

Impoliteness and turn taking in selected *Gbas Gbos* interaction among Nigerians on X

Tayo Adebayo¹, David Esuola²

Osun State University, Osogbo, NIGERIA¹

Lagos State University, NIGERIA²

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Abstract - Impoliteness strategies, a concept that underscores how people's self-worth is bruised in interactions, have been investigated at different levels in Nigerian scholarship, particularly on social media. Most of these studies have been premised on socio-political issues, whereby Nigerians have employed impoliteness strategies towards government authority. Few studies have explored impoliteness and turn-taking strategies among Nigerians on X. This gap necessitated the present study to examine the impoliteness strategies and turn-taking in *gbas gbos* interaction among Nigerian netizens on X. The study's data was collected using a purposive data collection approach from X social media platform. The data was bound by Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness framework and conversation analysis by Harvey Sacks et al. (1975). The study's findings unwrapped that *gbas gbos* interactions are marked with gross impoliteness, using strategies such as bald-on-record, positive, negative, and mock or sarcasm impoliteness. Conversational analysis via turn-taking highlighted how the participants observed turn-taking rules during the interaction.

Keywords: Impoliteness, *Gbas Gbos*, Nigerians, Netizens, X, Conversation analysis, Interaction

1. Introduction

Impoliteness theory, an offshoot of the politeness theory, is a universal phenomenon (Haugh & Chang, 2015). Impolite expressions and acts in everyday interaction among people in different contexts and cultures back up such presumptions. People from different cultural backgrounds experience this clash when they come into contact with another culture. Thus, Haugh and Chang (2015) advocated that a socio-pragmatic awareness between the speakers of two languages should be raised to avoid impoliteness among people in discourse. On this premise, going by the submission of Ikechukwu-Ibe (2023), X (formerly Twitter) is a social media platform where impoliteness strategies are employed by Nigerian netizens in discourse. Ikechukwu-Ibe (2023) disclosed that face-threatening acts (FTAs) are culture- and context-specific. To an extent, Nigerians see X as a platform in which they can express themselves regarding activism, justice, and dragging (impoliteness) because it is a leveller (Obia, 2023). X is a platform where people can be dragged and freely express themselves regarding any issue, irrespective of their social status. To this effect, prominent figures in the country have suffered dragging on X. Some notable recipients of dragging on X are Pastor E.A. Adeboye, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), and former presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari. Also, the incumbent president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, during the 2023 presidential campaign, revealed in one



of his media interactions that he left social media as a result of the insults hurled at him on various social media platforms, especially X (Ayekooto, 2022, retrieved from X).

Research on impoliteness and turn-taking in Nigeria has increasingly demonstrated how language reflects social conflict, power relations, cultural norms, and digital interaction. Early studies examined impoliteness as a sociocultural phenomenon in political and institutional contexts. Ajayi and Bamgbose (2019) found that online discussions surrounding ethno-religious conflicts reflected a "we versus they" ideology, with participants employing impoliteness strategies to express political, religious, and ideological divisions. Similarly, Ifechelobi and Okpokiri (2020) established a strong relationship between positive impoliteness and electoral violence, while Ayansola and Ugoala (2020) showed that verbal and non-verbal impoliteness serves strategic functions in courtroom discourse. Research on turn-taking further reveals that conversational organization is shaped by institutional roles and communicative goals. Udoh (2020) demonstrated that police-suspect interactions are controlled through institutional power, whereas Amadi (2020) found that television news interviews often depart from conventional question-response patterns through extended explanations.

