

Intentionality and Impoliteness Strategies in Readers' Responses to Posts on OMAM's Facebook Page

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Abstract

This paper examines the connection between impoliteness strategies and intentionality in readers' responses to posts on “Once a Mum always a Mum” (OMAM) is a private group on Facebook for women. This study examines impoliteness strategies employed in readers' responses to posts on OMAM's Facebook forum and the way they are used to reflect the intentions of the readers. Fifty readers' responses to three posts on OMAM's Facebook page are purposively selected and analysed using Culpeper's (1996, 2011) impoliteness strategies and intentionality as theoretical framework. This research finds that four impoliteness strategies are employed: bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness and sarcasm or mock impoliteness in readers' responses to three posts on OMAM. Negative impoliteness strategies feature the most, while withhold impoliteness did not feature. The study also reveals that respondents use impoliteness strategies with the intention of correcting, advising or rebuking rather than hurting or offending a poster. Impoliteness strategies are used to communicate what readers consider as the best view, opinion or advice in establishing intimacy with unknown persons on the group's Facebook forum.

Keywords: Linguistic Impoliteness, Impoliteness Strategies, Intentionality, Readers' Responses

Introduction

Communication is no longer limited to face-to-face interactions but extends to the use of technology in exchanging information be it ideational or relational. Through computer mediation it has become possible to use technological means to communicate such as computer, internet, mobile phones, video conferencing, etc. Locher (2010, p.1) states that Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is a text-based affair and thus within the

range of interest to linguists. It is as real as offline interactions. Wood and Smith (2005, p.20) are of the view that when people interact online, they may “consider the effects of online interaction just as impactful as those one might encounter in face-to-face scenario”. People use different types of online platforms to communicate or associate with other people, they participate in discussions or express their opinions, views, advices or even give answers to questions posted online. There are rules that are covertly or outrightly stated to guide social interactions online. These rules may also have been learnt as one grows up. However, the choice of words used in communicating online may be polite or impolite based on the intention of the people engaged in an online interaction. The use of polite language seeks to keep or save the face of others. In contrast, people may employ language in an impolite way to attack or threaten the others' face. Dynel (2015) is of the view that Computer-Mediated Communication is a fertile ground for linguistic impoliteness, because it is widely acknowledged that social media and internet users' anonymity instills a sense of impunity and lack of inhibitions in them, whereby it facilitates the occurrence of impoliteness strategies.

Although studies abound on the use of linguistic impoliteness in online discourse: Taiwo, Akinwotu and Kpolugbo (2020); Oyebade (2018); Ajayi and Bamgbose (2019); Blitvich (2010), Neurauter-Kessels (2011), not many approaches to impoliteness in CMC have looked at how intentionality may necessitate linguistic impoliteness. Impoliteness strategies may be used in performing certain illocutionary acts other than causing offence. They may be employed by a respondent/reader as suitable response to posts on social media depending on the situational context. Readers' intentions in using impolite expressions may be to correct, rebuke, advise rather than hurt or offend a poster.

This paper, therefore, examines the connection between intentionality and linguistic impoliteness strategies used by readers in responses to questions, jokes, advice, prayer requests, sayings and others posted on “Once a Mum Always a Mum” (OMAM). “Once a Mum, Always a Mum” (henceforth OMAM) is a private group on Facebook for women. The mantra of the group is that “every female is a mum”. It is a platform where issues regarding women, marriage, motherhood, children, women empowerment, recipes, relationships, etc are discussed. The group allows women of various age groups and status to share different life

experiences ranging from pregnancy, child bearing, marriage, relationships, birthday/wedding celebrations, to love stories and so on. Many women on the group's forum, every day share their life experiences, some post questions and seek advice. These women's identities are usually concealed as their questions/stories are sent to the group admin to post for readers to respond or make comments. The group was established in 2014 and there are rules governing its activities. The rules are: be kind and courteous, no hate speech or bully, no promotions or spam and respect everyone's privacy. These rules are mainly for members to be polite in their responses to posts on the group's forum; however, they are many instances of responses that are considered linguistically impolite. Therefore, the objectives of this study are to identify impoliteness strategies employed by readers' in their responses to posts on OMAM and to examine how these impoliteness strategies reflect the readers' intentions.

