

## **Violation of Politeness Maxims as a Catalyst For Tragedy: A Study Of Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo' S Roses And Bullets**

<sup>1</sup>Martin C. Ogayi and <sup>2</sup>Patience Akunna Osondu

<sup>1</sup>Department of English and Literary Studies Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki.

<sup>2</sup>Department of English and Literature Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education,  
Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria.

---

### **ABSTRACT**

*Human activities are conditioned by proper use of language. The primary use of language is for communication and communication is the transmission of information from one person to another in order to elicit a response. The response may be positive or negative depending on how language is used. Positive response leads to harmonious living among people while negative one produces conflicts among individuals. For harmonious living politeness principles are important tools in language use to reduce frictions, avoid conflicts and maintain a comity relationship among members of a speech community. When politeness is violated in an environment, agitations and conflicts erupt. This leads to tragic situations. This paper investigates the violation of politeness principles as a catalyst for tragedy in a literary text which is a fair representation of a community. It also evaluates the applicability of this principle to regulate spoken discourse. Excerpts from the text *Roses and Bullets* were collated and analysed based on Geoffrey Leech's (1983) politeness maxims. From the findings the researcher discovered that so many expressions which violate the maxim of politeness principles are prevalent in the text. The study reveals that violation of politeness principles leads to many forms of tragedy-strife, rancour, agitations and even death. It therefore recommends that this conversation principle should not be violated so that the society will enjoy a harmonious and peaceful living.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Violation, Politeness, Tragedy and Bullets*

---

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The most powerful, sophisticated medium of communication is language which is a vital instrument in cultural transmission and preservation of a social group. An examination of the linguistic content of a particular speech community can provide information about the life style, occupation, norms, and values of the people. Language has two primary functions. The transactional function of language is a means of conveyance of information. The interactional function refers to language as a means of social maintenance act. This is because people use language differently with one another in the daily conversation and make choice of words which correlates to the context of situation. This is because the content and form are inseparable. What we say is as important as how we say it. This makes it imperative for discussants to be careful to choose words in different social situations to fit different occasion.

Similarly, Okoro and Oruwari (2011:63) affirm that "the linguistic choice of a speaker indicates the social relationship the speaker perceives to exist between him and the listener(s)". This shows that the choice of words by a discussant determines the meaning and interpretation given to the sentences and contributions made during the conversation. In talk exchange, people have to see to whom they are speaking because it is needful to identify the social values of a society in order to speak politely.

In the process of conversation, people have to make decisions about what to, not regard as polite expressions which will involve assessing social relationship along the dimensions of social distance or status.

The study of politeness strategy basically involves knowing the way people use language during communication. It also preaches how language users manipulate language in order to keep the conversation ball rolling. The meaning and utterance of a speaker is understood by the hearers depending on the choice of words used and how the hearers are able to negotiate meaning from the speaker's contribution. This determines the continuity or otherwise of the conversation and also shows the social attitudes of the hearer to the speaker and the politeness strategies the hearer employs. The meaning of an utterance understood by the hearer may bring about love and affection and also malice, hatred and conflict among people.

It is for this idea which surrounds conversations that everyone wants to be understood and not be disturbed by others. Moreover, nobody wants to lose face while communicating. Losing face means the notions of being embarrassed, humiliated or disappointed. That is why face is something that is emotionally maintained, enhanced and constantly attended to in the course of an interaction. On this premise this study examines the

violation of politeness maxims in a literary text which should be avoided from our society so that tragic situations will not occur and our society will be peaceful.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Problems emanate from all quarters as a result of communication breakdown resulting from the inability of humans to be linguistically and communicatively functional. Tragic situations have occurred over trivial issues that appropriate expression of oneself should have solved. Our homes, churches, governmental institutions, political settings etc are in shambles because we lack, appropriate language use to influence others for positive behaviour. These therefore form the crux of this research that sees violation of politeness maxims as a catalyst for tragedy in the study of Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Roses and Bullets*. Pragmatic principles may have been used in the analysis of the texts but not much has been done in the application or violation of politeness principles in the analysis of the texts and the consequences of the violation.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is very timely and adequate in a country like ours where there are agitations all over the nation emanating from violation of politeness principles. This leads to rancour, strife, death as the case may be. The inhabitants of the society, teachers, children, students, parents, government official and law enforcement agencies should engage in conversation among people in order to maintain face so that we will live in peace. This study could also help to discourage the use of hate speeches in our nation especially in political dispensations.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions are addressed in this study:

1. What are the politeness maxims that were violated?
2. What are the effects of violation of politeness maxims to the hearers that led to tragic situations?

### **Scope of the Study**

This study has so many sub-divisions but the researcher limits her study to politeness maxim propounded by Geoffrey Leech (1983) especially its violations. Furthermore the researcher finds the implicative and explicative meaning of utterances through the violation of politeness principles. The study is further limited to *Roses and Bullets* by Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo and twenty one excerpts from the book were purposefully selected and analysed.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is presented under the following sub-heading: Conceptual framework, theoretical framework and empirical studies.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The following concepts shall be discussed to situate this study properly. Politeness, tragedy, impoliteness are all examined in this section.

#### **Politeness**

Generally, politeness is an essential feature or quality of social life. The study of politeness has attracted so many scholars and therefore possesses these definitions. Lakoff (1975:14)... says "politeness is developed by societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction". Friction in personal interaction is undesirable and that societies develop strategies to reduce that friction. Politeness is therefore being a set of norms for co-operative behaviour. Hence politeness is evaluative.

Leech (1980:19) defines it as 'strategic conflict avoidance which can be measured and in terms of the degree of effort put in to the avoidance of a conflict situation". Here the avoidance of conflict is making an attempt to be polite since it is strategic. This means that discussants estimate other forms of behavior not to undermine the purpose of establishment of comity.

Brown and Levison (1978:57) view politeness as "a complex system for staining face-threatening acts". This appears to present politeness to avoid becoming embodied in the evaluative struggle over (im) politeness but one cannot know how the hearers will react. The reaction will, therefore, reveal the evaluative nature of politeness.

