FACE-THREATS REDRESSIVE DEVICES IN JAY E. ADAMS' FAITH-BASED COUNSELLING CASES

AYANSOLA Abayomi

National Universities Commission

Abuja, Nigeria

Abstract

Face-redressive discourse devices are designed to assuage the emotion of the hearer following certain interactionally required politically verbal aggression which is necessitated by the situational power of the counsellor. The paper examines the influences of situational variables on the use of face-redressive strategies in Christian counselling, drawing insights from Ting-Toomey (1999) on the "four faces of face" and Lim and Bowers (1991) three types of face work.

In the case of Christian counselling, speakers' power difference, rather than relational intimacy as was the case with Lim and Bowers (1991), is the strongest predictor of face work manifestations including the strategies for face-redress. Such strategies help to sustain rapport and diffuse pre-mediatory as well as on-going face-aggravation that underlies the perceived "intrusion" of the mediator into the affairs of the parties. This study extends the face work theory by Brown and Levinson in order to explain the situational factors which are peculiar to Christian mediatory discourse and the strategies that are involved in augmenting its unavoidable face-aggravation.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to analyse how the Christian counsellor redresses or augments the face incursion of clients in faith-based discourse with a view to addressing the paucity of scholarship in the linguistic study in Christian counselling rather than on non-faith-based career, medical, and school counselling, among others. In the pursuit of this objective, the study extends the face work theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) in order to explain the situational factors which are peculiar to Christian mediatory discourse. By so doing, a cue is taken from the framework provided by Ting-Toomey (1999) on the "four faces of face" with insights from Lim and Bowers (1991)'s account on three types of face work: solidarity, approbation and tact as well as their effects on three social factors: relational intimacy, power difference, and the right to perform a given act in a given situation.

The influences of these situational variables on the use of face-redressive strategies are investigated in this study. In the case of Christian counselling, speakers' power difference, rather than relational intimacy as was the case with Lim and Bowers (1991), is the strongest predictor of face work manifestations which include face redressive strategies. Face augmentation involves the employment of discourse strategies which are designed to assuage the emotion of the hearer following certain interactionally required verbal aggression and power constrained politic verbal behaviour. Linguistic augmentation are strategies which help to sustain rapport and diffuse pre-mediatory as well as on-going face-aggravation that underlies the perceived "intrusion" of the mediator into the affairs of the disputants.

This is in consideration of Callahan (2005) who observes that face plays at least two distinct roles in mediation. First, people bring their face needs and perceptions to the negotiating table, so those dynamics may play a role in the mediation process relative to how the parties interact at the mediation and may thus add a dimension to the conflict which the mediator must accommodate. Second, saving or restoring face may be one of the underlying interests, or even the primary interest, of one or more parties and may therefore add a dimension to the substantive negotiations which the counsellor must be able to identify and incorporate into the handling of the conflict.

Any attempt to intervene in a dispute, in the opinion of Callahan (2005), is an intrusion into an already existing process of negotiation between the parties to the dispute. According to her, mediators are interveners who, in addition to assessing the climate of the parties' pre-mediation relationship, dealing with problems of perception, being on the lookout for imbalances of power, correcting false attributions, and shepherding the parties' negotiations from differentiation to integration, must be prepared to anticipate, identify and handle the below-surface image needs or perceptions of the parties. This aspect of mediation, the accommodation of the parties' "face" needs, is quoted by Callahan (2005) to have been likened to "negotiating in a minefield". Hence, it behoves on the CC to adopt certain linguistic devices in an attempt at reducing the size of face intrusion in mediatory exercise.

The application of face to linguistics is made prominent by Brown and Levinson whose theory of politeness (TP) is linked to Goffman's (1967) sociological notion of face which is conceptualised as the emotional variant to "face" as part of the human anatomy (Ayansola 2016:20). "Facework" has been summarised by John (2008) as a "subtle interpersonal encounter found in all societies, calculated to avoid personal embarrassment, or loss of poise, and to maintain for others an impression of self-respect." People in all cultures want to maintain face and at the same time maintain communication and respect with others. Facework refers to the behaviour parties resort to in an effort to deal with the conflict between preserving or serving their own face needs and

accommodating the face needs or interests of another party. Facework management during mediation is necessary so as to validate and maintain the delicate balance between or among the disputing parties with respect to their self-esteem and self-worth needs. Ting-Toomey (1988) has identified "four faces of face" as face-restoration or self-negative face, the need to give oneself freedom and space and to protect self from other's infringement on one's autonomy; face-saving or other negative face, the need to signal respect for the other person's need for freedom, space and dissociation; face-assertion or self-positive face, the need to defend and protect one's need for inclusion and association; and face-giving or other positive face, the need to defend and support the other person's need for inclusion and association. The four faces of face though are present in all negotiations settings in all cultures, certain sets of super-strategy are preferred by members of a culture more often than others. Face-saving or other negative face and face-giving or other positive face are germane to Christian counselling. Ting-Toomey, however, acknowledges the confusion that exists in distinguishing between negative and positive face preferring, rather, the terms: self-face (saving face), other face (giving face) and mutual face (both saving and giving face).

