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

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).

There have been studies on impoliteness and turn-taking in linguistic analysis in Nigeria. Some of these studies are Ajayi and Bamgbose (2019), which explored the use of impolite expressions among Nigerians regarding ethno-religious conflict through the comments sourced online on different issues of national interest. Similarly, Abayi and Kugbayi (2019) asserted that certain socio-cultural conventions in the Nigerian environment lead to (im)politeness enacted in Nigerian English. Ifechelobi and Okpokiri (2020) took another view in the study of impoliteness by exploring impoliteness as a source of political and social instability

4

in Nigeria by attempting to establish a connection between positive impoliteness strategy and insecurity in Nigeria. It revealed a strong link between positive impoliteness and electoral violence. In a different move to preceding studies on impoliteness, Ayansola and Ugoala (2020) analysed impoliteness in courtroom discourse. The study explored nonverbal communicative behaviour by lawyers and their professional antics related to verbal impoliteness in the court. It disclosed that nonverbal impoliteness and antics by lawyers are embedded in some of the legal documents and court sessions in the form of booby-trap arguments to frustrate the opposition and influence the course of justice.

8

Regarding turn-taking analysis, Udoh (2020) investigated the influence of power on turn-taking in police-suspect interaction. It illustrated the turn constructional components of police-suspect interaction and the various turn cues and transition relevance places in police-suspect interaction. On the other hand, Amadi (2020) delved into turn-taking patterns in news interviews. The study established that interview turn-taking departs from the question-response pattern expected of news interviews. The patterns highlighted by the study are explanation, question, and response.

The current study aimed to analyse impoliteness among Nigerians on X in order to determine impolite words and expressions in interaction among X users, determine impolite strategies adopted by the participants of an interaction, and determine how users on X take turns in trading insults among one another. This was done by adopting the impoliteness theory of Culpeper (1996) and conversational analysis by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1975). Impoliteness theory was adopted for its suitability in revealing the impoliteness expressions and strategies adopted by the participants of each *ghas ghos* interaction. *Ghas ghos* is "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 recipient's self-esteem." The term is coined from the Yoruba slang that indicates an exchange of blows or insults in a chaotic event. Therefore, on X, it is said that "For every *ghas*, there is a corresponding *ghos*". This implies that no one has the monopoly of violence; if an X user attacks another user, the person attacked can respond with an attack on the attacker.

The impoliteness theory helped classify the analysis into different categories based on the super-strategies of impoliteness discussed by Culpeper (1996). Similarly, conversational analysis by Sacks et al. (1975) helped highlight how each X user took turns in *ghas ghos* interaction. The instances of impoliteness and turn-taking posts subjected to analysis in the study were collected via purposive sampling. The study's findings revealed bald-on-record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and mock or sarcasm. Also, conversational analysis highlighted how the participants observed turn-taking rules during the interaction.

To foreground impoliteness and language use on X, it is essential to establish that language use on X among Nigerians is replete with banter. To this effect, Adeyanju (2017) opined that banter among Nigerian netizens is the use of sharp language to tease, challenge, or mock each other. Also, it is referred to as playful sarcasm and insults. The study posited that despite its aggressive nature, banter is an affectionate communication that signals solidarity among individuals. However, on some occasions, Nigerian netizens step out of the context of banter in interactions on X to disagreements replete with impoliteness strategies. Oloyede (2016) asserted that the language used on X demonstrates the significance of the social media platform among Nigerians. He submitted that global trends, hashtags, and memes have significantly shaped the way Nigerians interact on the platform in which they adopt linguistic styles and adapt them to their discourse. Ojo (2020) arguing on the use of impoliteness expressions among Nigerians. Language use of X in discourse that is characterised by sarcasm and insults reflects a confrontational approach in discourse among Nigerians on the site. Furthermore, the study substantiated that Nigerians deploy impoliteness strategies through humour, expletives, and derogatory terms, which are aimed toward prominent figures in government. This serves as a means of expressing their frustration towards the systemic failures of the government.