Watts (2003) said politeness is not something we are born with, but we have to learn and socialize into and no generation has been short of teachers and handbooks on etiquette and correct behavior to help us acquire polite skills. This confirms what Wardhaugh (1986:267) explains that politeness is socially prescribed.

These various definitions of politeness show that politeness principles control the ways we use language in order to maintain and consolidate our social relations (Niazi and Guatam 2010). It deals with methods of avoiding conflicts in a conversation. It also foregrounds the inter personal function of spoken language.

Similarly, Adegbija, (1989) in Oboko and Obika (2016) associates politeness with situation in which "one speaks or behaves in a way that is socially and culturally acceptable and pleasant to the hearer." For him, politeness should be viewed in terms of situations that are closely bound to culture. One can, therefore, say, that politeness is speaking to the hearer in a way that he/she is made to feel important and that his/her rights will not be infringed on. By this the speaker should consider the relationship between him and his hearer(s) and then speak in a way that is fitting.

Politeness is of two types positive and negative politeness.

**Positive Politeness:** Positive Politeness consists in maximizing the politeness of polite illocutions (Leech, 1983:84). Positive politeness utterances are used as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy, to imply common ground of sharing of wants to a limited extent even between strangers who engage in interaction for a common purpose. Holmes (2008:281) states that positive politeness is solidarity oriented. It emphasizes shared attitudes and values. Positive politeness strategies range over sets of structures that can only be interpreted as 'polite' in the presence of face-threat itself. Infact an interactant is positively thought of, given due respect and valued.

**Negative Politeness:** This consists in minimizing the impoliteness of impolite illocutions (Leech 1983:84) Negative politeness is oriented mainly toward partially satisfying the hearers negative face and emphasize avoidance of imposition on the hearer. Holmes (2008:281) states that "negative politeness involves expressing oneself appropriately in terms of social distance and responding status differences". It is the desire not to be imposed upon by others or to be left undisturbed.

In this study, the two types of politeness are violated and this leads to tragic situation to occur and it is deduced that both are strategies of politeness which should be employed in all forms of discussion.

### **Tragedy**

In literary terms, tragedy is a form of drama in which there is a display of human suffering and often catharsis for the audience. Tragedy, as we know it in western culture, has its foundation in ancient Greece. It has evolved over the millennia and had an important role in many different cultures and eras, such as in the time of the Roman Republic, in Elizabethan English and extending to the present day. Generally it is understood that the word comes from the classical Greek word *tragōidía*, meaning "goat song." There are a few different reasons posited for what role the goat played in the iterations of tragedy. Some quarters say that a goat was given as a prize to whoever sang the best tragic song in a competition, while others argue that a goat was sacrificed while choral dancing occurred. Yet one more possible etymological proof is from the Greek word *trygōdia*, meaning "ode of the grape harvest" as these events may have occurred during that harvest.

The definition of tragedy has changed over time. The free on line dictionary defines tragedy as "a literary work in which the main character is brought to ruin or suffers extreme sorrow, especially as a consequence of a tragic flaw, moral weakness, or inability to cope with unfavourable circumstances" Recently, we refer to many large and small events as tragedies in daily life, whether it's losing a loved one or a catastrophic natural disaster such as an earthquake that leads to many deaths. However, the literary definition of tragedy generally demands that the downfall of the protagonist does not come chiefly from external forces, but instead from the character's own errors and flaws. For examples:

Losing out on a promotion due to a fatal error

Breaking off a relationship through a misunderstanding and pride overshadowing the truth.

A patient dying at a hospital because a doctor is too arrogant to admit that he or she made a mistake.

In *Roses and Bullets* by Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo, the Protagonist Ginikanwa suffers extreme sorrow as a consequence of her flaws and inability to cope with circumstances surrounding her. She lost people that were the love of her life that is losing everything just that she did not lose her life. So tragic situations are prevalent in the text.

### **Impoliteness**

Locher and Bousfield (2008:3) describe "impoliteness by saying that impoliteness is behaviour that is face-aggravating in a particular context". They explained that impoliteness is caused intentionally. Culpeper (1996) introduced a model of impoliteness and asserts that "impoliteness is intended to produce disharmony between interlocutors in social interactions. (Walaszewska and Piskorska, 2012 P. 246) Although his model is based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) PT, he refutes their view that impoliteness is "marginal" to everyday conversation. He asserts that it is not possible to understand the notion of politeness without comprehending

impoliteness phenomenon. Culpeper (1996) defines strategies for negative and positive impoliteness. These strategies are shown below with their examples: P1 Notice, attend to other's interests, wants, needs and goods:

'You are looking good today! Can you help me shift some boxes?'

P2 Exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy for other (use intensifying modifiers or phrases):

'That's really an extremely good point.'

P3 Intensify interest to other (stress the sincerity of your good intentions for the hearer):

'If it will help, I could take on a few tasks.'

P4 Use in-group identity markers (ellipsis, slang, jargon):

'How'bout lending us a few quid, pal?'

P5 Seek agreement (talk about safe topic that both hearer and speaker are likely to agree on):

A: 'The weather's not very nice today, is it?'

B: 'I know. It's just awful, isn't it?'

P6 Avoid disagreement (use token agreements; appear to agree by hedging opinions):

A: 'You hate meetings, don't you?'

B: 'Well yes, sometimes.'

P7 Presuppose, assert or raise common ground (gossip, safe topics):

'Do you remember that restaurant we went to in Camden all those years ago?'

P8 Make jokes:

'Get that old frame of yours in gear and give me a hand.'

P9 Assert or presuppose speaker's knowledge of and concern for other's wants:

'I know you need this money so I'll pay you back first thing tomorrow.'

And so on.

Negative Politeness Strategies and their examples:

N1 Be conventionally indirect (in formulating the FTA):

'Can/could/will/would/etc. you lend me?'

N2 Hedge (the illocutionary force of FTA):

'I wonder if you could lend me?'

N3 Be pessimistic (about hearer's ability or willingness to comply with FTA):

'I don't suppose you can lend me?'