Literature Review

Studies on Linguistic Impoliteness Strategies in Social Media Discourse

The term “social media” refers to the wide range of Internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute to user-created content, or join online communities (Ningsih 2018, p.23). Blogs, Wikis, social bookmarking, social networking sites, status-update services, virtual world content and media-sharing sites are kinds of internet services associated with social media.

Investigation into linguistic impoliteness strategies in online discourse is gaining more attention with the use of the internet and computer-mediated communication. Various online platforms provide data and have become objects of interest to linguists. This paper looks at some studies that have been done on linguistic impoliteness in online discourse. Ningsih (2018) investigates impoliteness strategies realized by social media users in celebrities' Instagram posts. Using Culpeper's impoliteness strategies as theoretical framework, she analyses comments made by social media users in three celebrities' Instagram pages: Justin Bieber, Kim Kardashian and Logan Paul. The study reveals that only four impoliteness strategies are used by social media users in their comments in the celebrities' Instagram pages. Negative impoliteness was the highest

strategy used and the least strategy used was bald on record impoliteness and sarcasm or mock politeness. Withhold politeness strategy was not found in the comments made by the users. Closely related to Ningsih's research is Erza and Hamzah (2018) who examine the type of impoliteness strategy used by haters on Instagram artists. The study compares male artists and female artists on Lambe-Turah's Instagram account because the account showcases artists' daily life. Two hundred comments formed the data of the study, sourced from the comments contained in the Instagram pages of Lambe-Turah. The study employed Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness theory and the results of the analysis showed that positive impoliteness occurred the most.

Zhong (2018) also using Culpeper's anatomy of impoliteness strategies, explores the types of impoliteness strategies used by Chinese in a computer-mediated communication context. Quantitative results of the study revealed that four impoliteness strategies are employed in Chinese computer-mediated communication: bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness and sarcasm or mock impoliteness. Withhold politeness strategy was absent from the analysis of the data. The data containing a pool of 5,873 impolite utterances, supports Culpeper's anatomy of the impoliteness strategies and also produces more empirical data for the online linguistic impoliteness in the context of China.

Ibrahim (2020) investigates impolite expressions used by people through the social media platform “Twitter” and the effect of the variables (age and sex) on the use of impolite tweets on political issues. The study analysed 100 tweets, 89 of which reflected the ways in which male and female language users can give their stances via different strategies of impoliteness on tweets. The findings of the study reveal that there is wide use of impolite expressions in the social media “Tweets”, especially in tweets, meant to react to political posts. According to age criterion, (15-25) year old Twitter users rarely have tweets on political posts, while middle age (25-35) year old Twitter users record the highest percentage of the analysed data, they use more impolite tweets than older or younger users. Male twitters recorded the highest frequency in using impolite expressions depending on different strategies of impoliteness, especially the negative and bald on record impolite strategies, while withhold off-record strategies recorded the least use. Female twitters of (55-65) years old recorded the lowest frequency in using impolite expressions in their tweets which is

similar to impolite strategies used by males.

Taiwo, Akinwotu, Kpolugbo (2020) equally investigate interactional positioning and impoliteness in two Nigerian online political forum: *Nairaland Forum* and *Gistmania*. Drawing insights from Hyland's (2005) model of stance and engagement as well as Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness strategies as their theoretical framework, they analysed forty posts together with their comments totaling sixty-five thousand, five hundred and sixty-two (65,562) elicited from political sections of the two websites between December, 2019 and January, 2020. They find that bald-on-record and negative impoliteness are predominant in the discussions. They conclude that impoliteness thrives in political debates online because of the uninhibited context, which gives freedom to participants to deliberately inject invective language in order to set the emotional temperature of the discourse and cause disaffection among the participants and the group they represent.

