

# Conversational Implicature and Politeness Strategies in *Bíódún-Káyòdé* Newspapers' Review in South Western Nigeria

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## Abstract

Wardhaugh (1986) opines that when we speak, choices must of necessity be made of what we want to say, how we want to say it, the choice of words, sounds, (styles and other variables available within the speech community) that best unite (connect) what we say with how it is said. Based on the foregoing, the focus of this study is to identify and analyze the politeness strategies employed in the talk exchanges presented in *Bíódún* and *Káyòdé* newspapers' review through critical evaluation. In addition, the study seeks to investigate what is implicated by an expression, other than what a speaker actually said by saying what he said. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Grice's Cooperative Principle with its Maxims are adopted for analysis purpose. This study intends to show that Yorùbá culture places premium on social behaviour displayed and to reveal some of the culturally inherent linguistic and non-linguistic tools in the native speakers' intuition as well as and repertoire of the people which they employ to meet the face want of interlocutors in communication situations.

**Keywords:** Politeness, Face, Interlocutors, Implicature, Speech acts, FTAs.

## 1. Introduction

*Bíódún-Káyòdé*, as popularly called and known amongst the south western people of Nigeria is a daily Yorùbá newspaper review aired on selected radio stations. On the programme, both local and international news are captured and presented in form of talk exchanges between the duo reviewers- *Bíódún* and *Káyòdé*.

Traditionally, politeness is considered a vital part of the Yorùbá people's culture and a great deal in the people's daily linguistic and paralinguistic interaction, especially, if social distinction exists between participants. The concept of politeness is universal though it operates and manifests variously in diverse cultures and beliefs of people across the world (Ajayi and Balogun, 2004:77). This research will examine the talk exchanges of *Bíódún* and *Káyòdé* as presented in their newspapers' review to determine whether politeness, as found in Yorùbá talk exchanges exhibits universal feature reported in some scholars' works or it deviates from what has been on ground on the topic of politeness. This will be done by identifying, and analyzing politeness strategies and its various concepts (as discussed by Brown and Levinson, 1978) employed in *Bíódún-Káyòdé* newspapers' review. Similarly, this study seeks to find out what is implicated by speaker's utterance(s) other than what is said in the duo's newspapers' review.

## 2. Literature Review

Language is usually employed to reflect the belief, perception and views of people about certain ideas in the society. The social use of languages is guided by social order among which is politeness in Yorùbá culture (Ajayi et al., 2014:78). A society's language is said to form aspects of its culture. Scholarly definitions and views abound of what culture is. In his opinion, Adetugbo 1967 says that culture comprises of verbal and non-verbal aspects. According to him, the verbal aspect of culture is concerned with the cultural rules that guide the organization of the social use of a language or lack of it. *Ọdẹ̀bùnmi* seems to share this view when he says that:

Politeness is sometimes relative to people and culture. In the context of Nigeria cultures, the Hausa and the Yorùbá operate at two extremes in terms of politeness. Whereas Hausas are rather blunt in their description of persons and phenomena... the Yorùbá are reserved. A Yorùbá person is essentially euphemistic in his/her language usage when it comes to issues that border on the psych-social and emotional aspects of co-participants

(*Ọdẹ̀bùnmi*, 2003:71).

Similarly, Miriam, (2006:84) opines that the meaning we give to conversation exchanges as hearers, depend on where we grow up and the norms of politeness acquired in the meantime. Certain responses to talk exchanges which may be considered rude and impolite in some cultures and languages may be polite, normal and culturally acceptable by the standard of other language or culture based on mutual knowledge between the speaker and the hearer. Though the concept of politeness has been observed to be a universal one despite the fact that its operations and manifestations differ from culture to culture and in relation to people's beliefs across the globe (Brown et al., 1978:56-57; Ajayi et al., 2014:77).

In his study, Ikotun 2004 identifies verbal devices that are employed by Yorùbá people to indicate politeness to one another. Based on his findings, factors that influence politeness in address forms of the people include custom, marriage, market strategy, seniority, faith, age, neat physical appearance and courtesy. One noticeable observation made about the examples cited under Ikotun's use of politeness markers based on the factors he identified is the reoccurrence of similar address forms under numerous varying factors except a few.

### 3. Research Methodology/Method of Data Collection

This research is qualitative in nature. It is based on the talk exchanges that take place in the Newspapers' review of Bíódún and Káyòdé in South Western region of Nigeria. The review is carried out throughout the five working days in a week in the people's indigenous language (Yorùbá). This research topic is chosen in particular because it makes use of the people's indigenous language, and because it is assumed to reflect the beliefs of the people in terms of what is permissible in their linguistic exchanges. For the purpose of this study, we collected data directly from the newspapers' review of the duo reviewers within a period spanning over two weeks with the aid of mobile devices, namely, a handset and a transistor radio. In addition, a scheduled telephone interview is conducted with the reviewers as a way of interrogating and ascertaining the idea behind their style of newspapers' review.

### 4. Theoretical Frameworks

Talk exchanges is an interactional linguistic activity that involves at least, two participants in a conversation, hence, the need for mutual understanding and cooperation between them. Therefore, Brown et al. (1978) Politeness theory and Grice's Cooperative Principle with its maxims and sub-maxims have been adopted as theoretical frameworks for this study. Brown et al. formulated politeness theory based on the notion of 'face' developed by Goffman, (1967) and other concepts presented in their work. Brown & Levinson propose two assumptions which form the properties of interlocutors that all competent adult members of a society have (and know each other to have)

- (i) 'face', which is the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself.
- (ii) 'certain rational capacities, in particular consistent modes of reasoning from ends to the means that will achieve those ends'.