N4 Minimise the imposition:

'Can I just borrow?'

N5 Give deference (through honorifics, respectful address terms):

'Sir, I wonder if you could lend me?'

N6 Apologise (indicate reluctance to carry out the FTA):

'I hate to ask this, but could I borrow?'

From the above illustrations of positive and negative impoliteness, violations of politeness principles is equal to positive and negative politeness. It's applicability and intentions is to elicit conflict and so also it is for violations of politeness maxims. So it can be said that positive and negative impoliteness equal to violations of it.

#### **About the Author: Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo**

Akachi Adimora - Ezeigbo is a multi-talented novelist, speaker, essayist and critic who has been a trailblazer for female writers in Nigeria and the Wider African continent. She was born and brought up in Uga, Anambra State. Akachi was raised partly in rural environment and partly in an urban setting. In later years, she would adopt these mixed settings as the background for her books. After attending Queen's girls school in Enugu, Ezeigbo gained her first and second degrees from the University of Lagos and subsequently obtained a doctorate degree at the University of Ibadan. Since 1981, she has worked at the University of Lagos, teaching a range of courses in the field of English literature including critical writing, the contemporary African Novel Drama and Poetry. She was central to the development of two significant courses at the University of Lagos: feminism and contemporary literature and introduction to Gender Studies.

Ezeigbo has spoken and presented papers at numerous conferences and she is a respected voice on the subject of the role of women in literature. She has also served on the editorial board of two leading Nigerian Papers - The Independent and The Post Express. Ezeigbo is well-known for her critical works which include a 2008 contribution to a special publication to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Ezeigbo resides in Lagos and continued to teach at the University of Lagos. She has the following works to her credit.

#### **Novels**

House of symbols (2001)

Trafficked (2008)

Ako the story teller (2009)  
Zoba and his gang (2009)  
Roses and Bullets (2011)  
The last of the story ones Children of the Eagles.

### **Poetry**

Heart songs (2009)  
Clouds and other Poems for children (2009)

### **Synopsis of Roses and Bullets**

Roses and Bullets is written in 2011 by Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo. Roses represent love and Bullets represent war. The major theme of the novel is the civil war - The Nigerian/Biafran war which engulfed the nation between 1967-1970. While the war was on, people were loving and being loved, marrying and being married, living their normal lives as if nothing was happening. The lives of many were torn apart. While things were falling apart, Eloka and Ginika found love in each other. They eventually sealed their love by getting married. The centre could not hold until youngmen started being forcefully recruited in the army. Even young Udo got a feel of the battle front. With the desire to escape the harsh criticism of her mother in-law, Ginika attends a gig with a friend. She was drugged by an officer who had canal knowledge of her. She got pregnant for the faceless officer. She went through traumatic period in the hands of her family, in-laws and friends and even her love-Eloka. She lost her baby in the process, but did not loss her precious gift of life. The novel ended tragically and Biaffa lost.

In the novel, most of the problems that characters experienced are as a result of hatred. There is no demonstration of love. Only those who show love survived the war. The novel tries to tell us that it is only love that can help us to avoid warring situations. It is hatred that paves way for war.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted for this work is Geoffrey Leech's Politeness Principles. Geoffrey Neil Leech introduced the principle of politeness in 1983 after studying Grice Cooperative Principle. For him besides cooperation, most interactions are governed by politeness and that is to say by what is considered a polite social behavior within a certain culture. It also concerns a relationship between self and other in a conversation, self is identified as the speaker and other the hearer. Beside that, the speaker also shows politeness to the third parties who may be present.

Geoffrey Leech has proposed a way of explaining how politeness operates in conversational exchanges in series of maxims which are outlined thus:

- (i) **Tact Maxim:** (In impositives and commissives)  
(a) Minimize cost of other (b) Maximize benefit to other.
- (ii) **Generosity Maxim:** (In impositives and commissives) Minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self.
- (iii) **Approbation Maxim:** (In expressive and assertive)  
(a) Minimize dispraise of other (b) maximize praise of other)
- (iv) **Modesty Maxim:** (In expressive and assertive)  
(a) Minimize Praise of self (b) maximize dispraise of self).
- (v) **Agreement Maxim** (assertives)  
(a) Minimize disagreement between self and other  
(b) Maximize agreement between self and other
- (vi) **Sympathy Maxim:** (In assertives)  
(a) Minimize antipathy between self and other  
(b) maximize sympathy between self and other (Leech, 1983:132)
- (vii) **Poliyanna Principle:** (consideration maxim) Pollyanna Principle in its positive aspect posits that interactants in conversational exchanges tend to 'prefer pleasant topics of conversation to unpleasant one's since people will prefer to look on the bright side rather than on the gloomy side of life (Leech, 1983:147) In its negative aspect, the principle believes that interactants can play down on unpleasant or gloomy subjects by using pleasant expressions or euphemisms, by using understatements or litotes or by using act minimizing adverbials such as a bit, a little.

The tact maxim and generosity maxim, recognizing that an action is to be performed by the speaker, maintain that such an action concerns the cost or benefit of future action to speaker or hearer. Therefore speaker should minimize cost to other and maximize benefit to other but should minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self.

'Self as used above refers to the current speaker while other refers to the hearer (or the one being talked about who may not even be present during the conversation) respectively. Approbation and modesty maxims concern the evaluative strength of speaker's statement with respect to self and other. Approbation maxim may mean something like avoid saying unpleasant things about others and try saying pleasant things about others' while modesty maxim may imply something like avoid saying pleasant things about self and try to minimize or play down pleasant things about self. Agreement maxim focuses on mutual agreement and concord in conversations. A speaker is therefore expected to seek agreement and reduce or mitigate disagreement. The sympathy maxim wishes the speaker to reduce antipathy and show sympathy between self and other. Finally the Pollyanna maxim shows consideration to others.

Furthermore, Agbedo (2015:322) outlines Leech's different situations which call for different degrees of politeness as follows:

**Competitive:** The speech goals compete with the social goal. In this situation politeness is viewed as being negative. For example giving an order.

