

APPLICATION OF POLITENESS PRINCIPLES IN THE STUDY OF ALIYU KAMAL'S LIFE AFRESH

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Abstract

This paper examines aspects of politeness principles in the novel titled *Life Afresh* written by northern Nigerian novelist, Aliyu Kamal. Behind series of utterances said or any expression uttered lies a motive or force that depicts the extent to which the participants involved in the talk exchange revere or defame one another. The reverence or otherwise may be about an object or a person being talked about that can either be in presence or absentia. Therefore, this paper attempts to explicate utterances among or between characters of this novel based on the application of politeness principles. These principles applied have different concepts like face saving acts, face threatening acts, deixis, and Leech's politeness maxims (1983) that all form the target analysis of the novel. Qualitative approach with pragmatic content analysis has been the guiding tool in the identification of the utterances analysed from the novel. The dissection has revealed that the novelist employs some instances of expressions extractable from the novel to show levels of interaction that connect the characters in the novel. This can be extended to incorporate social contact existing in the novelist's environment. It has also been found that language as an instrument can serve as a way to cultivate harmony, love, friendship, empathy, and even apathy and their like among interlocutors.

Keywords: *politeness principles, revere, defame, face saving acts, face threatening acts.*

1. Introduction

This work investigates Aliyu Kamal's *Life Afresh* with the aim of bringing forth or to light the pragmatic entrails of the novel. The study therefore acknowledges politeness principles as the basic theoretical tool serving as guide in the explication of the novel. Interpretation of the utterances culled from the novel in relation to the theory selected for the study turns out significantly convenient. This is not unconnected with the fact that pragmatic research paradigm is and seems to remain multifaceted accommodating many aspects of language and meaning. Its multifariousness makes it cover deep scrutiny pertaining language use and the emotional effects such use of language evolves. Principles of politeness are deeply studied in pragmatics. Pragmatics has received different definitions but which show only subtlety in the target concept. Leech and Short (1981, p. 290) define pragmatics as "the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from the formal properties of words, but from the way in which the utterances are used and how they relate to the context in

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which they are uttered.” This gives us the idea that the wordy constituent of an utterance is not the concern of pragmatics in terms of meaning digging. The chief concern is the intended meaning the speaker wants to communicate, whether actually said by the words or implied. Lawan (2018, p. 31) opines that “pragmatics deals with the specific meaning of actual utterances of language use, that is, with the meaning conveyed by a linguistic expression in a particular context of speech.” Lawan’s view on pragmatics is not much different from that of Leech and Short (1981). It is fathomable here that summation of different linguistic and even paralinguistic entities of language use forms central aspects of pragmatics. To Allot (2010, p. 158), pragmatics is “primarily concerned with what is communicated or what is meant overall, rather than what sentences mean, hence the focus on the proposition expressed by the speaker on a particular occasion.” The thrust of Allot’s definition is the meaning carried by the proposition expressed in an utterance. As a result, even if utterance carries words that have no parity between the function and the form, the intended message of the utterance will prevail whether similar to or different from the form and/or function. Therefore, even language use in irony and the like, though sounds conventional, implies the meaning intended not possibly derived from the words that make up the sentence.

Concerning the theoretical aspects pragmatics can cover, Cruse (2006, p.136) reports that “.....there is a fair measure of agreement that the following belong to pragmatics: politeness phenomena, reference and deixis, implicatures, and speech acts.” As a result, the main concern or purpose of this paper study is politeness phenomena, where deixis, as a linguistic entity that helps in showing politeness or otherwise forms part of the analysis. The inclusion of deixis in the analysis as identified from the novel helps denote the converging relevance and interconnection of language and politeness as expressed via the use of language. Politeness principles are shouldered with the task of discerning the extent to which face is saved, threatened and whether the maxims of politeness as proposed by Leech are followed or not in the analysis.

However, Fraser (1990, p. 220) states that “a positive evaluation (politeness) arises when action is in congruence with the norm, a negative evaluation (impoliteness=rudeness) when action is to the contrary.” This means politeness is culture bound. What is polite in culture A may be impolite in culture B. Fraser’s view is in line with Lakoff’s (1973) quoted in Culpeper (1994, p. 350) asserting that “politeness can be defined as a means of minimizing confrontation in discourse.” Culpeper (1994, p. 350) then adds “impoliteness is the use of strategies that are designed to have the opposite effect—that of social disruption.” Utterances made in literary works turn out with either positive or negative effect on the speaker, hearer, or the person spoken about (whether present at the speech event or not). What are inclusively implied in this definition are face-threatening and face-saving acts or strategies that motivate or demotivate effective communication. Mey (2001) argues that in English people tend to use indirect commands and requests because they are often seen gentler and more polite than the direct ones. It is the reason some speakers start their requests saying Will you...? Would you.....? Can you.....? Mey informs us of the synergy existing between forms of utterances and how polite or impolite such utterances appear as a result of the form. This is also undoubtedly an aspect in speech act theory. That is to say the directness or otherwise of an utterance is tied to the level of its politeness or impoliteness. In Nigerian cultures, deictic expressions sometimes appear as an instance of politeness. Wives don’t usually mention their husbands’ names, children, too, don’t quite often mention their fathers’ names, etc. In the novel studied, which depicts northern Nigerian culture build-up, elements of deictic expressions with the intention of showing respect or politeness are pinpointed and explained.