To enter social relationships, Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that speakers have to show an awareness of face, adding that it is a universal practice across cultures that speakers should respect each other's expectations regarding self-image, take account of their feelings, and avoid acts that threaten someone's face. Although it is in every participant's interest to avoid face-threatening-acts (FTAs) in an interaction, it is not always possible since some illocutionary acts are inherently face-threatening as their performance pose threat to either hearer or speaker's face. In the submission of Brown and Levinson (1987), interlocutors are assumed to respect each other's "face" needs by applying certain linguistic strategies to mitigate FTAs, thereby conforming to polite linguistic conduct.

Critics have extended the Brown and Levinson's face work theory so that it can accommodate more complicated forms of interaction. Lim and Bowers (1991), for instance, propose three different types of face work: solidarity, approbation, and tact. The effects of these on three social factors – relational intimacy, power difference, and the right to perform a given act in a given situation – on the types of face work were examined. Lim and Bowers (1991) argue that relational intimacy is the strongest positive predictor of face work and that its effect is consistent across different types of face work and across different levels of power and right. According to them, the right to perform a certain act and speaker's power decrease face work but that these are mediated by relational intimacy, which achieves significance mainly in distant relationships. Lim and Bowers (1991) are unequivocal that respondents use

multiple types of face work when multiple face wants were threatened, and the use of one of the type of face work do not decrease the use of other types. Speakers' power difference, rather than relational intimacy as submitted by Lim and Bowers (1991), is the strongest predictor of face work in the case of Christian counselling. In this situation, the Christian counsellor leverages on the supreme power of God in the performance of face work; whereas, the client, guided by the notion of doxa, has and demonstrates little power in the performance of face work linguistic activities. In validating this position, Leichty and Applegate (1991:1) submit that "speakers carried out role-play persuasive tasks that were varied on the dimensions of speaker power, request magnitude, and familiarity. Speakers provided more face support when they had relatively little power".

There is no debating that the clergy has the right to counsel. This being a situational factor identified by Lim and Bowers (1991) which is relevant to CC. Rather than decrease facework, such right gives commensurate power as well as confers legitimacy on the counsellor to increase facework. The third factor, relational intimacy, has little or no influence in the shaping of linguistic facework in CC where the truth, in tandem with biblical principles, needs be told no matter whose ox might be gored. The wielding of power notwithstanding, CC often devises linguistic means of assuaging the face of their client when the performance of FTA becomes inevitable.

The notion of doxa, "a common knowledge and shared opinions [which] haunts all contemporary disciplines that put communication and social interaction at the centre of their concerns" (Amossy 2002a:369), is applicable in religious discourse particularly in CC. Faith-based counsellees are believers who, based on their understanding of the code of the Christian faith, have subscribed to the supremacy of God and His precepts through the Bible and the clergy who more often than none perform the dual responsibility of offering counselling services to the advice seekers. The supreme God is man's last hope for the provision of spiritual antidotes especially where orthodox medicine has failed to yield fruits. The speakers' language usage is restricted in CC consequent upon the elevation of the counsellor above the counsellee who sees the former as the direct representative of God.

Counselling interaction is controlled, structured and can be likened to a therapy session subsisting between a medical doctor and the patient where the interview features power which is disproportionately skewed in favour of the clergy. The clergy, though aware of his overwhelming influence on the counsellee, is however guided by the dictates of professionalism and the goal of the interaction by being tactful in his choice of language. The latent face-aggravating behaviour in CC requires discourse tact and politeness strategies which are aimed at augmenting potentially bruised face without which the

client may opt to withdraw key information that may be germane to the purpose of the counselling activity.

2. Review of Related Literature and Justification of Study

A few studies have focussed on counselling activities. For instance, Andera (2010) establishes the discourse structure of school counselling with a view to identifying the discourse markers that signal the various units that make up the structure. The study further examines the pragmatic features of discourse found in the data and to show how these lead to possible communication breakdown between the counsellor and client in school counselling sessions. The study, based on Sinclair and Courthard (1975) model on classroom discourse, reveals that school counselling discourse has a hierarchical structure in which smaller units combine to form larger units.

The pragmatic aspect of the analysis also draws on topic shift, speaker assumption, participant role and pragmatic focus which are identifiable features of discourse that indicate or effect miscommunication between counsellor and client in school counselling discourse. Andera's (2010) study is school based while the focus of this paper is on CC. Furthermore, the emphasis of the former is on conversation analysis rather than the application of the facework based theory of politeness to the counselling genre. Studies on other subsidiaries of counselling, namely, career, medical among others cannot suffice for CC with its situational peculiarities.

