A pragmatic analysis of conversational maxims in Chinua Achebe's *a man of people*

MAPENDO GAHAZI Japhet

ISAD-République Démocratique du Congo

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Abstract

The current study is entitled "A Pragmatic Analysis of Conversational Maxims in Chinua Achebe's "*A Man of the People*". It focuses on the structure and the organization of human interaction with a more specific focus on conversation interaction. This study purports to analyze the conversations of the characters in the novel, using Paul Grice's theory of the Cooperative Principle, which comprises its four maxims: the maxim of quality, the maxim of quantity, the maxim of manner and the maxim of relation. In addition, it purports to analyze how the maxims of the Politeness Principle are handled. It also comprises the tact maxim, the generosity maxim, the modesty maxim, the approbation maxim, the sympathy maxim and the agreement maxim. Together with analyzing how the maxims of the Politeness Principle are either adhered to or flouted, this study will also consist in analyzing how face is either threatened, saved or enhanced in the utterance following Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1987). This study being purely qualitative, collected data have been analyzed using qualitative research methods. Thus, this study uses the pragmatic approach as its primary analytical tool with a particular focus on the cooperative principle and the politeness principle.

Key-words: Pragmatics, Cooperative Principle, Conversational Maxims, Politeness Principle, Speech Acts and face.

Résumé

La présente étude s'intitule « Analyse pragmatique des maximes conversationnelles dans *A Man of the People* de Chinua Achebe ». Elle porte sur la structure et l'organisation de l'interaction humaine, en mettant plus particulièrement l'accent sur l'interaction conversationnelle. Cette étude vise à analyser les conversations des personnages du roman à l'aide de la théorie du principe de coopération de Paul Grice qui comprend quatre maximes : la maxime de qualité, la maxime de quantité, la maxime de manière et la maxime de relation. Elle vise en outre à analyser la manière dont les maximes du principe de politesse sont mises en œuvre. Elle comprend également la maxime de tact, la maxime de générosité, la maxime de modestie, la maxime d'approbation, la maxime de sympathie et la maxime d'accord. Outre l'analyse de la manière dont les maximes du principe de politesse sont respectées ou bafouées, cette étude consistera également à analyser comment la face est menacée, préservée ou renforcée dans l'énoncé, conformément à la théorie de la politesse de Brown et Levinson (1987). Cette étude étant purement qualitative, les données recueillies ont été analysées à l'aide de méthodes de recherche qualitatives. Ainsi, cette étude utilise l'approche pragmatique comme principal outil d'analyse, en mettant particulièrement l'accent sur le principe de coopération et le principe de politesse.

Mots-clés : Pragmatique, principe de coopération, maximes conversationnelles, principe de politesse, actes de langage et « face ».

Introduction

1.Context to the study

The field of pragmatics is concerned with the study of how meaning is created and understood in context. In this field there is a number of theories that have been developed to elucidate the principles that govern human interaction. Among the leading is Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which postulates that participants in a conversation ought to cooperate with one another by adhering to the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. The adherence to these maxims results in effective communication. Leech (1983) complemented Grice's (1975) model by the Politeness Principle, showing how speakers should maintain social harmony in interaction thanks to the observance of politeness maxims namely tact, generosity, approbation ,modesty, agreement and sympathy.

Moreover, for Brown and Levinson (1987) the Politeness Theory serves as a face-based account of linguistic politeness, asserting that speakers use different strategies to protect their own face and that of their interlocutors during interaction. In conjunction with speech act theory as developed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), the above frameworks provide pertinent tools and subsequently they constitute theoretical foundation on which the current study is based as it is noticed in the theoretical preamble. It is self-evident that literary discourse offers a valuable site for investigating the interplay between cooperative and politeness maxims since fictional dialogues often mirror real-life interaction. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) speakers in interaction frequently depart from cooperative expectations to protect positive and negative face wants, thereby generating implied meanings that contribute to characterization and the construction of social relations in literary texts.

Chinua Achebe's A *Man of the People*, which Babasola (2022) posits that it is seemingly a prophetic novel because of the political events that followed its publication, offers an appropriate corpus for investigating how pragmatic mechanisms shape meaning in literary discourse.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Commenting on Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Babasola (2022), states that critics have agreed that no African writer (novelist) writing in English has yet surpassed Achebe's achievement except Achebe himself. Igwedibia and Chijioke (2019) assert that Chinua Achebe's novels have undoubtedly stood the test of time especially in terms of scholarship and academic relevance. They have been subjected to series of studies and interpretations by many scholars especially through the lens of literary and qualitative critical analysis. However, as far as his novel entitled *A Man of the People* is concerned, there is absolutely no evidence of any pragmatic analysis of

the text to the researcher's knowledge.

Therefore, the current study on *A Man of the People* is motivated by the fact that though many thematic studies were conducted on this novel, it is still under researched from a pragmatic stance especially concerning the analysis of conversational maxims. The novel provides a very fertile ground for that kind of analysis to the extent that Palmer (1972) says that *A Man of the People* is a rare bird in the corpus of African novel.

1.2. Research Questions

The present study revolves around the following research questions:

- What are the maxims of the cooperative principle observed and those violated or flouted in *A Man of the People and what is the predominant pragmatic pattern between observances and flouting?*
- What maxims of the politeness principle and what politeness strategies are employed by the characters in the novel?
- How does the interplay between speech act theory, cooperative and politeness maxims contribute to the interpretation of meaning in the selected excerpts?

1.3. Aim of the Study

The aim of the current study is to examine what maxims of the Cooperative Principle are either observed or flouted in *A Man of the People*. It also aims at ascertaining whether which pragmatic pattern between observances and flouting predominates. It also purports to identify the politeness maxims and politeness strategies used by characters in the novel. At last, the research aims to analyze how the interplay between the speech act theory, the cooperative and the politeness maxims contributes to the interpretation of meaning in selected excerpts from the novel under study.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study seeks to close a major gap in the literature by examining the unexplored application of Grice's, Leech's maxims and Brown & Levinson's politeness theory to Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People*. Thus, this study purports to parse linguistic theories using data from literature, making it not only relevant but also timely. Thus, this study is so significant in that it brings a worthwhile contribution to the growing body of research on literary pragmatics. In addition, it enlightens potential researchers, scholars and students interested in the interface between linguistics and literature on the relevance of pragmatic frameworks to the interpretation of literary discourse.

