

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**MAKING COMPLAINTS IN GHANAIAN ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY OF THREE  
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE ASANTE MAMPONG MUNICIPALITY**

**BARBARA BOSUMTWI SAM**

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**



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**(200019228)**



**A Thesis in the Department of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Foreign Languages  
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Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
(Applied Linguistics)  
in the University of Education, Winneba**

**AUGUST, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

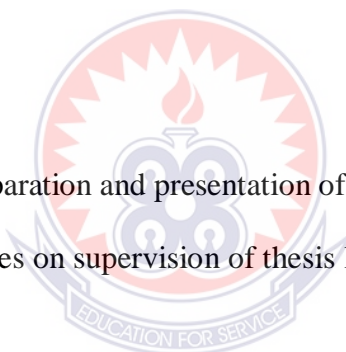
I, **BARBARA BOSUMTWI SAM**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:.....

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### Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



Name: **PROF. CHARLOTTE FOFO LOMOTey**

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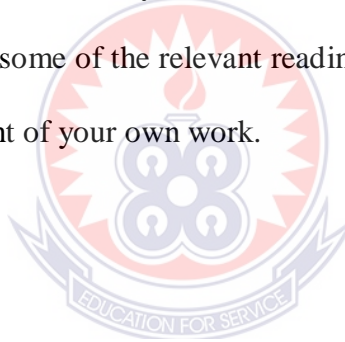
## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to God Almighty, and to my dad, Mr. Jonathan Sam, whose earnest prayers and unflinching support has made this possible.



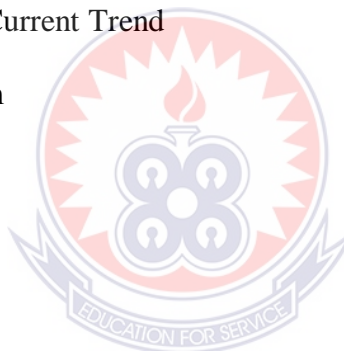
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## ABBREVIATIONS

DCT	Discourse Completion Task
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
FTA	Face Threatening Act
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
NES	Native English Speakers
NNES	Non-Native English Speakers
SUA	Socially Unacceptable Act



## **ABSTRACT**

Complaints are bound to occur in our daily interactions while seeking a remedy to that which has directly or indirectly affected someone unfavourably, thus, threatening the face of the addressee and may eventually engender social relationship breakdown if not done appropriately. However, that which is deemed appropriate is both language and culturally specific. This study examined the complaint speech act produced by the Ghanaian learners at the second-cycle institutions in the Ashanti region to ascertain the politeness strategies invested in expressing their dissatisfaction with an unacceptable act in Ghanaian English. The Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness theory served as the theoretical framework used in the study. The qualitative design was adopted and data was elicited from ninety-six (96) participants who were sampled using the purposive sampling technique from the three senior high schools in Ashanti Mampong. The participants role-played four complaint-provoking situations which focused on different power relations and social distance. The data were transcribed and analysed thematically. The findings revealed eleven strategies used in making a complaint in Ghanaian English, yet, the choice of a particular politeness strategy depended on the sociological variables of power/status and social distance. The findings further indicate that Ghanaians are indirect and tend to have a high inclination toward positive politeness strategies as they try to reduce the effect of the face-threatening act of complaining on the addressee's positive face. It was also found that this complaint behaviour is influenced by the Ghanaian cultural norms of politeness.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

An indispensable aspect of human existence is the need to communicate effectively with each other. In this regard, language is considered the most essential tool of communication used in conveying not only our thoughts but also, influencing or manipulating peoples' attitudes, challenging and even controlling people's values and ideas). So, when people communicate with language, they perform several functions that go beyond just the production of a set of grammatically correct sentence structures. Thus, these utterances have embedded in them meanings that are not always superficially expressed, yet aim at provoking certain reactions in the hearer (Rabiah, 2018). Languages, however, employ unique rules and social conventions for speech and interaction styles (Maynard & Turowetz, 2013). Therefore, the appropriateness of an utterance and its interpretation requires knowledge of the linguistic, as well as the socio-cultural background of the language used. Failure to do so may lead to a pragmatic failure which could result in the eventual breakdown of communication.

One area of our daily communication which requires strict adherence to social rules of interaction is in the expression of speech acts such as complaints. Trosborg (1995, 311) regards complaints as "an illocutionary act in which the speaker (complainant) expresses his /her disapproval and negative feelings towards the state of affairs described in the proposition and for which he/she holds the hearer (complainee) responsible, either directly or indirectly". This means, that the complainant in such instances does not only vent his/her displeasure but also expects the hearer to correct the harm done since the speaker holds the hearer partly responsible for that offensive act perpetrated. A complaint is therefore considered a "face-threatening act" (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Kesuma et al., 2021) if not properly made, as it

may cause an embarrassment to the hearer who may as a result, out of anger, refuse to make any form of reparation for the damage done, thereby leading to a breakdown in communication or even sever the relationship that exists between the interlocutors. As a result, Lubabah (2019) recommend that in such instances where the damage done could be repaired by the hearer, the speaker needs to consider the most effective approach for such a remedy to occur since a straightforward reproach may not always ensure the repair process. There is the need then, for an individual to take into consideration certain sociocultural variables like social distance, gender, social power, and even the situational setting, to determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the polite strategies used in performing a speech act like complaints since the influence of these variables may differ from one culture to another, and as such are relevant factors for a person's intercultural communication competence (Bavarsad et al., 2015; Yang & Wu, 2022)

## **1.2 English in Ghana**

The English language is inarguably one of the most influential languages in the world (Crystal, 2003; Mohamadaid & Rasheed, 2018). Through trading, colonialization, and Christianity, the English language has spread to many parts of the world aside from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States where English is the primary language. This rapid growth and spread of the English language have contributed to its current position as the global means of communication (Mohamadaid & Rasheed, 2018; Rao, 2018). Ghana is one of the numerous non-native English-speaking countries in the world. Having been subtly imposed on the Ghanaian by its colonial masters, the English language has over the years steadily woven its global influence into the fabric of the language policy of Ghana even after it gained political independence from its colonial masters and thus, attained the status of the second language in the nation (Adika, 2012; Owu-Ewie, 2006). As a complement to about eighty unintelligible indigenous languages, the English language is



indisputably the most important unifying cultural element of a multilingual nation like Ghana. It is the dominant medium of communication and plays a pivotal role in official domains such as education, governance, media, legal procedures, and commerce (Anderson, 2009)

The Ghanaian is therefore strongly motivated to learn English to enhance their economic and social well-being in the community as well as improve their global human relations considering how deeply the English language has penetrated the international domains of communication, politics, business, sports, entertainment, media, religion and education (Oduro-Ofori, 2021). This makes it more of a necessity rather than a luxury to master the official language; English, as early in life as possible. As a result, the Ghanaian child is exposed to English in the early stages of their school education through to the tertiary in cognizance with the current ‘language -in- education’ policy of Ghana which was promulgated in September 2007 to assist the Ghanaian to develop that required confidence and mastery of the English language. The English Language, therefore, is not just one of the subjects in the curriculum; it is the essential vehicle for learning all other subjects in Ghanaian schools today.

### **1.3 Ghanaian English: The current trend**

Whenever languages come into contact, some levels of linguistic changes are bound to be made by non-native speakers which mirror their distinct sociolinguistic and cultural uniqueness from that of the native speakers even though it still maintains some standards of the Target language. The consequent effect of the rapid spread of English to other non-native English-speaking countries, much to the displeasure of the native English speaker, resulted in a change in the linguistic norms which no longer accord English that prestige of a definite prominent variety (as generally associated with British English or American English) (Anchimbe, 2013; Crystal, 2003). English today, as Canagarajah (2015, p. xxiii) clearly

describes, “has gained a life beyond its land of origins, acquiring an identity and currency in new geographical and social domains, as it gets localized for diverse settings and purposes”, a situation currently evident in Ghana. Linguists have observed with keen interest over the years, how the unique indigenous Ghanaian linguistic and cultural features continuously permeate the use of the British Standard English in Ghana despite the effort of the Ghanaian (especially the educated) in achieving a native-like competence and thus, resulting in the birth of a distinctive variety of English, peculiar to the Ghanaian context even though, not completely alien to the Standard British English (Anderson, 2009). These distinct Ghanaian characteristics which have been travelling the delicate expansionist path of innovation, adaptation, and maintenance of standards over the years manifest at basically all levels of English (Adika, 2012) a view well shared by Dadzie (2004) in a statement indicating that wherever the language has taken root, whether as a result of forcible implantation or voluntary exile, it has shown a remarkable resilience in handling ideas and concepts alien to how meaning is expressed in the English structural system.

The different sociocultural backgrounds of Ghanaians just like any non-native speakers of English influence their way of conveying meaning while carving for themselves words and expressions that describe unfamiliar ideas and concepts in a way that may differ from that of both the L1 and English, though the grammar may be the same. For instance, ‘chop bar’ which is derived from the Standard British English lexical items ‘chop’ and ‘bar’, is used in the Ghanaian context to refer to an eatery. Also ‘galamsey’ a word believed to have been birthed from the expression ‘gather and sell’ is used to describe illegal surface mining in Ghana. These words ‘chop bar’ and ‘galamsey’ are ‘indigenized’ forms of English words just like many others of their kind whose meanings are completely different from that of the British Standard English, even though such ‘indigenized’ forms are only but an indication of the new status of an indigenous variety acquired by the English language after being adapted

into its new environment (Oduro-Ofori, 2021; Opoku, 2016). Such lexical features have now deeply penetrated the linguistic repertoire of educated users of English in Ghana. While some scholars deem such new development ‘indigenized forms’ as deviations from the Standard British norm (Nimako, 2008), others have embraced and described them as a distinctive variety of English known as the Ghanaian English (Nkansah, 2016; Oduro-Ofori, 2021; Bobda, 2000). Gyasi (1991), for instance, assert that:

There is nothing like ‘Ghanaian English’ if we base our argument on the occurrence of such errors as equipments; we must voice out our views; I am going and come. Convince the Ghanaian that these are errors or deviations from British Standard forms and he will not intentionally use them again. We should not, therefore, elevate bastardization into a status of legitimacy and call it Ghanaian English. (Gyasi, 1991, p. 27)

Another passionate defender of British English as the only true English, and as such, condemns most dispassionately the idea of a Ghanaian variety of English, is Sey (1973). According to him, “nothing disgusts the educated Ghanaian more than to be told that the English he uses are anything but standard...” and that once the linguist makes the features of Ghanaian English known to him, he “would strive to avoid them altogether (Sey, 1973, p. 10). A claim well supported by Hocking in his claim that “... what is correct in a language is just what native speakers of the language say. There is no other standard” (Hocking, 1974, p.58). Sey, contends further that “the surest way to kill Ghanaian English if it really exists, is to discover it and make it known” as a way of deterring the educated Ghanaian from such ‘deviant’ usage.

Quarcoo (as cited in Doade, 2001) however, presents an indisputable argument contrary to the aforementioned arguments against the distinct Ghanaian variety of English. He claims that what others like Sey would describe as deviations or mispronunciations due

to, for instance, the speech changes in stress in words like "violate" and "whitewash" where there is a shift of stress from the first syllable to the second syllable are rather the distinct Ghanaian way of saying them. He further argues that structural changes such as those stated below are "Ghanaian amendments" which must not be considered as errors or deviations from British English.

- a. The secretary requested for the supply of stationery; (requested not "requested for" in Standard English).
- b. I picked my pencil from the floor (Picked up not "picked" in Standard English).
- c. When we reached Madina, I dropped (I alighted/got down, in Standard English).

Similarly, Ngula (2012) a staunch advocate of Ghanaian English, considers these so-called 'deviations' as creative innovations which serve the communicative and communal needs of the Ghanaian, thereby allowing them to express themselves in ways that reflect their unique socio-cultural norms, an assertion affirmed by Kandiah (2002) in his claim that, a distinct rule-governed system of the English language, is sustained by a community of users spread across the area who share the norms by which its rules are determined and for whom that system will have some kind of self-identification value because it serves their distinct semiotic and pragmatic needs.

It is evident from the discussion thus far that the use of the English language in Ghana is not the same as originally introduced into the country; it has "developed a distinctive Ghanaian colour" which identifies them as Ghanaian speakers of English (Nkansah, 2016) This has, as a result, given rise to various intriguing comparative and contrastive studies at the level of phonology (Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017; Appartaim, 2012; Ngula, 2011), morphology (Ngula, 2014) and syntax (Huber, 2012; Ngula, 2012) as the most dominant areas of research into the Ghanaian English over the years while the pragmatic use of English, another area in

which the distinctiveness of the Ghanaian English is realized, has not received the same attention.

It is against this background that, this study seeks to explore how the English language is used by the educated Ghanaian in fulfilling their pragmatic needs of making complaints, to unveil not only the linguistic forms of the act of making complaints but also, the different pragmatic strategies employed in making complaints bearing in mind that, the effectiveness of a complaint depends not only on the way it is expressed but also on the social context in which it is performed.

#### **1.4 Statement of the problem**

Complaining offers a unique insight into the values and communicative practices of a given society. This is due to the fact that the pragmatic strategies and linguistic choices in making complaints are, most often than not, dependent on the speaker's cultural norms and knowledge which may differ from one culture to the other (Al-Shboul, 2022). Therefore, while speakers of some cultures may tend to use direct forms of complaints, others may rather place premium on some social factors such as social distance, social power, gender and the severity of the offense when performing the complaint speech act or even opt out completely from complaining (Al-Momani, 2017; Yang & Wannaruk, 2018; Caturay & Warlito, 2020). Hence, what may be considered a polite way of making complaint in one culture may be considered otherwise in another culture.

Ghanaians do not speak in the same way as the British in spite of their long years of exposure to the English language as they transfer some pragmatic strategies from their various first languages which in essence give the English spoken in Ghana some pragmatic features that distinguish it from other varieties of English and so, the social rules that govern politeness in the collectivist Ghanaian culture differs from that of native speakers of English (Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017; Anderson, 2009; Ngula, 2014). Consequently, having inadequate

pragmatic knowledge of how a face threatening act like complaints are made in Ghanaian English could lead to a situation in which the speaker could be misjudged as being uncooperative, rude, impolite, or uncultured, thereby making the hearer unwilling to take the necessary action to repair the damage. In some situations, an inappropriate production of complaint may induce a breakdown in communication and even severe the harmonious relationship between the interlocutors resulting in tension and long-lasting misunderstanding, unrest or upheavals. In the Ghanaian culture where social interdependence is valued over individualism, these upheavals could affect the peace and tranquillity of the society or community in which they occurred. It is imperative then to conduct a study on how complaints are made in Ghanaian English to ascertain the politeness strategies invested in its production in order not to induce a breakdown in communication while performing this speech act.

Even though a few studies have been conducted on speech acts in Ghanaian English (Anderson, & Asiam-Ossom, 2010; Anderson, 2009) a critical review of relevant studies however indicates that, an investigation of the pragmatic language behaviour of Ghanaian learners of English specifically in the act of making complaints in Ghanaian English as an aspect of communicative competence has not received any attention in literature, hence, the need for this study to explore the production of complaints in English by Ghanaian students at the secondary level. This helps to reveal some specific linguistic features of the complaints as well as the strategies adopted by the subjects, and the level of influence of the Ghanaian culture on their realization of the complaint speech act within varied contexts.

### **1.5 Purpose of the study**

The concern of the study is to examine how Ghanaians use English in producing complaints, a face threatening speech act; a case study of students at the secondary level of education. The study argues that it is necessary to acknowledge the indispensable influence of

social context on the production of complaints to understand the complaint behaviour of the L2 learner and so the study investigates how social variables influence the various patterns of this speech act as well as explores the linguistic phenomenon of pragmatic transfer that occurs in the production of complaints in the Ghanaian English to ascertain how different or similar it is, to that of the native English speakers.

### **1.6 Research objectives**

This study aims at investigating the speech act of making complaints from the production perspective. It specifically seeks to:

1. Determine the strategies employed in the act of making complaints in Ghanaian English
2. Investigate the influence of social variables on the realization of the complaint strategies to determine whether the choice of strategy strongly conforms with the Ghanaian culture.
3. Examine the pragmatic transfers that are made in the making of complaints

### **1.7 Research questions**

In order to achieve the set objectives, this study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. What are the strategies employed in the act of making complaints in Ghanaian English?
2. How do social variables and situational variation influence the realization of the complaint strategies?
3. What pragmatic features are transferred into complaints made in English?

### **1.8 Significance of the study**

In a general sense, the outcome of this study will give a background to complaints in Ghanaian English as a reflection of the social values and communicative practices of the

indigenous Ghanaian. This knowledge will also be an awakening call to the teachers and curriculum planners of the English language on the need to inculcate this aspect of pragmatics in their instruction in class. Moreover, it will be an insightful resource that will furnish the teacher with the requisite information to help them in equipping the students to effectively use English in communicating their grievances in any given situation. It will further contribute valuable information to the wealth of literature and serve as relevant material for other researchers interested in this topic.

### **1.9 Delimitation**

The study focuses on the pragmatic use of English in the Ghanaian context. The study is therefore delimited to the Ghanaian English, a non-native variety of English in Ghana, specifically, on the realization of the speech act of complaint by Ghanaian English learners at the secondary level of education. It pays attention to students' choice of linguistic forms and the pragmatic strategies employed in making complaints in Ghanaian English.

### **1.10 Organization of the study**

The rest of the study is organized as follows: Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background to the study and the review of related literature on the topic. These reviews point out the contribution of previous studies to the concept of the speech act of complaint as well as help situate the current study in the literature. The methodological approaches which are employed in the study are discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter describes the research design, research site, the population, the sample size, sampling procedure and the source of data. The instrument used and the methods of data analysis are also described. The analysis and discussion are presented in Chapter 4. This has been done in accordance with the three research questions of the study. Specifically, this chapter presents the results of the descriptive statistics of participants' complaints relating to the research questions together with the interpretation and discussion of the findings. Chapter 5 provides a conclusion to the



entire study, by presenting the summary of the study, main findings, implications and recommendations.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section presents a review of relevant literature as well as the theoretical framework on which the study is grounded. The chapter begins with a general review on pragmatics and discusses further the concept of communicative competence, interlanguage pragmatics and the speech act theory. This section also examines the complaint speech act which is of interest to this study as well as the theoretical framework adopted. Finally, a review of empirical studies on the complaint speech act is given.

#### **2.1 Pragmatics**

Pragmatics has been defined in various ways by different authors who sought to explain how interlocutors successfully accomplish communicative goals while participating in speech events of varying lengths and complexities without severing their interpersonal relationships with other participants. One of such prolific definitions have been given by Crystal (1985), who defines pragmatics as “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication” (p. 240). That is, pragmatics simply studies meaning as communicated by the speaker and interpreted by the hearer within a defined sociocultural (Gretsch, 2009; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2022). Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) categorize pragmatics into two major components: Pragmalinguistics and Sociopragmatics. Pragmalinguistics refers to “the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions” (Leech, 1983, p. 11). Such resources include pragmatic strategies such as directness and indirectness, routines, and a large range of linguistic forms which can either intensify or soften communicative acts (Ishihara, 2010; Kasper & Rose, 2002).

Sociopragmatics, which has also been described as the *sociological interface of pragmatics*, pertains to the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretation and performance of a communicative action (Gretsch, 2009; Ishihara, 2010). In other words, "it is the social conditions that are placed on the use of a language" (Thomas, 1983, p. 99). Hence, while pragmalinguistics is geared towards the various linguistic forms and their respective functions, sociopragmatics is more concerned with the appropriate social behaviour that governs a given communicative event. Learners of a second language however, ought to know that speech communities differ in their estimation of, for example, politeness or what constitutes a proper behaviour in the performance of communicative acts in order not to be unduly tagged as being rude or uncooperative in a social interaction. For this reason, understanding the linguistic structures (pragmalinguistics) and sociocultural rules (sociopragmatics) that constitute politeness in the TL is crucial for effective communication.

## **2.2 Communicative and pragmatic competence**

The essence of learning a language is to develop and possess the ability to communicate competently in that language. Crystal (1997) defines competence as "speakers' knowledge of their language, the system of rules which they have mastered so that they are able to produce and understand an indefinite number of sentences and to recognize grammatical mistakes and ambiguities" (p.74). Crystal's definition of competence however, pertains to the grammatical competence of the speaker, oblivious of the fact that what fuels the smooth path of communication is not based on shared grammar alone but also, the adherence to sociocultural cues that govern the choice and interpretation of the linguistic resources used in a communicative event. Luo and Goa (2011) posit that when speakers make grammatical mistakes, it is merely an indication that, they speak badly, but if the speakers do not speak appropriately, then, they are considered as behaving badly. Therefore, one's ability to use language in a socially acceptable manner by appropriately interpreting both implicit

and explicit meaning in conformity with the context of interaction, as well as having interactional skills such topic management, turn-taking skills, and repair is key, if one is to be considered communicatively competent.

Communicative competence, thus, encompasses both grammatical competence and pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence is the knowledge that one has of the conditions and manner of appropriate use of a language in varied contexts (Demonte, 2021). It is one's ability to use language in the most flexible yet effective manner in order to achieve a specific interactional purpose (Taguchi & Li, 2020). According to Canale (1988) pragmatic competence is the "illocutionary competence, or the knowledge of the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions, and sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing language functions appropriately in a given context" (p. 90). A learner of a TL's perception and understanding of the different functions that utterances might perform in any given communicative act is key in order to be considered pragmatically competent.

The discussions thus far imply that a speaker who has pragmatic competence does not only possess knowledge of the correct linguistic forms used in performing a linguistic action, but more importantly, how the linguistic resources are used successfully in creating and maintaining interaction in varied complex speech events. For instance, it is virtually useless to know the structure of *I like your dress* if you cannot decide whether what the speaker said is a genuine compliment or a request for your dress. Learning to be a competent user of the target language therefore involves learning the pragmatic norms of that language to effectively understand, as well as successfully convey the intended intentions (e.g. request, complaint, compliment, or promise) and the politeness values that govern any social interaction. Pragmatic competence is therefore an indispensable aspect of communicative competence which a learner of a second language must possess. An interesting area of

pragmatics which studies second language learners' comprehension and production of linguistic action in context is known as interlanguage pragmatics.

### **2.3 Interlanguage pragmatics**

Interlanguage pragmatics is concerned with how non-native speakers acquire and produce speech acts for effective communication in a language other than their L1 (Gomez-Laich, 2016; Hassall, 2003; Hiani, 2015; Loutfi, 2016). Bardovi-Harlig (2010) describes the relationship between pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics as one where “pragmatics bridges the gap between the system side of language and the use side, and relates both of them at the same time and interlanguage pragmatics brings the study of acquisition to this mix of structure and use” (p. 219).

#### **2.3.1 Pragmatic comprehension**

Pragmatic comprehension is the ability to understand the speech acts and conversational implicatures in an interaction (Rafieyan, Saharafi & Eng, 2014). Conversational implicatures are meanings that are deduced from contextual cues, on the basis of certain co-operative principles which govern the efficiency and normal acceptability of conversations (Beden, 2019; Tsojon & Jonah, 2016). This aspect of interlanguage pragmatics therefore, focuses on the learner's understanding of indirect speech acts, factors that account for the difficulty or otherwise of pragmatic comprehension, the role of linguistic form, context information, and learner variables that influence the performance of the speech acts (Abrams, 2013; Ohta, 2005; Taguchi, 2011).

#### **2.3.2 Production of linguistic action**

Interlanguage pragmatics also examines the learners' production in the target language in relation to their prior knowledge of language use. Research has shown that there is a universal pragmatic knowledge base made available to both L2 learners and native speakers (Hiani, 2015). They thus use this in their choice of realization strategies for

linguistic actions and the sensitivity to contextual constraints in their choice of strategy is similar, regardless of their L1 or learning context. However, learners are unable to effectively draw from the general pragmatic knowledge base which results in a deviation from achieving a native-like competence (Gomez-Laich, 2016) The inability of learners to effectively access the general pragmatic knowledge base is due to such factors as (1) their restricted L2 linguistic knowledge, (2) lack of L2 pragmalinguistic knowledge, together with negative transfer of socio-pragmatic norms from L1, (3) and their unwavering loyalty to L1 cultural patterns (Hiani, 2015). These factors can foil even learners with high L2 proficiency from fully drawing from, or utilizing, the available general pragmatic knowledge base in producing acceptable patterns of linguistic actions in the target language.

### **2.3.3 Summary**

The section gave a general review of pragmatics and discussed further the concepts of communicative competence, and interlanguage pragmatics. As discussed above, a learner of a second language must have not only sociolinguistic competence but even more importantly, the ability to choose the appropriate speech act strategies in any given situation in order to avoid being tagged as communicatively incompetent. In this study, the participants pragmatic knowledge on complaint production will be examined.

## **2.4 The Speech Act Theory**

The use of Language in performing certain actions is known as the Speech Act. This theory was proposed by the British philosopher of language, J. L. Austin in his monograph, *How to do things with words* in 1962 and has since then become the cornerstone in pragmatics in analysing the role and meaning of utterances in relation to the interpersonal behaviour of the speaker and hearer in a given communicative event. The notion of speech acts, as indicated by Austin (1962), captures an essential aspect of language use, as an indication of the fact that, not all utterances are only meant for describing different things or

matters which can be considered as just true or false. Rather, they may at some point, also indicate the performance of some communicative acts such as making request, asking questions, commanding, complaining, betting, promising, apologizing, warning, declaring, naming, thanking and many others. This can be seen in the examples illustrated in the utterances (1) and (2):

(1) I'll visit you today at six.

In uttering (1), the speaker is not only uttering a statement, but he/she is actually performing the act of 'promising'.

(2)

- a. Could you lend me some money?
- b. You, get out of my room!
- c. I'll buy you a car.
- d. I'm sorry, I ate all the food.

In the same vein, utterances in example 2(a-d) pragmatically perform the action of requesting, commanding, promising and apologising respectively even though they may have the linguistic appearance of just 'fact-stating'(Bacha et al., 2021; Suardana, 2020). The reality then is, in saying something, we are actually doing something or performing an action as argued by Austin (1962), who, based on this claim, distinguished between utterances that perform acts and those that simply state information. He called utterances that simply state a fact or describe the state of affairs in the world such as *it is raining* as constatives. Constatives correspond to what is usually referred to as 'propositions' or 'statements' which are either true or false. Therefore, when a constative successfully represents what is intended (that is, if the state of affairs that it asserts to be in the world is really in the world), it is considered as true or vice versa. Therefore, the statement, *It is raining* is considered true if it is actually raining but false if it is not raining.

On the other hand, he referred to the kind of utterances that are used to perform certain actions while uttering them as performatives. In essence, to utter a performative means to perform an action. For instance, in saying, *I apologize for arriving late*, the speaker in effect, is performing the act of apologizing. However, unlike constatives whose success thrives on truth value, that of performative utterances depend on the fulfilment of certain felicity conditions. Drid (2018) affirms that felicity has to do with the success or appropriateness of the performative utterance, and that, it is generally governed by the circumstances surrounding the issuing of that utterance. Hence, without such prerequisites, the performance of speech actions is doomed to failure.

Austin identified three of such conditions: The first condition is that, the persons (the speaker and the hearer) and the circumstance in which the performative is uttered must be appropriate, otherwise the performative is considered *null and void*. For instance, the performative *I hereby pronounce you husband and wife*, will only be considered felicitous if it is performed by an authorized person, to the appropriate persons at the designated place for such a ceremony to occur. However, if any of these conditions are not met, then the performative is null and void. The second condition is that the person uttering a performative must be sincere. For instance, in saying *I promise to buy you a car* to someone without really intending to do so, constitute an abuse of the performative and thus makes the performative infelicitous and unsuccessful. Thirdly, the performatives must be conducted correctly and completely. In this case, the failure of a performative takes the form of a breach of commitment. Thus, when the speaker, after issuing the performative, acts contrary to what is entailed by the performative, it constitutes a breach of commitment.

Austin further analysed the structure of the performative utterances which revealed that performatives may not always strictly be conveyed by overt performative verbs as performatives could either be explicit or implicit. He explained that an explicit performative



is one in which it is clear from the utterance of the performatives what actions are being performed since they contain explicit expressions which are generally indicative in specifying the act. For example, the utterances *I promise to buy you a car* and *I apologize for arriving late* contain explicit verbs *promise* and *apologize* which serve as pointers to the performatives and as such averts any form of misunderstanding which could arise from the performance of the act as well as emphasize the speaker's authority. Implicit performatives on the other hand, are indicated by the *primitive devices* accompanying the speech, such as: mood, tone of voice, adverbs, connecting particles, and the circumstances of the utterance. Hence, the kind of action being performed will have to be determined from the context of interaction. For instance, the utterance *I will be there* may be an expression of an intention, a promise, or a prediction of some future event and as such, it is the context of the utterance that will determine what action is being performed.

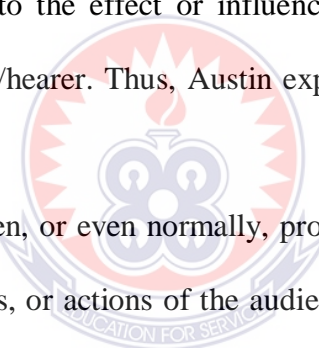
#### **2.4.1 The three components of speech acts**

Austin later abandons the performative/constative classification and presents a new framework to the study of the speech act theory. From the analysis of the constatives and performatives, Austin came to the realization that all utterances including constatives (statements) could be seen as 'doing something' after all. Therefore, a statement such as *John beats his wife* will only be appropriate if John indeed has a wife. Thus, if John happens to be unmarried, the utterance of the statement *John beats his wife* fails to get by. According to Austin, this is the same as performatives issued under inappropriate conditions, which make them null and void. In his attempt to thoroughly account for the nature of the speech act, Austin finally differentiates between the three acts that are performed simultaneously in uttering an utterance. These acts which are not mutually exclusive correspond basically to form, function, and effect of an utterance. They are:

A. Locutionary act: This refers to the actual or literal linguistic forms that are uttered by a speaker and as such involves the pronunciation of sounds (phonetic act), uttering of words or sentences in accordance with the phonological and syntactic rules of the language to which they belong (phatic acts), and acts of producing an utterance or a sentence with sense and more or less definite reference where sense and reference are equivalent to “meaning” (rhetic acts) (p. 94). This means when a speaker utters a sentence, he/she automatically performs what Austin calls, a “locutionary” act.

B. Illocutionary act: This is the core of the theory of speech act in that it is the function, force or actual intention behind an utterance. Thus, it refers to what is performed via the use of the performative (requesting, warning) or constative (stating or asserting) utterances.

C. Perlocutionary: This refers to the effect or influence of an utterance on the beliefs, thoughts or actions of the listener/hearer. Thus, Austin explains the perlocutionary from the point of view that,



Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them [...] We shall call the performance of an act of this kind the performance of a ‘perlocutionary’ act (Austin, 1962, p. 101).

In effect, the locutionary act is associated with the abstract or decontextualized meaning of an utterance while the illocutionary act reveals the (intended) function of an utterance whose true meaning is derived from varied social conventions. The consequential effect of the illocutionary force on the addressee (e.g. being convinced, persuaded, angered) constitutes the perlocutionary act. These three acts blend harmoniously to some extent in an utterance of a speaker in a given communicative event as can be seen from Example (3).

(3) I am hungry

In performing the locutionary act of uttering the sentence *I am hungry* in example (3), the speaker implicitly requests for food from the hearer (illocutionary act) and as result, the hearer may decide to find food for the speaker (perlocutionary effect). According to Austin, the illocutionary acts usually contain performative verbs (illocutionary verbs) which denote the acts performed by the speaker in uttering a sentence, as in Example (4):

(4) I apologize for taking your pen.

The verb *apologize* in Example (4) is an illocutionary verb which indicates the act of apologizing.

