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GENDER, LANGUAGES AND VIOLENCE IN LOLA AKANDE'S *WHAT IT TAKES*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines one of the roles of language as a vehicle of the various genres of literature in communicating the activities of humanity. The various stripes of violence encoded by language use; verbal and even nonverbal in lecturers' utterances and actions with Ph.D candidates in Lola Akande's ***What It Takes*** *that constitute psychological trauma that affects goal achievement are assessed and highlighted. The goal of this investigation is to assess the Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) and Politeness Maxims violated and exploited in language use in the study text to expose gender violence that impedes academic accomplishments. Sixty samples of interactions selected from the study text through stratified random sampling technique serve as data for examining the variables identified. The descriptive and qualitative research designs are deployed for the data analysis. An eclectic theoretical approach is adopted as insights are drawn from Goffman's (1967) face work and Leech's (1983) Politeness principle model to account for the various face-threatening as well as the violations of Politeness maxims. From the investigation, it is discovered that the lecturers' language uses are characterized by face-threatening acts effected on-record baldly to humiliate students. There are also highly marked violations of tact, agreement, sympathy and Pollyana Politeness maxims that constitute direct violence that cause mental trauma for students. It is concluded that all face-threatening acts and violations are discouraging and create unhealthy environment for the accomplishment of academic goals. Violation of space and nonverbal barriers by male lecturers are embarrassing and threatening impositions on female students who opt to abandon the programme than succumb. It is concluded from the study text that inappropriate linguistic and non-linguistic usages are forms of direct violence and face-threatening acts that can create mental challenges and low self-perception that can prevent candidates from*

accomplishing their academic goals. Altercations generate hateful lexemes that can demoralize and cause people to lose their face worths and accomplish poorly. Language programmes are for students. If lecturers' language use verbal and non-verbal, should constitute obstacles for learners to continue their programmes, then, the desired enhancement and innovations would be fruitless.

Keywords: language, gender, violence, space, face-acts, nonverbal expressions.

INTRODUCTION

The role of language in building and destroying one's image and self-perception cannot be over emphasized; also, is the potential of language use in creating conflict as well as conflict resolutions in homes, institutions and society at large. Lexical choices are at the heart of peace or chaos in homes as well as society. O'Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011) discussing the essence of words hold, that "words can be used to achieve various ends; language is at the heart of all things human". The above assertion summarizes the relevance of language in virtually all of human endeavours. Man's good will as well as ill feelings are communicated through language. Brennan and Lane cited in Thomas (2006) offer that "words that are being spoken do not just have an effect but how the words are spoken, the tone of voice, the facial expressions and body language all play a part in the message that is being conveyed to that individual".

The tone of language use, facial expression and the lexical choices are what make interactions polite or impolite. A polite tone and friendly facial expression cannot constitute harm to interactants' psyche. Rather, impolite tone, unfriendly facial expression and above all, hurtful lexical choices can harm interlocutor partner's psyche and face value and constitute verbal violence which can be demanding and consequently destructive. A considerate and polite speaker tactfully deploys language that is not intended to be hurtful to the interlocutor partners while the one that lacks appropriate linguistic tokens can create psychological trauma that can affect achievement of gaols at a particular point in time. It is against this backdrop that this study examines language use and violence in Lola Akande's *WHAT IT TAKES* as the inappropriate linguistic choices and expressions which the lecturers in universities deploy to insult and humiliate Funto, a Ph.D candidate receive attention in this pragmatic study. Pragmatics helps to "interpret the meaning that derives from the norms of the formality and politeness that exist in the society (Udofot, 2005: 127). Forms of behaviour which are generally considered rude, impolite, offensive and discourteous need to be studied so that the interactants will know the negative effects on other interlocutors. Impoliteness is clearly a salient form of social behaviour in the sense that it appears to go against the canons of acceptable and appropriate behaviour operative for the ongoing social interactions. However, verbal violence and impoliteness in tertiary institutions have not been receiving serious attention and that provides a justification for this study. Even Eelen (2001:5) points out quite rightfully, that theories of politeness have focused far more on polite behaviours than on impolite behaviours…"

Every language use has aim or purpose which is dependent on the communicative intent of the interlocutor at the point of the language use. This study x-rays violence against gender. It assesses the violence effected by impoliteness and acts of violations of even space.

