

Positive Face Threatening Acts Used By Kenya's Members Of The 12th National Assembly

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Abstract

Positive face threatening acts impinge upon positive face desires of interlocutors. These acts threaten hearer's desire to be liked when a speaker does not care about his/her interactant's feelings/wants or does not want what the other wants. In conversations, interlocutors try to protect their positive public image and want to be seen as valuable members of the society. Politeness strategies are utilized by interlocutors in order to reduce the effects of face threats to interacting parties. This paper concentrated on the speeches of selected Members of Kenya's 12th National Assembly in parliament context in order to find out the positive face threatening acts that they use. The objective of this paper was to discuss how positive face threatening acts are used by members of Kenya's 12th National Assembly. Politeness theory by Brown & Levinson (1987) was used to analyze, interpret and discuss the data collected. This paper used purposive sampling where only utterances with positive face threatening acts were selected for inclusion in the paper. The speeches were downloaded from the Hansard and analyzed using content analysis method. A guiding card was used to identify positive face threatening acts. The findings of this paper are expected to add to the existing literature in the field of sociolinguistics and pragmatics.

Key words: Face, Face threatening act, politeness, positive face

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I. Introduction

This paper discusses how members of Kenya's 12th National Assembly use positive FTAs in their discourse. This section is divided into facework, positive face, positive face threatening acts and theoretical framework.

1.1. Facework

Each person desires to present themselves in the public with honor, respect and dignity. The faces people take are dependent on the context. Goffman (1955) notes that culture, society and the situation of an utterance dictate the kind of face individuals adapt. At times, face is threatened by FTAs that run contrary to face needs of the hearer. This makes a hearer maintain facework in order to reduce face threats towards interacting parties. Qian (2014) states that facework is a central and enduring feature of all inter-personal relationships in communication. Facework is concerned with communication activities that help to create, maintain and sustain connections. It is through facework that we validate our face. Even though we enact different faces, we depend upon other people to confirm and accept that face (Goffman, 1955). Yule (1996) postulates that people need to be mindful of what to say, how to say and when to say in social interactions and in specific contexts. This shows the importance of considering the context of an utterance before it is made. Redmond (2015) observes that it is the presence of other people that make face to exist since it is a positive image that we present to other people. Brown (1970) characterized positive face by desire to be liked, admired and related to positively. Watts (2003) explains that friction in personal interaction is undesirable and facework helps reduce friction in interaction. Goffman (1955) notes that an interactant is expected to maintain considerateness by going to certain lengths to save face of everyone present. This leads to effective communication between parties. A face threatening act is said to threaten positive face when it denies a hearer his wish to be liked and admired.

1.2. Positive face

Positive face has been defined by Brown & Levinson (1987) as the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some other executors. The use of language is one of the ways in which members of the 12th National Assembly struggle to maintain a positive image in the public since language can establish or destroy a person's positive face. Murphy (2014) defined positive face in relation to politics as the desire to be

thought as a competent and popular leader amongst both other politicians and the electorates, the desire to have his/her views, actions, proposals and also legislation endorsed and supported both within the parliament and outside of it. It is the desire of all leaders to be seen as skilled and effective by the general public and their colleagues. They want their views to be accepted and endorsed by others. This is the desire of their positive face want to be accepted. An interactant shows appreciation of their partner's positive face by noticing something positive about him/her and appreciating it. The hearer feels wanted thus saving his positive face. Participation is required in order to maintain each other's face. This occurs when interlocutors use utterances that pay attention to their partner's face needs. Positive face according to Redmond (2015) notes that positive face is at risk when power is more or less equal between communicators. The more powerful individual tends to impinge on his interactant's face without caring while the less powerful person fears directly impinging on his interactant. Redmond (2015) explains that all people have a desire to be seen as competent and to have their face accepted and any act that runs contrary to the face need becomes a face threatening act. This occurs when a speaker does not want what the hearer wants thus impinging his positive face.

1.3. Positive Face Threatening Acts

Face only exists in public and depends on a particular context since the speaker adapts a particular face depending on how he/she wants to be perceived in that environment. In the course of interaction, face can be at risk, that is, it can be threatened. Any act that runs contrary to the face wants of the hearer is said to be face threatening. Goffman (1967) defines a face threatening act as any act that impinges to some degree upon a person's face, typically insults and orders. During social interactions, interactants want to maintain each other's face according to Brown & Levinson (1987) although sometimes they are forced to do face threatening acts in order to get what they want.

Positive face threatening acts are acts that damage positive face. When the speaker and hearer do not care about their interactant's feelings and wants, or does not want what the other wants, positive face is at risk (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Positive FTAs include accusations, complaints, ridicule, criticisms, challenges and insults. These FTAs can lead to damage of the speaker's positive face. For instance, Brown (1970) indicate that self-humiliations, inability to control one's physical and emotional self makes the speaker damage his own positive face. Ana (2013) explains that when an act indicates that a speaker has lost control over a situation, it leads to a threat to his/her own face.