Another central aspect to the politeness theory is face, which Deep (2013, p. 7) defines as “the socially acted projection of one’s self-esteem.” Being the façade in human beings and usually the indicative of the both internal and external emotions, face then theoretically

appears to be a term used to denote the affiliations human beings have in acts, whether ostensive or expressive. Politeness principles are interconnected with different pragmatic theories, as Wu (2019, p. 974) opines that “speakers often violate the principle of cooperation out of politeness. It is out of consideration of politeness that people choose different pragmatic strategies to obey or violate CP.” This states that whether obeyed or violated, the CP contributes in implying and inferring politely or impolitely the message between the interlocutors in the talk exchange. It is also extractable from this that politeness leads to the exhibition of utterances where the ideology or subtext behind the production of such utterance becomes manifest. In a situation where English serves a second language function and there are literary writers in that speech community, in terms of politeness portrayal, the works of the literary writers may depict linguistic elements of pragma-linguistic transfer. Kasper (1992, p. 209) underscores that “pragma-linguistic transfer shall designate the process whereby the illocutionary force or politeness value assigned to particular linguistic material in L1 influences learners’ perceptions and production of form-function mappings in L2.” This states the linguistic transition taking place pragmatically between L1 and L2 and to which elements of speech act theory (illocutionary force) and politeness theory (politeness value, (which is concern of this study)) are the basic elements that usually come to surface in the course of utterance production, spoken or written.

2. Literature Review

Bhandare (2015) studies six plays, three of Girish Karnad and three of Mahesh Elkunchwar, applying speech act theory, politeness principles and Grice’s maxims. The study presents the suitability of the application of pragmatic theories in the study of literary works. Superb use of English language by the playwrights, accentuated with flavours of Indian cultures projects their linguistic background and the flow of their L1 into their L2. Bhandare (2015) pragmatically dissects the plays linking them with English and Indian cultures. Maharani (2017) applies Leech’s maxims of politeness in the study of the main character in *Secret Forgiven*. His findings reveal explicit employment of the maxims relative to the character’s role and in the character’s interaction with the other characters. The findings further propel the ‘culture-boundness’ of politeness and that it entails power and solidarity. Isaac (2015) conducts a pragmatic survey of Nigerian expression of politeness in actual speech situations. The results of the survey show that Nigerian ways of expressing politeness are in tandem with politeness strategies as generally postulated by scholars in the field of pragmatics.

3. Politeness Principles

Various techniques are employed in conversation, whether spoken or written. These techniques or strategies that purposefully tend to minimize damage and maximize esteem are studied in the theory of politeness principle as postulated by Goffman and developed by Penelope and Levinson. These linguists and researchers came up with different concepts that made a part in politeness theory. The basic concepts of politeness theory are face, (positive/negative), face threatening act, face saving act, politeness maxims, etc. These concepts have been identified and explicated in this paper. Cruse (2006, p. 131) reports that “politeness is a matter of minimizing the negative effects of what one says on the feelings of others and maximizing the positive effects (known as negative politeness and positive politeness respectively). Politeness can also be either speaker oriented or hearer oriented.” Politeness is inherent in many cultures around the world and usually studied in pragmatic investigations. Concepts of negative and positive face are core to the politeness principles. While the positive does away with social disruption, the negative strengthens it. Goffman is the linguist to whom politeness theory is first likened, followed by investigation and modifications of the sociolinguists Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, who used

Goffman's face theory as a foundation for explaining human interactions that revolve around being polite (Redmond, 2015).

Pragmatic use of language conveys several cultural and linguistic implications. The motive behind the use of indirect speech act, for example, is politeness (Leech, 1983). Being polite means guarding and maintaining someone's self-image or esteem without doing anything that will make the person lose their face. The way politeness is managed in Nigeria or northern Nigeria, where the novel being studied in this research is set, is different from the way politeness is managed or maintained, say, in United States of America or even southern part of the country. Redmond (2015, p. 4) opines that "politeness theory has been criticized for not really being as universally applicable as claimed because of limited validity in non-western cultures." This stresses the opinion that since different societies have different languages and cultures or even religions that determine their ways of life, politeness should be developed within the culture, not outside the culture.

In pragmatic scrutiny, politeness and its other related elements are investigated despite the difference of cultures and languages of the theory developers and that of the other parts of the world. *Life Afresh* is a Nigerian novel written in English, a language not originally Nigerian, but through which Nigerian cultures are superbly presented in recurring manner both in words and actions. For the purpose of this study, politeness maxims as proposed by Leech (1983) form part of the analysis of this research work.

3.1 Politeness Maxims

Leech (1983) proposed six maxims of politeness based on cost-benefit scale. The maxims measure polite flow of communication and study the implication of where politeness or otherwise is minimized or maximized. Leech is always recognized among the leading contributors in this field. For the purpose of this research, the maxims proposed by Leech which have been explored in the study, are explained below:

3.1.1 Tact Maxim

As the name suggests, tact maxim identifies the speaker as being tactful and polite in his/her address of the listener or hearer. The listener gets the speaker meaning as an attempt to show respect and carries no harsh impositions. Tact maxim minimizes cost to other and maximizes benefit to other.

3.1.2 Generosity Maxim

Speakers tend to be generous by trying to maximize benefit to other and minimize it to self. It denotes act of the speaker in raising other above self. This entails showing of deference between interlocutors in order to maintain the image of others, sometimes by an act of self-imposition (negative face). This may involve some sort of negative face from the side of the generosity giver.

3.1.3 Approbation Maxim

This maxim states elements of politeness by means of praise and compliment, whether the person is present or absent at the setting of the praise. The dispraise of the person is minimized and his/her praise is maximized. This maxim of politeness is available in literary works where characters are conscious of status and appreciate any act of humanity they receive. Sometimes, the praise may come in appreciation of looks (eg. beauty) or some natural endowment (eg. talent).