2. Theoretical preambule

Human communication primarily relies on language. As a fundamental means of communication, language plays a crucial role in our daily lives. It serves as the expression of human communication through knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors, which can be experienced, explained, and shared. For Yule, G. (2010) language is also understood as the unique human ability to communicate with others, whether through written or oral forms, or via symbols such as body movements.

According to Olenyo (2012:7), language can be defined as a system of communication using speech sounds, either oral or written. These sounds are arbitrarily related to meaning; that is, there is no inherent relationship between a sequence of sounds and what it refers to.

Carter (1991:83) quoting Halliday and Hassan (1976), "asserts that language has three distinct functions that work together to create a discourse passage, yet being separate in the sense that they may be named and isolated. The ideational, interpersonal, and textual are these three functions. The interpersonal function describes the relationships between people, the ideational function deals with cognitive meaning, and the textual function focuses on the process that allows the writer or speaker to produce the text as a coherent series of units".

Moreover, Rafaela (2005:7) asserts that language is our most effective medium of communication. Communication enables human beings to build and maintain good relationships. It is a form of interaction where people influence one another. Communication is broadly divided into two main types: verbal and non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication involves conveying messages without using words, often through body language, gestures, and facial expressions. Verbal communication, conversely, uses language (Adler et al. 2020). A prime example of verbal communication is conversation. Conversation is one of the most frequently used forms of verbal communication between two or more people. Grice supports the above statement in the following way:

In a conversation, the participants must be cooperative." This implies that each participant should recognize their contribution to the conversation and strive to be informative, truthful, relevant, and clear. This is known as the "cooperative principle." The cooperative principle is further divided into four Maxims of conversation, known as "Gricean Maxims." Conversational Maxims describe specific logical principles observed by people to achieve effective communication. These are the Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, (Grice 1975).

In addition, Mbokani (2016) quoting Kary (1986:245) asserts …Conversation rules such as floor allocation, shared knowledge and phatic communication are cyclic rules which need to

be applied at every new contribution made by the speaker in an ongoing interaction…the failure to apply these rules cyclically or indeed their violation creates a pattern of domination of one speaker over the other amounting to an extended speech act of aggression by –as it were – verbal blows.

2.1. Tha maxims of the cooperative principle

2.1.1. The Maxim of Quality

Black, E (2006:23) asserts that the maxim of quality sets the rule of honesty; it is subdivided into two Maxims:

Super-Maxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true

Sub-Maxims:

(a) Do not say what you believe to be false.

(b) Do not say that for which you lack evidence.

2.1.2. The Maxim of Quantity

According to Grice (1989:26) the maxim of quantity states:

a) Make your contribution as informative as required for the current purpose of the exchange;

b) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

2.1.3. The Maxim of Relation

The Maxim of relation is sometimes called the Maxim of relevance, because it is composed of only "be relevant". The term "relation" is appropriate for this maxim because it has to do with the relationship between the current utterance and others preceding and following it, and more generally with the relationship between the current utterance and the context both textual and situational (Grice 1975, Black, E 2006:23).

2.1.4. The Maxim of Manner

The Maxim of manner obliges us to organize our utterances in an orderly manner, that is, to provide information in a way, which can be assimilated by the listener. According to Leech (1983:99), the Maxim of manner relates "not to what is said". Being one of the Gricean conversation Maxims which constitute the cooperative principle, the maxim of manner makes the following requirements:

Be perspicuous, avoid obscurity of expression, avoid ambiguity, be brief, avoid unnecessary prolixity and be orderly.

Complementary to the cooperative principle is the politeness principle which accounts for the social aspect of language use. It was introduced by Geoffrey Leech and it explains how speakers can maintain harmony and lessen tension during communication.

2.2. The maxims of the politeness principle

In addition to the four maxims of the cooperative principle explained above, this study also sheds light on the theories of the Maxims of the politeness principle, such as the Tact Maxim, the Generosity Maxim, the Approbation Maxim, the Modesty Maxim, the Agreement Maxim, and the Sympathy Maxim (Leech, 1983:131).

According to Leech (1983:107, these maxims of the politeness principle go in pairs.

2.2.1. The Tact Maxim

The tact maxim says:

a) Minimize cost to other;

b) Maximize benefit to other;

For Mbokani (2005:123), the tact maxim applies to Searle's directives and commissives categories of illocutions, which refer, in their proposition context, to some action performed, respectively by the hearer or the speaker.

2.2.2. The Generosity Maxim

Leech (1983:133) asserts "the maxim of generosity says:

a) Minimize benefit to self;

b) Maximize cost to self;

The generosity maxim applies to impositive and commissive categories of illocution. There is a little need to distinguish the "other-centered" Maxim of tact from the self-centered Maxim of generosity. The generosity encourages people to minimize benefit to self and Maximize cost to self.

2.2.3. The Approbation Maxim

The approbation Maxim states:

a) Minimize dispraise of other;

b) Maximize approval of other.

See, Igaab and Al Manhalawey (2010:41).

Thus, according to this maxim it is preferred to praise others and if this is impossible to sidestep the issue, to give some sort of minimal response (possibility through the use of euphemisms), or to remain silent.

According to Leech (1983:135), an unflattering subtitle for the approbation maxim would be "the flattery Maxim" – but the term flattery is generally reserved for insincere approbation.

In its more important negative aspect, the approbation maxim say "avoid saying unpleasant things about others, and more particularly about the hearer. Hence, the fact of complimenting others is highly valued according to the approbation Maxims.

2.2.4. The Modesty Maxim

According to Leech (1983:136), the modesty Maxim says:

a) Minimize praise of self;

b) Maximize dispraise of self;

Moreover, it is felicitous to agree with another's commendation (expression of praise for someone's good work) except when it is a commendation of oneself. Similarly, self-dispraise is regarded as quite benign, even when it is exaggerated for comic effect. In addition, to break the first sub Maxim of modesty is to commit the social transgression of boasting.

