

THE USE OF LANGUAGE TO INSTIGATE CHANGE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

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Abstract

The present study investigates how the notion of politeness manifests when language is used to instigate change in social media posts and its use on the readers. The theoretical framework adopted for the study is Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Austin and Searl's Speech Act Theory. The data for the research is a post on Instagram titled, "An Intimate Relationship with Violence," by Dr Oyinkansola Alabi, popularly referred to as Emotions Doctor. Using the descriptive qualitative approach, the research investigated how the writer used politeness strategies to mourn the death of Osinachi, a Nigerian Christian musician alleged to have been killed by her husband and also to incite women in similar situations towards liberation. The illocutionary acts employed are 6 assertives, 4 directives and 4 expressives. Three of the directives are bald on record while one is off record. The perlocutionary acts are more of enlightenment and a tendency to take a new course. The research observed that the bald on record politeness strategy was the most prevalent as the writer was mourning and took the issue as a life saving situation. She equally felt she was more enlightened and should educate women to stand up for their rights and life as the society is not with them.

Keywords: Politeness, politeness strategies, Illocutionary act, perlocutionary act, women, abuse

Introduction

Language is an instrument that can be used to attain many things. A place where language is used nowadays for diverse forms of communication is the social media. Many forms of communication take place on social media and to a large extent, it could be said that these conversations are effective. On social media, publicities and one

on one communications have proven to be successful. Beyond any form of imagination, one cannot emphasize enough the power of words used on different platforms. Besides spoken/written words and encounters of people, social media have become powerful tools for the mobilization of any group of people. Opinions are generated and shaped. This could be done through followership, group participation or one on one interpersonal conversation. Campaigns of various forms occur on social media with overwhelming influence and results. In recent times, besides political campaigns are campaigns done for the liberation of the minds of people especially from situations in which they may find themselves. Some of these campaigns obviously do not relate with any religious principles but are born out of the desire to see that beyond religion, people are freed from circumstances that bedevil, depress or make them unproductive in life.

In recent times, years 2020-2022, the stories of wife battering to death have flooded headlines in Nigeria. Many social media activists have been making diverse forms of posts to enlighten and convince women about their rights to liberation. These are done through the use of language. It is said that through the use of language, acts are performed as what is said entails the intention of a speaker. Gusthini et al affirm that, "A speech act is the attempt at doing something purely by speaking and many things can be done by speaking (Sameer, 2017);" (98). Brown and Levinson on the other hand are of the view that participants in conversations are naturally expected to maintain the face of whomever they are involved in a conversation with.

Anyone conversant with online conversations would agree that the notion of face is not just applicable to live conversations but to online conversations too as approaching one's boss online might take the same respect as approaching him in a real life conversation. Politeness theory in pragmatics is an aspect that considers how ideas are presented with the consideration of the face of the listener and face could be some consideration to the emotions of the listener, their getting angry, being ashamed, feeling disrespected, feeling loved, appreciated and so on.

This study focuses on a string of posts made by Oyinkasola Alabi on Instagram (a social media platform) titled, “An Intimate Relationship with Violence”, in reaction to the death of a popular Nigerian singer, Osinachi, a mother of 4 who was said to have been killed by her husband through battering. The post was shared by several women on their WhatsApp and Facebook statuses in agreement with the influencer who is said to have a PhD in Psychology and specializes in emotional intelligence on social media among other things. She has a total of 103 thousand followers on Instagram. The study considers the treatment of face in this post in respect to women liberation and why certain choices of Face Threatening strategies were made in the post over others. It equally employs the Speech Act Theory to facilitate the investigation of the intention or illocutionary act and the perlocutionary acts of these utterances on the followers or readers of online posts.

Against this background, this study aims to investigate the use of Language to Instigate Change through Social Media posts using politeness theory and speech act. The study is carried out to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify how politeness strategies were used in the text.
2. Investigate the Illocutionary force and the effect or perlocutionary act irrespective of the treatment given to face.