3.1.4 Modesty Maxim

In this maxim of politeness, an interlocutor tries to moderate praise showered to them. A person minimizes praise of self and maximizes dispraise of self. An interlocutor tends to be intermediate in accepting dispraise or rejecting praise. As a result, it involves act of negative face and self-deprecation.

3.1.5 Agreement Maxim

It is expected in this maxim that the listener agrees with the speaker's proposition. It minimizes disagreement and maximizes agreement between the interlocutors. In conversational interaction between characters in literary work expressions that indicate absolute commitment and support to the propositions said occur and seem to provide connection and cancellation of attitudes like arrogance, anathema, etc. in the interaction.

3.1.6 Sympathy Maxim

By way of utterance, this maxim decreases malevolence and increases mutuality and empathy. Sympathy maxim minimizes antipathy and maximizes sympathy between or among interlocutors. It creates sense of humane approach or say, generosity by being concern with the interlocutor's situation. This is realized from the wordings of the interlocutors and the ostensive acts that show such emotional feelings.

4. Notion of Face

According to Bhandare (2015, p. 70) "it is necessary for the speakers to cooperate with conversational partners in maintaining their public image or 'face' as it is referred to in pragmatics." In conversation or dialogue, interlocutors tend to save their dignity, reputation and integrity, and not inflict or disfigure a conversational partner's image. The concept of face is central in the politeness principles. Brown and Levinson (2010, p. 61) define face as "something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction." When a person's face is maintained, saved or enhanced, it is an instance of face saving act or positive politeness. When these are threatened, it is an instance of face threatening act. The façade in human beings and through which the mien of an individual becomes manifest is the face. Therefore, the notion of face is considered an indicator of all internal feelings or emotions that can be touched by words or acts of speech. As a result, it needs absolute attention in a politely controlled conversational interaction. In an interaction where the interlocutors act indifferent to the status of each other or one another, a face becomes liable to be threatened. Thorat (2002, p. 15) views that "some kind of commonality and fellow-feelingness among the communicators is necessary to keep the ball rolling." This implies that the success of communication is dependent upon how communicators attempt to avoid antagonistic or hostile terms and adopt the culture-bound polite manner in expressing all acts of speech. Bhandare (2015, p. 11) reports that "sociolinguistically, language has four fold functions in human interactions. They are informative—i.e exchange of information; expressive, it is expressions of feelings, attitudes, etc; directive which means getting things done by ordering or requesting people; and phatic or social function aiming at establishing and maintaining social or interpersonal relations." To arrive at the perfect realisations of the aforementioned established function of language, politeness principles or specifically face seems as important as the content of the message to be delivered in the act of speech or communication.

4.1 Face Saving Acts

Face saving acts entail speaker's act of complimenting, blessing, praising, etc, directed to the hearer or listener or even someone in absentia. It creates a good rapport between the speaker and the hearer or even the third person mentioned with the act of saving

his/her face. This implies positive face. Although face saving and face threatening acts are universal, positive and negative faces are culture bound. Brown and Levinson (2010) incorporated the idea of positive and negative face in the notion of face as developed by Goffman. Therefore, positive face states individual's wish to be respected, admired, praised, appreciated and treated well by other people in acts and words. In this paper, instances of face saving acts have been identified. The instances show how the characters act in deference to those who are older than they are. In some instances however, a young educated or rich person receives honour from an older person mainly in terms of power and solidarity (which may entail positive and negative face) or as a form of cadging which is rampant in the setting of the novel, and which the novelist tries to portray in some instances.

Any individual needs freedom of action and to which they normally adhere to maintain class. We can say that the constitution of Nigeria has some instances that indicate face saving acts. This is the rights it has given to all individuals or citizens to practice religion of their choice without destabilizing the peaceful atmosphere of the nation. Languages also have been given rights to exist and be practiced by their speakers especially in informal settings (if the language is not English). This is to save the people and the language—an instance that can be seen as a face saving act.

4.2 Face Threatening Acts

Face threatening act may affect the positive or negative face of either the speaker or the hearer. It challenges or impugns the wants or interests of the hearer and usually imposes some cost on either the hearer or the speaker. It may involve acts of cursing, insulting, arguing, etc. It is more inclined to negative face as face saving act is to positive face. Lakoff (1973) has given three broad principles of politeness:

1. Don't impose.
2. Make the addressee feel comfortable, and
3. Give options.

This prescribes how face saving act can be maintained in a communication. Face threatening act signifies any act of speech that can inflict a sort of discomfort in the person spoken to or being spoken about. If a person imposes his/her communiqué collaborator on a certain thing the collaborator needs options, the face of the person is said to be threatened. Brown and Levinson, quoted in Bhandare (2015, pp. 11-12) have given a schema of face threatening acts as:

“Do the act on-record. It means do without attempting to hide what we are doing. It has three sub-types. They are (a) baldly, without redress, (b) with positive politeness redress, (c) with negative politeness redress. Do the act off-record. It denotes to pretend to hide what we are doing, and don't do the act at all.” Bhandare (2015, p. 12), in his attempt to explain Brown's and Levinson's assertion above, gives the illustration below: “...if a person parks his own car in front of his neighbour's gate, the neighbor can perform a FTA as follows;

Don't park your car in front of our gate anymore.

A bald FTA

Dear friend, I know you have a beautiful car but how about you could park it across the road.

