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Articles

A Discursive Import of Suspects' Affirmative Responses in Police-Suspect Interaction in Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract: Police-suspect interaction, henceforth PSI, has been examined from the linguistic and non- linguistic standpoints. Existing studies have interrogated the stylistic peculiarities of PSI without engaging the discursive import of suspects' affirmative responses. Paucity of scholarly works on the discursive import of suspects' affirmative responses has undermined the place of the suspect in PSI. It is against this background that this study interrogates the discursive import of suspects' affirmative responses in PSI with a view to describing the contextual meanings of suspects' affirmative responses during interrogation sessions. To engage how contextual dynamics ambiguate suspects' affirmative responses to interrogation in PSI, the study adopts Grice's (1975) cooperative principles as theoretical framework to interrogate the motivation behind suspects' flouting of cooperative maxims in PSI. Recorded sessions of police interrogations on burglary and stealing, attempted rape, perversion of justice, kidnapping, conspiracy and felony and robbery at the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Ibadan, constitute the data for the study. A discursive engagement of the recorded interrogation sessions reveals that suspects' affirmative responses have multiple contextual meanings. This study contends that suspects' affirmative responses do not express agreement in all contexts; suspects consciously flout conversational maxims to challenge investigating police officers' (IPOs') claims, seek continued attention, confirm their innocence, negate IP- Os' claims and initiate new discourse. The study submits that suspects' deployment of the resourcefulness of their affirmative responses in contexts is geared towards seeking the path of exoneration. Suspects engage affirmative responses to enact discursive acts and power in PSI. The study recommends that further discursive enquiry should interrogate how resistance is created, managed and sustained by suspects in PSI.

1. Introduction

PSI is a cooperative activity mediated by the provisions of the law. Cooperation, from the perspective of the IPOs, concerns access to confessional statements from suspects. To suspects, cooperation denotes acceptance of their manipulative responses by IPOs to escape in- crimination. Discursive choices play a veritable role in enacting, legitimising and sustaining power relations in PSI (Nicola 2012; Heydon 2005; Akinrinlola 2016; Ajayi/Akinrinlola forthcoming). An IPO is charged with the responsibility of dealing with criminal cases while a suspect is a person assumed to have committed a crime. While IPOs are motivated by suspects' affirmative responses to case-related questions, suspects weave their responses to de- feat IPOs' investigative skills (Akinrinlola 2017). Aware of their disadvantaged position, suspects

manipulate their utterances to perform a number of discursive acts. Their (suspects') expression of agreement through the use of affirmative responses contributes to the realisation of IPOs' goals. However, with regard to Nigerian policing, contextual dynamics ambiguate suspects' affirmative responses to interrogations in PSI. In other words, suspects' affirmative responses have multiple meanings in contexts. This study holds that suspects' expression of yes in some contexts does not indicate agreement to IPOs' questions. In other words, suspects consciously flout the conversation rules to achieve some discursive ends in such communicative encounters. The flouting of such cooperative principles, which Grice (1975) refers to as maxims, results in a number of social acts which are context-driven.

A plethora of studies (McCarthy 2003; Koshik 2012; Nicola 2012; Abbe/Brandson 2014; Szczyrbak 2014; Heritage 2015; Akinrinlola 2016, 2018, 2019) have commendably engaged PSI from the linguistic and non-linguistic perspectives. Such studies have described the import of linguistic resources in anchoring the motivations and ideologies of IPOs and suspects in PSI. However, scholarship has not significantly interrogated the resourcefulness of suspects' contextually ambiguous affirmative responses in PSI. Dearth of discursive studies of suspects' context-motivated responses has undermined the conversational analytical strength of suspects' utterances. Besides, paucity of cooperative principles-driven studies in PSI has prevented an analysis of the implications of flouting the principles governing interaction in PSI. The goal of this study, therefore, is to engage a discursive import of suspects' affirmative responses in PSI. This study maintains that in some cases, where suspects express agreement to IPOs' questions, such expression of agreement flout co-operative principles propounded by Grice (1975). In a bid to extend the frontiers of studies in PSI, this paper examines contextdriven implications of suspects' affirmative responses in PSI. This study contends that suspects' expression of agreement to IPOs' questions during interrogation violates certain cooperative principles, and such violation contextually performs a number of discursive acts.

The study is premised on the following questions: What are the discursive acts performed by suspects' affirmative responses? Why do suspects flout conversational principles during PSI? What are the implications of suspects' flouting of conversational principles in PSI? To engage the aforementioned questions, this study adopts Grice's (1975) cooperative principles as its theoretical framework, considering its strength in handling the contextual peculiarities of utterances. A study of this nature is timely and significant. Apart from extending the coverage of context-sensitiveness of suspects' affirmative responses in PSI, the findings of the study would serve pedagogical purposes. Also, a study of this nature would extend the frontiers of studies in forensic discourse. The study adopts the qualitative approach in explicating the context-specific implications of suspects' responses in PSI. This study is divided into sections. The first section introduces the thrust of the study while the second section critiques existing studies in PSI, and presents the

tenets of the theory that anchors the study. Section three de- scribes the data analytical procedure while section four presents the findings of the study. The last section concludes and makes recommendations for further linguistic inquiry on PSI.