Positive face threatening acts can also lead to damage of the hearer's positive face. This can happen when an act expresses speaker's judgement of hearer's positive face. Brown & Levinson (1987) argue that this happens when the speaker indicates that he/she dislikes aspects of hearer's possessions or personal attributes, when the speaker indicates that the hearer is wrong or misguided. Ana (2013) argues that when positive FTAs denote interlocutor's lack of appreciation to hearer's face, it inflicts damage to one's positive face. Boasting, insults and mentioning of sensitive societal subjects also damage hearer's positive face.

Hasmi (2013) states that Nanny, the main character in *'Nanny McPhee'* movie makes use of positive politeness strategies to redress positive face threatening acts. He observes that Nanny prefers to use positive politeness strategies because most of her conversations occurs to groups of people she knows very well. This choice of a politeness strategy is motivated by their close relationship. Hasmi observes that social distance plays a great role in the choice of a politeness strategy. Hasmi (2013) uses social distance sociological variable to explain the use of positive politeness strategies. He notes that power difference made Nanny use more FTAs towards the children as compared to children who were more careful in their words.

Piia (2012) notes that lawyers mitigate positive face threatening acts by using both polite and impolite strategies in the courtroom discourse. Face threatening acts in this study occurred when lawyers argued their points towards lawyers, judges and witnesses. Lawyers use positive FTAs to attack the face of their opponents in order to discredit their arguments in an aim to win cases. This affects the public image of their opponent as a knowledgeable lawyer and one who can win cases. However, the formal setting of courtroom discourse influenced lawyers use of polite strategies to lessen threats to face.

Edi (2016) observes that positive face threatening acts generally give bad effects to hearer since they directly threaten hearer's face and show that a speaker does not care about hearer's feelings and wants. On the other hand, Edi (2016) finds out that using positive politeness strategies that redress face threatening acts generally give good effects to speaker since by a speaker not directly threatening the hearer, it shows he is willing to humble his face to avoid threatening hearer's face.

Soraya (2016) study reveals that face threatening acts are the core of both politeness and impoliteness. He notes that all speech acts are potential threats to face of both speaker and hearer. Soraya (2016) notes that positive face threatening acts are totally unavoidable in some instances while positive face damage can be greater in other instances such as use of insults. On the contrary, this study revealed that positive face threatening acts could be used to show intimacy when they are performed among very close friends in an informal context.

FTAs that impinge upon hearer's positive face desires lead to damage of positive face. Members of the National Assembly want their endorsements and opinions to be supported by their colleagues in order to save their positive face. When they are not shown appreciation and admiration, it leads to embarrassments and feelings of shame and defensiveness. Parliamentary discourse is characteristic of the use of positive face threatening acts that destroy interlocutor's positive face. A study on positive face threatening acts used by members of the 12th National Assembly is necessary and this is the gap that this paper intended to fill.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

This paper used Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. Politeness is an expression of the speaker's intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts towards the listener. It is through politeness that communication between two aggressive parties is made possible. This theory is built on the notions of face, face threatening acts and politeness strategies. Face can be positive or negative. Brown and Levinson (1987) define positive face as the want of every member be desirable to at least some other executors. This paper used this theory to identify positive FTAs that damage positive face of interlocutors. These FTAs are expressions of dislike, insults, complaints, accusations, disagreements, contradictions, challenges, excessive emotional expressions, disrespect, mention of inappropriate topics, boasting, belittling, mention of sensitive topics, interruptions, misuse of address terms, apologies, accepting compliments, being physical, lack of emotional control, self-humiliations and confessions.

II. Methodology

The population of the study consisted of all positive face threatening acts used by members of the 12th National Assembly. Purposive sampling technique was used in this paper. Five parliamentary sessions provided adequate data for analysis. Extracts from the 12th parliament proceedings were retrieved from Hansard and then content analysis of the speeches was done in order to identify relevant excerpts that contained positive face threatening acts. Speeches from the Hansard were used so no pseudonyms were used to conceal identities of members of the National Assembly since it is in the public domain.

III. Positive Face Threatening Acts Used by Kenya's Members of the 12th National Assembly

3.1. Positive Face Threatening Acts

Positive face threatening acts include: accusations, challenges, belittling, inappropriate topics, humiliations, lack of emotional control, interruptions, confessions, disagreements, disrespect, complaints, boasting, misuse of address term and insults.

1.1.1. Accusations

When the speaker accuses the hearer, it shows that he has a negative evaluation of the hearer thus threatening his/her positive face. The speaker hints an allegation towards the hearer that undermines his wish to be admired and to be related to positively. This is explained in the following examples.

FTA 1

Hon. Aden Duale: The second bill proposes amendments relating to filling vacancies in Public Service Boards among others. ... I stand to petition you to require the team you appointed to brief the house on the progress of the committee since the bill is pending. ... maybe you can ask Hon. Kimunya the vice chair to table a report.

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Kimunya is not at his usual place. Who are other members of that mediation committee?!

Hon. Aden Duale: The others are Hon. Oka Kaunya and Hon. Halima Mucheke. If any of them is here he can tell us whether they had a meeting. Hon. Kaunya is around.

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Kaunya are you aware of the membership?

Hon. Ole Kaunya: I am very aware of it. We have not held a single meeting on that issue. We have even been wondering why we are not making progress. We have not had a meeting even from within. Your direction on the basis of what the Leader of the Majority Party has just raised will be important for this House and the Committee.