An FTA with positive politeness

I am sorry to say, but why don't you park your car in front of your own house.

An FTA with negative politeness

Are you sure your car is all right in front of our house?

An off-record or indirect FTA

This implies that level of negative or positive politeness can be structured based on the tone and manner of the utterance. This usually takes place when the relationship between the interlocutors is made part of the considerable aspects in the speech event. It indirectly also relates the act with which speakers express themselves and the effect of such expression whether defeated or meekly complied to.

Although imposition is an instance of face threatening act, not all the time imposition in the form of request, offer, demand or order turns out threatening to the face of the addressee. For instance, when a student's name is called to come forward and receive an award, the student benefits from the imposition of the call. Therefore, contextually it is not an instance of face threatening act but of a face saving act as it fills the beneficiary with admiration and feeling of nobility, incorruptibility and a sort of excellence, accolade or encomium the award has come with. Accepting what something is as it is can be part of politeness. Saying 'yes' to where a context of 'no' or vice versa means a lie connotes lack of politeness and discipline.

5. Deixis

Deixis is an intrinsic concept in pragmatics. Pragmatics studies meaning in relation to context. Therefore, deixis is that aspect of pragmatics that helps identify meanings in relation to speech event, time and manner, or mood an act is expressed. It is therefore an aspect of study in the field of politeness. Clark (2006, pp. 366-7) reports that "speakers perform what they say in a particular time, place, and manner, constituting the right moment, for the right duration, originating from and directed to the right location, at the right amplitude; with the right gestures. They display their signals to others in order to designate such things as the speaker, addressee, time, place and context of their signals." Deictic expressions ease cooperation achievement in speech as they pinpoint event to perfect orientation in terms of person, place and time. Deictic expressions abound not only in normal daily conversation but also in literary texts. Deictic expressions fall into four categories (Bhandare, 2015).

5.1 Person Deixis

These are identified by the personal pronouns: first, second and third persons who may not be present at the moment or setting of the speech act. "Person deictics", according to Cruse (2006, pp. 126-7) "designates the basic roles in a speech event, namely the speaker, (first person), the person(s) spoken to (second person(s)) and the person or persons who are neither speaker nor addressee (third person)." This can be explained clearly. While 'I' refers to the first person in subjective form, with 'me' as its objective form, and the plural for 'I' is 'we' and that of 'me' is 'us'; 'you' refers to the second person(s) irrespective of number and gender in both subjective and objective forms, 'he', 'she', and 'it' refer to the third person singular in subjective form with 'him', 'her', and 'it' as their objective forms. The plural form of the last category just mentioned above in subjective form is 'they' and 'them' is the relevant objective form. A reader or listener, unbeknown of the context, cannot decipher the meanings suggested by the personal deictic expressions. This is because lack of shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer may make the deixis seem hypothetical and indefinite. This can bring in issues pertaining politeness because the person referred to by the person pronoun mentioned may be perceived by the listener or reader as with higher or lower esteem than they really or actually are.

5.2 Spatial Deixis

Spatial deixis makes relative location of people or things easily identified. Adverbs of place 'here' and 'there' are used to denote place near to or far from the speaker. Demonstratives like this, that, (and their plural forms: these and those) are used to point at person(s) or thing(s) close to or far from the speaker. Cruse (2006, p. 166) provides that "spatial deictics indicate location in space relative to the speaker. The most basic spatial

deictics are the adverbs here and there. These can be glossed ‘place near to the speaker and ‘place not near to the speaker.’ These deictic expressions can be identified in literary works. As such, the relevance of their identification to the subject under study is proverbial. All places mentioned in a literary work can be pragmatically identified as ‘here’ or ‘there’ depending on where the speaker’s relative location is. Places can be desecrated or profaned the same way homage can be paid to them.

5.3 Temporal Deixis

This category indicates time of an action that is active, ostensive or expressive, whether polite or impolite. Cruse (2006, p. 179) opines that “temporal deictics indicate the timing of an event relative to the time of speaking. The only ‘pure’ English deictics (those which give no other information) are now, which designates a time period overlapping with time of speaking, and then, which basically means ‘not now’ and can point either into the future or past.” This means temporal deictic expressions involve such expressions that localize the time of an event. Words such as now (proximal form) and then (distal form) are used to specifically localize time an utterance is made. Nouns denoting time such as: next week, last time, yesterday, today, etc, are also listed in the temporal deictic category. It is also viewed that the past marker (ed) inflected overtly to regular verbs and covertly to irregular verbs also indicates time of an action, and therefore form part of temporal deixis (Yule, 2010).

5.4 Social Deixis

Social deixis entails use of honorifics while addressing respectful people or people with royal bloodline. Culture plays a very important role in honouring people older than the other interlocutor in a speech event. Different cultures have distinguished ways of showing respect or deference. It can be argued that social deixis is related to power and solidarity. It may relate to old age or elated official status. Social deictic expressions may encompass all the other types mentioned but goes beyond that as it tends to generalize the dignity of the person being honored in the society. People in professions like teaching and preaching usually receive social deixis in the society they live. Sometimes, a brave work from nobody can make ‘the-nobody’ somebody and even be counted among those highly recognised. This also connotes social deixis. In such a situation, the face of the persons receiving the honour is saved.

6. Methodology

Researchers use different instruments in gathering information or data on their research topics. This work is not exempted from using instrument appropriate to its nature and method of data collection. Therefore, this research acknowledges two sources: primary and secondary. The primary source is the literary text selected for the study, a novel by Aliyu Kamal. Careful perusal of the primary source has made the researchers conversant with all the pragmatic aspects available in the text. The secondary sources are books, journals, articles and relevant papers or conferences sourced from different libraries and websites. The secondary sources, though relevant to this present study, exude different approaches from which this paper has seen a gap to fill.