Recent scholarship has shifted attention to X (formerly Twitter), where impoliteness has become a salient feature of online communication. Adeyanju (2017) described banter among Nigerian netizens as playful teasing and sarcasm that frequently develops into overt impoliteness. Likewise, Oloyede (2016) observed that Nigerian users adapt global hashtags, memes, and online trends into local communicative practices, while Ojo (2020) argued that insults and derogatory expressions commonly function as political criticism. Adeyanju (2016) further suggested that impolite online behaviour may strengthen users' social capital, whereas Fayemi and Nwosu (2019) showed that humour, satire, and memes frequently mask impoliteness while remaining socially acceptable. Related studies also indicate that online interactions are dominated by bald-on-record, positive, negative, and sarcastic impoliteness strategies (Taiwo et al., 2021; Pangaribuan et al., 2021; Baczkowska, 2021; Ikechukwu-Ibe, 2023). Beyond impoliteness, digital communication research has highlighted broader issues such as misinformation, media credibility, crisis communication, and hate speech regulation (Acheampong, 2024; Aruku et al., 2025; Oriola & Ajayi, 2023), while linguistic studies continue to document identity construction, dialectal diversity, and toxic online communication (Nwachukwu, 2025; Mensah et al., 2023; Nensilanti et al., 2025).

Despite these contributions, existing studies have generally examined impoliteness and conversational organization separately. To address this gap, the present study integrates Culpeper's impoliteness framework (1996, 2005, 2011) with Conversation Analysis proposed by Sacks et al. (1974). Culpeper's model classifies impoliteness into bald-on-record, positive, negative, sarcasm or mock politeness, and withholding politeness, while Conversation Analysis explains how speakers negotiate turns through sequential organization with minimal gaps and overlaps (Sacks et al., 1974). Combining these complementary perspectives enables a more comprehensive analysis of how impoliteness strategies and turn-taking patterns jointly construct *gbas gbos* interactions among Nigerian users on X.

This research seeks to study impoliteness among X users on different topical issues on the social media platform by adopting Sacks et al. (1974) conversation analysis and impoliteness theory by Culpeper (1996). The current study applies the tenets of CA and impoliteness theory in online conversation, focusing on the interaction between X users about turn-taking and impoliteness among the discourse participants in selected *gbas gbos* interaction.

2. Method

The study adopted a purposive sampling technique to elicit data for the analysis. Data for this study were collected from Nigerian posts on X. The posts are interactions in which the

interaction participants were impolite to one another on the platform. The data was collected from ten posts about disagreement on X from November 2019 to February 2020. The data collected were transcribed and presented in their raw form. The posts were constructed in English, *Naija* (Nigerian Pidgin), and some of the words' spellings were abbreviated. There is an unspoken rule on X among Nigerians about being rude to other users of the social media platform. The act is seen as banter, which the participants undertake for fun. Nonetheless, there are heated disagreements between the participants in the discourse. The severity of a "disagreement" is revealed through the context of the discourse and conversation that ensues through turn-taking between participants.

The analysis of this study adopts the impoliteness theory by Jonathan Culpeper (1996) and conversational analysis by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1975). The impoliteness theory is beneficial to the analysis of the study as it helps divide the work into different super-strategies of impoliteness theory, as discussed by Culpeper, and highlights the impolite expressions utilised by the participants of the discourse. Also, conversational analysis by Sacks et al. (1975) helps analyse how the participants of the interaction took turns in responding to one another.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Bald-on-record Impoliteness

The bald-on-record impoliteness strategy posits that wherever face is irrelevant, the FTA is employed directly, clearly, straightforwardly, and unambiguously (Culpeper, 1996). Scholars have discussed using the bald-on-record impoliteness strategy among Nigerians in different forms of discourse in the study of impoliteness. Scholars like Ajayi (2016), Akinrinlola (2016), and Ikechukwu-Ibe (2023) have highlighted the strategy in discourse among Nigerians in police-suspect interaction and #EndSARS discourse on X. From the data collected for this analysis, bald-on-record impoliteness strategy was the most used impoliteness strategy in *gbas gbos* interaction on the platform. The interaction is replete of insults and verbal attacks on the recipients without redress.