Hon. Speaker: That is a serious indictment. It is sad. You are sleeping on the job.

In *FTA 1*, the speaker accuses Hon. Kaunya and the other members of the committee of sleeping on their job. This happens when Hon. Kaunya confesses that their committee has not even held a single meeting to discuss the serious issue at hand. Such an utterance of accusation portrays the addressee negatively that they are not doing their job as it is supposed to be. The hearer's positive face to be seen as a reliable and competent MP is attacked. The speaker's accusation to the committee therefore damages their positive want. Therefore,

accusations express disapproval and they threaten addressee's face since they show that the speaker has a negative evaluation of the hearer.

FTA 2

Hon. Aden Duale: Hon. Speaker, when you called the mover, the member for Kilifi North asked Hon. Mbadi hii motion ni ya kuangusha ama kupitisha? This is a very bad statement. You cannot sit in this house and you cannot read. You must read. You must read the report and make a conscious decision whether to support or not. I have read, members have read, we will contribute.

Hon. Speaker: It is not adversely; he has just been mentioned. Member for Kilifi North.

Hon. Owen Baya: Hon. Speaker, Hon. Duale takes his members the way he wants. He bulldozes them to take a position. I asked my party chairman to tell me the position of the party on this motion so that I can argue my stand and the party's stand. This idea that people must go the way he (Hon. Duale) wants must end.

Hon. Duale complains that some MPs such as Hon. Baya do not read reports before they come to present motions in parliament. He says that some MPs only rely on their party leader's opinions blindly. That statement angers Hon. Baya who accuses Hon. Duale of using his powerful position as the majority leader to bulldoze other MPs to act the way he wants. Hon. Baya accuses Hon. Duale that he likes '*taking people the way he wants*' which denies them their desire to freely give their views in the chambers. This accusation damages Hon. Duale's face. Use of this accusation in *FTA 2* reveals power difference between MPs in the house. This utterance also reveals that Hon. Duale uses his powerful position as the leader of majority to bulldoze other MPs to take his stand during debates.

FTA 3

Hon. Aden Duale: Hon. Ichung'wah has joined the lot of members who bring errors to parliament. Today we had so many errors.

In *FTA 3*, Hon. Duale accuses Hon. Ichung'wah of tabling a report to parliament full of errors. This accusation portrays Hon. Ichung'wah as a careless MP who does not notice errors before issuing reports. This damages the addressee's positive face. His desire to be seen as a competent leader is demeaned. Brown & Levinson (1987) explain that a speaker accuses the addressee when he does not like a certain aspect about him/her. The hearer's positive face is threatened because the speaker does not want what the hearer wants and also does not care about hearer's feeling and wants. Therefore, it can be concluded that hearer's positive face is threatened by accusations since a speaker does not seem to care about hearer's feelings.

1.1.2. Challenges

This paper found out that MPs use utterances of challenges in their discourse. A challenge is intended to convince the hearer to perform an action. A challenge, according to Brown & Levinson (1987), could be an indication that the speaker does not value a particular aspect of the hearer. MPs challenge each other to do some act. Challenges include asking the addressee challenging questions, questioning the position of the hearer, questioning the addressee's beliefs and ethics.

FTA 4

Hon. Robert Pukose: Hon. Speaker, on page 52, part E says that Mr. Noor gave a copy of the letter to Hon. Gedi on Friday at 4.00 PM. Later, he learnt a copy of the same was being circulated on social media. ... I am looking at moral issue of how parliamentary documents are being guarded within parliament. ... after getting the document from Noor, she went to a lounge where she left the document. That is a lame excuse. That is careless handling of sensitive information.

Hon. Speaker: The Member for Uriri, it is your chance.

Hon. Mark Nyamita: Thankyou Hon. Speaker. I have read the report. I want to challenge the committee because something seems to be missing here. How can such a document be issued to a member in the streets?

A challenge can be used to indicate that the addressee is misguided and is wrong about an issue. For instance, in *FTA 4*, Hon. Nyamita claims that after reading the report tabled by the committee accusing Hon. Fatuma Gedi of leaking a sensitive parliamentary document on the internet, he has noticed that some details were missing from the report. He therefore challenges them to be more serious in following the issue to get the facts. This threatens their positive face. The challenge suggests that their report is wrong and misguided. This means he disapproves their report. *FTA 4* is an instance of rhetorical challenge whereby the speaker challenges the addressee by using a rhetorical question without expecting a response from Hon. Nyamita but the utterance

activates the hearer's mind to show speaker's disapproval of the hearer's actions. A challenge therefore can be used to show disapproval.

FTA 5

Hon speaker: Hon. members, I want to challenge my good friend Hon. Peter Kaluma to take this up. Propose an amendment.

In the above utterance, the speaker challenges Hon. Peter Kaluma to take up the issue at hand and propose an amendment. The speaker notices Hon. Kaluma's prowess in law and therefore gives him a challenge to propose an amendment in parliament. The speaker in *FTA 5* uses his influence as the speaker of the house to challenge Hon. Kaluma to use his knowledge in law and propose an amendment in parliament. This therefore shows that the speaker shows approval of Hon. Kaluma by noticing his expertise. Therefore, a challenge can be used as a directive to get the addressee to do something. This FTA impinges on Hon. Kaluma's negative face as he may not be willing to take up the challenge. He is being coerced by the speaker to propose an amendment which he may not be willing. The same case is seen in the *FTA 5*.

