

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF (IM) POLITENESS IN THE ADDRESS FORMS OF NIGERIAN ENGLISH USAGE

¹Abaya, Angulu Samson & ²Kugbayi, Lateef Iyanda

Department of English & Literary Studies,

Ahmadu Bello University

Zaria

Abstract

This paper focuses on (im) politeness in the address forms of Nigerian English usage and taking of offence. To this end, the paper argues that certain socio-cultural conventions within the Nigerian milieu do not only give birth to (im)politeness in the Nigerian English usage but permeate the way and manner (im)politeness is enacted in this variety of English. Besides, (im)politeness by speakers of Nigerian English would oftentimes be misinterpreted by speakers of other varieties of English due to divergences in the culture of the speaker(s) and hearer(s). The paper adopts Fairclough's (1989) theory of Critical Discourse Analysis by testing his "three dimensional model" using purposively obtained data from direct linguistic interactions and two selected articles on honorifics on the internet. The work eventually finds that profession, seniority, religion, politics, economy and ideology are various ways (im) polite address forms reflect unequal power relations in Nigerian English based discourse. It also discovers that when politeness is underplayed in discourse among users of Nigerian English, provocation of offence, outright breakdown in communication and exhibition of face threatening acts are inevitable. The paper concludes that owing to the socio-cultural influence on the Nigerian variety of English, speakers of other varieties of English across the world would, to some extent, be at a loss when they engage speakers of Nigerian English in conversations.

Keywords: Language and Culture, (Im)politeness, Nigerian English, Critical Discourse Analysis and Honorifics

Introduction

Similar to what is obtainable in various English speaking countries of the world, the general linguistic features of English language spoken in Nigeria have been, to an extent, expanded and used specifically to fulfil the essential linguistic functions that are mostly peculiar to the Nigerian community. Consequently, this form of English is more or less a reflection of the socio-cultural realities of the Nigerian peoples. This inadvertently poses a threat to the achievement of meaningful understanding of the language form by other English language users who are alien to the socio-cultural make-up of the Nigerian society. These cultural realities can be noticed in myriad linguistic structures such as (im) politeness as embedded in various honorifics of Nigerian languages and expanded the English usage. At various instances of conversation, the discursive elements are strictly employed and upheld to maintain unequal relationship. Incidentally, informed Nigerians systematically uphold the tenet and sustain the discourse flow and meaningful interpretation while the evidence of possible partial and incomplete communication breakdown cannot be ruled out when such an (im) politeness characterised discourse involve users of English language who are not familiar with the Nigerian socio-cultural peculiarities.

Hence, following Brown's (2015:330) proposition that "research on politeness needs to be anchored in a theory of social interaction that takes account of . . . cultural differences which make us sometimes misunderstand one another," this work aims at making bare several socio-culturally influenced (im)politeness elements, usually in the form of honorifics, that are usually exploited to achieve unequal social relations among users of English in Nigeria, but may not be meaningfully understood by other world users of the language,

using Fairclough's (1989) theory of Critical Discourse Analysis. It is therefore in the interest of this study to

- i. identify the address forms in Nigerian English usage.
- ii. examine the effect of (im)politeness address forms on the wider intelligibility.
- iii. explain various ways (im)polite address forms in Nigerian English usage reflect unequal power relations in discourse.
- iv. examine the effects of underplaying the essence of (im)polite address forms on discourse among users of Nigerian English.

An Overview of Nigerian English

As an international language, English has other countries of the world such as China and Saudi Arabia where it is used as a foreign language. It is for the purpose of making a clarification of where English is used either as a native, second or foreign language that Moag (1982) and Kachru (1985) cited in Aloba (2005:10-12) provide taxonomy of English language use globally. In his contribution, Moag identifies countries like the United Kingdom, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and some Caribbean nations as countries where English is used as a native language. Secondly, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Pakistan, India, Gambia, Nigeria, Liberia and some other countries are categorised as second language users. The third division in Moag's classification of world Englishes comprises the countries that use English as a foreign language while the fourth group covers countries where English based pidgins and creoles are used. From Kachru's (1985, 1992) perspective, the spread of English is considered using concentric circles - the inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle. Despite the viability of the classifications of English users globally as given by Moag and Kachru, it should be noted that these may not be considered adequate as it is expected there will be evidences of overlapping in the classifications, and those countries identified as second language users or members of outer circle, for

example, may have individuals who acquired English as either first language or mother tongue. This is also applicable to countries where English is considered to be used as a foreign language.

Spencer (1971:2) is of the view that English language is “by now part of the linguistic property of those who use it.” Thus, “one can claim that there is now a growing acceptance of the idea that English “means the English of non-native as well as native speaker. On the whole, the Hawaii Conference 1978 recommended that attitudes towards “Indian English,” “Malaysian English,” etc. need to be revised (Stevens 1980) and (Ekong 1982) cited in (Odumuh 1987), especially that Nigerian English and other non-native varieties of English are recognized worldwide through the proceedings of a Conference in Miami, Florida in 1977 (Eka 1985). Accordingly, “Today, there is consensus among most Nigerian scholars, that English is not only used in Nigeria, but it has also developed features which mark it out as a legitimate subset within the nativised world varieties” Eka (ibid.:2). In essence, “. . . the varieties of English spoken by . . . Nigerians . . . have enough features in common to mark off a general TYPE, which may be called Nigerian English” (Walsh in Jowitt 1991:30). Despite that however, other world users of English need to be aware of those features that mark of the variety from the general variety for maximal understanding.

Language and Culture

According to Hudson (1989:73), “Many of properties of language . . . are also property of culture in general and . . . meaning is best studied in relation to culture.” He adds that culture is “something that everybody has . . . some ‘property’ of a community, especially those which might distinguish it from other communities.” From an anthropological stand, he defines this to be “‘material culture’ – the artifacts of the community such as its pottery, its vehicles or its clothing.” Beyond the physical, Kluckhohn (1951:86), describing the

property, has stated that “Culture consists patterned ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting, acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values.” The point is that, though elements of culture are presumed to be mostly material, a lot about individual communities’ cultures reside in their peoples’ sub-consciousness and become, to a great extent, noticeable in the way they conceptualize the world alongside their behavioural and linguistic disposition to it, as in establishing unequal power relations through (im)politeness.