The data obtained from primary and secondary sources were gathered, read, reviewed, examined, and ascertained for authenticity, reliability, validity, originality, accuracy and relevance to the research. While following all the processes mentioned, note-taking also served an important tool. Each piece of data obtained was carefully read and all relevant and major points jotted down with their sources acknowledged. The work adopts pragmatic content analysis of a text, which makes it qualitative. Abawi (2008) argues that a researcher using qualitative method seeks a deeper truth and judiciously studies the research subject (text) for understanding from multiple perspectives. Such a research is context-bound; and tends to cover and discover patterns of the principles that coalesce to facilitate in the digging of a phenomenon of interest within the research field.

7. Data Analysis: Politeness Maxims as Identified in the Novel

Politeness maxims are concepts this research pays attention to in the analysis of politeness principles. The maxims, as identified in the novel, are:

7.1.1 Tact Maxim

Audi: Have you woken the children?

Dijengala: Shouldn't they sleep until 6? (p. 45)

Both the interlocutors above have employed mutual tact maxim as each turns out to show some politeness for the other in the conversation. Audi wants to tell his wife to wake up Maqbul and Iqbal after his return from Subh prayer. So, he tactfully uses interrogative sentence that carries no much force as that of the imperative. Dijengala too tactfully replies in the same manner but revealing the subtext or pretext behind her not waking the children up then. Indirectness is seen as an instance of showing politeness among interlocutors or characters in a literary work.

Jummai: You should wean him. (p. 67)

Jummai visits Dijengala whom she finds breastfeeding her son, Quraishy. After playing and throwing him up, Jummai advises her sister to wean Quraishy because she feels Quraishy is now enough to start eating solid food. Jummai's utterance signifies instance of tact maxim. She minimizes the cost of tedious breastfeeding to her sister and the benefit to Quraishy. She doesn't criticize her sister but politely advises her to wean him.

7.1.2 Generosity Maxim

Instances of generosity maxim include:

Dijengala: You know how to farm. (p. 76)

Dijengala is being generous to minimize benefit to herself and maximize it by offering the meal to Bala who has visited them. An act of offering the food is an act of generosity. The form of the expression above indicates an instance of transliteration of Hausa adage. It is said to someone who meets his/her host eating food or just ready to start. The locutionary act of the utterance indicates that the addressee knows the act of planting, growing and producing farm produce for food or consumption.

Maiyari: I left, too, on empty stomach. I got two pieces of waina dumpling though (sic). The narrator adds "she keeps one and gives him the other." (p.256)

Despite the state of famishedment and point of emaciation Maiyari is, she is generous enough to give one of the waina dumpling dough she has got from a neighbour's house to her husband, Jadda. The act of giving the waina to him is narrated to us by the omniscient narrator and not quoted as part of Maiyari's own words. Here Maiyari minimizes the benefit of having the two waina dumplings and maximizes to herself the cost of having one at the expense of being generous to her husband. The word 'waina' is a Hausa word inserted by the author possibly to fill a gap originated from cultural foods the two languages have in difference. Waina designates a type of food prepared with millet after being ground into liquid and fried in oil. It is either eaten with sugar, soup or pepper powder.

Audi: Let me give you a lift. (p. 272)

Audi meets his uncle loitering in the street. After they exchange greeting, Audi tries to be generous and save his uncle from moving under the scorching sun by stating the above utterance. It is an instance of generosity maxim because Audi minimizes the benefit to himself and maximizes it to his uncle. In short, the utter beneficiary in this interaction is Jadda; to whom generosity has been directed and who accepts it despite no specific place to go in mind.

Being kind, as Audi seems to be to his uncle in the just quoted example, is an example of generosity maxim.

7.1.3 *Approbation Maxim*

Examples of approbation maxims in *Life Afresh* are:

Audi: CityLights has shown signs of improving over the weekend. I heard that they are carrying out some urgent repairs. (p. 127)

As he returns from class, Audi is astonished to have found their (he and Mati share the office) office fan whirling, producing breezing whir as powered by the electricity. Sitting down and keeping his bag, Audi praises the company responsible for electricity distribution in the town that is CityLights. Audi's utterance is an example of approbation maxim because he is pleased to see the presence of light and even showers his appreciation of the ongoing improvements in the electricity company.

Dijengala: Men are better tailors. It is also the fashion. (p. 113)

In the utterance above, Dijengala praises the skills and weaving dexterity of men tailors comparing them with the women counterpart a notch below them. This makes her utterance an instance of approbation maxim. She also views that clothes sewn by the men tailors are the epoch women wear commonly.

Bala: You have taken a firm grip of the ground. (p. 75)

Bala's utterance directed to Audi is an example of approbation maxim which the reader perceives through the illocutionary act of the utterance. Bala praises the healthy looks and condition of his friend which is discernable from his mien. It shows a well-nourished body and reveals the inner or hidden happy life a person runs. It is an instance of northern Nigerian English expression derived from Hausa idiom. When somebody is told this sentence, they are then admired by the person who utters it in terms of health, affluence, integrity, etc. This meaning of the sentence is indirect. The direct one, as the constituents suggest, is that the addressee has firmly grasped sand his/her hand. The first interpretation given is the intention of the speaker.