Although, the studies above discuss linguistic impoliteness used in different online platforms, this study is different because its focus is to examine the intentions behind readers' responses and how it is reflected through the impoliteness strategies that are employed in responses to posts on OMAM's Facebook forum.

Theoretical Framework

Linguistic Impoliteness and Intentionality

Linguistic impoliteness is an extension of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (Culpeper 199, p.350). Culpeper (1996, p.355) admits that there exists a connection between impoliteness and politeness in a way that impoliteness is a parasite of politeness rather than an unproblematic opposite to politeness. Politeness theory seeks to explain ways in which people use linguistic strategies to maintain or promote harmonious interactions. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is based on Goffman's face notion and Grice's maxims. The theory distinguishes between positive face and negative face. Positive face deals with the desire to be recognized, accepted, liked or treated the same as other social beings, while negative face deals with the need to be independent to have freedom of action and not being impeded by others. The notion of face plays a crucial role in the distinction between politeness and impoliteness. Politeness has been regarded as the speaker's intention to endorse the face

and impoliteness as the speaker's intention to attack it. Like politeness theory most definitions of impoliteness have focused on the notion of face. Some of these definitions are mentioned below:

Goffman (1967) refers to impoliteness as aggressive face work which later was supported by Watts (2003). Locher and Bousfield (2008:3) define impoliteness as “behavior that is face-aggravating in a particular context”. Bousfield (2008, p.60-261) defines impoliteness as “constituting issues of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face-threatening acts”. Based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, Culpeper (1996, p.355) initially defines impoliteness as “...the use of communicative strategies that are designed to attack face which cause social conflict and disharmony”. Later on, he added other dimensions to the definition of the acts of impoliteness; one of which is intentionality. Culpeper (2011, p.50) gives a new definition of impoliteness, he states that the revised definition addresses flaws of the earlier definition. His revised definition of impoliteness is:

Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and/or beliefs about social organization, including, in particular, how one person's or group's identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviours are viewed negatively when they conflict with how one expects them to be. Such behavior always have to be presumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence. Various factors can exacerbate how offensive an impolite behavior is taken to be, including for example whether one understand a behavior to be strongly intentional or not (p.50).

Therefore, this study aims at examining how readers' linguistically impolite responses attack or threaten the face of posters who make posts on OMAM's Facebook page. The study also seeks to investigate how readers' impolite responses can reveal their intentions and the illocutionary acts that are performed.

Intentionality

Intentionality is an important element in impoliteness theory, Culpeper and Hardaker (2017, p.3) assert that it is important to distinguish between intentional cases of impoliteness (where someone intends to offend, hatches a plan to carry out that offence, and carries it out with full awareness) and accidental cases where somebody causes offence unintentionally. Bousfield's (2008, p.72) for instance; states that "impoliteness constitutes the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflict verbal face threatening acts which are purposefully delivered: (1) unmitigated and (2) with deliberate aggression". In other words, impoliteness acts may be intentional especially when they are meant to hurt or cause offence. To buttress this, Culpeper (2005, p.38) states that impoliteness can come about when, the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally or the hearer perceives behaviour as intentionally face-attacking or a combination of both.

However, Culpeper (2011:50-53) notes that full intentionality is not a necessary condition of impoliteness. He explains that not all impoliteness is intentional, because (1) sometimes the producer of impoliteness is not aware of the impoliteness effects they are causing (2) the act is considered impolite nevertheless, because the producer is blamed for not predicting those effects. Terkourafi (2008) equally avers that impoliteness captures unintentional face-threat. This shows that sometimes impolite utterances or expressions may not be intentional. This is the focus of this study; to examine how impolite readers' responses to posts on OMAM Facebook forum reveal the intentions behind them. Therefore, Culpeper's theory on intentionality in impoliteness provides an adequate framework for examining the intentions behind the impolite responses to posts on OMAM facebook forum.