The exchange of information between the doctor and patient according to Roberts et al (2004:161) involves the phase where the patient's complaint is usually characterised by "the description of symptoms, the context in which the symptoms occurred and the patient's stance" i.e. affective stance and epistemic stance: where the former "includes mood, attitude, feeling or disposition as well as the degree of emotional intensity", and the latter, the "degree of certainty of knowledge or commitment to truth or proposition. Put succinctly, while the patient discloses the symptoms he has noticed, the doctor narrows those symptoms to specific temporal or spatial circumstances thereby determining the patient's emotional posture to the symptoms.

Maynard (2004:53) has identified two major diagnostic news delivery methodologies namely, citing the evidence and asserting the condition. "Citing the evidence – reporting the result – is what clinicians do as a cautionary way of declaring a diagnosis, whereas asserting the condition – predicating it is an attribute of a person – is interactionally more forthright and bolder". This submission has been amplified by Perakyla (1998) as "explicating the evidence" and "plain assertions" along the scale of indirectness and directness respectively. Whereas, in the opinion of Maynard (1989), clinicians prefer to use the former more predominantly than the latter, there is scarcely any

linguistic evidence to support such inclination in CC where participants are guided by the craving for the gospel "truth".

Odebunmi (2008) has located diagnostic news delivery devices in Brown and Levinson's facework model of politeness theory. In a study which aligns with Maynard's (1989) postulations that also draws on Levinson's (1979) activity type model. Odebunmi (2008) notes that blunt news may be mitigated through veils and hedges. This is in addition to Maynard's (1989) "explicating the evidence" and "plain assertions" along the scale of indirectness and directness respectively. According to Odebunmi (2008), mitigations occur where the seriousness or severity of diagnostic news is downplayed to douse the tension of the patient.

The interaction between the counsellor and counsellee follows interaction order and shares discoursal features with doctor-patient encounter in terms of social power relations, presentation of symptoms, diagnostic procedures, diagnostic news delivery, and, so on. Whereas the medical procedure is verifiable in the scientific sense, the notion of doxa is stronger and more applicable in CC where the clergy combines secular procedure with liturgy. The uniqueness of CC has made it imperative to subject it to linguistic scrutiny more so that the Jay E Adams' (1974) recorded counselling cases has largely been studied only from religious and sociological perspectives. A linguistic study of counselling cases is, therefore, bound to offer insight into the strategies that are available to interactants in redressing offensive diagnostic news delivery or any other impolite verbal behaviour arising from CC.

Whereas, many studies have been devoted to the linguistic analysis of school, career, or medical counselling as the case may be, faith-based counselling as situation bound utterances and the consequent constraints it imposes on linguistic choices and interpretations that are available to interactants, has not received much attention it deserves. Counselling in its wider scope has been studied from the perspective of psychology (Friedlander, Myma 1982) and sociology (Erickson, Frederick, Jeffrey, 1982) using discourse analytical tools. Andera (2010) has however approached the counselling phenomenon majorly from conversation analysis with a limited foray into the pragmatics of the counselling activity-type.

The premise of Callahan's (2005) article is that mediators are intervenors in a dispute who, in addition to assessing the climate of the parties' pre-mediation relationship, dealing with problems of perceptions, being on the lookout for imbalances of power, correcting false attributions and shepherding the parties' negotiations must be prepared to anticipate, identify and handle the below-surface image needs or perceptions of the parties. The enclosed article discusses "facework" as a communication behaviour that is evaluated and posits that "face" and "facework" strategies should be considered in any mediation because "face" is a universal, cross-cultural characteristic of all

human behaviour. The focus of the current study is on Christian mediatory situation.

Face-threats are redressed in CC through the employment of positive politeness strategies, questioning tact and indirect communicative acts being the strategies through which participants cooperate and achieve the goal of the counsellor driven activity-type.

3. Methodology

This study is qualitative and devoid of neither numerical nor statistical interpretation as the situational occurrences that characterise the attitude of counselling are analysed based on the writer's fluidity in his interpretation of data extending the Brown and Levinson's facework theory with insights from Lim and Bowers (1991). Insights are also drawn from Levinson's notion of activity-types having noted that the participants in CC are governed by mutual contextual-beliefs having subscribed to the Christian faith. Levinson's model of activity-type takes cognisance of individual participants' goals, their contributions, shared assumptions, socio-contextual variables and pragmatic influence which are germane to understanding CC. Sixteen relevant counselling encounters which relay face-augmentation devices are selected from among documented cases by Jay E. Adams' *The Christian Counselor's Casebook* which is representative of the "sorts of problems most frequently encountered in pastoral counselling" (Adams 1974: iii).