Context

Miss Funtos aspires to get a Ph.D from a reputable university. She suffers from sexual harassments from male lecturers, mental harassment from Prof. Ephraim and verbal violence from the female Prof. Owoyemi, whom she felt that as a female would be of help. The hurting utterances and actions experienced are traumatic but constitute the bulk of the data for the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to:

- highlight infringement on space as face-threatening/violation of tact and agreement maxims.
- highlight the various face-threatening acts effected on-record baldly in the study text.
- examines sexual harassment as violation tact politeness maxim
- assess verbal violence as violation of generosity maxim.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Language is primarily concerned with communication. It is a basic tool for all of man's expressional functions. To Ifechelobi and Nwaenyi (2021 p.1), language does not just reflect the nature of society, but also serves as a primary means of constructing and maintaining that society. Since language is linked with the societal attitudes of human beings and is also affected by their social views and values, people's socio-cultural behaviours, attitudes and thoughts are reflected in their use of language. It is one of the most powerful means through which gender discrimination are perpetrated and reproduced. Aside the referential role or function of language, language performs the social and expressive functions that allow us to do things like – "thinking, boasting, insulting, apologizing, and promising – that convey to others how we feel about them and other things. We also use language to persuade others of our convictions and urge them towards action by crafting the texts that demonstrate the logic and appeal to those convictions" (Fasold & Linton, 2012).

Language as a means of communication finds expression through the spoken and written modes. Language is deployed for all communicative intents. (Ewurum & Njoku, 2018). Language is an essential tool for the tertiary education. Language use in tertiary institution is very important. It serves positively as instructional material for effective classroom activities. At the same time, poor language use in tertiary institutions can cause emotional devastation for learners and poor communicators within departments can render such departments potential pressure cooker. Thus, language becomes a tool for expression of our fears, disillusionment, embarrassment as well as anger and vengeance. Aside language being the instrument of teaching, it is the means of communication between lecturers and students.

Body language is a powerful tool in communication. Non-verbal communication entails the "process of communication through sending and receiving wordless (mostly) visual cues

between people." Social context influences both the linguistic and non-linguistic choices. Wordless or non-verbal communication modes can serve as deadly revolt.

Dike (2018, p.226) sees **gender** as a contemporary universal phenomenon by asserting that gender roles relate to the activities, responsibilities and rights that are considered normal and appropriate for women and men. **Gender** is a socially ascribed attribute which differentiates feminine from masculine.

To Esplen (2009b), gender refers to the range of socially constructed roles, behaviours, attributes, aptitudes, and relative power associated with being female or male in a given society at a particular point in time while gender equality entails women and men having equal opportunities and equal outcomes in life, including equal access to, ownership of, and control over resources and decision making. Esplen, (2009b) further advances that "gender equality entails that women and men are equally valued and have the freedom to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by rigid gender roles, prejudices and discrimination. Accordingly, gender equality presupposes that all human beings, (women and men) are equal and able to realize their fundamental human rights. This study however is not on gender equality. It rather centers on the stripes of violence effected by different gender on a particular gender. It is more of a gender-gender violence on a female Ph.D candidate.

Violence

Francis (2006) has identified three dimensions of violence to include:

- direct violence
- structural violence and
- cultural violence

Direct violence entails physical, emotional as well as psychological violence while structural violence reflects the existence of unjust policies, practices and social structures that engender harm, human sufferings and can lead to death.

Cultural violence involves norms and cultural practices that create injustice and discrimination. Direct violence can be evident in tertiary institutions, although the studies are not very prominent which is a justification for this study because of its psychological as well as emotional violence.

Causes of violence against students in tertiary institutions by lecturers include:

- disregard of the feelings of students
- violation of space
- violation of tact and agreement maxims
- demands as impositions

Psychological abuse incorporates:

- constant belittling
- threats
- intimidation
- humiliation

- restricting students' access to information and assistance.

Violence can be physical or emotional assault.
Psychological violence is a specific form of abuse that does not portray any physical signs on the person suffering it, rather the 'scars' are implanted on the person's mind as a result of the abuser's actions (Wallace, 2005)

Rasool (2005) concludes that about eighty percent of women experience emotional or psychological abuse. This form of violence is considered to be painful because, it is not seen, harder to prove because both the abuser and the abused most times pretend over the situation. However, pretending over the situation does not solve its problem, rather it culminates into pent-up emotions which when unleashed can cause harm to lives and property. Psychological violence has destroyed the peace, trust and confidence of students in various institutions of higher learning. Psychological violence has ruined harmonious relationships with its attendant tension and threat.

United Nations see domestic violence to include exchange in communication that brings shame, embarrassment, fear or disgrace to the person. The scars of emotional and psychological abuse are often deeper. Face-threatening acts can constitute pressure bombs. Domestic abuse is harmful and brings pain.