Context 1: *An X user reacted to a picture tagged "Bomboclaat". The users argued whether Beyoncé was overrated or not.*

- (1) Speaker A: *when you tell the beehive Beyonce is overrated.*
- (2) Speaker B: *see your sub, you can cry if I tell this at you.*
- (3) Speaker A: *Bey is the queen without a doubt, we paid our dues in the industry no one comes close to bey, no one!!!*
- (4) Speaker B: *I said it*
- (5) Speaker C: *emojis*
- (6) Speaker A: *She's overrated*
- (7) Speaker C: *Name a better female artist.*
- (8) Speaker A: *Maria Carey*
- (9) Speaker C: *Nice vocal range yes but relevance in this century nah. I don't know up to 5 of her songs even Toni Braxton is doing better.*
- (10) Speaker A: *Not knowing her or any of her songs don't make her less of a diva than yonce. Maria is the GOAT.*
- (11) Speaker C: *We are talking relevance, I'm over 20 and I can bring 20 of my mates who don't even know her. You didn't even say Celine Dion or Whitney Houston.*
- (12) Speaker A: *If you're talking relevance then Beyoncé would make a cut in the top 3 for the last decade. Idk what your point or stats are based off of. The best things in her life is being married to JayZ. Music wise, she just one other singer.*
- (13) Speaker A: *I meant to say would no make a cut.*
- (14) Speaker B: *Check his bio gurrlllll he definitely tripping.*
- (15) Bio of speaker A: *Please!!! Be advised that I do not think twice before posting so do not take my posts personal, or literally.*

The excerpt above opened with an entertainment argument between two X users. Arguments on the superiority of an artist over another are common in X discourse. Over the years, the fans of musicians have been engaged in an endless debate about who is better among Nigerian musicians Wizkid, Davido, and Burna Boy. Such arguments have included veteran artists like 2baba, D'Banj, and Psquare. In this interaction, speaker A said American pop star Beyonce is an overrated musician. Speaker A compared Beyonce with another accomplished American musician, Mariah Carey, who he believed was a better musician than Beyonce. Nonetheless, the opinion of Speaker A did not sit well with that of Speaker B, who involved Speaker C in the interaction; thus, an argument ensued between Speaker A and C.

Speaker A insisted that Beyonce is overrated and that artists like Mariah Carey are better than her. The interaction continued as Speaker A and Speaker C argued about who was better, Beyonce and Mariah Carey. This aligns with the view of Sacks et al. (1975), who posited that if the current speaker, C, selects the next speaker, N, then C must stop, and N should start. The speakers took time to present their views and left the floor open for the other person to present a counter-view. As this went on, one would assume it was an ordinary argument between two fans of their favourite musicians until speaker A performs one of the tenets of conversational analysis as underlined by Sacks et al. (1975), which says that if C does not select N, then any participant can self-select, first starter gaining rights to that next time. By this time, speaker A self-selected and informed Speaker C that Speaker A could not be taken seriously because of what was written on his bio. Speaker B, at this point, subtly comes in with a direct attack on the face of speaker A without redress. He wrote that speaker B was tripping.

Tripping is slang in American English, which means someone is acting like a fool, thinking crazy thoughts, or maybe high on mushrooms. Speaker B believed that the view of speaker A on Beyonce as an overrated artist only means that he is stupid or under the influence of drugs. He sourced this opinion from the bio of speaker A on X, which reads, "Please!!! Be advised that I do not think twice before posting, so do not take my posts personal or literally". This could mean that speaker A was only on the platform to catch a cruise (have fun). However, speaker B took the opportunity to attack his face in the interaction, probably because speaker B thought he was serious about the view speaker A initially posted on the platform. The direct attack without redress aligns with the position of Culpeper (1996), which says that bald-on-record impoliteness is a direct attack in a clear, unambiguous manner without redress.

Context 2: *This interaction took place between two users who argued on the album of rapper YCee.*

- (1) Ycee: *Be like una no know say I dey mad.*
- (2) Speaker A: *Yes na, na only mad person dey fight himself and still no blow. Ycee vs Zaheer.*
- (3) Speaker B: *Funny enough that Ycee vs Zaheer makes mad sense more than that good time by Davido that you guys are just hyping.*
- (4) Speaker A: *For real fam, you're a misfortune for not having a good time.*
- (5) Speaker B: *Your head is a misfortune for not having a grain of hair on it.*
- (6) Speaker A: *Your life don't even reciprocate the logo on your dp. You're a just riff raft.*
- (7) Speaker B: *Why are you pained guy. I hope in your next life you will be taller than the wiseness in you.*
- (8) Speaker A: *Abdulahi, so na you be this. I go too curse you.*
- (9) Speaker B: *My GEE na joke oooh.*
- (10) Speaker A: *You be mumu.*