2. Literature Review

A number of scholarly works have engaged the resourcefulness of discursive practices in different contexts. Studies (Heritage 2002; McCarthy 2003; Koshik 2012; Nicola 2012) have interrogated the dynamics of discursive devices in conversations. Scholarly works (Abbe/Brandson 2014; Szczyrbak 2014; Akinrinlola 2016; Akinrinlola 2018; Akinrinlola 2019; Omoroghomwan 2018; Ajayi/Akinrinlola forthcoming) have also investigated PSI as a peculiar form of institutional discourse. Such studies are devoted to investigating how language and context interact in expressing ideologies in PSI. Commenting on the role of social status in PSI, Thornborrow (2007) notes that, PSI is largely influenced by status of participants. She harps on the position of the suspects as the endangered zone in police interrogation. Social status, according to her, could place suspects in disadvantaged position during interrogation. From the same perspective, Nicola (2012) maintains that the social position of suspects influences the case-related phase of interrogation. She uses data from traffic police officers, where she analyses the conversation of traffic officers. The study shows that traffic police officers compromise the contents of interrogation with respect to suspects' social status.

Drawing data from PSI, Koshik (2012) investigates yes/no questions in PSI. The study adopts discourse analytical tool to engage the contributions of the participants in the interaction. Koshik concludes that the construction of polar question is not dependent on design of the question, but on the action they are used to perform. McCarthy (2003) studies the pattern of every day interaction, paying particular attention to the response tokens. He observes that high- frequency short-listener response tokens fulfil the criteria of being superfluous to transactional needs of being focused on the interpersonal plane of discourse, and that social functions seem to overlap with those of phatic relations. Considering the import of negative constructions in conversation, Heritage (2002) examines the import of negative interrogatives such as isn't it, don't you in casual conversation. The study uses interviews, and the result reveals that the use of negative interrogatives limits cases of questioning. He reveals further that such interrogatives are recurrently produced and treated as a vehicle for assertions. He, however, notes that the accompanying statements are not. Heritage (2015) investigates the discursive import of well in English conversation. The study maintains that the discursive practice of well functions as procedural alert that the turn it prefaces will privilege its speaker in communicative interaction. Using a corpus of 784 well prefaced turns, he argues that responses to

questions, topic shift, topic closure, corroboration and judgments are the contextual functions of well prefaced turns.

Drawing data from police interviews, Abbe/Brandson (2014) investigate how rapport is built and managed in police interview. The study holds that rapport in police interview can increase information from witnesses and improve trust, cooperation, agreement and negotiation. He however, regrets that law enforcement agents pay little or attention to rapport in police inter- rogation. Szczyrbak (2014) studies pragmatic marker use in police interviews. He specifically engages the use of I mean and you know in PSI. The study reveals that the said pragmatic markers perform the functions of inviting addressee's inferences, serving interpersonal functions, managing turns and serving repair mechanism. Akinrinlola (2016) examines elicitation and response strategies in PSI in Ibadan, Nigeria. The study adopts a fusion of critical dis- course analysis and Mey's pragmatic acts theory to engage recorded interrogation sessions on burglary, murder, arson, kidnapping and rape. The study reveals that IPOs and suspects per- form certain pragmatic acts such as rebuking, appealing, confronting, commanding, rejecting and affirming. On the import of laughter in PSI, Ajayi/Akinrinlola (forthcoming) investigate the discursive import of laughter in PSI Ibadan, Nigeria. The study uses recorded police inter- rogation on criminal cases as corpus. An application of multi-modal theory on the corpus reveals that IPOs and suspects adopt laughter to douse tension, reduce the severity of crime and sustain interaction.

Akinrinlola (2018) engaged the significance of turn management in PSI. He uses recorded sessions of police interrogation as corpus. The study reveals that IPOs and suspects rely on the deployment of turns, especially Current Speaker Continues (CSC) to project inherent ideologies in the interaction. Considering the influence of police behaviouralpattern on criminal identification, Omoroghomwan (2018) examines four known police behavioural strategies towards criminal identification among police personnel in Nigeria. The study uses two hundred and seventeen (217) respondents. Analysis of data reveals that police officers' use of service and defection is vital to criminal identification. It establishes that the strategy assists the police in tracking criminal activities. On the use of deixis in PSI, Akinrinlola (2019) reveals that deixis functions as resourceful discourse device used in expressing collectivism, labelling, assertion and legitimacy during police interrogation.