**Convivial:** The speech goal matches the social goal. In this situation politeness is viewed as being positive. For example thanking someone.

**Collaborative:** The speech goal is different from the social goal. For example making an announcement.

**Conflictive:** The speech goal conflicts with the social goal. For example making an accusation.

From the above, politeness therefore, involves conforming to socially agreed codes of good behavior. Violation of these codes of good behavior leads to tragic situations in the society which is what this study sets out to examine.

### **Empirical Studies**

A lot of studies have utilized the assumptions of politeness theory and different communicative contexts. This section will review some of these studies.

Odeunmi (2005:1-22) investigates politeness principles in the conversation between doctors and patients in hospitals in South-western Nigeria with the intention of identifying the tact and other politeness strategies employed in the interactions. Using insights from two unique theories of politeness, the researcher observes that interactions are characterized by the observance of the tact maxim, the generosity maxim, the sympathy maxim, the Pollyanna principle and face threatening acts. The study observes that the Pollyanna principle in hospital interactions is characterized by three operational tendencies which are Referential/Hinting, tendency Euphemistic and Ethical positivity tendencies. The researcher concludes that politeness and effective face management exert positive influence on medical practice and determine the extent of its acceptability by the people. The study finally notes that a number of doctors violate politeness strategies thereby causing complications, discomfort and even death of patients and even impinge on interactions. The present study is similar to the above as it examines the violation of politeness strategies as well as how hearers react to such and its effects on conversation even in the society. However, the study is concerned with real language habit occurring naturally and the present study is based on literary text.

Jasim and Aziz (2010:291-323) is an instance of investigations of politeness in literary text, which preoccupies itself with the examination of the politeness possibilities of a non-verbal linguistic behavior - silence - in conversations of characters in a literary text. Jasim and Aziz (2010) take a pragma-stylistic look into the nature and functions of silence in the conversations of characters in August Strindberg's *The Stronger*. The researchers note that the *Stronger* represents, in a realistic setting, a powerful and highly concentrated dramatic action in which two women are bound in an intense love-hate relationship and locked in a deadly conflict. The data is a play which unfolds like a dramatic monologue delivered by a character, Mrs. X at another, Miss Y who keeps completely silent throughout the play. She only maintains her share in the development of the action by pantomime, facial expression and an occasional laugh. Therefore, the data is devoid of dialogue in the usual sense. In the light of the pragma-stylistic analysis, the researchers maintain a number of positions: that the play is based on the literary strategy dominated as Rhetoric of Silence; that the immediate effect of the play is to make the audience be engaged in a process of decoding (that is, to position the audience within the symbolic order presented by the characters; that the author gives the reader the choice to choose who is the stronger and; that silence plays an integral part in human interactions as it is carried out in different fields of linguistics. Jasim and Aziz (2010) conclude that in August Strindberg's *The Stronger*, silence is practiced to express a variety of meanings and functions and that such functions of silence include silence as self-control, silence as curiosity, silence as respect and silence as avoidance (in the sense of omitting to say something negative), among others.

This work is related to the present research in that it focuses on the politeness possibilities in a literary discourse and normally silence is one of the features of naturally occurring conversations. However, the present work is on politeness violations in a literary text.

Behnam, Sakhaei and Nabifar (2014:80-87) is an exploration of face and politeness concerns in a literary text. The research which aims at figuring out how politeness strategies are used by the characters and

how the variables of power and distance influence the choice of politeness levels is a report of a comprehensive study of the politeness phenomenon in Harold Pinter's well-known dramatic literature, *The Birthday Party*. In order to analyze the play's text, the face-saving universal model of politeness is used and the three variables which are power, distance and rank extremity are also investigated in the text. In order to figure out the uses of politeness strategies in the drama, the researchers first identify the main characters, identify the kind of politeness strategies employed by the characters, assess the social variables of power and distance, and then calculate and compare the frequency of each strategy. Similar descriptive analytic procedures as often used in naturally-occurring conversations are employed.

The researchers employ qualitative method of analysis for evaluation and quantitative approach for calculating frequency counts and facilitating comparison of the findings. Careful screening of the dialogues demonstrates that a good number of politeness strategies are used in the drama. However, different preferences are found in the use of the strategies towards the positive role. Regarding the social distance, the findings are consistent with Brown and Levinson's theory predictions. The findings of this study suggest that the assertion of power is a complicated process which cannot merely be explained by the high frequency of the use of certain strategies and, an interlocutor's power depends upon many factors like the role of the interlocutor and his/her status in the particular interaction, and in relation to the addressee.

The Study is concerned with politeness in a literary dramatic text. This study and the present study are related as they are all concerned with politeness in literary texts. But Behnem, Sakhaei and Nabifar (2014) concentrate on variables of social distance, relative power and ranking of impositions among characters in a drama text but the present study looks at violation of politeness maxims in a novel.

This section has closely looked at some scholarly works on politeness principles in conversations be it naturally occurring conversations and in literary texts. The works reviewed reveal that none examined violation of Leech's (1983) politeness maxim in a literary text and that is why the present study is designed to fill the gap.

### III. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Here, twenty one excerpts which contain the politeness maxims that are violated are identified and analysed based on the research questions.