As established in the introductory part of this analysis, X is a platform where people can be subjected to impoliteness expression. One of the people in Nigeria who are subjected to dragging (impoliteness) is celebrities. Celebrities often have a hero complex and are viewed as perfect beings by people in society. Nevertheless, as Ikechukwu-Ibe (2023) posited that, X is a leveler. Nigerians see the platform as a platform where they can interact with celebrities and criticize them for wrongdoing. The recipient of the bald-on-record impoliteness in this excerpt is a rapper YCee. He won the Rookie of the Year category in the 2016 Headies Award. The interaction occurred after he released his debut album, Ycee versus Zaheer.

The album was titled after the rapper; his name is Zaheer, and his stage name is Ycee. After the album's release, some users on X believed that the album was not good enough. They took their time to drag the artist and the album on X. However, Ycee declared on the site that he could not be bullied because he was street-smart. This is presented in line 1 of the excerpt where it is written, "Be like una no know say I dey mad." This view was capitalized on by speaker A, who took the opportunity to attack the face of the rapper without redress during the interaction. In line 2, speaker A posted, "Yes na, na only mad person dey fight himself and still no blow. Ycee vs. Zaheer." This means that "yes, it is only a mad person that will fight himself and fail woefully at it." At this point, speaker B, a fan of the rapper, replied in line 3 by saying, "Funny enough that Ycee vs. Zaheer makes mad sense more than that good time by Davido that you guys are just hyping." The response of speaker B showed that he is a fan of the artist. He defended it by asserting that the album was better than the album of another musician and afrobeats sensation, Davido.

The response of speaker B was met with a corresponding bald-on-record impoliteness strategy by speaker A in line 4 of the excerpt, who posted that the speaker was unfortunate for not having a good time. He linked the insult to "a good time" because the album of Davido that was brought up in the previous line was titled "A Good Time." At this juncture, speaker A's response prompted Speaker B's reaction to reply to Speaker A by saying in line 5, "Your head is a misfortune for not having a grain of hair on it." After this, the users took turns insulting each other, such as calling each other a misfortune, which correlates with the tenets of CA by Sacks et al. (1975) by adopting the if C does not select N, then any participant can self-select, first starter gaining rights to that next time tenet of the theory. The speakers took turns in the *gas gbos* interaction until A noticed that speaker B was his friend by addressing him by name. At this point, Speaker B reacted by jokingly apologizing that he was playing with Speaker A. The interaction ended with Speaker A jokingly calling Speaker B a fool.

Context 3: *The participants in this interaction argued on consent before and during seX before they started cursing each other.*

(1) Speaker A: *Consent isn't just asking beforehand if they wanna sex. it's also checking in during sex. "Do you like this?" "can I carry on??"*

(2) Speaker B: *Doesn't this shit go both ways tho...Doesn't she also have to request for consent?... What if he doesn't want to carry on and is just doing it for her pleasure?*

(3) Speaker C: *Then he has the right to speak up. At the end of it all, this all thing is about being able to communicate with your partner during sex without feeling guilty for whatever reason. That way, nobody feels used and the whole sexual process can be enjoyed and looked forward to.*

(4) Speaker D: *She has the right to speak up too. Let energies be mutual, world doesn't revolve around any gender.*

(5) Speaker C: *Uncle, please read and understand before you start forming opinion.*

(6) Speaker D: *Your first sentence was clear and I replied to it. Your back up was okoto meow skrrr skrrr. Relax.*

(7) Speaker C: *Q'dè*

Fool.

(8) Speaker D: *O'í è ló yí*

You are mad.

(9) Speaker C: *O'í tì e gan dàru'*

You are also mad.

(10) Speaker D: *O'í e gbálè. Nonsense*

You are mentally disturbed.