Proxemics according to Mckay and Davis 2020, is the "study of what one communicates by the way one uses **space**. How far one stands from a person one is talking to, and how one responds to others including one's territory are important **non-verbal statements**.
The father of proxemics, Edward T. Hall, an anthropologist, describes four distinct zones that people unconsciously use as they interact with others as:

1. intimate distance
2. personal distance
3. social distance
4. public distance

Hall, (2006 p.24) asserts that if a person is surrounded by four centric bubbles of personally defined space, the bubbles are largest in front of the individual and smallest at their sides and back. Each zone has a "close and a far" subphase. He insists that generally speaking, the greater the distance between two people interacting, the less intimate their relationship.

"Intimate distance has a close subphase of actually touching and a far subphase of 6 to 18 inches from the body. This is the zone for lovers, close friends, and children holding onto their parents or each other. Non-intimates usually feel embarrassed or threatened if circumstances force them to share this space without non-verbal barriers to project themselves. If eye contact is made, it is brief and often combined with a polite, non-intrusive smile." It is against this backdrop that this study assesses a male lecturer's violation of **space**; the intimate distance, as gender violence.

Non-verbal communication is a term used to describe all human communication events that transcend spoken or written words (Knapp and Hall, 1992, p. 37)
Non-verbal communication behaviours are those actions, vocal qualities and activities that typically accompany a verbal message. These behaviours are usually interpreted as intentional.

According to Burgoon (1994), cited in Verderber & Verderber (2001), "Non-verbal communication is used with regularity among members of a given culture or speech community, and they have agreed-upon interpretations in that culture or speech community" (Verderber & Verderber, 2001, p. 143) The "agreed-upon" interpretations in a culture or speech community depicts ability to "recognize that although people from around the world may interpret them differently, consequently, a smile may mean a positive experience, or it may mean enjoyment of contract, or it may mean enjoyment of contract, or it may simply be a means of **saving face** in an uncomfortable situation."

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Concept of Face in Linguistic Interactions

Goffman (1967) propounded the notion of face which originated from the English 'folk' notion of face, which depicts being embarrassed, humiliated or 'losing face'. Goffman (1967) developed and systemized the notion defining face as "the positive value a person claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during personal contact" (Goffman 1967: 306). Face is also extended to be the image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes. Goffman (1999: 419) further defines face as "a person's sense of self-esteem (positive face) and desire to determine their own course of action" (negative face). 'Face' is a property that all human beings possess that is broadly comparable to self-esteem. Face consequently can be positive or negative.

According to Brown and Levinson's (2006) model (B&L), positive face is a person's wish to be well thought of. Its manifestation may include the desire to have others admire what we value, the desire to be understood by others, and the desire to be treated as a friend and confidant.
Negative face is one's wish not to be imposed on by others and to be allowed to go about one's business unimpeded and with one's rights to be free and self-determined action intact.

Spolsky (2008:87) observes that two ways of showing consideration for people's feelings can be related to the notion of **FACE**. Two aspects of people's feelings enter into face: desires not to be imposed upon (negative face), and desires to be liked, admired, ratified, relate to positively (positive face).

Goffman (1999) stipulates that "any action or utterance, however mild, might conceivably upset the delicate balance of face maintenance is a face-threatening activity (FTA)." There are many kinds of FTAs which occur frequently that can be potentially highly embarrassing. An interactant who is made to lose face will be embarrassed or offended. Goffman (1999) cited in Bloor and Bloor (2007: 102) identifies FTA in the process of talk management to include:

- starting an unsolicited conversation
- challenging an opinion or assertion made by the addressee

- interpreting another person's turn;
- raising a topic known to be unwelcome to the addressee
- changing the topic
- adversely commenting on or directing the addressee's speech (e.g. please speak up! could you please get to the point?)
- raising taboo topics or uttering taboo words;
- ending the interaction

Other verbal FTAs include:

- request for help,
- offer for help,
- "making a pass" in a sexual sense,
- rejecting an offer,
- rejecting a pass.

FTAs are often verbal, performing an FTA without adequate mitigation may be popularly referred to as:

- making a gaffe;
- making a boob;
- dropping a brick;
- dropping a clanger;
- slipping up.

There are also non-linguistic FTAs such as:

- encroaching on another's physical space by, for example, entering someone's home, workshop, office
- making accidental physical contact,
- upsetting someone's drink; inadvertently or deliberately,
- obstructing success
- sitting at the same table
- taking the last available seat/biscuit/spoon,
- failing to recognize someone,
- burping and so on, (p.102)

People who fail to handle threats to their own face and to conceal their distress may be called:

- touchy or
- over sensitive

Power and solidarity are central to all these since they affect the whole nature of the degree to which an act is threatening. This is so because acts that would be threatening when addressing a stranger or a social superior may be deemed on as threatening within the family, to a close friend or to a social inferior or an officer giving an order to a soldier. Even in less extreme situations, participants who take the line of "plain speaking" may use on addressed FTAs. This can be described as being blunt or forthright or, more critical, as rude.