**What are the politeness maxims that are violated?**

**Twenty one violated maxims and dialogues are presented in this table**

#### Research Question One

No	Data	Violated Maxim
Data 1	"Did you not hear what I said? Go and get your things" Ginika heard her father letting out a bellow of rage. She looked up instantly and saw him standing smack at the door. He had doubled back to find out if she was picking up her things. "Meet us in the car I will send Udo to help "he added (pg 10)	in this case the tact maxim is violated
Data 2	"Where is Eloka? Where is that headstrong boy who thinks he is eze-onye-agwanam, the one who knows it all"? He bellowed like a bull maddened by the bites of testse-flies... I say where is that ingrate, who behaved like an overfed child that bit off his mother s nipples, forgetting that he would need to suckle again? Ewo I have seen an abomination Eloka, what is this I heard from Osita... Osita told me that you are not studying agriculture but engineering. Is this true?... Yes papa I'm studying electrical engineering. (pg 89).	
Data 3	"Are you pregnant? Did you do what I advised you to do when I talked to you on this matter? I am not pregnant Ginika felt anger rising inside her but she didn't want to give it room to grow. "Mama I thought you and Eloka discussed this matter when he was here why do you bring it up again"? "You are asking me why I bring it up, eh? My daughter-in-law asks me why I want to know if she is pregnant Aru, abomination! Why do you think we married you to come here and stare at us in the face? (pg 260-261)	
Data 4	"You students, your eyes are always in search of girls instead of reading your books. You are all izizi-nso-ogbogbo, womanizers" Eloka scowled at him. "You insult me because I asked a simple question? Just go away "He hissed and turned away. The man boomed him "Anumanu, beast. She is safe here where she is, fly after her if you can "He laughed derisively and hurried into the hall, (pg 80)	Generosity maxim is violated
Data 5	"You will not go to work today, as I want to send you to orie market to buy what we need in the house" "I didn't tell Mrs Asinobi that I won't come to work today," She said rubbing white powder on her face "who is Mr Asinobi? Is he not the one Onuwora made camp warden? He cannot do anything if we decide to stop you from going to work any day. When you see him on Monday, tell him I sent you to the market, if he makes trouble let me know" Ginika said nothing, she was displeased, for she had wrapped some akara in banana leaves she wanted to take to Janet, Emma and Inno. She had done it before and they appreciated it. (Pg 264-265).	
Data 6	The officer frowned, but it was too late to zoom off, especially as one off Ginika's legs was inside the car and the other outside and her aunt was already opening the door of the passenger seat to sit with the driver. He will not stop to pick up any girl again until he has made sure she is alone her aunt said, still laughing (ne 2911	
Data 7	"where did you pick up this one that looks so crude? Ginika, this girl does not measure up to your class, you know? Ginika had left the room without responding to her step mother's comment which she considered snobbish and spiteful, (pg 52)	These texts violate approbation maxim

*Violation Of Politeness Maxims As A Catalyst For Tragedy: A Study Of Akachi ..*

Data 8	"Where are the going?" he asked Caleb, a boy of his age, who lived with lieutenant Ofoka. "Ha, you are just an Ignoramus, Caleb replied scornfully, He was a skinny light with bow legs. "You see soldiers getting into vehicles and you ask where they are going"? "Shut up, you foolish boy that walks like a duck" Udo said angrily. "Is it because I asked you question that you call me an ignoramus? "Yes because you asked a stupid question "Caleb's eyes flashed. "And don't ever call me a duck again or I will cut off your ears, bloody civilian like you"	
Data 9	Nwakire confronted their father over what he called the immoral and tyrannical invasion of Ginika's privacy. He pursued him to his room one evening after supper "papa Ginika told me how you abused her two years ago, how you misused your power as a parent and a medical doctor to inflict psychological and mental wounds to her", (pg 104).	
Data 10	One skinny young man of about twenty beats his breast and boasted he would be an army officer before the war ended. Another youth shout him down. "Mechie onu gi, shut your mouth! You will for sure catch a leopard with bare hands, you coward! When the time comes, you will run 'forty' the race of a life time". Everyone roared with uncontrollable laughter..? "What did I say wrong to attract your scorn and venom? You all heard him I was not talking to him why should he put his akputu mouth into something that did not concern him, eh" "who has akputu mouth... look at the thickness of his lips like the lobes of a fat woman's buttocks", (pg 30-31)	Modesty maxim is violated here A
Data 11	Auntie Lizzy raged. "Imagine, I should not say what should happen in my house? Who are you? Esi be gi eje b'onye? Whose house does your house lead to? Whether you are from America or from London, you cannot do as you like in this house. And let me tell you: you had better make your children behave well. Did you give them any training at all? They are rude, forward and lazy". (pg176).	
Data 12	please don't speak to my mum like that" Amaka said, her eyes blazing "Is it because you don't have children of your own that you abuse us"?... "Auntie Lizzy please, calm down. "Ginika clung to her. "Leave me, Ginika, set your hands off me. Did you hear what this Ochicha this cockroach said? I'm going to teach her a lesson.	
Data 13	Eloka, what is this I heard from Osita, Chief Unegbu's son? When I visited his father this afternoon, Osita told me you are not studying agriculture but engineering is it true? Eloka nodded "yes, I'm studying electrical engineering I told you all along that I wanted to study engineering. I'm not interested and I knew I would not do well if I registered for it". "Eloka was it not enough that I, your father who is training you and paying your school fees, wanted you to read agriculture? Should not have respected my wish and registered for the course?"	Agreement maxim is violated in this case
Data 14	"Why didn't you tell me that Eloka's father kept a woman in the refugee camp"?... She replied mama what are you talking about? "Which woman I'm not aware that papa kept a woman in the camp. Did someone tell you this? The person could be a mischief-maker".	
Data 15	Ginika, "I said it when I first saw you that your beauty is skin-deep, ocha ka amaka. If only Eloka had agreed to marry the girl Adaeze found for him, I would not have been put in this condition". Her mother-in-law began to sob.	
Data 16	"The baby died", the midwife said in a gentle voice Ginika gave a loud cry and began to weep. "Ginika don't cry" her aunt consoled "It is best he should go. I saw him: he was too tiny and was malformed. Each of his hands had two fingers missing. His breathing was laboured and I watched him breathe his last. "Her aunt's words distressed rather than comforted her. (Pg 297).	Sympathy maxim is violated here
Data 17	Ginika spoke only once after they had all denounced her "can't I stay until Eloka returns? "Are you mad? So you think my son will stay married to you after what you did; if you don't know it, this is a decent family. Now get out of my room you win the war wife" Ginika burst into tears. She got up and left the room, stumbling as she stepped on the doormat (pg 295)	
Data 18	"Stupid woman! Barawo! You don't kill Sergeant Sule. You go see pepper today. Nobody fit save you; you go pay for your crime".... "You think say crying go save you? You go see. Na you tell Sule make him go circumcise himself before you allow him to touch you. No be so ashawo? The wound get infection. You don't kill better man, you bastard rebel!... "You go dey for guardroom till you tire for here or you can die if you like", he spat "if you make noise, I shoot". (Pg 356-357).	
Data 19	"We shall see. Remove your underwear and lie down on the bed. I am going to examine you". "No papa, please, no one did anything to me. We were in the hell all the time" "She shrank further away from the bed and pressed her back against the wall. "Look Ginikanwa, do as I say; or do you want me to force you?" He glared at her. No, no, papa please "Get on with it! He barked moving threateningly towards her. Slowly she pulled off her underwear, (pg. 99).	These dialogues violates Pollyanna maxims.
Data 20	"Papa I'm sorry if I disappointed you, but you have nothing to fear. Eloka and I love each other very much. All we want is your blessing". "Si ebea puo, leave my room" His words, spoken in Ama-Oyi dialect, sounded so final that she got up immediately to take her leave. (Pg. 176).	
Data 21	"So you are trying to justify what you did? Is that it?" She shook her head. "No, don't get me wrong, I'm only asking you to try to understand" His voice was raised when he said, "I said you should leave" He glared at her and saw her flinch. Her eyes were full of despair but he was too angry with her to care.	