The Concept of (Im) Politeness

As pioneers in the study of Politeness Principle, Brown and Levinson (1978/1987) mention that linguistic politeness is a means of showing concern for people’s face. According to them, people diverge from direct and clear communication in order to protect their own face needs and take the account of those of their addressees as well. They give an outline of different kinds of politeness strategies: positive strategies, making offers, joking and giving sympathy, and as negative politeness strategies, hedging, apologising and giving difference. Mey (1993:81) explains, politeness is used “to create (or manifest) a distance between interlocutors, as in the case of social-hierarchical placements that have to be maintained through language use.” He adds that, the distance, “in most cases, reduces the need for expressed verbal collaboration: yet another case of cooperation yielding to politeness.” In a general term, Holmes (1992:296) is of the view that “politeness involves taking account of the feelings of others. A polite person makes others feel comfortable.” He also states that to be “linguistically polite involves speaking to people appropriately in the light of their relationship to you” as “Inappropriate linguistic choices may be considered rude.” From a theoretical perspective, Leech

(1983:80) suggests that, for the purpose of linguistic interaction cooperation, it is necessary to have Politeness Principle which will further complement conversational maxim in the Cooperative Principle of Grice (1975). He then outlines a number of maxims covering politeness with emphasis that different societies differ in the weight they attach to each of the maxims. His maxims of Politeness Principle which tend to go in pair include:

- *Tact Maxim (in impositives and commissives) (a) Minimize cost to **other** [(b) Maximize benefit to **other**].*
- *Generosity Maxim (in impositives and commissives) (a) Minimize benefit to **self** [(b) Maximize cost to **self**].*
- *Approbation Maxim (in expressive and assertive) (a) Minimise dispraise of **other** [(b) Maximise praise of **other**].*
- *Modesty Maxim (in expressive and assertive) (a) Minimise dispraise of **other** [(b) Maximise praise of **other**].*
- *Agreement Maxim (in assertive) (a) Minimise disagreement between **self** and **other** [(b) Maximise agreement between **self** and **other**].*
- *Sympathy Maxim (in assertive) (a) Minimise antipathy between **self** and **other** [(b) Maximise sympathy between **self** and **other**].*

Culpeper (1996:356) has proposed five impoliteness strategies that are means of attacking rather than enhancing supporting face. These are:

- a. **Bald and Record Impoliteness:** in which a face threatening act (FTA) is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise manner where face is relevant.
- b. **Positive Impoliteness:** in which strategies designed to damage an addressee's positive face wants are used.
- c. **Negative Impoliteness:** in which strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants are used.

- d. **Sarcasm or Mock Politeness:** through which the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain face realization.
- e. **Withhold Politeness:** which is the absence of politeness work where it is expected.

Mirhosseini, Mardanshahi and Dowlatabadi (2017: 225) reveal that “Power can be seen like impoliteness which is not within the language rather it is constructed through discourse.” Citing Culpeper (1996) and Bousfield (2008), Mirhosseini *et al.* (ibid.) state that the imbalance of power between interlocutors provides the more powerful interlocutor more freedom to be impolite because s/he has the capacity to reduce the ability of the less powerful participant to retaliate with impoliteness, or threaten more severe retaliation if the less powerful participant is impolite.

Hence, impoliteness can be described as a manifestation of imbalance of power, the reason why when interlocutors do not agree on a subject, they mostly threaten each other's face. In a bid to convince each other this way, there is a great possibility of being impolite. Meanwhile, the influence of impoliteness on imbalance of power can be taken for granted without the interlocutors sharing the same background knowledge of such things as **culture, facts, news, stories** and **local geography**. This is consequently hinged upon the fact that every community, like Nigeria, has its own **communal lexicon** (Clark 1998), regardless of using a language like English, for the language has not only been coloured with linguistic and non-linguistic signals in the country but also has many more users beyond national borders who are not familiar with the features that set the variety apart from the general English form.

Critical Discourse Analysis as a Linguistic Model

As a methodological tool for discourse studies, Baker and Ellece (2011:26) describe Critical Discourse Analysis (hence, CDA)

as an “approach to the analysis of discourse which views language as a social practice and is interested in the ways that ideologies and power relations are expressed through language.” According to them, the goal of a discourse analyst is specifically to evaluate issues of inequality and ultimately bring to bear who benefits from the inequality practices in the course of carrying out the analysis. Wodak (2001:11) has established that “CDA takes an interest in the ways in which linguistic forms are used in various expressions and manipulations of power.” Meanwhile, these ways are usually cryptic and CDA, by effect, is concerned with bringing to bear “the *opacity* of texts and utterances – the discursive constructions or stories that are embedded in texts as information that is readily available to consciousness” (Locke *ibid*: 40) by methodically dealing with this opacity.

By extension, CDA in demystifying the opacity of linguistic structures primarily considers society as characterised by unequal power relations through social conventions (Locke 2004:32) and establishes that “Dominant structures stabilize conventions” (Wodak 2001:3). The role of CDA is consequently germane in this regard since the arrangements of structural dominance of discourse “are more powerfully established via subtle, everyday, textual work of persuasion, dissimulation and manipulation that sets out to change the minds of others in one’s own interests” (van Dijk 1993:254).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this work is Fairclough’s (1989) *Discourse as Social Practice*. Since CDA is not only concerned with linguistic forms but also with examination of social context in terms of how and why the linguistic tokens are produced in relation with other texts that are being referenced by the tokens (Baker and Ellece 2001:26), CDA was first developed by Fairclough (1989), has to considerably lean on a three-dimensional

framework of analysis (proposed by Halliday in the 1980s) in which a text and context relationship is maintained. This is based on a description of what is called *context of situation*, being the social context of a text through which meaning could be exchanged in terms of:

The Field of Discourse: refers to the subject matter or the general sense of what a text is about in the form of the nature of the social action that takes place.