Jackson (2007: 62) sees an utterance that is perceived as insulting as a face-threatening act. Even with intentional challenges to face, the malicious participant may try to undermine the other by surreptitious means. In everyday parlance, such behavior is described as spiteful, bitchy, catty or snide.

The concept of 'face' is present in everyday language in expressions like lose face, save face, shame faced, barefaced (liar, robbery, cheek, etc). The presence of an audience is obviously important in weighing all FTAs (Bloor and Bloor, 2007: 103).

Goffman (1999) cited in Downes (2008: 297) asserts that a participant's face is the image of him or herself in terms of approved social attributes. All the participants in normal conversational situations cooperate to ensure that neither themselves nor others are defaced, out of face, or in the wrong face. But the reverse is the case with language use in Lola Akande's *What It Takes*. The interlocutors deliberately adopt the various utterance types according to function to deface conversational partners 'on record baldly'.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) model stipulate that when one has a face- threatening act to perform, B & L's model person chooses from three superordinate strategies. They are;

i. do the act on-record - baldly, without redress
   - with negative politeness redress
   - with positive politeness redress.
ii. do the act off-record
iii. don't do the act at all.

By 'on-record', B & L means without attempting to hide what one is doing while 'off-record' means acting in such a way as to pretend to hide what one is doing. The practical implication is that when one has a face threatening act to perform, speakers work with an equation in which any distance differential, any power differential and any imposition are computed as: Social distance(D) + Power differential (P) + Ratio of imposition(R) equal to degree of face-threats to be redressed by appropriate Linguistic Strategy (Grundy, 2008, p. 197).
Brown and Levinson (1987) explicate more that speakers take three main variables into account when deciding how to word a face- threatening utterance such as a request or a challenge.

- The power differential between hearer and the speaker (that is, amount of equality/inequality, labelled (P))
- The distance - closeness between them (labelled D)
- The degree of imposition of the content of the utterance (labelled rank R)

They maintain that, other things being equal, the greater the power differential, the greater the distance and the greater the imposition, the more careful and more indirect the speaker would be. In our sample utterances, the interlocutors are not equal and because the lecturers are ranked higher in power differential, they are not tactical in their language use. The degree of imposition ranks higher(R). Instances of face-threatening acts in Lola Akande's *What It Takes* and its effect at destroying one's image and self-perception because of the psychological trauma such face-attacks create in hindering achievement of goals are accessed in the study.

A major relevant concept in the analysis of verbal violence and impoliteness is politeness principles.

Leech's (1983) Politeness Maxims

Leech's (1983) propounds seven maxims of politeness:

1. Tact maxim which states that interactants should:
    a. minimise the expression of beliefs which imply cost to others and maximise the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to others.
    b. minimise the expression of impolite beliefs and maximise expression of polite beliefs
2. Generosity maxim stipulates that interactants should:
    a. minimise benefit to self
    b. maximise cost to self
3. Approbation maxim states that speakers should:
    a. minimise dispraise of others
    b. maximise praise or approval of others
4. Modesty maxim stipulates that interactants should:
    a. minimise the expression of praise to self
    b. maximise the expression of dispraise of self
5. Agreement Maxim states:
    a. minimise the expression of disagreement between self and others.
    b. maximise agreement between self and others.
6. Sympathy maxim states that interlocutors should:
    a. minimise antipathy between self and others
    b. maximise sympathy between self and others
7. Pollyanna Principle Stipulates that:
    a. people should look at the bright side instead of the gloomy side in commenting about others. this accounts for why no negative things are said about the dead.

DATA ANALYSIS

Infringement on Space as face-threatening / Violations of Tact and Agreement Maxims

Tact maxims stipulate that interactants should "minimize expression of beliefs which imply benefit to others." Accordingly, interlocutors should say what will benefit others, not what will be of cost to them. This maxim demands interactants to "minimise imposition" and "give deference". This maxim highly communicates speaker's want not to infringe on the hearer. According to Svarova (2008 p9), "addressers should indicate that they are reluctant to infringe. In the verbal language use of lecturers in the study text, the reverse is the case as the conditions of this maxim do not hold in any way.