Austin (1962, pp. 150-151) further classifies illocutionary acts into five subcategories based on the illocutionary verbs found in the English language, even though such classification seems difficult to do since there are a lot of potential illocutionary acts, and in many cases the speaker's intentions are vague. The five categories are: Verdictives, Exercitives, Commissive, Behabitives, and Expositives. Austin summarized his classification as follows:

To sum up, we may say that, the verdictive is an exercise of judgment, the exercitive is an assertion of influence or exercising of power, the commissive is an assuming of an obligation or declaring of an intention, the behabitive is the adopting of an attitude, and the expositive is the clarifying of reasons, arguments, and communications (Austin, 1962, p. 151).

The American philosopher, John R. Searle, Austin's student, advanced Austin's *Speech Act Theory* after his death. It is evident that Searle did not depart from Austin's position, even though there are areas where the two philosophers slightly differ. Searle preferred to use the term *speech act* to Austin's *performative* and concentrated his

investigations on the illocutionary act. To him, to perform illocutionary acts is to engage in a rule-governed form of behaviour. Searle's (1975, pp. 9-10) thus criticized Austin's work that

There is a persistent confusion between verbs and acts, not all the verbs are illocutionary verbs, there is too much overlap of the categories, too much heterogeneity within the categories, many of the verbs listed in the categories don't satisfy the definition given for the category and, most importantly, there is no consistent principle of classification.

Consequently, Searle categorized all that language could possibly do into five broad thematic areas based on the three basic principles of the direction of fit with the world, psychological state, and the purpose of illocutionary act (illocutionary point).

The *illocutionary point* of a speech act refers to the basic point or purpose of the speaker in performing an illocutionary act of a certain kind. For instance, the point of an *order* is to make the hearer do something, and the point of a *description* is to represent something while the point or *purpose* of a promise requires the speaker to achieve his commitment. The expression *Direction of fit* refers to the match between the word (speech act) and the world (states of affairs) in determining the success of illocutionary acts. It comprises of: *word-to-world direction of fit* (where a speech act is being matched with a state of affairs), *world-to-word direction of fit* (where a state of affairs is being matched with a speech act), and *null direction of fit* (where there is no match intended between a speech act and a state of affairs). The third principle which is the sincerity condition of the speech act refers to the appropriate psychological or mental state that goes with the performance of an illocutionary act. Therefore, when a speaker states something, he/she expresses a belief that something is the case.

#### **2.4.2 Searle's classification of speech acts**

The five categories of speech act as per Searle's classification are:

- **Representatives:** They commit the speaker in varying degrees to the truth of the expressed proposition. Thus, a speaker makes a belief fit an already existing state of affairs in the world (word-to-world fit). They include asserting, claiming, saying, reporting, doubting, denying, concluding, and the like such as in Example 5.

5. All senior high students have gone back to school.

- **Directives:** They are attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something (word-to-world fit). Requests, suggestions, and commands are all examples of directives as is illustrated in Example 6.

6. Keep quiet!

- **Commissives:** They commit the speaker to some future course of action as in promising, threatening, and offering. Thus, the speaker commits himself to making the world fit the words (world-to word fit). When a speaker commits him/herself to do something in the future as in the case of a promise, the speaker must satisfy the essential condition. As such, if the speaker is not willing to undertake the obligation of fulfilling the promise, then the illocutionary force of the act will not be achieved. An example of a commissive utterance is shown in Example 7.

7. I will call you tomorrow

- **Expressives:** They express an inner state or psychological state like feelings or attitudes about states of affairs. This category includes thanking, apologizing, welcoming, congratulating, deploring, regretting. For an expressive speech act to fulfil its illocutionary force, participants must be sincere. For example, as illustrated in Example 8, the expression of gratitude must be done in all sincerity as a true reflection of appreciating what the hearer has done for the speaker.

8. Thank you for lending me your car at such a short notice.

- **Declarations:** These speech acts effect immediate changes in the state of affairs. This includes instances of excommunicating, baptizing, naming, and firing from employment. As noted by Searle, the declarative speech act ought to be said or issued by the right person at the appropriate place. For example, if an authorized religious official baptizes someone, that act of baptism will be infelicitous. In the same regard, the act of sentencing will be successful if only it is said by a judge in court.

Austin and Searle's speech act theory have been used in conducting quite a number of studies which sought to investigate the performance of speech acts among speakers of dissimilar languages (Abrams, 2013; Agyekum, 2010; Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017; Bacha et al., 2021; Suardana, 2020). The results of these have shown that while the typology of speech acts seems universal, its conceptualization and expression differ from one culture to the other as speech communities employ different interactional styles. Hence, the same speech act might be understood very differently across dissimilar cultures. O'Keeffe, Clancy and Adolphs (2011, p. 84) claim that the "speech act theory provides a taxonomy of the different functions that utterances might perform, and it also offers an approach to understanding the apparent discrepancy between what we say and what we mean". The study of speech acts therefore, gives a better understanding of the correlation between linguistic forms and sociocultural contexts (Deveci, 2011; Nguyen, 2008; Puksi, 2016). Thus, the meaning communicated by the various speech acts in an utterance may reveal something about the speakers' attitude, social role, and the type of situation, among others (Archer et al., 2012; Holle, 2013). One of such speech acts of interest to this study is the speech act of complaint.

### **2.4.3 Summary**

In our daily conversations different speech acts are produced to achieve set communicative goals. Speech acts are thus used to perform various communicative functions

such as promising, making requests among others. These could be expressed directly using specific illocutionary verbs or indirectly. There is therefore not always a direct correlation between an utterance and its communicative functions and as such, their appropriate interpretation will require contextual inferences to be made. Moreover, these speech acts though universal, are culturally specific in nature and therefore require enough sociopragmatic competence to successfully produce and comprehend them so as not to be deemed communicatively incompetent.

## **2.5 Complaint as a speech act**

A complaint is one of the expressive speech acts, according to Searle's categorization that expresses a psychological state of dissatisfaction, annoyance or disapproval of something or an action that has affected the speaker in an unfavourable manner (Beltrán-Palanques, 2020; Bikmen & Martı, 2013; Ekmekçi, 2015; Tanck, 2002). Trosborg (1995) views the complaint speech act as

an illocutionary act in which the speaker (the complainant) expresses his/her disapproval or other negative feelings towards the state of affairs described in the proposition (the complainable) and for which he/she holds the hearer (the complaine) responsible, either directly or indirectly (pp. 311-312)

Edmondson and House (1981) affirm this assertion by stating that, "in making a complaint, a speaker potentially disputes, challenges, or bluntly denies the social competence of the complaine" (p. 145). Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) outline some preconditions required for the speech act of complaint to take place from the complainant's point of view:

- The hearer (H) performs a socially unacceptable act (SUA) that is contrary to a social code of behavioral norms shared by speaker (S) and H.
- S perceives the SUA as having unfavorable consequences of herself, and/or for the general public.

- The verbal expression of S relates post facto directly or indirectly to the SUA, thus having the illocutionary force of censure.
- S perceives the SUA as: (a) freeing S (at least partially) from the implicit understanding of a social cooperative relationship with H; S therefore chooses to express her frustration or annoyance.
- Giving S the legitimate right to ask for repair in order to undo the SUA, either for her benefit or for the public benefit. The main goal of such instrumental complaints is to ensure that H performs some action of repair as a result of the complaint (p. 108).

Olshtain and Weinbach, just like Trosborg (1995), perceive the speech act of complaint as a communicative act in which the speaker expresses his annoyance or passes a moral judgement on a past or ongoing unacceptable action that is affecting him or the public unfavourably. According to Holmes (1995), such actions that could be considered as socially unacceptable by an individual include the following:

- Space offences: e.g. bumping into someone, queue jumping
- Talk offences: e.g. interrupting, talking too much
- Time offences: e.g. keeping people waiting, taking too long
- Possession offences: e.g. damaging or losing someone's property
- Social gaffes: e.g. burping, coughing, laughing inappropriately
- Inconvenience offences/ inadequate service e.g. giving someone wrong item

(p. 167)

Thus, whenever any of these infractions are made, there is a tendency of a complaint being made. As a result, complaints are usually directed at the hearer who is either totally or partially held responsible for that unpleasant act with the main aim of provoking him into



correcting that act and this could threaten the desired face wants of the addressee especially if not done appropriately.

### **2.5.1 The directive acts of Complaint**

Whenever complaints are made, the three directive acts: request for repair, threats and request for forbearance, may be implied (Trosborg, 1995, pp. 320-322).

#### **2.5.1.1 Request for repair**

At the core of every complaint is the request for repair. A complainant complains with the obvious intentions of not only calling an end to a morally unacceptable act which either affects the complainant directly or indirectly but even more importantly, the speaker anticipates some form of compensation to remedy the harm that has been done by the hearer. Consider an example given by Trosborg (1995) of a passenger to a fellow passenger smoking in a non-smoking compartment in a train: *This is a non-smoker*. The speaker in this case is not only voicing out his displeasure but also implying that the passenger ought to stop smoking.

#### **2.5.1.2 Threat**

Threat is the next directive act of a complaint. The complainant by seeking a redress of the unsatisfactory act may threaten the hearer. The speaker in this case usually uses swear words to provoke a form of remedy from the hearer. Consider the situation in which a cassette was stolen from a shop:

Speaker: 'Now, give me back what you have stolen, or I shall have to call the police'

(Trosborg, 1994, p. 321)

The speaker in the situation above resorts to threat '*I shall have to call the police*' to cause the hearer who is being held responsible for the offence of stealing to return the missing item.

### 2.5.1.3 Request for forbearance

Request for forbearance is the third directive act of the complaint speech act. In performing this directive act, the complainant asks the hearer to take the required steps to prevent or reduce the risk of repeating the offensive act in future such as in the example, ‘*Well, I’d like to find out about this because I’m hoping it won’t happen again*’.

## 2.5.2 Categories of complaints

The speaker, in expressing his dissatisfaction of an offensive act perpetrated, can either do so directly or indirectly. Complaints are thus characterized as either direct or indirect depending on the speaker’s intentions (Monzoni, 2008).

### 2.5.2.1 Direct complaints

Direct complaints are expressed when the speaker directly communicates to the hearer, his displeasure of a previous or an ongoing act that has caused him some discomfort to enable the hearer fix it (Hassouneh & Zibin, 2021; Monzoni, 2008). A direct complaint thus involves an explicit or implicit accusation and at least one explicit or implicit directive act (El-Dakhs et al., 2022; Ghaznavi, 2017) This makes a direct complaint rather face threatening since by either implying or explicitly stating that, the hearer should undertake some actions to change the undesirable state of affairs, the speaker impinges on the hearer’s negative face want who may as a result, not perceive the speaker’s statement positively (Brown & Levinson, 2011; Song, 2017). According to Shaeffer (2018, p. 9), these complaints may take the form of *explicit complaint* (e.g., “You’re so mean to me!”), *accusation and warning* (e.g., “If you do that again, I will lower your course grade”), or *immediate threat* (e.g., “Don’t touch my food or you’ll be sorry”). Direct complaints therefore, usually produce a feeling of embarrassment, humiliation, chagrin, or defensiveness in the hearer who ironically, is also expected to repair the harm done to the speaker. This conflictive nature of complaints may rather negatively impact the social goal of maintaining comity between

interactants (Jewad et al., 2020). Place (1981) agreeably posits that “the act of moral censure or blame is an act of social rejection; an act whereby the accuser breaks ties of affection, mutual support and co-operation” (p.28).

### 2.5.2.2 Indirect complaints

An indirect complaint is also known as ‘trouble-telling’ or ‘gripping’ (Allami, 2006). It refers to the expression of discontentment with oneself or someone/something that is not present. Shaeffer (2018) explains that an indirect complaint is commonly related to self, situation, and other. In a self-complaint, a speaker expresses dissatisfaction of himself, his own ability, actions, or physical appearance and in a situation-induced complaint, the speaker registers his displeasure about general problems such as time, food, weather, and crime. In other complaint which is commonly referred to as third-party complaint, speakers express their discontent about another person who is not present (Ghaznavi, 2017; Traverso, 2008). Consider, the utterance in (9):

(9) I am tired of mum’s nagging.

Here, we observe that even though the speaker expresses her negative feeling (*I am tired*) on a “complainable matter” (mum’s nagging), the addressee in this case is neither adjudged responsible nor capable of remedying the perceived offence. Therefore, in contrast to direct complaints, indirect complaints are not deemed as prototypical face threatening acts (FTA), rather, they provide an avenue for releasing negative feelings, while establishing rapport and solidarity with the addressee, without provoking actions to redress any form of grievances (Traverso, 2008) as illustrated in (10).

(10)- complaint by two students about the quantity of food served at the dining hall

A: I hardly get satisfied with the food served at the dining hall!

B: Oh, yesterday was the worst!

Moreover, indirect complaints create the opportunity for further interaction between the interactants who, based on their shared beliefs, freely engage in a number of considerate responses by way of building rapport and strengthening relationships (Crawshaw, 2010). Trosborg (1995), for instance, observed that NSs of English preferred indirect complaints as a positive strategy for establishing points of commonality and solidarity with their interlocutors while Ukrainians preferred explicit strategies of making complaints (Prykarpatska, 2008). Also, Olshtain and Weibach (1993) in their study of complaints produced by Russian and Moroccan immigrants who had been in Israel for at least two years, revealed that, Russians tend to be more direct in their production of complaints than the Moroccans.

In the academic setting, students are likely to express their displeasure or annoyance directly so as to seek from their interlocutors, an immediate redress of the perceived wrongful or unfavourable act. This study therefore focuses on investigating only direct complaints as produced by learners at the secondary level of education.

### **2.5.3 Functions of a complaint**

In everyday conversation, infractions are bound to occur as people have strong expectations about how others should act in any given social situation. Complaining can therefore be a very useful skill in communication as it first and foremost allows the speaker to draw the hearers attention to some deficiency or mistake that needs to be put right. From a social point of view, a complaint opens the door for communication about an offence which makes the offender reconnect with the offended person through reference to an actual or perceive transgression. A complaint is viewed in this case as a communicative act whose main role in speech is an attempt made by the speaker to have the offended person reconciled and to have the social harmony restored. Although complaints are most often than not regarded as face threatening, its proper usage can improve a negative situation and establish solidarity between interlocutors (Hasyim, 2020). The next section discusses some of the

strategies that are used by complainants in ensuring that their primary aim of airing their grievances are not defeated.

#### **2.5.4 Direct complaint strategies**

In order to effectively and successfully perform the complaint speech act, the speaker employs various strategies depending on the severity of the offense, the level of formality and restrictions on occurrence which may vary from one language and culture to the other. As a result, several scholars have identified and classified different types of strategies used in making complaints in the area of cross-cultural and interlanguage studies (Ekmekci, 2015; Gafanha, 2021; Monzoni, 2008). In general, the complaint speech act can be realised by means of the following strategies that either precede or follow a direct complaint: opening, hints, expression of annoyance or disapproval, explicit complaint, justification, accusation, remedy, and closing. These strategies are discussed as follows:

##### **2.5.4.1 Opening**

A speaker may precede a complaint with an utterance that allows him to gain the hearer's attention. This usually takes the form of greeting and self-identification but does not include any information about what has actually gone wrong, why the wrong merits a complaint or even how to remediate the wrong (Kakolaki & Shahrokhi, 2016). An Opening statement may include any of the following semantic formulae: *name*, *formulaic adjunct* (*Please...Excuse me...*), *salutation* (*Hello*), *attention getter* (*Uy... hoy!*), and *addressing* (*Miss...Sir...*) (De Leon & Parina, 2016). These openers are not randomly chosen but rather, they are carefully chosen based on the receiver of the complaint and the aim of the speaker. Therefore, if opening strategies are used properly, they can function as mitigators to soften the face threat posed by complaints as well as provide an initial time interval that allows interlocutors to establish an interactional style and some degree of mutual trust and rapport (De Leon & Parina, 2016). Zhang (2001) for instance observed in a cross-cultural

comparative study of the Chinese and American English speakers that, the type of opening utterances used by the Chinese in making complaints were characterised mainly by small talks which were used by the speaker to either stress their shared interest and concerns, or build a common ground between the speaker and the hearer and thus, toned down the harshness of the complaint.

#### **2.5.4.2 Hint**

This type of strategy is also termed as below the level of reproach (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1988) or no explicit reproach (Trosborg, 1995). A complainant, in using this strategy, indirectly indicates or gives clues of his displeasure without explicitly mentioning the offensive act such as *'don't see much of you these days, do I?'* This strategy, though could be manipulated with success to make it a more effective and influential strategy, it is generally regarded as a rather weak strategy, since the speaker does not explicitly mention the offensive act (Razzak & Jamil, 2016)

#### **2.5.4.3 Expression of annoyance or disapproval**

This strategy involves the expression of annoyance, dislike, or disapproval, of a certain state of affairs which the speaker deems bad or unacceptable. The speaker at this level avoids a direct confrontation with his/her interlocutor but makes a general remark that expresses some kind of annoyance at the violation (Shaeffer, 2018). Thus, by using this strategy, speakers imply that the hearer is responsible for the SUA, but do not mention the hearer as the guilty person as illustrated in the utterance *'I have already spar, spa, I've already spent ten minutes oh, quarter of an hour I think it was, cleaning up the bathroom itself'* (Trosborg, 1995, p. 317)

#### **2.5.4.4 Accusation**

The speaker uses this strategy when he/she either directly or indirectly accuses the hearer of having committed the offence (Ellyawati, 2018). Thus, the speaker at this point

asserts that the hearer was in some way involved in the offence and thus tries to establish the hearer as a potential agent of the unacceptable act such as in the utterance: *You know I don't like dust, I'm allergic to dust, didn't you know it?* (Ellyawati, 2018, p. 3)

#### **2.5.4.5 Explicit complaint**

At the heart of the complaint strategies is an utterance that explicitly states the problem or holds the interlocutor directly responsible for that violation or wrong act (Puksi, 2016; Tabatabaei, 2015). Trosborg (1995) categorizes this strategy under the 'blame' strategy in which the complainer presupposes that the accused is guilty of the offence and so, outrightly, condemns the act and the person. Explicit complaint is the most direct of all the strategies and thus threatens the face of the hearer; whenever this strategy is used, the speaker directly and aggressively states the action that the hearer had to take responsibility for without being mindful of the hearer's face wants such as in the utterance: "*The interview committee has not received the letter yet*" (Tabatabaei, 2015, p. 134).

#### **2.5.4.6 Justification**

This includes utterances that defend or lend support to the speaker's position concerning the hearer's unacceptable behaviour (Hassouneh & Zibin, 2021). Zhang (2001) identifies three sub-categories of this strategy: justification of the speaker (an utterance to explain why the speaker personally makes the complaint), justification of the hearer (an utterance to give a reason for the hearer having committed the wrong), and justification of both the hearer and the speaker (an utterance to declare the common ground that both H and S share). He further asserts that, the type of justification made could either amplify the severity of the complaint or help maintain the face of the addressee.

#### **2.5.4.7 Remedy**

As already stated in this thesis, the main essence of a direct complaint is to ensure a redress of the irresponsible or wrongful behaviour by the hearer who is inevitably held

culpable (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993). Therefore, in order to restore harmony and trust between the complainant and the interlocutor, the speaker proposes a form of remedial behaviour required of the hearer. According to Zhang (2001), this may take the form of demand on grounds of authority "*Give me another fresh dish*", request "*Could you give me a refund?*" or a threat "*Or I would call the police*".

#### **2.5.4.8 Closing**

This is an utterance that is made by the complainant at the end of the speech event which concludes his turn at speaking. To thank somebody after a complaint goes contrary to expectation and has a powerful effect on the success of this speech act. Typical expressions are "*I would really appreciate that*", "*Thanks*", "*Bye-bye*".

#### **2.5.5 Determinants of complaint strategy**

The inherent nature of complaints makes it a face-threatening act for the hearer though a face-saving act for the speaker. Therefore, bearing in mind the social consequences of making a complaint, a person may decide on the most appropriate strategy to use based on the following factors:

##### **2.5.5.1 The level of imposition**

The performance of the speech act of complaint is reliant on the severity of the violation committed or the extent of the perceived social damage. Therefore, the strategy of complaint used is influenced by the degree of imposition or threat to the speaker's public image (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Thus, the more severe the offence, the stronger and more effective a complaint would be. Holmes (1995) provides a taxonomy of offence types according to the different levels of weightiness at which an offence takes place.

- a. *Light offences*:** e.g. stepping on someone's toe unintentionally, forgetting to call your girlfriend or losing someone's pen.



- b. *Medium offences*: e.g. being late for the first class, keeping someone waiting unintentionally, forgetting to do homework.
- c. *Strong offences*: e.g. breaking someone's leg in a game, insulting someone badly in a public conversation.
- d. *Severe offences*: e.g. inflicting damage to someone's property like a car or computer, wrongfully accusing someone of something serious in public.

(Holmes, 1995, p. 171)

From Holmes' categorisation of offences, one would effortlessly presume that severe offences will invariably incite the most direct and aggressive style of complaint while lighter transgressions might evoke no complaint at all or less harsh form of complaint. However, the same offence can often be weighted at divergent levels due to differential views of the seriousness of the misdemeanour and the influence of the various contextual circumstances that surround it.

#### **2.5.5.2 The relationship between the interlocutors**

In any given communicative event, the level of friendship that exists between interlocutors informs their choice of the appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues in ensuring that the social goal of communication is unimpeded in any way. Therefore, the relationship between interlocutors does not only change the strategy choices but also the use of both language and paralinguistic types (Saleem et al., 2018). It further influences the face needs and politeness strategies required (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Accordingly, in a complaint situation, the closer the relationship between the offender and the offended, the more easily complaints are likely to be made and the less face threatening the complaint would be (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Interlocutors thus determine the type of strategy to use in expressing their displeasure of an unacceptable act based on who their interlocutors are and the laxity of relationship that exists between them.

### **2.5.6 Sociolinguistic factors that influence complaint production**

The decision and manner in which individuals choose to express their complaints effectively about past or on-going situations require first of all sociopragmatic knowledge before the pragmalinguistic knowledge (Ghaznavi, 2017; Saleem et al., 2018). The sociopragmatic aspect refers to the contextual factors such as gender, social distance, social status, social imposition, obligations, and aims of the speech act to be performed, that affects communication (Agyekum, 2010). These are important elements that must be considered by the speaker in deciding what is appropriate or otherwise in performing such a face threatening speech act as complaint. Though these factors are universal, their level of influence on speech acts is culturally specific. The following social variables of social status, social distance, and gender are discussed to see how these variables affect the production of complaints in different cultures and languages.

#### **2.5.6.1 Gender**

According to Segal (2001, p. 3), gender refers to “a culturally based complex of norms, values and behaviours that a particular culture assigns to one biological sex or another”. Thus, although gender denotes a male or female distinction, it is more of a social concept. The speech behaviour of men and women have been extensively researched into by many linguists to ascertain the level of distinctiveness in their choice of words, tone of voice, emotional expressions, and body language as a tool of achieving politeness during social interactions (Holmes, 2013). Mills (2003, p. 165) posits that women’s language style is usually characterised by the use of elements such as ‘hedges, tentativeness, tag questions which show indirectness, mitigation and hesitation and male speech as direct, unmitigated statements and interpretation’. This speech behaviour of women enables them to avoid conflict as well as easily build rapport with others unlike men who are more assertive, and aggressive and as such makes their speech behaviour rather impolite (Mavrigiannaki, 2020).

Keikhaie & Mozaffari (2013) also observe that women are more polite when interacting with their fellow women while men on the other hand were generally more polite when speaking to a female and thus concluded that in a social interaction, the gender of the addressee plays a key role in the politeness strategies employed by the speaker.

Accordingly, previous studies on complaints have emphasized the main differences between males and females in expressing their displeasure or in performing the act of moral censure. De Leon & Parina (2016) observed in their study on Filipino complaint that, Filipino males were more assertive in complaining than their female counterparts who preferred indirect strategies in making complaints. Examination of the similarities and the differences of complaints expressed by Thai male and female native speakers revealed that, the male participants tended to complain using modified blame, followed by hints and annoyance strategies which made their complaints more direct and aggressive than their female counterparts who preferred the use of indirect and other less aggressive complaint strategies (Noisiri, 2002). Ayu and Sukyadi (2011) also investigated the differences of politeness strategies used by Indonesian male and female students in the speech act of complaints. The results showed that, the gender of the speaker influences the choice of complaint strategies in that, females used less direct accusation than males who used more direct accusation. In addition, their study which confirmed that of Keikhaie & Mozaffari (2013) showed that males were more direct in talking to their fellow males than females when they had to complain.

Moreover, in the Iranian context, Kakolaki and Shahrokhi (2016) observed in their study of the production of the speech act of complaints by Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) male and female students that, the female students preferred to use more indirect complaints than their male counterparts who tended to use very direct complaint (Kakolaki & Shahrokhi, 2016). The findings of these studies discussed are consistent with

argument in the literature that women tend to be more focused on preserving and maintaining relationships than males and this is evident even when making complaints.

#### **2.5.6.2 Social status**

The social status of a person refers to the person's position (lower, higher or equal) or one's level of importance in relation to other people within a particular society. The status of an individual invariably defines the amount of power wielded by that person and hence a key determinant of what kind of social interaction that person may have with others and vice versa. Saleem (2018) suggests that the power and status of an individual could be influenced by factors such as the comparative experience, age, qualification, or skills of a person. According to Wannaruk (2008), a person of a higher status is likely to be more assertive and expressive whereas a person of lower status tends to be passive in social interactions (Wannaruk, 2008). Hassani, Mardani and Dastjerdi (2011) also affirm that speakers pay much attention to social status in their relationships and interactions. Therefore, people of higher status as a result receive much respect as compared to equal and lower status interlocutors (Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017).

In performing a speech act like complaint where one could easily lose face, the status of the addressee plays a significant role in the choice of strategy deemed appropriate to save the addressee's face. For instance, the production of complaints between a pupil and an instructor, may be different from that of a manager to an employee. Agyekum (2010) opines that whenever there is the evidence of this social variable in any social interaction, it is an indication that face and politeness must be treated with utmost delicacy. Consequently, a complainant may not like to seek remediation of an offensive act and may even opt out of complaining completely when the perceived social status of the addressee is higher and as such makes the cost of doing so too high (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Therefore, the higher the status of the offender, the less likely a complaint would be made and, in such situations, where a complaint is made, the complainant is most likely to choose a relatively milder form of complaint as a sign of courtesy whereas, interlocutors of a higher or equal status are likely to make explicit complaints regardless of the face want of their addressees. De Leon & Parina, (2016) for instance reported that, Filipinos are likely to complain when the addressee is of a lower or equal status than when the addressee is of a higher status. Al-Shboul (2022) also observed in a study on the complaint behaviour of Jordanian Students at Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU) that, the participants used less direct strategies when complaining to their professors (higher social status) but used more direct strategies with their classmates (equal).

### **2.5.6.3 Social distance**

Social distance is the perceived level of intimacy tolerated between interlocutors such as close, intimate, acquaintance or distant relationship (Brown & Levinson, 1987). According to Spencer-Oatey (2000), social distance involves social familiarity, length of acquaintance, frequency of contact and the degree of familiarity. Thus, the closer the relationship between the interlocutors, the more directly speakers will possibly express their complaints. Therefore, the differences in the degree of familiarity between the complainant and the addressee have a major influence on the effectiveness of the complaint produced. However, this complaint behaviour is not absolute as cultures differ in their production of the various speech acts. For instance, Yang and Wannaruk (2019) realised that natives of Thai complained most explicitly to an acquaintance, but less explicitly to an intimate or a stranger while the Chinese complained more explicitly to an intimate, than an acquaintance or even a stranger. Tamanaha (2003) also observed that the Japanese generally complained more implicitly to out-group members than to in-group interlocutors.

### **2.5.7 Summary**

This section focused on the strategies used in making a complaint and the sociolinguistic variables that influence their choice and usage. The discussion thus far indicates that these social variables of gender, social distance, and social status underpin the successful performance of this face threatening speech act and so must be treated with utmost care. Thus, the person who formulates a complaint must endeavour to act politely in conveying the intended illocutionary force as an indication of one's communicative as well as cultural competence. Politeness inevitably forms an integral part of our everyday communication as it entails taking into account the addressees' feeling of self-respect and freedom from imposition as much as possible. The next section therefore, discusses the politeness theory which is the theoretical framework for this study.

### **2.6 Theoretical framework: Politeness Theory**

In social interactions, interlocutors endeavour to minimize any potential cause of disharmony and conflict that may hinder the smooth flow of communication by remaining polite. The concept of politeness as an essential component of our daily communication has gained a lot of attention in the literature which has led to the formulation of a number of theories aimed at explaining this concept and how it operates. One of the most influential approaches to the theory of politeness which forms the theoretical underpinning to this study was propounded by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson in 1987. According to Brown and Levinson (1978), each person is endowed with 'rationality and face' which work simultaneously to achieve the communicative goals in any speech event. Rationality is considered as a clearly defined mode of reasoning which guarantees inferences from ends or goals, to means that will achieve those ends. The notion of 'face', which is at the heart of this politeness theory, is based on the ideas of face as posited by Goffman who defined face as

“the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume s/he has taken during a particular contact” (Goffman, 1967, p. 5).

Brown and Levinson (1987), in relating face to politeness, describe face as the public self-image that all rational adult members have, when engaged in spoken interaction. They further explained that, in any given communicative event, everyone has two specific faces that must be constantly adhered to; positive face and negative face. The positive face is “the want of every member that, his /her wants be desirable to at least some others’ while ‘the want of every competent adult member that his /her actions be unimpeded by others’ constitutes a person’s negative face” (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 62). In essence, one’s positive face is largely based on the desire to have one’s values and wants acknowledged and approved to enable them stay connected to others, while the negative face is simply, the desire of every partaker of any social interaction to be allowed to act freely without imposition from their interlocutors. Brown and Levinson built their theory of politeness on the assumption that face, though an emotionally invested thing, can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and so ought to be constantly attended to, in any social interaction. Consequently, most often than not, during social interactions, interlocutors endeavour to redress or minimise any form of offends that may affect a person’s face wants by considering the three social variables: the perceived social distance (D) between the hearer and the speaker, the perceived power (P) difference between them, and the cultural ranking (R) of the speech act.

Relative power (P) refers to the authority of the speaker in relation to that of the hearer (equal status, inferior to superior, or superior to inferior), which reflects the degree at which the speaker can impose his/her will on the hearer. Therefore, the level of face threat will increase if the addressee wields more power than the speaker and consequently, more reparation will be needed to balance the threat in such a situation. Agyekum (2006) posits that speakers of a higher status or power speak freely without necessarily paying attention to

the face wants of their addressees but speak with utmost caution when the opposite occurs (Agyekum, 2006).

Social Distance (D) is the degree of familiarity and solidarity that exist between the interactants. The speaker is more likely to choose polite expressions when engaging in an interaction with the hearer when the social distance between them is wide. For instance, Anderson (2009) observes that speakers who see themselves as of lower status in English-speaking contexts tend to mark social distance between themselves and higher status addressees by using address forms that include a title and a last name, but not the first name (e.g. Mr. Adams) so as not to be deemed impolite by the hearer. Absolute ranking (R) of imposition shows the right of the speaker that allows him to perform the speech act in one's culture and the degree to which the hearer welcomes the imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 74). Therefore, the higher the risk of imposition, the higher the degree of politeness necessary for communicating.

The politeness theory may have chalked a lot of successes in the world of academia as far as politeness in the expression of the various speech acts is concerned; nevertheless, it is not without criticisms. The concept of universality, the rigid relation between politeness and sociological variants, the absence of context and the neglect of discourse have been greatly criticised in the literature (Anderson, 2009; Ayad, 2017; Watts, 2011). At the heart of these criticisms is the fact that the perception of threat and politeness, contrary to Brown and Levinson's universal theory of politeness is not always the same; it varies cross-culturally (Anderson, 2009). Thus, different cultures have different interpretations and values of face, hence, the appropriateness of an FTA strategy to a larger extent, depends on the culture of the language used.