FTA 6

Hon. Godfrey Osotsi: Mr. speaker I want to go on record. I know the amendment has been passed but this will stop companies from processing of data.

Hon. Deputy speaker: Hon. Osotsi you cannot rule on procedure. ... read the standing orders. Yes Hon. Odhiambo.

Hon. Millie Odhiambo: I am glad that the leader of majority has advised Hon. Osotsi. If he thinks this is a defective amendment let him convince members so that it is recommitted.

When Hon. Osotsi complains that the amendment that the MPs have just passed would stop companies from processing data, Hon. Odhiambo challenges him to convince the house otherwise so that it can be recommitted. This challenge threatens Hon. Osotsi's positive face and his desire to be thought as a competent leader and to have his views, actions, proposals and legislation endorsed by his fellow MPs. The challenge is also an indication that he does not understand the standing orders that once an amendment has been passed, a member is not supposed to complain about it in the same sitting. Members of parliament therefore use challenges to reveal their evaluation about hearer's views and actions. They also use challenges as a strategy to convince an addressee to act in a certain way. Challenges reveal that the speaker does not care about the positive face wants of the hearer.

3.1.3. Belittling

Members of parliament use utterances meant to make the addressee be seen as less important than he/she is. Belittling acts are meant to damage the addressee's positive face. Consider the following FTAs that were identified as containing acts that belittle the hearer.

FTA 7

Hon. Aden Duale: Hon. Speaker, the chairman is telling me I am wasting time. We do not waste time here. Maybe you have nothing to say but I have something.

The utterance made by Hon. Duale is meant to belittle the addressee's positive face since the chair says Hon. Duale is wasting time. Belittling acts can be taken to mean that the speaker does not like something about the hearer's needs. They show speaker's disapprobation of the hearer. Hon. Duale tells the chair that he has nothing to say in the house. This downgrades his ability as having the necessary knowledge and skills as an MP thus a threat to his positive face. Hon. Duale uses diminutive terms '*you have nothing to say*' to belittle the chair to show that he is complaining, maybe because he is not knowledgeable like him (Hon. Duale). Therefore, belittling utterances inherently threaten the addressees face. *FTA 7* explains more.

FTA 8

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Yusuf, you are not going to teach us traditions we have not found.

Hon. Yusuf Hassan: Then why is our tradition different from others like the commonwealth?

Hon. Speaker: I do not know which commonwealth you belong to. What you are suggesting is not even known anywhere in commonwealth that I know as the chair of CPA (Commonwealth Parliaments of Africa) African region. We will not allow laziness.

The speaker belittles Hon. Yusuf Hassan for claiming that Kenyan parliament is different from other parliaments of the commonwealth countries. Hon. Yusuf is referring to the issues of members being notified about the day that government officials are set to appear in parliament to answer their questions. The speaker belittles Hon. Yusuf by telling him that he is actually the chair of Commonwealth Parliaments of Africa and no parliament notifies MPs that their questions will be answered on a particular day. He refers to Hon. Yusuf as a lazy MP who only wants to appear in parliament when his question is being answered and to disappear in other days. This utterance threatens Hon. Yusuf's positive face. He is portrayed as incompetent since the speaker says he cannot allow his laziness in the house. Belittling has been used in this case to show that the speaker dislikes the aspect of laziness from Hon. Yusuf. Therefore, from the above examples, it can be concluded that belittling threatens hearer's positive face and it shows that the speaker has a negative evaluation of some aspects of the hearer.

3.1.4. Inappropriate Topics

Mention of inappropriate topics refers to the act of going out of the current topic of talk and mentioning a topic that is not appropriate in the current context. The speaker in this case damages his own face if he raises issues that do not relate to the issue at hand. The speaker's desire to have his views endorsed by others is demeaned because he is attacked for his actions. This is explained in *FTA 30*.

FTA 9

Hon. Marseline Arbelle: This report is on inquiry of alleged leakage of data contrary to the leadership and integrity act of 2012... we also need to look at the integrity of the MP involved here. The integrity on Fatuma Gedi has also been violated. There was a pornographic clip that went viral...
Hon. Speaker: I am sorry I will not allow that topic to be subject of debate.

This FTA alludes to an issue whereby Hon. Fatuma's pornographic clip allegedly leaked on the internet. She was also accused of leaking vital information on social media belonging to parliament the same day. The house therefore meets to discuss about leakage of important parliamentary data to the public which is illegal as stated in the leadership act of 2012. Brown & Levinson (1987) state that mention of an inappropriate topic makes the speaker damage his own face since he goes out of the current topic of discussion. Hon. Arbelle loses his positive face by going out of the important issue on inquiry of data leakage and talks about Hon. Gedi's pornographic clip that also leaked online. Hon. Gedi also loses her face because she is portrayed negatively to the public. Therefore, this shows that mention of inappropriate topics damages speaker's face and thus a FTA.