The Tenor of Discourse: has to do with the social relation that exists between interactants in a speech situation that could occur in the form of formality, power and effect which emanate from the roles and relative status of the interactants particularly in their linguistic choice exchange.

The Mode of Discourse: is through which a description is established on the ways language is being used during linguistic interactions alongside the medium (spoken, written, print, etc.) and the rhetorical mode (either persuasive, expository, didactic, etc.,) that is adopted.

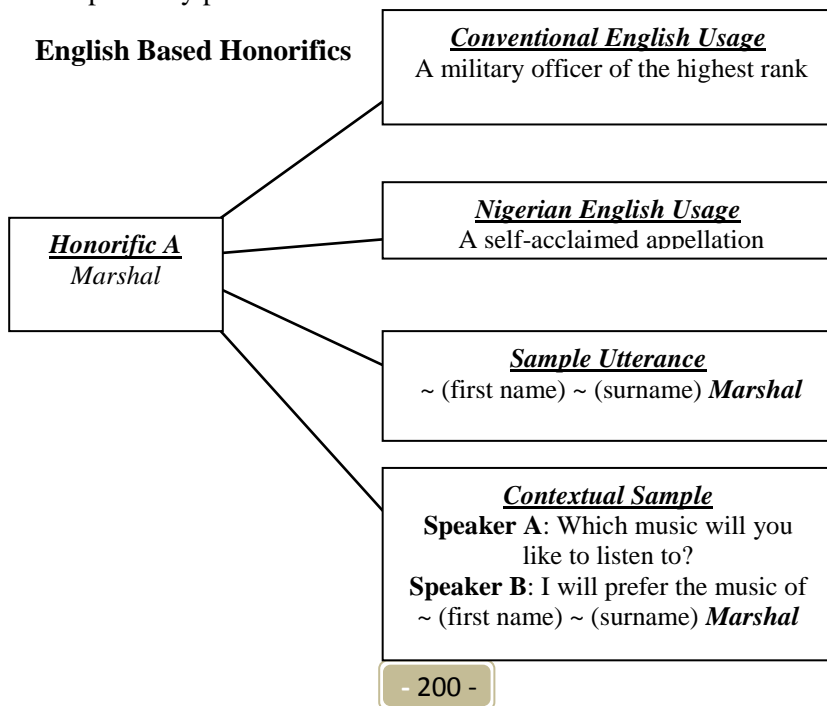
Methodology

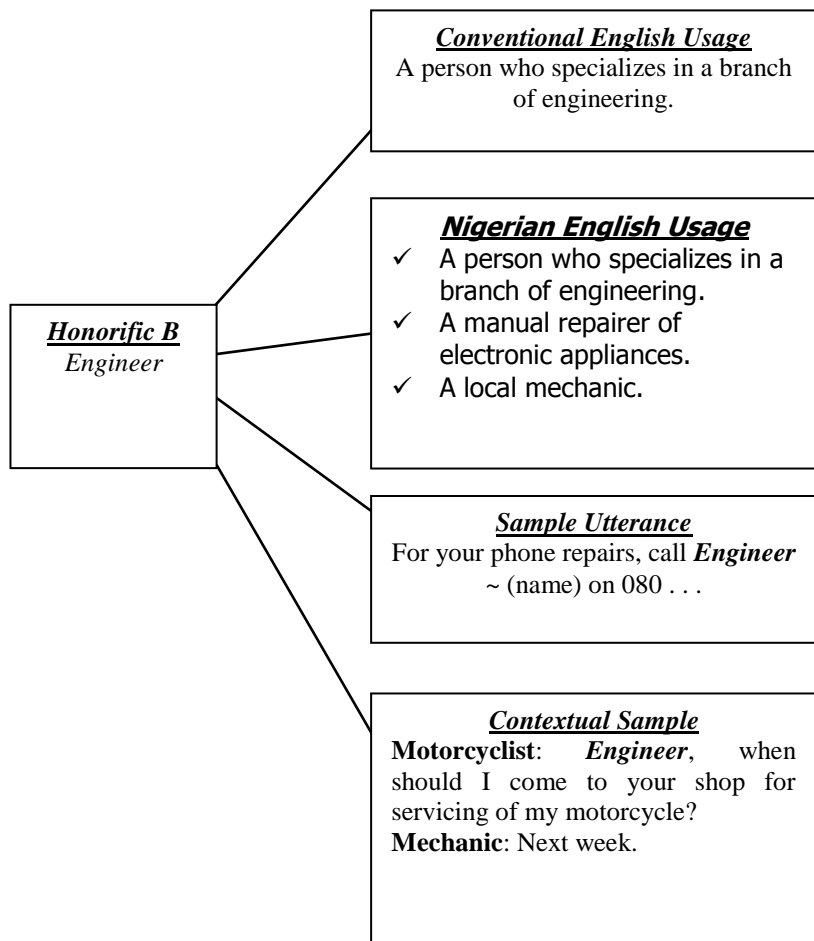
The primary sources data for this paper were gathered directly during interactions. Some were also obtained from a series of articles on different titles that are common with Nigerians. The articles are found in <https://www.thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2016/07/olufemi-taiwo-a-country-of-honorifics-but-no-honour/> and <https://www.quora.com/Why-are-Nigerians-very-big-on-titles-Prof-Pastor-Dr-Bishop-MBA-etc>. A set of the data were collected during several interactions. Each of these was transcribed on the spot. A total number of fifty six Nigerian based politeness elements of honorifics was marked, out of which twelve were selected for analysis. The selected items are subsequently divided into four parts with three of the items each representing the English based, the Hausa based, the Igbo based and the Yorùbá based linguistic tokens in Nigerian English