Fraser (1990, p. 22) accordingly posits that "each society has a particular set of social norms consisting of more or less explicit rules that prescribe a certain behaviour, state of



affairs, or a way of thinking in context. Therefore, a positive evaluation (politeness) arises when an action is in congruence with the norm, a negative evaluation (impoliteness) when an action is to the contrary". Fraser thus, equates politeness to a socially correct or appropriate behaviour since an act of politeness in one culture may be deemed impolite in another. Due to the cultural-specific norms that govern how the face is treated in relation to the performance of the various speech acts, a speaker may unintentionally behave in a linguistically inappropriate way in an intercultural encounter which could easily lead to miscommunication and the eventual breakdown in communication.

Similarly, Anderson (2009) sees Brown and Levinson's concept of face as western-biased, and so questions its validity in West African societies, where the appropriateness of a speech act is rather assessed on the basis of his social status in a particular society. This view is in cognisance with Watts, Ide and Ehlich (2005) who reveal that, the Japanese equivalent term for politeness has different sets of connotations associated with it other than the English version of politeness. They claim that what governs politeness in a culture such as the Japanese where emphasis is placed on collectivism rather than individualism is the acknowledgement of the interdependence in the society and not necessarily based on 'face-wants' as stipulated by Brown and Levinson.

Watts (2011) also claims that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model does not take into cognizance knowledge of the social situation of the interlocutors, and their knowledge of what constitutes politeness in a given communicative event since what may be considered as polite by the Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model, may be considered impolite in certain speech situations. In addition, Holmes (2013) agrees that the relevant dimensions of communication (solidarity and status) may be universal, but the ways in which they are realized tend to differ in different communities. He further argues that the value of politeness in many Eastern societies, such as Japan, Korea and Indonesia involve

using language which recognizes relative status very explicitly. Therefore, people from culturally different speech communities often express particular speech acts differently, and use different rules of interaction. As a result, misunderstandings may arise and they may unwittingly offend one another.

Some scholars have also argued that Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory only takes into account the speaker's attitude towards politeness even though communication is a two-way affair. This may result in the speaker's intentions being misinterpreted by the addressee especially in situations where the interlocutors have different cultural backgrounds (Ayad, 2017; Diani, 2014). In spite of the criticisms levelled against the politeness theory, the fact remains that during social interactions, people cooperate (and assume each other's cooperation) in maintaining face in interaction; such cooperation being based on the mutual vulnerability of face. With this understanding, a lot of empirical studies have been conducted using this theory in exploring the performance of the various speech acts for effective communication (Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017). Brown and Levinson's Politeness theory proposes that the level of politeness invested into a particular communicative event depends on the status of the addressee, the social relationship between the interlocutors, and the topic under discussion. As a result, this study will treat the concept of face in line with the three social variables; power, social distance, and rank of imposition as discussed above.

## **2.7 Complaint as a face threatening act**

There are times when the face that a person earnestly seeks to uphold is challenged, or undermined. This is due to the fact that, many speech acts are intrinsically threatening to the face and as such may not support the face wants of either the speaker or the addressee. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 65) categorize those acts that by their very nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or speaker as 'face threatening acts' (FTAs). Watts (2011) regards a face-threatening act as any act that undermines the desirable view of a person by

others. So, if a speaker in the course of an interaction, says something that represents a threat to the addressee's public self-image expectations, it is described as an FTA (LeBlanc, 2010). In Trosborg's (1995) view, complaints are inherently non-polite, hence considered as one of the speech acts that threaten the face of the addressee (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Complaints, threaten the addressee's positive face want of being respected and appreciated when the speaker holds the hearer responsible for an unsatisfactory act. Besides, by implicitly requesting a redress of the addressee's unacceptable behaviour, the addressee's negative face want of acting freely without any form of imposition from others is threatened. Consider the utterance in (11).

(11) A student openly complains to his teacher in class:

Student: Sir, your method of teaching, always makes it impossible for me to understand anything you teach in class.

The student, per his utterance in (11), is not only expressing his displeasure, but also requesting the teacher to change his method of teaching which seems to be the reason for his incomprehension of what is taught in class. In this case, the teacher's positive face (the need for recognition and appreciation of the self-image) and negative face (the need for freedom of action and freedom from imposition) are damaged. As a result, the student is obviously considered very rude in this case since he did not take the teacher's face into consideration while making his complaint.

## **2.8 Complaint face saving strategies**

Interlocutors demand utmost respect or tolerance from each other as they interact and so even if one feels offended at a point, s/he is expected to express his/her displeasure in a polite manner as much as possible in order to reduce, if not completely avoid embarrassing the hearer. Unfortunately, a face threatening act like a complaint undoubtedly, inherently damages the face of the addressee who acts in opposition to the wants and desires of the

other. It is imperative then, that the speaker presents his grievance in the most appropriate manner, so as to mitigate the severity of the complaint as a way of saving the face of the offender. As Brown and Levinson cleverly state,

normally everyone's face depends on everyone else's being maintained, and since people can be expected to defend their faces if threatened, and in defending their own to threaten others' faces, it is in general, in every participant's best interest to maintain each other's face. (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61)

Guided by this assertion, Brown and Levinson outline some polite strategies (opt out, *bald on-record*, *positive politeness*, *negative politeness*, and *off-record politeness*) considered by interactants in performing such face threatening acts as complaints.

### **2.8.1 Opting out strategy**

A speaker may 'opt out' by completely refraining from expressing the FTA as a way of avoiding the consequent effect of potentially damaging the face of the hearer. According to Shaeffer (2018), in a 'complainable' situation, the speaker usually opts for this strategy in situations where voicing out one's frustration could induce a confrontation between the interactants instead of ensuring a redress of the grievous act, thereby severing the social relationship between them. However, when the speaker decides to perform an FTA, he can do so either by going off-record or on-record.

### **2.8.2 Off-record strategy**

The speaker, in choosing an off-record strategy, uses linguistic realizations such as irony, rhetorical questions, and all sorts of hints to express what he wants to communicate. A speaker who chooses this strategy expresses his dissatisfaction without directly mentioning either the unacceptable act or the offender (Maheswari et al., 2017; Puksi, 2016; Shaeffer, 2018). The hearer in this case, is expected to infer the true meaning of what is said on the basis of the situational context. Consider for instance, the situation where a family decides to

while away time by driving through town and their driver decides to speed up unnecessarily on the road, the speaker might say something like, ‘we’re not in a hurry to get back home’. No real face damage is committed in this case since there was no direct mention of the offender or the offense, yet the offender will, most probably, reduce the speed at which he’s driving and thus resolve the concerns of the speaker. In using the off-record strategy therefore, more is communicated than said as a way of saving the face of the hearer.

### 2.8.3 On-record strategy

In contrast to the off-record strategy, the speaker may directly and unambiguously express his intentions by going on-record. The speaker in performing an on-record FTA, chooses from any of these three sub strategies: i) *bald-on record (non- redress)*, ii) *Positive Politeness (redressive action)*, and iii) *Negative Politeness (redressive action)* depending on what he seeks to achieve. Bald-on-record, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is chosen whenever the speaker wants to do the FTA with maximum efficiency more than he wants to satisfy the hearer’s face. This strategy is therefore, considered the least polite of the FTA strategies. For instance, a speaker who feels offended may choose to express his frustration as much as possible in the most direct, explicit form, without any mitigation. The speaker in this case could even go to the extent of using insults and threats to achieve his aim of expressing his displeasure of an unacceptable act (Puksi, 2016; Shaeffer, 2018) However, Brown and Levinson claim that an FTA is usually done this way only if the speaker does not fear retribution from the hearer or the speaker is superior in power to his addressee and thus, can verbally control the addressee’s behaviour. For example, in an office situation where the boss tells his subordinate at a meeting, *You always drag our meetings with your unnecessary interruptions*. The boss in this case, without mincing words, directly expresses his displeasure towards his subordinate without any attempt to save the face want of that worker. This strategy is also used in urgent or desperate situations where explicit or unambiguous

instructions must be given, such as, “hold still!”; when efficiency is necessary, as in, “pay attention”; and in task-oriented situations, such as, “hand over the key”.

The positive politeness strategy is more oriented towards saving the positive face want of the hearer by treating him as one whose wants and personality traits are known and accepted. In performing the speech act of complaint at this level, the speaker still explicitly airs his displeasure but with some expression of mutual concern and understanding so as to maintain the public self-image or face of his addressee. This strategy unlike the bald-on record, will not necessarily lead to real conflict and the face damage will be relatively minimized since the complainant appeals to a common goal, and even friendship, via the use of expressions of solidarity, informality, and familiarity. So, if for instance, a father tells his son, *You parked the car by the roadside again*, and there is an understanding between them that *he should park the car at the garage*, such a complaint will not greatly damage the relationship between the two.

Negative politeness on the other hand is used by the speaker to reduce the threat on the hearer’s desire to maintain freedom of action and personal space and as such, the FTA such as complaint in this regard might take the form of mitigation through the use of conventional request for repair, where applicable, or a less direct statement relating to the socially unacceptable act or other softening mechanisms that give the addressee a face-saving line of escape, permitting him to feel that his response is not coerced (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Thus, in the example of the over speeding driver, the speaker might say "Excuse me, sir. Could you slow down a bit" or in the case of the boss and his subordinate at the meeting, the boss could say *I was really hoping to end our meeting early today*. By negative politeness therefore, the speaker tries to keep the hearer's negative face by valuing the hearer's personal territory through the use of expressions of formality, distancing, and restraint. Brown and Levinson assert that these politeness strategies provide an effective approach to

communicating one's intentions without causing a break in communication which could eventually sever the relationship between the interlocutors. Thus, politeness according to them, is a redressive action for amending the effect of FTAs in all cultures and languages.

#### **2.8.4 Summary**

This section looked at the politeness theory and its role in making the speech act of complaint. The discussion revealed that even though the conflictive nature of complaints makes it threatening to the face of the addressee, a complainant may employ certain politeness strategies in order to save the face of the addressee. However, the level of politeness and how they are manipulated as strategies in saving the face the addressee can vary depending on the context and social rule of interactions pertaining in a particular language.

#### **2.9 Complaints and pragmatic transfers**

Taguchi (2010) notes that pragmatic knowledge deals with language use in relation to language users and language setting's, therefore, when the learner's pragmatic knowledge of his native language and culture influence his comprehension, production and acquisition of the second language pragmatic information there is said to have been a pragmatic transfer. Pragmatic transfer can either be positive or negative. Positive pragmatic transfer refers to the pragmatic behaviours or other knowledge which displays consistency across the learners' L1 and L2 (Chantharasombat & Pongpairoj, 2018). Due to such instances of commonalities between the L1 and L2, learners are able to successfully execute certain pragmatic functions (e.g., speech acts) in the target language even though, the acts may still contain some non-native features. Positive pragmatic transfer therefore usually leads to success in communication. Negative transfer on the other hand, occurs when the differences in the learner's native language pragmatic knowledge impedes the learner from reaching native-like pragmatic competence in the target language.

While exploring communicative competence of German learners of English, Kasper (1981) found that the non-native speakers' complaint strategies were more direct than those of native speakers when they interacted with each other in role play dialogues. Learners also had difficulty choosing appropriate modality markers and modal verbs in English and so preferred intensified indirect complaints, which was attributed to the linguistic behaviour in their L1. According to native speakers of English, learners' complaints were perceived as negative behaviour, which consequently would lead to a pragmatic failure. Al-Momani (2017) who examined the production of the complaint speech act by Jordanian EFL learners and native speakers of American English realized from his study that there were occurrences of negative pragmatic transfer in the complaints made by the Jordanian learners. Tran (2002) also found that Vietnamese learners of English transfer sociocultural norms from their first language when they complain in the target language.

These studies show that language learners are expected not only to have the ability to produce speech acts that are deemed contextually appropriate by their interlocutors, they also should understand and appreciate the elements that form linguistic behaviour in different types of contexts in their target language (Saleem et al., 2018). Contrary to positive transfer, negative transfer of the learner's L1 linguistic and social pragmatic norms can lead to an inappropriate pragmatic production in the target language which can hinder their success in communication. An aspect of this study therefore, aims at investigating how learners' L1 pragmatic knowledge influences their production of complaint in English in Ghana.

## **2.10 Related studies**

The complaint speech act, due to its face-threatening nature, has comparatively very limited but interesting studies conducted in this area. One of such study which is widely quoted in the study of complaint is that of Olshtain and Weinbach (1993). This study investigated the realization of the speech act of complaint in Hebrew. Data was elicited from



35 Israeli university students using a discourse completion questionnaire, consisting of 20 situations which also sort to examine the influence of social status and the social distance on complaints. The out-come of the study led to the development of a scale for the perception of the severity of complaint with which Olshtain and Weinbach identified five categories of realization patterns of complaints. They further realized that, speakers of Hebrew used more of disapproval, complaint, and warning of the five categories. Speakers also had the tendency of choosing less severe complaints (disapproval and complaint) when the speaker was of a lower status than the hearer, but opted for the two most severe realizations (complaint and warning) when the speaker was of equal or higher social status than the hearer.

Trosborg (1995) also investigated the complaints made by Danish learners of English in comparison with NSs of English in varied contexts (complaint to a person of superior status, a stranger, a person of equal status) by means of role-plays. The study identified four main categories of realization patterns of complaints and eight subcategories according to their level of directness or indirectness. These are: no explicit reproach (hint), disapproval (expression of annoyance or consequence), accusation (direct or indirect accusations), and blame (modified blame, explicit blame- behaviour, explicit blame-person). The study further revealed that, Danish learners produced significantly fewer complaints than the native speakers of English which differed at the level of directness and ability to support a complaint adequately. While native speakers employed the use of hints in making complaints, Danish learners of English used more direct forms of complaints characterized by the use of fewer modality markers, upgraders and down graders. Moreover, unlike the NSs of English, the learners did not adjust their performance of complaint significantly to the parameters of the dominance and social distance.

Another study was carried out by Deveci (2011) who investigated the complaint speech act used by Turkish EFL learners speaking to a commiserating and contradicting

teacher. The data for the study was obtained from twenty (20) native English speakers, twenty (20) Turkish EFL learners and twenty-five (25) Turkish native speakers through role-plays. The students' production was then judged by two native speakers. The subjects' complaint speech act sets were transcribed and analysed, using a coding scheme from Murphy and Neu's (1996) complaint strategies (Deveci, 2015). The baseline and the interlanguage data were compared using SPSS to see to what extent they were similar and different, and to see whether or not the Turkish EFL learners made positive and negative transfer, and whether there were any unique features to the interlanguage of the learners. The findings of the study revealed that, the components of the complaint speech act set realized by the Turkish EFL learners were 'complaint', 'justification', 'candidate solution: request', 'candidate solution: demand', and 'explanation of purpose'. When speaking to the commiserating teacher, the students made positive transfer in using the components 'explanation of purpose', 'complaint', 'justification', and 'request'. They made negative transfer in using 'demand'. The students speaking to the contradicting teacher made positive transfer in their use of the components 'explanation of purpose', 'complaint' and 'justification'.

Hermann (2009) examined the nature of speech act set of complaint as performed in English by 24 international students of Chinese, Dutch, Gabonese, German, Libyan, and (white) American backgrounds living in two Stellenbosch University residences. The complaint data were collected through a discourse completion task. The social acceptability judgment data were elicited from three Afrikaans-speaking South African staff members of these residences, and from an additional six Afrikaans-speaking South African students who served as informants. All the data were analysed within the pragmatic framework of Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project, as developed by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989). The main findings of the analysis indicated that, almost all the complainers in the six

cultural groups chose a direct strategy in performing the complaint speech act but differed from one another in the use of modifiers (both intensifiers and softeners) in their performance of the individual speech act of complaint.

It was also observed that Gabonese complainers used softeners the most, followed by the German and the Americans. The Chinese and the Libyan complainers on the other hand used softeners less frequently, and the Dutch used the least. Concerning the use of intensifiers, the Dutch complainers used the most, followed by the Chinese and the Libyan complainers; the American complainers used fewer intensifiers, followed by the German complainers and lastly the Gabonese, who used least of all. Moreover, these differences influenced the level of comprehension of some complaints by the staff members. It was also found that the staff members' responses to the complaints were influenced by their social acceptability judgments of the international students' utterances.

Furthermore, Wijianto et al. (2013) investigated the influence of different social distances and social status levels on the politeness strategies used in making complaints. The participants of the study were 50 Indonesian learners of English. The data was elicited through oral discourse completion tasks and Trosborg's (1995) complaint categorization was used to categorize the various complaint realization patterns identified. The findings of the study showed that different social distances and status levels did not result in different types of politeness strategy. In another study, Hussein and Al-Mofti (2014) examined the production of complaints speech act in English performed by Iraqi and Chinese English language students. Data were collected using a DCT which aimed at examining the language proficiency as well as the pragmatic ability of students. The participants of the study were English majoring students of College of Arts/University of Anbar, Iraq and College of Arts/Beijing Language and Culture University, China. The responses made by both Iraqi and Chinese students were compared to those collected from native speakers of British English.

The results revealed that, both Iraqi learners and native speakers of British English were more direct in their complaining than their Chinese counterparts.

Fatmasari (2015) investigated the complaint strategies used by 30 Students of the English Department at Universitas Brawijaya. The data was collected using a discourse completion task and analysed following Trosborg's (1995) categorization of complaint patterns. The study unveiled four categories of complaint and seven sub-strategies of complaint. Learners however, produced complaints more directly using accusations. It was also observed that social status influenced the degree of politeness of the students in that, the learners used indirect accusation when the addressee was of a higher social status but used direct accusation when addressee was of equal social status.

In a similar study, De Leon and Parina (2016) investigated the occurrence and likelihood to complain by the Filipino in both English and Tagalog in relation to gender, status, and perceived level of language proficiency as well as the different semantic formulae used in making complaints by males and females in English and Filipino. In view of this, data was elicited through questionnaire and written discourse completion test from 120 bilingual college students who had Filipino as their mother tongue. The results showed no relationship between likelihood to complain with regard to gender, and self- assessed language proficiency, and likelihood to complain and the level of status (superior, equal and inferior). However, the study revealed that Filipinos complained in a different manner depending on the language that they used; while Filipino males were assertive when complaining in English language, they were more assertive when complaining in Filipino language, and both genders used different semantic formulae when complaining in English and Filipino. Moreover, Filipino speakers of English as a second language preferred to complain in Filipino rather than in English in order to help maintain the face of the hearer.

Al Rashidi (2017) investigated the complaint strategies used by monolingual Saudi Arabian adults (MSAAs), Saudi EFL adult learners (SEFLALs), and native speakers of English (ENSs). The study also sought to find out whether SEFLALs displayed pragmatic transfer in their choice of complaint strategies. A total of 183 written responses were collected from MSAAs, SEFLALs, and ENSs via a three-item discourse completion task (DCT) and analysed. The findings revealed that hints, request and annoyance were the most frequently used strategies by MSAAs, SEFLALs, and ENSs. Moreover, there were no statistically significant differences among MSAAs, SEFLALs, and ENSs in using the strategy of direct accusation which was consistent with the concept of positive pragmatic transfer. However, the SEFLALs use of hints, behavioural blame, request and indirect accusation were cases of weak negative pragmatic transfer; modified blame was consistent with concept of strong negative pragmatic transfer.

Maheswari et al (2018) also sought to identify the strategies used by the senior vocational students in making and responding to verbal complaints. It was a descriptive qualitative research that used an elicitation technique to collect the students' complaints and responses to complaints through simulated speech encounters. The students were asked to complain and respond the complaints based on five different situations. The data were categorized and analysed based on the theories of complaint and response types and strategies used in this research. The findings showed that the students mostly chose direct accusation as the verbal act strategy, meaning that they explicitly stated their complaints.

Masjedi and Paramasivam (2018) analysed the politeness strategies employed by Iranian learners in communicating their complaints in English. Searle's (1969) speech act theory and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory comprised the theoretical framework of the study. The data were elicited through open-ended discourse completion task questionnaire from 50 Iranian university students. The findings revealed that Iranians are

able to draw on a variety of strategies when faced with various complaint-provoking situations. The findings also showed that Iranians are indirect and exercise negative politeness as they try to minimize the face threatening act of complaining. However, when the situation demands for it, they can be direct in their manner of speech.

In a more recent study, Al-Shboul (2022) examined the complaint strategies used by Jordanian male and female students at Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU) in order to appreciate the influence of the participants' gender on the complaint strategies produced. The data collected for the study was done through the use of a modified version of the discourse completion test (DCT) proposed by Zhang (2011). The questionnaire was then translated into Arabic to aid the participants' comprehension of the situations. Then, data were mainly analysed based on Trosborg's (1995) complaint classification system. The results revealed that gender influenced the choice of complaining strategies and politeness in that, even though both male and female students produced the same complaining strategies, they differed in their preference and frequency of use of these strategies: the male students used more direct accusation complaints compared to their female counterparts. It was also observed that the social status and social distance of the addressee influenced the participants' responses in terms of the level of directness and their use of different politeness strategies. Thus, the participants tended to use less direct strategies with their professors (higher social status). Moreover, the participants used more direct strategies with their classmates (close) than a service person (stranger). Although there are several studies on the speech act of complaint of different cultures, there is none that has focused on how Ghanaians complain in English when faced with difficult situations and as such, this study seeks to fill that gap in the literature.

## 2.11 Conclusion

It is of utmost importance that people co-exist with each other in a way that promotes peace and harmony. Unfortunately, due to our fallibility as humans, this great quest to live harmoniously with one another is tempered with as we interact with each other. Most often than not, in such situations where a violation of a social or moral norm has occurred, a complaint is made so as to ward off any lingering negative feeling or a repetition of such an unacceptable act which is capable of thwarting the peace and tranquillity in that relationship. The victim whose action or otherwise distorts the peaceful co-existence of interactants in a communicative event is then compelled to make reparations based on the offence committed once the complaint is made (Maheswari et al, 2018).

However, this chapter through the review of relevant literature has revealed first of all that, people from different cultures generally differ in their communicative style. Consequently, in expressing one's displeasure of a socially unacceptable act, speakers employ different strategies which cannot be generalized due to the differences in cultural backgrounds. The choice of these strategies as observed in the literature is to a large extent influenced by the severity of offence, social distance and social power prevailing between the complainant and his/her addressee and thus differs from one language to another. These differences in the strategies offer an opportunity for researchers to identify new strategies which can be re-grouped and segmented, or affirm those which have already established. The current study is therefore expected to offer new results for the strategies of complaint in the Ghanaian context, which has never been examined, or affirm their correlation with what pertains in other languages, as established by other researchers.

Moreover, the researcher based her study on the theory of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), which focused on the maintenance of 'face' in social interactions. The application of this theory will enable the researcher appreciate how the

social variables; status and distance influence the participants choice of strategy in making complaints in varied context. Furthermore, the literature review revealed that, researchers mostly depended on the use of DCT as the only means of gathering data. Aston (1995) as cited in Deveci (2015) espoused that, responses to proposed theoretical situations such as those found in the DCT's do not necessarily reflect what the participants would actually say if they were in such situations, but rather what they think they would say. This means that the type of data gained through these written forms may inaccurately reflect the naturalness of oral data. Therefore, unlike the previous studies, the present study would adopt an Open Role Play method in examining the complaint speech behaviour of Ghanaian ESL learners. The data collection method is presented in detail in the next chapter.





## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The present chapter presents a vivid account of the methodology employed in accomplishing the aims of this study. This includes a description of the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, and the instrument of data collection. The chapter further discusses the data collection procedure, the pilot study and ethical issues. Finally, the transcription and analysis of the data are discussed.

#### **3.1 Research approach**

This study employed the qualitative research approach. A qualitative research is an exploration of the meaning that individuals or groups assign to a social or human phenomenon, opinion, and experience (Creswell, 2014). The process of such research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively developed from specific to general themes, and the researcher making interpretation of the meaning of the data. The current study is a qualitative study since it seeks to investigate complaints, a delicate linguistic human behaviour whose successful realization and interpretation is largely based on shared social norms and belief systems and thus difficult to obtain through quantitative methods of data collection.

#### **3.2 Research design**

The focus of this study, which is aimed at gaining a significant insight and a comprehensive understanding of the influence of social factors on the realization patterns of complaints found in the English language produced by Ghanaian English as second language learners, makes it possible for using a descriptive case study as the appropriate qualitative research design for the study (Kohler, 2012). According to Creswell (2009, p. 13), a case study is “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event,

activity, process, or one or more individuals” in order to understand complex issues in its real-life settings. The case study research design adopted in this study thus, affords the researcher the opportunity of unraveling a deeper understanding of “how” and “why” students in the senior high schools in Asante Mampong complain in Ghanaian English after being taught in British English at least from primary four to the secondary level of education.

### **3.3 Population**

The aim of every research is to address issues that are of great relevance to a specified group of individuals known as a research population (Cohen et al., 2007). The population of this study consists of both male and female final year students of the three senior high schools in Asante-Mampong in the Ashanti Region, namely: St. Monica’s S.H.S, St. Joseph Seminary S.H.S and Amaniampong S.H.S. These three schools in Ashanti Mampong municipality were chosen because they admit students from every part of the country and thus give a fair representation of the different ethnic groups and first languages from across the country. Also due to time and financial constraint, the researcher took into consideration the proximity of the research site.

### **3.4 Sample and sampling procedure**

A population sample is the group of individuals from the population whose properties are studied to gain information in order to arrive at conclusions that will be applicable to the whole (Creswell, 2009). In a qualitative study, the ‘richness’ of data collected is deemed far more important than the number of participants (Tuckett, 2004), hence the small number that characterizes a qualitative study (Creswell, 2009). Charmaz (2006) as cited in Creswell affirms this claim by stating that, you stop collecting data when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties (Charmaz, 2006). Guided by these assertions, the purposive sampling technique, which allows the researcher the luxury of selecting participants who possess the ability to provide the requisite data, was used in

choosing the 96 Form 3 students as the participants for this study without recourse to any category other than gender (Charmaz, 2006; Tuckett, 2004). The sample size for this study thus comprised 32 (16 females and 16 males) final year students from each of the three public secondary schools in Asante Mampong who have English language as their second language (L2) and 4 teachers who only served as interlocutors to the student participants. However, since St. Monica's is an all-girls school, all the 32 participants are girls only. The final year students were chosen for the purpose of this study as they seem to have acquired an appreciable level of mastery over the use of the language having studied and used English as second language learners (L2) for not less than 14 years. Moreover, the form 3 class is the highest class of the senior high school and therefore the students are deemed to be mature enough to understand and appreciate the importance the choice of words in making complaints and the resultant effect of the words used.

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

One major concern of a pragmatic research is the manner in which data is collected since, "the data collection instrument will determine whether the data gathered are reliable and fairly accurate to represent the authentic performance of linguistic action" (Nurani 2009, p. 667). Considering the main objective of this research study which is to examine the performance of the complaint speech act in its full discourse context to ascertain the politeness investments made in strategy choices by Ghanaian SLA learners, it is imperative to gather data using an instrument that allows the researcher exert experimental control over participant roles, contextual factors and communicative activities. A data collection format that affords more tightly such pre-structured interaction is the role play (Beltran-Palanges 2020; Schneider, 2018). Kasper describes role-plays as "simulations of social interactions" (Kasper, 2008, p. 288) in which participants enact described roles within stipulated situations.

Role plays can be *spontaneous* without the participants necessarily assuming different identities, or *mimetic-replicating* role plays in which the participants take on the role of the visually presented model, or *mimetic-pretending* role plays where participants instead of retaining their identities, rather assume a different identity (Kasper, 2008, p. 288). Also, role plays can either be open or closed depending on the extent of interaction (Kasper, 2008) In closed role plays, the interlocutors are allowed a one-turn oral response to a description of a situation in an attempt to elicit the communicative act under study. The response is therefore, organized as a single-turn speech act. In open role plays however, the interlocutors take multiple turns and discourse sequences as needed in order to maintain and complete an interactional task. This enables the researcher to examine the sequential structure of utterances in a full discourse context to reveal a particular speech act behaviour. Open role plays are effective for examining how context factors such as power, distance, and imposition influence the selection and realization of communicative acts and how the values of these factors may be changed through conversational negotiation in simulated real-life situations (Félix-Brasdefer, 2018). As Fant & Bavegard (1997) notes, open role plays allow researchers to observe generic resources and structures of conversation that are fairly independent of particular contexts and goals, but unlike authentic discourse and elicited conversation, they also permit researchers to design contexts and roles that are likely to elicit specific speech events and communicative acts.

A major criticism against the use of role plays as a tool of data collection is that participants do not always behave in role-plays as they would in real-life situations since they generate interactions from imaginary contexts (Bataller & Shively, 2011). Moreover, speakers with limited target language proficiency may be faced with difficulty if they are required to interact in an imagined context with no real-life history or experience (Golato, 2004). Nevertheless, data elicited through open role play are closer to the naturally occurring

data than other procedures such as questionnaires or DCTs which encourage participants to produce their responses in a textual form (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Role play is thus, adjudged a valid and reliable method of data collection which allows the researcher to closely monitor the experimental conditions of their studies and make inferences pertaining to real life situations (Demeter, 2007; Grando, 2016). This study therefore, employed the open role play as the main instrument used in the collection of the data. Considering the fact that some speech acts such as complaint are very difficult to collect via natural data because they do not occur frequently in spontaneous interaction (Billmyer & Varghese, 2000), the open role play allowed the researcher to obtain a large amount of data on complete conversational interactions, including openings and closings of conversation as a reflection of the participants' awareness of the appropriateness of language use.

### **3.6 Data collection procedure**

This study collected data on complaints using open-ended role plays in order to get data that were as close to the natural as much as possible. The role play scenarios were based on four complaint-induced situations which were carefully designed not only to be as realistic as possible but even more importantly, to reflect everyday occurrences that are familiar to the participants. This helped to reduce unnecessary anxiety that the participants might feel as a result of an unfamiliar situation which could lead to a misrepresentation of their true behaviour. Table 3.5.1 summarizes the four situations used in eliciting data on complaints.

*Table 3.5.1. Situations used in eliciting data on complaints*

Situation	Description
1	You have just received your test script but you are surprised how low your grade is. After careful review of your work, you come to the realization that, you should have had a better grade than what you have been give. Since this grade would adversely affect your final grade if not rectified, you decide to talk to your teacher about it.
2	You are sharing a room with your friend who never sees the need to take part in cleaning the room, yet is fond of messing up the place. You have tried your best to put up with his/ her behaviour for a while but today, after seeing the kind of mess made in the room, you feel you have had enough and need to speak to him/her about it. How would you complain to your friend?
3	You asked your junior to sweep your class after school but you realized the next day that he/she didn't do it. Complain to that junior.
4	You are at the boarding house and noise is strictly prohibited after night prayers. However, your colleagues in your dormitory have blatantly ignored this all-important rule. As a result, you hardly get enough sleep and this is gradually taking a toll on your academics. How would you present your complaint to your housemaster/ housemistress?

The researcher took into consideration the three factors: social distance and social power between the speaker and addressee as well as the severity of the offence in preparing the four complaint-induced situations. These social factors, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), determine the way a face threatening act like a complaint may be produced and so these factors are investigated in the study to see how they influence the types of complaint

produced. In situation 1 and 4, for instance, the speaker is a student and the addressee, a teacher. The addressee therefore, is of a higher status than the speaker. However, unlike situation 1, situation 2 is what Boxer describes as a third part complaint. The speaker in this situation complains about the unacceptable behaviour of his house mates (noise making) to his teacher who cannot be held accountable for the unacceptable act performed.

Situation 2 involves roommates of equal status; therefore, neither the speaker nor the addressee has a more dominant power over the other. Moreover, they have a very close relationship and so have no social distance between them. In situation 3 on the other hand, even though the speaker and the addressee are both students, they share a very low degree of familiarity and solidarity between them. Furthermore, the speaker is a senior while the addressee is a junior; the speaker therefore, is of a higher status than the addressee. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), interactants may either complain or opt out depending on their perception of the severity of an imposition in a social interaction. Therefore, the degree of imposition was constantly high in all the four situations in order to induce the production of complaints by the participants. These characterizations are presented in Table 3.5.2.