From the foregoing, it is clear that scholarly works have commendably engaged discursive practices in casual conversation and institutional settings. Studies (Heritage 2002; McCarthy 2003; Thomborrow 2007; Koshik 2012; Nicola 2012) on the dynamics of discursive practice in casual conversation have established the resourcefulness of conversational devices. These studies are relevant to the present study in that the discursive import of conversational mark- ers is commendably examined. However, the difference lies in the focus and scope; while the aforementioned studies are not devoted to investigating the place of the suspect, the present study is investigates suspects' ambiguous

expression of agreement in PSI. This study agrees with Abbe/Brandson (2014) and Sczzyrbak (2014) on the discourse analytical strength of discursive markers in managing turns during police interview. However, the present study con- tends that contextual dynamics ambiguate suspects' responses in PSI. Besides, existing stud- ies on PSI (Akinrinlola 2016, 2018; Ajayi/Akinrinlola forthcoming) concentrate on the dis- cursive devices employed in enacting, legitimising and sustaining power relations in PSI. Scholarly works have not sufficiently engaged the place of the suspects in Nigeria, especially with regard to how their responses to interrogation function. It is against this background that this study examines the discursive import of suspects' affirmative responses in PSI in Ibadan, Nigeria.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Communication thrives on a number of social ethics. Interlocutors are required to observe these ethics in communicative encounters. Observance of the rules of communication contributes significantly to the achieving communication goals. Grice (1975) holds that utterances convey meaning in relation to contexts. As a dynamic phenomenon, context is the continually changing surroundings that enables the participants to interact, and in which the linguistic expression of their interaction become intelligible. He identifies the logical content of a statement and the implicature (what is left unsaid). Grice (1975) proposes some conversation- al principles that guide interlocutors in the course of interaction. To him, these principles are important to make communication easier and to avoid breakdown. Such principles are also necessary for meaning interpretation. When people talk, it is important that they are saying what needs to be said rather than more than needs to be said. People communicate, whether they use language or not, whether they observe syntactic rules or not, people have to tell something during communication. Communicate requires people to cooperate. The bare facts of conversation come alive only in a mutually accepted; pragmatically determined context. The concept has been elevated to an independent principle in the work of Grice (1975) whose cooperative principles consist of four maxims:

The maxim of quantity

i. Make your contribution as informative as required.
ii. Do not make your contribution more informative than required.

The maxim of quality

i. Do not say what you believe to be false.
ii. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The maxim of relation

i. Make your contribution relevant.

The maxim of manner

i. Avoid obscurity.
ii. Avoid ambiguity.
iii. Be brief.
iv. Be orderly.

Grice (1975) maintains that the above principles are expected to be observed so as to achieve some ends in conversation (Yule 1996). However, Thomas (1995) notes that these cooperative principles could be violated or flouted in communicative encounters. He differentiates between flouting a maxim and violating a maxim. To Thomas (1995), violating a maxim de- notes non observance of a maxim with no intention of deceiving interlocutors while flouting a maxim means conscious disregard to a maxim with the intention of manipulating interlocutors. Such manipulation, according Thomas (1995), is intended to achieve a speaker's conversational ends. In similar vein, Cutting (2002) corroborates Thomas' (1995) submission on the discursive import of violating a maxim. Cutting (2002) surmises that when a speaker violates a maxim in conversation, such violation is a discourse act which has far-reaching implications on the entire discourse. He notes that a speaker could perform a number of acts via violation of cooperative principles. Commenting on the import of cooperative principle in discourse, Paltridge (2006) holds that a conversational engagement of maxims enables better production and interpretation of discourse to understand what extent people are following maxims. He conceives of maxims in terms of principles that constraint participants in a conversation.

This study maintains that Grice's (1975) cooperative principles are appropriate in investigating discursive practices in institutional setting such as PSI. As a discourse genre that is structured in adjacency pairs, PSI features interrogation between IPOs and suspects. In such encounter, IPOs and suspect break conversational rules to project their discursive goals. In other words, IPOs and suspects work at cross purposes, and in such situation, cooperation tends to be threatened because the participants are constrained to violate and flout cooperative principles in a bid to achieve some ends. Existing studies have described the dimensions of power in PSI (Heydon 2005; Nicola 2012; Akinrinlola 2016). However, studies have been silent on the resourcefulness of cooperative principles in engaging affirmative responses in PSI. This study is premised on the fact that suspects' affirmative responses could be ambiguous in some contexts. It is against this background that this study investigates instances of violation of Grice (1975) Paul's cooperative principles between IPOs and suspects in SCIID, Iyaganku, Ibadan, Nigeria.

3. Data and Analytical Procedure

Data for the study comprise interrogation sessions tape-recorded at the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID),

Ìyágànkú, Ibadan, Oyo State. SCIID, Ibadan is a unit of the Nigeria Police Force devoted to crime investigation. It is a section of the Force to which serious crime cases within Oyo State are referred. The said unit parades highly trained police officers who are versed in crime investigation skills. Having sought approval letters from relevant authorities, interrogation sessions on burglary and stealing, attempted rape, felony, robbery, kidnapping, affray and conspiracy were tape-recorded. For ethical reasons, permission to tape-record interrogation sessions was also sought from the suspects, and such permission was documented. The names and locations of suspects are coded. The non- participant observation technique was adopted. The ethnographic observation was complemented with structured and unstructured interview. Fifty IPOs (twenty of which are within the rank and file and thirty within the inspectorate cadre and above) were interviewed on the motivation behind suspects' ambiguous affirmative responses during police interrogation. The essence of such interview was to compare the submissions of the IPOs with the results of the study.