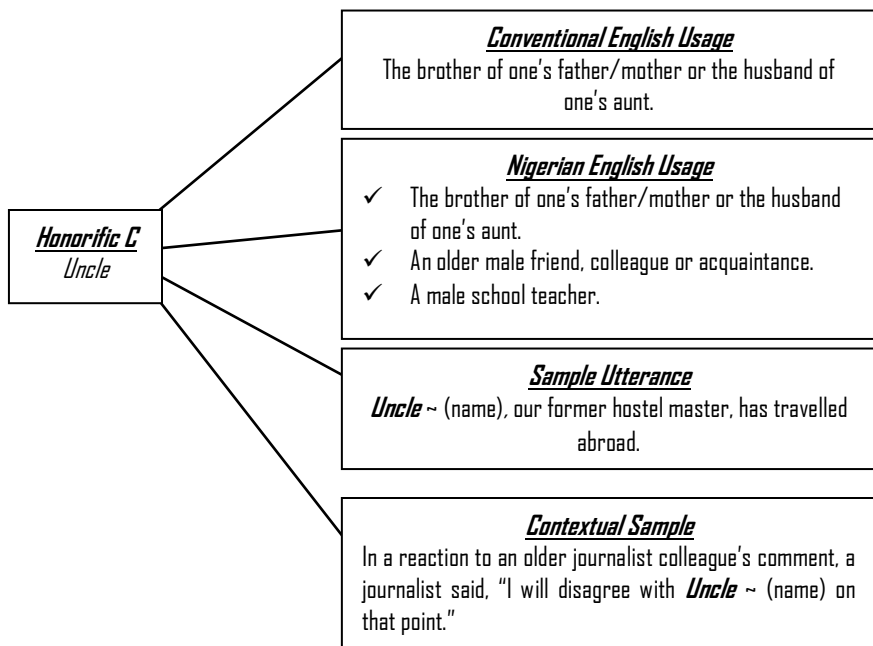
usage. The analytical procedure is Fairclough's (1989) *Discourse as a Social Practice Model*.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In the graphic representations below, the collected data are grouped according to their linguistic bases – English, Hausa, Igbo and Yorùbá – for common features of Nigerian English. They are subsequently comprehensively presented and individually analyzed on a five-space diagramme, of which randomly selected Nigerian based honorifics, their conventional English usage and Nigerian English usage, sampled utterances for politeness relevance and related contextual instances are respectively presented.







Interpretation

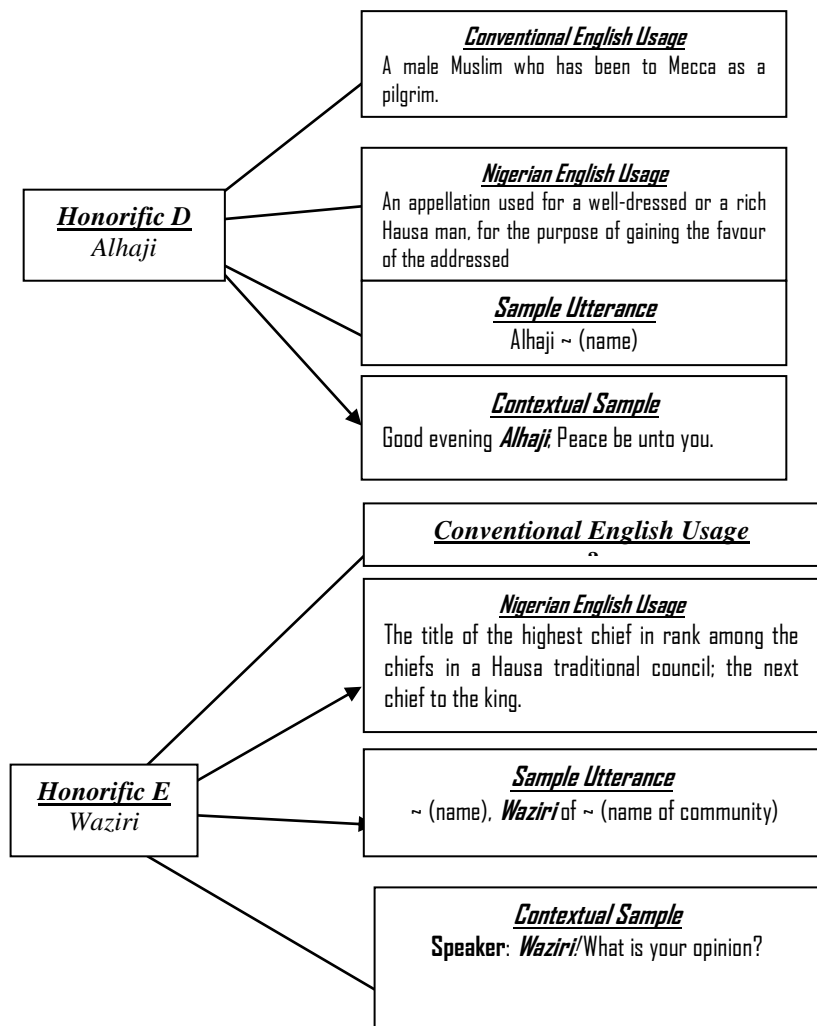
The meanings of the designations: *Marshal*, *Engineer* and *Uncle* have been expanded in the Nigerian context. Hence, while the word,

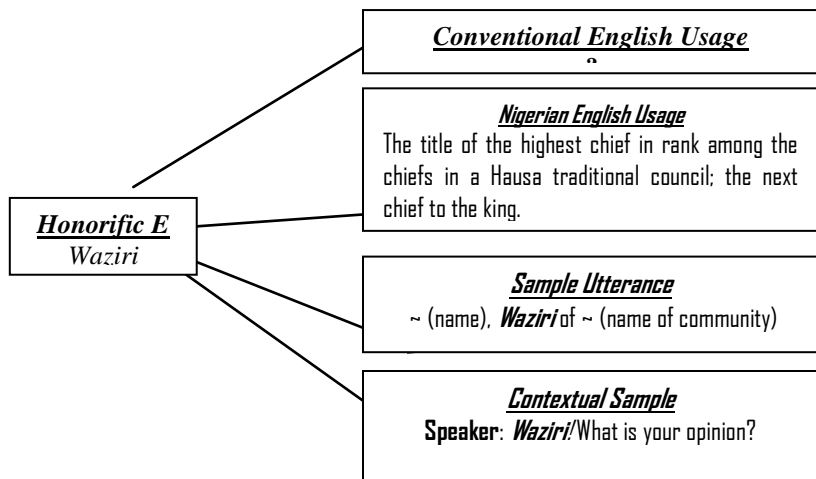
(i.) *Marshal* is linguistically used for a military officer of the highest rank universally, it has become a rank a civilian can pick up as an appellation in the country.