*Table 3.5.2. Characterization of situations in role-play*

<b>Complaint Situation</b>	<b>Social Status of Speaker</b>	<b>Social Distance</b>
1 Unfair grade	Lower	Wide
2 Dirty roommate	Equal	Close
3 Disobedient junior	Higher	Familiar
4 Noisy housemate (indirect complaint)	Lower	Wide

The researcher, before the role play, took time to explain the character specification, the social power and social distance between the participants as well as the setting in which the interaction would take place. After that, the participants (32 males and 64 females) were grouped in pairs for distinct elicitation sessions. They were then encouraged to negotiate the role (i.e. speaker or addressee) they wanted to act out. Since the participants were asked to complain to a teacher and house master/ mistress in scenario 1 and 4 respectively, six teachers (2 females and 4 males) acted as addressees to the student participants to address the authenticity concerns in those scenarios.

The teachers were duly informed about each scenario in detail and precise instructions were given to enable them act as naturally as possible. With the participants' permission, the role-plays were recorded by the researcher and a trained field assistant using a digital video-recorder. The participants were given ample time for the realization of their tasks. In order to minimize the effect of observer's paradox in the recording of their performance, each participant performed more than once, with the first performance serving as an ice breaker before the main recording. An average of 40 minutes was spent on each complaint situation. On completing the recording, the researcher took time to express appreciation to the leadership of each school and the participants for their cooperation and participation.

### **3.6 Pilot study**

It is prudent that in conducting a qualitative study of this nature, a pilot study is conducted before the actual empirical research as it may present new approaches or ideas, which otherwise would not have been perceived by the researcher (Ahmed, 2017). In view of this, a pilot study was conducted in St. Joseph Seminary S.H.S., one of the schools under study to test the reliability of the instrument chosen. This school was chosen for the pilot study because it is a mixed school and so the researcher had access to both males and females as respondents. Six males and six females served as participants at this level. They were



given detailed instructions to ensure that they completely understood their task before beginning the role play sessions which were duly recorded with the participants' permission. Participants were encouraged to act as natural as possible to the supposed offenses in each situation.

The outcome of the pilot helped to examine the possible challenges associated with the instrument and the designed situations. As a result, the researcher was able to redesign the complaint situations to reflect the true experiences of the participants in order to achieve the set objectives of the study. For instance, the situation which involved an adult cutting the line at a bus station was replaced by the situation in which the student was expected to report a noisy neighbour to their housemaster/mistress. The pilot study thus helped to realize the feasibility of the role play in the actual work and the challenges that were likely to be encountered. The number of situations was also reduced from eight to four due to time constraints and also, the researcher realized that the participants lost concentration after a few situations.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

According to Creswell (2014), it is imperative for a researcher to take into consideration ethical issues in the conduct of their study. In adherence to this, the researcher first of all sought approval from the appropriate authorities in charge of each of the three setting. After which a verbal informed consent was sought from the participants. An informed consent usually includes: voluntary participation, explanation of the nature and purpose of the research, as well as the protection of the participants' privacy (Creswell, 2014). In view of this, the researcher in this study, informed the selected participants about the purpose of the study and how the data gathered would be used. The participants were then given the freedom to either accept or decline the researcher's offer to participate in the study. The researcher in adherence to the code of confidentiality and anonymity, ensured that the information gathered

was used for the purpose of the research without disclosing it to any other user. Moreover, the participants were asked not to mention their names during the role-play and participants were identified by serial numbers instead of their real names.

### 3.8 Data analysis

The data recorded from the role play were first played back repeatedly to provide a general sense of the information and an opportunity to reflect on its overall meaning, taking into consideration both the verbal and non-verbal cues of the interlocutors. This was followed by an orthographic transcription of the relevant aspect of the recorded data (i.e. speakers' complaint production utterances) by the researcher. The transcribed data were then coded, grouped into themes and interpreted in accordance with the three research questions and objectives which are:

1. What are the strategies employed in the act of making complaints in Ghanaian English?

In order to identify and classify the strategies as stipulated in question 1, the researcher segmented each complaint sequence into its semantic components based on the framework developed by Trenchs-Parera (1994). Within this framework of speech act classification, 11 semantic formulae were categorized for the realization of complaint. These formulae are:

- Opener- an utterance made by the complainer which initiates the speech act set without

mentioning the offense committed. The sub-categories identified in the Opener are: Names, Formulaic Adjuncts, Salutation, Attention-Getters, Addressings and Combinations of two or more of the subdivisions of the Openers

- Act Statement- an utterance that states the problem
- Justification- an utterance that constitute moves supportive of the central act of

complaining. There are two types of Justification:

a. Justification of the Speaker-an utterance made by the complainer that explains why he personally is making the complaint

b. Justification of the Addressee -an utterance made by the complainer that gives a reason for the addressee's having committed the wrong

- Remedy- an utterance that call for an action to rectify the wrong. The two sub categories

are Threat and Commands

- Valuation- An utterance made by the complainer which expresses her feeling about either the addressee or the wrong that has been committed
- Preaching- An utterance that reflects a rule of what the speaker considers to be “proper”

behaviour in that situation. It may take the form of scolding or of moralizing

- Cursing- A word or phrase which is used in the data as a marker of courtesy.
- Formulaic Adjunct- It is a word or a phrase used as a courtesy marker. It may appear alone

or as part of the semantic formulas.

- Closing- An utterance made by the complainer at the end of the speech event which concludes his turn at speaking. They include: Expression of Appreciation, Apology and Goodbye.

- Non-linguistic Sounds- a conventionalized sound conveying a specific message such as *Ssshhh*

- Silence- situations in which the hearer chooses not to address any verbal complaint.

However, the researcher realized that not all semantic components occurring in the present data fit into this framework, so, slight modifications were made to suit the complaint culture of the Ghanaian. This was done by deleting the Cursing, Nonlinguistic and Silence

components while incorporating two more categories and other sub-categories as well as expanding the meanings of some of the categories to suit the findings in the data. Thus, these strategies: Interrogation, Opening Statement and Remedy (warning, command and request) which were identified in the data in the current study were added to that of Trenchs-Parera's categories of semantic formulae. They are explained in detail with examples from the current data in the subsequent chapter. Each semantic component was then counted based on the number of occurrences and distribution across the four situations using the SPSS software. If a particular semantic component was produced more than once in the same complaint sequence, it was counted only once as can be seen in the following example:

### **Subject 36**

*Good morning madam (opener-combination). Madam please, I want to show you something about the test we took yesterday (opening statement). Madam, I got three of the answers correct but you marked me wrong (act statement). Please madam do something about it for me (remedy-request). Please, that three marks will help me achieve my ambition (justification of the speaker) so please help me (remedy-request). Thank you (appreciation).*

In the example above, I only considered the semantic component of Remedy as occurring once although there are two utterances.

2. How do social variables and situational variation influence the realization of the complaint strategies?

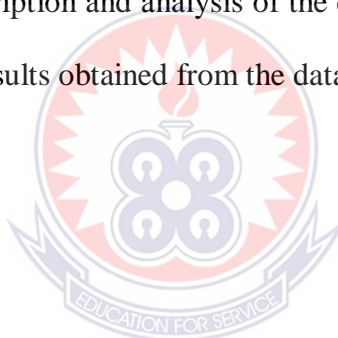
To answer this question, each situation was descriptively analysed with the frequency table being an adjunct to the discussion. This helped to appreciate the influence of the social variables; social status and social distance on the choice of strategy used. Though the research did not initially intend on comparing the speech behaviours of the females and males, some interesting observations were made from the data and this will also be discussed.

3. How do pragmatic transfers affect the making of complaints in English in Ghana?

In order to answer this question, the complaints collected were examined to assess the communicative competence of the Ghanaian learners. This was done by examining the influence of politeness in the Ghanaian culture which may have been transferred into the complaints produced.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented in detail, the relevant methods used in the collection and interpretation of the data used in this study. The issues discussed include a description of the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, and the instrument of data collection. The chapter further discussed the data collection procedure, the pilot study and ethical issues. Finally, the transcription and analysis of the data was also discussed. The next chapter discusses in detail, the results obtained from the data analysis.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

The study is conducted to ascertain the nature of complaints produced by Ghanaian learners at the secondary level of education in English. This chapter, therefore, presents the results of the data analysis in accordance with the research questions posed in chapter 1 of this study. Consequently, this chapter is divided into three major sections: the first section discusses the semantic formulae which also reveal the pragmatic strategies used in the production of complaints by the participants. The second section analyses the influence of social variables and situational variations on the participants' choice of complaint strategies employed in the expression of their displeasure towards any unacceptable behaviour. Finally, the third section examines the evidence of the pragmatic transfers exhibited by the participants in their choice of pragmatic strategies in their production of the complaints in English.

#### 4.1 Strategies used in the production of complaints

This section presents an analysis of the various pragmatic strategies used in making complaints and the frequency at which each was used by the 96 participants: 64 females and 32 males as they expressed their displeasure in each of the 4 complaint-provoking situations. As a result, 384 complaints were produced out of which 256 representing 66.67% complaint utterances were produced by females while 128 representing 33.33% were uttered by male complainants. Analysis of these complaint structures revealed that a variety of pragmatic strategies were used by the participants in expressing their displeasure towards an unacceptable behaviour. These strategies are grouped into eleven components according to their semantic features: opener, opening statement, justification, act statement, remedy, interrogation, valuation, preaching, insults, formulaic adjunct and closing. Not all complaint

sequences had all these semantic formulae. However, a participant could use more than one strategy in a particular situation. In general, both genders showed very similar tendencies in the use of semantic formulae across the four situations. The frequency of the use of the eleven semantic components in the complaints produced across the 4 complaint-induced situations is shown in Figure 4.1.

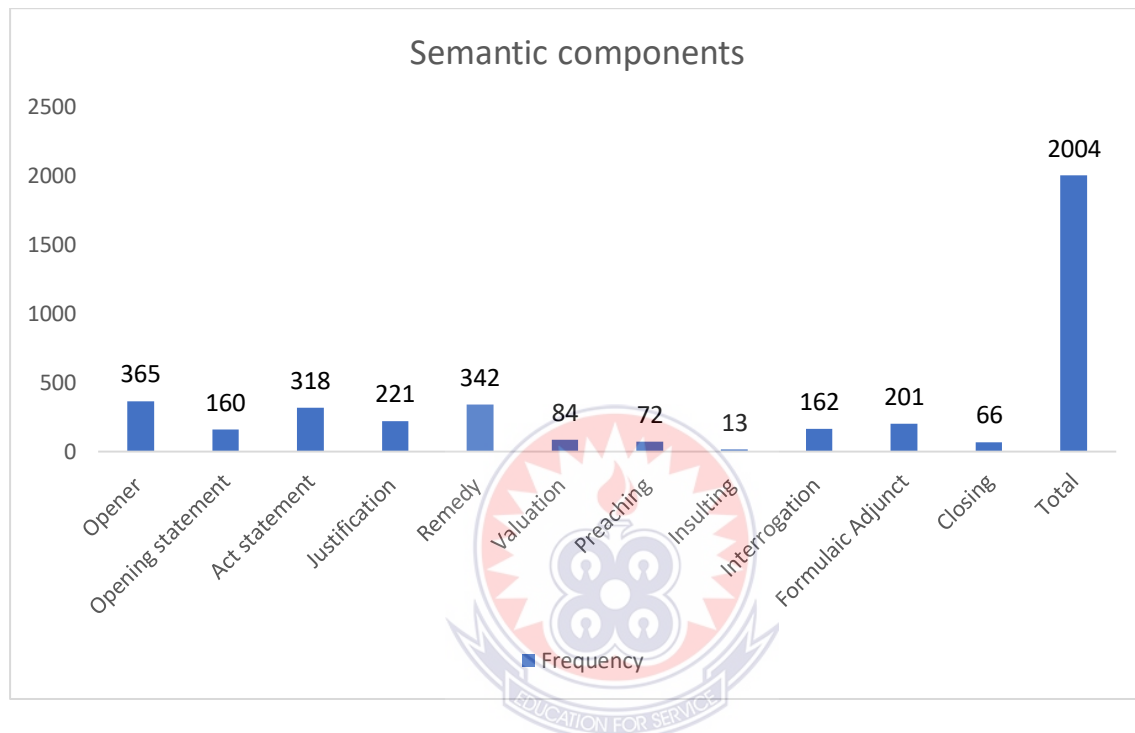


Figure 4.1. Occurrence of the semantic components across the 4 complaint situations

Figure 4.1 shows that, out of the eleven semantic components produced by the 96 participants, opener (365), act statement (318), and remedy (342) had significantly higher frequencies in their usage. These were followed by justification (221), formulaic adjunct (201), interrogation (162), and opening statement (160), while valuation (84), preaching (72), closing (42) and insulting (13) remained the least of the strategies produced by the participants. According to the existing literature on complaints (Trosborg, 1995), the act statement and remedy constitute the main components of a complaint. The act statement thus expresses the speaker's displeasure, or annoyance while through Remedy utterances, the speaker draws the addressee's attention to their responsibility to amend the offensive act. Moreover, considering how complaints can threaten both the positive and negative face of the

addressee, De Leon and Parina (2016) claim that openers are used by complainers to soften or make their complaint politer. Hence, the reason for the three components: opener, act statement and remedy recording the highest frequencies in the data. The analysis of each component has subsequently been further explained in detail with evidence from the data. The examples provided may contain more than one strategy, in such cases, only the one in focus is italicized.

#### **4.1.1 Opener**

The opener was used by virtually all the complainants in getting the attention of their addressees and also as a way of opening the conversation rather than immediately mentioning the offense done to them. It thus, constituted the strategy with the highest frequency of 365 representing 18.22% of the complaint utterances produced in the data. 89.84% of the male participants and 97.66% of the total female respondents used an opener in their complaints. Also, 6 females representing 2.34% of the total female participants and 13 males representing 10.16% of the total male participants did not use an opener in their complaint. The types of openers identified from the data are name, attention-getter, addressing, greeting or a combination of any two or more of the openers stated. The types of openers and their distribution across the four complaint situations are shown in Figure 4.1.1.

##### **4.1.1.1 Name of addressee**

In order to open a conversation, some of the complainants used the addressee's first name, or nickname. As can be seen in figure 4.1.1, 30.8 % of the females used this type of opener while 8.59% were used by the males. While males used this opener in only situations of dirty roommate and disobedient junior, their female counterparts used it in all situations except in the situation of the noisy roommate. This type of opener is illustrated by the utterances in (1).



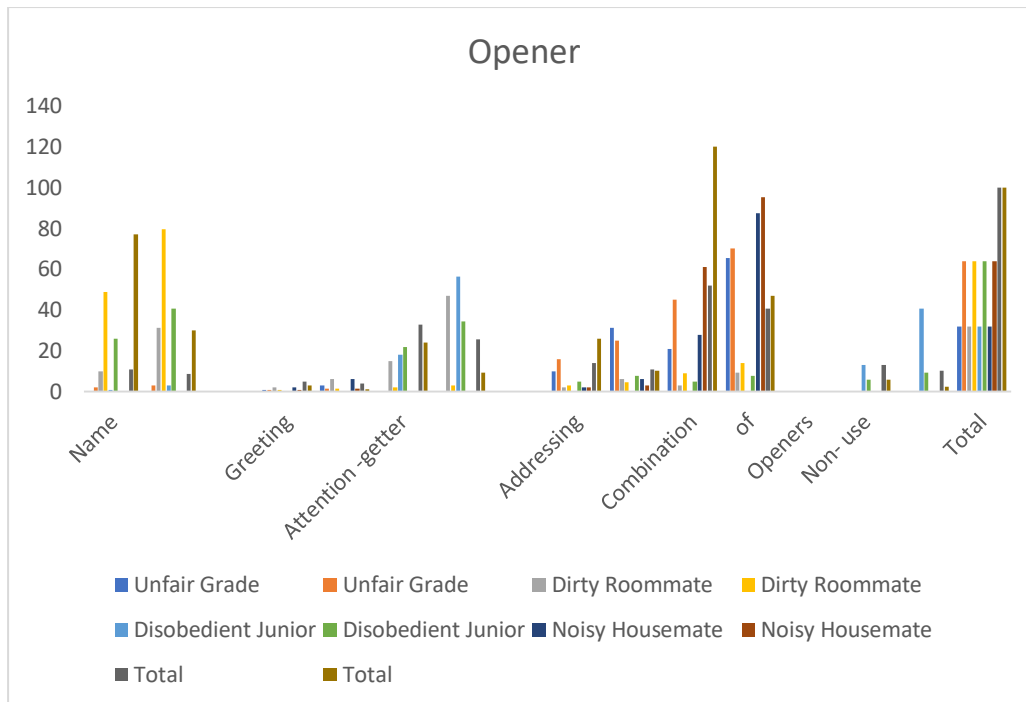


Figure 4.1.1. Types of openers across the four situations

- (1) a. *Adriana*, you've been messing up the room all the time and I haven't been complaining.
- b. *Kombat*, who do you think you are?
- c. *Linda*, I have a conversation with you.
- d. *Esther*, see, the way you live with me, I don't like.
- e. *Mike*, you always provoke me to talk but I have been quiet every day.

In (1a), a female speaker complains to her roommate about her unacceptable behaviour in the situation of a dirty roommate. We observe from her utterance that the complainant is so frustrated by the addressee's behaviour that, she does not mince words in her complaint. She thus, begins her complaint by explicitly mentioning the name of the addressee 'Adriana' to let her know that she has no desire of protecting the addressee's face and precedes to directly accuse her of the offense. Similarly, in (1b), a male complainant complains to his roommate indicating how unfairly he was being treated in the room. His level of annoyance is reflected in the way he mentions the name of the addressee 'Kombat' before asking a rhetorical question. He mentions the addressee's name to let him know how fed up he is of his

behaviour. The speaker's complaint sounds accusing and threatening as a result and hence, the positive face of the addressee in this case is also not adhered to. Therefore, contrary to Brown and Levinson's (1987) categorization of the use of names as openers in FTAs as one of the positive politeness strategies aimed at establishing common grounds of solidarity, the use of such an opener in such instances rather makes the complaint more direct and bolder, which increases the severity of its effect and thus damages the positive face of the addressee.

#### 4.1.1.2 Addressing

The participants also used what Trenchs-Parera (1994) terms as addressing, as a type of opener in their complaint sequence. These are address terms that depict the title of the addressee such as 'mistress/madam/sir'. From table 4.1.1, there's virtually no difference in the overall percentage of the use of this type of opener by both males and females. However, the highest frequency of use by both genders was recorded in the situation of the unfair grade. Moreover, males did not use this type of opener at all in the situation of a disobedient junior. The following examples in 2, illustrate this type of opener in the data.

- (2) a. *Mistress*, my roommate is the world's number one talkative and so she is always giving me a headache.
- b. *Sir*, please you made a mistake with my exercise.
- c. *Madam*, please I am here to tell you that some of the girls in our room do not obey the rules that govern the dormitory.
- d. *Madam*, please when it is lights out every day, one girl called Abiba makes noise and she always disturbs the whole dormitory.
- e. *Sir*, question 4, I had it correct but you marked me wrong.

(2a) is an utterance made by a female participant in complaining to her house mistress about a noisy roommate. (2b) on the other hand is an utterance made by a male participant while complaining to his teacher about an unfair grade. In both instances, the speakers need a

favour from their teachers who are of a higher rank and power than them. So, the complainants use of ‘Mistress’ and ‘sir’, is a polite way of addressing their addressees in recognition of their authority as their teachers and the confidence they have in them to be able to address their concerns. This form of opener is therefore, a way of paying tribute to the positive face of the addressee as it makes the addressee feel acknowledged.

#### 4.1.1.3 Attention-getter

In addition to the types of openers used by speakers in this study is an Attention-getter. These took the form of expressions like: ‘hey, bro, sup, yo’ and a combination of any two. A total of 25.78% males, which is almost thrice that of the females used this type of opener. While none of the participants used this opener in situations of unfair grade and noisy housemates, both genders used it mostly in the situation of the disobedient junior. The following in 3, are illustrations of an Attention-getter found in the data.

- (3) a. *Hey*, it seems all the tidying up of this room have been imposed on me of late.
- b. *Yo, sup bro!* you keep messing up the whole room every time I tidy up the room.
- c. *Hey*, come! What did I ask you to do before I went to the prep room?
- d. *Bro*, there’s something you’re doing that I don’t like.
- e. *Hey!* What is the meaning of this?

The utterance in (3b) opens with a combination of Attention-getters used in signalling the attention of a roommate in the situation of a dirty roommate by a male complainant. Even though, the complainant is dissatisfied with the addressee’s behaviour as his roommate, he acknowledges the fact that, they are colleagues, and so uses a kinship term ‘bro’ to reflect the level of acquaintanceship that exist between them and an indication to the addressee that, the complaint is without malice. Consequently, the aggressiveness of the complaint is reduced with that level of acquaintance established which makes the complaint less threatening to the addressee’s positive face. However, in (3c), the use of ‘hey’ is a conscious attempt by the

speaker to establish his superiority over the addressee who is of a lower status than he is before even speaking his mind on the offensive act. The speaker is clearly unwilling to bridge the social distance between them so as to mitigate the negative effect of the complaint on the addressee's face. The use of 'hey' in this sense therefore, rather bruises the ego of the addressee thereby threatening his positive face. In the Ghanaian culture, 'hey' is considered a derogatory remark and so cannot be used for a person of a higher status or power and this accounts for its non-use in situations of the unfair grade and noisy roommate where the addressees were of a higher status and power than the addressee.

#### **4.1.1.4 Greeting**

This type of opener when used alone had the least number of frequencies of use by the participants. 3.91% of this type of opener was used by the males while 1.17% were used by females in this study. Greeting is deemed an indispensable aspect of the Ghanaian culture. One is considered very rude if he is fond of speaking directly without first using the appropriate form of greetings especially when talking to an elderly person. It was not surprising that this type of Opener was only used in a situation where the addressee was of a higher status such as in the examples (4).

- (4) a. *Good afternoon.* Madam, please I want to complain about something which is going on in the dormitory.
- b. *Good afternoon.* Please Sir, something baffles my mind and I want to tell you.
- c. *Good afternoon,* sir please I'm here because I had a question right and you marked me down.
- d. *Good morning,* sir please I want to discuss an issue with you.
- e. *Good afternoon,* please madam there is something going on in the dormitory that I wanted to come and tell you.

The complaints in (4) were sourced from the two situations of the unfair grade and noisy roommate. As already stated, the addressees of these situations were teachers and so had higher status and power than their interlocutors. The complainant, knowing the implications of greetings in the Ghanaian culture, unfailingly preceded their complaints with a form of greeting ‘good afternoon, good morning’, as an expression of politeness in recognition of the addressees’ authority over them. It is a positive politeness strategy as it is used in acknowledgement of the addressee’s social status. Moreover, the form of greetings used also sort to prepare the addressee’s mind to be receptive to what the complainant had to say and also made the complaint produced less confrontational.

#### **4.1.1.5 Combination of openers**

Almost all the participants used the combination of openers as the first component of their complaint sequence while expressing their displeasure in situations of an unfair grade and a noisy housemate. Although, both males and females exhibited similar tendencies in the use of combination of openers in the situations understudy, none of the males used this type of opener in the situation of a disobedient junior. The combination of openers was usually expressed with the structure: formulaic adjunct + addressing + greeting, attention-getter + name of the addressee, addressing + formulaic adjunct+ greeting or formulaic adjunct + addressing as illustrated in example (5).

- (5) a. *Sir, please good morning.* I am here because I got an unfair grade in the essay test you marked.
- b. *Hey Nancy,* where do you think you are going?
- c. Madam please good afternoon, there is something going on at the dormitory which I’m not really happy about it.
- d. Please madam, there is a complaint I want to draw your attention to, it has been happening at the dormitory.

e. Hey you Prince, I've been watching you for a while now.

Complaints, as already stated, are inherently impolite and so when being made by especially someone of a lower status, a lot of care is taken not to further heighten the situation. In (5a), for instance, the speaker (student) makes a complaint to his teacher (addressee) on how he has been unfairly graded in a class work. Even though the teacher is at fault, the student tries to make his complaint in a way that does not unduly compromise the face want of the teacher. He therefore chooses an opener that sets the right tone of upholding the positive face of the addressee in gaining the attention of the teacher who, as a result, may out of empathy, be willing to make reparation for the damage done. As a result, the complainant used a combination of openers '*Sir, please good morning*' which is an indication of politeness or respect in Ghanaian English (Anderson, 2009) as the first step in his complaint production.

Contrary to (5a), the speaker in (5b) in gaining the attention of her roommate in the situation of a dirty roommate, first uses the attention-getter 'hey' and follows it with the addressee's first name 'Nancy' in her complaint sequence. This combination of openers used first and foremost shows the level of familiarity or friendship that exists between the interlocutors. However, as already stated in this study, the use of 'hey' in addressing someone is considered derogatory in Ghanaian English. Therefore, the combination of 'hey' with the addressee's first name shows even more importantly, the level of anger of the speaker who as a result sends a signal to her addressee that, she has no recognition of who she is or what she stands for and thus is not afraid to address her directly concerning her despicable behaviour in the room. The combination of openers used in (5b) as a result, disregards the positive face wants of the addressee.

The use of openers in a conversation is an important discourse feature in Ghanaian English. This is because, in the Ghanaian culture, openers are used in recognition of the

addressee's status, age and power. Hence, a speaker who uses an opener as a pre-sequence in any social interaction is considered communicatively competent and aware of the social-contract view of politeness. It is therefore not surprising that even in expressing one's displeasure of a socially unacceptable act, speakers preceded their complaints with an opener which presents them as well cultured. Generally, it was observed from the data that, the females used more openers in their complaints than their male counterparts. Also, both genders had similar tendencies in their choice of opener in the situations where their addressees were of a higher status. However, when addressing someone of an equal or lower status, most females chose to use the first name of the addressee while their male counterparts preferred the use of an attention-getter in the same situations.

#### **4.1.2 Opening statement**

An opener was usually followed by an opening statement in some of the complaints produced in the data. This strategy was however, not found in Trench's categories of semantic formulae. Opening Statements were utterances used by the participants solely to prepare the mind of the addressee before stating their displeasure after gaining the attention of the addressee. Figure 4.1.2, shows the distribution of opening statement in all the four situations. In all, 160 utterances representing 7.98% of the total complaint utterances produced by the 96 participants in all the four complaint situations were identified as opening statements. 115 representing 44.92% of the total opening statements recorded were produced by females and the remaining 45 representing 35.17% were produced by males. The highest frequency was recorded in the situation of a noisy housemate by both genders. None of the participants used an opening statement while lodging a complaint in the situation of a disobedient junior, even though more females used this strategy in their complaint in the situation of a dirty roommate.

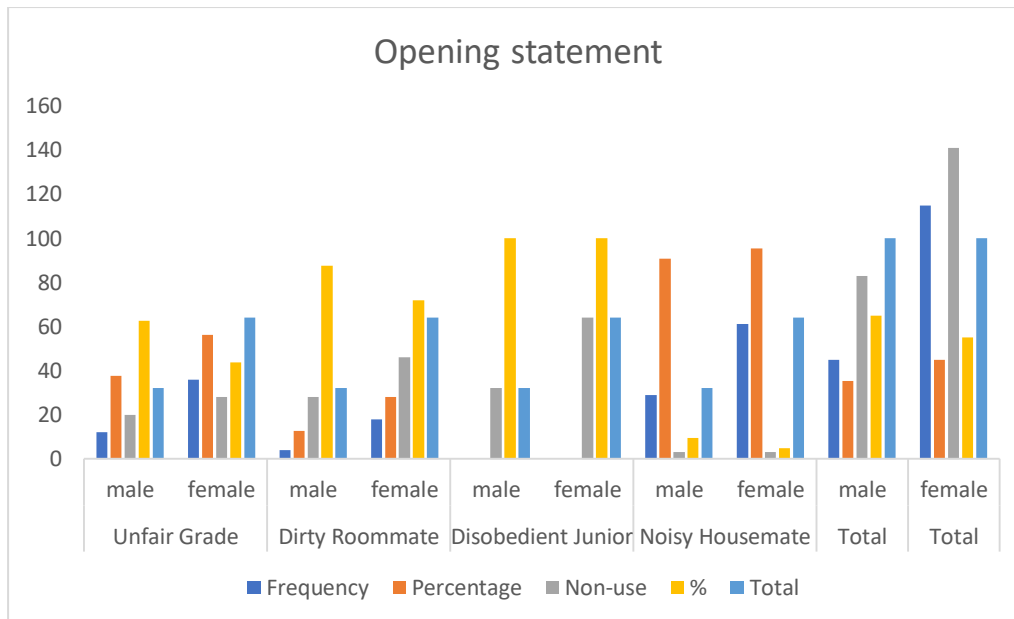


Figure 4.1.2. Frequency distribution of opening statement across the four complaint situations

The participants used the opening statement to perform three main functions:

i. The participants used an opening statement to introduce themselves to their addressees by giving their names and/or some information about themselves such as in example (6).

(6) a. *My name is Frank and I am a member of Assenso house and I'm here to lodge a complaint.*

b. *Please sir good morning. Please I'm Alex.*

c. *Please sir, good evening. It's me Bismarck Yeboah Asiamah*

d. *Sir, I'm Emma.*

e. *Good afternoon madam. Please I am in Savino room 3 and I sleep on the down bed.*

Example (6a) is an example of a complaint made to a housemaster about a noisy roommate by a male complainant. The speaker, in realizing the number of students in the school saw the need to introduce himself by mentioning his name and house of residence for identification purposes before even stating his complaint. Also, for the complainant to have mentioned the name of his hall of residence in the school 'Asenso' suggests that, the teacher



must be well aware of the notoriety of noise making associated with that particular hall and would therefore not downplay his complaint but give it the utmost required attention. In (6e), the complainant goes a step further to indicate his sleeping place in the hall ‘the down bed’ which makes him more susceptible and exposed to all the vices associated with the noise making. The complainants in both instances used the opening statement to prepare the teacher’s mind to be receptive to their complaint which articulates the severity of the offense.

ii. The complainants also preceded their complaints with an apology as shown in (7).

(7) a. Sir please good afternoon. Sir, *I’m very sorry to disturb you.*

b. Please madam, *sorry to disturb you this time of the day.*

The apology rendered by the speakers in (7), was an acknowledgement of the fact that, they were invading the privacy of the addressee (teacher), who at the time, had the right to either grant them hearing or ignore them. That statement was thus, made not only to get the attention of the teacher but also a request for the teacher to grant the speaker, audience. Therefore, by apologising before stating his complaint, the complainant showed his reluctance to impinge on the addressee’s negative face. According to Gafanha (2021), this form of opening statement is considered a politeness marker as it minimizes the negative effect of the speaker’s imposition on the addressee’s negative face. Unfortunately, an opening statement of such nature was hardly used in the data.

iii. The opening statement also revealed the speaker’s intention of initiating a complaint on an issue that bothered him/her without necessarily stating the problem. Most of the opening statements found in the data functioned in this regard. The subsequent examples in (8) are evidence of such utterances in the data.

(8) a. Please madam good afternoon. *Please, I want to complain about the work you gave us the last time.*

b. Hey Jacob, *I have to tell you something.*

c. Please *I want to have a word with you if you don't mind.*

d. Madam please *I have something to tell you*

e. erm please *I have a problem with the results of the test*

Example (8a) is an utterance made by a female student in the complaint situation of an unfair grade. Here, the student only gave a hint to the teacher that, she was about to pass a negative comment on an issue known to both of them without disclosing the true problem. The speaker uses the off-record politeness strategy at this point by giving a hint. The complainant avoided stating immediately his complaint because, he acknowledged the fact that, the teacher had power to award or deny him of the needed mark and so he needed to be very polite and tactful in his complaint to gain the attention and sympathy of the addressee (teacher) which could not have been achieved by just being confrontational.

However, in (8b), we observe that, even though the complainant used an opening statement in complaining to his dirty and lazy roommate, the aim for doing so was quite different. Here, the complainant preceded his complaint with an opening statement as a way of engaging the attention of his colleague for him to wish to listen to what he had in store for him since being a colleague he could have easily ignored him or brushed him aside. Therefore, by saying '*I have something to discuss with you*' the complainant kept the addressee in suspense, and made him curious to know what the complainant had tell him. The complainant at this point went off-record by being intentionally vague to gain the attention of the addressee. Generally, females used significantly, more Opening statement than the males. It was frequently used by both genders in situations in which the complainant was of a higher status than the addressee.