Conceptual Review: Social Media

The social media space has become one of the most viable tools for online communication and creation of global presence. Sarrats attests that, “Digital activism has become a mechanism within society to create awareness on both individual and collective levels, always using that space for sharing and to show to other people around the world that they are not alone” (Np) It facilitates the creation of an online community where marginalized voices are empowered and given a chance for cross boundary dialogue. These digital or online spaces have proven to be effective as they go quite wide and have been used for various campaigns which go viral. Ground breaking movements to

advocate for change are done. The post used for this research is one of many posts made by social media activists to create awareness on a seeming ignored evil practice of the killing of wives in Nigeria as a result of the soaring number of abusive marriages which appear to be gradually becoming rampant from 2020 to 2022 without attracting the desired attention from society and relevant authorities. The online newspaper, The East African has reported an increase in worldwide gender based violence and killing of women from 2020 but this appears to be more in 2023 as Momoh's report on the 23rd of September 2023 states that about 47 women had been killed by their husbands from January 2023. He added that the disease (referring to abusive marriages which lead to the death of wives) became prominent after the death of the Gospel Singer, Osinachi Nwachukwu, in April 2022 and her husband is still undergoing trial in respect to her death.

This study investigates the use of language in this post identifying salient features that stand it out and how it is able to instigate change in readers.

Speech Act

Speech act suggests that saying something is analogous to doing something. Blakemore states that language is not just used for descriptions of existing affairs but creating new ones. She further adds that the Speech Act Theory is not just about having one's intentions known but about having one's intention, recognized as a particular type of speech act (92). Levinson presents three acts that are performed by saying something, as isolated by Austin. They are the:

Locutionary act: the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense and reference.

Illocutionary act: the making of a statement, offer, promise etc. in uttering a sentence, by the virtue of the conventional *force* associated with it (or with explicit performative paraphrase)

Perlocutionary act: the bringing about of effects on the audience by means of uttering the sentence, such effects being special to the circumstances of the utterance. (236)

Horn and Ward describe Perlocutionary act as the “consequences or by-product of speaking whether intended or not.” It consists of the production of an effect on the thoughts, feelings and actions of the addressee, speaker or other parties especially in the case of a performative (55).

Scarantino introduced the Theory of Affective Pragmatics which studies emotional expressions. He feels that just like words, emotions can be used to do things. Emotions have a way of directing people’s behaviour, representing what the world is like and committing the future course of action. If emotions could attain this, words used to express emotions can do much more as this study hopes to reveal.

Austin made his classification of Illocutionary act, which was modified by John R. Searle to include:

1. Assertives or Representatives: these are speech acts that “commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition and thus carry a truth value.” It expresses the speaker’s belief. Its paradigmatic cases include: claiming, concluding, reporting and stating. The speaker uses this to represent the world the way he or she believes it is. (Huang 106)
2. Directives: this includes attempts to get the addressee to do something, a wish or desire for the addressee to act in a certain way. Its paradigmatic cases include: advice, command, order, question, and request. In using the directive, the speaker intends to elicit some future cause of action on the part of the addressee, thus making the world match the words via the addressee.
3. Commissives: this expresses “the speaker’s intention to do something.” Paradigmatic cases include: offer, pledge, refusal, promises and threats. Commissives get the world adapted to the words via the speaker.

4. Expressives: These are speech acts that express a psychological attitude or state in the speaker as joy, sorrow, likes and dislikes. Paradigmatic cases include: apologizing, blaming, congratulating, praising and thanking.

5. Declaratives: these are “speech acts that effect immediate changes in some current state of affairs.” They rely on “extralinguistic institutions for their successful performance”. This speech act brings about changes in the world. Its direction of fit is words to world and world to words. Paradigmatic cases include: Bidding in bridge, declaring a war, excommunicating, firing from employment and nominating a candidate (Huang 107).