(ii.) *Engineer*, is a general title for an individual who has been formally trained and skilled in a branch of engineering, it is an adopted nomenclature for a manual electronic repairer and local mechanic in a Nigerian situation.

(iii.) *Uncle*, is universally regarded as the brother of one's father/mother or the husband of one's aunt, it is used in Nigeria to refer to an older friend, colleague, acquaintance or a male school teacher. Thus, it is regarded impolite locally when these titles are by any means withdrawn, while addressing these individuals.

Hausa Based Honorifics





Interpretation

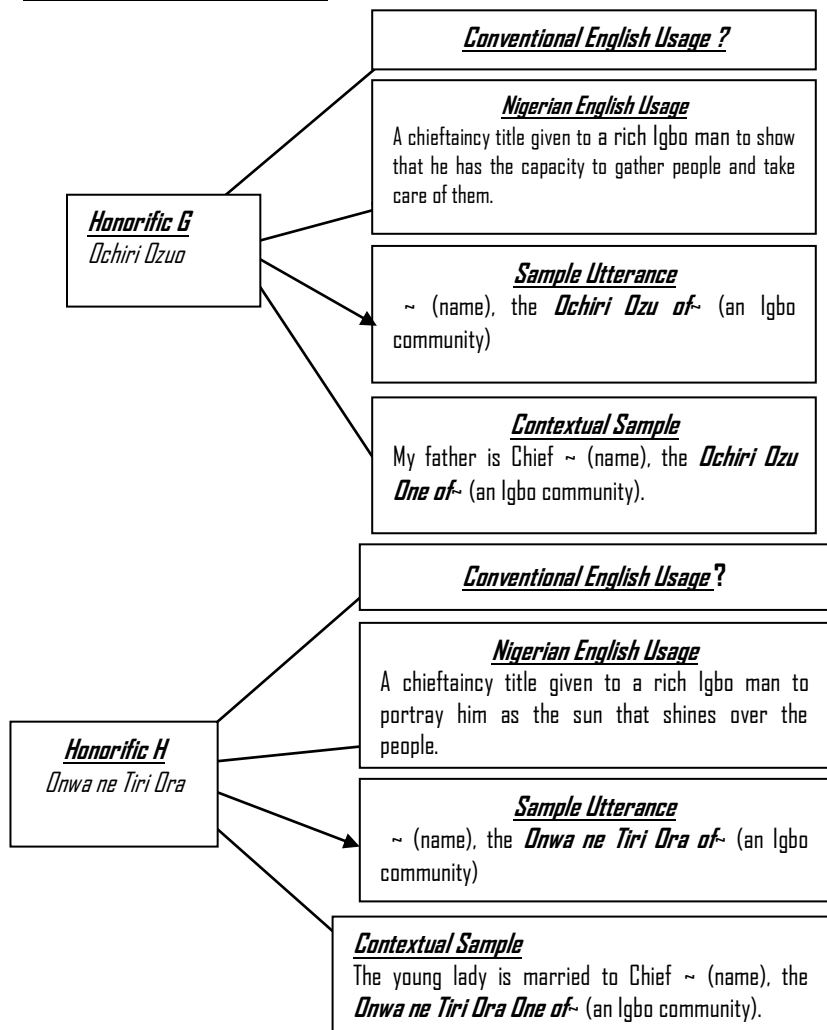
Based on a universal linguistic competence, it will be somewhat difficult to provide the meanings of words, *Alhaji*, *Waziri* and *Malam* as used in Nigeria since they are Hausa based while the former and the latter are originally from Arabic. Thus, for efficient interpretation and politeness, an alien speaker of English should have the knowledge that

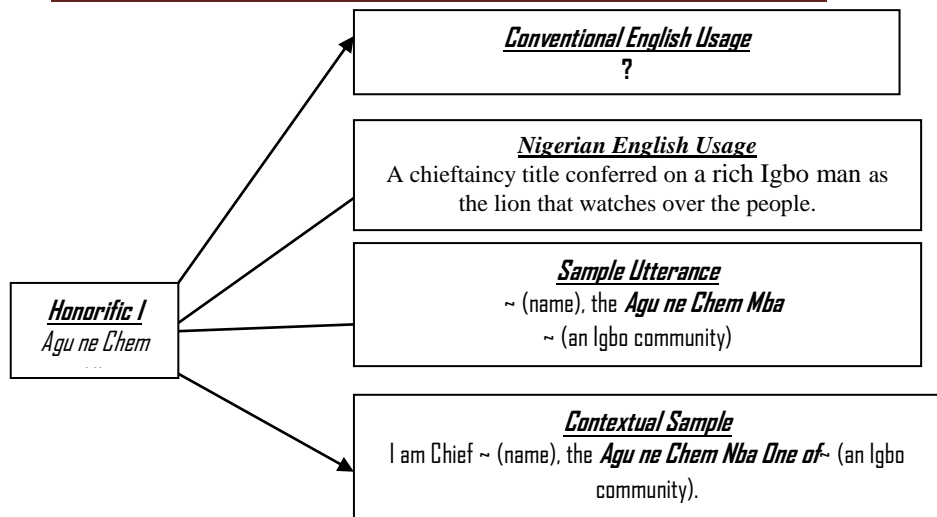
(i.) *Alhaji* is an appellation used for a well-dressed or a rich Hausa man, for the purpose of gaining the favour of the addressed.

(ii.) *Waziri* is a title of the highest chief in rank among the chiefs in a Hausa traditional council; the next chief to the king.