Face has two related aspects, namely, 'negative face and 'positive face'. According to Brown et al. (1978), "face is something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction". There is need for participants in an interaction to cooperate in maintaining or saving each others face, such cooperation, however, is based on mutual vulnerability of face. In other words, normally, the face of every participant in an interaction depends on the face of other (everyone else's) being maintained. The propounders of politeness theory presents and treats 'face as wants', which every member of a society is aware that every other member desires. Since the face of everyone is susceptible to being threatened by certain speech acts in interactions, it is therefore in the interest of everyone involved in talk exchanges, to maintain each others' face by employing speech acts that assures the other participants that his/her acclaimed public self-image is recognized, or, politeness strategies that limit threat to the participants faces.

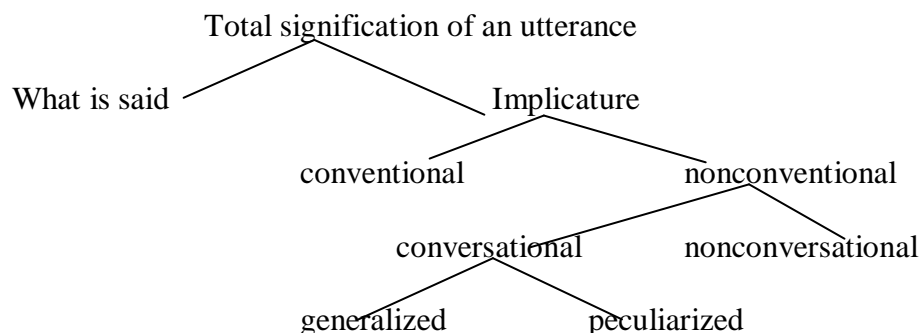
**Negative Face:** This refers to the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others. Negative face derivative is negative politeness of non-imposition, it usually shows up as formal politeness which the notion of politeness readily brings to mind.

**Positive Face:** This is the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others e.g. that the speaker (S) shows in some ways that he identifies with the hearer (H) in matters that are of interest to him. The derivative of positive politeness is less obvious, but consists of the most important aspect of an individual's personality expected of other interactants that his wants or desire be ratified, understood, and approved (Brown et al., 1978:62). In the course of interaction, face threatening acts do occur which result in a loss of face (damage our positive face). This is the essence of the use of facework strategies from which politeness strategies are derived to redress and restore our (threatened) face (Redmond, 2015).

On the need for cooperation by interactants in linguistic exchanges, H.P.Grice, (1975) in his work 'conversational logic' suggests that conversation is based on a shared principle of cooperation (CP) which is expected to be operational whenever people interact. Conversational logic provides us with logical basis for making inferences from utterances literally expressed in a sentence (Gergely, nd.). The formation of Grice's framework is an effort to

make clear the ‘intuitive difference’ that exists between what is said literally in a sentence and what is entirely implied, suggested, or hinted with an utterance containing the same number of words.

To distinguish between the two above ( what is said and what is implicated), Grice employs the coinage *implicate* and *implicature*; he refers to the linguistic content of ‘utterance made as ‘what is said’, while he calls the totality of what is said in a sentence and what is implicated in an utterance of the same sentence ‘the total signification of an utterance (Grice 1975, 1989b:41). Implicature extends to cover many ways in which literally unexpressed information can be conveyed. Gergely conveys the relationship between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is implicated by what is said’ in the schema below:



According to Grice, conversational implicature is initiated by “certain general features of discourse” rather than by conventional meaning of a specific word (which helps to determine what is implicated along side what is said) (Grice, 1989a:26). The features are as follow:

- i. Linguistic exchanges are governed by the cooperative Principle (henceforth, CP), the content which is fully detailed in the four maxims of conversation and their submaxims;
- ii. When one of the participants of the exchanges seems not to follow the cooperative principle, his or her partner(s) will nevertheless assume that, contrary to appearance, the principle is observed at some deeper level. Thus, the Cooperation principle simply states that:  
 “make your conversational contribution what is required,  
 at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose  
 or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.”

This principle is with the following maxims and sub-maxims of conversation:

Maxim of Quantity:

- (1) “Make your contribution as informative as required.”
- (2) “Don’t make your contribution more informative than is required.”

Maxim of Quality: Be truthful

- (1) “Don’t say what you believe to be false.”
- (2) “Don’t say what you lack adequate evidence for.”

Maxim of Relation: “Be relevant.”

Maxim of Manner: “Be perspicuous.”

- (1) “Avoid obscurity of expression.”
- (2) “Avoid ambiguity.”
- (3) “Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).”
- (4) “Be orderly.”

Grice’s notion of conversational implicature can be stated as follows:

“A participant P in a linguistic exchange, by literally making an assertion with the propositional context x, *con conversationally implicates* the proposition y if and only if:

- (a) P is presumed to be observing the maxims
- (b) The supposition y is required to maintain (a)
- (c) P thinks that his partner will realize (b).”