However, fifteen cases were purposively selected because of their relative manifestation of ambiguity in suspects' affirmative responses (yes) in the interaction. The data collected were transcribed into text, and for conversations in Yoruba and Pidgin, efforts were made to trans- late them into the English language. The translation process follows a one-to-one process to ensure that meaning is not distorted in the analysis. Grice's (1975) cooperative principle was adopted to investigate suspects' adherence to the rules governing PSI, especially with regard to the use of affirmative responses. Suspects' responses in the data are closely studied, and cases of violation or flouting of cooperative principles (maxims) are identified and described in relation to the prevailing contexts. The conversational acts, discursive import and implications of such violations are described. Grice's (1975) cooperative principles are adopted to investigate the discursive functions of suspects' affirmative responses in the interaction.

4. Data Analysis

With regard to the sampled data, suspects flout conversational maxims to achieve some ends in their interaction with IPOs. One of the contextual implications of flouting cooperative maxims is to subtly express agreement, but such agreement is subtly expressed in a bid to challenge IPOs. An instance of suspects' expression of challenge is presented below:

4.1. Challenging IPOs' Claims Excerpt 1

P: Who is XX to you?
S: He is my nephew.
P: Were you there when he made the promise?

S: Yes, but I told the IPO to investigate others very well.

P: What made you stand as guarantor for him?

S: I knew him very well as a responsible boy.

P: Why have you not paid the debt? Are you ready to appear in court?

S: Yes, as long as others will be there, and all necessary protocols are observed.

P: Why did you say so? Are we inexperienced in this job?

Excerpt 1 is a case of perversion of justice. One Mrs. XX arrested her tenants for tampering with some electrical installations in her house. One of the arrested tenants, XX, was interrogated, and was fined the sum of twenty thousand naira (20,000). One of the conditions for his release was a provision of a guarantor who must also ensure the suspect appear at the Police Station the following week. The suspect eventually failed to meet the conditions, and the guarantor was arrested. In the interaction, the IPO's attempt to understand the relationship between the suspect and the guarantor in line 1 necessitates the suspect to respond positively to the question asked. It could be safely said that the structure of the question asked in line 1 enhances the needed response. In line 2, the IPO asks if the suspect was there when the real suspect made the promise to pay the said amount, and provide his guarantor. The IPO's ques- tion in line 2 is also structured to elicit positive response from the suspect, considering the fronting of the auxiliary verb, were. The suspect, however, uses the affirmative, yes to initiate positive response. Although the suspect's use of yes in the interaction expresses agreement with the IPO's question, such expression of agreement flouts the maxim of quantity. Since the maxim of quantity favours appropriate information in interaction, the suspect consciously flouts the maxim of quantity by including, "But I told the IPO to investigate others very well".

With particular attention to context of the interaction, the suspect flouts the maxim of quantity by providing unnecessary information. Such unwarranted inclusion is intended to achieve certain discursive ends. The suspect's use of "But I told the IPO to investigate others very well" questions and challenges the stance of the IPO. The suspect uses such inclusion to technically initiate the path of exoneration by alleging that other tenants (suspects) should be interrogated. The suspect's statement covertly alleges other tenants of being responsible for the crime. The suspect equally flouts the maxim of quality by insisting that other tenants should be interrogated because he lacks adequate evidence that proves the culpability of other ten- ants. Asked if he will like to appear in court, the suspect responds in line 8, "Yes, as long as others will be there, and all necessary protocols are observed". The suspect's response in line 8 flouts the maxim of quantity; instead of giving an affirmative response, he deliberately includes the presence of other tenants, and the notion of protocols which are not relevant to the question asked. The flouting of such maxim is intended to challenge the position of the IPO, and seek exoneration. This study agrees with Akinrinlola's (2016) analysis of contextual functions of affirmative responses. However, this study extends the scope of affirmative responses in context by asserting that

affirmative response, particularly in PSI could be adopted to challenge the position the IPO who is considered as the more powerful participant in PSI.

4.2. Indicating continued attention

Excerpt 2

P: E don reach five years wey you don dey manage the firm now? (You have been managing the firm for some five years now?9

S: Yes sir as person wey dey in charge of operations. (Yes sir as a substantive head of operations.)

P: Wetin you mean?

(What do you mean?)

S: Oga, I don serve as assistant for two years before dem make me head self.

(Sir, I also served in acting capacity for two years before I was appointed Head.)

P: You dey always give your payment receipts to your boss? (Did you always submit your purchase receipts to your boss?)

S: Yes, especially wen we dey close.

(Yes, especially when we were still very close.)

P: Explain watin you mean by very close. That one get anything to do with telling your oga everything about the business?