2.2.5. The Agreement Maxim

Concerning the agreement Maxim Igaab (2010:162) asserts, the agreement Maxim states:

> *a) Minimize t disagreement between self and other;*
>
> *b) Maximize agreement between self and other;*

This is in line with Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies of "seek agreement" and "avoid disagreement", to which they attach great importance, Betti (2013:5).

2.2.6. The Sympathy Maxim

The sympathy Maxim states:

> *a) Minimize antipathy between self and other;*
>
> *b) Maximize sympathy between self and other;*

This Maxim includes a small group of speech acts such as congratulation, commiseration and expressing condolences-all of which is in accordance with Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategy of attending to the hearer's interest, want, and needs. See **Igaab, Z. K.** (2010).

It goes without saying that tact maxim and approbation maxim are 'other'-oriented whereas generosity maxim and modesty maxim are 'self'-oriented. At last, agreement maxim and sympathy are 'self' and 'other' oriented.

These maxims are important to the current study because politeness is a social phenomenon, a means to achieve interpersonal relationships, and a norm imposed by social conventions. The use of maxims is commonly experienced in real life. Since a novel often mirrors real-life events, this study analyzes how characters use, respect, violate, or flout conversational maxims in *A Man of the People*.

Therefore, this research consists of an integrated approach combining both linguistic and literary approaches and methods. Mary Louise Pratt's (1977) provides the foundational theoretical basis for literary pragmatics by demonstrating how **linguistic methods and literary methods are productively combined** in the analysis of literary texts. From a **linguistic perspective,** she draws directly on **speech act theory,** a core pragmatic framework**,** to analyse literary utterances in terms of **illocutionary force, communicative intention, and contextual conditions.**

Together with being grounded in literary pragmatics this study is stylistic. Quoting Widdowson, Christopher, B and Ronald, C (1987:151)

assert that stylistics is the study of literary discourse from linguistic orientation i.e. it links the two. Furthermore, Widdowson (1975:5) clarifies the concern of the literary critic and that of the linguist in the following terms: 'the concern of the literary critic is not principally with the way the signals of the artist are constructed but with the underlying message which an interpretation of these signals will reveal. The linguist on the other hand is concerned with the codes themselves and particular messages are of interest in so far as they exemplify how the codes are constructed'.

In addition, this study is labelled as "an integrated pragmatic analysis" because both the Politeness Principle and the Cooperative Principle are related frameworks upon which the pragmatic analysis of conversational maxims is based. As for pragmatics, Akmajian et al (2010: 361) identifies the coverage of pragmatics to the study of language use, and in particular the study of linguistic communication, in relation to the structure of and context of utterance. Adegbite (2000), quoted by Igwedibia and Anieke (2020: 66), defines pragmatics in the following way: ''The pragmatic analysis of language can be broadly understood to be the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from properties of words, and constructions but from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the contexts in which they are uttered. As for Leech (1983:6), the meaning in pragmatics is defined relative to a speaker or user of the language.

2.3. Speech act and face

In the words of George Yule (1996:47), actions performed via utterances are generally called speech acts and, in English, they are commonly given more specific labels, such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, or request… Thus, the communicative intention of the speaker is related to these descriptive terms for different kinds of speech acts.

Austin (1962) distinguished three types of acts performed when an utterance is made:

-Locutionary Act: The act of uttering a meaningful linguistic expression.

-Illocutionary Act: The communicative force or intention behind the utterance. This is what the speaker intends to achieve by saying something.

-Perlocutionary Act: The actual effect or consequence of the utterance on the hearer. Austin emphasized that for a speech act to be successful, certain "felicity conditions" must be met, including appropriate context, conventional procedures, and the sincerity of the speaker.

J.L. Austin (1962), distinguishes two main speech acts as performative**s** and constatives. Performatives are sentences, which not only describe a given reality, but also, change the social reality that they describe. In addition, performatives are used for the purpose at undertaking an action, which may be felicitous or infelicitous. Constatives are used for just making a

statement, which can either be true or false. For J.L. Austin (1962), constatives are words that describe a situation.

Searle (1969) refined Austin's theory, proposing a more systematic classification of illocutionary acts and further exploring the relationship between linguistic form and communicative function. He classified speech acts into five general categories:

1. Representatives (also referred to as assertives) are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be the case or not. They contain a certain statements about the world such as: Assertions, conclusions, descriptions, claiming, boasting, swearing, etc.
2. Directives: are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to get someone else to do something.
3. i.e. they direct the hearer towards doing something. e.g : commands, orders, requests, suggestions, questions, inviting, advising, begging.
4. Commissives: they commit the speaker to do something in the future. i.e. those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future actions. They express speakers' intentions. e.g.: promising, planning, vowing, betting, threatening, offering…
5. Expressives: those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker feels about a certain situation. They express psychological states and can be statements of thanks, apologies, welcoming, deploring, pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy or sorrow…
6. Declarations: these are speech acts that change the world via their utterance. These speech acts include statements such as Christening, marrying, firing…See also George Yule (1996:53-54).

As far as face is concerned, Yule (1996:60), asserts that face is a technical term, which means the public self-image of a person. It refers to the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expect everyone else to recognize. Negative face refers to a person's desire for independence, freedom of action, and freedom from imposition by others, while positive face refers to the desire to be accepted, appreciated, and connected to others (Brown & Levinson, 1987). For George Yule (1996), negative politeness involves showing respect, deference, or apology in order to avoid imposing on someone. Positive politeness, on the other hand, emphasizes solidarity, shared goals, and friendliness between speakers.

In *A Man of the People*, characters use speech acts such as promising, criticizing, and persuading while also trying to protect their positive or nega-

tive face during interaction. Through the observance or flouting of conversational maxims, the novel shows how language reflects politeness, power relations, social intentions, and ideological positions in communication. Consequently, together with analyzing which maxims of the cooperative and the politeness principles are either observed, violated or flouted, the current study seeks to examine how speech acts, cooperative maxims and politeness strategies interact in the novel through the selected excerpts and how this interaction contributes to the interpretation of meaning in the novel.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design and Paradigm

By research **design**, Kumar (2014:122) quoted by Ngitsi (2020:67) and Mukule (2023:57) means the road map that you decide to follow during your research journey to find answers to your research questions as validly, objectively accurately and economically as possible.