(Gergely, p.2)

In one of Grice’s examples of interaction, inference made by speaker B from the request of speaker A reveals that certain interpretation can only be derived by means of conversational implicature. In other words, the inferred meaning will be situated within the context of the immediate discourse or interaction being held at that instant.

See the example below:

A: Is that scotch over there?

B: Help yourself.

Literally speaking, the example above obviously reveals that A has just asked for information “on the nature of the liquor (scotch) which B interprets as a request for a drink”. Since nothing in the literal meaning of A’s utterance could possibly make B to respond to A’s request the way he did, it follows then that B’s interpretation was inferred by means of conversational implicature made possible by the context of their interaction. Furthermore, Grice claims that any implied meaning stands a risk of being (mis)understood by the hearer as against what the speaker intended to communicate. The implicature of an utterance may be misread thereby leading to incorrect inference on the part of the hearer. Consider the hypothetical example of an exchange between a pregnant woman with health challenge and a concerned neighbor:

**Neighbour:** I think you should see your doctor more frequently for prenatal care considering your EDD and your health condition.

**Pregnant woman:** I am a Hebrew woman.

The concerned neighbour of this woman needs to have some background knowledge about who “Hebrew women” are and the basis for the response of the addressee. In order for the speaker not to misunderstand the meaning of the hearer’s response and to implicate appropriately, he must be a Christian that conversant with the story of Hebrew women, or must have been told how Hebrew women in the land of Goshen (a territory occupied by the Hebrew in Egypt) in the biblical narrative used to be very strong such that they were delivered of their babies before the arrival of Egyptians’ midwives without any medical aids (Exodus 1:16-19).

In actual sense, what is responsible for hearer(s) making inference of an exchange is non-observance of maxims. A speaker’s failure to observe CP maxim may prompt a competent hearer to draw one of many possible conclusion that:

The speaker is “**opting out**” from the operation of the maxim, deliberately and secretly **violating** maxim for some personal selfish purpose, committing maxim **infringement** usually because of incompetence or **flouting** a maxim based on certain premises postulated by Grice that serve as basis for non-observance of maxims. More often than not, it is an established fact that people fail to observe the CP maxims either deliberately or accidentally. Either ways, the consequential effect of non-observance of maxim can result in flouting, violating, infringing, opting-out, or suspending (Grice, 1975). In this research, we shall subject talk exchanges of the newspapers’ reviewers to Grice’s framework to investigate their observance of CP, and also find out, if their utterances fail to follow the cooperative principle and its maxims through the various means stated by Grice that the maxims could be violated in linguistic exchanges.

#### **Flouting of Maxim:**

Flouting of maxim occurs when a speaker “blatantly fails to observe a maxim, not with any intention of deceiving or misleading, but simply because the speaker wishes to prompt the hearer to look for a meaning which is different from or in addition to the expressed meaning” (Thomas 1995:65). Mey (1993) lend credence to Thomas’ claim by providing succinct but inclusive definition of flouting as a case of exchange when we can make a blatant show of breaking one of the maxims...in order to lead the addressee to look for covert, implied meaning”. In order words, the speaker is indirectly provoking a huge in the hearer to look for a hidden meaning which he did not state.

#### **Violation of Maxim:**

Violation is defined in term of being deliberately secretive with information that could help in meaning-making, with a mind to misguide the hearer. When a speaker violates a maxim, he is said to ‘be liable to mislead’ (Grice 1975:49). Violating a maxim is quite contradictory to flouting a maxim. The former discourages or prevents hearer from delving into discovering of covert meaning or implicatures, instead, it encourages their taking information at face value. Like flouting, all the maxims can be violated. Overall, Non-observance of maxim(s) form the basis for making deductions in conversation which Grice referred to as *implicatures*.

### **5. The Structure of Bíódún-Káyòdé’s Newspapers Review**

The Newspapers’ review of Bíódún-Káyòdé is distinct in its style of presentation. This is as a result of its systematic structures. The sequential ordering of the core linguistic elements of their programme is consistent every day. The

duo, usually start off their review with jokes directed at each other as a way of introducing each day's programme and to draw the attention of their audience. This is followed by rendition of individual's pedigree.

A dedicated interval is earmarked for sponsors' advertisements. This is usually followed by turn-taking exchanges that normally start with the presenters calling out to each other in this manner: "Káyòdé, Bíódún, and vice versa. This is where the review programme derives its title and popularity in south west Nigeria. Going into the main review, the presenters do not just roll out news from newspapers, instead, they play around such news by speaking in riddles and proverbs to create suspense in order to lure their hearers to stay glued to their radios till the end of the news.

Often than not, the reviewers utterances are directed at themselves as the referents of a particular news being presented, they only mention the name of the actual referent towards the end of such news to avoid violation of broadcasting regulations and possibility of allegation of doctoring news by National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), coupled with the need to give their audience direction. The closing trend of Bíódún-Káyòdé newspapers review has been known to follow the same pattern consistently. They usually end the review session by eulogizing themselves making reference to their family background, town and appellations and then move on to close their presentation with song thus:

### Translation

**Bíódún:** Ì jé tí tí d'òlá, chief commander Bíódún Ìlèrì Until tomorrow, I am chief  
lèmi ñjé o, Aládé Aléle l'orúko tí wón fi ñ commander Bíódún Ìlèrì popularly gbé mi lárugé.  
Amúúlúdùn fún gbogbo Ìjèro known as Aládé Aléle , a renowned àti gbogbo àgbáyé  
kááfàtà. entertainer for Ìjèro land and the  
entire world