#### **4.1.3 Act statement**

Another component that was frequently used in the complaint sequence of the complainants was the act statement. These were utterances used by the complainant in

explicitly stating their grievances toward an unacceptable behaviour of the addressee. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), explicit complaints constitute bald-on record politeness. The complainant usually uses this strategy when he/she wants to express his/her displeasure with maximum efficiency, without bothering to take care of the addressee's face wants. Figure 4.1.3 shows the distribution of the act statements in the four complaint situations.

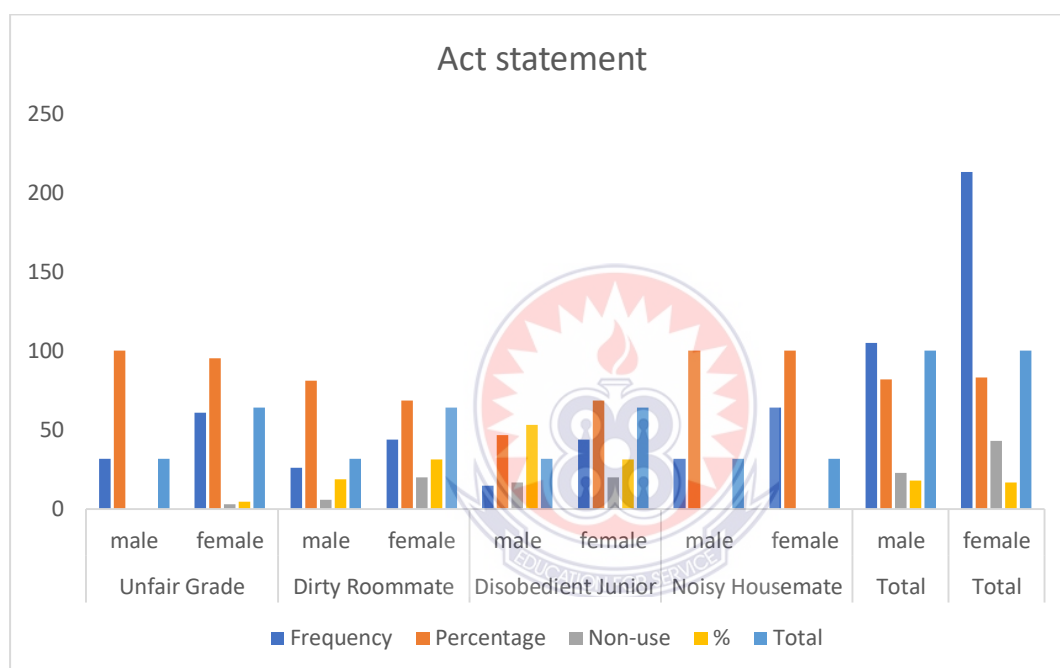


Figure 4.1.3. Distribution of act statements in the four complaint situations

As the main component of a complaint, it constituted a total of 318 representing 15.87% of the total complaint utterances found in the data. The highest frequency of use of this component was recorded in the two situations of the unfair grade and the noisy housemate while the least frequency of use was produced by males in the situation of a disobedient junior. The males however, produced more explicit complaints than their female counterparts in the situation of a dirty roommate. A clearer understanding of the use of this strategy is given in Figure 4.1.3. The following examples from (9) are evidence of act statement used in the study by the complainants.

- (9) a. Please, the exercise you mark for me yesterday, you didn't give the correct score.
- b. Sir, *there are some people at the dormitory that always make noise to disturb those of us who want to take our rest during lights out.*
- c. I told you sweep and you have the guts not to do it.
- d. You keep embarrassing me in this room before my friends with your dirtiness.
- e. As your senior, I asked you to pick the rubbish and you didn't do it

All the examples in (9) point to the fact that the complainants in this study had no qualms explicitly stating what they perceived to be wrong irrespective of who their interlocutors were. However, the complaints were either hedged or expressed baldly depending on the intentions of the complainant. For instance, in (9a), the complainant complained to the addressee (teacher) about an error in the grade given him in his class assignment. Even though, the complainant used the bald-on record strategy by directly and explicitly stating the problem, he clearly had no intentions of being rude or ignoring the face of the teacher, his addressee. On the contrary, as a way of acknowledging the positive face of the hearer, the complainant preceded the complaint with the politeness marker 'please' so as to minimize the level of imposition, being mindful of the power and status of the teacher. The complainant stated directly the complaint because he knew that, he needed to clearly identify the problem to elicit the right response or action from the teacher; which is to give him the correct or desired marks, and thus, applied the direct form of strategy to avoid any ambiguity.

On the other hand, in (9c), the complainant registered his complaint to a junior who had disobeyed him. The complainant in this case, saw the addressee's refusal to comply with his directives as an open defiance of his authority and that provoked the complainant who as a result preferred to perform the complaint efficiently and directly rather than minimizing the

threat to the addressee’s face. The complainant forcefully registered his displeasure by using words like ‘guts’ in his complaint which showed how disgusting the behaviour of the addressee was, to him. It also showed his unpreparedness to tolerate any such act in future, but to demand full compliance of what was expected of the addressee.

#### 4.1.4 Interrogation

Another component of the complaints made by the participants is Interrogation. The Interrogatory strategy constituted 8.08% of the total complaint utterances found in the data. Figure 4.1.4, throws more light on how interrogation was used in the four complaint situations.

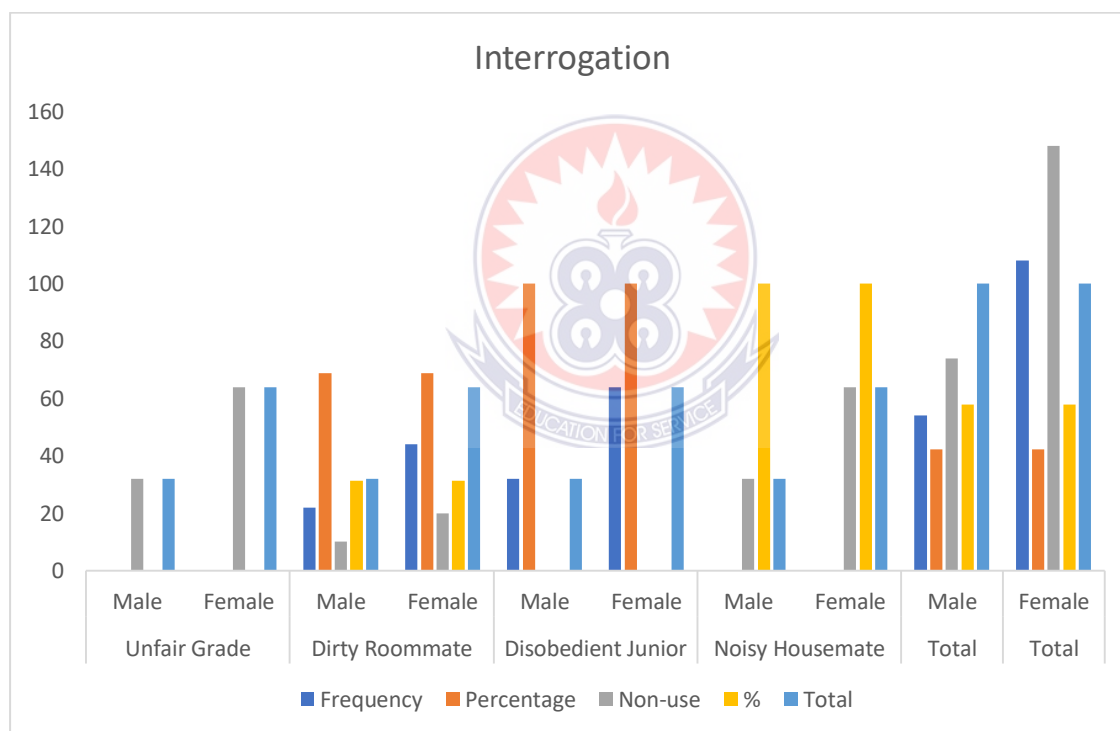


Figure 4.1.4. Distribution of interrogation in the four complaint situations

Both genders recorded the same percentage of use in all the four situations. This strategy was used when the complainant presupposed that, the addressee was not just responsible but also well aware of the offence committed and thus called for an explanation of the addressee’s behaviour. As shown in Figure 4.1.4, none of the respondents used the interrogation strategy while addressing a teacher in registering their complaints in either the situation of a noisy

housemate or an unfair grade. However, the highest number of interrogations was recorded by both genders in the situation concerning the disobedient junior. This pattern in the usage of the interrogatory strategy corroborates the Ghanaian assertion that the younger one should not question the behaviour of the adult because it is perceived to be either a sign of disrespect or an act of insubordination.

The interrogatory utterances were usually expressed by means of ‘Wh-’ questions and ‘yes-no’ questions as shown in example (10).

- (10) a. What stopped you from doing your morning duties?  
b. Why would you trash the room on purpose?  
c. Why do you always want me to do the work?  
d. Hey! form 1 boy come here. *What happened to the work I asked you to do?*  
e. Hey! come. *What did I ask you to do before I went to the prep room?*

(10a) is an utterance made by a female complainant to a junior who refused to do her assigned morning duty. The complainant by this utterance did not necessarily seek any answers or explanation from her addressee. Rather, it was an indication that, the junior or addressee had no reason whatsoever not to have done the duties assigned her, and so the speaker was not prepared to accept any excuses from the addressee. In that sense, the complainant felt no reason could absolve the junior whose inability to do the work was only, an open defiance of the complainant’s authority. The complainant’s use of questioning however is a negative politeness strategy which reduced the level of confrontation between the interlocutors.

In the same vein, in (10c), the complainant seemed very annoyed because he expected that as roommates, the tidying up of the room should be a shared responsibility since they shared the room together. The complainant therefore expected that, the addressee ought to have known better, and so posed a question as a way of calling him to order rather than

asking for an explanation. In both (10a &c), although the complainants appeared rather irritated by the addressees' behaviour, and thus mentioned categorically the offensive act, they still tried to save the face of the addressee by using interrogation as a negative politeness strategy. Moreover, in some cases, the questions asked were rhetorical in nature. Such rhetorical questions basically attacked the addressee rather than asked them for an explanation or information, such as utterances in (11).

- (11) a. What sort of laziness is that?  
b. Do you think I am a fool?  
c. What sort of uncleanness is that?  
d. Why do you always push me to the wall?  
e. Who do you think you are?

In (11b), the complainant expressed his anger at the behaviour of the addressee who presumably has been taking him for granted for far too long. The expression showed that, the complainant has been very accommodative over the period but the addressee seemed to have taken his silence or acquiescence as a weakness and that provoked the complainant to the extent that, this time there was an outburst of his anger. This utterance threatens the addressee's positive face as it is an insult and a mockery on the pride of the addressee who thinks the complainant is not wise enough to have noticed all that she had done over the years. The speaker however, goes off-record in his complaint through the use of the rhetorical question and irony.

#### **4.1.5 Justification**

A total of 221 representing 11.03% of the total utterances found in the data were justification utterances which functioned as supportive moves of the central act of complaint. These utterances were thus used by speakers to either substantiate their complaints or give a reason for the addressee having committed that wrong. They therefore occurred before or

after the act statement in the data. The two types of justification: justification of the speaker and justification of the addressee, which were found to be consistent with that of Trench's who also identified the same types of justification in her study. Figure 4.1.5 shows how justification was used in all the four situations.

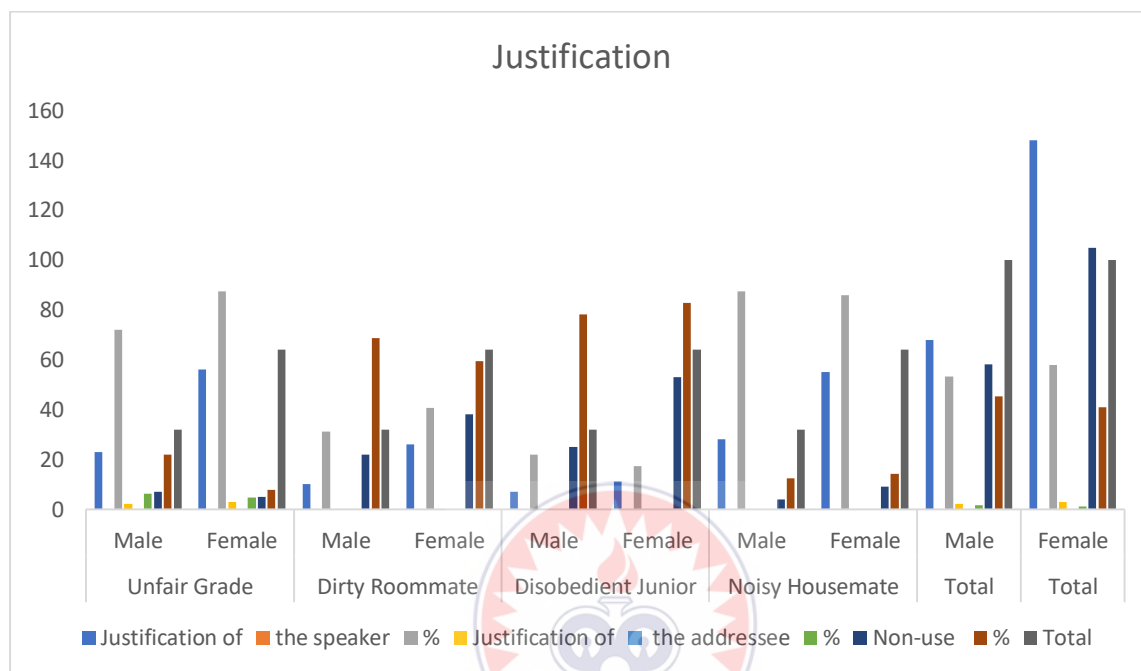


Figure 4.1.5. Frequency distribution of Justification in the four situations

It is worthy to note that 216 utterances representing 97.74% of the total justification utterances found in the data were used in justifying the speaker while only 5 representing 5.21 % were used in justifying the addressee. Justification of the addressee was only found in the situation of the unfair grade. A look, also at the table 4.1.5 further indicates that justification was used mostly in situations of an unfair grade and noisy housemate while it was very low in the situation of a disobedient junior. Females used more justification than their male counterparts to explain why they were disturbed or offended by the addressee's behaviour except in the situation of a disobedient junior. According to Brown and Levinson, giving reasons or justifications constitute positive politeness. Some of the utterances of participants that gave Justification are given in the examples (12).



(12) a. maybe you were tired when marking mine or you weren't able to read the work because of my handwriting.

b. Sir, I don't know if you gave the script to someone to mark because I know you won't do that.

c. I was expecting more than this because *I answered it using the method you gave us and the answer was the same to that of the brilliant students in class.*

d. Since you came into this room, I've been the one doing everything, sweeping and scrubbing for the past three years.

e. The question 3 was marked wrong but *I just referred to the notes you gave us, that was exactly what I write but I'm marked down*

The utterance in (12a) was made by a female complainant in the situation of the unfair grade.

The complainant per this utterance tries to give reasons why the teacher gave her that unacceptable grade as a way of mitigating the severity of the complaint on the addressee's face. The complainant did not want to portray the teacher as being incompetent because of the error found in his grade, thereby disregarding his positive face. Consequently, the complainant consciously shifted the blame to the overexertion of the teacher in his marking which resulted in his tiredness and the illegibility of the complainant's handwriting. The use of justification in this sense is thus, a positive strategy used by the complainant in acknowledgement of the positive face the addressee.

It is however observed that speakers mostly used the Justification to aggravate the complaints made, as can be seen in example (12d). In (12d), the complainant, in his quest to give reasons why his complaint was valid, used an utterance that in the end portrayed the addressee as being lazy and inconsiderate. The complainant per her utterance claims that even though for the past three years she has not been happy, she has been tolerant in order to maintain the cordial relationship that existed between them while hoping that, the addressee

would change her attitude. But since the complainant was not seeing any transformation in the addressee's behaviour, she felt compelled to point out her mistakes without being mindful of how her addressee would feel, thereby intensifying the severity of the effect of the complaint on the addressee's negative face.

#### 4.1.6 Valuation

Some valuation utterances were also made by the complainants in this study. These are utterances that expressed the complainant's emotional state concerning either the addressee or the problem. Thus, the complainant by using this strategy, poured out his/her grievances to show his/her disapproval of the unacceptable act, in a way which would appeal to the emotions of the addressee. It does not elicit response, rather the complainer expects the addressee to amend his or her behaviour with those kinds of admonishing or promptings. A total of 84 representing 4.19% valuation utterances were produced in the data. As anticipated, females produced more utterances of valuation than their male counterparts in all four complaint situations as shown in Figure 4.1.6.

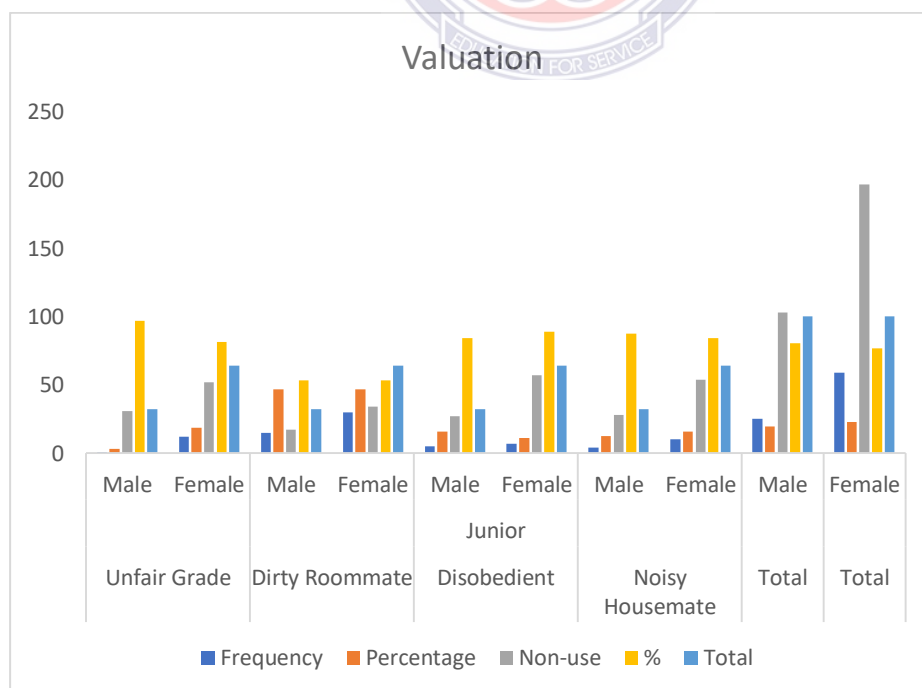


Figure 4.1.6. Distribution of valuation in the four situations

From Figure 4.1.6, we notice that the highest frequency of valuation was recorded by 30 females, representing 46.88% in the situation of the dirty roommate, while the least was recorded by a single male in the situation of an unfair grade. Both genders did not use a lot of valuations in their complaint in the situation of a disobedient junior. Examples of such utterances from the data include those in (13).

- (13) a. I have had enough of this; I can't tolerate this anymore!
- b. Sir, it's not fair oo!
- c. I am tired of doing all the house chores alone!
- d. What I want to say is that, *I dislike your behaviour!*
- e. Madam, I really know is good to pray and sing but what my colleagues are doing is unbearable!

In (13b), the speaker does not only voice out his complaint about the unfair grade that was given him, but also expresses his total disappointment at the teacher's unpardonable behaviour because he is convinced that, the teacher is entirely to blame for the kind of marks recorded. The speaker at this stage uses the bald-on record strategy to achieve the desired effect of appealing to the conscience of the teacher. Similarly, in (13d), the complainant strongly registers her frustrations and unwillingness to keep a blind eye to her roommate's irresponsible behaviour. Her utterance clearly indicates that she is fed up with the roommate's attitude of not helping with the cleaning of the room. It is so obvious that, this speaker is annoyed by the addressee's behaviour to the extent that he has no regard for the addressee's face wants at that time.

#### **4.1.7 Remedy**

In general, a total of 342 remedy utterances representing 17.07% were made by all participants across the four situations under study. This placed Remedy as the second most frequently used strategy in the data. According to Trosborg (1995), complaints are inherently

threatening to the face because they seek a redress of the offensive act committed. The participants' high frequency in the use of remedy is therefore consistent with such claims in the literature that, complaints are made not only to express one's emotional stands on a socially unacceptable act, but even more importantly, require of the addressee, a change in behaviour to correct the wrong done. The forms of remedy used by participants in their complaint sequence are shown in Figure 4.1.7.

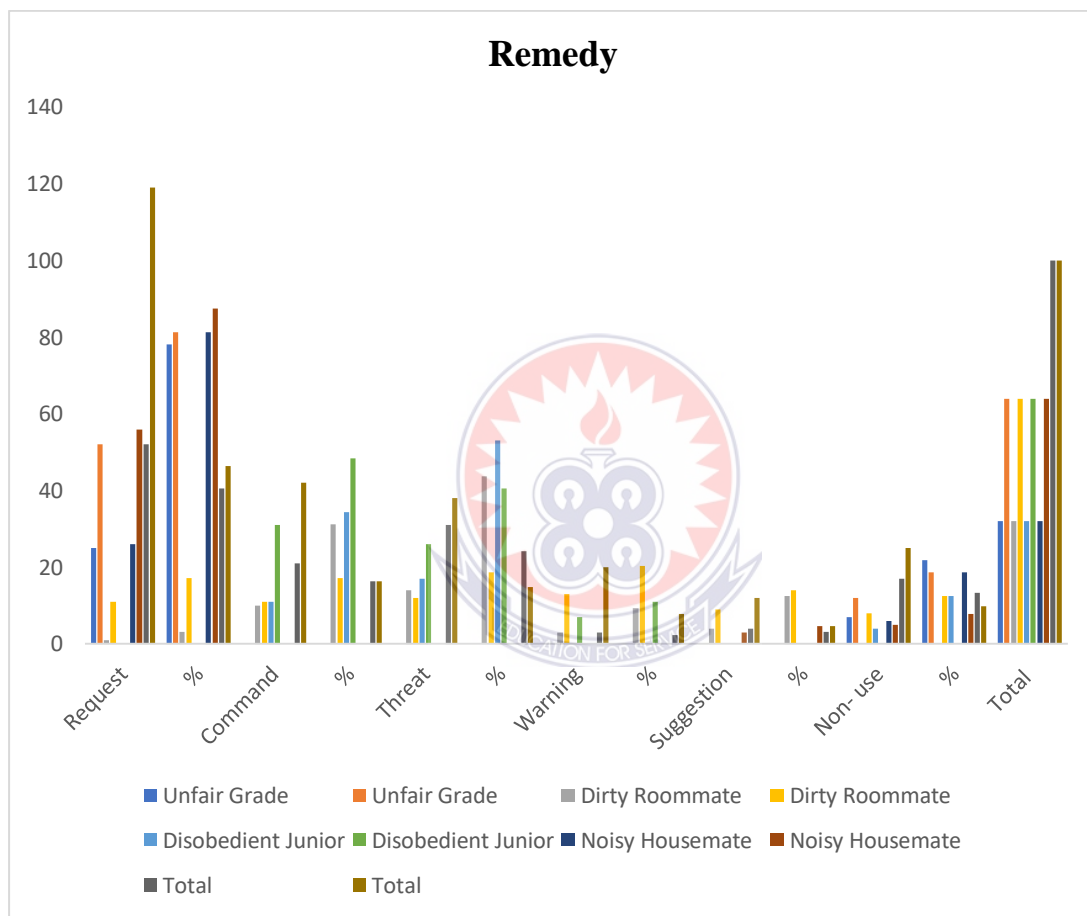
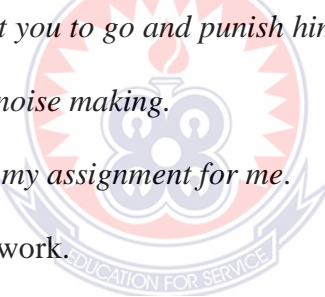


Figure 4.1.7. Frequency distribution of remedy in the four situations

#### 4.1.7.1 Request

Among the semantic components for remedy, the request for repair was mostly used by the complainants. It constitutes 49.71% of the total remedy found in the data. Request is a subtle way of making demand without offending the sensibility of the addressee, hence considered as a negative politeness strategy. The negative politeness strategy allows the speaker to maintain the addressee's negative face by acknowledging the addressee's face

want and yet imposing on the person (Totimeh, 2015). In general, 46.48% of the total requests were produced by female complainants while only 40.63% were made by males. The analysis also revealed that requests were the most frequently used form of remedy in the situation of unfair grade and noisy housemate. In these two situations, 25 males representing 78.13% of the male complainants and 52 females representing 81.25% of the female complainants used request in the situation of the unfair grade while 26 males representing 81.25% of the male complainants and 56 females representing 87.5% of female complainants used request in the situation of the noisy housemate. Only 1 (3.13%) male used this strategy in the situation of a dirty roommate while none of the participants used request in the situation of the disobedient junior. The examples in (14) show how requests were made by the complainants.

- 
- (14) a. So please sir, *I want you to go and punish him or talk to him for me and make him stop the noise making.*
- b. So please, *re-mark my assignment for me.*
- c. Please remark my work.
- d. Please madam, *I will like you to talk to her on my behalf for her to stop disturbing us.*
- e. Sir, please, *change them from our room.*

The examples in (14a & b) express some requests made by a male and female complainant in the situations of noisy housemate and unfair grade respectively. The complainants in these two situations followed their complaints with a request for remedy from their addressees. The use of ‘want’ in (14a) and the imperative statement in (14b) makes their requests rather direct and face threatening. As a result, the requests in these two utterances can be described as a tacit way of giving command to the addressees to have the problem solved in the complainant’s own way. In an attempt to mitigate the level of imposition of the request to

addressee's negative face therefore, the complainants used the politeness marker prior to requesting a repair.

Furthermore, evidence from the data indicates that the complainant's use of request called on the addressee to change his/her behaviour or put an end to that offence or avoid a repetition of the offence in future as shown in examples (15).

(15) a. So please, *put a stop to it*.

b. I'll be very delighted if *you will change your ways and behaviours*.

c. so I want you to change your lifestyle and how you do things in this house so that we can live in peace.

d. so 'maame', *change your behaviour*

e. so Chelsea, *stop being a lazy girl and learn how to do this house work for your own future sake*.

Moreover, it was observed from the data that some complainants added to their request a justification or a reason why they wanted the addressee to intervene. The examples in (16) illustrate such requests:

(16) a. So please Sir, go through again and check it for me please *because I don't want to score zero please*.

b. So please change it for me *or else, my mom will beat me sir*.

c. I'd be glad if you could get me a new room or change their room for them *so that, I can have some rest and go for the class*.

d. Janet, I want you to change your attitude and sweep the room *so that there will be no problem between us*.

e. Sir please do something about this for me *because this exam could determine my life*.

In (16b), the complainant had every reason to believe that her complaint was well grounded, backed by facts or evidence and so she could strongly appeal to the teacher to effect the needed changes. It is a direct request that appealed to the conscience of the addressee to empathize with her and feel what she's bound to go through if those changes are not made. Even though, the complainant went on-record by making a direct request, the severity and damage to the addressee's negative face was mitigated by the use of the politeness marker, 'please'.

#### 4.1.7.2 Threat

In general, a total of 69 utterances representing 20.18% of the remedy found in the data took the form of Threats. These were utterances that stated an action the speaker might take, as a result of the addressee's negative reaction to their request for remedy. Threats constituted the second most frequently used form of remedy found in the data. They were used by participants only in situations of a dirty roommate and a disobedient junior. However, their frequency of use in these two situations was different; males used more threats in both situations than females. The examples in (17) are a list of utterances that show how complainants threatened their addressees, in seeking for redress of the offensive act committed.

- (17)
- a. Take it from me today, next time you repeat, *you will see the animal side of me.*
  - b. Better go and do it now *or I will go and report you to the senior house mistress.*
  - c. Please you must stop this thing *or else you going to see the bad side of me.*
  - d. Hurry up and go and do the work, *otherwise I'll go and report you to the housemaster.*
  - e. Next time try it again and you will see who is who.

Example (17d) is a threat issued out to a disobedient junior. The threat was a warning to the addressee that, the complainant was capable of going to every extent, including involving people of higher authority like the ‘house master’ to ensure that, his instructions were carried out to the latter. Hence, the complainant used the bald-on record strategy in expressing his unpreparedness to leave any stone unturned to see to it that, his desires are met and so the addressee should not take him for granted.

Furthermore, a number of examples from the data indicated that, some complainants used verbal threats with the intention of physically harming the addressee such as in examples (18).

(18) a. Today, *I will punish you mercilessly.*

b. If you joke, *I’ll beat you and send you to the senior house master.*

c. Herr! you are doomed, if you don’t erh, the way *I will beat you mercilessly.*

The examples in (18) indicate the consequences that the addressee is likely to face if he does not amend his behaviour. For instance, the threats in (18b) show the extent of provocation the addressee has caused the complainant by not obeying his orders as a junior and therefore he should not be blamed if he takes any action which is seen as inhumane or unreasonable, to get the addressee to comply with his directives. Punishments are supposed to be corrective and not necessarily cause damage or harm but in some cases the extent of provocation could cause the person meting out the punishment to go overboard if the warnings are not heeded to, as illustrated in (18a). Such utterances show extreme provocation. Verbal threats as seen in the examples violate the addressee’s negative face want and thus constitute negative impoliteness, as they force the addressee to act contrary to his/her will.



#### 4.1.7.3 Warning

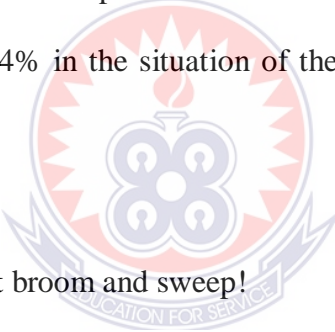
Warning was also used by some of the speakers in cautioning the addressee against repeating the offensive act in future. Out of the 342 utterances used as remedy, 23 representing 6.73% were warnings given by the complainer, in their quest to ensure that the offensive act is corrected. These utterances were used only in situations of a dirty roommate and the disobedient junior. Females used more warnings in both situations than males who didn't even use this strategy at all in the situation of the disobedient junior. Examples of such utterances from the data are illustrated by the utterances in (19)

- (19) a. This should be your first and last!
- b. Don't repeat what you have done again!
- c. Let this be the last time you will ever refuse to do my punishment!
- d. If you know you can't sweep this room after the mess up then it's better  
for you to leave.
- e. Chelsea be very careful!

Example (19a) is a complaint addressed to a disobedient junior by a male complainant. The complainant is annoyed that the addressee refused to do his assigned work without any tangible reason. The complainant therefore vehemently registers his disapproval of the addressee's behaviour with an admonishing that a repeat of that unruly behaviour would have dire consequence. Just like in (19a), the complainant in (19d) is not prepared to accept the roommate who seems to be fond of messing up the place all the time yet shuns the cleaning up of the room. These utterances show that the complainant does not care about the face wants of the addressee and thus uses the bald-on record politeness strategy as an indication of the fact that, he has run out of patience and so sends a strong word of caution to let her roommate know the intended outcome of her behaviour.