(iii.) *Malam* is a title for a man learned in Koranic studies: a form of address for a learned or educated man: an appellation for any adult male who appears in a Hausa dress (Kaftan).

Igbo Based Honorifics



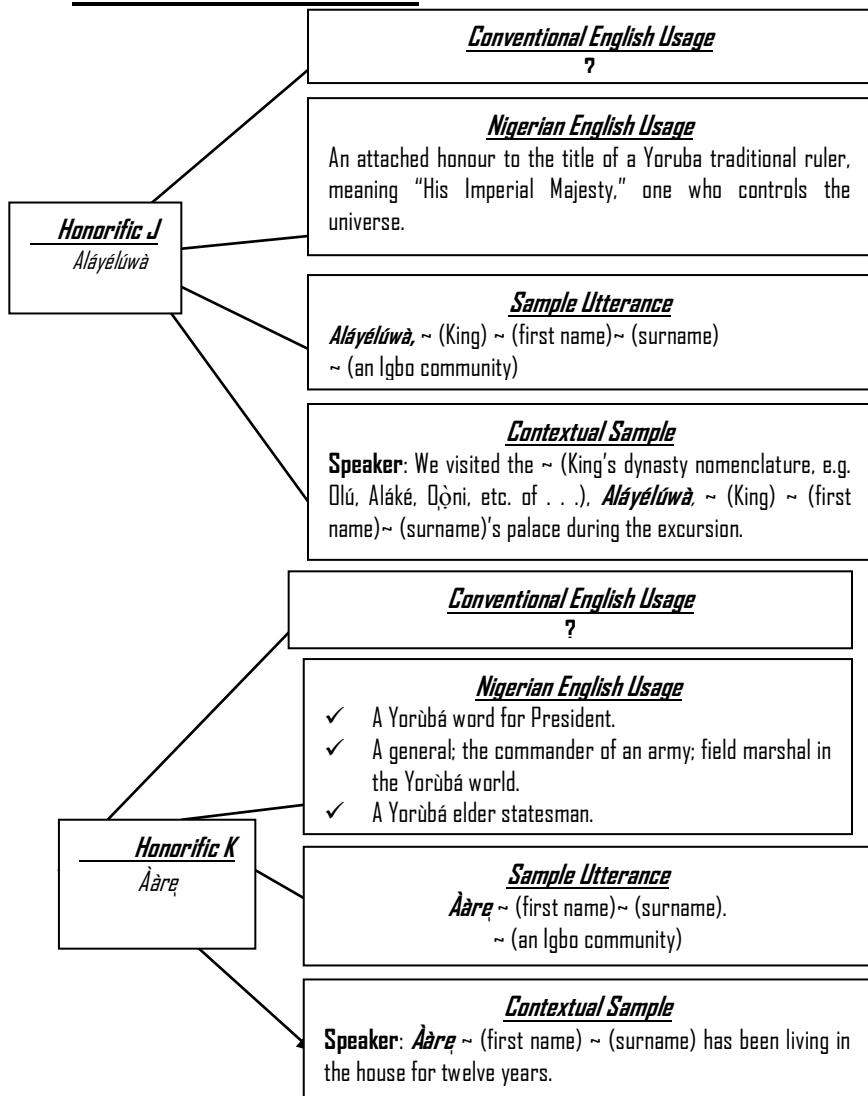


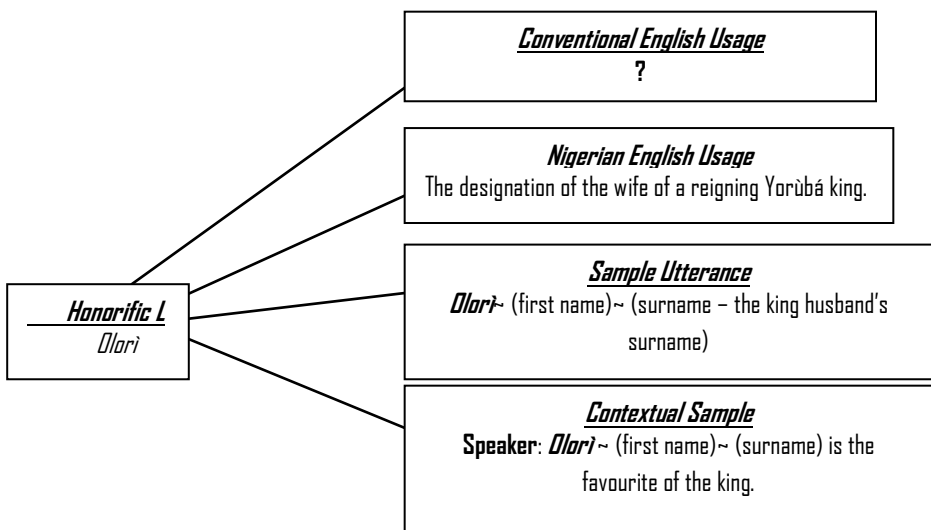
Interpretation

At a sentential level, members of the audience who are alien to Igbo culture may find it difficult to interpret what *Ochiri Ozu*, *Owa ne Tiri Ora* and *Agu ne Chem Nba* stand for in English utterances, since there are no specific equivalent words for them in general English usage. For (im)politeness purposes, it is necessary for both the speaker and the listener to have the knowledge that

- (i.) *Ochiri Ozu* is a chieftaincy title given to a rich Igbo man to show that he has the capacity to gather people and take care of them.
- (ii.) *Owa ne Tiri Ora* is a chieftaincy title given to a rich Igbo man to portray him as the sun that shines over the people.
- (iii.) *Agu ne Chem Nba* is a chieftaincy title conferred on a rich Igbo man as the lion that watches over the people.

Yorùbá Based Honorifics





Interpretation

The words *Aláyélúwà*, *Ààrẹ* and *Olori* are not in the lexicon of the English language but necessarily loaned into the Nigerian English usage among Yorùbá speakers of English in line with the people's culture. Thus, their use in relation to (im)politeness can be affected when any of the interactants could not explain that

- (i.) *Aláyélúwà* is an appellative prefix attached to the title of a Yorùbá traditional ruler to suggest that he is an Imperial Majesty, one who controls the universe.
- (ii.) *Ààrẹ* is an equivalent title for a president; general; the commander of an army; field marshal in the Yorùbá world; an elder statesman.
- (iii.) *Olori* is a designation for the wife of a reigning Yorùbá king.