(Please explain what you mean by very close? Does closeness relate to being ac countable to your boss?)

S: Yes sir; e get o. Some people badmouth me no be small for oga side. Since that time, my oga no trust me again.

(Yes sir; it does. Some people painted me black before my boss. Since then, he does not trust me again.)

P: The papers and receipts wey dey our place show sey person forge them o. You no follow for all these?

(The papers and receipts here show traces of forgery and manipulations. Were you not involved in all these?)

S: Yes oga. I sure my oga wife with some workers here wan put me for trouble.

(Yes sir. I am sure my boss' wife connived with some of my workers to implicate me.)

Excerpt 2 presents a case of conspiracy and stealing. The suspect was arrested for mismanaging a firm. The suspect in question misappropriated the sum of three million naira meant for the day to day running of the firm. In the interaction above, the IPO asks about his position in the firm in line 2. The suspect's response in line 3 consciously flouts the maxim of quantity. The IPO's question demands either a yes or no. In a bid to sustain the attention of the IPOS, the suspect says, "Yes sir as a substantive head of operations". The suspect deliberately includes the details of his position so as to assert his influence. As the IPO negotiates the case related phase of the interrogation, he asks the suspect if he usually gives his sales receipts to his boss. The suspect's response, "Yes, especially when we were

still very close" in line 5 flouts the maxims of quantity and quality, relation and manner. Instead of giving exact information in terms of yes/no, the suspect includes, "When we were very close" to sustain the attention of the IPO. The inclusion of the subordinate clause, "When we were very close", is meant to seek the continued attention of the IPO. In other words, the use of such clause could elicit further questions on relationship between the suspect and his boss.

On the maxim of quality, the suspect does not have convincing evidence to establish the state of friendship between him and his boss, and how such relationship affects the business. The inclusion of such clause flouts the maxim of relevance in that such statement is not germane to whether he provides the receipts of payment to his master or not. Besides, such statement also flouts the maxim of manner in that the statement is ambiguous. There is no corresponding relationship between the provision of receipts of payment and the relationship between the suspect and his boss; both statements are mutually exclusive of each other. It is apposite to state that these maxims are flouted in the interaction to seek continued attention of the IPO. The suspect's preference for continued attention of the IPO is meant to provide the suspect ample opportunity to weave his responses, allocate his turns to hold the floor. The same goes for line 9 where the IPO confirms the suspect's mischievous acts with regard to the manipulation of receipts presented. Asked if he was not involved in the manipulations, he responds, "Yes sir. I am sure my boss' wife connived with some of my workers to implicate me". The suspect's mention of his boss's wife conniving with some people to implicate him is quite irrelevant to the subject of the discourse. This study establishes that the use of the affirmative response yes in an institutional setting like PSI is used by suspects to continually seek attention of the IPO. While this study negates Koshik's (2012) submission on the import of affirmative responses in casual communication, the study is in tandem with Nicola (2012) and Akinrinlola (2018) on the contextual dynamics of affirmative responses in institutional discourse.

4.3 Confirming innocence

Suspects' affirmative responses contextually express confirmation of innocence in PSI. Excerpt 3 depicts the contextual resourcefulness of suspects' affirmative responses in confirming their innocence.

Excerpt 3

P: XX dárúkọ rẹ pé o pẹ#lú àwon ọ#daràn náà.

(XX mentioned your name as part of the gang.)

S: Ọ# gá, mo mà pé ọlọ#run máa kómi yọ. (Sir, I know God will vindicate me.)

P: Sé o darapọ# máwon ni XX? (Did you join them at the XX?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá . Mo sọfún ọlọ#pàá XX. Mo kàn lọ síbẹ# lọ fún won nínkan ni. (Yes sir but I told IPO XX. I only went there to drop an item.)

P: DD ní wón san owó fún ẹ níbẹ#.

(DD also said you were paid some money at the scene. True or false?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá, sùgbón kòní se pẹ#lú ẹjọ# náà.

(Yes sir, but the money has nothing to do with the case.)

P: Sé o ní àmì ìdánilójú pé oòsí lárawon?

(Do you have any proof to show you were not involved?)

S: Ọlọ#pàá, bẹ#ẹ#ni! Mo ní àwon ẹlẹ#rígan an. (Officer, yes! I have witnesses, too.)

P: Sé o ma nkan tí àwon ọmọdékùnrin yìí nse? (Do you know what the boys do?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá. ọ#danràn niwón. Wón má n ja àwon ará ìlú lólè.

(Yes sir. They are dubious. They rob people of their belongings in the neighbour hood.)

P: Wón mú XX fún irú ẹ#sẹ# yìí ní osù tó kọjá. Njẹ# o gbọ#?

(XX was arrested for the same offence last two months. Are you aware?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni, olèni. Mi ò kìn se irú n kan bẹ#ẹ#.

(Yes, he is a known criminal. I don't involve in such things, sir.)