Indirect Speech Act: deals with cases where the speech act has no direct relationship with the sentence type. For instance, a situation where a question is used to make a request. Indirect speech acts are in general associated with politeness as they are considered to be more polite than the direct speech act as it is believed that the more indirect the speech act, the more polite the utterance. (Huang 110 and 114)

Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson had one of the most influential theories of face. Conversations are generally tied to face as face is something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction (61).” Brown and Levinson derived their notion of face from Goffman which ties face to the idea of being “embarrassed or humiliated or ‘losing face’”. Thus, face is something that is emotionally invested, and people can defend face when they feel threatened. Therefore, focusing on face, Brown and Levinson are of the opinion that one may choose to do a face threatening act or choose not to. A further aspect of rational behaviour seems to be the ability to weigh up different means to an end and choose the one that most satisfies the desired goals (65). In other words,

circumstances determine the choice of politeness strategy to get the desired result as communication a lot of times is about results. There are ways to go about it. It could be on record or off record. If it is on record, it can be without redressive action, baldly or with redressive action. When on record with redressive action is employed, it could be used in addressing a positive or negative face. Picking on these ideas one after the other, the following concepts would be defined:

Face threatening Acts: These are acts that run contrary to the face wants of the addressee or speaker.

On record without redress: This indicates “Doing an act **baldly, without redress**, involves doing it in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible (for example, for a request, saying ‘Do X!’) (Brown and Levinson 69)

On record with redressive action: It refers to “attempts to counteract the potential face damage of the FTA” thus this is done with modification or addition to, lessen face impact. It considers the positive and negative face. (Brown and Levinson, 69)

Positive face entails the desire for one’s self-image to be appreciated. Those that predicate some positive future act and may put pressure on a hearer include: offers and promises. Those acts that predicate some desire of S toward H or H’s goods include: compliments, expressions of envy or admiration, expression of strong emotions.

Those acts that threaten the positive-face want, indicating the speaker does not care about the addressee’s want include: expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints and reprimands, accusations, insults, contradiction. Those that show that the speaker does not care about the hearer’s positive face include: expression of emotions, irreverence, bringing of bad news about H, or good news, raising of dangerously emotional or divisive topics, e.g. politics, race, religion, women’s liberation, etc. There are much more classifications made.

Negative face deals with the right to non-distraction and the desire not to be imposed on. The conversation is redressed by the speaker with apologies for interfering and with other conventional indirectness in order to make the addressee not to feel coerced. Acts that threaten Negative face include: orders, request, suggestions, advice, reminders, threats warnings etc.

Off record: This is a way of presenting an idea with an unambiguously attributable intention so that the actor cannot be held to have committed himself to one particular intent.

Do not do Face threatening act: This involves the speaker avoiding face threatening acts in order to avoid or not to offend the hearer.

Some face threatening acts that threaten both negative and positive face include: complaints, interruptions, threats, strong expressions of emotion, and requests for personal information (67).

Brown and Levinson are of the opinion that people involved in conversations have face needs and this could be in form of positive or negative needs.

Before the choice of any form of politeness strategy, many considerations are made to determine the seriousness of a face threatening act. They include:

- (i) the 'social distance' (D) of Speaker and Hearer (a symmetric relation)
- (ii) the relative 'power' (P) of Speaker and Hearer (an asymmetric relation)
- (iii) the absolute ranking (R) of impositions in the particular culture.

These ratings are based on the assumption of the interlocutors.

Social distance is related to intimacy of relationship like in the case of two classmates who meet daily and the one that one meets after ten years.

Relative power deals with the relative power of the speakers in the society. For instance, parents with children, bosses and employees, buyers can be more powerful than sellers etc.

Absolute ranking is closely related to the others. It deals with the weight of the "Stake or request involved" (Pratama, 7-8). It then indicates that different levels of politeness are required in relation to different people and for different circumstances.

Various scholars have their perspectives on online communication. Some are of the view that the communication pattern follows the daily face to face pattern of communication, each treats his or her counterpart as if they are engaged in real conversation (Chandra 2). Surdayat et al assert that today's users of social media in written form are less polite probably because it is not face to face so desires, taste, opinions are freely expressed.