3.1.5. Humiliations

Humiliation refers to the act of dishonouring, embarrassing and shaming someone. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), humiliations have the potential to damage hearer's positive face since it is meant to shame the hearer and paint a negative impression about him/her to the public. MPs use some utterances that are meant to humiliate the addressee.

FTA 10

Hon. Marwa: Thankyou Hon. Speaker. Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) was directed by the ministry to rehabilitate a road in Migori county said to be of security importance. It is on account of neglect of that security road that I seek a statement from the chair of Departmental Committee on Transport, Public and Housing Works on the following question; What is the status of rehabilitation and budgetary allocations of all other roads that are regarded as security roads in this country?
Hon. Speaker: The Chairperson who is in front of you can tell us when he wants to give a response. Hon. Pkosing.
Hon. David Pkosing: Thankyou Hon. Speaker. I will respond to those questions in two weeks. However, there is nothing called a security road.
Hon. Speaker: He is a new member. Maybe where he comes from there are roads classified as such.

After asking his question regarding the rehabilitation of a 'security road', Hon. Marwa is humiliated by Hon. Pkosing telling him baldly that there is nothing like a security road. Brown & Levinson (1987) note that humiliations directly damage hearer's face. The speaker saves Hon. Marwa's positive face by saying that he is a new member and jokes that there may be such roads where he comes from. Such humiliating acts are meant to shame the addressee which damages their face. They lead to the hearer feeling embarrassed. Hon. Marwa's desire to be related to positively is impinged upon. Therefore, this humiliating act is a FTA that was used to correct Hon. Marwa informing him directly that there is nothing known as a security road.

FTA 11

Hon. Speaker: The member for Cherangany does not know how to communicate. He thinks he can whisper from his place. Please spend time in the house so that you can learn that whispering does not pass information in parliament. You are only hissing. Only snakes hiss.

The speaker humiliates the MP for Cherangany saying that he does not know how to communicate. This is because he whispered instead of raising a point of order so as to be permitted to speak. This speech act by the speaker embarrasses the addressee and shows his negative judgement towards him. The hearer's desire to be wanted is impinged upon. When the speaker humiliates the hearer, it shows his condemnation and loathing of some aspects of the hearer such as whispering in *FTA 11*. Interlocutors can use humiliations to achieve great efficiency since it is stated directly towards the addressee. They can also be used to give warnings such as in *FTA 11* the member for Cherangany is warned against whispering in parliament and instead should follow the correct procedure.

3.1.6. Lack of Emotional Control

Another positive FTA portrayed by MPs is lack of emotional control. Excessive emotions make the speaker lose his/her positive face. His/her need to be related to positively is impinged upon because he/she may lose control of what he/she is saying leading to conflicts. This is explained in *FTA 34*.

FTA 12

Hon. Didmus Barasa: Hon. speaker I want to bring the allegation...

(Gladys Wanga shouts)

Hon speaker: Hon. Wanga you have no authority to force me to do what you want.

(Gladys Wanga shouts)

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Wanga you are making noise.

Hon. Didmus Barasa: Hon. speaker you should protect me from this lady. Do not make noise here. I will punch this lady

Hon. Wanga seems to be angered by Hon. Barasa which makes her lose control. She keeps shouting thus disrupting Hon. Barasa's speech. She tries to force the speaker to allow her to speak. This make her lose her positive face. Her actions are unparliamentary and therefore cannot be approved of as positive face demands. Her competence as a MP is lost. Hon. Barasa also ends up losing his positive face because he also becomes excessively emotional and almost becomes physical. Lack of emotional control leads to embarrassment as one is seen as someone who cannot control him/herself. Hon. Wanga's lack of emotional control demonstrates her anger towards the speaker and her lack of patience to wait for her turn. Therefore, excessive emotions lead to threats to positive face.

3.1.7. Interruptions

Interruptions threaten speaker's positive face desire of the want to express his views freely without being stopped or intimidated by anyone. The speaker wishes to present his views and legislation freely and supported by others present. Interruptions therefore have the ability to threaten speaker's face. In parliament, interruptions occur when a member wants to rise on a point of order, when some members make loud consultations causing disruptions and when the speaker disrupts a speaker's turn. *FTA 35-37* explain this.

FTA 13

Hon. John Mutunga: ...when they are registered, we will know them even if it means targeting them through packages for farming inputs or...

Deputy speaker: Hon. Mutunga you were supposed to reply.

Hon. Mutunga takes the floor as the mover of the motion to reply. However, he engages the house in other debates and consumes time. This forces the deputy speaker to interrupt him by reminding him that he was only supposed to reply. This interruption causes a threat to his positive face. His views are not endorsed by his colleagues. In parliament, the speaker of the house makes interruptions to MPs when they go out of topic. In this context, they are meant to correct the MP and make him do what is expected. These interruptions are potential FTAs as they show the hearer is wrong or misguided.

FTA 14

Hon. Yusuf Hassan: There is a tradition in world parliaments where they....

Hon speaker: Hon. Yusuf you are not going to teach us traditions we have not found.