Excerpt 3 is a case of robbery. The suspect was arrested for being part of the gang that robbed a named community Chairman in XX. The suspect was alleged to have been spotted at a particular meeting point. He was arrested and detained for interrogation. In the interaction, the IPO asks the suspect if he joined the other suspects at the venue of the meeting. The suspect's response, "Yes sir, but I told IPO XX. I only went there to drop an item", in line 4 flouts the maxim of quantity for being unnecessarily informative. The suspect's undue informative response does not express agreement with the IPO's question, but performs the discursive act of confirming the suspect's innocence. Instead of giving yes as the required response, he (the suspect) answers yes, but includes a coordinating conjunction but to establish a contrast between his use of yes to express agreement and his intended meaning in the discourse. The suspect's use of but introduces another contextual meaning to his response. He acknowledges the fact that he joined them at the venue, but his use of but creates justification for his action. He (the suspect) flouts the maxim of quantity to establish his innocence by affirming that he informs IPO XX about his actions and as such, he is not supposed to be sanctioned. His response in line 4 provides rationale for his action of going to the venue to drop an item.

In a bid to dissociate himself from the crime, the suspect flouts the maxim of quantity to establish that he is not legitimately involved in the crime. Flouting the maxim of quantity implies that his action has the backing of the IPO. The IPO alleges the suspect to have collected some money at the scene, but the suspect contends that such money has nothing to do with the case. In line 6, the suspect consciously flouts the maxim of quantity and quality to seek innocence. Apart from giving more than required information in line 6, the suspect does not give justifiable evidence to establish his innocence in the crime. These maxims are flouted by the suspect to assert his innocence. In line 8, the suspect confirms that he is not part of the gang, and that he has those that can testify to his innocence. The suspect's use of the affirmative response, "Officer, yes! I have witnesses, too" in line 8 establishes grounds for his

innocence. His flouting of maxim of quantity in line 8 by mentioning that he has witnesses introduces the third party (witnesses) to the subject of interrogation. The suspect's emphasis on witnesses is aimed at attesting to his innocence in the crime. Contrary to Heritage's (2002) and Thornborrow's (2007) submissions of the use of affirmative responses to seek agreement in interaction, this study reveals that affirmatives are contextually used in PSI to confirm suspects' innocence during crime investigation.

4.4. Negating IPOs' testimonies

As part of strategies of wriggling themselves out of crimes, suspects weave affirmative responses to negate IPOs' testimonies. The data below showcases the rationale behind the use of affirmative responses to negate IPOs' testimonies in PSI.

Excerpt 4

P: XX ní o jí ọmọ náà nígbà tí o n sùn lọ#wọ#.

(XX confirmed that you hijacked the baby while She was sleeping.)

S: Ọ# gá, miò ja gbà.

(Sir, I did not.)

P: Óyá dúró, o yọ# wọle nígbà tí kòsí ẹnìkankan nílé. Bẹ#ẹ#ni tàbí bẹ#ẹ#kọ#?

(Ok, listen! You Sneaked into the apartment when nobody was around. Yes or no?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá, sùgbón miò gbé ọmọ naáà. Báwo ni màá se jí ọmọ náà gbé nígbà tí àwon ènìyàn wà ní àdúgbò? Miò gbé ọmọ náà, ọ#gá

(Yes sir, but I did not carry the baby. How would I have carried the baby when some people were in the neighbourhood? I did not carry the baby, sir.)

P: Ọ# gbẹ#ni XX lé ọ láti gba ọmọ náà lọ#wọ# re ní déédé agogo méjìláá ọ#sán. (Mr. XX pursued you to get the baby from you at 12 noon.)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá, sùgbón ọmọ náà ti súnmó ojú títì márosẹ#. ìdí nìyí tí mo fi fẹ# koyọ nínú ewu.

(Yes sir, but the baby was very close to the express. That was why I attempted to save her.)

P: O fẹ# koyọ nínú ewu. Sé o mà pé o ti sẹ# sí òfin nípa gbígbé ọmọ tí kìí se tìẹ?

(You attempted to save her. Do you know you have committed a crime for taking a baby that is not yours?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá. Mo seé torí ìfẹ# tí mo ni sí ìdílé náà. Ó ti se díẹ# tí a ti jẹ# ọ#rẹ#. Óse díẹ# tí a ti jẹ# òrẹ# àtipé ìdílé wón ti ránmí lọ#wọ# nígbàkan rí.

(Yes sir I did it out of concern for the family. We have been friends for some years now, and the family had assisted me in the past.)

P: Sé wón ti fi ẹ#sùn yí lọ# ẹ# rí?

(Have you been arrested for this kind of offence before?)

S: Rárá ọ#gá.

(No sir.)