**Káyòdé:** Orúkọ tẹ̀mi kò tí ì yí padà, G5 yín rẹ̀e o, My name remain unchanged, I am  
general evangelist s̄i wà ñ bẹ̀ o your G5; your general evangelist is En, Olúkáyòdé  
ni mo ñ jé, Akínmóyèdè is still very much available. I am Fálẹ̀gàn lorúkọ bábá tó  
bí mi lòmọ, Olúkáyòdé, my father is Akínmóyèdè ajísanwó kẹ́hú, Káúsú gbogbo oníròyìn,  
Fálẹ̀gàn, one who studies Quran daily, Falilat, Sheik amúludù gbogbo ilú Ìjèro chief  
amongst broadcasters, a àti gbogbo àgbálá-ayé, kiniún ádíni renowned entertainer for  
Ìjèro land tí kì í s̄éégbẹ̀ kiniún ẹ̀lẹ̀yámẹ̀yà kan. and the entire world, a powerful lion  
Kiniún ì bá à káwo mèsàn án jáde, that differs from all others. It does  
kiniún tẹ̀mi ni yóò fa gbogbo iho not matter if any lion grown nine òhun yọ.... (joke)  
horns; It is my lion that will pluck them all  
(jovially).

**Bíódún:** (singing) Bó bá diwòyí òlá, (Káyòdé echoes) òlá gangan,  
(both) kó tó diwòyí òlá ganranranran, iyanu á s̄elè.

The song means, by this time tomorrow, there shall be miracle. (The presenters anticipate a brand new day to carry out their daily business of newspapers' review).

Often times, the reviewers present news about very serious matters such as robbery, kidnapping, suicide and assassination cracking jokes. At such instance, maxim of quality is flouted /violated because the situation being reported does not call for joke. However, the reviewers, despite their joke expect their hearers to be able to make logical deductions from the content of the jokes. It is pertinent however to state at this juncture that joke is a conscious and deliberate strategy employed by the reviewers to lessen tension, put hearers in relaxed mood and to sustain their interests through the news.

## 6. Data Presentation and Analysis

### Excerpt 1

**Bíódún:** Káyòdé:  
**Bíódún:** Ìyàlẹ̀nu ló jé fún mí pé ìgbá tí mo sọ pé  
àwọn kan fẹ̀ wá s̄ekú pa mí,  
o jẹ̀ mò pé Gómìnà wa kò tilẹ̀ pè mí

### Translation:

Káyòdé,  
It is surprising that the Governor did  
not call me since I said some people  
made an attempt to assassinate me.

<b>Káyòdé:</b> Gómìnà ò pè ó?	The Governor did not call you?
<b>Bíòdún:</b> Kò pè mí, kó má tí è sọ pé òun á wá ẹ àbẹ̀wò	He did not call me not to talk of paying me a visit.
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Ìgbà tí èmi àti Gómìnà sọ̀rò, <b>wón</b> ní ìbo lo wà? Mo ní àláfíà ní o wà pé <b>mà má rẹ ẹ̀şẹ̀ bímọ</b> . kò jẹ́ kí <b>wón</b> yojú.	When I and the Governor talked, he asked after you, I told him your mother has just been delivered of a baby, that is the reason why you did not see him.

In the above data, four different politeness strategies are employed, two of which are positive-politeness strategies and the other two are negative-politeness strategies. They are *joke*, *pluralization of pronoun*, *deference* and *avoidance* as analyzed below.

### 6.1 Joke Strategy

There is hardly a language, and by extension, culture, in the entire universe that does not have the way it expresses jokes. This is usually done to bring people into a relaxed state, ease tension, or as a deliberate attempt to make people laugh. Likewise, joke can be used to communicate a potentially inciting message, depending on how much the speaker knows how to use language. Brown et al. (1987:124) describes “jokes as a basic positive-politeness technique for making hearer (H) to be ‘at ease’”. They are also of the opinion that one can take advantage of joke as politeness strategy to “redefine the size” (intensity) of FTA.

The above data vividly indicates direct FTA; a friend of the Governor (the S and H’s names withheld) has just accused him of not bothering to visit or at least call him having heard of the failed attempt that some people made on his life. The utterance (locution) of the first participant (Bíòdún) is a face threatening speech act that infringes on the right of the Governor (though in Yorùbá society, such accusations are traceable in talk exchanges that involve very intimate friends) as to whether he wishes to visit or call the victim of the failed assassination.

The utterance of the second interlocutor was purely a joke “*Ìgbà tí èmi àti Gómìnà sọ̀rò, wón ní ìbo lo wà? Mo ní àláfíà ní o wà pé mà má rẹ ẹ̀şẹ̀ bímọ, òhun ni kò jẹ́ kí wón yojú* ‘when I and the Governor talked, he asked after you, I told him your mother has just been delivered of a baby, that is the reason why you did not see him’. Káyòdé employs this strategy as a redressive measure to soften the intensity of the FTA and to save the face (personality and self esteem) of the Governor.

### 6.2 Avoidance of Name Strategy

Avoidance of name calling of the interlocutors (S and H) as well as the affiliation of the H to his office (Governor) is a deliberate attempt on the part of the Newspapers reviewers to protect the face want of the hearer ‘that his actions be unimpeded by others’. The intensity of the direct effect of the FTA would have been higher; it probably would have generated heat in the society and among the fans of the Governor and his friends. In some cases, towards the end of a particular news presentation, the presenters will jokingly mention the referent’s name by teasing each other that “I am not the one that said X, it is Z. And often times times, they refer their audience to the newspaper that reports the news being reviewed for the full story.