This research relies on qualitative approaches. Since the study seeks to uncover the communicative intentions behind dialogue in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People*, a qualitative design allows for a deeper understanding of the linguistic, social, and political nuances embedded in the text.Creswell and Poth (2018) assert "Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences.

As for the research paradigm this study is anchored in the interpretivist research paradigm, which assumes that meaning is socially constructed and can be understood through the interpretation of linguistic interactions. John Creswell (2014) describes a research paradigm as a philosophical worldview that shapes how research is conducted, including assumptions about knowledge, reality, and methods of inquiry.

As it was up mentioned, this study applies an integrated pragmatic approach which underscores the maxims of the cooperative principle and those of the politeness principle. Condensedly, it all together parses how face is managed i.e. either saved or threatened in the analyzed passages.

The current study consists of the analysis of ten selected excerpts from *A Man of the People*. They were strategically selected by virtue of their pertinence and applicability to the research objectives. The researcher paid much attention to conversational exchanges that encompass clear observance, violation or flouting of Grice's and Leech's maxims and politeness strategies. The selected excerpts comprise interactions among major characters and portray various social and political contexts within the novel.

3.2. Ethical considerations

As this research consists of analyzing a literary work, ethical considerations mostly center on accurate source citation and a commitment to understanding the text accurately, avoiding any misrepresentation of Achebe's intentions.

3.3. Trustworthiness of data

In qualitative approach, researchers use trustworthiness essentially to indicate to the readers how the findings of the research are credible. According to Clarke and Braun (2013) trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to the extent to which the research findings represent what the researcher intended to study. In this study which focuses on the pragmatic analysis of conversational maxims in *A Man of the People*, trustworthiness is achieved through a systematic, transparent, and contextually grounded approach to data selection, interpretation, and analysis. It focuses on the four crucial constructs to ascertain the trustworthiness of the findings: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

3.3.1. Credibility

Credibility is well-maintained to ensure the accuracy of the findings. Ravitch and Carl (2016: 188) asserted that "the attempts to establish credibility are achieved by structuring a study to seek and attend to complexity throughout a recursive research design process" that refers to the accuracy of the research findings. As validity stands for credibility in qualitative research, direct quotations from the novel "*A man of People*" were provided to help readers verify the claims that touch the problem of trustworthiness of the interpretations (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015) in this study. Additionally, credibility in this study resulted from a variety of cross-checking strategies of data sources, including contextual grounding, triangulation, and peer examination (Merriam, 1998, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

In this study, contextual grounding was used in the sense that each excerpt is interpreted within the socio-political and narrative context of the novel. Furthermore, triangulation was used in the fact that the pragmatic insights and the findings of the study are corroborated using multiple theoretical lenses Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), Leech's Politeness Theory (1983), and conversation analysis. Last, peer examination or peer review consists of asking colleagues to scan through the results and assess if the findings are credible depending on the data (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To ensure credibility through peer examination in this study, analyses and findings were reviewed by colleagues with knowledge on pragmatic analysis, academic peers, and supervisors to cross-validate the interpretations and minimize researcher's bias. Along with peer examination, the feedback from my research committee members enriched the findings of this study.

3.3.2. Transferability

Transferability which stands for generalizability (in quantitative studies) consists of leaving an extent to which readers of the study give value to the soundness and applicability of the findings from the study in their proper situations (Merriam, 1998, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015). Interestingly, Ravitch and Carl (2016: 189) argue that while qualitative research does not aim to produce true statements through which generalizations can be made to other individuals or environment, "transferability is the way in which qualitative studies can be applicable, or transferable, to broader contexts while still maintaining their context-specific richness". To increase the transferability of this study, I provided a thick description of the findings and the setting to enable readers to make comparisons to other contexts (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Furthermore, the findings of this study were contrasted with deep literature from previous studies to enable readers to make decisions of the usability of the findings from this research to their contexts.

Finally, while the study focuses on a specific novel, its findings are transferable because the analysis of conversational maxims can be applied to other postcolonial literary works, especially those using satire and political commentary. Further, detailed contextual information is provided about characters, socio-political settings, and narrative functions, allowing readers to apply them in other contexts of studies.

3.3.3. Dependability and Consistency

As an essential construct of trustworthiness, dependability increases trustworthiness in qualitative research. Certainly, dependability is reached based on the consistency of data processing and findings (Merriam, 2009; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Furthermore, dependability is ensured when data collected answers the study's research questions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Some techniques help researchers reach the consistency of their data.

In this study, dependability was applied through an audit trail. According to Moser and Korstjens (2018: 22), the audit trail requires researchers to be "responsible for providing a complete set of notes on decisions made during the research process, research team meetings, reflective thoughts, sampling, research materials adopted, the emergence of the findings and information about the data management".

Further, the audit trail enables readers of the research study to ensure that the researcher was transparent in the whole research process (Joyner et al., 2013, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study, dependability was used in the sens that the whole process of this research is provided. Starting by the identification of the dialogic unit containing potential pragmatic significance thanks to the close reading technique, the Contextual assessment

in which each utterance is examined paying attention to the speaker and the person spoken to, the speech's environment and the goal of the speaker and finally the identification and classification of maxims.

3.3.4. Confirmability

Confirmability is equivalent to objectivity in a quantitative perspective. Ravitch and Carl (2016) underscored that qualitative researchers do not look for objectivity, but their findings must be confirmed. Confirmability seeks to acknowledge and discover how researchers' biases and prejudices affect the findings' interpretations. According to Moser and Korstjens (2018: 121), "confirmability is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but clearly derived from the data". In this study, confirmability was achieved through triangulation, researcher's reflexivity, and revisiting several times data collected. Further, excerpts from the novel were cited to show a clear linkage between data and conclusions. Additionally, the use of conversational maxims provides a structured and systematic analytical model, reducing the potential for arbitrary interpretation.

4. Findings and Discussion

Excerpt 1.

(Background: the following excerpt is related to what happens when chief Nanga goes to pay a visit to Anata, his village, at the occasion of his reception at Mr. Nwege's school).