Excerp 4 presents a case of kidnapping. The suspect was arrested for kidnapping a baby girl at XX. The suspect was consequently arrested and interrogated. In the course of the interrogation, the suspect deliberatly flouts the cooprative maxims to achieve some discursive ends. In tracking his involvement in the kidnapping case, the IPO intends to establish his involvement in the case by delving into how the suspect carried oout the dastardly act. The IPO's question, which is rendered in polar form to establishes that the suspect sneaked into house to commit the crime when nobody was at home, is meant to establish the culpability of the supect. In response, the suspect ignores the cooperative maxim of quantity. In other words, the discursive structure of the IPO's question is ignored to assert the suspect's aim. Instead of either responding in the affirmative or in the negative, the suspect in line 4 deliberately questions the IPO's stance by rendering the IPO's stance invalid. The suspect invalidates the IPO's testimonies by enaging a rhetorical question to initiate innocence. His response, "Yes sir, but I did not carry the baby. How would I have carried the baby when some people were in the neighbourhood? I did not carry the baby, sir," introduces agreement, but such agreement is negated.

To further invalidate the IPO's stance, the suspect rhetorically questions the IPO's testimonies by projecting impossibiities that shroud the testimonies of the IPO. The suspect affirms that some people were in the neighbourhood, and such act could not have been successfully orchestrated. The maxims of quantity, quality and relation are flouted to thwart the discursive import of the IPO's questions. Instead of responding appropriately, the suspect gives more than the required information for which he lacks evidence. Besides, such statement (when some people were in the neighbourhood) of the suspect is not related to whether he kidnapped the baby or not. Even when the IPO establishes in line 6 that the suspect was given a hot chase to get the baby from him, the suspect responds in the affirmative, but contends that his act is carried out to save the baby's life. One can infer from the study that affirmative responses are consciously used by suspects in PSI to technically manipulate IPOs during interrogation. Suspects introduce affirmative responses, but negate the import of such affirmatives in a bid to achieve their goals. The study aligns with Akinrinlola's (2017) sub mission that discursive devices are pointers to meaning in PSI.

4.5. Initiating a discourse

In PSI, suspects resort to the use of affirmative responses to create stories within the structure of PSI. Such creation of irrelevant narrative is consciously done to make IPOs lose track of interrogation sessions. An example from the data is shown below:

Excerpt 5

P: Sé ilé kan nìwọ àti ọ#gbẹ#ni XX àti ìyáàfin XX jọn gbéni? (Do you live in the same house With Mr. and Mrs. XX?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#ga,mo máa n rìnrìn àjò láti lọ kí àwon ẹbí mi ní XX. (Yes sir, I travel often to see my family in XX.)

P: Ìkan lára àwon alábágbá rẹ# río tíò n fi ọwọ pa ọmọ yìí lára. Bẹ#ẹ#ni tàbí bẹ#ẹ#kọ# (You were caught by one of your neighbours, fondling this little girl. Yes or no?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni, ọ#gá. ọmọkùnrin náà rími nígbaà tí mo n yẹ ara ọmọdebìnrin náà wò. Alábágbé kan sọfún mi pé ọmọdebìnrin náà ò lọ sí ilé ìwé fún ọjọ# díẹ# torí àìsan. (Yes sir. The man saw me with the girl when I was checking her body. A neighbour

told me the girl had not gone to school for some days because of illness.)

P: Sé dókítà tàbí nọ#ọ#sì ni ọ# ni? (Are you a doctor or nurse?)

S: Rárá ọ#ga. Mon tọ#jú àwon ọmọdé láyikaa mi. (No sir. I care for children in my area.)

P: O n tọ#jú àwon ọmọdé láyikaa mi láyikáà mi. (You care for children in your area?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá. Gbogbo ènìyàn lómà. Mo ní ajo tí n se ìtọ#jú àwon ọmọdé ní agbègbè mi. Gbogbo àwon ọmọ tí ó wà ní agbègbè mi ni ó ti gba ìnawọ# sí nínú àgbékalẹ# yìí. Báwo ni irú mi se lè se irú n kan bẹ#ẹ#?

(Yes sir, everybody knows. I run children's welfare scheme in my area. All children in the neighbourhood are beneficiaries of the scheme. How will someone like me do such a thing?)

P: Kílódé tíò n fi ọwọ pa ọmọ náà lára? Njẹ# àwon òbí rẹ# wà níbẹ# nígbà tíò n fi ọwọ pa ọmọ kekere náà lára?

(Why were you fondling the little girl? Were her parents there when you were fon dling her?)

S: Rárá ọ#gá. Miò fi ọwọ# paá lara. (No sir. I did not fondle her.)

P: Sé àwon ènìyàn le gbẹ#ríẹ jẹ# ní agbègbè re?

(Can people attest to your integrity in your area?)

S: Bẹ#ẹ#ni ọ#gá, olùsọ# àgùntàn nimí. Wón ti pèmí kín wá parí aáwọ# láàrín àwon òbí ọmọdébìnrin kékeré yìí ní ọ#pọ# ìgbà. Mi ò le se irú n kan bẹ#ẹ#.

(Yes sir, I am also a pastor. I have been invited to settle dispute between the parents of this girl a number of time. I can't do such thing, sir.)