Impoliteness Strategies

Culpeper (1996:355) builds a framework for his impoliteness strategies in relation to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies. In his view, impoliteness strategies are very much the parasite of politeness. Each of the politeness super strategies has its opposite impoliteness super strategies. They are opposite in terms of orientation to face. Instead of enhancing or supporting face, impoliteness super strategies are a way of attacking the face (Culpeper, 1996: 356). He proposes five super strategies:

1. Bald on record impoliteness: It is a strategy that has direct, clear and unambiguous threatening effects to the hearer's face.
2. Positive impoliteness: It is a strategy that threatens hearer's positive face wants. For example: "ignore, snub the other", "exclude the other from an activity", "disassociate from the other", "be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic", "use inappropriate identity markers", "use obscure or secretive language", "seek disagreement", "make the other feel uncomfortable", "use taboo words" and "call the other name" (Culpeper, 1996:357-358).
3. Negative impoliteness: It is a strategy that attacks hearer's negative face wants. For example: "frighten, condescend, scorn or ridicule", "do not treat the other seriously", "invade the other's space", "explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect", "put the other's indebtedness on record" (Culpeper, 1996: 358).
4. Sarcasm or mock impoliteness: It is a strategy where the face of the hearer is threatened through the use of insincere politeness strategies.
5. Withhold politeness: It is a strategy by which the impoliteness is achieved when a speaker fails to express politeness being expected.

This study adopts Culpeper's impoliteness strategies as a theoretical framework in analyzing the data for this paper. This is to identify and categorise linguistic impoliteness strategies employed in readers' responses to posts on OMAM.

Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative design. The data consists of readers' responses to three posts on the OMAM Facebook forum. The justification for this choice of data is to examine the role of intentions or intentionality in the use of impoliteness strategies. Purposive sampling technique is used in selecting data for this study; fifty linguistically impolite readers' responses are selected from three posts on the OMAM platform. The three posts are sent by three different women to the group administrator, who conceals their identities. The posts generate a lot of

responses some of which are impolite in spite of the group's rules instructing readers to avoid using impolite expressions. Culpeper's (1996, 2011) impoliteness strategies and intentionality is used in analysing the data for this study. For the sake of analysis, screenshots of each post and comments generated from the posts are presented. Readers' responses considered by the researcher as impolite are identified and categorized into each of the impoliteness strategies based on the criteria proposed by Culpeper (1996) for identifying and categorizing impoliteness strategies and the intentions behind them are inferred from their context of use.

Post 1 posted 31st June, 2021 on OMAM Facebook Page:



Table 1: Analysis of Readers' Responses to Post 1 and Impoliteness Strategies Performed