« *Although Mr Nwege had begun by saying that the distinguished guest needed no introduction, he had gone on all the same to talk for well over twenty minutes largely in praise of himself and all he had done for the party in Anata and environs. The crowd became steadily more restive especially when they noticed that the minister was looking at his watch* ». p. 13.

In the above excerpt from *A Man of the People*, Mr Nwege clearly flouts Grice's maxim of quantity. He provides useless and excessive information, notwithstanding the fact that he initially claims that Chief Nanga, the distinguished guest requires no introduction. Prolonging his speech loaded with self-praise, Mr Nwege ignores to introduce the guest. Thereby, the communicative event turns into an occasion of self-glorification. Pragmatically, Nwege's verbosity creates impatience among the participants and it suggests his overt political opportunism. It is revealed through the crowd's restiveness and the minister's nonverbal clue of looking at his watch. It is worth noting also that Mr Nwege flouts the maxim of relation because what he says about himself is not relevant or related to the ongoing situation. The implicature in what he says is that Mr Nwege neglects the audience and pays attention to his positive face in front of the distinguished guest.

Through the lens of speech act and politeness, Mr Nwege's utterances are viewed as assertive and self-aggrandizing (self-promotional act) act

targeting to enhance his positive face and public image in the presence of the minister in particular and all the audience in general.

Drawing on the politeness maxims, Mr. Nwege's speech does violate the modesty maxim which advises speakers to minimize the praise of self and to maximize the dispraise of self.

In addition, this speech violate the tact maxim because it creates restiveness, annoyance and inconvenience on the audience while prioritizing his own realizations. Hence, the above quotation brings to light the way in which speech act, face management and violation or the flouting of conversational maxims interact to lay bare (show clearly) political opportunism and social discord in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People*'s discourse. Therefore, the negative face of the audience is threatened by the fact that Nwege does not take into account their desire to be relaxed instead he causes them to become restive and bored.

Excerpt 2

(Background: during the meeting, which aims at creating a new political party, Max says words that are contained in the following extract).

« *Max introduced me without any previous consultation as a trustworthy comrade who had only the other day had his girlfriend snatched from him by a minister who shall remain nameless » p. 77.*

The above excerpt, consists of an assertive-expressive speech act with the illocutionary force of accusing/ condemning in which the maxim of quantity is skillfully flouted. In fact Max who is and used to be Odili's friend provides more information than is normally required for an introductory circumstance. Normally, Max ought to have presented Odili as a "trustworthy comrade" given that the ongoing meeting aimed at finding trustworthy comrades who would represent the new political party in different constituencies. Instead, Max unnecessarily reveals the personal incident in which a minister is involved in concerning the loss of his girlfriend. The blatant flout of the maxim of quantity due to the excess of information encompasses a conversational implicature by indirectly condemning the ruling class's abuse of power and notorious political corruption.

From the stance of politeness principle the above utterance violates the tact maxim and the approbation maxim. By implicitly attacking the unnamed minister and publicly revealing Odili's secret personal experience, Max neither adheres to the tact maxim, neither does he to the approbation maxim. However, even though the utterance stipulates that the minister's name shall remain unknown, this does not reinforce politeness, on the contrary it intensifies criticism.

Thus, though the utterance uses indirectness, its combination with satire aims at condemning immoral poli-

tical behaviour among the politicians.

As it has just been noted above, as far as speech acts and face are concerned, this utterance performs both assertive and expressive speech acts. Max both tells the audience about Odili's situation while at the same time expresses condemnation towards the political elite represented by Chief Nanga. Moreover, Max's utterance entails a face threatening act because it neither saves nor enhances the minister's positive face, on the contrary it threatens it. However, it can be noted that while Chief Nanga's face is threatened at the same time Odili's one is. The fact of saying that Odili's girlfriend was taken by an unnamed minister threatens his positive face.

Excerpt 3

(**Background:** The following passage is an answer by Odili to the question of accepting or not to represent the new party in the southeast).

"You know, Odili," he began suddenly after a longish pause, "I don't believe in providence and all that kind of stuff but your arrival just at this very moment is most fortunate: you see, we were planning to appoint able and dynamic Organizing Secretaries in each of the regions very soon. Now we have you, we do not have to worry our head about the Southeast anymore." "I'll do what I can, Max," I said. (p. 82)

The above excerpt constitutes an indirect directive and a commissive, in which it is obvious that the maxim of quantity is followed (for the factual content) because Max provides sufficient information concerning the appointment of the party's Secretaries in all the regions of the country. He is also as informative as it is required concerning the appointment of Odili as the representative of the new party in his native land. However, Max seems to flout the maxim of quantity by an exaggeration of Odili's praises which encompasses the implicature of political persuasion and tactical motivation rather than mere transmission of information.

In addition, through this utterance Max observes the maxim of relation, the maxim of approbation and the agreement maxim. In fact Max both expresses approbation of Odili and agrees with the audience about every point regarding the party's plans.

As far as face management is concerned, the description of Odili as able and dynamic constitutes a clear enhancement of Odili's positive face. This also limits Odili's eventual objection to Max's proposal, hence Odili immediately responds that he will do what he can. Referring to the maxim of the politeness principle, Odili's minimal response aligns with the modesty maxim which advises speakers to minimize praise of self. Odili does not abound in Max's depiction of his abilities in order to boast himself.

As just announced, from the angle of speech act theory, Max's utterance echoes an indirect directive targeting to persuade Odili to accept the

newly conferred political responsibility. In addition, Odili's reply performs a commissive act which displays his availability or his disposition to cooperate.

All in all, both speakers protect and enhance each other's positive face using deferential (respectful) and cooperative language, uncovering the way political discourse in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* is based on pragmatic negotiation, persuasion and politeness.

Excerpt 4

(**Background:** This is when chief Nanga, then minister pays a visit to Anata and is welcomed by many villagers at Anata grammar school).

« *I wished a miracle, for a voice of thunder, to hush this ridiculous festival and tell the poor contemptible people one or two truths. But of course it would be quite useless. They were not only ignorant but cynical. Tell them that this man had used his position to enrich himself and they would ask you…"* p. 2.