### 6.3 Use of Honourific Pronoun(s) Strategy

As observed by Brown & Levinson, the phenomenon of pluralizing pronouns to differentiate social status seems to be widespread in unrelated languages and cultures around the globe. In such languages, greetings and politeness are almost inseparable. In French, as shown by (Ajàyí et al., 2014:83), politeness permeates greetings depending on the status of people interacting. It is out of acceptable norm of the language for a student to greet his teacher saying “**Bonjour monsieur, comment allez vous?** Which is translated as “Good morning sir, how are you? Instead of saying “*Bonjour ca va?* Which means “Good morning, how are you?”. Their study shows how languages that do not belong to the same ancestral family nor situated within the same continent manifest common cultural features in the way they express politeness in their greetings (pp. 83-84). In the third example cited by Ajàyí et al., (2014), because there is no cordialness between the first speaker (who incidentally is the wife to the friend of the second speaker) and the second, the interlocutors resorted to the use of honourific pronoun “**vous**” to save each other’s faces; though between the second speaker and his friend (the husband of the first speaker), they use “**tu**”.

The use of iwọ/ẹyin 2<sup>nd</sup> per sgl and pl pronouns in Yorùbá correspond to “tu/vous” distinction in French where singular ‘you’ **tu** (T) exists and a plural ‘you’ **vous** (V) also exist. Just like the case of tu and vous in French as reported by Wardhaugh, (1986: 260-261), ‘Eyin’, the 2<sup>nd</sup> pers pl pronoun form is often employed in Yorùbá to indicate power relationship, status, age, to mention a few. Individuals with a higher status gives ‘iwọ’ and receives ‘eyin’. Such usage is found between parents to children, masters to servants, teachers to students, superior to subordinates, older siblings to their younger ones, people in position of authority (i.e. political office holders) to their subjects. Unlike the situation where the use of **tu** (T) related the mutual vous of politeness, because solidarity is considered highly significant than politeness in personal relationship in Yorùbá society, the use of symmetrical V

subsist because politeness is a part and parcel of the people's culture except in certain industries for example, in banking industry where people see themselves as colleagues consequently, they address one another by their last surname) name; this of course is a foreign culture to Yorùbá society.

In the data we are examining, the newspapers reviewers use *wón* 'they' to refer to "the Governor" who is a singular entity. Instances of similar usage abound in Yorùbá culture where plural pronouns are used to indicate class and social differences (i.e. age, power, education, religious, financial and political status) between the speaker and the hearer. For example, 'you' as in 'èyin' and 'e' in:

Sé e (sgl prn.) ti jeun? 'Have you eaten?'  
Ta ló mú iwé mi? èyin? 'Who took my book? You?'

When expressions such as the ones cited above are used to refer to a single person, it is employed to indicate deference. Brown and Levinson's theory (1978:198-199) propose possible motivations for this phenomenon as a politeness strategy, the one that relates with the use of pronoun pluralization as it affects the linguistic items used in this context is that, such phenomenon "conveys the desire of the speaker to render H that tribute (of occupying a higher status) while fulfilling the practical needs of the clarity and on-record (direct) talk.

#### 6.4 Deference Strategy

Deference is usually employed as negative-politeness strategy. According to Brown et al., deference has two realizations; in one, the speaker deliberately 'humbles' and 'abases' himself, and in the other, the speaker pays H a kind of positive face, such that satisfies H's wants (desire) to be treated as 'superior' (even though S would not have done so in sincerity but in order to let H know that he recognizes and acknowledges the status that H claims for himself). In the two realizations, the fact that H is of higher social status than S is vividly expressed by employing the honorific pronoun '*wón*' to refer to the Governor as a single person. Deference of this sort according to Brown & Levinson serves to

'diffuse potential face threatening act by indicating that the addressee's rights to relative immunity from imposition are recognized- and moreover that S is certainly not in a position to coerce H's compliance in any way'.

**Brown et al., (1978:178)**

<b>Excerpt 2</b>	<b>Translation:</b>	
<b>Bíòdún:</b> Şé o rí àwón ọ́lópáá tí a ní yíi, Işé ni wón n şe	Have you observed our policemen? They are really up to their tasks,	
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Kí a má a gbórí ìyìn fún wón; Há à! Işé ni wón n şe	we should salute them, they are indeed working.	
<b>Káyòdé:</b> O rí ọwó mi? O rí bí mo şe şe ọşùbà?	Can you see my hand? You see how I fold my fists?	<b>Bíòdún:</b> Mo rí i!
Mo rí i!!	I can see it! I can see it!!	

#### 6.5 Exaggeration, Prosodic and Kinesic Hedge

The politeness strategies used in the talk exchanges are "exaggeration" and "prosodic and kinesic hedge (Brown et al., 1978:104, 172). The exaggeration strategy states that S exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H). The politeness of this sort is usually achieved through exaggeration of different prosodic features like intonation, stress, pitch and so on; modifier intensity inclusive in English.