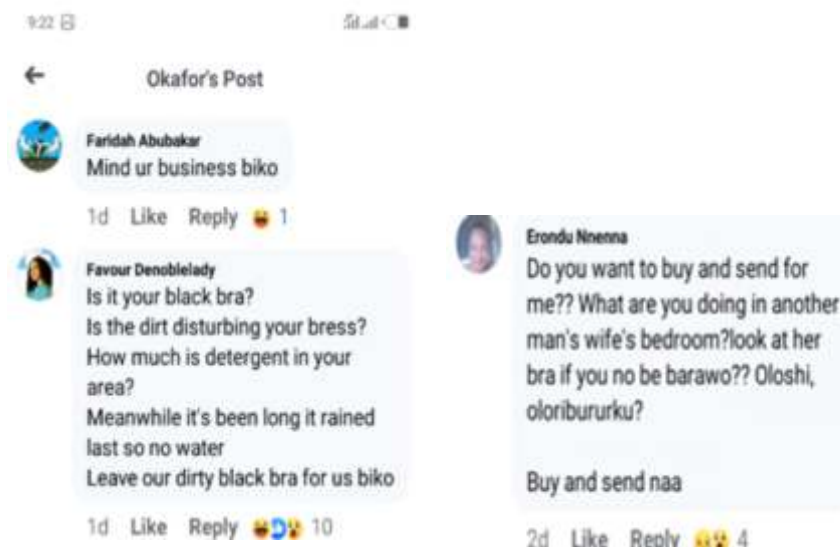
S/N	Reader's Responses	Impoliteness Strategies
1.	You dey find wetin nor dey fine u	Bald on record impoliteness (direct, clear and unambiguous)
2.	I don't know what to say	Positive impoliteness
3.	Am speechless o	Positive impoliteness
4.	Another post pls	Negative impoliteness (ridicule, do not treat the poster seriously, belittle the poster)
5.	Been busy is very important in life	Negative impoliteness (ridicule)
6.	Mtchewwww	Negative impoliteness (Condescend, scorn)
7.	Next post pls	Negative impoliteness (do not treat the poster seriously, belittle the poster)
8.	Na like this we go dey while away time til...2023	Negative impoliteness (ridicule, belittle the poster)
9.	Madam madam madam get it into your head that you have 2 sons and your 2 sons are brothers Treat them same way and stop looking for trouble where there is none	Bald on record (direct, clear and unambiguous)
10.	What type of childish story is this? Mmhhhh	Negative impoliteness (belittle the poster, ridicule)
11.	This one sef na issue? Nawa!	Negative impoliteness (belittle and ridicule the poster)
12.	U done start wetin u no fit finish Y u tell the boy to come live with una? The mama do die? Mtcheew	Negative impoliteness (invades poster's space)

- 13. You are supposed to be focused on your child and child's future, you are busy worrying on the product of your husband's infidelity. Abeggii goan sit down. You don't have a case. Bald on record impoliteness
- 14. No case here Negative impoliteness (belittles the post)
- 15. This time na clothe wahala, no be husband/wife matter again. This one too na problem? Just asking Negative impoliteness (belittles the poster's post)
- 16. At my age I don't comment on nonsense post Negative impoliteness (ridicules the post)
- 17. Ahhh this post is so annoying Bald on record impoliteness
- 18. Useless post. Whatever you would have done if they were your son's own eee, do same to them. Bald on record impoliteness

Post 2 (see post below) posted 26th July, 2021 on OMAM Facebook Page



Some Linguistically Impolite Responses to Post 2



Analysis of Readers' Responses from Post 2 and Impoliteness Strategies Performed

Table 2:

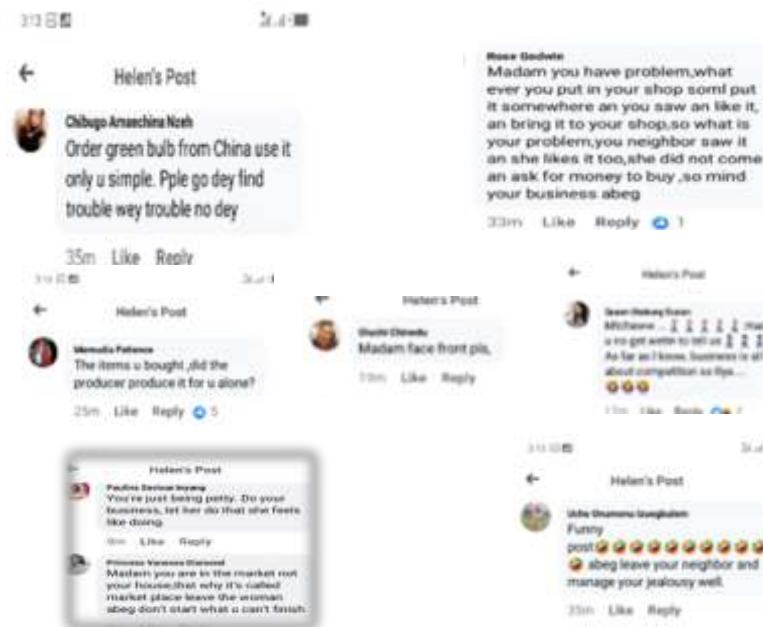
S/No	Reader's Responses	Impoliteness Strategies employed
19.	Change your own first biko, am not like you	Bald on record impoliteness
20.	E no concern you abi na your body I wear am	Bald on record impoliteness
21.	See where u wan use head hit wall...no face front waka u hear	Bald on record impoliteness)
22.	Pls buy me another one so I can change it since is only u that know what I have n also know is long	Negative impoliteness (ridicule)