Hon. Yusuf tries to raise an issue about standards in other parliaments where MPs are notified earlier that their questions would be responded to on a particular day. This makes the speaker interrupt him and remind him that he cannot teach MPs traditions from other parliaments that they do not know of. This utterance threatens Hon. Yusuf's positive face since he does not freely express his views. His wish to be admired and related to positively is impeded. This leads to him losing his positive face.

FTA 15

Hon. Leonard Yegon: I would like to ask the following question...

(Hon. Duale consults loudly)

Hon. Speaker: You are now out of order the leader of the majority party. You are making it hard for Yegon to communicate.

Another way that interruptions occur in Parliament is through channel noise where disruptions by members making noise and consulting loudly occur. The speaker faces a difficult time contributing because he cannot express himself clearly. In *FTA 15*, Hon. Duale interrupted Hon. Yegon's turn by making loud consultations. This attacks Hon. Yegon's face. The speaker reminds Hon. Duale that he is out of order because he makes it hard for Hon. Yegon to speak. Such an interruption shows a negative assessment one has towards the speaker. MPs interrupt others during complaints when they do not agree with the speaker. The speaker of the house interrupts a member's turn when correcting him/her or when the speaker goes out of topic. These interruptions threaten the speaker's positive face want of being related to positively.

3.1.8. Confessions

Brown & Levinson (1987) explain that confessions have the ability to damage any participant's (speaker and hearer) face. A confession against the hearer shows speaker's negative assessment of the hearer which portrays him/her negatively. The speaker can also make confessions against himself which makes him be seen negatively in public.

FTA 16

Hon. Ferdinald Wanyonyi: Thankyou deputy speaker. It is pathetic that last weekend I went to a funeral and met two ex-MPs who looked so pathetic and worn-out and I asked myself what mistake I made to be a MP. I will speak for myself, the pressure I experience when I go home. I do not think I have done anything in the last eight years as an MP because of pressure.

A leader is expected to work for his people to bring development in his/her constituency. Hon. Wanyonyi confesses that he has been a MP for the last 8 years but he has done nothing for his people. This makes him lose his positive face as a competent and reliable leader. Such a confession attacks his face because it is expected that he manages funds well to bring development for his people. However, Hon. Wanyonyi also uses this confession to justify why his constituency is under developed. He says that he does not get enough money to channel to development because his constituents always pressure him to give them handouts every time he goes home. This confession is also used to persuade the other MPs to fully support the motion about giving retired MPs retirement benefits since most of them retire poor because of giving much money to their constituents during fundraisers and other events.

3.1.9. Disagreements

Disagreements in parliament occur when a MP reveals that he does not support and is not in line with what his/her colleague is suggesting. Brown & Levinson (1987) state that disagreements destroy addressee's positive face because they reveal that the speaker thinks the hearer is wrong, misguided or lying.

FTA 17

Hon. Ferdinald Wanyonyi: I have been listening and I think that their amendment is timely. However, I think three months is too soon. The majority leader should have made it six months.

Hon. Dennitah Ghati: Hon. Deputy speaker, I disagree with Hon. Wanyonyi for six months is too long. Three months is already long.

Hon. Ghati disagrees with Hon. Wanyonyi when he suggests that Hon. Duale should have stated that the amendment will take six months instead of three because he believes it should take a longer time. Hon. Ghati thinks that three months is long and it should even take a shorter period. This disagreement threatens Hon. Wanyonyi's positive face because it shows that he is misguided on the amount of time an amendment should take. His opinion is not endorsed by his colleagues making him lose his positive face. Statements of

disagreements pose threats towards addressee's positive face. So, this shows that disagreements can reveal that a speaker does not approve of hearer's actions/utterances.

3.1.10. Disrespect

Acts of disrespect in parliament indicate that the speaker lacks a courteous regard to the hearer. Acts of disrespect manifest themselves in the August house during loud consultations, shouting, use of derogatory terms to a member and use of insults. The following FTAs explain this.

FTA 18

Hon Speaker: Hon. Sabina wants to say something being the mother of the county.
Hon. Chris Wamalwa: (*shouting*) Grandmother of the county.
Hon. Speaker: She is too young to be a grandmother Hon. Wamalwa.
Hon. Sabina Chege: Hon. Speaker there are some words Hon. Wamalwa should not exchange with me. We can take back the girl we gave him.

Hon. Wamalwa disrespects Hon. Chege by referring to her as a grandmother. This utterance shows he lacks respect towards her and tries to destroy her public self-image. Disrespect utterances such as this one exposes the speaker's negative evaluation of the addressee's positive face. This could be as a result of hatred. To restore her face, Hon. Chege uses the politeness strategy of going on record as not indebted to the addressee by ignoring the issue and telling the speaker that Hon. Wamalwa should not use such words. Members of the National Assembly use utterances of disrespect towards their fellow MPs that reveal their lack of respect towards addressee's.

FTA 19

Hon. Chris Mwale: Hon. Deputy speaker, try and protect me. The leader of the majority is shouting at me.
Deputy speaker: You are protected.