The analysis of the above extract helps disclose how the maxim of quality is indirectly highlighted thanks to the narrator's description of the crowd, whom he describes as "ignorant" and "cynical". Indeed, though the story is told in the first person limited point of view, the narrator one of the citizens observes the maxim of quality because he describes truths that he affirms to master. The speaker's fictionalized "truth" about political corruption suggests a tension between what is known to be true and what the public is willing to accept, thereby stressing a pragmatic concern with sincerity, evidence, and truthfulness in communicative exchange.

Drawing on the politeness principle this utterance both flouts the agreement maxim and the sympathy maxim. As a matter of fact, wishing a voice of thunder to hush the ridiculous festival encompasses expressing antipathy to the crowd and at the same time describing the people as ignorant means that they (crowd) and the narrator do not agree with one another concerning the true nature of politicians in general and that of Nanga in particular.

The implicature derived from the flout of the agreement and sympathy maxim is that the narrator expresses a strong dissatisfaction with the politicians and it encompasses a rude condemnation of Chief Nanga's actions.

As far as face is concerned, throughout this utterance the positive face of the crowd is threatened. The narrator's description of the crowd does not use any mitigation which makes the threatening act more severe.

Following the speech act theory, as coined by J.L. Austin (1962) and expanded by John Searle, the passage performs both an assertive and expressive speech act. Though from the locutionary level the utterance consists of a mere description, its illocutionary force embeds frustration, superiority

and as I have just mentioned it above moral condemnation.

Excerpt 5

(**Background**: This happens after the minister of finance has presented a plan to deal with the issue of inflation).

« *The Prime Minister said 'No' to the plan. He was not going to risk losing the election by cutting down the price paid to coffee planters…*

The next morning the prime minister sacked them and in the evening, he broadcast to the nation. He said the dismissed ministers were conspirators and traitors who had teamed up with foreign saboteurs to destroy the new nation » p. 3.

From the above excerpt it is clear that the maxim of quality is manipulated. The Prime Minister's words that the "sacked/fired ministers were conspirators and traitors" are not supported by any evidence. This flout of the maxim of quality generates several implicatures: such as framing propaganda, justification for his action, demonizing his opponent, appealing to nationalism and maintenance of power. Thus, the intentional distortion of truth demonstrates how politicians in the novel use language not to inform but to control ideological reality and rationalize their partisan interests.

Leaning on the politeness principle the Prime Minister violates the approbation and the agreement maxims.

The Prime Minister blatantly breaches the maxim of agreement of which observance would require him to take into account the minister of finance's plan to tackle the matter of inflation. At the same time, his categorical refusal of Dr Makinde's plan which was well prepared breaches the approbation maxim.

From the standpoint of speech act theory, the Prime Minister's broadcast performs the assertive speech act with the illocutionary force of accusing and a directive act (mobilizing public opinion against the dismissed ministers). These speech acts are strategically deployed to justify his political actions, particularly the dismissal of ministers, while reinforcing authority and rule over national discourse.

From the perspective of face, the Prime Minister's discourse constitutes a serious face-threatening act against the fired ministers. Following Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, such public accusations threaten both the desire to be approved (positive face) and the need to be free from imposition (negative face).

The fact that the utterance does not contain any mitigating politeness strategies sheds light on a deliberate use of impoliteness to crush and to question the legitimacy of political adversaries. Therefore, this analysis unveils how power is linguistically established using the methodical violation of pragmatic norms in the novel.

Excerpt 6

(Background: The following excerpt concerns Mr Nanga and Hon. T.C, Kobino's telephone conversation).

''That was Hon T.C, Kobino, very stupid man the cabinet has approved the completion of the road between Giligili and Anata since January but this foolish man has been dillying and dallying, because it is not his constituency'' P.42

The above extract first embodies a blatant flouting of the maxim of quality. Chief Nanga, the speaker's words are manifestly overstated and biased (subjective) rather than evidence-based. By portraying Hon. T.C. Kobino as "very stupid" and "this foolish man", the utterance violates the expectation that contributions should be truthful and adequately evidenced, thereby replacing objective reporting with emotive and judgmental language. This pragmatic mismatch (pragmatic inconsistency) serves to amplify ideological positioning and to build a negative characterization of political opponents.

From the standpoint of politeness theory developed by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, the above utterance constitutes an unambiguous face-threatening act (FTA), in particular against Hon. T.C. Kobino's positive face. The fact that Chief Nanga applies words such as "stupid" and "foolish" are immediately attacks to Kobino's desire to be respected and approved of, hence breaching norms of negative politeness as well.

Following the speech act theory as neologized by J.L. Austin (1962) and John Searle, the utterance encompasses an expressive act combined with a directive-like implicature of denunciation. While apparently talking about governmental action concerning the road-building project, the primary illocutionary force of the utterance is rooted in criticizing and discrediting the politician's performance.

The speech act therefore functions within a pragmatic model where positive face attack, violation of maxims and ideological expression converge to reveal how Achebe uses language as a tool of social judgment, power negotiation, and evaluation.

Excerpt 7

(Background: When chief Nanga goes to pay a visit to Anata, there is a talk among Nanga, Odili and the school proprietor).

« *That's right, said the minister not to anyone in particular but to some mechanism of memory inside his head. You are Odli. 'Yes, sir'. Before the words were out of my mouth, he had thrown his arms round me smothering me in his voluminous damask. You have a wonderful memory', I said, it's at least fifteen years… He had now partly released me although his left hand was resting to the proprietor and announced proudly:*

I taught him in… 'Standard three, I said. That is right, he shouted… he is one of the pillars of this school said the pro-

prietor… Odili, the great, said the minister boyishly, and still out of breath. Where have you been all this time?

I told him I had been to university and had been teaching for the last eighteen months; »

p. (8-9).

Throughout the above excerpt the maxim of relation (Grice, 1975) is well observed. The relevant turns among different speakers illustrate how successfully communication is carried out. The fact that the minister i.e. Chief Nanga recognizes Odili by the word, "you are Odili" and Odili says, "yes, Sir" and the following relevant words, sets off (triggers) a coherent line of memory-guided interaction. Even so, slight pragmatic shifts happen as Chief Nanga's emotional reaction and self-oriented comments in a moment suspend strict informational relevance, giving priority to interpersonal recall. As a result, relevance is preserved at an overall (holistic) level of exchange but untightened locally to accommodate social bonding.