The repetition of "**işé ni wón n şe**" in line 2 and 4 of excerpt two serve as emphasis which exaggerates how much the policemen are working. Similarly, the presence of **exclamatory remarks** in the last line of the conversation serves the purpose of intensifying the degree of the policemen industriousness. The second strategy, kinesic, which comprises of non-verbal communication such as gestures or other body movement is also used to indicate "tentativeness or emphasis". The kinesics employed may show the speaker's attitude or disposition towards what he is discussing. This, of course cannot be shown in writing. Brown et al. assert that prosodies and kinesics "serve as the most salient clue to the presence of an FTA across culture".

Generally speaking, the police force has been labelled a black goat among security agencies in Nigeria. The politeness strategies used by Bíòdún and Káyòdé here indicate that they (S) identify with and approve the efforts of the police. In Yorùbá culture, the folded fists (ọşùbà) is a sign or gesture extended to an individual to praise, appease or pacify him. The person being appeased or pacified in such a communicative event reaches out his hands to touch the folded fists as an indication that he has accepted the plea of the pacifier. This strategy serves as a redress to possible face threatening acts (FTAs), and it is used in Yorùbá culture as politeness indicator.

<b>Excerpt 3</b>	<b>Translation:</b>
<b>Bíọdún:</b> Àwọn tó jí kábièsí gbé ní ipínlẹ̀ Òndó, wọn tí dín owó tí wọn fẹ̀ gbà láti mílioni mēdédógún mēta náirà.	The kidnapers who kidnapped a king in Ondo State have reduced their ransom demand from N15m to N3m
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Ó sì ní rin wọn bọ. Kò sèni tó má a kọ wọn nígbà tí wọn oò tí í jáde.	They are just starting, No one will advise them before they push him (the king ) out of their hide out.

According to Brown & Levinson, one can invite conversational implicature only when certain maxims are not observed. It is expected of interlocutors to have the capacity to make sense of the talk exchange they engage in even when there are ‘missing elements’ in such a conversation. The missing elements are what is implicated. The implicatures are said to be made possible by shared cooperation between speaker (S) and hearer (H).

It is important to bear in mind that before additional meaning(s) can be implicated from a talk exchange or inference made, there must have been conversation must of necessity violates or flouts a maxim to serve as logical basis for inference. On this ground, the data above will be subjected to cooperative peinciple (CP) maxims to see if it violates any in order to draw inferences, of what the likely implicatures might be.

Primarily, the intended message that the above talk exchanges seeks to pass to the public is that “the kidnapers of a particular king from Ondo State have reduced the random demand place on him in order to get him freed”. We will now examine the talk exchanges in the light of each of the maxims.

<b>Excerpt 4</b>	<b>Translation</b>
<b>Bíọdún:</b> Káyòdé, ẹ ẹ tiẹ bá àwọn omọ orílẹ̀-èdè bílioni mētàlà náirà tí náà.	Káyòdé, you did not bother to Nàìjíríà sòrò lóri ẹ sọ wípé ẹ rí gbà gan an. E jẹ ká mọ ẹni gan tó lowó E jẹ ká mọ! E sọ fun wa.
Let us know who owns the money. Let us know! Please tell us.	
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Sẹ owó un?	You mean that money?
<b>Bíọdún:</b> Un un,	Yes,
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Kàn jẹ kí wọn mọ;	Just let them be aware;
<b>Bíọdún:</b> Kàn jẹ a mọ ọ.	Let them know him.
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Sẹ bí o ní sọ fun mi tẹlẹ pé iwọ lo ní.	But you told me previously that the money belong to you.
<b>Bíọdún:</b> Èmi kọ! Èmi kẹ? Níbo ni mo ti fẹ r’ówó tó tó un?	Not me! Not at all. Where will I get such huge amount?
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Inú mi ti ní dùn pé tí wọn bá ti gbé e fún ọ, ti ẹ jẹ fifty-fifty, seventy-thirty	I was excited already that whenever you recover the money, if we cannot employ fifty-fifty sharing formula we can make it seventy-thirty
<b>Bíọdún:</b> Seventy-seventy ni ì!	No, you should have make it seventy-seventy
<b>Káyòdé:</b> Rará	No.
<b>Bíọdún:</b> Olẹ burúkú!	Thief



In the data above, the two politeness strategies used are **honourific pronouns** and **joke**. See pp.9-11 for analysis on the strategies.

### Excerpt 5

**Bíódún:** Káyòdé! Láíláí, àfí tí kí í bá ẹ̀ bábá                      Káyòdé! Never, except I am not a                      mi ló bí  
mi, mi ò lè tọ̀rọ̀ àfọ̀rìjì lówó                      bona fide son of my father, I cannot                      Sàràkí,                      láyé  
àbádà!                      ask for Sarakí's forgiveness. Never!

**Káyòdé:**                      Ah! Kí ló pa iwọ̀ àti Sàràkí pò o?                      What business do you have with  
Sàràkí?

**Bíódún:** Nnkan tó pa wá pò pò o                      A lot.

**Káyòdé:**                      Èn, mo n gbó...                      Yes, I am listening...

**Bíódún:** Kí èmi ó wá lọ má a tọ̀rọ̀ àfọ̀rìjì lówó rẹ̀?                      That I should ask for his  
forgiveness?

**Káyòdé:**                      O ò lè tọ̀rọ̀ àfọ̀rìjì lówó rẹ̀?                      You mean you cannot ask for his  
forgiveness?