Another way that disrespect occurs in the National Assembly is through disruptions. This occur when there are disagreements in points of view. The leader of the majority party in *FTA 19* disrupts Hon. Mwale by shouting at him. Hon. Mwale's positive face want to be related to positively and his opinion be respected is impeded leading to face loss. This leads him to request for protection from the deputy speaker. Brown & Levinson (1987) explain that such acts of disrespect unavoidably threaten addressee's face. They may also lead to communication difficulties such as in *FTA 19* where Hon. Duale shouts at Hon. Mwale when he is making his speech. Through shouting, Hon. Duale aims to stop Hon. Mwale from contributing his ideas to parliament.

3.1.11. Complaints

A complaint occurs when a speaker portrays a grievance or problem that something is not right. Complaints portray the addressee negatively thus attacking his positive face. Brown & Levinson (1987) explain that when a speaker complains about a particular aspect of the addressee, he threatens his positive face need to have his actions and proposals endorsed and supported. The following FTAs from MPs speeches explain how complaints threaten face.

FTA 20

Hon. Millie Odhiambo: Hon. Duale said 'Aye' and I said 'Nay' then you said 'Ayes have it'...is it because my voice is soprano and Duale's is a bass? That is discrimination based on gender.

In *FTA 20*, Hon. Odhiambo feels discriminated against by the speaker when he states that Ayes have it. She feels that that is a case of gender discrimination because according to her, only two people voted and the speaker chose Hon. Duale's side. Such complaints portray the speaker negatively; that he favours one side and is not being just. This attacks his face. Hon. Odhiambo portrays him as incompetent thus he loses his face as a fair leader who should be neutral and never favour any side. Complaints, as seen in *FTA 20*, are used by MPs as a strategy to air their grievances and demand their rights. Hon. Odhiambo uses a complaint to remind the speaker that he should be fair.

FTA 21

Hon. Ali Adan: Hon. Speaker I would like to know the fate of my question which you directed to the energy committee. I appeared before the committee and the CS never appeared. We need urgent answers.

In *FTA 21*, Hon. Ali complains to the speaker that the MPs in the energy committee have not yet responded to his question. This attacks their positive face showing that they are not serious in doing their work. The MPs

positive social value they claim for themselves is lost. Their positive face desire to be approved of is lost thus portraying them in a bad way. The above FTA has been used in this context by the speaker to show the laxity in the energy committee in which its members are not serious in responding to questions in time. Such complaints therefore lead to loss of addressee's positive face.

FTA 22

Hon. Mwamba Mabongah: Hon. Speaker, I raised an issue last week about questions I asked four months ago. You directed the majority leader to respond but I have not heard anything from him yet.

In this speech act, Hon. Mwamba complains that he raised an issue the previous week about a question he had asked four months ago to the majority leader who has not made any effort to provide an answer. The face of the majority leader is destroyed by this utterance. Complaints, just like accusations, reveal that the speaker does not value a certain aspect of the hearer according to Brown & Levinson (1987). In this case, Hon. Mwamba dislikes the ignorance of the leader of the majority party.

FTA 23

Hon. Ole Sankok: Hon. Deputy speaker, you have eaten much of my time.
Hon. Deputy speaker: Is it possible to eat time surely? I know I am hungry this morning but time cannot fill my stomach. I give you extra 30 seconds.

In *FTA 23*, Hon. Sankok complains and accuses the deputy speaker of using his allocated time to make announcements. To minimise this threat that attacks his positive face, the speaker uses a joke as a politeness strategy stating that he cannot eat time though he is hungry. This restores his face as he offers Hon. Sankok 30 extra seconds. As can be seen from the above examples, MPs use complaints to express their views and reveal their attitude towards their colleagues. Complaints threaten the addressee's positive face desire to be liked and related to positively.

3.1.12. Boasting

Boasting refers to a brag or appraisal of oneself. Brown & Levinson (1987) suggest that boasting about oneself threatens the addressee's face value because the speaker does not care about the effect of such utterance to the hearer. The speaker can boast about his possessions, achievements, qualifications and also power. This makes the addressee feel inferior thus losing his positive face. MPs boast about their achievements. This is illustrated in *FTA 24, 25 and 26*.

FTA 24

Hon. Aden Duale: ... you can easily find yourself being discussed on the floor through a report. I have been here for 13 years and I have never been discussed.

In *FTA 24*, Hon. Duale boasts about being a member of parliament for 13 years unlike some MPs who are just serving their first term. He also boasts being a very principled MP who has never been discussed in parliament through any report because of scandals. This statement has the ability to attack the addressee's positive face in that it reveals that some members are always being discussed in reports because of scandals. This comes after Hon. Gedi is discussed in the house having exposed parliamentary documents on the internet. This act of boasting undermines the MPs who have found themselves being discussed negatively in the house because of their actions. This statement therefore undermines the hearer's positive face.

FTA 25

Hon. Babu Owino: I agree with the president for appointing a youthful leader. I served with her at the UON. ...she and I used to go and get students released when they were arrested. We used to fight against fee increment and we fought when HELB delayed funds. However, the president also nominated people older than Methuselah.