Excerpt 5 presents a case of attempted rape. One Mr. XX was caught fondling a little girl in his nieghbourhood. A concerned neighbour raised an alarm, and the man in question was arrested by the parents of the girl. Maxims of quantity and relevance are flouted by creating discourse within interrogation to make IPOs lose track of interrogation sessions. In engaging the case, the IPO commits the suspect to the interrogation by establishing that the suspect was caught fondling the little girl. The suspect responds by flouting the maxims quantity, relevance and manner by initiating stories within his testimonies. The suspect's affirmative responses are discursively engaged to acheive a number of discursive goals in the interaction. In line 4 of the excerpt above, the IPO affirms that the suspect was found fondling the girl. However, the suspect responds by disrgarding the maxim of quantity by establishing that he only acts on information he receives concerning the girl's ill health, and that the girl has not been in school for some days owing to illness.

Apart from flouting the maxim of quantity, the suspect equally flouts the maxim of relevance because his expected yes or no response is

unrealated to his information about the health of the girl in question. Though the suspect affirms that he checks the girl's body, the suspect deliberately flouts the maxim of manner by manipulating lexical choices to seek innocence in the encounter. The IPO alleges that the suspect fondles the baby. The choice of fondles overtly expresses illegal sexual relations with the girl in question. The suspect, however, ignores fondles and settles for check. He (the suspect) says he checks the girl's body. The choice of check by the suspect connotes innocence. The suspect curiously engages affirmative response to subtley express agreement, but such agreement is created to infuse stories within the structure of the interaction. The IPO further queries the suspect's claim that he cares for children in the neighburhood. The suspect responds by flouting the maxim of quantity by asserting his inflence in his neighbourhood. He says, "Yes sir, everybody knows. I run children's welfare scheme in my area. All children in the neighbourhood are beneficiaries of the scheme. How will someone like me do such a thing?". The suspect's introduction of welfarism as his calling introduces another discourse in the interrogation.

Asked if people can attest to his integrity in his area, the suspect introduces another stretch of discourse by affirming that he is a pastor. The suspect's inclination to pastorial responsibility is premised on the fact that pastors are suppossed not to engage in nefarious acts. In the interaction, the suspect uses affirmative responses to subtley express agremment, but such expression of agreement is orchestrated through the creation of discourse within the structure of the interaction. The motivation behind the creation of such discourse is to narrate extraneous details. Such extraneous information is discursively constructed to dissuade IPOs from the subject of interrogation. While Ajayi/Akinrinlola (forthcoming) holds that PSI features prominently the manipulative engagement of linguistic devices by IPOs to enact power, this study contends that linguistic resources are also engaged by suspects to achieve desired goals during PSI.

4.6. Contextual implication of suspects' affirmative responses in policesuspect interaction

PSI is cooperative activity that features the projection of inherent discursive ideologies of IPOs and suspects. While IPOs are known to hold and sustain power in the interaction, suspects are constructed as victims of IPOs' discursive constructions. The responses of suspects are consciously constructed by IPOs. Affirmative responses of suspects perform quite a number of discursive acts in specific contexts. This study establishes that IPOs' questions are intended to either elicit affirmative or negative response from suspects. However, the notion of context of discourse has not been engaged to underscore the multiplicity of meanings that suspects' responses assume in contexts. This study's investigation of the implications of suspects' flouting of cooperative maxims identified by Grice (1975) shows that suspects do more than mere expression of agreement in their interaction with suspects. With

regard to PSI in Nigeria, this study shows that suspects manipulate affirmative responses to enact power, hold the floor, sustain their turns and register their influence. In the course of interrogation, suspects flout the cooperative maxims by deploying affirmative responses to seek the path of exoneration. Suspects challenge the positions of IPOs, confirm their innocence, seek continued attention and initiate new discourse within the structure of the interaction.

5. Conclusion

This study has undertaken a discursive analysis of suspects' affirmative responses in PSI. While existing studies have concentrated on the use of affirmative responses in casual communication, this study examines the contextual dimensions of affirmative responses in PSI with particular attention to the place of the suspect. This study establishes that the place of the suspect has not been adequately examined in PSI. While it is assumed that, IPOs create power and sustain power in PSI (Harworth 2017; Akinrinlola 2018; Akinrinlola/Farinde 2018), this study maintains that suspects also challenge IPOs' institution by manipulating their responses within specific contexts. One of the instruments deployed in challenging IPOs' position during interrogation is the use of their responses. While existing studies have documented the use of affirmative responses in expressing agreement, this study reveals that suspects, with particular attention to contextual realities, violate the cooperative maxims in PSI. Such blatant violation of the cooperative maxims is consciously done to challenge IPOs, confirm and assert their innocence, initiate a new discourse and negate IPOs' testimonies. It could be inferred that one of the ways to examine the contributions of suspects during PSI is to subject their responses to critical discursive analysis. A critical discursive engagement of suspects' responses reveals the contextually mediated social acts negotiated in their responses. This study recommends further discursive engagement of how resistance is created, managed and sustained in PSI.

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