#### 4.1.7.4 Command

Another form of remedy issued by some complainants in this study is Command. As peremptory orders given by those in higher authority to those of lower rank or status, they usually define how and what is expected of the addressee and does not give room for the addressee's opinion or discretion as to how he is supposed to carry out such orders. With a percentage of 18.42%, Commands were the third most frequently used form of remedy found in the data. Just like the threats and warnings identified. Thus far, Commands were used only in the two situations involving the disobedient junior and the dirty roommate. In these situations, 10 males representing 31.25% of the male complainants and 11 females representing 17.19% of the female speakers used this strategy in the situation of the dirty roommate. The number of female complainants that used this strategy however, almost tripled with a percentage of 48.44% in the situation of the disobedient junior. Examples of commands include those in (20):

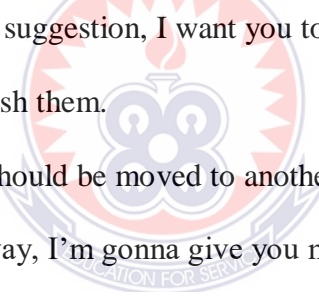
- 
- (20) a. Leave my sight!
- b. You better take that broom and sweep!
- c. Clean it up!
- d. Kneel down and hands up for five minutes.
- e. Hey! sister, come on, *get up, go and get broom*

Example (20d) which subjects the addressee to a form of physical torture characterizes most of the commands found in the data in the situation of a disobedient junior. Here, the complainant due to the level of provocation, not only asked the addressee to re-do the work which he had earlier failed to do, but also subjected him to some level of physical torture 'kneel down' and 'hands up for five minutes'. The use of command as stated earlier showed the complainants authority over the addressee. In the same vein, in (20e), a female complainant who is enraged by the addressee's refusal to do her assigned duty, resorted to the

use of such imperative utterances aimed at compelling the addressee to fulfil her obligation. The complainants in both instances had no desire of keeping the face wants of their addressees and thus used this bald-on record strategy as a way of forcing them to do their bid.

#### 4.1.7.5 Suggestion

This was the least form of remedy used in the data. Of the 342 remedy utterances found in the data, only 16 representing 4.68% were suggestions made by the participants in two situations involving the dirty roommate and noisy housemate. 4.69% of suggestions were made by the female complainants. This was higher than the frequency of suggestions made by the males in the study. It was also observed that, 13.28% of males and 9.77% of females did not produce any remedy utterance in one situation or the other as they made their complaints. The following in (21) are examples of suggestions produced in the data.

- 
- (21) a. Please this is just a suggestion, I want you to eliminate them from that room or rather punish them.
- b. I suggest that they should be moved to another room.
- c. Ok, let's do it this way, I'm gonna give you money to get another hostel and do what you want.
- d. I suggest that you either give them a severe punishment or change me from that room.
- e. Please madam, I think if you tell her something, she will stop what she is doing.

In (21a), the speaker calls on the addressee in the situation of a noisy roommate to repair the damage done even though the addressee cannot be held directly accountable for the offensive act perpetrated. The complainant however, recognizes the level of imposition made on the addressee's negative face want as he seeks such a repair of the offensive act. He therefore, opts for an option that gives the addressee room to decide on the cause of action to be taken

with regards to his complaint. Similarly, in (21c), the complainant makes it clear to the addressee that he needs a remedy, yet, he did not want to have his own way and so gave some discretionary powers to the addressee even though, he gave some options. In both situations, the complainant used the negative politeness strategy in seeking redress from their addressees.

#### 4.1.8 Insulting

In general, 13 utterances of insults representing 3.34% of the complaint utterances were recorded in the data. Utterances of insults were made by the speaker with the intentions of disrespecting or humiliating the addressee thereby disregarding the positive face wants of the addressee. This category was the least of all the strategies as used by the complainants in the data. Consider the analysis done in Figure 4.1.8.

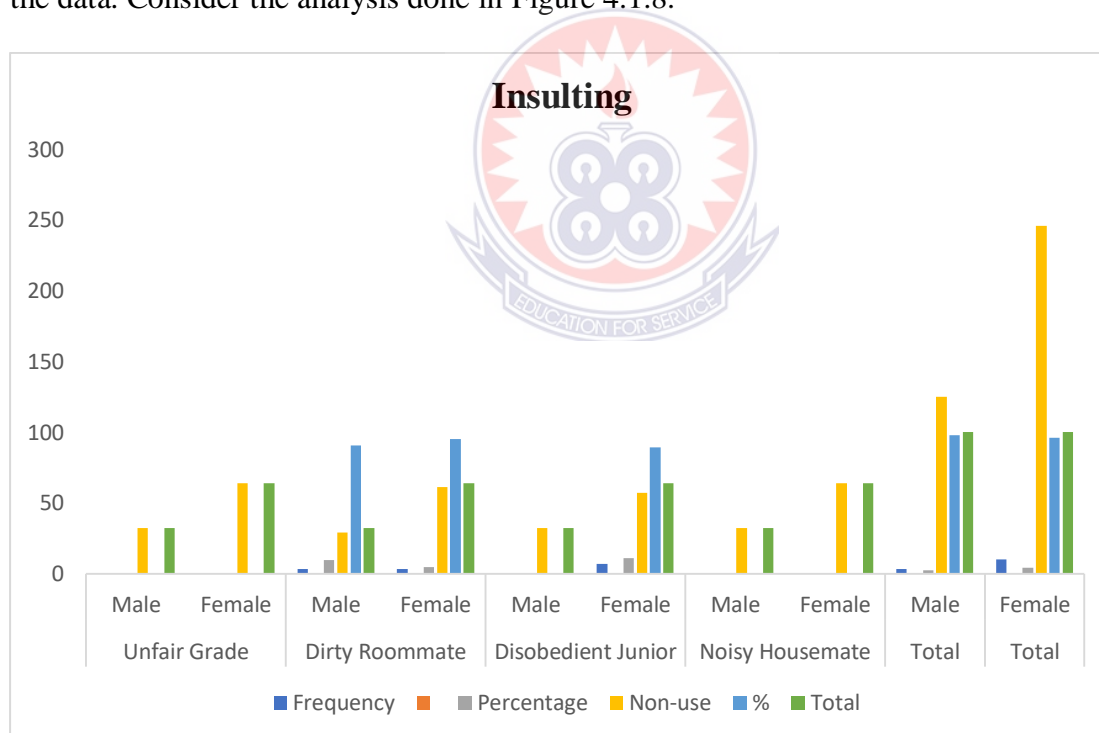


Figure 4.1.8. Distribution of insulting in the four situations

From Figure 4.1.8, we see that insults occurred only in situations of the dirty roommate and disobedient junior. The highest frequency of 7 representing 10.94% of insults was produced by females in the situation of a disobedient junior while the males did not use this strategy at

all in this situation. Consider the following examples in (22) of how insults were used by the speakers in the data.

- (22) a. So, *your common sense can't tell you to keep the room clean.*
- b. if you refused to obey my words again you will see who came to this school first, *nonsense!*
- c. Leave my sight, *you wretched girl from the forest!*
- d. I'm I your houseboy? *Stupid boy!*
- e. My friend, go look for a broom and start sweeping. *Rubbish!*

It was observed from the data that, utterances of insults as illustrated in (22), mainly pointed out a defective performance, ability, or traits in the addressee. For instance, the complainants' use of insults in (22a) and (22d) shows the extent of desperation or frustration on the part of the complainant to see the addressee change his behaviour in the situation of a dirty roommate. It suggests that, the complainant must have made some efforts earlier to correct the addressee which yielded no effect. The addressee is therefore, seen by the complainant as a deviant or a nonconformist who could only be corrected with the use of such harsh words. In most cases, insults are used as last resort to get a person to transform to a required behaviour. The complainant therefore resorted to insult hoping that, that would compel the addressee to budge or change his behaviour or attitude. The complainant intentionally used insults, a bald-on strategy to affect the ego of the addressee and cause him to get the necessary changes or reaction.

#### **4.1.9 Preaching**

Another component of the complaint sequence found in the data was preaching. A total of 18.75% of the complaint utterances fell under this category. Preaching was used by the females in all the complaint situations with the exception of the situation of an unfair grade. The males on the other hand, used this strategy in only the situations of a dirty

roommate and a noisy housemate. Consequently, females produced 23.05% of the total utterances that were used as Preaching. The frequency of preaching is presented in Figure 4.1.9.

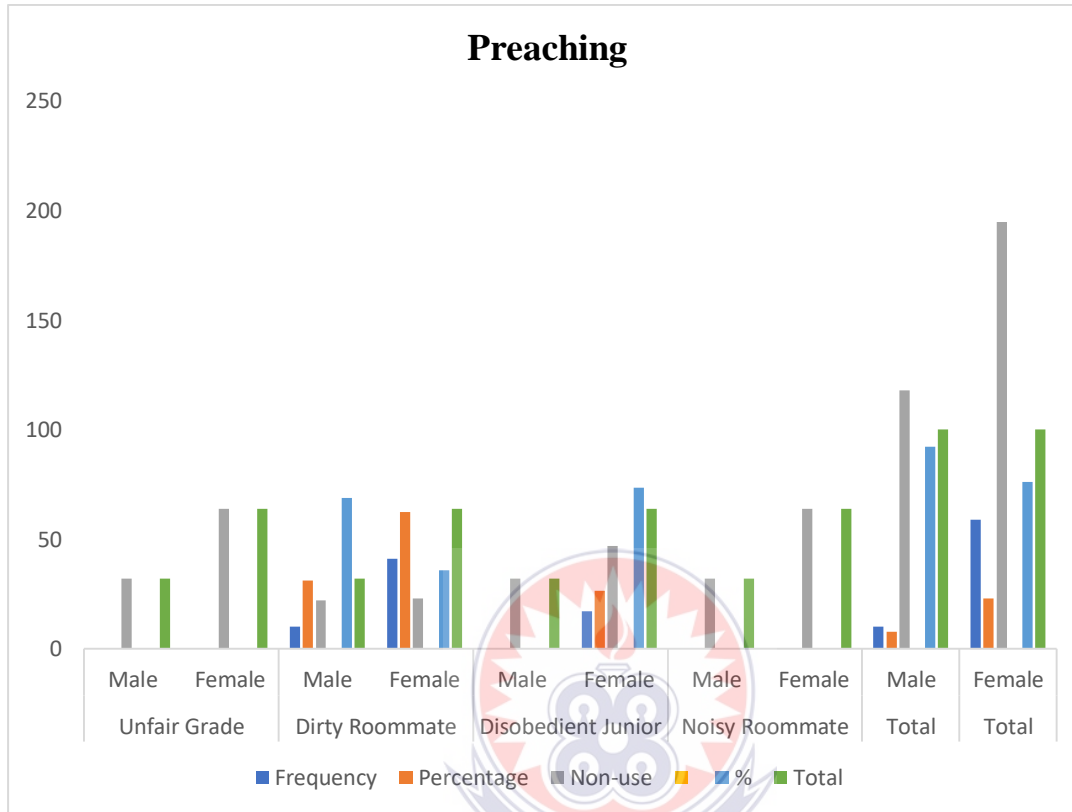


Figure 4.1.9. Frequency distribution of Preaching in the four situations

The following examples in (23) are evidence of Preaching from the data.

- (23) a. *It is said in our holy book that cleanliness is next to godliness, so change!*
- b. *Don't repeat it again because it is a bad manner.*
- c. *A word to the wise is enough.*
- d. *You are a lady and so you can't be lazy to the extent that you can't sweep your own room.*
- e. *And our elders have been saying that a word to the wise is enough so advice yourself okay.*

Example (23a) is a complaint made to the speaker's roommate in the situation of a dirty roommate. The complainant in this case, used the Holy book as a source of reference which suggests that, the complainant and the addressee are ardent believers who share a common faith and belief that the Holy book could be used to teach, correct and to admonish and ultimately help to transform an individual. The complainant therefore made reference to that book to enable the addressee to reflect on that message and take the necessary remedial measures. In the same vein, the (23c) is a proverbial saying which means that a reasonable being does not need much promptings for him to be made aware that he/she is on the wrong path and needs to change his attitude or behaviour. The complainant therefore, did not need to speak at length for the addressee to know what was expected of him.

Consequently, the complainant's choice of preaching did not seek to make the addressee guilty, but to transform that person. Thus, the speaker, though may be provoked or hurt, he/she still tends to empathize with the person who has committed the offence, and therefore tends to address the person in a way that will cause the person to reflect over their actions or inactions and change their behaviour. The speaker uses the off-record politeness strategy at this point by invoking implicature through the use of proverbs to save the face of the addressee.

#### **4.1.10 Formulaic adjunct**

According to Trenchs-Parera (1994), a formulaic adjunct is used as an indication of politeness. Participants in their quest to appear courteous and tone down the aggressiveness of their complaints used a lot of formulaic adjunct, especially in cases where their interlocutors were of a higher status. As a result, this marker usually preceded an address term, act statement or a request in the data as a way of marking politeness. A total of 201 utterances representing 10.03% of the complaint utterances produced are found in this category.

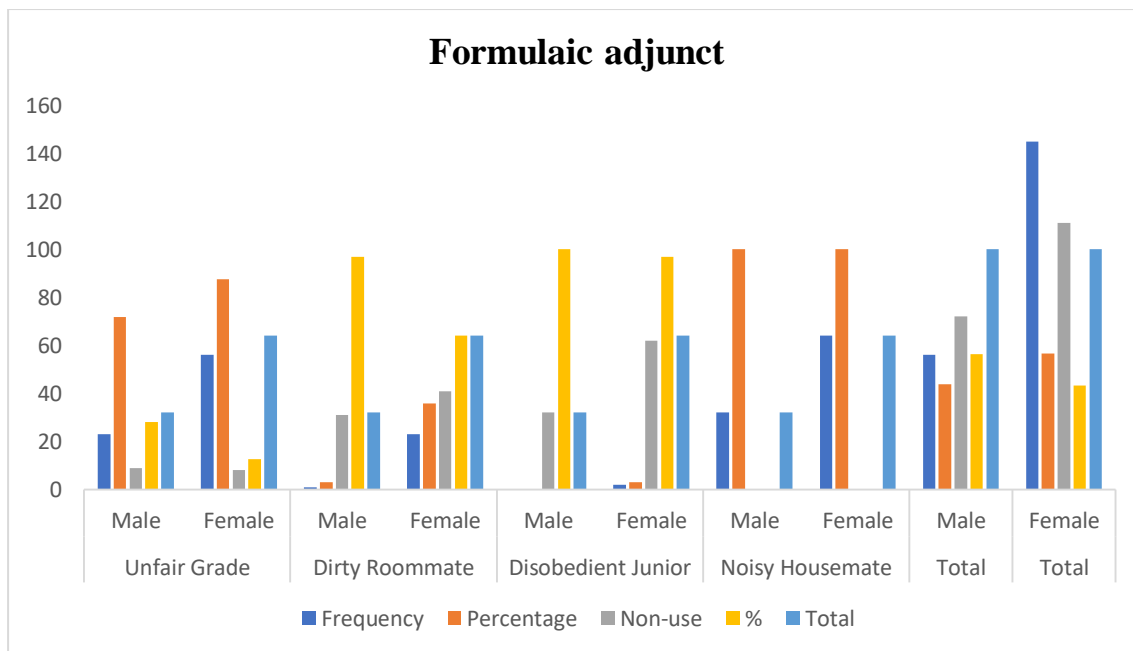


Figure 4.1.10. Frequency distribution of Formulaic Adjunct across the four complaint situations

The highest frequency of use of the formulaic adjunct was recorded in the situation of the noisy roommate. This frequent usage might be alluded to the fact that, because the teacher (addressee) in this situation could not be held directly responsible for the offensive act, the complainants were even more careful in presenting their complaint in a way that would not unduly compromise the face concerns of the addressee and so used a lot of this politeness marker to mitigate the severity of the intended speech. It was also observed that, the females used more of this courtesy marker throughout the four situations than the males who did not even bother using this strategy at all in the situation of a disobedient junior. The item *please* as a mark of politeness creates a more congenial environment for a person to be heard so once the person begins with that, the addressee will become more receptive. Being mindful of this, the complainants used this courtesy marker to make the addressee prepared to hear what he or she had to say.

Example (24) provides evidence of how speakers used this component in their complaints.

(24) a. Sir, *please* the assignment you gave us, none of mine



was wrong but you just wrong me.

b. *Please* stop this behaviour of yours.

c. *Please* next time I see it again, I will park your things out of this room.

d. *Please* sir, per the marks that I got I think I deserve more marks than what you have given me.

e. *Please* check if there is a mistake.

In (24a), we observe that the student though eager to unambiguously state his complaint to the teacher, cautiously chooses his words to ensure that, he does not infringe on the addressee's positive face wants. He therefore precedes the Act statement with the polite marker 'please' to mitigate the effect of the complaints on the addressee's face even though the teacher is in the wrong. Also, in order to maintain the close relationship between the speaker and her roommate, the formulaic adjunct was used as a politeness marker to reduce the negative effect of the complainant's request for a change in behaviour in the situation of a dirty roommate as shown in (24b). The use of the politeness marker 'please' is an indication of the fact that, the complainants in this study paid attention to the positive face want of the addressee.

#### **4.1.11 Closing**

An expression of gratitude was employed by some of the participants as a closure to their complaints thereby minimizing the face threat to the addressee at the end of the conversation. A total of 3.29% utterances of gratitude were produced by both genders in all situations, except in the situation of the disobedient junior where neither the male nor female participants used this strategy.

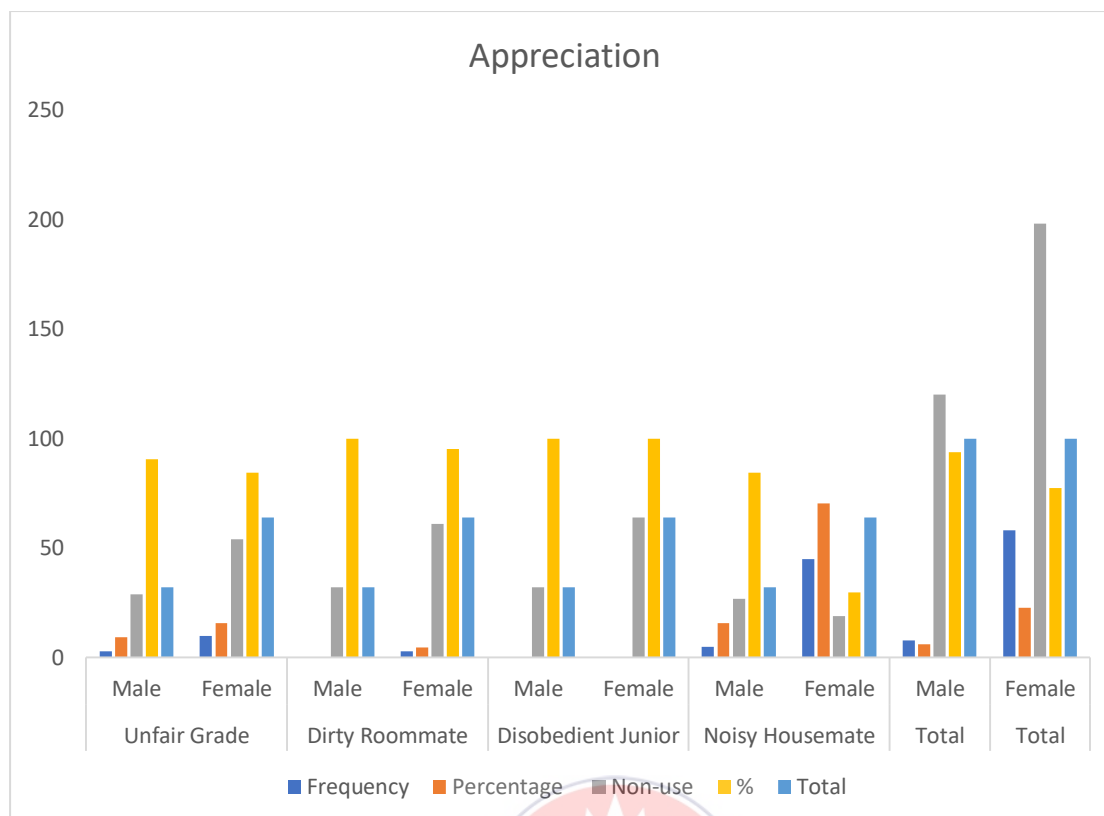


Figure 4.1.11. Frequency distribution of closing across the four situations

The complainants were rather more appreciative to their addressees in the situation of a noisy housemate than that of an unfair grade. Thus, only 3 out of the 32 males representing 9.37% and 10 females representing 15.62% of the female participants expressed gratitude to their addressee at the end of the conversation in the case of an unfair grade. Conversely, in situation 4 which bothers on the noisy housemate, the number of closing shot up to 70.31% females and 15.63% males. It is interesting how the frequencies are consistently higher in the fourth situation than the first even though, both involve a student complaining to a teacher. This could probably be because in the situation of the noisy housemate, the teacher was not responsible for the offensive act committed. Examples of utterances that expressed appreciation as a form of closing include those in (25):

(25) a. *Thank you* for wasting some of your time to listen to some of our problems.

b. Ok madam, *I'm grateful to you*.

- c. Ok, *thank* you for accepting to help me to clean up this place every day.
- d. I want you to remark it for me for I don't deserve to have that mark. *Thank you.*
- e. Can you please add the marks for me. *Thank you very much sir.*

A form of appreciation used in the data served two main functions: to express their gratitude to the addressee for making time to listen to their grievances and for the addressee's acceptance of the possible remedy action proposed by the complainant. For example, in (25a), the complainant at the end of his complaint of a noisy roommate showed gratitude to the teacher by saying 'thank you' for having had the patience to even give a listening ear to his problem. The complainant is well aware of the level of imposition on the addressee's negative face as a result of his complaint and thus uses an appreciation which is a negative politeness strategy as a redress to the addressee's face. By thanking the addressee, the complainant also expressed his confidence in the addressee that his grievance would surely be attended to for him to have his peace of mind. Similarly, in (25c), the complainant said 'thank you' to her roommate for accepting to change her dissatisfactory attitude of not helping the complainant clean the room. A word of appreciation at this point allowed the addressee to take the complaint in good faith without any malice and be prepared to give the needed response or reaction. In the end, a word of gratitude, engenders harmony between the complainant and the addressee. Moreover, showing appreciation even in a complaint situation is considered an act of politeness that will make the addressee more receptive to any suggestions or complaint in future.

#### **4.1.12 Summary**

This section of the study sought to identify the strategies used by the participants of this study in making complaints in English. The discussion thus far shows that the complainants in this study have no qualms about expressing their dissatisfaction with

unacceptable behaviour and they show this by exploiting different semantic formulae, with the opener, act statement, and remedy being the prevalent of all as illustrated in table 4.1. As a result of the high frequency in the use of the act statement and remedy, the complaints produced were identified as direct. However, Ghanaians just like the Chinese (Zhang, 2001) tend to use external linguistic build-ups to achieve indirectness or cushion the face threatening acts present in the complaints produced, to preserve the harmony between these Speaker and his addressee. Consequently, the complainants used formulaic adjunct, opening statement, justification and closing as the main external linguistic build-up devices in their complaint sequence while syntactic down graders were sparingly used. As Trosborg (1995, p. 312) points out, “causing offence is part of the conflictive functions, and complaints are by definition non-polite”. These external linguistic build-ups were thus used by the complainants as positive politeness strategies in adjusting the social distance between them and their addressees to ensure a harmonious result at the end of their complaints.

Moreover, the semantic formulae identified in this study are consistent with that of Trenchs-Parera (1994) except for interrogation, opening statement and remedy (warning, command and request) which were identified as part of this researcher’s study. It was also observed that both males and females showed similar tendencies in their choice of compliant strategies. Nonetheless, a significant difference in the usage of these strategies was found across the four situations. It could further be asserted that, though both genders exhibited significantly higher frequencies of the use of Act statement, the males tend to make complaints more directly and aggressively than the females. This is because the females tend to produce a lot of justifications, formulaic adjunct, and other supporting moves that lessen or hedge their complaints more than the males. This discourse behaviour of the two genders in this study is consistent with the findings in the literature that claim that females tend to be politer than males (De Leon & Parina, 2016; Keikhaie & Mozaffari, 2013). The analysis

however revealed that gender is not the only important factor that influences complaint behaviour. Other social variables like social distance and relative social power are factors that also affect the production of this speech act. Further analysis would, therefore, be subsequently made, to ascertain the level of influence the social variables had on the strategy patterns identified in this study.

## **4.2 Influence of social variables on complaint production**

The realization of a face-threatening act like a complaint as already stated requires a lot of consideration as it can disregard or jeopardize one's positive face want of being appreciated by others as well as one's desire to act freely without any form of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Consequently, the complainant may opt for a variety of strategies in making a complaint to either vehemently register their protest to show their disapproval of behaviour or mitigate the level of threat meted out to the addressee's face. This section of the chapter, therefore, investigates how the complaint strategies employed by the participants in making a complaint are influenced by social variables and situational variation. To achieve this, each strategy identified in the preceding section of this chapter is analysed vis-a-vis the four complaint-induced situations: an unfair grade, a dirty roommate, a disobedient junior and a noisy housemate. It also uses the politeness strategies explained in Brown and Levinson's face-saving theory to explain the findings in this section.

### **4.2.1 The influence of social status on complaint production**

One of the relevant factors that influence speech behaviour is the level of social value or respect accorded a person as an indication of their superiority or inferiority in social interaction. Differences in social status between the complainant and the offender in a specified complaint situation have a major influence on their relationship and hence determine the effectiveness of the complaint produced.

#### 4.2.1.1 Lower-higher status

In complaining to a person of a higher status, complainants were very mindful of the level of influence that their interlocutors had over them and so sort to be more circumspect in their complaint production. In recognition of the addressee's status and power, therefore, the complainant aimed at reducing the level of aggressiveness of their complaint by first using an opener to gain the attention of the addressee instead of starting directly with their complaints. Consequently, three types of openers: greetings, addressing and a combination of openers were used in opening the conversation at this level. However, the combination of openers was predominantly used by the three. This combination of openers mainly took the form of formulaic adjunct+ addressing + greeting such as '*Please sir, good afternoon*'. In Ghanaian English, such openers are considered polite forms of greetings that depict the status relationship between the interlocutors (Anderson, 2009). For instance, a younger person's failure to greet appropriately before engaging in a conversation with an elderly or a person of higher status is considered uncouth and a sign of him trying to seek equality with the higher-ranking addressee (e.g. Agyekum, 2010). Hence, such forms of opener used by the complainants served as a mark of courtesy and recognition of the enormity of the authority of the addressee over the speaker. They are, therefore, considered one of the positive politeness strategies employed by the speakers as they take into account the addressee's positive face wants of being acknowledged by their interlocutor despite the aggrieved situation.

In order not to appear too confrontational in their complaint, the complainants also tried to prepare the addressee's mind with an opening statement before finally initiating the complaint through the use of an Act Statement as seen in the subsequent example:

*Please sir (formulaic adjunct), I want to show you something about the assignment you gave us (opening statement). Sir, please (formulaic adjunct) I think (downgrader) I got all of the answers correct but you've marked me wrong, (act statement).*

In the discourse above, the complainant complains to a teacher concerning his grade in a class assignment. The teacher is obviously of a higher status than the complainant who is a student. The student is well aware of the social background of the teacher as being older and also having more social power than him. So, the complainant begins his complaint with politeness markers; a formulaic adjunct 'please' and a form of addressing 'sir' in recognition of the addressee's status. Also, the complainant still being mindful of the authority that the addressee wields, which could either make him receptive or otherwise of his complaint, decides to go off-record by the use of hints in his opening statement. The complainant by the opening statement '*I want to show you something about the assignment you gave us*' implies that, the addressee is well aware of the problem, and thus indirectly holds him responsible. The use of the hint allows the complainant to avoid a confrontation with his addressee which may in the end jeopardise his aim of complaining. Without being oblivious of the status of the addressee, the complainant finally goes on record and airs his grievances explicitly without any form of ambiguity through the act statement *sir please, I think I got all of the answers correct but you've marked me wrong.*

The complainant goes on record so that, the addressee (teacher) could have a clearer understanding of the problem to get the needed results of having his grade changed. The complainant, however, goes on record not without redress to the addressee's negative and positive face which could be damaged by the act statement; the severity and level of imposition were thus, mitigated by the use of the politeness marker '*please*' and the internal modifier '*think*'. The complainants further used a lot of justifications, as to why their complaints were valid. For instance, in the situation of an unfair grade, it was observed that the speakers had some confidence and respect for their teacher, such that, they knew the teacher would not do anything out of malice, so the speakers used Justification, even though the addressee's behaviour was unacceptable to them and thus toned down the severity of the

complaint. The following discourse is an example of this observation: *maybe when marking mine, you weren't able to read the work because of my handwriting*. The complainant per this utterance tends to use negative politeness to save the face of the teacher, by giving reasons why he (addressee) made an error in grading his paper. The Justifications used at this level thus, shifted the blame from the addressee as being directly responsible for the offensive act and hence saves the face of the addressee.

These utterances of justification also served as a way of emphasizing the complainant's overwhelming situation to gain the addressee's sympathy as well as seek some possible solutions to the problem. Consider the following discourse:

*Sir you see, after lights out, I like to recall whatever they've taught me throughout the day but because of the noise making I can't recall whatever they've taught me which is affecting my studies but sometimes when you tell them to keep quiet, they try to fight with you.*

The speaker at this point exaggerates the effect of the noise making on her academics *I can't recall whatever they've taught me* and also indicates how futile all her efforts to get the offender to stop the noise making have been, hence her complaint.

The forms of remedy used at this level are request and suggestion. From the data, the complainants used request and suggestion as the only form of remedy probably because, they realized that, due to the social status of the addressee (teacher), he/she could easily refuse to heed their complaints and so, they decided to appeal to the conscience of the teacher knowing that on their own, there was no way they could compel the teacher to affect their expected or desired changes. Consider the request made by a student in the situation of an unfair grade:

*Sir, please I'm sorry just check it for me or else I will be the last in class.*

The student in this situation knew that even though she had the right to air her grievances about the unsatisfactory marks given and demand a redress of the problem, she could not



afford to get on the bad side of the teacher by exhibiting any offensive behaviour or making any infuriating utterances. As a result, she even begins her request for repair with an apology as a negative politeness strategy to repair the damage that her request could do to the addressee's freedom of action. The complainants finally ended their complaint with an expression of gratitude which took the form of 'thank you', or 'I'm grateful'. The speakers recognized that the addressees may have gone through a lot in granting them an audience, as well as their desire to solve their problem and so found it prudent enough to show their appreciation at the end of their complaints.

It was also observed that in complaining to a person of a higher status, whether the addressee is the direct offender as in the case of the unfair grade or a third party as in the case of a noisy roommate, the complainant's choice of strategies was consistent and only varied in their frequency of usage. Thus, most complainants in the case of a noisy roommate preceded their complaints with an opening statement and gave a lot of justification to win the sympathy of the addressee. In addition, more softeners were used in the situation of the noisy roommate than the unfair grade. In general, it was observed that the complainants chose less severe strategies in complaining to a person of a higher status. They also used a lot of external linguistic build-ups in maintaining the face wants of the addressee. This complaint behaviour of the complainants aligns with the Ghanaian culture where one is expected to be very circumspect in his or her utterances when addressing people of higher social status, even in the face of extreme provocation.

#### **4.2.1.2 Equal status**

In complaining to an addressee of equal status, the complainants used all the eleven strategies identified in the data. The complainants, though of equal status with their addressees, preceded their complaints with an opener as a way of gaining the attention of their interlocutor. An attention-getter such as '*yo bro*' or the personal name of the

addressee 'Nancy' was the frequently used type of opener by the speakers at this level. The female complainants used significantly more of the name of the addressee than the males who preferred using an Attention-getter as an opener. The use of such types of openers was a deliberate attempt by the complainants to establish a common ground to tone down the harshness of the complaint on the addressee's positive face.

However, not all openers used attended to the face wants of the addressees. For instance, the use of a combination of openers, i.e. the attention-getter 'hey' + the first name of the addressee 'hey you Prince!' made the complaint produced rather too direct and harsh on the addressee's face want. A few of the complainants, mostly the females, followed the use of an opener with an opening statement which prepared their addressee for the complaint ahead. Consider the discourse:

*Linda, (opener), I have a conversation with you (opening statement). I don't like how you've neglected the cleaning of the room to only me, yet you make the most rubbish (act statement).*

These opening statements, such as can be observed from the discourse, were signals to the addressee that the complainant was annoyed about something which needed urgent attention.