Text 1: Dr. Durojaiye mirrors my action; he sits beside me, encroaching into my **space**. p.27
Text 2: "You need a man", he breathes into my ears." My skin crawls at his **proximity**
Text 3: "Don't you think so?" … he's still leaning over me and my senses are hyper-aware
Text 4: "He's playing with my braids now, running his hands over them. I cringe, gritting my teeth. p. 27

Text 5: What's going on? I glance nervously at the door; he follows my eyes with his and says, "it's locked." p. 27
Text 6: An alarm bell sounds in my head. What does he want?
Text 7: Suddenly, he cups my chin in his right palm, raising my face so that we stare at each other. His eyes glow with amusement
Text 8: "You want to pretend that you don't play?" he asks, **pointing his chin at my breasts.**
Text 9: He gets up swiftly and walks toward the door, turns the knob to ensure it's locked, then removes the key, puts it in his right pocket and **sits beside me**
Text 10: I find courage and mumble a demurral but he ignores me. I watch, open-mouthed, as he clasps my hands, giving them a gentle squeeze. p. 27
Text 11: Then he starts to caress my cheek, running his fingers down to my chin, which he grasps between his thumb. Not satisfied, he leans forward and attempts to place a kiss on my lips. p. 28

In the above texts, Dr. Durojaiye, violates both the tact and agreement maxims as he impinges on the intimate space and distance subphase of 6 to 18 inches which is for lovers and intimate friends for a Ph.D candidate he sees for the first time as he:
Text 1: encroaches into her space
Text 2: breathes into her ear
Text 3: still leaning over her
Text 4: ... plays with her braids, running his hand over them
Text 7: ... he cups her chin in his right palm, raising her face so that they stare at each other
Text 8: pointing his chin at her breast
Text 9: he ... sits beside her
Text 10: ... he claps her hands, giving them a gentle squeeze
Text 11: he starts to caress her cheek, running his fingers down her chin which he grasps between his thumb … and attempts to plant a kiss on her lips

He impinges on Funto, the Ph.D candidate's space. He maximises imposition on her and denies her deference. He refuses to accord her the relative deference. He refuses to accord her the relative immunity from imposition. He impinges on the hearer. The tact maxim is oriented to intimidate the student. He exploits forced intimacy to maximise imposition by encroaching on intimate space / distance.
Text 12: Do yourself a favour by agreeing to work with me. You are extremely lucky to have someone like me showing interest in you. (P. 28)
He maximizes cost to the candidate as he maximizes benefit to self thereby violating the tact maxim.
Text 13: FUNTO; Again, I'm aware of his eyes on me, regarding me. I peek up at him and watch as he unbuttons his shirt at the top so that I can see a sprinkling of hair. I gape at him in embarrassment. I'm still looking at him, wondering why he's gone this far, **when he suddenly loosens his trouser button** and, and, what! Am I in the real world or a trance?
Have I levitated? (p. 29)

Text 14: Dr. Durojaiye **has his manhood out** of his boxers, holding it to me and muttering, "**Rub it for me baby. Come on now**, suck me, sweetheart. It won't bite you, play with me darling. (P. 29)

Text 15: My mouth drops open. I squawk. I try to keep my revulsion in check. Averting my eyes, I rise and attempt to walk to the door. I have only taken a few steps **when he comes after me, lounges at me, pushing me, pressing into my belly.** He's muttering "come on now, **you've seen my own, I've got to see yours too, you must suck me,** you have to suck me, damn you" Is he raving mad? (P. 30)

In texts 13, 14 and 15, Dr Durojaiye's imposition takes another dimension. He locks the door and attempts to rape the lady.

Text 15: … "he comes after me, lounges at me, pushing me against the wall, his erection pushing, pressing into my belly. He's muttering "come on now, you've seen my own, I've got to see yours too, you **must suck me**, you have to suck me, damn you!

This is an imposition. The relatively high imposition evidenced in the lecturer's sexual harassment results in violation of tact and agreement.

The linguistic choice "you **must suck me**" is an imperative which connotes **force** and **marked threat** as well as **imposition**. The intimate distance is violently encroached upon. He encroached on Funto's physical space to intimidate her. This is a non-linguistic face-threatening act that is a direct violence. Raising **taboo utterances** and **taboo words** are quite embarrassing face-threatening acts.

Violation of Tact

Text 16 Prof: If you are serious about becoming a Ph.D candidate under my supervision, you must have thirty thousand naira to get the consent letter you are require to submit at the PG School. After your registration, I will **spell** out other terms of engagement to you. (P. 38)

On-Record Baldly Face-Threatening Act

"On-record baldly" act has no linguistically encoded redress in verbal abuse and direct violence. Face-threatening acts are effected with three strategies:

i. do the act on record – baldly, without redress
   – with negative politeness redress
   – with positive politeness redress
ii. do the act off record and
iii. don't do the act at all.