**Bíódún:** láyé mi kó! Èén! Kí ló n jé bèè?                      Not in my life! What?

**Káyòdé:**                      ó dáa, n òò tẹ̀lẹ̀ ọ̀ lọ tó bá jé èrù ló n bà ọ̀;                      It's alright, if you are scared I will a  
n n tẹ̀lẹ̀ ọ̀ lọ...                      accompany you to his place

**Bíódún:** Katapílà ò ní foríbalẹ̀ fún mótò.                      A caterpillar will never bow to a car.

**Káyòdé:**                      Ìyẹn katapílà tó n ẹ̀şẹ̀.                      That if the caterpillar is functioning

In the data above, apart from the rhetorics employed by the presenters i.e. rhetorical questions and personification in line 4, 7, & 12, joke is the main politeness strategy used. This is done mainly to bring redress to the already threatened face of the addressee (Sàràkí), owing to the way the speaker lashed at him; even to the extent of swearing on his paternal origin. The expressions **...ó dá a, n òò tẹ̀lẹ̀ ọ̀ lọ, ...iyẹn katapílà tó n ẹ̀şẹ̀** are both jokes, aimed at calming the nerves of their radio audience who must have become agitated by the speaker's tone and choice of words.

Subjecting the talk exchanges to Grice's cooperative principle which states that participants in a conversation need obey a general rule which is expected to apply any time a conversation happen; such that the participants make their "conversational contribution such as is required". In order words, they are expected to stick to the rule(s) that govern such interaction by focusing on the direction of the conversation and not saying more or less that is required. However, in this instance, even if we decide to jettison all other parts of data 5, the statement "*katapílà ò ní foríbalẹ̀ fún mótò*" is a very strong statement if we go by the shared knowledge presumed to be possessed by interlocutors in such context as this among south western Nigerians. The expression alone can prompt listeners to begin to probe into the incident that warranted issuing of such strong statement by the speaker.

We know that in all sense, a caterpillar is way bigger than a car (Sàràkí). For a speaker to speak in the manner we see above against senator Sàràkí who known to be a 'big shark' as far as Nigeria polity is concerned, there must have been a serious rancor between them. Similarly, we can infer, based on the utterance of the speaker that he is a bigger shark than Sàràkí though anonymous. These implicatures are made due to the flouting of the maxim of quantity by the speaker's expression as shown above which is implicature encumbered (see pp. 5 & 7).

### Excerpt 6

**Káyòdé:**                      Bíódún! Ó ga ò! Òkúnrin kan mà ni ò,                      Bíódún, can you imagine, a man sold  
ó ta ọ̀mọ̀ ọ̀dún méfà ní egbèrún lónà igba                      a six year old boy for two hundred                      náirà!  
thousand naira!

**Bíódún:** Àh! Two hundred naira?                      What? Two hundred naira?

<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Two hundred thousand....	Two hundred thousand ...
<b>Bíòdún</b>	... ló ta omọ odún méfà, odidi èniyàn! human!	...he sold a six year old, a complete human!
<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Ó lù ú n gbàṅjo.	He sold him cheap.
<b>Bíòdún:</b>	Olórùn mà kó ẹ̀dà yọ kẹ̀.	May God deliver us.
<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Àmín o.	Amen.

In data 6 above, the utterance “**ó lù ú n gbàṅjo**” made in line 7 has a literal meaning of putting up a product or goods for sale at its minimum expense or at give-away price in south western Nigeria. This statement flouts the maxim of quality because in reality, one can only sell a good or product in that manner; probably because of its value depreciation or for reason of catering for emergency financial obligation. On one hand, in the sense, human being is not a good that can be put up for sale in that manner. The worst that could happen is for a parent to give out his or her child for domestic aid in order for the child or family to earn a living. In some cases too in Nigeria, young mothers, who sometimes feel they cannot take care of their new born babies give them up for adoption illegally in some make-shift maternity homes. Consequently, this information can be assumed to be superfluous in its context of usage despite the price the child was sold as the presenters claimed. On the other hand, these statements,

<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Ó lù ú n gbàṅjo.	He sold him cheap.
<b>Bíòdún:</b>	Olórùn mà kó ẹ̀dà yọ kẹ̀.	May God deliver us.

as uttered by the presenters are capable of generating implicatures in listeners as to what the ‘situation’ of the man that sold his child is.

- (1) Could he be suffering from psychosis?
- (2) May be he is in a mess that requires financial settlement which he could not meet up with;
- (3) May be he could not fend for the child and he needed someone to assist with his or her upkeep.

The probability of circumstances which could have led to that ‘act’ is endless just as the statements imply.

#### Excerpt 7

<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Áàh! Ó màṣe ò!	(Exclaimed) It is a pity!
<b>Bíòdún:</b>	Kí ló tún ṣẹ̀lẹ̀ báyi?	What happened again?
<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Ọmọkùnrin kan lẹ̀yí tí wọn yinbon fun pẹ̀lú akọ̀wé ibílẹ̀ ní Akwa-ibom	A guy with his council secretary from Akwa-Ibom was shot
<b>Bíòdún:</b>	Èn ẹ̀n òòò?	Is that so?
<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Òun <b>nàà</b> ti ṣe bẹ̀ <b>jé aláìsì</b> lánàá	He too died yesterday
<b>Bíòdún:</b>	Eè! Eè! Eè! Ó <b>pàpà</b> kú?	(Exclaimed!) So he died eventually?
<b>Káyòdé:</b>	Ó jé aláìsì.	He died.