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 23. | Mind your business biko | Bald on record impoliteness |
| 24. | Is it your black bra?
Is the dirt disturbing your bress?
How much is detergent in your area?
Meanwhile it's been long it rained last so no water leave our dirty black bra for us biko | Negative impoliteness (invade the poster's space) |
| 25. | Do you want to buy and sent for me? What are you doing in another man's wife's bedroom? Look at her bra if you no be barawo?? Oloshi, oloriburuku | Positive impoliteness(call the poster names) |
| 26. | I see...speaking with experience right? | Negative impoliteness (ridicule, invade the poster's space) |
| 27. | Is it ya bra?
Is it ya bress?
Is it ya black?
Abeg face front! | Negative impoliteness (invade the poster's space) |
| 28. | Poster everyone can't be dirty like you | Bald on record impoliteness |
| 29. | How is that your business? | Bald on record impoliteness |
| 30. | Abeg face front | Bald on record impoliteness |
| 31. | Stay on your own | Bald on record impoliteness |

Post 3: Posted 26th July, 2021 on OMAM Facebook Page



Some Linguistically Impolite Responses to Post (3)



Analysis of Readers' Responses from Post 3 and Impoliteness Strategies Performed

S/N0	Reader's Responses	Impolite strategies employed
32.	Order green bulb from China use it only u simple. Pple go dey find trouble wey trouble no dey.	Sarcasm or mock politeness
33.	Madam you have a very big problem n its better you change honestly. Did d manufacturer produce d bulb for only you? You are not jovial pls try n be jovial because this world is not created for you.	Negative impoliteness (explicitly associate the other with negative aspect)
34.	But you are the one acting childish here nah	Bald on record
35.	Speechless	Positive impoliteness
36.	Madam face your business	Bald on record
37.	You like trouble shaa	Bald on record impoliteness
38.	Next post please	Negative impoliteness (belittles post, condescending)
39.	Na only u waka come market	Negative impoliteness (ridicule)
40.	I think the best thing you will do is to have your own company and produce your own product so that no one else will have to sell except you. I want to ask you on question, shebi you go school because others are going to school, why did you imitate them. You be enemy of progress	Sarcasm or mock politeness
41.	The items you bought did the producer produce it for u alone?	Negative impoliteness (ridicule)

42.	If u see indigo bulb for market buy, problem no dey finish	Sarcasm or mock politeness
43.	Madam face front pls	Bald on record
44.	Mtcheww...madam u no get wetin to tell us. As far as I know, business is all about competition.	Negative impoliteness (condescending)
45.	You're not serious	Bald on record impoliteness
46.	You are just being petty. Do your business, let her do that she feels like doing	Bald on record impoliteness
47.	Nne pls buy black bulb and she'll not copy you again. Case closed.	Sarcasm or mock politeness
48.	Madam you are in the market not in your house, that why it's called market place leave the woman abeg don't start what u can't finish	Negative impoliteness (condescend, scorn)
49.	Mtchewww	Negative impoliteness (condescend, scorn)
50.	Funny post abeg leave your neighbor and manage your jealousy well.	Negative impoliteness (ridicule)