The utterances from the text that depict violations of tact maxim of politeness are analysed here.

Text 17: Don't delude yourself. There are practical things that you will require as you go along. You will need books and other study materials. What has God got to do with that, or are you a religious fundamentalist? Where are you from? (P. 36)

Text 18: I'm from Ibadan, Oyo state. I'm not a religious fundamentalist, ma.

Text 19: Tell me truthfully then, do you have people who can support you financially? (P. 36)

Text 20: I have my mother

Text 21: "Good, what does your mother do?"

Text 22: "She sells yam flour at Beere market in Ibadan", I explained calmly but this only elicits raucous **laughter** from her, making me flinch. Is she mocking me? (P. 36)

Text 23: "If that isn't interesting, tell me what is" The sarcasm in her voice ravages my soul; I cringe. "You want to do a Ph.D?" She asks and I nod (P. 36)

Text 24: She resumes talking. "You are a terrific dreamer", she says with a **throated laugh.** My heart sinks unbidden, and unwelcome tears pool in my eyes. Prof. Owoyemi looks into my eyes, our eyes lock, mine frosty and hers intense

Text 25: "I will be straight with you, umm-what's your first name?"

Text 26: "Funto" I mumbled

Text 27: "Yes, Funto, you don't talk like someone who's ready to embark on a Ph.D programme. **An unemployed, husbandless, middle-aged woman whose only relation sells Yam flour in a local market seems more suited for a tramp".** (P. 36 – 37)

Text 28: "When did **loafers become qualified to dream let alone aspire for a doctorate degree?"** She queries, fixing me with a stern gaze (Pg. 37)

Use of Global Labels as Strategy for Face-Threatening Acts

Situation-laden lexical items as global label insults are deployed to humiliate interlocutor

- religious fundamentalist
- raucous laughter
- terrific dreamer
- throated laugh
- an unemployed
- husbandless
- middle-aged woman
- more suited for a tramp
- loafer

Prof. Owoyemi adopts 'global label insult' to effect 'on-record baldly face-threatening act'. The face right of interlocutor is put at risk by the lexical choices deployed by the lecturer. She hauls verbal insults like "an **unemployed, husbandless, middle-aged woman** whose only relation sells yam flour...." Such lexical choices as dreamer and loafer put the face rights of interlocutor partner at risk. The verbal insults deface the Ph.D candidate. This is effected on-record baldly without mincing words to discountenance the candidate. The lecturer's lexical deployment is derogatory and very hurtful face-threatening act in which the concept of "considerateness" is frontally jettisoned. The non-redressive lexemes work to pragmatically deface and discourage the candidate.

The pragmatic import of the text is that her poverty level is a barrier to her academic pursuit.

Text 27: … An unemployed husbandless, middle-aged woman whose only relation sells yam flour in a local market seems more suited for a tramp (P. 36-37)

She further runs the face-threatening act with an insulting interrogative - Text 28- "When did loafers become qualified to dream let alone aspire for a doctorate degree?"

Interrogative as Face-Threatening Act

Text 27: When did **loafers** become qualified to **dream** let alone aspire for a **doctorate degree**? (P. 37)

Interrogative in the above text does not work as information eliciting technique, but as strategy for defacing the "other". The interrogative has the pragmatic goal of humiliation.

The interlocutor adopts the face-threatening strategy of "do the act on-record baldly" without any form of linguistic redress or hedging. Funto is qualified as a **loafer** who is not even qualified to dream, let alone pursue a Ph.D degree. The pragmatic import is that those without huge bank accounts should not aspire to embark on a Ph.D.

Another humiliating interrogative is from Dr. Durojaiye.

Text 29: Why are you acting like a kid? You are a mature woman; you have a daughter. So, this isn't the first time a man is trying to play with you (P. 27)

Text 30: Do you want to do your registration or do you want to play the rebellious little child? (P. 30)

Text 31: Did you think I would write such an important letter just like that? (P.37)

The above interrogative is still a face-face threat as it still mocks Funto, the Ph.D **poverty** as the Ph.D candidate asks in return:

"Is she angry, upset or shocked that I dare to aspire to embark on a Ph.D without a huge bank account?"

Text 32: Don't delude yourself. There are practical things that you will require as you go along. You'll need books and other study materials. What has God got to do with that, or are you a religious fundamentalist? (P.39)

The above interrogatives are on-record baldly face-threatening acts. Funto is mocked of being childish because she refuses to sleep with the randy lecturer in text 30 and of being poor in text 32.