(11) Speaker C: *Qmọ àlè jàtijàti. Òpònu' ikejì ajá.*

You are a bastard and an idiot.

(12) Speaker D: *Yee!! eranko òshì. ashièrè aláíní lakáyè. Asíwín ròdòn rodon*

Yee!! You are an animal, a senseless and mad fellow.

(13) Speaker C: *Òdè ni é! I give up*

You are a fool. I give up.

(14) Speaker D: *O'í e ò pé! I win*

You are mad, I won.

- (15) Speaker C: *Qba àwọn ọ̀dẹ̀. Gba adé e (speaker C shares a picture of a crown on a dummy)*
King of fools, collect your crown.
- (16) Speaker D: *Dákun kóshì kúrò fúnmi.*
Get out of my sight.
- (17) Speaker C: *Eléribú ara e, kó rádaràda dànù sínú igbó.*
You are an unfortunate fellow. Get out of my sight.
- (18) Speaker D: *Ah alákorí olófò oòjé wá bí kóshì e gbà lor.*
Stubborn loser, get out of my sight.
- (19) Speaker C: *Inú igbó ni ilé wéyàrèy, moh pá láshe ni, mi ò da lábà, Ìwo (mentions speaker D's name). Óyá wo igbó lo kí o má bu igi je.*
Mad men live in the bush, this is a command and not a suggestion. Right now, run mad and go into the bush.

This *ghas gbos* interaction is replete with lots of impolite expressions in which users took turns attacking the other recipient's face without redressing directly. The interaction commenced with a post from speaker A, who raised an opinion on consent before and during sex for women. The subject of consent before and during sex is a hot topic on X anytime it comes up. Some people believe that a man must get consent before he has a sexual relationship with any lady, and if, in the course of the sexual intercourse, a lady can withdraw her consent. If the man continues, he is guilty of rape. When the topic was discussed on X, it attracted different opinions from people who believed that consent should not be withdrawn midway into sexual intercourse. Nonetheless, speaker B raised a similar opinion for the male gender in response to Speaker A's opinion. At this point, speaker C got involved in the interaction to inform Speaker B that consent goes both ways, but Speaker D (a new participant) misunderstood it by saying consent should be for both genders. Speaker C reacted by asking him to reread her initial post. Speaker D responded that the post was apparent in the first part, but in the last part, the speaker was talking off-point in line 6 (okoto meow skrrr). This sparked a series of *ghas gbos* among the two marked with negative impoliteness. Speaker C starts by reacting to Speaker D's assertion that she was talking off-point by calling Speaker D a fool. Speaker D replied by calling Speaker C a mad person.

Speaker C replied to Speaker D by saying that he was also mad. At this point, Speaker D asserted that Speaker C was mentally disturbed, and Speaker C replied by saying that Speaker D was a bastard and an idiot. This prompted Speaker D to call Speaker C an animal, a senseless and mad fellow. In response, Speaker C called Speaker D a fool while Speaker D said that Speaker C was mad and, based on the insults hurled at each other, she won the *ghas gbos*. From this, one can presume that *ghas gbos* interaction degenerates to that level because the people did not want to lose the argument, resulting in impolite expressions of all kinds to win the argument. Additionally, speaker C responds that Speaker C is the king of fools; she shares the picture of a crown on a dummy as part of the post. Speaker D reacts to this by asking Speaker C to get out of his sight while Speaker C calls him an unfortunate fellow and says he should get out of her sight. Speaker D's response is to call her a stubborn loser and say that she should get out of his sight before Speaker C takes the *ghas gbos* to another level by "commanding" Speaker D to go into the bush as an incurable madman.

In all, lines 7-19 are replete with a bald-on-record impoliteness strategy without any form of redress by the speakers in the discourse. Most of the expressions employed were carried out in the Yoruba language. Some of the expressions are *orí ẹ́ ló yí* (You are mad) *ọ̀mọ̀ àlẹ̀* (bastard) *ọ̀pònú* (idiot) *eranko* (animal) *ashière* (mad fellow) *ọ̀dẹ̀* (fool) *orí ẹ́ ò pé* (You are mad). The bald-on-record impoliteness expressions employed by the participants in this discourse correlate with the position of Culpeper (1996).