The use of impoliteness expressions on X is a function of social capital and social identity markers (Adeyanju, 2016). The study established that individuals who engage in impoliteness on X stand a chance to gain social capital by aligning with social or political movements line activism or opposition. In analysing insults, humour, and satire in impoliteness expressions on X, Fayemi, and Nwosu (2019) substantiated that humorous and satirical expressions disguise impoliteness on X because they are accepted forms of criticism in Nigeria. Impoliteness expressions in this category are captured in the form of texts and images, which include jokes, memes, and parodies. On this premise, Fayemi and Nwosu (2019) asserted that many political figures in Nigeria have been subjected to satirical cartoons, viral insults, and memes to make fun of their leadership style and decisions. This study therefore aims to analyse impoliteness expressions from the purview of impoliteness theory by Culpeper (1996) and conversational analysis in confrontational interactions among Nigerian netizens on X. the study highlights the different impoliteness strategies deployed according to the classification of Culpeper (1996) and how conversational turns are observed among the participants of the discourse through the tenets of conversational analysis by Sacks et al. (1974).

Many scholarly endeavours have been carried out on impoliteness in Nigeria and globally. These endeavours have been divided into two categories. The first category encompasses literature on impoliteness, and the second category includes impoliteness on X (Twitter). In the first category, existing studies reviewed are Ajayi and Bamgbose (2019), Abayi and Kugbayi (2019), and Ifechelobi and Okpokiri (2020) among others. These studies explored impoliteness from the view of the ethno-religious conflict, socio-cultural conventions in the Nigerian environment, impoliteness as a source of political and social instability in Nigeria, and impoliteness in nonverbal communicative behaviour by legal representatives.

Ajayi and Bamgbose (2019) explored the use of language impoliteness among Nigerians regarding ethno-religious conflict through the comments sourced online on different issues of national interest. The study disclosed an element of they (them) versus we (us) ideology among the population selected for the analysis. Also, it revealed that Nigerians utilize different impoliteness strategies during online ethno-religious conflict. Additionally, the study posited that ethno-religious crises in Nigeria arise from issues bordering on political affiliation, sectional killings and insecurity, and different ideological stances of the people. Abayi and Kugbayi (2019) established that certain socio-cultural conventions in the Nigerian environment lead to (im)politeness enacted in Nigerian English. Also, the research posited that speakers of other dialects of English would misinterpret impoliteness in Nigerian English due to the differences in the cultures of the speakers and hearers. Furthermore, the study disclosed that religion, profession, economy, severity, politics, and ideology are the various means of (im)politeness expressions that reflect unequal power relations in discourse among Nigerians.

Ifechelobi and Okpokiri (2020) examined impoliteness as a source of political and social instability in Nigeria by attempting to connect positive impoliteness strategy and insecurity in Nigeria. The study discussed the consequences of impoliteness on national development in all sectors of the country. Thus, the study revealed a strong link between positive impoliteness and electoral violence. Positive impoliteness, such as excluding the other from an activity, name-calling, and disassociating from the other, among other methods, were employed by politicians. Ayansola & Ugoala (2020) examined impoliteness in nonverbal communicative behaviour by lawyers and their professional antics related to verbal impoliteness in the court. The study disclosed that nonverbal impoliteness and antics by lawyers are embedded in some of the legal documents and court sessions in the form of booby-trap arguments designed to frustrate the opposition and impact the course of justice and time-wasting tactics.