Violations of Agreement Maxims

Some of the sampled data illustrate interlocutor's violation of agreement maxims.

Agreement maxim states that interlocutors should:

- minimize disagreement between self and others and
- maximize agreement between self and others.

This is in tandem with Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies of seek agreement and avoid disagreement. Wadhaugh (2010: 291) observes that "we must not always be polite, for we may be quite impolite to others on occasion. "However, we could not be so if there are no rules of politeness to be broken.

Text 33 Funto: I'm appalled by your crudity, Prof. I came to you full of hope, especially as you are a woman like me. I thought women are more compassionate, empathetic and mature. I thought women were not driven by blind, obsessive and dangerous ambition. I thought women didn't make unreasonable demands from anyone and especially from you… (P. 39)

Text 34: Prof.: I know your type. You are among the ignorant women who foolishly condone and encourage male domination by believing that women don't deserve the good things of life. Why should my gender prevent me from enjoying what my other colleagues enjoy? (P.39)

Text 35 Prof: Shut the hell up and get out of my office! I know your type (P.39)
Text 36 Funto: You are right about one thing, Prof. I don't wish to be your student and people like you ought to be flushed out of our country's revered ivory towers (P. 39)
Text 37 Prof: Get out! I don't need an insolent bitch like you as my student. (P. 39)
Text 38 Funto: Nonsense! (P. 39)

Funto in **text 33** becomes confrontational too. She has endured Prof. Owoyeni's insults and ridicule enough and decides to go 'on-record baldly" to deface the professor irrespective of her social status. Interlocutors' utterances can hardly follow socio-cultural demands when their rights are violated. The interlocutor's goal is to harass and humiliate these agents of extortion and intimidation as well as imposition in texts 32-37. Imposition and intimidation are the order of the day and the only option is to question these agents of discouragement without mincing words.
For Dr. Durojaiye, his randy moves have to be stopped in an aggressive face-threatening manner.
Text 39: Is he raving mad? I **claw ruthlessly at his exposed chest like a vicious hyena, digging my nails deeper and deeper into his chest** until I feel his hitherto turgid manhood shrink dramatically.

The above aggressive fight for freedom is the climax of the violation of the agreement politeness maxim. The one of lower status humiliates one of higher status by maximizing disagreement between self and other.

Violation of Pollyana Maxim
Pollyana principles states that people should look at the bright side instead of the gloomy side of life. In the texts below, people are rather pessimistic rather than optimistic in the pursuit of Ph.D degree. The time frame can drag from eight to ten years.
Text 40: "You think I am not aware that people spend as long as ten years trying to get a Ph.D?"
Text 41: You got it all wrong Ma'am! Ph.D is a three-year programme" P.15
Text 42: Now I know you are the ignorant one. You know Agbeke, don't you?"
Text 43: Oh yes, of course I know her, Mama Tunde?
Text 44: That's her. It's the same Tunde I have in mind. He's been trying to get a Ph.D for eight years without success. He came to visit his mother last week and after he left, I asked how far her son has gone and she said the story is the same. (P. 15)
Text 45: I shifted uncomfortably on my seat, perching at the edge of the cushion chair. My mother ignores me and continues talking.
Text 46; I ask Agbeke when her son will become the doctor, she has repeatedly boasted to us about. She said she asked Tunde the same question and **his response was that "no one is ever able to predict the finishing date of a doctorate programme**." (P. 15)
Non-Verbal Acts as Pollyana Maxim
Text 47: My heart sinks
Text 48: Unbidden and unwelcome tears pool in my eyes
Text 49: Prof. Owoyemiu looks directly into my eyes, our eyes lock, mine frosty, hers intense

Text 50: I shift uncomfortably, perching at the edge of the couch. He gets up swiftly and walks toward the door, turns the knob to ensure its locked, then removes the key, puts in in his right place pocket, and comes back and sits beside me. I look questioning at him but he says nothing. A wicked smile etches at the corner of his mouth (P. 27)

- … his lips inches from my ear. (P. 26)

Text 51: He breathes into my ear. My skin crawls at his proximity (P. 26)

- … he is still leaning over me and all my senses are hyper-aware. (P. 27)

Text 52: Why is he acting this way in heaven's name? (p. 27)

Text 53: What's going on? (p. 27)

Text 54: What does he want? (p. 27)

Text 55: His behviour is awkward and embarrassing and inside I'm screaming "Back off," (P. 27)

Text 56: I glance nervously at the door; he follows my eyes with his and says, "it's locked" (P. 27)

Text 57: An alarm bell sounds in my head, what does he want? (P. 27)

Text 58 I'm still looking at him, wondering why he's gone this far, when he suddenly loosens his trouser button and, and, what! Am I in the real world or trance? Have I levitated?