3.1.2 Positive Impoliteness

Positive impoliteness is using strategies constructed to damage the recipient's positive face wants (Culpeper, 1996). The participants in the *ghas gbos* interaction employed positive impoliteness sub-strategies of calling other names, using derogatory nominations, and dissociating from others, as Culpeper (1996) highlighted.

Context 4: *This happened between two users who argued on hanging out together.*

- (1) Speaker A: *please who is in zaria? Let hangout, Preferably with your car.*
- (2) Speaker B: *I'm here*
- (3) Speaker A: *I reject*
- (4) Speaker B: *All the bills are on me, please.*
- (5) Speaker A: *Which bill*
- (6) Speaker B: *We aint supposed to just sit and be staring at each other now. There should be refreshments. Me think if someone says hang out it involves refreshments and cuisines*
- (7) Speaker A: *DM*
- (8) Speaker B: *I reject*

The excerpt presented above is a positive impoliteness strategy in which two X users adopted dissociate from other sub-strategies of positive impoliteness while interacting, as discussed by Culpeper (1996). In the excerpt, a lady posted in line 1 that she would love to hang out with someone in Zaria City, Kaduna State, in North Central Nigeria. This open invite was met by an offer by speaker B in line 2 for the hangout. Speaker A rejected the offer in line 3. Nevertheless, speaker B in line 4 persisted by offering to foot the bill for the hangout. This offer piqued the curiosity of Speaker A, who asked what the bill was for in line 5 of the interaction. Speaker B responded that the bills referred to the bills they would incur for refreshments during the outing.

At this point, speaker A asked for a direct message in line 7 to discuss the hangout details. However, speaker B responded with "I reject" as payback for the initial rejection speaker A gave him at the beginning of the interaction. They both adopted disassociate from the other sub-strategy of negative impoliteness by not wanting to associate with each other. Speaker A did not want to associate with Speaker B probably because of his social class, and by the moment she agreed to hang out with him after she had been assured of refreshments at the hangout, speaker B employed the same strategy towards her as a form of payback. The speakers took turns in alignment with the tenet of CA by Sacks et al. (1975), which says, "if C does not select N, then any participant can self-select, first starter gaining rights to that next time."

3.1.3 Negative Impoliteness

Culpeper (1996) asserted that negative impoliteness is using strategies calculated to damage the recipient's negative face wants. The participants adopted sub-strategies of negative impoliteness, like belittling the other and ridicule, to damage one another's negative face.

Context 5: *Two tweeps eXchanged war of words between each other.*

- (1) Speaker A: *Delete Netflix app on your system. unfollow them if you are a true Christian...The movie 'gay jesus' is an insult to Christianity and abuse to our sensibilities... we stand to condemn it and all it stands for. Mad people...*
- (2) Speaker B: *The post was making absolute sense until it got to the last word. sigh.*
- (3) Speaker A: *It wasn't posted to make sense to you. it was meant for sensible people.*

In the argument in the interaction above, the first speaker (speaker A) posts that Christians should delete the Netflix app, the leading movie streaming platform in the world, because of the 'gay Jesus' movie they made. The post was made in response to the Brazilian film "The First Temptation of Jesus." The movie was released on Netflix in 2019 until it was banned in Brazil for the controversy that ensued for portraying Jesus Christ as gay in the film. Speaker A, in line 1, believed that Christians around the world are meant to delete the Netflix app on their electronic gadgets and boycott the business for portraying Jesus and his disciples as gay. In addition, he ended the post with bald-on-record impoliteness towards Netflix. However, the *gbas gbos* interaction did not occur between the speaker and Netflix; instead, speaker B found the last phrase of line 1 insensible, and he pointed it out.