Discussion of Findings

Bald on Record Impoliteness Strategy

Bald on record impoliteness strategy occurs nineteen times in the data analysis; according to Culpeper (2005:41) it is a situation where the speaker performs the Face Threatening Act (FTA) in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way. It is performed in a circumstance where face is not minimized. From the data, some readers attack the face of the poster. They attack the poster's sense of judgment in some responses: "you

dey fine wetin no dey fine u”, “...stop looking for trouble”, “Madam madam madam get it into your head that you have 2 sons...”, “... You don't have a case.”, “Ahhh this post is annoying”, “Useless post”. This strategy is used with the intention to correct the first poster's impression about her husband's son and to admonish her to regard the boy as her son and treat him the way she would treat her son. The readers equally use bald on record impoliteness to attack the character or behaviour of the third poster by saying “you are just being petty...”, “you are not serious” and “you are acting childish”. The intention of the respondents or readers in using this impoliteness strategy is to rebuke the poster for not being tolerant especially for not tolerating her fellow trader. In the case of the second poster who wrote a joke; comments or responses that are bald on record impoliteness such as “Mind your business” and “...face front”, “stay on ur own” “poster everyone can't be dirty like u” etc may pass as superficial impoliteness. The intention of the speaker in attacking the face of the poster may be to banter words with the poster. Leech (1983:144) argues that banter reflects and fosters social intimacy. The responses to the joke may be to establish some kind of intimacy with the poster thus it becomes unimportant to be polite. The intention of the readers in this case is not to offend the poster but to equally joke.

Positive Impoliteness Strategy

Positive impoliteness occurs four times in the data analysis. This strategy is used to attack a poster's positive face, where she wants to be accepted by other women in the group. This strategy is employed by some readers as a way of showing disinterest in what is being posted, hence comments like: “speechless”, “I don't know what to say” and “Am speechless o”. These responses are impolite because the poster seeks for the readers' advice not their “silence” as is exemplified in their responses. The intention behind using this impoliteness strategy by the readers is to show lack of interest in the post and to avoid literally insulting or calling the poster names; for this reason readers may choose to remain “speechless” as reflected in their responses. This strategy is also employed in attacking the positive face of the woman who posted a joke about unwashed black brassiers, a reader calls her names “barawo, Oloshi, oloriburuku”. In this case, positive impoliteness strategy is used to get even with the poster for daring to reveal the truth about some women's habit of not washing or changing their black

lingerie, hence the need for being positively impolite. The intention of using this impoliteness strategy is not to hurt or offend the poster but to make fun of her.

Negative Impoliteness Strategy

Negative impoliteness features the most in the responses of the readers. This impoliteness strategy occurs twenty-three times as shown from the data analysis. It is a strategy according to Culpeper (2005:41) that is used to attack the addressee's negative face want. The speaker uses this strategy to damage the addressee's want to have freedom of action. From the responses, the negative impoliteness strategies employed are: condescending, ridiculing, belittling of the poster and invading the other's space. Four responses were condescending: “Mtchewww” is used by two readers to hiss and “next post abeg” in another reader's response are condescending responses used to show the readers' disgust to what was written by the poster. Responses in numbers (4), (5), (8), (22), (26), (39), (41), (50) as shown on the tables above, are used to ridicule the poster and her freedom to express what she considers a problem. The reader's response in number (2) of the table belittles the poster by asking “this one too na problem?” “Another post pls” in number (4) of table 1 also belittles the poster because the reader does not consider the post significant as such she requests for another post. Response on number (8) of the table also belittles the poster's freedom of action, the reader's response sees the post as “whiling away time til...2023”; another reader, lashes at a poster's post as “...childish story...” (10), this response belittles the poster and her freedom to express herself. There are also responses that invade the poster's space; responses on (12), (24), (26) and (27) of the tables invade the poster's space.

This strategy is used by the readers to ask questions directed to the poster, however, the relationship between the reader and the poster is not intimate enough for such questions or for the poster to respond.