Audi: You have cleaned the lettuce very well, Dije. (p. 12)

Audi lauds his wife's act of washing the lettuce he eats to the extent of leaving no single grain of sand or stone stuck in it. It denotes an approbation maxim. Even the diminutive form of her name (Dije) which he uses here appeals to an act of endearing in which approbation maxim is a particle.

7.1.4 *Modesty Maxim*

Examples of modesty maxim from the text include:

Audi: "No", says the chosen one self-deprecatingly. "Anybody can do it." (p. 245)

When the head of Audi's department appoints him the seminar coordinator and praises him for having a paper ready to present (an act of approbation maxim), the chosen and praised one tries to moderate the head's hails of praise and self-deprecatingly views that such an act which the head feels deserves praise can be done by other colleagues of Audi's; a clear instance of modesty maxim.

Audi: "No", Audi laughs self-deprecatingly. "It's nothing." (p. 226)

Audi is the most reluctantly admired lecturer in the department and least easily deprecated of because of his commitment to academic papers. When Audi finishes his first novel, the head of department congratulates him and appreciates Audi's effort of going ahead of the literature teachers and writes a novel, Audi replies to the head's exaltation by using the above quoted utterance. Audi minimizes the praise showered to him by the head, asserting that his effort to have written a novel is nothing to write home about, and sounds not up to the mark of receiving praises. Therefore, those who have not written a novel among Audi's colleagues don't deserve dispraise.

Bala: "I didn't know I had religious backing, Audi!" says his friend cheerfully, "not to keep quiet". (p. 79)

Bala minimizes the praises inundated to him by his friend in the above utterance and feigns ignorance about a hadith that supports his view of not keeping quiet while eating. It is an instance of modesty maxim. It happens when Bala visits Audi and both start having a delicious meal that serves to make Bala ravel and make gibberish. Without showing religious erudite knowledge of meal rules, Bala views that eating food time is a time of joy and conviviality that requires no muteness. Audi supports the idea with a hadith. Bala then shows his ignorance of religiously prophetic backing to minimize praise of himself and steer away his host's potential view of stamping him as having religious knowledge.

7.1.5 Agreement Maxim

Some instances of agreement maxim in *Life Afresh* include:

Audi: I mean they still stage his oeuvre the year round and watch it on CD too, but they don't practice what he preaches. (p. 181)

Audi agrees with the view that they (Westerners) stage his (Shakespeare's) oeuvre non-stop, but he does not agree with the Westerners really applying the lessons in the works of Shakespeare into practice. Audi minimizes the disagreement by giving credit to the part of the view and maximizes agreement by not subscribing to the part of the view. This is an instance of agreement maxim.

Audi: ...after all, the Nigerian literature teacher isn't the reading type.

Mati: Not the literature teacher, but teachers of English in general. (p. 187)

It is deducible from the above dialogue between Audi and Mati that Mati uses agreement maxim in his utterance. Mati believes that not only literature teachers like himself don't read as they should, but also teachers of linguistics like Audi. By such utterance, Mati partly agrees with Audi and disagrees with him partially as well.

Hansai's Father: yes, that is true. But you forget that she is as hare-brained as he is. (p. 153)

Hansai's father posits with what his wife says about their daughter's love with a young man he disapproves of. The man disqualifies Danluwai as hare-brained too and likens his light-headedness to that of his daughter's. This is a clear instance of agreement maxim by Hansai's father as he seems to accept some part of his wife's assertions and discards some.

7.1.6 Sympathy Maxim

Sympathy maxims as used in the novel include;

Audi's Mother: I will not persuade you to marry her, nor will I dissuade you not to marry her. (p.258)

When Audi is trying to overcome pushes, insinuations and instigations to love Uwani from all angles, he complains to his mother who also narrates what Audi's uncle has told her about the same issue. The mother then sympathetically gives a patch of relief, if not panacea or nostrum, by making the above utterance. Her words have been out of her mouth by a deep motherly sympathy. It is an example of sympathy maxim.

Jummai: You do it the old way. That is why. (p. 70)

Dijengala is a 'dashi-collection bee'. That is she the treasure of a stockfel. As it is according to the tradition, any treasurer receives a certain percentage as part of his/her duty for banking the money with hm/her. In her dialogue with her sister, Dijengala receives the above utterance with which a patch of sympathy is directed to her. Jummai sympathises with her sister who, in return of her keeping the money, earns nothing from the stockfel members except who wishes to be generous. This sympathy has been initiated by Dijengala who complains to her sister that despite her effort in safely keeping the money and managing the 'dashi' peacefully, no one pays her anything.

Dijengala: You cheeky boy! I am only trying to be helpful. Do you want some water?
(p. 64)

Dijengala's first contact with her errand boy happens like in a drama. She calls the boy to offer him some leftover. Before the boy collects the food, another beggar from behind him quickly collects the food and takes more than half in a blink to his mouth. The sudden drama threw some soup in her would-be errand boy's eyes. In her attempt to help him, Dijengala utters the sentence quoted above. Although from her tone and mood, she can be judged angry, Dijengala acts sympathetically to assist the boy wash the piquant soup out of his eyes. This is also an example of sympathy maxim.

7.2. *Notion of Face*

This brings to surface the analysis of face saving acts and face threatening acts in this paper.

7.2.1. *Face Saving Acts*

The face saving act instances, as explicated in the novel, are:

Audi: You have cleaned the lettuce very well, Dije. (p. 12)

In the utterance above, Audi saves his wife's face by complimenting how clean she has washed the lettuce or salad he is eating and has not crunched any grains of sand. The compliment expressively makes Dijengala feel honoured and revered. Her image of being recognized as a good wife is saved. It can be likened to her positive face.