Furthermore, in complaining to an addressee of equal status, the complainants through the Act statement did not mince words in expressing their complaints as explicitly as possible such as illustrated by the utterance, *I don't like how you've neglected the cleaning of the room to only me, yet you make the most rubbish.* Through the act statements, the complainants directly blamed and held the addressee responsible for the offence and thus, demanded a repair of that unacceptable act. It is obvious that, because the interlocutors were of the same status, the complainants could freely and maximally vent their anger on their addressees without any fear of imposition or recognition of the self-image of the addressee. The complaints produced were as a result done baldly. However, Agbaglo (2017) claims that

the bald-on record strategy is usually employed among people who are very close to each other or know each other very well and so the level of imposition or threat to the face is minimal.

Another strategy used at this level is Justification. Though not as many as in the case where the addressee was of a higher status, quite a number of the complainants especially the females, gave justification utterances to support their complaints. As was observed in De Zhang (2001), the Justifications served not only as supporting moves to the Act Statement but even more importantly, they were used to protect the relationship that existed between the interlocutors. Consider the utterance:

*You eat and put it under the bed, you don't like washing, you put your dirty clothes around and I've always been excusing you fine.*

Here, the complainant is a female and to justify her complaint, took time to list some activities that her roommate did not do and how she tried to keep a blind eye to it for a while until she could no longer keep quiet but voice out her displeasure.

The complainants also expressed how they felt about the offence through valuation utterances which would perhaps make it evident why the complaint had to be made. Interrogation which was mainly rhetorical in nature, preaching, and occasionally, insults also formed part of the complaint sequence produced. The forms of remedy used in this situation were, commands, requests, threats, warnings and a few suggestions. Females used more requests than males who did not use it but for one person. However, the males used more threats and commands while females used more warnings, requests and threats when seeking a form of remedy from their roommates. Even though females used threats, they were not as aggressive as the males. The only few instances of appreciation in this situation were produced by the females.

In general, males are more masculine in nature and would want to assert their authority in every situation hence their use of threats and commands even when speaking with somebody of equal status. The females, on the other hand, have tender feelings and tend to be compassionate in most situations and thus, would usually not want to aggravate such situations with more offensive utterances to bruise the feelings of their addressee. They would therefore do everything to maintain a cordial relationship between themselves and their colleagues hence their inclination towards the use of requests and warnings. The complaints made by males are more direct and balder than those of their female counterparts who try to use the formulaic adjunct 'please' and other hedge devices in mitigating the severity of the complaint on the addressee's face. The females thus used several strategies that showed their level of solidarity or compassion for their addressee more than their male counterparts.

#### **4.2.1.3 Higher-lower status**

The complainants used the least number of strategies in complaining to a person of a lower status. These are: opener, act statement, interrogation, valuation, insulting, preaching and remedy. It was observed from the data that just like in the case of an addressee of an equal status, the main types of opener used in this situation were attention-getter or the name of the addressee. While the males used only attention-getter, the females used either the name of the addressee or an attention-getter as an opener in addressing a person of a lower status. However, not all complaints began with an opener: 40.63% males and 9.38% female complainants did not use any form of opener in this situation. This because, since the complainants were of a higher status than their addressees, they saw no need in properly acknowledging their addressees and so even in cases where openers were used, they sought to belittle the addressee rather than uphold their self-esteem. Consequently, the openers that were even used as a pre-complaint strategy at this level, rather threatened the face of the

addressee and showed the complainant's level of superiority over the addressee as illustrated by the utterance:

*Hey boy (opener-attention getter), come here, I ask you to sweep the room and you refuse.*

Moreover, due to the social status of the complainer, no form of opening statement was used as a preparatory device prior to the complaints. Thus, the complainants either immediately initiated their complaints after the opener or zoomed straight into complaining without properly addressing the addressee. The complainants used the bald-on-record strategy in making complaints at this level through the use of either an act statement or an interrogation even though the complainants used more Interrogatory utterances than the act statement. This is illustrated by the discourse:

*Hey Form 1 boy come here (opener- attention getter). What do you take me for? What happened to the work I asked you to do (interrogation)?*

Here, the senior directly accuses the junior of the wrongful act of defying his orders and so asks for an explanation of the addressee's behaviour. The form of interrogation used however, did not only aim at seeking an explanation rather, it sought to intimidate the addressee thereby threatening the face of the addressee.

The females also used insulting, and preaching, which the males did not use. As already established in this study, females are generally less aggressive than males, and so in complaining to an addressee of a lower status in the case of a disobedient junior, the female complainants used preaching to correct the junior and win them back into their fold instead of using strong and harsh utterances to incur their displeasure. The complainants used command, threat and warning as a form of remedy; while the males still used more threats than females, the females also used more commands than the males and occasionally a form of warning which the males did not use at all. The complaint strategies used in addressing a

person of a lower status, were deliberate attempt to belittle, frighten and invade the personal space of the addressee in order to emphasize the speaker's relative power over the addressee. The complainants in addressing an addressee of a lower status thus, used predominantly bald-on record and negative impoliteness strategies.

#### **4.2.2 The influence of social distance on complaint production**

Another important determinant of complaint production is the level of familiarity that exists between the complainant and the addressee. In the Ghanaian culture, a lot of premium is placed on the social distance between interlocutors. This is because; it is believed that a lot of respect must be given to people of higher social status which invariably defines the social distance between them. From the data, in the situation of the unfair grade and dirty roommate, there is a wide social distance by default, between the teacher who is the addressee and his or her student (complainant). Consequently, the speaker's choice of Openers such as '*Sir/Madam or please Sir/Madam, good morning Sir/Madam*' which are polite forms of addressing people of higher status reveal the level of social distance which exist between the students and their teacher.

However, this social distance between the teacher and his student can be widened or closed based on the relationship and the rapport that exist between them. It was observed from the data that, some teachers, by their actions or inactions, were able to bridge the social distance between them and their students, such that the students address them by their first names or nicknames without referring to them as 'Sir 'or Madam' as is usually expected of the students. For instance, some of the females addressed their teacher by his nickname '*Okese*' in the discourse *Okese, (opener-nick name), please I have a bit of an issue to discuss with you*. The use of such an opener made their approach toward their teacher more amicable and also depicted the closeness of the social distance between them and their teacher. It was also observed that in making their complaint, the students frequently used the politeness

marker 'please' and other mitigating devices which toned down the severity of their complaint in recognition of the distance between them and their teacher. The complainants thus used mostly positive politeness strategies through the use of formulaic adjunct, opener, and opening statement, as a way of bridging the social distance between them and the addressee and eventually making their complaints less face threatening.

In the same vein, depending on the extent of the relationship that exists between interlocutors of the same social status, the social distance could be close or wide and as such affect the nature of complaints produced. From the data, it was observed that, in the case of a dirty roommate, where the interlocutors are colleagues and therefore are of equal status, the speakers' choice of opener such as '*yo bro*', '*Nancy*' and '*sister*' connotes the level of intimacy that exists between them as roommates which shows that, there was no social distance between them. With little or no distance between the interlocutors, the complainants were able to freely unleash their frustrations on the addressee for the offensive act done. As a result, the complainants though intended their complaints to be made directly, they did not want to strain the relationship between them and their addressees, hence, the complainant's predominant use of the off-record strategy through the use of rhetorical questions showed their desire to maintain the cordiality that existed between them despite being aggrieved.

Moreover, in the situation where the speaker is of a higher status than the addressee, the social distance could still either be widened or bridged depending on the relationship between the interlocutors and thus, influence the type of complaint produced. It was observed from the data that, in such a situation as in the case of the disobedient junior, the interlocutors were only familiar with each other and thus, did not have a close social distance between them. However, it was observed from the discourse that, the seniors (complainants) were rather keen on widening the social gap between them and the juniors (addressees). This was evident especially in their choice of opener which was predominantly 'hey or hey junior'

while others ignored its usage completely in their complaint sequence. Such openers as already stated in this study are seen as derogatory, intimidating and face threatening. Consequently, the complaints made were direct and bald which affirmed the level of social distance between them and their addressees.

#### **4.2.3 The influence of severity of offence on complaint production**

The influence of the severity of the offence on the production of complaint was also examined in this study. The severity of the offence depends on the nature of the offence and how the complainant views it; either as a trivial or huge offence. Also, the severity of offence does not change, it is rather its effect which can be made to change depending on who the complaint is made to; the addressee. Due to the severity of offence which was perceived to be consistently high and its resultant direct effect of the on the complainant, all the complainants in this study saw the need to complain instead of opting out from performing the FTA so as to provoke the needed solution to the problem. As a result, all the complainants went on-record but the complaints were either made baldly with or without re-dress depending on who was being addressed. The complainants, used the bald on-record strategy, without mitigation if the addressee is the offender and of a lower or an equal status but if the addressee is of a higher status, then whether he is the direct offender or a third party like in the case of the noisy roommates, the complainant toned down the negative effect of the complaint with the use of the politeness marker 'please' and other mitigating devices, irrespective of the level of provocation. The effect of the severity of offence thus primarily depends on who the complaint is being made to; his status, and the social distance that exist between the interlocutors.

#### **4.2.4 Summary**

This section examined the influence of social variables on the complaint strategy choices made by participants in making complaints in varied situations. It was observed in



the study that, all participants reacted to the parameters of social distance, social power and the severity of the offence. Thus, the participants employed different complaint strategies depending on the social distance and status of the addressee in all of the four situations under study. The findings of this study are consistent with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory which indicates that, the greater the social distance and social status between the speaker and the addressee, the greater the degree of politeness required in saving the addressee's face and restoring the social equilibrium.

The findings of this study also corroborate that of Zhang (2001) in a study conducted to investigate the speech act of complaining by Chinese and American English speakers. The results showed that the complaints produced by both groups were greatly influenced by social factors and situational variables. As a result, the complainants used a lot of softeners and other external linguistic devices to achieve the appropriate level of indirectness and politeness when making complaints to an addressee of a higher status. It was also revealed that where there was little or no social distance, the complainants tended to use more Justification to take care of the addressee's face and maintain an intimate relationship with their addressees whereas little justification was used in situations when there was a large social distance but the speaker was of a higher status than the addressee.

Similarly, Tabatabaei's (2015) comparative study of the complaint behaviour between Persian and Native English speakers revealed that both groups of speakers consciously chose the types of complaint strategies depending on who their addressee was. Thus, both groups tended to choose the less severe form of complaint when the addressee was of a higher status and vice-versa. Therefore, English and Persian native speakers used *threat* and *sarcasm strategies* when the interlocutors had equal or lower social status but used either *justification* or *explanation of purposes* when complaining to a person of higher social status, to reduce the negative effect of complaining on the addressee's face. Moreover, in seeking redress for

the socially unacceptable act, complainants resorted to the use of *demand* when the interlocutor had lower social status but used *request* when the interlocutor had higher social status.

Wijayanto et al (2017) also observed in their study of the complaints by Indonesian learners of English that most complaints sounded very direct, particularly those addressed to lower-unfamiliar interlocutors. Caturay (2020), who examined Filipino ESL learners' semantic formula in expressing complaints, affirms the findings of this study that the complaints made were influenced by the social status of the addressee and the severity of the offence. However, contrary to the findings of this study, the social distance between the interlocutors was rarely a contributing factor to the way complaints were made. Astia (2020) also affirms through her study of complaints by international students that the choice of complaint strategy was informed by the status (age and power) and social distance between the addressee and the complainant.

#### **4.3 Influence of the Ghanaian culture on complaint production**

This section seeks to examine the influence of Ghanaian culture on the complaints produced by the learners in this study. Every speech community has clearly defined norms and conventions that regulate the actions or reactions of people in a given context (Eelen, 2001). Consequently, a person is deemed polite when his actions are in congruence with these predefined social norms or conventions. When a person's behaviour contradicts these conventions that govern speech and interaction, he is tagged as being impolite or rude, and thus treated with abhorrence. The Ghanaian community also has its norms and conventions regarding utterances that are deemed fit and appropriate or otherwise, in any given social interaction. In Ghana, being polite means being respectful to people in terms of age and status. Thus, one has to be extremely cautious when interacting with people older or of higher social status than his co-equals or even people younger (Thompson & Anderson, 2019).

Therefore, people must not behave in any way that threatens the face of those older or of higher status. From the study, it was evident that learners had woven some Ghanaian politeness principles into the complaints produced in English even after studying English for so long. Considering that, a complaint is a face-threatening act whose successful production is to a large extent influenced by one's culture, such transfers were rather expected. According to Anderson (2009), the interplay of the Ghanaian and English communicative norms and conventions are what gives the English spoken in Ghana its distinctive colourization and pragmatic features. The following components of the complaints produced to show evidence of pragmatic transfers in the study.

#### **4.3.1 Opening a conversation**

The first evidence of transfer was recorded in the use of openers in the complaint sequence of the learners. The types of openers identified in the data and their usage are consistent with the Ghanaian culture. In Ghana, a person who wishes to engage in a conversation with someone must endeavour to use an opener of a kind, irrespective of one's age or status. Failure to do so sends a negative signal to your interlocutor that you are either not in a cordial relationship with them or you are just not communicatively competent. Therefore, whether in pleasant or unpleasant situations, one would usually not directly start speaking without first using an opener since the appropriate use of an opener, helps to eliminate perceived obstacles that may impede the free flow of the interaction. This accounted for the high frequency in the use of an opener, even in a situation where one feels offended by his addressee's action.

The type of opener used, however, is what depicts the level of respect and the relationship that the person has for his interlocutor. For instance, in the Ghanaian culture, addressing an elderly as 'sir, or madam' is a mark of utmost respect and recognition of the person's status and power. As a result, learners in this study used these address forms rather

too frequently than one would expect. Thus, such address terms were used not only as openers but even preceded their complaints, justification and requests as a sign of respect and a way of minimizing the level of imposition on the addressee's face wants. They also transferred the use of kinship terms into their complaints. In the Ghanaian culture unlike that of the natives, the meaning of such kinship terms like '(my) brother and (my) sister' are extended to address a non-acquaintance or anybody of the same age as the speaker, as a way of showing solidarity as well as bridging the social distance between the interlocutors.

Another type of opener transferred into the English spoken by the participants of this study is greeting. Greeting in Ghana does not only pave the way for one to initiate or contribute to a conversation, it's also a mark of communicative competence. This is because, in Ghana, one greets in recognition of the addressee's status, age or power (Anderson, 2009). Consequently, the younger person is expected to initiate a form of greeting depending on the time of the day when speaking with an adult, as a mark of politeness and respect. This habit of greeting to show one's politeness was thus transferred into the English spoken in Ghana, with its resultant structure as 'please sir good morning' or 'good morning madam' found in the data. Speakers who used this form virtually transferred such syntactic structures from their L1 as these are polite ways of greeting. Even though such structures may seem odd to the native, these are important discourse features of English spoken in Ghana.

#### **4.3.2 The use of the politeness marker**

It was observed that the learners used the polite marker 'please' excessively in their quest to make their complaints politer while talking to a person of a higher status and as a result, ended up producing structures which may sound awkward to a native speaker, yet consistent with the English spoken in Ghana. Consider the complaint:

Please Sir good morning. Please, Sir, I have an issue to discuss with you. Sir please there is one guy in my room who always disturbs when its lights out. Sir, the

reason why I want to report this issue to you is that the noise that the guy makes disturbs me a lot sir when I'm sleeping and there is noise in the room, I can't sleep so it's affecting me in my health and academics. So, Sir please I want you to tell him to stop or change him from that way to another way.

This excessive use of the polite marker *Please* could only have been transferred from the speaker's first language as this is consistent with politeness expressed in many Ghanaian languages. It is considered rude for a child or a person of lower status to speak to an adult or someone of a higher status without the use of this polite marker in Ghana. This feature is extensively used among the Akuapem for instance who precede even an insult with 'please' such as **me pa kyew se wo ye aboa** which means 'please you are a fool'.

In the Ghanaian community, it is uncommon for a child to openly express their anger when they are offended by an adult, therefore when it becomes necessary for such a child to express his displeasure against an adult, he must do so with utmost politeness using 'please' as often as possible to reduce the level of imposition. This is premised on the fact that in Ghana, as far as our traditions are concerned, there is an axiom that the adult is precluded from feeling guilty in the presence of the child even if the child is right or not guilty during arbitration; lest the child might subsequently disrespect the adult for winning the case, and culminate in insubordination.

### **4.3.3 Expression of appreciation**

In a complaint situation where tensions are high as a result of one's expectations not being met, one would hardly expect that the complainants would express gratitude at the end of their conversation. However, complainants in this study did not fail to appreciate their addressees at the end of their interaction, especially with a person of a higher status. In Ghana, it is considered unworthy to spend one's resources or even time on an ungrateful person. Such people are often referred to as **bonyi ayɛ** in Akan which means an ingrate, and

they are always shunned by people for not being appreciative. As a cultural practice, children are taught to be appreciative by saying ‘thank you’ for any kindness or favour shown to them. So, in the study, in a situation where the addressee was not the offender but was used to get the required remedy, had to be appreciated hence the use of ‘thank you’ in such instances; this is a mark of politeness.

#### **4.3.4 Summary**

Considering the fact that language and culture are intertwined, this section of the study aimed at examining the influence of the Ghanaian culture on the complaint strategies that were used in making a complaint in the study. The discussion thus far has proven that just as was identified by Anderson (2019), the politeness strategies used in the complaints produced in English in Ghana, are transferred from the various Ghanaian languages and cultures. Even though studies have shown that non-native speakers easily transfer communicative strategies from their native languages into the target languages (Zhang, 2001; Rashidi, 2017; Li & Suleiman, 2017), such transfers are but deliberate attempts on the part of the non-native speakers to indigenize the English language to convey their distinct cultural concepts and meanings as well as establish their identity. Therefore, the tango between the Ghanaian culture and the English language in making complaints by the participants in this study is innovative and a stylistic use of the English language to convey the Ghanaian identity.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the results and findings of the study have been discussed in consonance with the research objectives and questions. It was established that there are several strategies used in expressing one’s displeasure of a socially unacceptable act with the most frequently used strategies being opener, act statement and remedy. Due to the face-threatening nature of this particular speech act, complainants did not randomly choose just

any kind of strategy in complaining, but they consciously chose the appropriate strategy based on the status and relationship between them and their addressees to at least reduce the degree of imposition or face threat that the complaint may have on the addressee while they seek a repair of the offensive act. These social variables; social distance, social power and the severity of offence mainly influenced the complainants' use of opener, opening statement, Justification and even the choice of Remedy in their complaints. The findings of this study are consistent with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory which indicates that if the level of imposition or face threat goes higher, the interlocutors tend to be more courteous. It was also observed that the females were not as aggressive as the males in their choice of complaint strategies. Finally, the influence of the Ghanaian culture on the complaints made by the participants was examined. It was established that the complainants transferred some politeness strategies, which are very characteristic of the Ghanaian culture, into their complaint sequence. These transfers would usually make their complaints sound awkward and impolite to the native speaker of English. However, as Anderson (2009) rightly claims, these are what give the English spoken in Ghana its distinctive pragmatic features.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

The study investigated the complaint behaviour of Ghanaian learners of English at the secondary level of education in the Asante Mampong municipality in the Ashanti region. To achieve the set objectives as well as answer the research questions, a qualitative research design was employed in the study. Data for the study was elicited from 96 learners from the three secondary schools in the Ashanti Mampong municipality through open-ended role plays. The role plays were designed based on four complaint-induced situations that usually occurred in the school setting. The complaints from the recorded role plays were then coded according to Trenchs-Parera (1994) complaint taxonomy. The data were then analysed according to the frequency of the semantic formulas used. This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the study and suggestions for further studies.

#### 5.1 Summary of findings

The findings of the study are in three parts. The first part discusses the findings on the strategies used in complaining. The second part discusses the influence of the social variables on complaint production while the third and final part bothers on the pragmatic transfers made in the expression of the complaint speech act.

##### 5.1.1 Complaint strategies

The findings revealed a variety of pragmatic strategies used in expressing one's displeasure towards an unacceptable behaviour. These strategies were grouped into eleven components according to their semantic features: opener, opening statement, justification, act statement, remedy, interrogation, valuation, preaching, insults, formulaic adjunct and closing. The opener, act statement and remedy constituted the strategies with the highest frequency of usage. Interrogation, opening statement and remedy (warning, command and request) which



were identified in the data in the current study were added to that of Trenchs-Parera (1994) categories of semantic formulae. Interestingly, almost all the participants preceded their complaints in all situations with an opener despite the unpalatable circumstance. The use of the opener indicates the desire of the speaker in maintaining the positive face of the addressee despite having to make a complaint (De Leon & Parina, 2016). The act statement and remedy were predominantly used of the eleven components as they constitute the main components of a complaint (Trosborg, 1995) whereas the opener, opening statement, justification, interrogation, valuation, preaching, insults, formulaic adjunct and closing served as supportive moves which occurred either before or after the main components. These supportive moves were used either to mitigate the severity of the speech act of complaining to attend to the Hearer's face and preserve the harmony between them or to aggravate the intensity of its effect on the face of the hearer. The high number of supportive moves found in this study corroborates the findings in the literature that non-native speakers use more supportive moves in communication than native speakers (Zhang, 2001).

### **5.1.2 Influence of social variables**

The findings of this study revealed that due to the face-threatening nature of this particular speech act, complainants did not randomly choose just any kind of strategy in complaining, but they consciously chose the appropriate strategy based on the status and the relationship between them and their addressees to at least reduce the degree of imposition or face threat that the complainant may have on the addressee while they seek a repair of the offensive act. The results of this study thus substantiate the claim that the social factors: social distance and social status have an enormous influence on the choice of a particular politeness strategy used in the performance of the complaint speech act.

Consequently, it was observed that when the speaker was of a lower status than the hearer and the social distance between them and their interlocutors was wide, the speakers

used more supportive moves (opener, opening statement, justification, formulaic adjuncts and closing) to adjust the social distance and achieve the appropriate level of indirectness and politeness between the speaker and the hearer. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), such supportive moves attend to the positive face wants of the addressee. The speakers, therefore, used predominantly positive politeness in talking to a person of a higher status to minimize the positive face of the addressee in the complaint. However, speakers of either equal or higher status had no qualms expressing their complaints as directly as possible without making any effort to mitigate the severity of the complaint on the addressee's face. It was interesting to note that, contrary to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, not all complaints made to an addressee of equal status were done baldly.

### **5.1.3 Pragmatic transfer**

The results of the study showed that Ghanaian culture influenced the performance of the complaint speech act. The occurrences of pragmatic transfer were reflected in the frequency of some of the semantic formulas used. Thus, the participants' choice of openers, formulaic adjunct, remedy and closing could be traced back to the Ghanaian languages and cultural backgrounds. The findings of this study affirm the findings in the literature which indicates that non-native speakers often transfer some aspects of their sociocultural values in their speech acts which complaint is no exception. According to Loutfi (2016), such transfers are usually a result of the learner's L2 proficiency level and his L1 cultural background. The study also corroborates findings in the literature which indicate that the Ghanaian equates these to competence in communication and so were predominantly used in the complaint (Agyekum, 2008; Thompson & Anderson, 2019) For example, the predominant use of the openers in addressing someone of higher status was in recognition of the power hierarchy that exists in Ghana and which must not be disregarded if one wants to be deemed communicatively competent in any speech event in Ghana.

## 5.2 The place of complaints in communication in Ghanaian English

The Ghanaian concept of politeness is far more complex than that of the western cultures which dwell more on ‘individualism’ than ‘collectivism’ and as such forms an essential component of communication in Ghanaian English (Anderson, 2009). The Ghanaian places much premium on maintaining social relationships by paying attention to the strict social hierarchy in any given interaction. Thus, the amount of politeness needed in maintaining one’s face is adjusted depending on the status of the addressee. In general, complaints may be a necessary tool in restoring the emotional balance in social interaction, however, it is important to master the skill of saving and maintaining the face of especially an addressee of a higher status or power even while seeking a redress of a socially unacceptable act as losing face **animguase** is considered a very serious issue to the Ghanaian. This is because the reproach which may be as a result of a complaint made transcends or goes beyond the individual whose image may be dented and can affect the family or even the community as a whole.

## 5.3 Implications for communication in English

The study revealed that Ghanaians generally use a lot of politeness markers in their complaints due to the premium the society places on social values. To the native English speaker, this may sound not only odd but also awkward. E.g. *Please good morning*. However, to the Ghanaian, such a speaker would be deemed to be very courteous irrespective of their ethnic background. Even though the study was not conducted on the basis of ethnicity, it is common knowledge in Ghana that some tribes like the Akuapem, Ewe, Ga and Fante languages are replete with politeness markers which embellished their communication and make them appealing and acceptable to the addressee. However, it is an axiom that Ghanaians generally frown on impoliteness and applaud respectful behaviours. One is therefore expected to exercise restraint, circumspection and decorum in the use of the

language even in situations of extreme provocations when making complaints, thereby making the use of politeness markers very imperative in our complaints irrespective of the ethnic group or tribe that one belongs to. This makes the Ghanaian distinct from the native speakers of English.

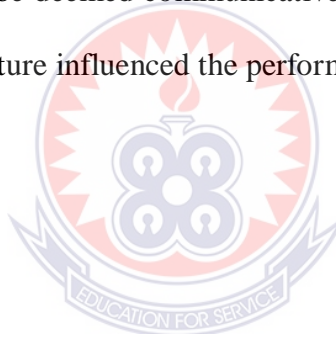
#### **5.4 Suggestions for future research**

The present study concentrated on the nature of complaints produced by Ghanaian English as second language learners. It would be a fruitful step for interlanguage pragmatics research to compare the complaint realization strategies of Ghanaians in English with that of the native speakers of English to ascertain the differences and similarities between the two. Also, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the subjects in the present study do not, by any means, represent all Ghanaian speakers as the subjects were limited to those in their final year at the secondary level of education. Future research should thus replicate all aspects of the social variables: social distance and status with a great variety of subjects in varied complaint situations beyond the school setting to reiterate the findings of this study.

Additionally, to enhance our understanding of the influence of gender, an in-depth analysis of the complaint behaviour of females and males could be considered in future studies to examine its influence on speakers' choice of politeness strategies in making a complaint. Lastly, the FTA of complaint enjoins the hearer to do something to compensate for the loss of the speaker. Therefore, an examination of the kind of responses given to complaints would be worth future research to ascertain the pragmatic competence of learners in handling the complaints produced. All of these will help obtain more insight into the pragmatic behaviour of Ghanaians especially in expressing their displeasure of socially unacceptable acts in English.

## 5.5 Conclusion

It was established that several complaint strategies are used in making complaint in Ghanaian English. These are carefully chosen by the speaker based on the status and the relationship between them and their addressees as well as the expected outcome. Ghanaians prefer the use of mostly positive politeness strategy which is evident in their high inclination to minimize the effect of their complaint expressions on the addressee's positive face. Hence, to achieve indirectness and remain polite, Ghanaians tend to use more of external linguistic structures such as Opener, Formulaic Adjunct, Opening Statement, Justification and Closing which are considered positive politeness strategies. This complaint behaviour is a reflection of the social values and communicative practices of the indigenous Ghanaian which must be strictly adhered to if one should be deemed communicatively competent. It can therefore not be gainsaid that the Ghanaian culture influenced the performance of the complaint speech act.



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**APPENDIX A****COMPLAINT ROLE PLAY SCENARIOS FOR DATA COLLECTION**

Situation	Description
1  Unfair  Grade	You have just received your test script but you are surprised how low your grade is. After careful review of your work, you come to the realization that, you should have had a better grade than what you have been give. Since this grade would adversely affect your final grade if not rectified, you decide to talk to your teacher about it.
2  Dirty  Roommate	You are sharing a room with your friend who never sees the need to take part in cleaning the room, yet is fond of messing up the place. You have tried your best to put up with his/ her behaviour for a while but today, after seeing the kind of mess made in the room, you feel you have had enough and need to speak to him/her about it. How would you complain to your friend?
3  Disobedient  Junior	You asked your junior to sweep your class after school but you realized the next day that he/she didn't do it. Complain to that junior.
4  Noisy  Neighbour	You are at the boarding house and noise is strictly prohibited after night prayers. However, your colleagues in your dormitory have blatantly ignored this all-important rule. As a result, you hardly get enough sleep and this is gradually taking a toll on your academics. How would you present your complaint to your housemaster/ housemistress?

## **APPENDIX B**

### **TEXT TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL DATA**

NB//: The transcripts are that of the speakers alone in accordance with the various complaint situations.

#### **Situation 1: Unfair Grade (Female Speaker)**

##### **Subject 1**

Hello Sir, good morning! Sir please I came to show you my script. I don't understand how you gave me such a low mark. My essay contains the same mistakes as compared to Esther's but her score is much higher than mine. Sir, this is not fair ooh.

##### **Subject 2**

Sir, please, the last time you had given us an assignment and per the questions you gave us and how you explained the points, I did mine the same as you taught us but you marked my work wrong and I can't see any mistakes in the assignment. so please re-mark my assignment for me because all my friends wrote the same thing and you marked them correct and yet still I can't find any mistake in my assignment.

##### **Subject 3**

Sir, please the assignment or the test you gave us, none of mine was wrong but you just wrong me. And all the answers was written from the textbook but you intentionally wrong me, so please you please remark it for me else I won't accept that.

##### **Subject 4**

Madam please good morning. Please madam I'm here to talk to you about the group work you assigned to us. Madam please (formulaic adjunct), we did all you asked of us but I think you didn't give us a fair mark. Madam please (formulaic adjunct) I'm here on the behalf of

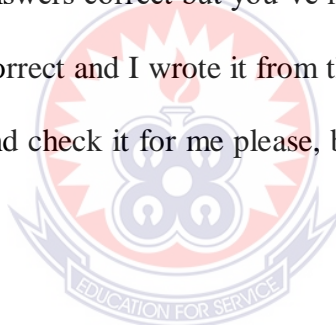
my group members and we are demanding for a better grade because this one seems too bias of you.

### **Subject 5**

Madam please, the work that you marked it I suppose to get 8/10 but you gave me 4/10 but the answers are correct. Please madam I want to know the reason why you gave me 4/10 because if I compare it to my mates is the same but you gave me 4/10 and you gave them 8/10. So, madam please I need an explanation.

### **Subject 6**

Please sir, good afternoon. Please sir, I want to show you something about the assignment you gave us. sir I got all of the answers correct but you've marked me wrong, sir please why? I know that all the answers are correct and I wrote it from the book you told us to copy from. So please sir go through again and check it for me please, because I don't want to score zero please.



### **Subject 7**

Okese, please good morning. Please I came here to show you my work. Actually, I came here to complain about how unfair you marked my work. I've compared mine with others and I could see you marked me down. Let me even collect Gladys' book and show you. Even her hand writing doesn't look appealing and has a lot of mistakes. Just because you like her and always call her to answer questions in class doesn't mean you should upgrade her. Okese, it is too much. I do not have a problem with your liking her but your downgrading me has just hurt me to the core.

### **Subject 8**

Please sir good day, I'm here to see you about the grade you gave me on my essay. I think I was marked unfairly. Comparing mine to other colleagues, demand that I get my fair grade.

### **Subject 9**

Good morning sir, please I came to confront you with the work you gave us. I had all the marks but you marked me down. I even checked my friend's own and you marked everything for her but I had the same work with her. So please see it for yourself, here is her book.

### **Subject 10**

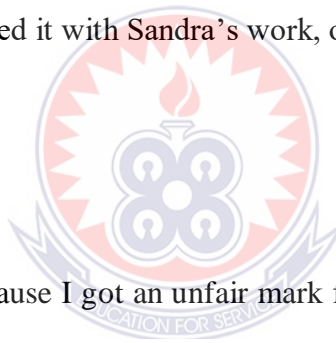
Good morning sir. Please I want to have a word with you I have a problem with the way you scored my exam. When I compared it with Sandra's work, our scores don't tally. Please, have a look.

### **Subject 11**

Good morning sir. I am here because I got an unfair mark for the essay quiz we took the last time. I think I deserve better than this, I worked hard enough to acquire more than the marks you gave me. Please sir can you go over and mark it for me, pls sir, because I compared it to one of my classmates and what I wrote was same as hers, mine was even on point.