From the perspective of Leech's politeness principle, this utterance embodies the observance of the approbation maxim which encourages speakers to maximize expressions of praise of others. In fact the fact that Odili reacts to Chief Nanga's words saying that he has a wonderful memory constitutes an unambiguous illustration of his compliance with the maxim of approbation. In addition, Mr Nwege the school proprietor, reacts to the minister's approbation words saying that "Odili is one of the pillars of Anata Grammar School" which also encompasses another instance of observance of the maxim of approbation. Moreover, a profound analysis of all the interlocutors' words, in the words there flows a stream of mutual understanding which clearly hints to an observance of the agreement maxim.

Furthermore, the utterance contains unambiguous observance of the maxim of quality first because the interaction between Odili and Chief Nanga appears to be evidence-based. The evidential proof lies in the fact that there is maximization of agreement between Odili and Nanga regarding their former life one being a student and another being a teacher.

Drawing on Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1987)'s politeness theory, the utterance comprises face saving act which aim at protecting the speakers' face. Odili's words "you have a wonderful memory" intend to protect Nanga's positive face meanwhile Mr Nwege's words "he is one of the pillars of the school" save Odili's positive image. As for speech acts, the above excerpt is loaded with assertive and expressive acts (Searle, 1969). Chief Nanga asserts acknowledgment and expresses appreciation while Odili reacts informatively about his educational background. Finally, the exchange is heavily face-centered.

Excerpt 8

(**Background**: when Odili says that he thinks "the minister was busy", the minister says that minister means servant).

« *Well, I said happily – I am ashamed to admit – I know how busy a minister … Busy? Nonsense. Don't you know that minister means servant? Busy or no busy he must see his master* ». p.9.

To the statement of Odili's belief about the "business of a minister", the minister replies "Nonsense. Don't you know that minister means servant?"

The minister's answer flouts the maxim of relation as proposed by Grice (1975).

The flout is due to the fact that instead of answering literally to the question of how occupied the minister is, he immediately rhetorically questions Odili regarding the semantic status of minister. The implicature derived from the minister's rhetorical question alludes to Odili's critiques of authority and to the relation between the ruler and the ruled. Moreover, the admittance that minister means servant is also another point hinting to the observance, of the maxim of quality though the truth contained in that assertion is implied and not directly stated.

Leaning on the politeness principle Chief Nanga's words observe the modesty maxim which advises speakers to minimize praise of self and to maximize dispraise of oneself. Indeed, the minister's recognition that minister means servant, despite his high political and social status constitutes an implied observance of the modesty maxim. Instead of boasting or praising himself he somewhat lowers himself from the high position of minister to the lowest position of a servant.

As far as face is concerned, the rejection of Odili's words which pragmatically mean respect for authority, his positive face is threatened which means that the above utterance embodies a face threatening act. As for the speech act theory, this utterance consist of an assertive-directive speech act because of the presence of the statement and the question.

Excerpt 9

(Background: During the problem of inflation, the Government is invited to talk about that issue in front of the parliament, as the minister of finance is concerned he would also present his speech explaining how he expects to handle the issue).

Although DR Makinde read his speech, which was clearly prepared; the Hansard later carried a gabled version, which made no sense at all. It said not a word about the plan to mint fifteen million pounds which was perhaps to be expected but why put into Dr Makinde's mouth words that he could not have spoken? p. 6.

In this quotation which consists of a representative and a directive speech act embedding an illocutionary force of question, the violation of

the maxim of manner is obvious. Dr Makinde the minister of finance prepares a well-planned speech about how he would deal with the problem of inflation. The Hansard i.e those in charge of reporting what is said in the parliament, decide to report the minister's speech in a garbled version which makes it ambiguous, unclear and logically incoherent. Thus, the version carried by the Hansard is neither original nor intelligible on the contrary it is both obscure and constitutes a violation of the requirement for clarity and unambiguity, therefore breaks effective communication. In addition, the hansard report flouts the maxim of quality because it contains falsified truths which breaks the two submaxims of the maxim of quality which advises not to say that for which one believes to be false and that for which one lacks evidence. Thus, the Hansard's report is sarcastic.

In terms of politeness theory, this utterance threatens Dr Makinde's positive face because it threatens his public image and trustworthiness, while at the same time it displays a lack of respect for communicative equity. As far speech acts are concerned, the reporting of the distorted speech embeds a secondary illocutionary act which falsifies the original Dr Makinde's intended force, therefore, Dr Makinde's original assertive speech act is replaced by a distorted version, sabotaging his authority and social identity within the discourse community.

Excerpt 10

(Background: This is about the minister's announcement to go to America to get his Doctorate).

Inspite all this joking the minister's invitation was serious and firm. He said it was important I came at – once as he was planning to go to the United States in about two months.

'They are going to give me doctorate degree', he announced proudly' Doctor of laws, LL. D. p.18.

This excerpt exemplifies the maxim of manner thanks to a mixture of clarity and indirect ambiguity in his discourse. Even though, the invitation appears direct and urgent, the tone of joking around it introduces subtle indeterminacy. From a pragmatic stance, this reflects a biasedly flouted maxim of manner as the interaction oscillates between clarity and jocular ambiguity, hence revealing the minister's tactful strategic control over discourse. Moreover, the words of Chief Nanga flout the maxim of quantity which advises the speaker not to say more than is required thanks to the additional words LLD (Legum Doctor) which is not normally necessary but added to create the implicature of boastfulness which in turn constitutes a breach of the modesty maxim which advises speakers to minimize praise of self. In fact the minister boasts for the doctorate he is about to receive while it is just an honorary degree for which no prior training is required.

Relying on the politeness principle, the minister's words flout the maxim of modesty (as mentioned above) which advises speakers to minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. The fact that the minister announces that they are going to give him a doctorate degree proudly flouts the maxim of modesty. The implicature generated from this flout is that the minister expects applause and admiration from the hearer who is Odili and of course some other attendants. From the speech act theory, this utterance constitutes an assertive and an expressive speech act. As an assertive it asserts the upcoming event and as an expressive it expresses the minister's self-esteem and pride about the new title he is about to receive. Following Searle (1969) and J.L Austin (1962) this utterance comprises an illocutionary act of boasting, though it is conveyed as information.