4. Presentation and Analysis of Data

4.1 Positive Politeness as Face-threat Redressive Devices

A speaker may orient himself towards the hearer's positive face through the employment of certain linguistic strategies. Brown and Levinson(1987:101-129) have identified fifteen positive politeness strategies including the choice to "express interest in H", "claim common ground", "use in-group identity markers" and so on. Positive politeness aims to save positive face in showing solidarity and orientation, appealing to oneness as well as making others to feel good. This exemplified below notwithstanding the on-going feud among the parties:

Example 1:

Phyllis: I'm leaving you; I waited to tell you so that I wouldn't spoil your holiday.

Frank: Pastor, help me; I don't want to lose Phyllis. I love her! What happened? Where did things go wrong (*The Christian Counselor,* 6)?

Phyllis and Frank are husband and wife with three children. Phyllis has come to the Pastor so that he would endorse her request for a divorce. Notwithstanding that the ground on which the solicited divorce is being sought is undisclosed, it is gratifying to note that Phyllis is mindful of the face-need of her husband by sustaining his "happiness": *I wouldn't spoil your holiday.* This is short of professing love for the man whom she seeks to divorce. Granted that Frank is startled by his wife's declaration – a case of infringement to his face, nevertheless, he also professes love to her and emphasises his unwillingness to let go of her. The point to note, here, is the augmentation of the verbal attack to Frank's face by professing love simultaneously with a request for divorce. The enactment of positive politeness between feuding family members is further illustrated in the interaction below:

Example 2:

> Florence: We owe everyone in town, and if Warren doesn't soon get a good job and keep it we may be tarred and feathered and run out of town!
>
> *Warren, quite honestly, had detailed a thirteen-year history of failure to make good at supporting his family of three (they had two children – Sally and Rose). Time and again, they had been bailed out of financial ruin by Florence's father, but the last time, he had put his feet down.*
>
> Flo Father: Never again! If you don't make it this time, you can sink!
>
> *That was six months ago. At the time everything looked rosy. But gradually, the old problem had returned. Disagreements, complaints, anger, and resentment toward his employer and his fellow workers grew until two days ago in a fiery exchange with the plant manager he stormed out of the place and quit. It was then that Florence came to the counsellor for help.*
>
> (*The Christian Counselor,* 8).

The introductory pronoun, "we", in the preceding interaction is an indicator of oneness between the couples notwithstanding that the speaker, Florence, is disenchanted with her husband, Warren, owing to the irresponsible attitude of the latter to job and family. In the face of the economic calamity that awaits the family, the wife knowing that there is hardly any escape route, aligns with the husband through the use of "we", a positive politeness marker that shows that

wife and husband are inseparable. Politeness, has in this case, masked the otherwise aggravating insinuations against Warren.

The use of "we" is a tacit acknowledgement of Warren as (the speakers). In a case of husband "for better for worse", they ("we") both owe, hence they ("we") may be tarred and feathered and run out of town! The weight of Florence's politeness devices is appreciated when juxtaposed with the bald-on-record face-threatening-acts by her father:

Never Again! If you don't make it this time, you can sink!

While one is a case of solidarity, the other is "it is your headache not mine". It further shows a varying degree of social bond: wife versus husband, on the one hand, and father/son-in-law relationship, on the other, and the (face) obligation that each imposes on linguistic choices. Positive politeness may not always appear on the surface structure but may be embedded and inferred as has been illustrated in the next example.
Example 3:

> Bob: *Bob, a former seminary classmate, now a pastor of a conservative church in a neighbouring town, has made a lunch date with the counsellor and questions the validity of the Christian faith which they both share. He puts it this way:*
> [I am here] to discuss some serious doubts concerning the basic doctrines of Christianity. … These doubts have been so disturbing I haven't been able to do my work well – I'm behind in everything.… I have been so depressed over doubt I've been getting further behind each week. I can barely stay ahead with my sermon preparation; I haven't made a visit for weeks. … I'm ready to give up.
>
> Counsellor: When did you begin to get behind?
> Bob: About two months ago.
> Counsellor: When did your doubts begin?
> Bob: I remember; I had a wedding and a funeral and four serious counselling cases all in the same week. I got behind on everything after these events. Soon after, I remember having to prepare a sermon on the inspiration of the Scriptures. But because I was so rushed, I did a very superficial job.
> Counsellor: How about your regular schedule, Bob? For the family, study, worship, etc.? Are you working all day long? Are you trying to catch up (*The Christian Counselor,* vii).

The initial inference by the hearer is the suspicion that the speaker, his seminarian classmate and a fellow pastor, may have backslidden. Further narrative, however, reveals that Bob is under some kind of pressure, a situation that has elicited the host's empathy. Empathy is a recipe for solidarity and has informed the counsellor's attempt at helping a friend to get to the route of the problem. This is achieved through below-the-surface positive politeness strategies that have unmasked the counsellor's deep concern and camaraderie for his colleague:

How about your regular schedule, Bob? For the family, study, worship, etc.?