Taiwo et al. (2021) analyzed interactional positioning and impoliteness on Nigerian political discussion websites, Nairaland and Gistmania. The analysis demonstrated a dominant use of bald-on-record and negative impoliteness on both platforms. In addition, impoliteness on these platforms was expressed through name-calling, vulgarism, dismissal, sarcasm, and cursing. Oluremi Olugbemi-Gabriel (2022) explored the Yoruba proverbs in the movie *King of Boys*, which served as conflictive-motivated, face-threatening Yoruba proverbs (CFYPs). The

study discovered positive and negative impoliteness strategies in living through Yoruba proverbs. In the study, it was disclosed that the speakers use positive impoliteness through CFYPs to criticise and insult people, especially the less powerful ones. In contrast, negative impoliteness through CFYPs is employed because the speaker holds power and, as a result, threatens the life of the addressee. Dozie (2023) evaluated the relationship between the evidence-based findings on turn-taking in formal discourse and its application to real-life interaction to ascertain its significant outcomes and workability. The study observed that because extant studies have been patterned and trajectories in a manner that stipulated that all forms of conversation were hitch-free, thus, yielded to turn-taking strategies, the same would not be easily said for informal conversation scenarios not investigated by these studies.

The second category of impoliteness reviewed in this study discusses existing literature on impoliteness on X. Pangaribuan et al. (2021) and Ikechukwu-Ibe (2023). These studies analysed impoliteness on X from the angle of comments by netizens and the 2020 Nigerian #EndSARS protest. Oliveira et al. (2020) investigated how hashtags were employed to express offensive behavior and convey impoliteness in Brazilian Twitter. The study's data suggested that hashtags served as impoliteness strategies by intensifying the contents of the posts and by framing the interpretation of verbal aggression.

Pangaribuan et al. (2021) aimed to discover the impoliteness strategy employed by netizens in commenting on actors' posts and the forms of post comments made by netizens. The research disclosed four impoliteness strategies: bald-on-record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm or mock politeness. Baczowska (2021) sought to propose a typology of replies to insults according to the data retrieved from Twitter. The study asserted that the platform is complete with offensive comments. Also, it posited that what counts as an insult hinge primarily on whether the insultee perceives an utterance as an insult or not. Ikechukwu-Ibe (2023) investigated applying impoliteness strategies to discourse on Twitter about the 2020 Nigerian #EndSARS protest. The findings revealed five impoliteness strategies in posts and comments with the hashtag #EndSARS. Ikechukwu-Ibe (2023) established that Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) are both culture- and context-specific. Furthermore, the study established that prior knowledge and actual situation knowledge leads to bald-on-record impoliteness. Also, it was submitted that adverbs, conjunctions, and modal auxiliary verbs, depending on their application, can trigger impoliteness. The study concluded that context and turns preceding and succeeding any Turn Construction Unit (TCU) are strong determinants of impoliteness in any discourse.

This paper adopts the impoliteness framework by Culpeper (1996) and conversation analysis by Sacks et al. (1974) in analysing *ghas ghos* interaction on X. The impoliteness framework was premised on Culpeper's view on politeness from the angle of impoliteness. Culpeper (1996) described impoliteness as a system in which people develop communication strategies to create and improve social harmony. Impoliteness is defined by Culpeper (2011) as "an attitude of disapproval towards the latter parts of some behaviours that happen in specific situations." Culpeper's framework highlighted some strategies similar to the super-strategies of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. The super-strategies of impoliteness, as described by Culpeper (1996), are bald on record impoliteness, positive politeness, negative politeness, sarcasm or mock politeness, and withhold politeness.

Bald-on-record impoliteness by Culpeper (1996) asserted that where face is irrelevant, FTA is carried out directly, clearly, straightforwardly, and unambiguously. Positive impoliteness involves using strategies to undermine the addressee's desire to receive favourable social approval from others. The sub-strategies of positive impoliteness are:

- Use taboo words: It includes using swear, abusive, or profane language.
- Disassociate from the other: It includes denial of association or common ground with the other; avoid sitting together.
- Seek disagreement: This is to select a sensitive topic and make the other uncomfortable.
- Use inappropriate identity markers: For example, use title and surname when a close association pertains or a nickname when a distant relationship pertains.