## **Research Question Two**

### **What are the effects of violation of politeness maxims to the hearers that led to tragic situations?**

#### **The effects of the Violated maxims are presented thus:**

1. Tact Maxim (minimize cost to other and maximize benefit to other)

Data 1, "Did you not hear what I said? Go and get your things" Ginika heard her father letting out a bellow of rage. She looked up instantly and saw him standing smack at the door. He had doubled back to find out if she was picking up her things. "Meet us in the car I will send Udo to help "he added (pg 10)

Data 2, "Where is Eloka? Where is that headstrong boy who thinks he is eze-onye-agwanam, the one who knows it all"? He bellowed like a bull maddened by the bites of testse-flies... I say where is that ingrate, who behaved like an overfed child-that bit off his mother's nipples, forgetting that he would need to suckle again? Ewo I have seen an abomination Eloka, what is this I heard from Osita... Osita told me that you are not studying agriculture but engineering. Is this true?... Yes papa I'm studying electrical engineering. (pg89).

Data 3, "Are you pregnant? Did you do what I advised you to do when I fylked to you on this matter? I am not pregnant Ginika felt anger rising inside her but she didn't want to give it room to grow. "Mama I thought you and Eloka discussed this matter when he was here why do you bring it up again"? "You are asking me why I bring it up, eh? My daughter-, in-law asks me why I want to know if she is pregnant Am, abomination! Why do you think we married you to come here and stare at us in the face? (pg 260-261).

The above lines show violation of tact maxim which places high value on others wants. It is violated because high value was placed on-self s wants. In Excerpt 1, Ginika was forced to go back to the village Amaoyi with her father from Enugu. Her father is autocratic and actually issued a command. This action elicits hatred in her for her father which is a tragic situation. In excerpt 2, Chief Odunze wants his son to study agriculture against Eloka's wish to study electrical engineering. Also in excerpt 3, Ginika's mother-in-law Akunnaya wants her to be pregnant against her wish. She has agreed with her husband to start having children after the war when they finish their education. This situation makes Akunnaya to hate Ginika and she starts making her uncomfortable in her husband's house by giving her a lot of house chores which lead her to go for the dance at Nkwere as an escapist route which shatters her life. This choice of hers is a tragic flaw which maimed her for life.

2. Generosity Maxim (Maximizing benefits for others but minimizing benefits for self)

Data 4, "You students, your eyes are always in search of girls instead of reading your books. You are all izizi-nso-ogbogbo, womanizers" Eloka scowled at him. "You insult me because I asked a simple question? Just go away "He hissed and turned away. The man booed him "Anumanu, beast. She is safe here where she is, fly after her if you can "He laughed derisively and hurried unto the hall, (pg 80)

Data 5, "You will not go to work today, as I want to send you to orie market to buy what we need in the house" "I didn't tell Mr Asinobi that I won't come to work today," She said rubbing white powder on her face "who is Mr Asinobi? Is he not the one Onwuora made camp warden? He cannot do anything if we decide to stop you from going to work any day. When you see him on Monday, tell him I sent you to the market, if he makes trouble let me know" Ginika said nothing, she was displeased, for she had wrapped some akara in banana leaves she wanted to take to Janet, Emma and Inno. She had done it before and they appreciated it. (Pg 264-265).

Data 6, The officer frowned, but it was too late to zoom off, especially as one off Ginika's legs was inside the car and the other outside and her aunt was already opening the door of the passenger seat to sit with the driver. He will not stop to pick up any girl again until he has made sure she is alone her aunt said, still laughing (pg 291)

The above excerpts show violation of the generosity maxim. This maxim minimizes benefit to self and maximizes costs to self and the excerpts exhibit low value to others wants. In excerpt 'a', Elokas was mocked and abused just for asking Ginika's name and his want and desire were denied him. In 'b', Ginika was not allowed to send the parcel of akara she-intended to give her colleagues in the office because her mother-in-law suddenly stopped her from going to work against her wish and wants her to go to Orie Market for her as a way of puhfshing her since she has refused to give her a grandchild. She is being scorned daily for that which is a tragic situation. In data 6, the officer frowns at giving them a ride when he learnt that they were two ladies. This violated generosity maxim because he wants his own benefit of having a ride with a single lady who knows his plans for Ginika in the long run.

3. Approbation maxim. (Minimize dis praise of other and maximize praise of other)

Data 7, "Where did you pick up this one that looks so crude? Ginika, this girl does not measure up to your class, you know? Ginika had left the room without responding to her step mother's comment which she considered snobbish and spiteful, (pg 52)

Data 8, "Where are the going?" he asked Caleb, a boy of his age, who lived with lieutenant Ofoka. "Ha, you are just an Ignoramus, Caleb replied scornfully, He was a skinny light with bow legs. "You see soldiers getting into vehicles and you ask where they are going"? "Shut up, you foolish boy that walks like a duck" Udo said angrily. "Is it because I asked you question that you call me an ignoramus? "Yes because you asked a stupid question "Caleb's eyes flashed. "And don't ever call me a duck again or I will cut off your ears, bloody civilian like you"

Data 9, Nwakire confronted their father over what he called the immoral and tyrannical invasion of Ginika's privacy. He pursued him to his room one evening after supper "papa Ginika told me how you abused her two years ago, how you misused your power as a parent and a medical doctor to inflict psychological and mental wounds to her", (pg 104).