Empirical Review

Hussein Kamal did a research on "A Pragmatic Analysis of Power in Arabic Doctor-Patient Interactions" using politeness theory by Brown and Levinson. He adopted the naturalistic observation method where data from 10 doctors and 38 patients in different public and private medical settings were collected. The study hypothesizes that doctors commonly use politeness strategies due to their "expert", "referent" and "legitimate" power while patients apply politeness strategies in their interaction with their doctors in order to lessen Face threatening Acts. The study discovered that doctors engage face Threatening acts baldly-on-record in most cases which presents them as more powerful than the patient in order to bring instances under control while patients (both males and females) of different ages use politeness to lessen the FTA. The study also unveiled that doctors use redressive strategies when they address issues that deal with serious illness, patient's psychological condition, socio-demographic factors of social status and when they report bad news. They use mitigating strategies and patients' use the bald-on-record based on situational reasons. While Kamal focuses on the use of power, this study focuses on the general use of politeness theory and the choices made to convince the listener to act.

Gusthini et al aver that the texts used to convince people about their rights contain a lot of directives inasmuch as the writers might not necessarily be known by the readers. One goes off record where an imposition is small but relative S-H (speaker- hearer) distance and H's (hearer) power are great, and also where H is an intimate equal of S's but the imposition is very great (Brown and Penelope 78).

Chandra did a research on, "Politeness in the Use of Language in Social Media." Unlike this study which studies the politeness strategies adopted to convince the reader, Chandra's research was aimed at investigating the communication patterns in social media to reveal the causes of the use of specific patterns language usage, especially in the office domain. The study adopted the descriptive qualitative method to describe the results of observations, interviews, and documentation focusing on the strategy used by a speaker to choose the appropriate utterance in a given situation, the factor influencing the choice of utterance and politeness strategies used. The data which were basically conversations among lecturers and admin staff of a University of Diponegoro were collected through non-participatory observation method, recording and note taking technique. The result of the analysis revealed that the choice of utterances is affected by relative status, social distance and some range of imposition. These were basically guided by the intention of the speaker. Most utterances represent the obedience to politeness maxim as the bald on record and face-saving acts, positive and negative politeness strategies were all used. It was also discovered that communication forms of language which do not meet the standard language and non-verbal representations were used.

Mestre-Mestre et al carried out a pragmatics research on emotion triggering strategies in TED X Talks. The researchers, who consider TED X talks to be quite different from other types of talks, investigated how emotions are utilized for triggering audience response, involve spectators in their monologues, and explore other strategies exploited to spark feedback. The paper did an analysis of 120 TED talks from two different topics, businesses and education using the corpus-based and corpus-driven analyses. It looked at how the emotion words

and audiences intermingle by looking into laughter and applause, as the two identified forms of feedback. Results indicate that no significant differences can be found in the two subcorpora analysed in terms of emotion words, the use of multiple humour strategies, and the acknowledgment of multicultural audiences on the side of the speakers. Unlike that research, the present research focuses on a Facebook post trying to investigate how language is used to stir emotions and actions of readers in future approaches to events.

Ortavia et al did a pragmatic research where they investigated politeness in directive speech acts. Unlike the present research which focuses on a social media post, Ortavia et al used a movie studying politeness in directives speech act. They collected and transcribed 14 directives speech and tried to investigate the notion of politeness by Brown and Levinson. They discovered that most directives speech acts are positive politeness strategies which are aimed at creating a common ground for speaker and listener in other words seeking relationship and giving appraisal to the listener were used.

Theoretical Framework: Politeness Theory and Speech Act

Politeness Theory is studied from different perspectives but the one adopted for this study was propounded by Brown and Penelope in 1978. It is seen as suitable for this research as they tied politeness in conversations to the concept of face which is viewed as something that is emotionally invested, and must be constantly attended to in interaction. Its proper use can stir and instigate the desired change by the speaker. The use of the politeness theory can reveal the degree of politeness used in a gender awareness post like this to create a common ground for the speaker and hearer and if possible to convince the listener to act in a certain way. Speech act Theory propounded by Austin in 1975 and further developed by Searle was equally used for this research. It is seen as suitable as it is meant to help in revealing the intention of the writer in each locution and also explain the reaction the utterance may cause or instigate in the listener.