Readers may have employed the negative impoliteness strategy the most because they consider it the best way of expressing their views, opinion, advices or answers to questions that are posted on the platform. The intentions of readers in employing negative impoliteness strategy may be to correct, rebuke or advise. Their intentions determine their choice of words; in the context in which they are used though impolite, their

intentions are either to rebuke or to correct a poster's attitude or reactions to things or other people, as such they employ the negative impoliteness strategies. Culpeper (2011:25) explains that sometimes the producer of impoliteness is not aware of the impoliteness effects they are causing. Readers may not be aware that their expressions are impolite. It is important to note that most responses to posts on OMAM are polite even when correcting a poster, the few that are impolite are equally geared towards correcting a poster but the readers do so in an opposite way. Contextual elements such as background, age, culture, educational background, marital status etc affect the way a reader responds to posts on the OMAM Facebook forum. In other words, some readers may have chosen impolite expressions, not with the intention of hurting or offending a poster but to correct, rebuke or admonish the poster. Negative impoliteness strategy may have been used unintentionally to rebuke or correct a poster's attitude, disposition to issues or her relationship with other people.

In another instance, this impoliteness strategy is used to establish intimacy with a poster. For instance; invading a poster's space by asking direct questions such as: "Is it your cry or your bra abeg park well", "I see...speaking from experience?" these responses are not to hurt or offend the poster but to establish friendship. Another intention behind responses that are negatively impolite may be to show superiority. Negative impoliteness strategy presupposes a speaker's superiority as exemplified by the types of the impoliteness strategies: condescending, ridiculing, belittling, invading the space of the other employed in readers' response. This show of superiority is seen in some of the responses; for instance women that are much older in age or marriage may consider some posts childish, insignificant or belittle a poster's post.

Sarcasm or mock impoliteness Strategy

Sarcasm or mock politeness is another impoliteness strategy that is employed in the responses of the readers to posts on OMAM. It occurs four times and it is a strategy that reveals when the face of the hearer is threatened through the use of insincere politeness. Even though this impoliteness strategy is employed in an indirect manner, it is still impolite. Response (32), (40), (42) and (47) are sarcastic. The poster who expresses her displeasure over an elderly woman who sells practically everything

she (the poster) sells including a blue bulb she bought is mocked for this. The poster is mocked to buy "...green bulb from China...", "...indigo bulb..." and "...black bulb..." another reader tells the poster to "...have her own company and produce your own product..." From the context of the readers' responses, mock impoliteness is employed to make fun or ridicule the poster. The intention is not to hurt the poster but to indirectly advise her by making her realise that in doing business she would always have competitors, hence the need for her to be tolerant.

Conclusion

Using Culpeper's (1996, 2011) impoliteness strategies and intentionality, this paper analyses readers' responses to three posts on OMAM Facebook forum. The study finds that four linguistic impoliteness strategies: bald or record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness and sarcasm or mock impoliteness are employed in the readers' responses to three posts. The analysis reveals that the intentions of the readers determine the way they opt to use language; though the readers' responses are impolite they may not be premeditated with the aim of offending or hurting a poster as seen from the way they are used in OMAM Facebook forum. Linguistic impoliteness is a pragmatic phenomenon; it is influenced by elements of context. This is because many factors determine the way some readers' respond to issues of life such as: age, gender, marital status, cultural and educational background, exposure, family background etc. Thus, some readers may not even be aware that their responses were impolite because their intentions may have been to perform other illocutionary acts such as correcting, rebuking, advising, making fun, or getting even with a poster's joke. Culpeper (2011:22) asserts that "impoliteness is very much in the eye of the beholder, that is the mind's eye. It depends on how you perceive what is said and done and how that relates to the situation".

The paper concludes that sometimes in communication, certain impoliteness strategies may be employed as a way of correcting, advising, rebuking, or establishing intimacy between unknown people as seen from the discourse in OMAM's facebook forum.

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