The utterance once again embodies positive face enhancement because the minister's public face want is to be liked and admired. However, the minister's invitation functions as a directive which at its turn functions as a face threatening act vis-à-vis Odili who is imposed to go to Bori before Odili goes to America. That is why Odili is invited and imposed to come in a serious and firm way.

5. Summary of the findings

Excerpt number	Maxim observed	Maxim flouted or violated	Face effect	Implicature
01	-	-Maxim of quantity(flouted) -Maxims of relation and modesty (violated)	-Mr. Nwege's positive face enhancement -Threat to the negative face of the audience	-Political opportunism and social discord -Negligence of the audience
02	-	-Maxim of quantity(flouted) -Maxims of tact and approbation(violated)	-Threats to both Chief Nanga and Odili's positive face	-Condemnation of the ruling class's abuse of power and notorious political corruption.
03	-Maxims of quantity, relation, approbation and agreement	-Maxim of quantity flouted in excessive praise.	- Enhancement of Odili's positive face	-Political persuasion and manipulation -Tactical motivation
04	-Maxim of quality	-Agreement and sympathy flouted	-Threat to the positive face of the crowd	-Expression of strong dissatisfaction -Condemnation of Chief Nanga's actions
05	-	-Maxim of quality(flouted) -Maxim of agreement(violated) -Maxim of approbation(violated)	-Positive and negative threatening acts to the fired ministers	-Framing propaganda -Justification for the Prime Minister's action -Demoralizing opponents -Appealing to nationalism -Maintenance of power
06	**-**	-Maxim of quality (flouted)	-Hon. Kobino's positive face threatening act	-Amplification of ideological positioning -Construction of a negative characterization of political opponents.
07	-Relation -Approbation -Agreement	**-**	-Both Odili and Nanga's positive faces are saved	-
08	-Quality -Modesty	-Relation maxim(flouted)	-Threat to Odili's positive face	-Critiques of authority and to the relation between the ruler and the ruled.
09	**-**	-Maxim of quality (flouted) -Maxim of manner(violated)	-Threat to Dr Makinde's positive face	-Sarcasm

10	-	-Maxim of manner(flouted) -Maxim of quantity(flouted) -Maxim of modesty (violated)	-Nanga's positive face enhancement -Negative face threatening act to Odili.	-Boastfulness -Expectation of applause and admiration

Conclusion

This study consists in the pragmatic analysis of the maxims of the cooperative principle i.e the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relation and the maxim of manner. In addition, it has also consisted of the analysis of the six maxims of the Politeness Principle namely the tact maxim, the generosity maxim, the approbation maxim, the modesty maxim, , , the agreement maxim and the sympathy maxim. For each excerpt, the researcher has provided its background, and a thorough integrated pragmatic analysis showing whether the maxim was adhered to, flouted or violated and the possible pragmatic implications of the flouting. Moreover, in addition to the analysis of conversational maxims the study examined how face is managed relying on Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory. The study demonstrated that Achebe's dialogue is deliberately crafted to reflect complex communicative intentions in which conversational cooperation is frequently suspended, manipulated, or strategically exploited to produce meaning beyond the literal level of utterances.

A careful pragmatic analysis unveils that conversational maxims are more violated and flouted than observed. As it can be glanced in the above table of the summary of the findings the most flouted maxims are the maxim of quantity and the maxim of quality. In addition, the study reveals that the novel's predominant pragmatic pattern is the flouting and violation of conversational maxims, especially in encounters that are socially and politically asymmetrical. These deviations serve as intentional techniques that provide implicatures crucial to character representation and thematic development, rather than indicating a breakdown in communication.

The maxims of the politeness principle employed in the study are the approbation maxim, the agreement maxim, and the modesty maxim. Those violated are the modesty maxim, the tact maxim, the approbation maxim and those flouted are the agreement maxim and the sympathy maxim. Moreover, the politeness strategies employed by the characters in the novel in light of the analyzed extracts include face threatening acts, face saving acts and face enhancement acts. It is worth noting that both the positive face and the negative face are concerned by the up mentioned politeness strategies. Achebe highlights the tension in post-independence African society between outward politeness and underlying ideological struggle through such pragmatic maneuvers. Furthermore, the pragmatic analysis of the maxims of the Politeness Principle has revealed how the observance of these maxims is not only literary and with no importance but also how useful they are in real life for a genuine preservation of interpersonal relationships.

Through an in-depth analysis, it was brought to light that the inter-

play between the speech act theory, the cooperative and the politeness principles facilitates a critical interpretation of meaning by discovering the speakers' illocutionary intent and implied meanings embedded in their utterances. Through the realization of miscellaneous speech acts and the observance or the flouting of cooperative and politeness maxims, the study makes clear how meaning extends far beyond locutionary expressions to reflect social relationships, contextual factors and illocutionary intent.

Overall, this study revealed that *A Man of the People's* conversational maxims function as socially and politically motivated tools in addition to being linguistic norms.

Limitations of the study

The study has some limitations despite its significant contributions. The analysis is restricted to a single novel, which limits how broadly the results may be applied. In addition, the focus on verbal interaction omitted non-verbal pragmatic clues that may also contribute to meaning. Additionally, even though Gricean and Leech's principles and speech act frameworks have been proven to be helpful, they may not accurately represent all indigenous linguistic communicative norms found in the text because they are based on Western linguistic philosophy.

Textual Constraints: As it was mentioned, the study is limited to the text of *A Man of the People*, and while the findings will provide valuable insights into the novel. Thus, they may not necessarily be generalizable to all African literature or postcolonial texts.

Recommendations for further research

Despite the present study's contributions, it is crucial to recognize that no single study can fully explain every aspect of pragmatic occurrences in literary discourse. Future research could adopt other pragmatic mechanisms in other Achebe novels or in works by other African writers. To improve pragmatic interpretation, researchers can also fully apply critical discourse analysis, politeness theory, or relevance theory on other African novels. Additionally, empirical studies using reader-response pragmatics could study how different audiences interpret implicatures in African literary texts.

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