of imposition the speaker perceives himself to be making: This is proven by the high occurrence of politeness strategies in requests. In addition, requests record the highest number of adherence to maxims.

   II. Attitude of the participant who initiates the discourse: This has great consequences for success in a communicative event. Discourses that appropriately started with courteous recognition of the hearer (through greetings) went more smoothly than those where it was omitted. The second speaker tends to be correspondingly polite when the first is. Datum 2 is an instance of a communicative event where contraventions of politeness abound as a result of the conversation initiator's flouting of maxims.

9) Below are goals achieved by language users through their choice of politeness strategies in particular contexts:

   I. Sociability and Approachability: Through greetings, participants in discourse show courteous recognition of their co-interactants. This conveys willingness to participate in a cooperative interaction. This in turn achieves pleasantness and approachability.

II. Persuasiveness: Discourse markers such as ‘please’, ‘you know’, ‘you understand’, and ‘sorry’ appeal to the hearer to comply to the speaker’s request or instruction, as the case may be. The grumblings in datum 5, exchange 4 contain various utterances intended to attract the hearer’s empathy and convince them to help.

III. Empathetic Support: Compliant responses indicate that the speaker gives high value to the hearer’s concerns or needs and low value to his/her own want (that of not desiring to be imposed upon). Thus, compliance conveys compassionateness and empathetic support.

10) Customers and staff in KW-IRS make various strategic choices fulfilling the politeness principle during conversations. These include formal greeting, possibility question + modal auxiliary, familiar greeting, acknowledgement/rapport enhancer, pause and disfluency, indirect strategy, grounder, apology, wh-question, yes-no question, the politeness marker ‘please’, honorific, title + surname formula, appreciation, question hint, and statement hint.

11) There are inconsistences in the influence of scales of value (vertical distance, horizontal distance, and cost-benefit) on the degree of politeness in discourse. However, the cost-benefit analysis shows that speakers tend to be more polite in exchanges where they perceive themselves as making imposition on the addressee.

12) The manifestation of politeness is influenced by participants’ culture and idiosyncrasies. There are instances were Nigerian English or Yoruba language structures and terminologies, reflecting politeness, are used.

5.4 Conclusion

The Politeness Principle is integral to smooth, persuasive and successful communication events. Participants in discourse therefore take care to achieve politeness in discourse. The social/situational setting of discourse, as well as the sociocultural orientation of language users, influences the manifestation of politeness. In Nigeria, manifestations of the politeness phenomena are widespread in corporate organisations where encounters between guests/customers and hosts/staff are, either directly or indirectly, usually geared towards fulfilling organisational goals. Observance of the politeness principle is particularly essential in requests and instructions, which are the major speech events that occur in corporate organisations. Using KW-IRS as an archetype of such bodies, this study presents, quite explicitly, the manifestations of the politeness phenomena in corporate bodies. However, the unearthed politeness strategies, factors that influence distinctive linguistic choices conveying politeness, and goals achieved by such choices explored in this study are, by no means, exhaustive of the topic.

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