The politeness strategies to be used for this research would be those of Face threatening act. They would include:

1. bald on record
2. positive politeness
3. negative politeness
4. Off record

Before the choice of any of the above politeness strategies is made, the speaker or writer considers the weight of face threatening act to the speaker thereby he or she chooses the most appropriate sociological variable to mitigate the face threatening act if the need arises. This research would reveal the sociological variable that inspired the general choice of strategies employed.

Speech act, on the other hand, would be used to present utterance token (locutionary acts), the intention (Illocutionary acts) of the speaker and the perlocutionary act, to have a clue of what the reader is inspired to feel or do.

Methodology

This research used the purposive sampling method, picking on a particular post for the research. The data was obtained from Instagram, a viral post, “**An Intimate Relationship with Violence**” by Oyinkansola Alabi, after the death of Osinachi, a Nigerian gospel musician by her husband. The post had gone viral as it was reposted by many women on different Social media platforms. The post had ten different slates which were not all considered. The title slate and the last were not considered. The descriptive qualitative approach was used to analyse the data based on the utterance token not the slates. The whole relevant content was considered using politeness theory by Brown and Levinson and Speech Act Theory by Austin and Searle. The study investigated the choice of politeness strategy and the likely reason for the choice of the strategy for each utterance token as a Locutionary act. Then it presented the Illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act with particular interest in how the audience is likely to react to the utterances.

An Intimate Relationship with Violence (April 10 2022) 3053 likes

While strolling on social media yesterday after eavacuating my heart at an Emotional Intelligence Certified Specialist Course, I bumped into the statement on domestic violence in the church. Then I saw a name and a face trending, I explored further only to discover that Osinachi, the Ekwueme chant crooner has been murdered by her husband.

The writer chooses the bald on record politeness strategy to be as clear as possible. Her choice of illocutionary force which is the Assertive helps her clearly report what had happened to give a background to her readers on what she was about to discuss.

The perlocutionary act is the readers just got a new information.

In denial, I went on Youtube to listen to the song again, I couldn't believe what I read. I made a few calls, and they all confirmed that Osinachi, a mother of 4 was granulated to death by her husband.

The Politeness strategy is bald on record. Her choice of this strategy is to clearly express herself after she confirmed something unacceptable; leaving no information or how she feels about it to chance.

The illocutionary force which is an expressive with the phrase, “granulate to death” facilitates in painting a picture of pain/sorrow and to blame the person alleged to be involved for engaging in a cruel act. This equally creates the desired background and mind-set she wants her readers to have.

The perlocutionary act created in the reader is that of sadness and pity for the victim who was unjustly treated. This locution equally prepares the reader's mind making it ready to accept any likely indignation the writer may pass over the incidence.

I bathed myself in tears and stared at the roof all evening.

It uses the positive politeness strategy to overstate the situation in a bid to present to the hearer that she is disheartened by the situation and shares in the pains of those affected and also to get the hearer more interested in the conversation.

The Illocutionary force expresses sorrow and the perlocutionary force is sadness/bitterness stirred in the minds of the reader.

We keep killing women, wives, mothers, and girlfriends.

The positive politeness strategy was employed here through the use of the word we, involving writer to tone down the accusation or to call the attention of the reader to the fact that this crime keeps happening and nothing seems to be done about it. She is being inclusive, making herself part and parcel of the problem or the killing by not speaking against it or being passive about it.

The illocutionary act is an expressive still expressing sorrow and subtly blaming the accused who actually are involved in the act of killing and blaming the society for allowing it linger for too long.

Perlocutionary act spurs in the reader the curiosity of having to take a little statistic to be certain if this is as prevalent as the speaker has presented it. For those that are already aware it creates a deep saddening feeling within them at a helpless situation which is treated as insignificant.

We have an intimate relationship with violence and when I say we, I mean religion and the church.

The bald on record politeness strategy is used here. It starts with the “we” to create a common ground but went ahead to clarify that religion and church are guilty. The illocutionary act employed is the assertive where the writer makes a claim about what she believes to be true. The perlocutionary act is surprise which would likely arouse the interest the reader with a new information he or she probably never thought of or related religion or the church as the culprit. Some may be more curious at this new dimension while others may be confused. The two groups would want to read further to understand why the church is being accused.