Nevertheless, speaker A responded to the view of speaker B when he disassociated himself from speaker B by adopting the disassociate from the other sub-strategy of negative

impoliteness, as Culpeper (1996) discussed. In line 3, speaker A responded by posting, "It was not posted to make sense to you. it was meant for sensible people." By this, he established that speaker B was not a sensible person. This referenced Speaker A's unwillingness to associate with Speaker B during the interaction.

Context 6: *This incident occurred between three X users in response to American rapper 'Cardi B' viral post.*

- (1) Cardi B: *Picking my tribe*
- (2) Speaker A: *Cardi Chioma B is obviously Igbo. She's very fair, fine and rich plus she doesn't like pepper ask Ghana that poisoned her with alligator pepper.*
- (3) Speaker B: *but she doesn't have bears or yam leg na.*
- (4) Speaker A: *at least she's fine not looking like bread that burnt in the oven.*
- (5) Speaker B: *didn't say u should gv us detailed description of you.*
- (6) Speaker A: *no. I was describing your mother.*
- (7) Speaker C: *ahn ahn!!
This new Year??!!!*

This *ghas gbas* happened between three Nigerians in response to Cardi B's post, where she declared that she wanted to become a Nigerian. Cardi B is an American rapper; she won the best rap album at the 2019 Grammy Awards. After the declaration, she proceeded that she was about to choose a tribe. This post prompted speaker A to give her an Igbo name, "Cardi Chioma B." In the process, speaker A subtly attacked the Yoruba tribe with a negative impoliteness by saying that Cardi B did not like pepper. The Yoruba tribe in Nigeria, one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria, predominantly in the southwestern part of Nigeria and West African countries like the Benin Republic and the Republic of Togo, is famously known to love eating spicy foods. Speaker A claimed an attack on the Yoruba tribe. Such claims and attacks on X are not uncommon because they breed tribal wars among Nigerians. The opinion of speaker A prompted speaker B to respond in line 3 by claiming that Cardi B does not have yam legs like the Igbo tribe. Also, it is believed among Nigerians that women from the Igbo tribe have big legs, which are untidy, and beards. On this premise, they derogatorily refer to Igbo ladies as people with yam legs.

In response to Speaker B's assertion, speaker A insulted Speaker B by describing her looks as: "looking like bread that burnt in the oven." All these are instances of scorn, a sub-strategy of negative impoliteness. On this note, in line 5, speaker A replied to speaker B by informing her that she just gave a detailed description of herself. Speaker A responded by posting that he had described Speaker B's mother. At this point, a new participant self-selected a turn by adopting the if C does not select N, then any participant can self-select, the first starter gaining rights to that next time tenet of CA by Sacks et al. (1975). He joined the interaction by mocking the participants whereby he posted "ahn ahn!!! This new Year???!!!" to react to speaker A's last post and ridicule speaker B for the insult hurled at her by speaker A. Speaker C's response is an instance of ridicule the other, a sub-strategy of negative impoliteness by Culpeper (1996) in this context. It is possible that speaker C supported speaker A, who is Igbo.

3.1.4 Mock or Sarcasm

According to Culpeper (1996), sarcasm or mock politeness is the FTA performed using insincere politeness strategies decoded from the speaker's tone. This impoliteness strategy was displayed in the excerpt presented in this section.

Context 7: *This interaction took place between three users on X. They argued on men putting the social class of the women into consideration before they approach them.*

- (1) Speaker A: *Before you slide into a girl's DM, take a good look at yourself first. Are you on her level and can you afford her?*
- (2) Speaker B: *"Can you afford her?" like say girls are commodity you just enter shoprite to buy.*
- (3) Speaker A: *I said what he wrote for women exactly for men and you insecure lots want to use me and trend. ndi ara.*
- (4) Speaker B: *So how much does a guy need to have for him to afford you? Since you're for sale, available for shipping, pay and delivery.*

(5) Speaker A: *I won't give you the publicity you want. keep crying.*

(6) Speaker C: *Answer him nah. Your customer might be on his TL.*

In the interaction presented above, there are three cases of impoliteness. The argument started with Speaker B reacting to Speaker A's initial post that men should consider the class of the women they want to date before approaching them. Speaker B reacted by saying that Speaker A relates women to commodities that can be bought, which Speaker A responded by saying that she said what men say about women and that people are insulting her about it. She ended the post with *ndi ara*, which means mad people in Igbo. This is a case of a bald-on-record impoliteness strategy, as highlighted by Culpeper (1996).