Mati: I agree with you being critical of culture and the danger of one's wholeheartedly accepting it. (p.60)

By agreeing with Audi, Mati reciprocates Audi's view and politely saves Audi's face. This act of reciprocating with a person's view makes 'the reciprocated or agreed person' secured and respected.

HOD: "Aha," the head expostulated. "I've chosen the best man for the job." (p. 245)

This act of reverie makes Audi's head hang high above other heads. The head of department, after appointing Audi as the Departmental Seminar Coordinator and noticing that Audi has already had a paper to present, showers such an act of praise and saves Audi's public image. It makes Audi have a feeling of importance.

7.2.2. *Face Threatening Acts*

The instances of face threatening acts in the novel are:

Danluwai: You moronic ignoramus!

Hansai: You dim-witted congenital idiot!

Danluwai: You bone-headed greenhorn!

Hansai: You certified pinhead!

Danluwai: You precious fool!

Hansai: You perfect fool! (p.155-156)

Hansai and Danluwai, like wordsmiths, shower curses and insults to each other using strings of abusive words. The dialogic exchange of insults denotes an instance of face threatening act, whereby the interlocutors (Danluwai and Hansai) threaten each other's public image. They show indifference to the public image of each other whether threatened or downgraded.

Audi: "You see Hajiya" says Audi turning to his mother, "what I said about Jadda preying on people. How can such a person have any respect in my eyes? He defrauds me even as he hatches a scheme to tear my household apart." (p. 261)

Audi's utterance explicitly shows face threatening act to Jadda (in absentia) who is not present at the moment and place of the utterance. Audi suspects Jadda of plotting to tear his

family apart after cheating him, an act Audi views deserves disrespect to the plotter. Audi obviously makes an utterance that shows a threat to Jadda's face even though he is absent.

"Where is my leftover food, Uwani?"

"What food Buba?" she asks nonchalantly. "Did you ask me to keep it for you?"

"I had always had leftover food before you came to this house."

"You could have seen it if any has been left over."

"But it always has", says the errand-boy sounding angry.

"Look Buba, nobody gave me any leftover to give you. If you have any kept for you, go and ask the wife of the house. It has nothing to do with me. I am here to work—and so are you." (p. 108)

A careful perusal of the dialogic exchange between two house-helps (a boy, Buba and a lady, Uwani) altercation or facing off over leftover in the house of their master will reveal acts or instances of face threatening. Deep below their utterances, lie strings of disregard and looking down on each other. The bone of contention is the leftover Buba always benefited from before Uwani's appointment in the house. In the utterance, the noun phrase 'the wife of the house' is typical Hausa ways of referring to a married woman when a speaker doesn't want to mention her name and to show politeness. It is therefore a clear instance of Nigerian English. Uwani here shows face threatening act to Buba but face saving acts to Dijengala in absentia.

7.3. *Deixis*

The deictic expressions identified under this heading are categorized into: personal, spatial, temporal and social deixis.

7.3.1. *Personal Deixis*

Personal deixis abound in the text. Those identified in the utterances of the characters are:

Dijengala: That little will do. He doesn't like his alala bare. (p. 110)

Dijengala speaks to Uwani about the quantity of alayyaho (spinach) to use in the lunch she prepares. She states the sustainability of the amount just in hand as the person referred to as "He" in the utterance doesn't like the meal being prepared plain. Dijengala uses the personal deixis "He" to refer to her husband. In northern Nigeria, where the novel is set, it is impolite for wives to call their husband's names plain. Dijengala is being polite by using the personal deixis "He" to mean Audi. The word 'alala' as used here is a Hausa word to designate a type of meal prepared with crushed and ground beans, usually cooked in tins or small white polythene. Although wives sometimes mention their husbands' names, it is not out of impoliteness, but politely for emphasis. For example;

"Audi didn't let me," says Dijengala, giving Quraisy the breast. "You know how he is" (p. 67)

Jummai interrogates Dijengala the reason behind her not attending a particular wedding gathering, to emphasise that she is not on herself when it comes to issues like that, Dijengala mentions the name of the person responsible for the permission of outing.

Audi: "Didn't he tell you?"

Shehu: "Tell me what?"

Audi: "Why he came." (p.87)

In the above dialogic exchange between Audi and Shehu, a mention of personal deixis is pervasive such as: he (Lallan), you (Shehu), me (Shehu) and another he (Lallan). The meaning associated with these deictic expressions is contextual and restricted around the interlocutors and a mentioning of a third person. This pragmatic concept reveals interpretation

relevant to the context. The prerequisite to understand the speech situation is to follow the story line. It is the most used among the deictic expressions identified in the novel. Lallan is an elderly person whose daughter Audi loves. As a result, mention of his name obviously is impolite by the would-be son-in-law and his friend is impolite.

7.3.2. *Spatial Deixis*

Spatial deixis in the novel under study include:

Dijengala: It is there on the table with your coffee, sugar and milk. (p. 45)

Dijengala gives the perfect orientation of the place her husband's radio has been kept. The "It" she uses in the beginning of the sentence refers to the radio. The word 'there' in the utterance is the spatial deixis as it denotes relative place of an object, in this context, a radio. The mentioning of other items like the coffee, sugar and milk also helps locate the radio. It means identification of one of them signifies identification of all of them. The politeness related to this utterance is Dijengala's care and concern towards all her husband wants and sets them ready before he comes back home. The place for keeping all the husband wants is 'there' as mentioned in the above sentence.