From the excerpts above, approbation maxim was violated as they show disapproval of others qualities and approbation places high value of others qualities. They are all acts of condemnation.

In Data (7) Ginika's step mother condemns Philo, by calling her crude In (8) Udo condemns Caleb by calling him a 'duck' and Caleb calls him 'Ignoramus' and (9) Nwakaire condemns his father's action by saying it is immoral, cruel and concludes that he is not an inquisitor or prosecutor. The effects of the above are all devastating, abusing and condemnation which are tragic situations.

Modesty maxim (Minimize praise of self, maximize dispraise of self)

Data 10, One skinny young man of about twenty beats his breast and boasted he would be an army officer before the war ended. Another youth shout him down. "Mechie.qnu gi, shut your mouth! You will for sure catch a leopard with bare hands, you coward! When the time comes, you will run 'forty' the race of a life time". Everyone roared with uncontrollable laughter... "What did I say wrong to attract your scorn and venom? You all heard him I was not talking to him why should he put his akputu mouth into something that did not concern him, eh" "who has akputu mouth... look at the thickness of his lips like the lobes of a fat woman's buttocks", (pg 30-31).

Data 11, Auntie Lizzy raged. "Imagine, I should not say what should happen in my house? Whp are you? Esi be gi eje b'onye? Whose house does your house lead to? Whether you are from America or from London, you cannot do as you like in this house. And let me tell you: you had better make your children behave well. Did you give them any training at all? They are rude, forward and lazy", (pg 176).

Data 12, "Please don't speak to my mum like that" Amaka said, her eyes blazing "Is it because you don't have children of your own that you abuse us"?... "Auntie Lizzy please, calm down. "Ginika clung to her. "Leave me, Ginika, set your hands off me. Did you hear what this Ochicha this cockroach said? I'm going to teach her a lesson. The excerpts above depict violation of modesty maxim because they show dispraise of others because in 10, the man shows that he is stronger than the youth that wants to go and fight. In '11', Anutie Lizzy Ginika's step mother feels she is superior to Mrs. Ndefo because she is staying in her house. In '12', Amaka sees her mom better than Auntie Lizzy because she has children of her own. So there is a show of dispraise of others which is what this maxim says.

Agreement Maxim (Minimize disagreement between self and other maximize agreement between self and other)

Data 13, Eloka, what is this I heard from Osita, Chief Unegbu's son? When I visited his father this afternoon, Osita told me you are not studying agriculture but engineering is it true? Eloka nodded "yes, I'm studying electrical engineering I told you all along that I wanted to study engineering. I'm not interested and I knew I would not do well if I registered for it". "Eloka was it not enough that I, your father who is training you and paying your school fees, wanted you to read agriculture? Should not have respected my wish and registered for the course?

Data 14, "Why didn't you tell me that Eloka's father kept a woman in the refugee camp?"... She replied mama what are you talking about? "Which woman I'm not aware that papa kept a woman in the camp. Did someone tell you this? The person could be a mischief-maker".

Data 15, Ginika, "I said it when I first saw you that your beauty is skin-deep, ocha ka amaka. If only Eloka had agreed to marry the girl Adaeze found for him, I would not have been put in this condition". Her mother-in-law began to sob.

The above examples are violation of agreement maxim. Agreement maxim places high value on others' opinion by maximizing the expression of agreement between self and others. Above examples lead to disagreement between self and others. In example (13) and Chief Odunze does not agree with Eloka for not studying agriculture, in '14' Ginika's mother-in-law did not believe that Ginika does not know that her husband kept a mistress in the refugee pamp and in (15), she does not agree that Ginika and Eloka should start having babies after the war. She is very resentful. Eloka's father was disappointed and felt bad in example (13) and all these are attributes of tragic situations which can harm one's health.

Sympathy Maxim (Minimize antipathy between self and other maximize sympathy between self and other)

Data 16, "The baby died", the midwife said in a gentle voice Ginika gave a loud cry and began to weep. "Ginika, don't cry" her aunt consoled "It is best he should go. I saw him: he was too tiny and was malformed. Each of his hands had two fingers missing. His breathing was laboured and I watched him breathe his last. "Her aunt's words distressed rather than comforted her. (Pg 297).

Data 17, Ginika spoke only once after they had all denounced her "can't I stay until Eloka returns? "Are you mad? So you think my son will stay married to you after what you did; if you don't know it, this is a decent family. Now get out of my room you win the war wife" Ginika burst into tears. She got up and left the room, stumbling as she stepped on the doormat (pg 295)

Data 18, "Stupid woman! Barawo! You don't kill Sergeant Sule. You go see pepper today. Nobody fit save you; you go pay for your crime".... "You think say crying go save you? You go see. Na you tell Sule make him go circumcise himself before you allow him to touch you. No be so ashawo? The wound get infection. You don't kill better man, you bastard rebel!..." "You go dey for guardroom till you tire for here or you can die if you like", he spat "if you make noise, I shoot". (Pg 356-357).

The above lines are instances of violation of sympathy maxim because the utterances place low value on others feelings. In excerpt (16) the words of Antie Chito are even harmful to Ginika instead of comforting her. She yells the more because her baby died. In excerpt (17), Ginika practically begs her mother -in-law to stay until her husband comes back but she refuses to sympathize with her. In excerpt (18), the officer does not want to hear her own side of the story but decides to put her in the guardroom for further punishment.