- Call the other names: It deals with the use of derogatory nominations.
- Be disinterested, indifferent, and unsympathetic.

Culpeper (2005) asserted that negative impoliteness involves "the use of strategies deployed to damage the recipient's negative face wants." Culpeper (1996) cited the following instances of negative impoliteness: Frighten: to instil a belief that action detrimental to the other will occur; condescend, scorn or ridicule, do not treat the other seriously; belittling the other, invade the other's space: it means that you should not go closer to the other than your relationship will allow.

It deals with evident deceptive politeness acts that only achieve surface realizations. The setting has a significant impact on this strategy. As a result of specific contextual cues and the purpose of not offending but demonstrating social connection, surface politeness can be regarded as impoliteness. Also, to determine if someone is being sarcastic, joking, or mocking, the hearer must be familiar with them and examine the tone in which the speaker has made the speech.

Withholding politeness is an impolite strategy of remaining silent when being courteous is expected. Culpeper (1996) noted that impoliteness may be realized through "...the absence of politeness work where it would be expected." Culpeper (2005) illustrates that "failing to thank someone for a present may be taken as intentional impoliteness."

Furthermore, Sacks et al. (1974) conducted conversation analysis, a study on informal and formal social interaction. Conversation analysis (CA) analyses conversation as social interaction where one speaker speaks at a time with little or zero gaps and overlapping. Sacks et al. (1974) posited that turn-taking is a social interaction behaviour with explicit attributes. They opined that no formal rule guides the taking of turns in discourse. The concept of CA is captured in the notion that one speaker talks at a time with little to no gap and overlapping occurring in the conversation. Sacks et al. (1974) established that overlapping and gaps come into play during the transition between speakers.

Sacks et al. (1974) described interaction as a societal organization governed by social norms that allow for a speaker at a time in open participation. They suggested turning units into syntactic and prosodic units governed by rules. These rules are: (1) If the current speaker, C, selects the next speaker, N, then C must stop, and N should start. (selection could involve address terms, gaze, or, in the case of dyadic conversation, defaults to the other). (2) If C does not select N, then any participant can self-select, and the first starter will gain rights to that next time. (3) If no other party self-selects, C may continue.

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 *ghas ghos* 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 *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 gurrlll he definitely tripping.
- 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.

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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 ooh.
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: Ọdè
Fool.
8. Speaker D: Ọrí ẹ ló yí
You are mad.
9. Speaker C: Ọrí tí ẹ gan dàrú
You are also mad.
10. Speaker D: Ọrí ẹ gbálẹ̀. Nonsense
You are mentally disturbed.
11. Speaker C: Ọmọ àlẹ̀ jí tì jà tì. Ọpónú ìkẹ̀jì ajá.
You are a bastard and an idiot.
12. Speaker D: Yee!! ẹranko ọ̀shì. ashièrè aláìní làkáyè. Asíwín ròdòn rodon
Yee!! You are an animal, a senseless and mad fellow.
13. Speaker C: Ọdè ni é! I give up
You are a fool. I give up.
14. Speaker D: Ọrí ẹ ò pé! I win
You are mad, I won.
15. Speaker C: Ọba àwọn ọ̀dè. 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: Eléríbú ara e, kó rádaràda dànù sínú igbó.
You are an unfortunate fellow. Get out of my sight.
18. Speaker D: Ah alákorí olófò ọ̀jé wá bi kóshì e gbà lor.
Stubborn loser, get out of my sight.
19. Speaker C: Inú igbó ni ilé wéyà, 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 *gas 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 ghos* 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 ghos*. From this, one can presume that *ghas ghos* 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 ghos* 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 ẹ ló yí* (You are mad) *ọmọ àlẹ* (bastard) *ọ̀pònú* (idiot) *ẹranko* (animal) *ashière* (mad fellow) *òdè* (fool) *orí ẹ 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 ghos* 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 *ghas 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 gbos* 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.

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