Are you working all day long? Are you trying to catch up?

Counsellor's attention to parties' positive face is demonstrative of the tact that is required of his practice and the achievement of mediatory goals. An illustration will suffice:
Example 4:

> (*Sharon and Eric have come for help in reconciling their marriage. They have been living apart for about one month, ever since Sharon found out about the "affair".*

Eric: She's frigid. What was I supposed to do?

Sharon: But don't forget to tell him about those times that you beat me …, and when you threatened my life! You were drunk, but I got scared! Billy, our son, won't even stay in the same room with you when you're like that. Everyone is afraid … and … fear and sex don't mix.

Clergy: Eric, you are going to have to ask Sharon for forgiveness, and Sharon, you will have to forgive him if you expect to put this marriage together again. Moreover, we must discuss the even more basic matter of seeking God's forgiveness in Christ. That's where reconciliation and new life begin.

Sharon: I have forgiven him, but I can't forget. Forgiveness doesn't demand forgetting, does it? I know that I love Eric, but I don't know whether I will be able to give myself to him again. You can't have good sexual relation when you are scared to death (*The Christian Counselor,* 14)!

The first two exchanges aim to justify infidelity and denial of sexual activities on the part of Eric and Sharon, respectively. The excerpts summarise verbal and prosodic aggression that have characterised their relationship, thereby climaxing in the request for divorce. Curiously, Sharon, who bears the brunt of the aggression, is quick to voice her love for the husband, the alleged aggressor: *I know that I love Eric*. The confession of love is preceded by a tacit acknowledgement that, after all, our (their) union is productive and has produced a child. Note... *our son* in the extract: *Billy, our son, won't even stay in the same room with you when you're like that.*

Positive politeness is crucial considering that Christianity hardly endorses divorce, hence Sharon's resolve not to foreclose reconciliation with her husband. *I love Eric* is tactical indirect request for him to desist from further domestic aggression. It is noticeable that the hearer did not utter anything to suggest that he does not love Sharon either, thereby presupposing that their love is mutual and that there is a consensus in the pursuit of reconciliation.

The clergy has presented himself as a stakeholder in the rebuilding process of a crumbling marriage by prevailing on either party to forgive the other. This option predisposes him as being neutral and is bound to make his intervention more credible to the disputants. The use of the first person plural, *we*, a positive politeness marker, has aligned the counsellor to the "sinners" and has redressed the FTA in his request that both parties should reconcile with God as a prelude to marital reconciliation. Granted that the FTA is not made succinct, there is no denying that the clergy has performed an FTA by labelling both husband and wife as sinners.

The choice of *we,* therefore, is to present everybody, including the speaker, as sinners who should seek forgiveness from God – a directive which the speaker has presented as a pre-condition for their marital consideration. The FTA and its augmentation is an attestation to the divergence of goals which individuals may bring to an interaction. Whereas, the couples seek reconciliation, the clergy is concerned with both earthly and spiritual reconciliation. This informs the performance of FTA and the imperative of its augmentation in meeting his hearers' face-needs. This is in consideration of John (2008) that the entire mediatory process is perceived by the feuding parties as an intrusion by the mediator.

In order to remain savvy and responsive to the face concerns of the parties, the clergy in CC do show a high degree of impartiality like it has been demonstrated above.

> Clergy: Eric, you are going to have to ask Sharon for forgiveness, and Sharon, you will have to forgive him if you expect to put this marriage together again (*The Christian Counselor,* 14).

The strategy of balancing the scale of admonition, among the aggrieved parties, according to John (2008), is "face-restoration" and is intended to assure the parties, among other objectives, the neutrality of the peacemaker thereby, assuaging the counsellees' pre-mediatory aggravated face.

The speaker in the next excerpts appeals to positive politeness strategies as a way of recanting heresy.

Example 5:

> Midge: I'm nothing and I feel inferior. My self-concept is just absolutely zero. Nobody notices me, nobody likes me, and nobody cares about me. I may as well be dead. I feel so inadequate. Even when I pray I can't find any relief. Probably the Lord doesn't even like me. But He is the one who made me this way, so maybe he does (The Christian Counselor, 20).

The heresy in the submission of Midge arises from the attribution of her predicament to God. She claims that *even when I pray I can't find any relief. Probably the Lord doesn't even like me.* Knowing that such suspicion can hardly be substantiated nor justified by a Christian, the speaker opts out by acknowledging the creative power of God and His love: *but He is the one who made me this way, so maybe he does.* The acknowledgement, through which the speaker has deferred to the authority and love of God, has remedied the heresy in the preceding utterances. Acknowledgement is a linguistic device for achieving positive politeness.