Discussion

1. English Based Politeness Elements: The English based elements of politeness in Nigerian English usage do not only have expanded meanings. Many a time, those who use them also attach to such linguistic tokens some excessive values and honour, beyond their semantic representations in the aspect of:

a. **Profession:** where honorifics like:

- i. *Marshal (Honorific A)*, which is universally used for a military officer of the highest rank, is adopted by civilians as an appellation at will, as in ~ (*first name*) ~ (*middle name*) **Marshal** (*a newly acquired surname*).
- ii. *Engineer (Honorific B)*, which is a title for an individual who has studied and certified as a specialist in a branch of engineering, is used to refer to a manual repairer of electronic appliances or a local mechanic, as in “*I am **Engineer** ~ (*surname*). I have come to return your repaired phones.*”

Some other professional related honorifics that form bases for politeness are:

- iii. *Barrister*, which is a universal name for a lawyer who has the right to argue in higher courts of law, is usually adopted by individuals who are not professionals in law as an appellation or a later acquired surname, as in ~ (*first name*) ~ (*middle name*) **Barrister** (*a newly acquired surname*).
- iv. *Doctor*, a general name for a person who is trained and licensed to treat sick and injured people, has taken the nomenclature for:

- (1) *herbalist* to generate a new reality of *native doctor*
- (2) *nurse*
- (3) *pharmacist etc.*

b. **Seniority:** This is portrayed in the use of **Honorific C**, *Uncle*, which is linguistically interpreted as a brother of one's

father/mother or the husband of one's aunt, but used in Nigeria in some other forms, like when referring to *an older friend, colleague, acquaintance* or a *male school teacher* to demonstrate politeness. Other related tokens include:

(1.) *Father*: which is extended to generate a politeness token or mark of respect for an elderly man, a quite old man or any man of any age in position of authority who is not necessarily one's paternal parent as in when members of a notorious gang praise their leader, "*You are father for life!*"

(2.) *Sister*, when referring to a female friend or elder who is not in any way related to one either by blood, religion or background.

c. **Academics**: Several academic titles are universally known with each of them bestowed on individuals according to the academic degrees they have acquired or their rank as college or university teachers. Among such are:

(1) *Doctor*: for a person who has earned one of the highest academic degrees (as a PhD) or a person awarded an honorary doctorate by a university.

(2) *Professor*: for a teacher of the highest rank at a university, etc.

These titles have become common appellations among the general public including the semiliterate and the illiterate.

2. Nigerian Indigenous Language Based Politeness Elements:

Since the English spoken in Nigeria is a reflection of the users' cultural systems, the politeness elements in the language form inadvertently draw heavily from the socio-cultural realities of the Nigerian peoples in term of:

a. **Religion**: Nigeria is a highly religious country. The custodians of the three religious forms in the country – Christianity, Islam and traditional religion – are highly revered by their followers, particularly through their various titles. Meanwhile, in the

Nigerian English usage, it is not only those that are universally known for such special titles that bear them, the use of the titles have taken different dimensions as in *Honorific D, Alhaji*, a title a male Muslim who has been to Mecca as a pilgrim, becomes an appellation for a well-dressed or a rich Hausa man for politeness and to influence the behaviour of such a person. In the same vein, the prefix *Malam*, which is not in the general English lexicon, is adopted in Nigerian English as a mark of respect for a man learned in Koranic studies; a form of address for a learned or educated man; an appellation for any adult male who appears in a Hausa dress (Kaftan). There are those that are English/Arabic based, like *Deacon/Deaconess, Pastor, Prophet/Prophetess, Reverend, Archbishop, Bishop, Apostle, Mother-in-Israel, Imam, Ustaz, Sheikh*, etc.

- b. *Politics*:** Nigeria has strong (pre/post colonial) political systems that, ideally, have to be respected by all and sundry, across the various ethnic groups. As such, the *Honorifics E, J, K* and *L* respectively demonstrate the honour holders of the titles naturally earn from their subjects, by virtue of the positions the latter occupy in the society. Although such political designations are not readily captured in the universal use of English, a provision is made for them in the Nigerian English usage through a whole loan of the linguistic tokens from the Nigerian indigenous languages into English. In addition to those identified in *Honorifics E, J, K* and *L* are *Emir, Obi, Qba, Igwe, Ayaba, Kábiyèsí, Sultan, Galadima, Balógun, Attah*, etc. These are further referred to from English connotations as *His/Her Royal Majesty, His/Her Royal Highness, His Eminence*, etc. and in the contemporary political system *His/Her Excellency, Senator, Rt Honourable, Honourable*, etc.

- c. **Economy:** This usually occurs when individuals are given titles to enjoy community respect and honour through opulence as in **Honorifics G, H and I**. These are typically Igbo without equivalent English words except for the provided transliteration forms. Nevertheless, they are absorbed directly into the English language usage and further post modified by addition of **ONE** to mark class difference and ascendancy, the absence of the linguistic tokens in the general English lexicon notwithstanding.
- d. **Ideology:** Many Nigerian cultures frown at younger ones calling their older counterparts by their names. Failure to observe this will result in impoliteness. The former therefore usually resort to titles when referring to the latter as in **Honorific C** where the word, *Uncle*, is used for a senior colleague. Other forms could be *Aunty, Brother, Ègbón, Sister, Bros, Sisy, etc.* These are peculiar to the Nigerian environment and alien to other users of English.