While showing his support of the president's appointment of a youth, Hon. Babu Owino boasts about serving and working with her in Nairobi University as student leaders. He boasts of getting students released and fighting against fee increment. Brown & Levinson (1987) explain that boasting impinges upon the hearer's positive face since the speaker does not care about the effect of the utterance on the addressee. The MPs who do not support this appointment by the president feel intimidated and coerced to change their views to support Hon. Owino's point of view. This act of boasting is also used to show Hon. Babu Owino's approval of the president's

decision to appoint the nominee who is a youthful leader who he describes as very hardworking and outgoing. Boasting can therefore be used as coercion to make the hearer embrace speaker's views.

FTA 26

Hon. Aden Duale: The BBI (Building Bridges Initiative) report was released. Go and cry at home if you are a loser. When the acting prime minister is talking you keep quiet.

Hon. Duale boasts to be the acting prime minister after the release of BBI report that advocates for creation of a prime minister's post. He assumes the position and boasts that when he stands to speak everyone else must keep quiet. Hon. Duale's utterances telling other MPs to go and cry at home if they lost shows that he disregards their stand as opposers of BBI. The member's positive face is attacked through this act. They are made to feel inferior.

3.1.13. Misuse of Address Terms

This refers to addressing the hearer as someone else that he/she is not. Misuse of address terms occurs when the speaker misidentifies the addressee or when the speaker uses a title that do not refer to the target. This can lead to damage of either the speaker's or hearer's face. The following FTAs explain how misuse of address terms threaten face.

FTA 27

Hon. Martin Owino: Hon. Speaker...
Deputy speaker: Order Hon. Owino. I am not Hon. speaker.
Hon Martin Owino: I am so sorry. I was not looking up.

FTA 28

Hon George Gitonga: Madam speaker, this country is suffering. Sorry Hon. deputy speaker. I did not look up.

Hon Gitonga and Hon. Owino misuse address terms when they misidentify their addressees. While contributing to the motion, Hon. Owino refers to the deputy speaker as the speaker forcing him to intervene and clear the issue. Hon. Gitonga in *FTA 28* also refers to the deputy speaker as madam speaker. Such mistakes make the speaker lose his/her face. The speaker and the deputy speaker expect to be known and be referred to correctly. When misidentified, their positive face as popular members of the assembly is impinged upon thus creating a threat to their positive face. The speaker also loses his face as a keen member because he portrays himself as unobservant to notice that the speaker has left the seat and his deputy has taken over. However, one way to restore face after using a wrong address term is by being apologetic. Hon. Owino in *FTA 27* apologises and states that he had not noticed that the speaker had left the chair. Hon. Gitonga in *FTA 28* also apologises thus restoring his face.

FTA 29

Deputy speaker: Hon. Member for Kwenya make your contribution.
Hon. Zachary Kwenya: I am the member for Kinangop. Kwenya is my name.
Deputy speaker: Kwenya member for Kinangop.

The deputy speaker in *FTA 29* misidentifies Hon. Kaunya and refers to his name as a constituency. Through correcting the speaker, he restores the speaker's face. The speaker loses his positive face because he portrays himself as incompetent and does not know some members despite having a screen that displays the names of members who wish to speak and their constituencies. The deputy speaker restores his face by correcting himself and rephrasing his statement. These examples therefore explain how misuse of address terms can lead to loss of face among MPs. From *FTA 27, 28* and *29*, it is evident that misidentifying addressee's names lead to loss of face and it can be restored through being apologetic and correcting oneself.

3.1.14. Insults

Another positive FTA used by MPs is the use of insults. They portray the addressee negatively because the speaker gives a negative opinion that shames the hearer leading to embarrassment. *FTA 30* is an instance where a MP loses his emotional control and insults another MP

FTA 30

Hon. Didmus Barasa: What are you doing? Stupid! I can punch you.
Hon. Esther Passaris: Who do you think you are? You cannot punch me.

Hon. Didmus Barasa: Who are you? You are unruly. I will... stupid.

Hon. Passaris becomes emotional and stands to confront Hon. Barasa. This makes him angry and he threatens to punch her. He refers to her as stupid. This occurs after Hon. Passaris becomes emotional after being angered by Hon. Barasa's speech. Use of insults damage the addressee's positive face want to be wanted, admired, respected and related to positively. Insults embarrass the addressee. Hon. Passaris loses her positive public image as a MP. The use of insults in parliament therefore threatens the addressee's positive face value. The use of insults and derogatory terms towards other MPs in parliamentary context is considered unparliamentary and so this act portrays Hon. Barasa as uncouth and impolite. Hon. Barasa later apologizes and thus restores his face.

IV. Conclusion

Members of national assembly use positive FTAs during debates. Thirty positive FTAs contributed to sixty percent of the total number of face threatening acts that were used by members of the 12th National Assembly. Positive FTAs showed that the speaker did not care about hearer's feelings. The use of more positive FTAs than negative FTAs by members of National Assembly shows that they impinge on hearer's positive face more. They attack their interactant's desire to be thought as a competent and popular leader and to have his legislation endorsed by others. Positive FTAs occurred in the form of insults, misuse of address terms, boasting, complaints, disrespect, disagreements, confessions, interruptions, lack of emotional control, humiliations, inappropriate topics, belittling, challenges and accusations. The use of positive FTAs damaged hearer's desire to be liked, admired and related to positively.

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