4.2 "It-is-You-that-said-so" Questioning Approach

Counsellors may structure their questions for the purpose of augmenting the infringement of the negative face of the client since mediation, as has been stated, is, *ab initio,* a face-threatening genre. Certain touchy questions, deployed for the purpose of extracting vital information, may violate the client's negative face, hence, the need to structure questions in a manner that the person of the interrogator is insulated, thereby absolving him from any perceived violation of the hearer's negative face. Ting-Toomey (2008) christens this strategy, which is often realised through what may be described as "It-is-you-that-said-so" questioning structure, as face-saving.

Example 6:

> Counsellor: You said they had you arrested when you tried to force your way on to an airliner heading for Africa?

> Richard: Yes – and I'm going to get their yet! I know I was wrong in trying to serve God as I did. I know that I should have earned my money for my ticket instead of acting so impulsively upon His call (*The Christian Counselor,* 10).

The counsellor has reminded the hearer of some negative experience through the inclusion of two content words: "arrest" and "force" in his question to him. The inclusion has seemingly made the counsellor verbally aggressive. Considering, the preceding items before the FTA: *you said* ..., the speaker is absolved of perceived impoliteness. He has successfully hidden behind the hearer's personal confession in his bid to obtain the needed information. The success of the counsellor's strategy manifests in the volunteering of information by Richard in his admittance of guilt for the action that necessitated his arrest. A similar strategy is replicated by the clergy in the next extract:

Example 7:

> Counsellor: Here on the pink sheet you list your problem as 'church membership'. Would you explain what you mean by that?
>
> Mike: Sure. Here's the situation. I am single, 25 years old, and attend two churches. I like both of them very much, but I know that I should become a member at one and devote all of my energies there. So I've been praying for guidance for a long time, but the Lord still hasn't shown me which church I should join. What do you think I should do? (*The Christian Counselor,* 13).

In locating Mike's "problem", the clergy relies on Mike's self-disclosure and self-blame which the latter had volunteered: *I know I should become a member at on and devote my energy there*. By this strategy, the counsellor can hardly be held liable for face infringement or be accused of insinuating that Mike has some problems. Rather, the tact in prompting the respondent to explain "what is meant by "church membership" is to locate the face-threat as self-induced (in which it is a case of self-FTA) and to consequently sustain the on-going rapport between the participants. This option is rewarding as it succeeded in prompting Mike to profile additional clarifications to the issues that have brought him to the counsellor. It also significantly provides the clergy with further insights to the issues involved with Mike. "You-said-so" questions are used to shift responsibility to the hearer rather than the speaker. This assertion is made explicit through the conversation involving the counsellor below:

Example 8:

Counsellor: Like you said at the beginning, after hearing all of these problems I can see that this is a very complicated situation.

Vic: Right! Putting two messed up lives like ours, plus the five children from previous marriages, makes for a wild household. Counsellor: Yes, I can see why you get frustrated. Now, before you go there's just one more thing I need to know. You mentioned that Paul, your 17 year-old son, and Bill, Marie's 16-year-old fight constantly, and that you find it difficult to discipline them about it. I suppose this is the biggest source of irritation in the family. What kinds of things do they fight about?

Vic: Well, they fight about almost everything (*Vic responds quickly*).Who's better in football, who's better in school, who gets away with the most around the house. You know things like that, all the time!

Counsellor: There's probably a lot of competitiveness due to their close ages, wouldn't you say?

Vic: Yes, I'm sure of that.

Counsellor: O.K., we'll keep that in mind. Well, I think we are starting to get a much better picture now than what we had an hour ago (*The Christian Counselor,* 18).

Other than Vic's admittance of having some problems into the "hearing" of the counsellor as is the case with example 7, there are numerous layers of FTAs above, including: "problems", "complicated situation", "messed up lives", "wild household", "get frustrated", "inability to enforce discipline", and so on in example 8. These are however reflexive FTAs with the perlocutionary effects on the speaker. The counsellor, in it-is-you-that-said-so devices, is quick to remind his client that he heard her saying she had some problems.

This is a counselling strategy at having a clearer picture of the underlying narrative. It is not a coincidence that the counsellor, in his first two moves, employs the second person pronoun *you* first, in the declarative and in the second, through an interrogative structure. In both cases, there exists a pattern whereby the speaker reiterates the earlier confessed aggression by the client as a pre-modifying strategy of augmenting the FTA. In these cases, the counsellor agrees with the counsellee that one, the situation is complicated and secondly, that the children fight constantly and that the parent find it difficult to discipline them. The clergy, in the next example, requires the speakers to underscore a reflexive FTA:

Example 9:

Counsellor: Now, let me get this right, you only had three conference
tables, and two of them blew up in arguments?
Paul/Jan: (*reply simultaneously*) Yes, that's right.
Paul: (*adds*) And what's more, the third wasn't very profitable.
Counsellor: What caused the first blow-up?