Speaker B enquired about the worth of Speaker A by asking her how much it would cost to be able to afford her. This is an instance of sarcasm or mock impoliteness, as discussed by Culpeper (1996). Speaker A, in turn, responded by saying that she would not give him (speaker B) the attention he wanted. Speaker A adopted a negative face in her response to the speaker. At this point, speaker C said that Speaker A should answer Speaker B. He adopted mock or sarcasm impoliteness by jokingly commenting, "Your customer may be on his TL." This means that Speaker A's husband may be observing the argument. At first look, this looks like a genuine concern, but on another thought, it is seen that the speaker was mocking speaker A by suggesting that she could find her husband on the social media platform.

3.2 Discussion

This paper has defined the concept of *ghas ghos* as an exchange of insults in a heated argument or quarrel between two or more netizens marked with derogatory words aimed at ridiculing and reducing the self-esteem of the recipient. The analysis discovered that users take turns in arguments, and the interaction is marked with gross cases of impoliteness by using strategies such as bald-on-record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and bald-on-record impoliteness/mock or sarcasm. The study was conducted from the point of view of impoliteness theory by Culpeper (1996), and conversational analysis by Sacks et al. (1975) disclosed the impolite words and expressions and strategies utilised by Nigerian netizens in *ghas ghos* interaction on X through turn-taking strategies. The impoliteness theory and conversational analysis were adopted for the study as they bring to light the impolite words and expressions and help classify them into different strategies for easy analysis. Conversational analysis highlighted how the participants observed turn-taking rules during the interaction.

The research discovered that impolite expressions and words used by Nigerians in arguments were adopted to win the argument and not look like the weak ones in the discourse. There is also little or zero gap between the participants in *ghas ghos* because the participants are all online at the time of the arguments and reply as soon as possible. Overlapping does not occur because the interaction occurs on the internet.

4. Conclusion

This study examined impoliteness and turn-taking in selected *ghas ghos* interactions among Nigerian users on X by integrating Culpeper's (1996, 2005, 2011) impoliteness framework with the Conversation Analysis model of Sacks et al. (1974). The findings demonstrate that *ghas ghos* interactions are highly structured communicative events in which participants strategically employ impoliteness while simultaneously adhering to recognizable turn-taking patterns. Rather than representing random exchanges of insults, these interactions reveal organized conversational sequences through which users negotiate conflict, identity, and social positioning.

The analysis showed that bald-on-record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm or mock politeness are the predominant strategies used by Nigerian netizens during online confrontations. These strategies are realized through direct insults, derogatory naming, ridicule, taboo expressions, sarcasm, and face-threatening acts that

challenge the social identity and credibility of opponents. Their deployment reflects not only emotional reactions but also deliberate rhetorical choices aimed at asserting dominance, defending ideological positions, gaining audience support, and discrediting adversaries. The findings further indicate that the interpretation of impoliteness is highly dependent on cultural knowledge, contextual cues, and the participants' shared understanding of online interaction.

The study also demonstrates that conversational turn-taking remains orderly despite the confrontational nature of *gbas gbos*. Participants generally observe sequential turn organization by responding directly to preceding posts, extending or challenging previous arguments, and maintaining interactional coherence with minimal disruption. This finding supports the view that conflictive online discourse is governed by recognizable conversational conventions rather than by communicative disorder.

The study contributes to pragmatic and discourse studies by illustrating the complementary value of combining impoliteness theory with Conversation Analysis in examining digitally mediated communication. It highlights *gbas gbos* as a culturally distinctive form of Nigerian online discourse that reflects broader issues of identity, power, ideology, and public engagement. Future research should expand the analysis to other social media platforms, employ larger multilingual datasets, and incorporate comparative cross-cultural approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of impoliteness, interactional dynamics, and digital communication practices across diverse online communities.

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