#### 6.6 In-group Identity Marker Strategy

The language use ‘*jé aláìsì*’ meaning ‘died’ in Yorùbá language is often and preferably used among the people of south western Nigeria to announce the demise of a member of the society, known or unknown in order to claim common ground with the bereaved. The reviewers made the choice of the phrase deliberately to serve as redress to the face of the public (their audience), the deceased local government, and their immediate families. In Yorùbá land,

the word 'kú' 'die' from 'ikú' 'death', is not usually employed on the occasion of people's death. First, because the people see their selves as siblings; therefore, what happens to one affects all. Second it is more soothing to talk about passing away of people among the Yorùbá without making reference to the word death. Rather, they use 'jé aláísí' 'dead'. This is done to identify with the bereaved and at the same time condole with them.

The analysis of data 7 in line with CP reveals flouting of maxim of quality. The word **náà** 'too' and **pàpà** 'eventually' as uttered by the presenters in lines 6 and 7 serve as cue to some incident prior the death of the 'guy' who was in the same vehicle with the local government secretary when they were shot.

The two words above have indirectly provided audience with information that the local government secretary died earlier, may be before he was rushed to the hospital due to the gun shot injury he sustained, and later, the guy 'too' died that same day (yesterday). This implicature is made possible because of the flouting of the maxim of quality by the presenters prompted by the words **náà** 'too' and **pàpà** 'eventually'.

## 7.Data Analysis in the Light of Grice's Maxims

### 7.1 Maxim of Quantity

Looking at the conversations above, there would not have been any violation of maxim of quantity if the conversation had ended with the information supplied by the first participant. Kayode's contribution (his response) has given out more information to get H thinking such that could trigger the following questions:

- (1) Why did the kidnappers reduce the ransom demand?
- (2) What is the status of the king among Yorùbá kings?
- (3) What is the king's financial status (power)?
- (4) Does the king have any health challenge?

Based on the questions triggered by the **overstatement** of *ó sì ñ rìn wón bọ*, 'they are just starting', the talk exchanges has flouted the second maxim of quantity which says "don't make your contribution more informative than is required".

### 7.2 Maxim of Quality

The above linguistic expression does not violate the maxim of quality because it is true that the kidnappers reduced the ransom placed on the king due to the fact that he has not been able to meet up. Also, because the kidnappers made contact with the king's relation to let them know that they can get their person released on the payment of lesser amount than earlier demanded. If such contact was not made, it would not have come to the public notice that the ransom had been reduced. With this, adequate evidence is established.

### 7.3 Maxim of relevance

This maxim stipulates that participants in talk exchanges should make their contributions 'relevant'. Brown et al., (1978:214-217) highlight four ways by which the maxim of relation can be flouted; they include (i) by giving hint, (ii) by giving associated clue, and (iii) through presupposition. According to Brown & Levinson, it is possible for an utterance to be 'almost' completely relevant in context, and still flouts the relevance maxim at the level of its presuppositions. The subordinate clause '*ó sì ñ rìn wón bọ*' in the context of usage here presupposes that it is a usual practice for the kidnappers to reduce ransom demands if no member of the family of their victim indicates interest to pay the ransom demanded.

### 7.4 Maxim of Manner

Like in the instance of maxim of quantity, the contribution of the second participant in the talk exchanges examples given in the excerpt above flouts the maxim of manner. The expression '*ó sì ñ rìn wón bọ*' is euphemistic, consequently, it is vague. Therefore, it flouted the first sub-maxim of manner which states "avoid obscurity of expression." The vagueness of the italicized expression can trigger the following implicatures:

- (5) It could be that the kidnappers are tired of keeping the king in their custody
- (6) It could mean that the kidnappers are broke (out of cash).

Based on the flouting of the maxims discussed above, the following can be implicated:

- (7) The kidnapers are unemployed individuals in search of daily bread and so they will not hesitate to reduce the ransom to any amount as long as they can get anything
- (8) That the kidnappers are amateurs
- (9) That the kidnapped king is one without class (low status) among the kings of the Yorùbáland, and that the king as well as his relatives is financially poor.

However, despite the flouting of maxim of manner observed above by the italicized expression, the same is relevant for maxim of 'relevance'. The continual reduction in the ransom placed on the kidnapped king corresponds to the relevance of the statement '*ó sì ñ rìn wón bọ*' considering the inability of the relations of the kidnapped king to raise or make available the ransom demanded inspite its reductions.

## 8. Findings and Conclusion

Generally speaking, evidence from several studies reveal that politeness, verbal or non-verbal has been observed to be a universal phenomenon that lubricates social relationships though with minor cultural differences in its manifestations. It minimizes social frictions or totally eliminates it, depending on expertise of interlocutors in maneuvering their ways around language use and the observance of social norms that guide interpersonal relationships and social interactions.

In conclusion, whatever politeness strategies one employs in social interactions, whether positive or negative plays out a crucial role in mitigating possible FTA. It also resolves conflicts that may arise in the course of communication events, thereby promoting a hitch free interpersonal relationship among members of community irrespective of their social status. Similarly, it is essential for members of a speech community to understand the social stratification of their society, and the inference that may be drawn from language used in different communication contexts in order to guide against passing wrong or unintended message in the course of interaction.

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