Paul: Well, we were talking about finances, and I got mad at what
Jan said.

Counsellor: What was that Jan?

Jan: I just said we are in financial trouble now because Paul has
never helped me or given me any leadership in organizing
the budget.

Counsellor: Now was the second blow-up over the same issue
(*The Christian Counselor, 128*)?

The above example features the counsellor leveraging on the clue as provided by Paul and Jan on their inability to settle their domestic differences in a meeting as suggested by the mediator. The feedback from the couple has revealed that much as they sat to negotiate on how to resolve the lingering crisis, there was always a deadlock. This, the counsellor wants to confirm and reiterate. Rather than name the couple as incapable of achieving a settlement thrice as much as they tried, he only repeated what they had said:

*Now, let me get this right, you only had three conference tables, and
two of them blew up in arguments?*

There is no need denying a reflexive FTA, hence the couple's simultaneous response:

Yes, that's right.

Paul, without further prompt, adds:

And what's more, the third wasn't very profitable.

FTAs in counselling engagements have been shown, through the scenario involving Paul and Jan, to be speaker-inflicted and are hardly initiated by the counsellor.

The next excerpts further indicate that the burden of initiating the counselling agenda and the accompany face-aggravation rest on the client. An illustration will suffice:
Example 10:

Counsellor: Now explain this to me again, Phil. Why did you quit your job?

Phil: Because the Holy Spirit told me to.

Counsellor: And how did the Holy Spirit tell you?

Phil: He spoke to me. You know, I heard a voice. It always happens that way.

Counsellor: Well, I don't understand. It's never happened to me, and there is no biblical reason to expect that it would happen to you. But let's quickly examine the results of this decision. Where do you live now?
Phil: Oh, I still live with my parents.

Counsellor: And how much do you pay them for room and board?

Phil: I can't pay them anything now, because I don't have a job. I'm trusting the Lord.

Counsellor: You mean you are trusting the Lord to get you a new source of income?

let's quickly examine the results of this decision. Where do you live now?

Phil: Oh, I still live with my parents.

Counsellor: And how much do you pay them for room and board?

Phil:I can't pay them anything now, because I don't have a job. I'm trusting the Lord.

A layman could simply have named Phil a liar in attributing his hasty decision to leave his employment to the so-called Holy Spirit. The counsellor, conscious of his professional obligation, is however careful not to get into doctrinal argument with his client, thereby avoiding the looming FTAs. He is circumspect, rather, in his observation:

Counsellor: And how did the Holy Spirit tell you?

Phil: He spoke to me. You know, I heard a voice. It always happens that way.

Counsellor: Well, I don't understand. It's never happened to me, and there is no biblical reason to expect that it would happen to you.

4.3 Indirect Communicative Face-Threats Redressive Strategies

Indirect utterances are accommodated in the non-literal aspects of communication while its interpretation depends on the cognitive inference of the hearer. In the opinion of Geoffrey Leech (1983:80), people are often indirect in their utterances so they could be polite. Indirectness empowers the conveyer to deliver "messages which the hearer is liable to find disagreeable without causing undue offence" (Thomas 1995:158). Indirect communicative acts in CC manifest in the form of metaphor, lexical ellipsis, hedging or euphemism. A case of metaphor as ICA is illustrated in the next example.

> Example 11:
> Sally: *An area of continual frustration for Sally, the 38-year-old mother of five, is her sexual relationship with Paul. Paul, her husband, is living with another woman. Though she gets angry and violently upset whenever he calls or visits the children, she also becomes sexually hungry and allows him to come to her for sex every few weeks. This has been a regular pattern over the past six months. Afterward she feels guilty, confused, and even angry. She asks the counsellor:* "Should I lock the door?" (*The Christian Counselor,* 26)

Sally has, in the excerpts above, refrained from making a direct reference to sex as is common in most culture. She has by so doing employs a linguistic substitute for the entrance of the female genital organ which is comparable to the door which the owner could open or close depending on her decision. The preference for "door" rather than calling her organ by its real name is in consideration of the hearer's face-concern. Since metaphor is the imputation of the quality of a particular object on another, Sally has explored the features of the door in comparison to the female organ as a strategy of avoiding the face-aggravation which may otherwise have attended a denotative name-calling. Speakers' avoidance of sex denotative words is further exemplified in the next extract.

> Example 12:
> Josh: I just can't seem to break the habit. She (*referring to the wife*) thinks that there must be something wrong with her – that she can't satisfy me or something. I tell her that she is wrong, but you can see why she doesn't believe me. Before we were married, two years ago, masturbation had such a hold on me that I could

hardly think straight. Now, however, I find myself doing it, but less frequently. Yet, as Flo says, I shouldn't indulge in it all. I don't want to, but how can I break the habit once and for all? (*The Christian Counselor,* 28)?