The church has repeatedly pontificated how women should fast and pray for abusive husbands. How God hates divorce and how only prayers will change a malfunctioning male.

The Face Threatening act used here is bald on record. The previous statement accused religion and the church while this tries to

clarify why. The speaker raises a negative evaluation of some aspects of H's positive face, a criticism but chooses not to employ any politeness strategy in order to ensure that the message is rightly received. The illocutionary act is an Expressive. The writer blames religion and the church for teachings that keep women at the mercy of abusive men. The choice of the bald on record strategy is to get religious bodies and the church to redress their approach. The perlocutionary act is for two audiences who would feel different things. Religious bodies and the church who may feel wrongly accused or guilty. If they feel guilty, they may begin to balance their teachings but if they do not, they would be offended. Women on the other hand would more likely be in agreement with the speaker for stating what may be true.

Dear women, let me tell you how religion and culture in Nigeria were designed so that you will wake up. They were designed with you as collateral damage. When a man cheats or beats you, they sentence you to the war room.

When you don't have a child, they blame you. When you do and the child misbehaves, they blame you.

When the marriage ends, they blame you.

That's why they created more conferences for women than man like men are not part of society.

They want to fix women. Everything starts and ends with the woman.

You are the sacrifice and the casualty.

The politeness strategy is bald on record clearly stating the mind of the speaker who is an emotions doctor trying to enlighten women whom she assumes do not understand the degree of damage the society has done to them. The last two sentences, **Everything starts and ends with the woman. You are the sacrifice and the casualty**, are direct address with no redress strategies as the speaker feels that this is an emergency situation and the women need to be educated immediately so that the ongoing impositions by the society and the church can be addressed as soon as possible. The Illocutionary act is an Assertive as the speaker makes claims expressing her belief. **The perlocutionary act** is the women's realization that they have actually been unfairly treated

by society which could create a likely individual strategizing to ensure the situation does not remain the way it is.

The bad news is that no one will likely save you if you don't save yourself.

The Face Threatening act employed here is bald on record. The choice of bald on record is to call the woman's attention to the fact that she is the only one that can liberate herself. The illocutionary force is an Assertive clearly stating what the writer believes is the state of things. It is equally a directive subtly advising the woman to stand up for herself. The perlocutionary act is the raised curiosity in the audience to further understand why she is her own problem. It equally subtly makes the reader want to find ways to save herself.

Your pastor may not want you to leave your husband because he is beating his wife too. If he isn't, remember he will be alive when you die. Your aggressive husband will also remarry when you die because they may change the story from domestic violence to throat cancer. The church will deploy silence as a tool to control and inform everyone to keep quiet on social media, during your funeral they will say you suffered for the Lord and died virtuously.

The Face Threatening act is bald on record, clearly explaining the previous assertion, **The bad news is that no one will likely save you if you don't save yourself.** The writer enlightens women about the strategies used by society, the church inclusive, to gang up against them. She vividly presents her idea to get women to understand that the pastor would work against them because he may be guilty. Even if he is not, he is not the one in the condition or dead. The guilty husband would change the story since the woman is not alive to defend herself and also quickly forget the woman that had died to marry another woman. The church would say nothing and convince everyone not to talk. They would praise the woman for being virtuous to the end. All the points made are to present how everything is planned out by almost everyone against the woman.

The Illocutionary act is an assertive making explanations and claims in order to convince the woman that is a victim of abuse. It also

gives her reasons why she needs to save herself from the society as no one is willing to.

The perlocutionary act is the realization by the woman that these things are true. She may choose to begin to strategize on how she would be liberated from these realities or stay in disbelief that these might not happen to her.

A virtuous woman would preserve her virtue by leaving. It is not the will of God for men to live their best lives at the expense of their wives.