3. Multiple Uses of Politeness Elements: Contrary to what is obtainable in many countries of the world where English language is used, it is highly impolite to take an individual for granted by underrating the essence of his/her honorifics. In many occasions, the honorifics are in layers. Each of these must be attached to the name of their recipient and none in any way is omissible whenever the recipient is introduced. This gives rise to multiple sets of politeness tokens in the Nigerian English usage like;

- *Chief (Dr) ~ (first name) ~ (surname), the ~ (chieftaincy title) of ~ (community).*
- *His Royal Highness, Alhaji (Dr) ~ (first name) ~ (surname) OON, mni, ICAN.*
- *Pastor Evangelist Prof. (Mrs)~ (first name) ~ (surname)JP.*
- *Alayeluwa Oba (Dr) ~ (first name) ~ (surname), the ~ (dynasty title) of ~ (community name).*

- *Mr ~ (first name) ~ (surname), the ~ (community title) One of ~ (community name).*

Findings

The work centres on a Critical Discourse Analysis of (Im)politeness in Address Forms in Nigerian English Usage. It affirms the position of Nigerian scholars who are of the view Nigerian English exists and has developed features that mark it out as a legitimate subset of English language. Consequently, the study has made the following findings.

- i. The work identifies both English based and Nigerian indigenous language based politeness elements of honorifics are the address forms in Nigerian English usage.
- ii. The study finds that the (im)politeness address forms in the Nigerian English usage affect the wider intelligibility by promoting extreme politeness or complete impoliteness among users of English who are not familiar with the socio-cultural systems of the Nigerian social realities.
- iii. The research makes bare various ways (im)polite address forms in Nigerian English usage reflect unequal power relations in discourse as *profession, seniority, religion, politics, economy and ideology*.
- iv. The work discovers that the effects of underplaying the essence of polite address forms on discourse among users on Nigerian English include
 - provocation of offence.
 - outright breakdown in communication.
 - exhibition of face threatening acts.
 - withholding of politeness.

Conclusion

Nigeria is a country where much is given to both titles and titleholders. The reason for this can be attributed to the fact that the titles carry positive collocations and accord a great deal of respect to their holders. Like any other linguistic elements of text, the sense in which the titles are used is peculiar to the Nigerian society even though they are embedded in English – a language of global acceptance.

Also, those who crave for power, whether they are qualified for such by their profession, academic status, cultural/political positioning or by religious roles; or by personally overrating themselves, attach notable Nigerian nomenclatures to their names and expect every other person to address them accordingly during conversations. Failure to accord them such creates a situation for impoliteness and engenders impolite behaviour – one of the features that mark Nigerian English off from the British and American standards as well as other world varieties.

Consequently, due to the socio-cultural influence on the Nigerian variety of English, speakers of other varieties of English across the world would, to some extent, be at loss when they engage speakers of Nigerian English in conversations. In essence, the act of (im)politeness, as nurtured by speakers of Nigerian English in the manner they address each other or speakers of other varieties of English in a discourse, could somewhat be mistaken for either extreme politeness or complete impoliteness. This could therefore lead to a partial or complete breakdown in communication.

References

- Allen, J. P. and Corder, P.S. (eds) (1973) *The Edinburgh course in applied linguistics*, vols 1–3. vol.1.
- Alobo, J. O. (2005) *Varieties of English: An introduction*. Kano: Afomat de Printers.

- Baker, P. and Ellece, S. (2011) *Key terms in discourse analysis*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Bousfield, D. (2008) *Impoliteness interaction*. Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing Company.
- Brown, P. (2015) "Politeness and Language." *International encyclopaedia of the social and behavioural sciences* (2nd ed.). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.53072-4>. Elsevier, Vol. 18
- Brown, P. and Levinson, S. C. (1987) *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clark, H. H. (1998) "Communal lexicons" in Malmkjær, K. and Williams, J. (Eds.) *Context in language learning and language understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 63-87.
- Culpeper, J. (1996) "Towards an anatomy of impoliteness." *Journal of pragmatics*, 25, 349–367.
- Dalton. E. J. (2013) *Impoliteness in computer mediated communication*. MA Thesis, San Diego State University.
- Denham, K. and Lobeck, A. (2010) *Linguistics for everyone: An introduction*. Boston: Wadsworth, Centage Learning.
- Eka, D.A. (1985) *A phonological study of standard Nigerian English*. PhD Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Fairclough, N. (1989) *Language and power*. London: Longman.
- Grice, P. (1975) "Logic and conversation." In Cole, P. and Morgan, J. (eds.) *Syntax and semantics*, 3. New York: Academic Press.
- Holmes, J. (1992) *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman Publishing.
- <https://www.thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2016/07/olufemi-taiwo-a-country-of-honorifics-but-no-honour/>.
- <https://www.quora.com/Why-are-Nigerians-very-big-on-titles-Prof-Pastor-Dr-Bishop-MBA-etc>.

- Hudson, R. A. (1980) *Sociolinguistics*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Jowitt, D. (1991) *Nigerian English usage: An Introduction*. Lagos: Learn Africa Plc.
- Kluckhohn, C (1951) "The Study of Culture" in Lerner, D. and Lasswell, H. D. (Eds) *The Policy Sciences*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, pp 86-101.
- Leech, G. (1983) *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Locher, M. (2004). *Power and politeness in action: Disagreements in oral communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Locke, T. (2004) *Critical discourse analysis*. London: Continuum.
- Malmkjaer, K. (2006) (Ed) *The linguistics encyclopaedia*. London: Routledge.
- Mirhosseini, M., Mardanshahi, M. and Dowlatabadi, H. (2017) "Impoliteness Strategies Based on Culpeper's Model: An Analysis of Gender Differences between Two Characters in the Movie *Mother*" in *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research* Volume 4, Issue 3, pp. 221-238.
- Mey, J. L. (1993) *Pragmatics: An introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Odumuh, A. E. (1981) *Aspects of the semantics and syntax of educated Nigerian English*. PhD Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Spencer, J. (1971) (ed). *The English language in West Africa*. London: Longman.
- Van Dijk, T. (1993) "Principles of critical discourse analysis." In *Discourse and society*, 4, 249 – 283.
- Watts, R. J. (2003). *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wodak, R. (2001) "What CDA is about: A Summary of its History, Important Concepts and its Developments" in Wodak, R. and Meyer, M. (eds) *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. London: Sage.