Pollyanna Maxim (Consideration Maxim) (Minimize the hearer's discomfort)

Data 19, "We shall see. Remove your underwear and lie down on the bed. I am going to examine you". "No papa, please, no one did anything to me. We were in the hell all the time" "She shrank further away from the bed and pressed her back against the wall. "Look Ginikanwa, do as I say; or do you want me to force you?" He glared at her. No, no, papa please "Get on with it! He barked moving threateningly towards her. Slowly she pulled off her underwear, (pg. 99).

Data 20, "Papa I'm sorry if I disappointed you, but you have nothing to fear. Eloka and I love each other very much. All we want is your blessing". "Si ebea puo, leave my room" His words, spoken in Ama-Oyi dialect, sounded so final that she got up immediately to take her leave. (Pg. 176).

Data 21, "So you are trying to justify what you did? Is that it?" She shook her head, "No, don't get me wrong, I'm only asking you to try to understand" His voice was raised when he said, "I said you should leave" He glared at her and saw her flinch. Her eyes were full of despair but he was too angry with her to care.

The above excerpts show violation of Pollyanna Maxim which is also a consideration. Maxim. The people involved are not considerate of others feelings. In excerpt (19) papa Ginika does not trust his daughter so he does not bother how she feels as he examines her to see if she is defiled. In excerpt (20), Ginika's father scolds Ginika when she tells him she wants to marry Eloka without considering the love they share. In excerpt (21), when Ginika tells Eloka the truth of the pregnancy Eloka refuses to be considerate of her predicament but outrightly rejects her.

Violation of politeness maxims as shown above is really affected by lack of maintenance of face value in the conversations involved. Generally speaking, politeness involves taking account of the feelings of other (Holmes 2008) A polite person makes others feel comfortable. These violations come in form of abuses, neglect, disrespect, disapproval and even death. The protagonist Ginikanwa says in her own words "that she realized bitterly that it was not the dreams one dreams that rule one's life but the choices one makes that determine the course of one's life". (Pg 355). These choices include the choice of words for appropriate enhancement of positive conversational relationship among participants in a discussion parlance which may make or mar relationships among people.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Language is a veritable tool in the hands of human beings especially creative artists. It is used by literary writers to portray some of the happenings in the society either positively or negatively. This tool is used by Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo in *Roses and Bullets* which envelops violation of politeness maxims in a typical Nigerian/Biafran civil war setting. In the book, the researcher shows that in as much as there is war setting, people are living their normal lives; loving and getting married, antagonizing and hating others and so on. The researcher concludes that violation of politeness maxims among people often breeds hatred, rancour, altercation and in extreme cases death. All the Geoffery Leech's politeness maxims tact, modesty, approbation, agreement, sympathy and Pollyanna are violated. Ginikanwa the protagonist has a feel of it and lost everything but she does not lose her life by the intervention of her teacher Miss Taylor.

In communication, the role of politeness principle is reflected in the procedure to communicate verbally. It can be better if the communicants know the appropriate linguistic nuances to be used to oil the flow of conversation for a conflict free society.

#### **V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study has provides new insights into the study and perception of politeness phenomenon as it has opened vistas for applying violation of Geoffery Leech's politeness maxims in creative works like the novel. The researcher, therefore, recommends that communicators should not violate politeness maxims since it leads to tragic situations. Tragic situations advance to conflicts and this society in which hampers development. She also hopes that this work can be expanded by suggesting that a comparative study of the violation of this theory can be applied to two or more novels for a wider coverage.

#### REFERENCES

- [1]. Agbedo, C.U. (2015). *General Linguistics Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. Kumcee-Ntaeshe Press Inc. Nsukka.
- [2]. Behnam, B. Sakhaei, S.R., & Nabifar, N. (2014). The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Harold Pinter's 'The Birthday Party' in terms of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 3, 4, 80-87.
- [3]. Bousfield, D. & Locher, M. (eds) (2008). *Impoliteness in language studies on its interplay with power in theory and practice*. Berlin: Mouton DeGruyter.
- [4]. Brown, P. & Levison, S.C. (1978) Universals in language usage politeness phenomena. In E.N. Goody (ed) *Questions and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [5]. Culpeper, J. (1996). *Towards an anatomy of Impoliteness' Journal of Pragmatics* 25, 349-367. Cambridge University Press.
- [6]. Ezeigbo, A.T. (2014). *Roses and Bullets*. University Press Ibadan.
- [7]. Hiba, N.M. & Nawal F.A. (2015) Pragmatics of Impoliteness and Rudeness. *America International Journal of Social Science*, 4(6) December 2015/24 pdf.
- [8]. Holmes, J. (2008) An Introduction to socio-linguistics: England Pearson Education. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences Education (IJHSSE)*, 1(11), November 2014, Pp. 170-179 ISSN 23 401-0381 (on line).
- [9]. <https://www.encyclopedia.com> free online encyclopedia.
- [10]. Jasim, M.H. & Aziz, F.H. (2010). Silence as Non-Verbal Positive Politeness Strategy in August Strindberg's The Stronger: A Pragma-Stylistic Study. *Journal of Missan Researches*, 7(13), 291-323.
- [11]. Lacoff, R. (1975). *Language and woman's place*. New York: Haper and Row. Leech, G.N. (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*: Harlow: Logman.
- [12]. Naizi, N. and Gouitam, R. (2010). *How to study literature, stylistic and pragmatic*. Approaches India: New Delhi PHL Learning Private Limited.
- [13]. Oboko and Obika, A.N. (2016). *The place of face and greeting as a positive politeness marker in African values. Fakuty of Arts Publication on Humanities and African Values 2016*. Nnamdi Azikwe University Awka.
- [14]. Odebunmi, A. (2005). Politeness and face Management in Hospital Conversational interactions in South-Western Nigeria. *Ibadan Journal of English Studies*, Vol. 2, 2-22.
- [15]. Okoro, O. and Oruwari, J. (2011) A study of Politeness and disagreement principles in conversational implication. *The Eltartye Journal of English Language. Research*, Vol. 2 No. 1 Dec. 2011.
- [16]. Wardhaugh, R. (1996). *An introduction of socio-linguistics*. Oxford Basic Blackwell.
- [17]. Watts, R. (2003). *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.