Text 59: A part of me wants to laugh at her crudity, another part is horrified, but there is also a part that is seething with humiliation at the undeserved insult she's been hauling at me. This part wants to dominate my psyche right now because hot tears stand in my eyes (P. 38)

Text 60: My blood is boiling with uncontrollable rage (P. 38)

- Damn Prof. 'Cash and Carry'!
- … I'm back in the HOD's office. I sink into a chair, hunching my shoulders. Why in heaven's name are my hopes and dreams being cruelly dashed?

Her dreams and hope are cruelly dashed as well as that of a thousand and one candidates out there. The feeling of hopelessness depicts the violation of the Pollyanna maxim. The lexemes "**cruelly dashed**" illustrates the pragmatic import of the Pollyanna maxim.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study examines language as used to express the interlocutors' experience of the reality of the challenges and violence associated with seeking higher qualifications, Ph.D in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Utterances and actions as well as non-verbal language use that constitute violence as experienced face-threatening acts in Lola Akande's *What It Takes* are explored and articulated.

Gender-Gender violence as various forms of face-threatening acts permeate Akande's *What It Takes* as male lecturers perpetrate their forms of violence and even female lecturers execute theirs. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated language and violence in the study text using Goffman's (1967) face-work and Leech's (1983) Politeness principle model to account for the various face-threatening and violations of Politeness maxims

The violence effected by violation of space as face-threatening act is highlighted. Sexual harassment as violation of tact politeness maxim is examined.
Verbal violence as generosity maxim is assessed. The various face-threatening acts effected on-record baldly in the study texts are highlighted. The summary of the findings at the level of the pragmatic analysis indicate:

- violations of the negative face as one's wish not to be imposed on by others

Out of the three strategies for face-threatening acts such as:

- do the act on-record baldly,
- do the act off-record
- don't do the act at all,

It is discovered that all the face-threatening acts are effected on-record baldly without any linguistic redress. The law of "considerateness" is at low scale. The lecturers voice out their insult without mincing words and without consideration for the face worth and face wants of the students – the interlocutor partner.
Dr. Durojaiye's violation of Funto's space, the intimate distance is a direct gender violence and violation of tact politeness maxim as imposition.
Most of the non-verbal communications are violations of Pollyana Politeness maxims designed to show the students devastation and hopelessness. Verbal face-threatening acts includes Funto's rejection of Dr. Durojaiye's pass violently.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the tact and agreement maxims are predominantly violated in the lecturers'/students' interactions and discourses as students are imposed upon by lecturer's violations of intimate space and even demand for money. Language of extortion in the tertiary institutions is intimidatory and face-threatening.
Both the negative and positive principles of politeness are violated.
All face-threatening acts are effected predominantly "on-record baldly without redress".
Dr. Durojaiye raises taboo topics and utters taboo words which violate tact politeness maxims and constitute direct violence. He makes a pass in a sexual sense. Funto's rejection of the pass violently is a face-threatening act. Face-threatening acts are both verbal and non-verbal.
The non-linguistic face-threatening acts discovered in the investigation include:

- encroaching into interlocutors partner's space
- encroaching the intimate distance as near rape.
- making a deliberate physical contact.

All of Prof. Owoyemi's utterances to Funto are all on-record baldly face-threatening acts without linguistic redress.
There is marked high degree of imposition which ranks (R).
It is concluded that poor language use by lecturers, the higher power, can be a cog in the wheel of conducive atmosphere for academic accomplishment. Furthermore, language of extortion in the tertiary institution of study text is intimidatory and face-threatening.
Language use of lecturers to students in the tertiary institution of the study predominantly violates tact and agreement maxims being mainly impositions. Violation of space in the study is direct violence since it is geared towards rape.

There is highly marked Violations of Pollyana Politeness Maxims as the face-threat becloud the Ph.D aspirant's self-perception and ambition as her dreams and hopes are cruelly dashed.

> FUNTO: "I'm back in the HOD's office. I sink into a chair, hunching my shoulders. Why in heaven's name, are my hopes and dreams being dashed, cruelly dashed?"

The interrogation demonstrates the interlocutor's utter hopelessness/despair

Recommendations

Gender-based violence in institutions of higher learning and its harmful effects should be addressed and reduced so that students would not be frustrated out of their ambitions of earning degrees.

Language programmes are for students. If lecturers' language use – verbal and non-verbal, should constitute obstacles for learners to continue their programmes, then, the desired enhancement and innovations would be fruitless.

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