Audi: "You still here?" he asks. "Hasn't your father returned?" (p. 54)

On his visit to his mother as he went every morning, Audi meets some children playing outside the house. Among them is his nephew, Abo's son. Audi then makes the above interrogative sentence within which lies our example of spatial deixis "here". Abo's husband has gone to Lagos in search of better life, leaving his wife and children with their grandmother. 'Here' in Audi's question refers to his mother's house where the abandoned wife and children find solace and refuge.

Audi: My house is not far from here; she can walk. (p.90)

Audi's dialogue with Uwani's father, Lallan, reveals Audi's acceptance of Uwani's appointment in his house as house-help. Uwani used to work in somebody's house before the person's abrupt transfer to Adamawa which left her without the menial job many despise. In her former place of work, Uwani used to spend the night. She had a room spoken for her. In her new place of work however, Uwani doesn't have to spend her nights. Audi speaks from the immediate place the dialogue takes place that Uwani can walk as his house is very close from the speech event. The spatial deixis in the example is 'here'.

Audi: "Let me take you to your grandmother" says their father; "you'll find something to eat there." (p. 284)

When Dijengala has deserted her matrimonial home because Audi is trying to get Uwani married to him, she has left no cooked food for the children. Audi speaks to Maqbul and Iqbal whom he meets at the top point of emaciation. Audi's expression, the adverb of place 'there' means Audi's mother's house, where he intends to take his two children in the hope of finding something to quench their burning hunger.

7.3.3. *Temporal Deixis*

The temporal deixis identified in the novel include:

Audi's Mother: Yes, it will. You bought enough last month. (p.57)

In response to Audi's question whether the food in the house would last to the end of the month, Audi's mother answers using the above utterance in which lies our example of temporal deixis 'last month' which denotes the previous time of buying the food stuff after which no purchase has been done. It is a noun phrase denoting time, formed by the adjective 'last' and the nominal head word 'month'.

Uwani: "It is now one," says the girl. "I pray at two." (p.112)

After lunch is ready, Dijengala gives option politely to Uwani either to pray, and eat the food later or vice-versa. In response to Dijengala, Uwani mentions the above utterance. In it, three words 'now', 'one' and 'two' indicating time are our examples of temporal deixis.

While ‘now’ mentions the immediate time with no specification of the hour, ‘one’ specifies the hour, meaning 1:00 pm, two means 2:00pm. The temporal deixis in the utterance indicates times Dijengala and Uwani pray their Zuhr prayer. While Dijengala sees it convenient to pray at one, Uwani sees it better to pray at two. The ideology behind this is difference in prayer time of some sects to which the interlocutors belong.

Lallan: The last time I came here you had just been served fura porridge. (p. 176)

Lallan tells Alhaji Yaro the above expression. It carries the temporal deixis ‘the last time’ that portrays Lallan’s previous visit to Alhaji Yaro’s house identified by the spatial deixis ‘here’ in the expression. The word ‘fura’ is from Hausa language meaning a type of soft food made by molding millet dough and served in milk. Its insertion here in the expression also serves to locate the type of English used in the novel and identifies the novel’s setting.

Asabe: “I’ve always suspected you of chauvinism”, says Asabe to loud cheers when questions are asked from the audience, “but today you confirmed it to me loud and clear that you are a male chauvinist.” (p. 250)

The word ‘today’ in Asabe’s expression is an example of temporal deixis. It marks the end of Asabe’s suspect of chauvinism directed to Audi (you—personal deixis in the utterance) and the start of clear chauvinism connected to him at the moment.

7.3.4. *Social Deixis*

Examples of social deixis in the text include:

Shuke: “I have no other option but to take it, Maigida” says Shuke agitatedly. (p. 179)

The word ‘Maigida’ is an example of social deixis borrowed from Hausa language, thrown to Alhaji Yaro, who is a very rich person and infamously respected. Shuke feels imposed on to accept Alhaji yaro’s fifty-fifty deal of his gratuity. The near synonym to ‘maigida’ is the English word ‘sir’.

Jadda: “At the end of the tether, Yallabai” says Jadda with a slight bow. (p. 225)

Honorific word in Jadda’s expression above and which is our instance of social deixis is ‘Yallabai’, a Hausa word employed here and accompanied with an act of ‘slight bow’ to show culture of respecting people who are educated or rich even if the one giving the solidarity is older than the receiver of the power. As seen here, Jadda is Audi’s uncle yet bows to him politely and calls him Yallabai. It can be argued that Jadda does it as a form of cadging and that the word is usually said to police men in northern Nigeria. With all that it can be defended that most of the sycophants surrounding politicians and royal people do it for self-benefit and that saying ‘yallabai’ to a person connotes a sort of solidarity in the power the person holds.

8. Conclusion

It is clear from the analysis that some aspects of politeness principles appear more than the others. The analysis therefore has paid attention to the recurrence of each of the aspects looked into. Even the maxims explicated stress some differences commensurate with sentence types and the emotional appeals the sentences project. The writer has Hausa language as first, and English as the second. As a result, seldom use of Hausa words and idioms or proverbs are available in the texts. A reader without Hausa background cannot fathom the meaning attached to the Hausa words, idioms or proverbs as used. Therefore in the analysis, explanations have been rendered of such inimitable style of the novelist. It is deducible from the analysis that politeness principles form part of cultural in-build of the novelist’s environment. It is also understandable that language is the medium used to convey not only expressive, but also emotional attachments that are of high and great influence or impact in human interactions.

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