This is bald on record done for maximum clarity. The writer wants her advice to be clearly understood and taken. The Illocutionary force is directive for the first sentences which is an advice and the second an assertion drawn from some facts in the Bible. The perlocutionary act involves the reader being enlightened as she may accept that this is true. She may also agree that this is true but not an easy step to and may thereby think of a new approach to the issue.

Not all marriages are ordained by God. In fact, He is not aware of some of them.

This is bald on record chosen for clarity. The Illocutionary act is Assertive making claims based on what the writer believes. The perlocutionary act is a new sense of awareness and probably helpless shock by the reader.

A temple of a God-ordained marriage is where a man loves you as Christ loves the church anything else means you are unequally yoked to a ritualist.

This utterance is a positive politeness strategy to overstate the situation in a bid to present to the hearer that anyone that is as wicked as to kill his wife is a ritualist. The Bible speaks about being unequally yoked with an unbeliever but the writer here uses ritualist trying to enlighten the reader about the fact that human killing by any one is unacceptable. In other words, the writer shares in the pains of those affected. The Illocutiouary act is Assertive; comparatively drawing conclusions from the Bible. Perlocutionary act is a new sense of awareness and enlightenment on a perspective the reader never thought

of which may raise the reader's self-worth and expectation towards better treatment in her marriage.

The same God who hates divorce is the God of second chances,

This is off record; an indirect way of telling the abused woman to get a divorce; that God will give her a second chance to live and thrive. She probably chose the off record strategy to get the abused woman to think for herself and act appropriately.

And for the statement "What would People say". Who are the people? Humans dealing with darkness, an increase in diesel and food prices, insecurity, pandemic, Sapa, Japa are the people you are bothered about?

This is bald on record, challenging the abused woman that people's opinion should not make them take unfavourable decisions as these people have their problems too. The Illocutionary act for these utterances is directive, advising the abused woman on what to do not being more concerned about people's reactions than their well-being. The perlocutionary act of these utterances could be enlightenment to have a rethink, willingness for a change of situations after being convinced, willingness to act in favour of oneself (the abused woman).

Discussion of Findings

The most prevalent politeness strategy used for this post is the bald on record strategy which was used in about 10 locutions out of 14. This makes it obvious that the writer chose very few mitigating strategies. Two sociological variables must have informed the choice of the politeness strategy. Though the writer and the reader have no personal relationship which is considered as social distance, the perception of the writer on the issue she raised gives her more relative power than her reader whom she considers as less knowledgeable and helpless. Her state of mind and the urgency required by the situation informed her choice of bald on record politeness strategy as she considers the matter a life threatening one, making her overlook the face saving strategies to save the life of the women involved in similar situations. She saw the need to approach the matter as a life-saving

emergency thereby employing a clear language that would get the women to act immediately. We may conclude that Relative Power and the Absolute Ranking basically inspired the choice of more bald on record strategy. The writer was bitter and saw the need to call on abused woman to rise up for themselves.

The writer chose the positive politeness strategy to create a common ground for herself and her reader, especially the abused woman to get her to understand that inasmuch as she may say some things that are not polite, she is doing it for the good of herself and the women involved in battering.

She again used the positive politeness strategy through the use of the word, we, to indicate that she is part and parcel of the ongoing problem. The third positive politeness strategy employed overstated the issue to tell the abused woman that the writer is with her; insisting that biblical standards of loving the woman unconditionally must be used for the treatment of women and the woman must accept nothing less. In the last instance where bald on record strategy was not used, the writer went off record to indirectly urge the woman about the option of divorce as acceptable in a life threatening case like this.

The illocutionary acts are assertives, expressives and directives. The 6 Assertive Illocutionary acts were used to make reports, make claims and draw conclusions. The 4 Expressive illocutionary acts were used to express sorrow and to blame. Four Directive Illocutionary acts were used to advise women. Three were bald on record while one was off record.

The perlocutionary acts consist of being informed, the curiosity being aroused, being enlightened, in agreement or disagreement with, realization of truth, a new sense of awareness, willingness to change in one's favour after being convinced. In a nutshell, it could be said that women have been enlightened to take an action for themselves which the efforts of the writer is likely to make them do even little actions that would ameliorate their situation.

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