The speaker keeps the hearer in suspense in order to avoid the word "masturbation". He achieves that through cataphora – a device whereby the naming of a pre-defined item is deferred thereby making its subsequent unveiling somewhat an anti-climax. Josh has euphemised the act of masturbation by naming it as "the habit", thereby reducing the intensity of the aggravation. This is reinforced by the anaphoric reference to the act of masturbation through the use of *it* in "… I find myself doing it", "I shouldn't indulge in it all" and *the habit* in "I don't want to, but how can I break the habit. "The choice of *it*-pronoun and lexical substitution (habit) in naming masturbation is strategically aimed at augmenting the FTAs.

Euphemism is an artistic preference for inoffensive expression that is substituted for one that is considered offensive. It provides literary bases for indirectness and politeness.

Example 13:
Shirley: *Shirley wants to reconstruct a marriage out of pieces that had been scattered all over since what she calls "the incident". Brad, her husband, had begged for forgiveness, claiming that he had lost his head after Shirley had refused to have sexual relations with him for three months. I've forgiven him, but how can I ever trust him again?*
Brad: *It only happened then, because our 16-year-old daughter purposely tempted me."*

The reporting wife is polite to her husband by her preference for euphemistic "the incident" rather than naming the action of Brad as "incest". Brad, in turn, subtly claims that he is guilty as charged "I lost my head" followed by the excuse of being sex-starved by his wife. The next example features a case where adultery is euphemised as "the affair":

Example14:
Sharon: *Sharon and Eric living apart for a month until they were both persuaded to seek counselling services which affords them the opportunity of rationalising their separation.* Pastor, what do you suppose I should do? Stomach the affair?

Eric: *In a veiled admission to having an affair remarks that:* She's frigid! What was I supposed to do? *He goes on openly to tell of*

> *his subsequent unfaithfulness and adds that there had been no sexual relations for over six months prior to his adultery.*
> Sharon: But don't forget to tell him [the Counsellor] about those times that you beat me … and when you threatened my life! You were drunk and I got scared! Billy [*their* son] won't even stay in the same room when you're like that. Everyone is afraid … and … fear and sex don't mix (*The Christian Counselor,* 14).

Euphemism is preferred to face-offensive words with sexual connotations. This is the situation with Nancy, in the excerpts below, who prefers the usage of "dates" rather than "boyfriend".

> Example 15:
> Nancy: I never have dates. My father says that he expects me to die a spinster. I don't know what is wrong with me (*The Christian Counselor,* 36).
> The next example combines instances of cataphora with hedging for remedying FTAs:
> Example 16:
> Barry: Pastor, I've never told anyone, but I've got to tell you now. I can't keep it to myself any longer. I'm … I'm … I'm a queer! Since my early teens I've been involved. My father and my older brother both were involved first and they involved me. I got away from them when I went to the college, but last year I got into it again with another student. Now I'm so deeply into it I don't know what I'll do. … Please, help me, Pastor. Is there any hope for homosexual? (*The Christian Counselor,* 110)

Barry's utterance is strikingly filled with suspense which is achieved through hedging and a cataphoric reference to homosexuality. The mentioning of homosexuality is in this case deferred till when the speaker has sufficiently prepared the hearer for the bombshell! *Pastor, I've never told anyone, but I've got to tell you now. I can't keep it to myself any longer. I'm … I'm … I'm a queer!* The linguistic preparation of the hearer for the impending FTA is numerous: *pastor,* a case of positive politeness which acknowledges the pastor's position as a spiritual authority; *I've never told anyone*, lexical ellipsis omitting the reference (homosexual); *I can't keep it to myself …, it* is a pronoun used as a cataphora to homosexuality; and finally, *I'm … I'm … I'm a queer,* which features hedging or hesitation before the speaker finally volunteers that he is a queer. The argument is that the clergy is hardly surprised by the final disclosure that Barry, a prominent member of his congregation is a homosexual owing to the mitigating devices which the speaker has offered preparatory to the announcement.

5. Conclusion

This paper has evaluated the face-management strategies through which are contributory to effective counselling granted that FTAs can hardly be avoided in CC since the genre is inherently face-aggravating. It has been established that CC is successful largely because of linguistic strategies through which inherent verbal aggression is attended to. Such strategies include the use of positive politeness through which love and unity is professed by the participants across board, questioning strategies absolving the clergy from the authorship of offensive content, and indirect communicative acts which feature metaphor, euphemism, hedging, lexical ellipsis and cataphoric references.The significance of these strategies is the augmentation of perceived FTAs in CC, thereby sustaining a rewarding interaction.

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