### **Subject 12**

Please sir good day, I'm here to see you about the grade you gave me on my essay. I think I was marked unfairly. Comparing mine to my other colleagues I demand that I get my fair grade.



### **Subject 13**

Okese, it seems the script you gave me wasn't mine, it has been exchanged because, you marked me down. When I measured it against that of Elizabeth's script and that of Flora's, I had all them correct but you marked me down. Sir, please check for yourself, if you don't believe me.

### **Subject 14**

Okese, good day. How are you. Okese, this is really unfair and you can't do this to me okese. Okese, do you remember the last exercise we did I got everything and you marked me down. Okese you have to correct it or else am not leaving. I actually stay up late and burnt the midnight candle just to have you do this to me okese. Okese, please you have to correct it because I cross checked it with my sitting partner and it seems it's the same answer. Okese it's unfair and you have to correct it.

### **Subject 15**

Good afternoon sir, sir please have a look at this question. Sir, it's not supposed to be so, I mean my marks. My mom is going to kill me so change it for me. She'll say that I'm not doing well in class and she will beat me so sir change it for me. Sir no, she is recording the marks, the class rep, so please change it for me or else am going nowhere or I'll die here, my mom will beat me sir. No, no, no I'm not going, change It for me first before I go.

### **Subject 17**

Good morning sir. Please sir I'm here for a remark. No sir you're not WAEC but you had an oversight when you were marking. Sir, you just have a look. Sir just glance through it. Please sir please, you can compare it with Emmanuelle's.

### **Subject 18**

Good afternoon sir, I had a question right but you marked me wrong that's why am here. I compared with a colleague. Please sir, I beg you I compared it just to be sure is correct. Sir please.

### **Subject 19**

Sir, you marked me down but this is the answer Elvis wrote and you marked it for him. Even him who always scores low had higher than me so please check it for me. I'm Charity, A4, sir please I'm sorry just check it for me or else I will be the last in class.

### **Subject 20**

Good afternoon, sir please I'm here because I had a question right and you marked me down so I want you to check it. Sir I'm correct.

### **Subject 21**

Sir, please I had the answer correct but you marked wrong. Sir about question 7, I had it correct but you marked it wrong. I compared mine with Emily and it is the same but she had it correct I had it wrong so please check and the examples too I gave two but you didn't mark it. Sir the class prefect is recording so can you please check.

### **Subject 22**

Madam Evelyn, please you have made a mistake in my examination paper. Please question 1, you marked me wrong but when I compared it with Dennis' paper, it is the same answer and I cross-checked again with my notes and it's correct. So please check for me.

### **Subject 23**

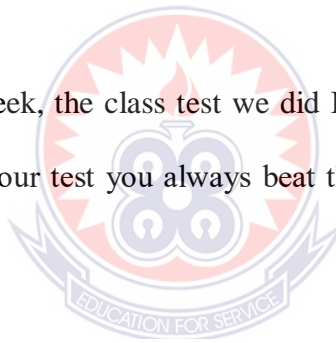
Madam good morning. Madam please the work you gave us in class, please you marked me wrong while I'm correct. All my mates were marked correct but you marked me wrong while the answer I gave was the same answer my mates wrote so madam please I don't understand.

### **Subject 24**

Please sir, I have to discuss something with you. What I want to discuss with you is that, the exams we did, I have scored more than the marks you gave me so I want to ask you what I have done wrong that you gave me that marks. If I have done something wrong that I don't know, please forgive me.

### **Subject 25**

Good morning sir, please last week, the class test we did I scored more than the marks you gave to me. I know that as for your test you always beat that's why I'm here to explain the problem about my marks.



### **Subject 26**

Please madam good morning. Please I have a word with you. Madam concerning the English exams that we did last semester, madam, I don't know why you gave me that mark. I know that I did very well in that examination but when you brought the answer booklet, the mark that you gave me was unacceptable. Why I'm I saying this, because I learned very hard all the time but you did not give marks that I deserved. So please give the right marks next time.

### **Subject 27**

Madam please, the work that you gave us last week Monday, I got one correct but you marked me wrong and I don't understand why you did that because when I looked at Agnes'



work, the same question that you marked me wrong, you marked her correct, so please madam I want you to correct mine for me else I will lose marks in the final exams.

### **Subject 28**

Please madam, please the work that you gave us to do during our last meeting I score all so you were suppose to give me 10/10 but you gave me 5/10 so please madam, I urge you to look through my work because I'm sure to get it all. Thanks madam.

### **Subject 29**

Please madam, good morning. Please madam, the exercise that you gave us last week I had all correct but you mark me wrong while you have mark some correct. Please madam I don't know if it is my hand writing or how I arrange the things. Please madam I want you to do something about it.

### **Subject 30**

Madam, I'm really sad of what had happen and I'm worried about the marks you gave me of the text you just marked. Madam, my expectation was higher because I patiently checked everything well as I answered the questions and even answered some of the questions due to how I understand it.

### **Subject 31**

Good morning madam. Please madam, the exercise that you gave us in class, I got two correct, question 1 and 2 but you marked me wrong. When our exercise books were given to us, I compared it with those who got question one and two correct and their answers are the same as mine so please madam mark them correct for me or it is going to affect my grades. Please do something about it.

### **Subject 32**

Good afternoon madam. Please madam, aww, I can't even understand this, you spoil my exam marks or you want me to be the last person in the class anaaa. I got good marks but when my report came I realised it wasn't what I got. Please madam, try to it again or check the marks well.

### **Subject 33**

Madam, please I got the work right but you mark me wrong. I checked from my friend's textbook and I saw that I get it right so madam check it again and mark it for me because it will affect me academically. If you don't mark it for me, I will marked down and must not, help me please.

### **Subject 34**

Good morning madam. Please madam I think (mitigation) I had question one correct but you marked me wrong. Please madam when I compared my marking to the other person, even though the person had it wrong but you marked for the person. So please madam, I want you to remark it for me for I don't deserve to have that mark. Thank you.

### **Subject 35**

Good morning sir, sir yesterday you gave us an assignment and when you were marking it, you marked me wrong and I know that I wrote the good answer. So please sir, I have brought it to you for you to mark me correct and show me the reason why you marked me wrong because I know myself that I wrote the correct answer.

### **Subject 36**

Good morning madam. Madam please, I want to show you something about the test we took yesterday. Madam, I got three of the answers correct but you marked me wrong. Please

madam do something about it for me because my dad told me that if I get all the answers for that test, he'll take me abroad to further my education and that is my ambition to further my education in abroad. Please that three marks will help me achieve my ambition so please help me. Thank you.

### **Subject 37**

Good afternoon sir. I have a problem to discuss with you. It's about the marks you gave me. I was expecting more than this because I answered it using the method you gave us and the answer was the same to that of the brilliant students in class. And so I want to know why I got this mark.

### **Subject 38**

Madam please good morning. Madam I have a problem with my work. The marks you gave me I was supposed to score more than this but number five question I can remember one of my classmates asked you the same question and you gave this exact answer that I wrote. So please cross-check it again for me else I will lose more marks and I will be the only one with the lowest mark in the class.

### **Subject 39**

Please madam good afternoon, please I want to complain about the work you gave us the last time. The problem I'm suppose have 15 out of 15 but you gave 10. I want you to go through if there is mistake and correct it for me because I'm supposed to have 15 over 15 not 10 over 15.

**Subject 40**

Sir good afternoon, sir the assignment you gave us last week I scored all but you gave me 60 marks. Sir, it seems you are not doing anything right now, can you please add the marks for me. Thank you very much sir.

**Subject 41**

Sir please I have something to tell you. There are some things you do and I don't like it at all. Sir the work that you gave to us I think I deserve better marks than this and I can see that I got it right but you marked me wrong. Sir please make sure that you do it for.

**Subject 42**

Sir please I'm really not in the mood today concerning the work that you gave us You know me and my arguments. I took my friend's book and comparing it seems like my marks was low, I wrote a lot of points, explain further but comparing with my friends own like my own was a little down but she had more high marks than me so I think you should take it and go through because I deserve more marks. You know me I'm always good, and this point too about education I wrote it well and sat down and think about.

**Subject 43**

Sir, please I want to tell you something about the work that gave us last week. Anytime you mark my work you always mark me wrong but when I go through my work I realise that I correct but you mark me wrong and sir this is not the first time. Okay sir, thank you sir.

**Subject 44**

Sir please the last time you marked my work, this word you gave me wrong but here I get it correct and you marked me wrong. Check it for me.

**Subject 45**

Sir please good morning. sir this work I get it correct and you marked me wrong. Sir this one, day in day out you just marked me wrong I don't know why. I do not deserve about this grade but you gave it to me. Exams you marked me, mock you marked wrong, assignment too. Sir do it right now.

**Subject 46**

Madam please good afternoon, madam I just received my work and I think the marks that you gave me I deserve more than that. No madam you thought us and I explain it vividly, you just check it and see and remark it for me. Yes madam, I have done what you told us to do. Madam are you going to mark it right now. Madam so when should I come for the book. 5 minutes time okay, please madam check it well because I have to get everything correct. Okay madam I will be back in 5minutes time.

**Subject 47**

Madam please good afternoon. Madam I'm here to show you the assignment you marked for us. Madam this place I had 10 but you gave me 5. The point I raised was the same thing you gave us. I just want you to give me my marks. I don't want my marks to go down. Okay thank you madam.

**Subject 48**

Please madam good afternoon, Madam I just received my book and I think there is a mistake somewhere. Ooh madam is not wrong you told us to state some effect of pollution and I clearly stated them So please I came for remarking. I just want you to look through it and see if there is a mistake somewhere.

**Subject 49**

Please madam good afternoon. Madam I'm here to show you the work that you gave us last week. Madam I scored all but you didn't record all the marks. The work is over 20 but you gave me 16 over 20. Madam but I showed working. Ooh madam I want you to add the marks for me. I compared it with my colleagues and I realised I was correct.

**Subject 50**

Sir, please I'm not ok with what I got in the test, I compared my paper with that of Angela, a lot of them were marked wrong but was right. Here it is sir, please remark my script.

**Subject 51**

Sir, sir please look at the marks you have given to me sir I'm not supposed to get such a low mark sir the question was what is cell, and I carefully explained myself but you have mark me down. Please change it for me or else my mum will beat me.

**Subject 52**

Sir please good morning. Sir please, the exercise you mark for me yesterday you didn't give the correct scored. Here it is. I want you to remark it because some answers you mark me wrong you have mark my colleagues correct I don't understand so please I want you to remark it for me. Aww thank you.

**Subject 53**

Sir please good afternoon. Sir, I'm very sorry to disturb you sir, I don't think the marks that I got in our last assignment was the marks I was supposed to get. I got everything in question 3 but you marked me down so please check if there is a mistake.

**Subject 54**

Sir good morning, please there's a mistake in my script. The question 3 was marked wrong but I just referred to the notes you gave us, that was exactly what I write but I'm marked down kindly explain it further to me because I don't understand why you marked me down.

**Subject 55**

Okese, please I have a bit of an issue to discuss with you. I think the grade you gave me weren't very deserving. I should have passed, not with an F9. I crosschecked the essay and no red inks and the objectives were well stated. Please remark my work.

**Subject 56**

Sir, please sir I was surprised when the results was out and I saw that I had c6 in maths while I knew I wrote it with all I could during the test. Please sir, you and I know that, I got 98% which is supposed to be A1. Please sir, do well and look into it because this is not fair.

**Subject 57**

Please sir, the assignment you gave in our class, is the same answers I also gave in the assignment book but when you marked the books and return it back and I got mine, please my score was average and it seems that it's not the wrong answer but it was a correct answer I provided and half of my class mates also wrote the same answer but you marked them correct please sir my notice I came to you is that you have to go back and check mine again either I'm wrong or correct.

**Subject 58**

Good morning sir, please I have gotten my sheet for the English exam but sir I am not comfortable with it because I know I did better than that marks I got. I really know I deserve more than that. I'm here to plead if you could remark my script again.

### **Subject 59**

Please sir, this exams I don't understand how you mark it what I wrote I don't deserve this mark sir you have to do something about it how can you mark this explanation like this? Please sir what I wrote is the same thing in the text book. Please check it well and do something about it because I don't deserve this mark. thank you.

### **Subject 60**

Good day sir, please I want to inform you about the grade that you gave me last time please sir you always give me the grade that does not belong me because anytime you mark my work you always mark the correct ones wrong which make me fail. Sir please do something about this for me because this exam could determine my life.

### **Subject 61**

Sir please good afternoon sir please I want to have a word with you sir please it's about the test that you gave us please sir per the marks that I got I think I deserve more marks than what you have given me because there are some I got right but you marked me wrong and you did not mark some of my work so please sir go through my work and do the correction for me for I deserve better marks than this thank you.

### **Subject 62**

Please sir good afternoon, Sir please I came to discuss something important with you concerning last Monday the test you gave us. I was suppose to score all but you gave half of the marks and also deducted me. The reason why I am here is for you to give me the marks that I deserve to be given. Thank you.



### **Subject 63**

Please madam, I greet you. Please madam you didn't mark my work well. I wasted my time to do this work well and with all confident, and with the aim that I will get all of them correct but when it came I got them wrong so madam, I have come here for correct it and change my marks for me.

### **Subject 64**

Please Sir, I am supposed to get all correct, and you marked me down. Sir please one of my friend wrote the same and you marked her correct and I wrote the same and you marked me down. I think my work deserves better mark than this because, I gave vivid and lucid explanation on every point that I made.

### **Unfair grade (male speakers)**

#### **Subject 1**

Sir, question 4 I had it correct but you marked me wrong. I compared my answer with the one in the notes that you gave us and I'm correct. Please I'll lose marks oo if you don't change the marks.

#### **Subject 2**

Madam please good morning. Madam please last week, you gave us an assignment and I had all correct but you marked one of the answers wrong. We all wrote the same answer and you marked them right but you marked me wrong I'll be very grateful if you mark me right.

### **Subject 3**

Please madam good morning. Please madam, the work that you gave to me I had it correct but you marked it wrong. Please madam, I discussed it with my colleague who had it correct so mark me correct.

### **Subject 4**

Madam please good morning. Madam please last week you gave us an assignment and I was right but you marked me down but I even checked my text book and saw I was correct. Madam please I beg you have to do something about it every mark counts.

### **Subject 5**

Madam, madam please I had this answer correct but you marked me wrong. Please do something about it or else I'll be the last person in the class and my mates will tease me.

### **Subject 6**

Madam please good morning. Please, in the exercise, I had an answer correct but you marked me wrong. Please try and mark it for me because it will affect my marks in the exams.

### **Subject 7**

Please madam I have a problem with the exercise that we did. I had some parts correct but you marked me wrong. Please, I want you to mark it again so that I will know I had it correct.

### **Subject 8**

Good afternoon madam, erm please I have a problem with the results of the test. I think I was given an unfair mark. Everybody wrote the same thing and they were marked correct but mine was marked wrong.

### **Subject 9**

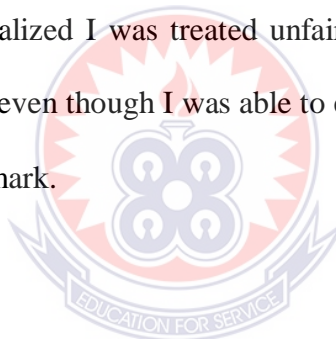
Please madam, my work was marked unfairly so I want to show it to you. I raised some points that I was marked wrong but they're the correct.

### **Subject 10**

Good afternoon madam. Please I have a problem with the test you marked. You told us that any time we have a sentence, linking verb, it takes a complement and not an object but when I underlined the complements you marked me down.

### **Subject 11**

Please madam good afternoon, Please I have a problem and I want to explain to you. Madam, during our last term exams, I realized I was treated unfairly because I tried to get a better grade but you marked me wrong even though I was able to explain in detail the question three but you did not give me the full mark.



### **Subject 12**

Madam good afternoon. Madam please I've been marked unfairly in the last exam that we did. I know the points I raised, I'm sure are correct but I was marked wrong even though that of my colleagues have been marked correct.

### **Subject 13**

Sir good morning. Please I've come for a remark because I don't understand my marks. You asked us to write the complement and that's what I did and the reason is also written under it so I don't understand where I was wrong for you to give me this mark.

#### **Subject 14**

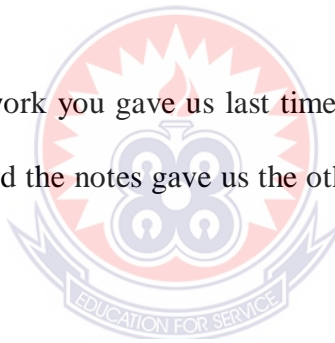
Good afternoon. Madam I have a big problem. You gave us a class test and I did everything I could but you marked me down. I compared with all my friends and they all had it. You can check it out.

#### **Subject 15**

Good afternoon madam. Please madam, I don't seem to understand the marks you gave me in the last test. My answers are the same as what you gave us in our notes but you did not give me the full marks that I deserve. Please try and change it for me. It's not fair to get such marks since I did nothing wrong.

#### **Subject 16**

Please sir good afternoon. The work you gave us last time, I got everything correct but you marked me wrong. I even checked the notes gave us the other day and I saw that I was right. Please take a look at it for me.



#### **Subject 17**

Sir in my definition, I stated categorically that constitution is the body of fundamental principle and rules by which a country is govern. That's exactly what you gave us but you marked me wrong. Sir, you need to check it for me. Sir, is correct that's why am complaining, you can check from the book.

#### **Subject 18**

Siirrr! Sir, good afternoon. I wanted to show my script to you. You marked this question wrong but I had it correct. Sir I don't know if you gave the script to someone to mark because I know you won't do that. Thank you sir.

### **Subject 19**

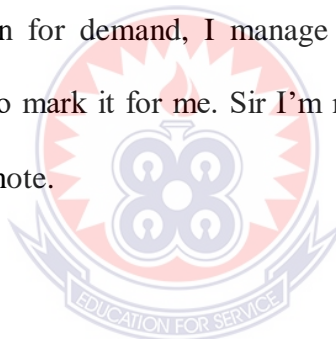
Good day sir, I was glancing through the third question and I spotted a mistake. Immediately I got my paper I was shock because since form one ICT, a whole me 73 naaa,. Sir, it was the essay part, sir check the textbook and the note.

### **Subject 20**

Sir, is me. Sir, I got a question right but you mark me wrong. Sir I beg, sir I beg, I beg, see this question definition for demand I got it correct. sir, you can check it from the book. Thanks sir.

### **Subject 21**

Good morning sir, the definition for demand, I manage to get the answer right but you marked it wrong so I want you to mark it for me. Sir I'm not wrong, you gave us the notes. Sir, you can compare it with my note.



### **Subject 22**

Sir, you marked me wrong and I don't understand. Everybody had it right but you marked me wrong why. sir you can mark it for me. No, no, I'm not telling you what to do, no sir I'm not forcing you but you've to mark me right, am right. Digestion is the breakdown of complex food substances into simpler forms into the ..... Yeah you can cross check.

### **Subject 23**

Sir. I'm Emma. sir please, I had the question 2 correct but you marked me down. Can you please check it for me?

### **Subject 24**

Sir, please it seems there was a mistake when marking my script. You made a mistake marking my script. The definition for “Economics” is, is defined as a science which study human behaviour and the relationship between production and consumption of goods and services but you marked me wrong so I came so you can correct it. Thank you, sir, you do all!

### **Subject 25**

Good afternoon sir. Sir the marks you gave me didn't match when I did my calculations. Sir you can even do the calculations yourself.

### **Subject 26**

Good afternoon sir. Please the work you gave me, I would like it if you would go over mine again. Actually, I don't find anything wrong with my work but you gave me half of the mark. And maybe you were tired when marking mine or you weren't able to read the work because of my handwriting so please here is my book I would be happy if you re-mark my work and I will take any mark you give me after the re-marking.

### **Subject 27**

Please sir, good day, there is a marking mistaked in my exercise that you did so please sir, can you go through again please again. Please sir.

### **Subject 28**

Sir, please I don't understand why you marked me wrong but I did everything you asked us to do. When you were teaching this was what you ask us to do. So, sir, please explain to me. Is there anything that you expect that I didn't do?

**Subject 29**

Sir, please you made a mistake with my exercise. I was supposed to score 10 because, question 5, 7, 3, 9 and 1 you marked me down but I have compared it with Mavis' work proving that I'm correct because hers is the same as mine. So please re-check it again.

**Subject 30**

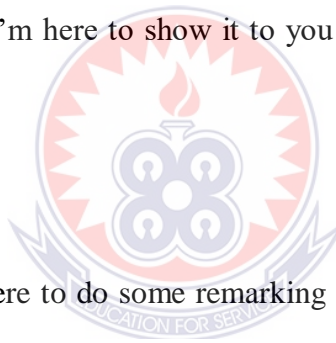
Sir, please I had the higher mark, then you gave, the lower mark can you please correct it for me.

**Subject 31**

Good morning sir, please sir it seems that there is mistake here. I did what you told us to do but you marked me wrong and I'm here to show it to you so that you will mark me correct because that is the right answer.

**Subject 32**

Please sir good morning, I am here to do some remarking on the assignment you gave to us Please I did it nicely without no mistakes, I even learnt the points you gave to us and wrote it as my answers but you marked me wrong and at the same time you marked my friends correct. So please I am here for you to mark me correct. And please If I have wrong you, then forgive me because I don't know the reason why you marked me wrong



## **Situation 2: Dirty Roommate (Female Speaker)**

### **Subject 1**

Linda, Linda, I have a conversation with you. I don't like how you've neglected the cleaning of the room to only me, yet you make the most rubbish. Linda, I'm fed up if you don't change this your behaviour I'll be cleaning only my part of room and you know this won't be a good impression to anyone that visits.

### **Subject 2**

Adrian, you've been messing up the room all the time and I haven't been complaining. You eat and put it under the bed, you don't like washing, you put your dirty clothes around, you're always bringing different guys around and I've always been excusing you fine. But what actually hurts me to the core is my seeing the used condoms in the room I sleep in, we sleep in. Ok, lets do it this way, I'm gonna give you money to get another hostel and do what you want.

### **Subject 3**

Ohemma, Ohemma. How can a beautiful lady refuse to keep your surrounding clean? Ohemaa I've been too tolerant towards you. I think is high time you moved out or you either stay with me and clean up after yourself or move out.

### **Subject 4**

Jamila. Can you please pack your clothes into your locker- before you go? Aren't you wise enough to see that what you are doing is not right?



### **Subject 5**

Nancy, you, you Please why would you trash the room on purpose? it's fine you don't want to help, but that doesn't give you the right to mess this place up. I'm fed up.

### **Subject 6**

Hey Nancy, where do you think you are going? have you forgotten that the room is dirty and also the dishes in the kitchen have not been washed? you better go to the room and do all the messy things because I am not going to do this house chores anymore.

### **Subject 7**

Ohemaa, Ohemaa, Ohemaa, how can a beautiful lady refuse to keep your surrounding clean? Ohemaa, I've been too tolerant towards you I think it's high time you moved out or you either stay with me and clean up after yourself.

### **Subject 8**

Esther, see, the way you live with me, I don't like. You don't take part in anything and you always mess up the place, I can't be serving you. I am not maid and again I am not a maid to you.

### **Subject 9**

Look at her, that's all what she knows. Always on social media, take it into practice. Sweep, clean! Being a woman is not how you dress or present yourself, being a woman is how you keep your environment clean. I pray I don't get a room with you next semester. Look at her. The cheek of it.

### **Subject 10**

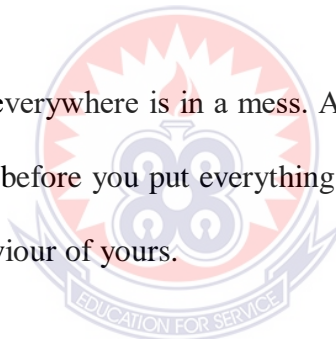
I can see rubbish under your bed, toffees, biscuits, what sort of laziness is that? You neither clean the room nor the louvers. What sort of uncleanness is that? From today onwards make sure you clean every place you are supposed to do. I'm the only one doing it every day, you are also a human being, you also should be doing that too. What sort of laziness is that?

### **Subject 11**

Ooh Abi, are you not a human being? This behaviour of yours is going too far and I can't tolerate it at all, in fact you are a dirty girl, I can't tolerate it again, my sister change from that behaviour.

### **Subject 12**

Rachel, look at the whole place everywhere is in a mess. Ain't you a lady? So, you want me to tell you the room is in a mess before you put everything in order. Are you not ashamed of yourself? Change from this behaviour of yours.



### **Subject 13**

Hey Abigail what do you want me to do? You are always messing up the place. Since you came into this room, I've been the one doing everything, sweeping and scrubbing for the past three years. Is time you pay attention to that life of yours.

### **Subject 14**

Hmm! My God, what's this? Eiii Clara you don't know how to wash your things. A lady like you shouldn't be called a lady. Just look at the pants how dirty it's. You are a disgrace. Please, please.

### **Subject 15**

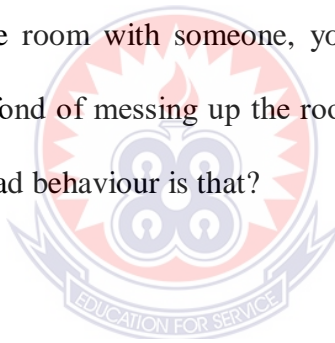
Charity, Charity, why are you always allowing me to sweep the room? Remember I'm not a slave. Today I'm not going to sweep so you better do that now.

### **Subject 16**

Mariam, you're a girl and I am too although we came from different towns (opening statement). You do not take part in cleaning why? I only have an advice for you. If you do clean your handsome will not loss. There is a saying "if all humans are turning to animals then you have to turn to animal too" (preaching). I have nothing to speak of again.

### **Subject 17**

Laty, when we were sharing the room with someone, you never take part in cleaning or sweeping the room but you are fond of messing up the room. So, do you think you're more important than us? what sort of bad behaviour is that?



### **Subject 18**

Hey! What is the meaning of this? As a girl like you, you don't even know how to arrange things and keep the room clean. Every day you want someone to do it and at the end of the day you mess up the room nonsense! So, your common sense can't tell you to keep the room clean.

### **Subject 19**

Uh! Chelsea what's up with you? Every day you keep on messing up the room, can't you be a little hygienic for once. Ah!! this your character is bad change!

### **Subject 20**

Aharr! You Priscilla I will deal with you. Every day you suppose to sweep the room and you will not sweep it and when I swept it you will come and ate and leave the rubbish here I'm warning you if you know will not sweep here don't come and eat here, if I catch you eating here again hmm! You clap for me and you will see the real character of me.

### **Subject 21**

Good afternoon Rhoda. I hope you are fine. Rhoda I want to have a conversation with you about something. Rhoda do you know cleanliness is next to goodliness so why are so dirty like that. You always makes the room dirty whiles you won't clean it but when I clean, you make the room dirty again. Rhoda you leave your unwashed clothes, plate and even when you urinate and you will keep it under bed which is causing mosquitoes in the room. So please put a stop to it.

### **Subject 22**

Barbara please, I want to have word with you. Please you know that ever since we both moved to this apartment, I haven't bothered you with anything like sweeping, washing of utensils or whatever, but I have quite noticed that you have taken advantage of things. Whenever you come, you mess up the room, I tidy things again and you mess up again. I have had enough of this, I can't tolerate this anymore. All I will tell you is that better change your habit or you can choose to leave else I will be the one leaving this apartment.

### **Subject 23**

Priscilla, I want to have a word with you. What I want to say is that, I dislike your behaviour. You don't wake up early and sweep, you are also lazy and dirty. I am tired of doing all the house chores alone. So please you have to stop the laziness, wake up early and help me with

the work. If you listen to my advice, it will help you in the future. Thank you for listening to me.

#### **Subject 24**

Racheal please come. Ever since we stayed in this room, I am the person who always sweeps this room, I always mob this room and I have never seen you holding a broom or making any attempt to tidy up this room. Please I'm telling you this as a lady, you have to keep yourself clean. Please next time I don't want to see any dirt in this room. Please next time I see it again, I will park your things out of this room.

#### **Subject 25**

Akosua, you know that I really love you a lot and I don't have any problem with you, but there is something going on if I don't say it, it will hurt me very much. Akosua, you are very lazy and dirty. You don't sweep our room, you don't mob the room and you don't even pick the rubbish from there when you see it in the room. I have always been doing all of these work while you stay behind relaxing and having fun with others. Please Akosua, change for me and let's live together and be happy.

#### **Subject 26**

Please sister I want to have a discussion with you about the way you mess up the room. I have observed and tolerated for a long time now since you joined me in this house. You always make things difficult for me and I can't continue to stay with you again so I want you to change your lifestyle and how you do things in this house so that we can live in peace or else you are going to leave this house. You don't sweep, you don't even wash your clothes when its dirty.

### **Subject 27**

My friend today I want everything to be clear to you of what you have been doing ever since we started sharing this room. I hope you know you are a lady and a lady is not the one who wears good clothes walking around majestically but inside her home, her room kitchen, bathroom and hall are full of dirtiness. I am sick and tired of you. Please or else you will go or I will go. In fact, I'm giving you three days to change from that bad character of yours. Mtcheew.

### **Subject 28**

Ama, why do you always mess up the room? And I am tired of it. Please you have to put a stop to it or else you will go a rent your own house. A word to the wise is enough.

### **Subject 29**

Dorothy, being in a room with you worries me. And I expect some few changes from you starting today. Why do you always want me to be the only one working in this room? Just check this room, how dirty it is. I just cleaned this room in the morning yet see where you have put your socks and see how your clothes are scattered.

### **Subject 30**

Hey Belinda, why is the room so scattered as if you are in your mother's house? Listen to me very carefully, since the day you joined me in this room, I have not been happy about the things you do in here. Every day, I sweep this room and arrange things here while you always make the mess and leave the room untidy. Today, I have something to tell you, I was the one who rented this room and because you had nowhere to stay I asked you to stay with me but if you don't change your attitude, I am going to send you out of this room and I don't care where you will live.

### **Subject 31**

Ei sister why? You are suppose to sweep the place but you intentionally refuse to do so I have been watching you since we came to this room, you don't like sweeping, and you are dirty too. As we human beings don't deserve to stay in a dirty place so 'maame', change your behaviour or I'll report you to madam .

### **Subject 32**

Webkhid, every day, when I tidy up the room you always mess up the room and this won't help our friendship to build up stronger and longer so advice yourself to change your behaviour, keep your things clean and sweep the compound and the room every day.

### **Subject 33**

Eii Jessica, since from the time we rent this house you have not been cleaning and sweeping this room. What is happening to you? I was the only person who has been doing the whole chores in this house but whenever I'm to tidy and clean the room and you will be messing it up again. I'm now fed up, I can't tolerate you again. Is better for you to leave this house or put a stop to that messing you have been causing. And our elders have been saying that a word to the wise is enough so advice yourself okay!

### **Subject 34**

Good morning Afia. Afia, I want to have a chat with you about something. Afia, you yourself know that you have to take a broom to sweep here but you are the one who dirty this place always. Whenever you eat you throw the rubbish anywhere you like as if here is a refuse dump. Don't you know this call flies and mosquitoes to come here? What annoys me most is that your urine you leave for a week before pouring it away. Afia, enough is enough. Don't

you know that cleanliness is next to godliness. Afia, put an end to this from now onward or you will leave this room or I'll report you to whoever will discipline you. Thank you.

### **Subject 35**

Racheal, I'm tired of your laziness. Since we came to this room, I have study you and I have come to know that, you are the one who makes the room untidy but you don't sweep or arrange the room and because of this attitude of yours, I would like to make it clear to you that, is either you move from this room or change from that attitude of yours.

### **Subject 36**

Sister, please let me have a word with you. I have studied you for long since you joined me in this room you have never swept this place before but yet you always litter around. Please change that attitude of yours before I report you to the authorities. You just check around, as a lady you are comfortable living in such dirt Pick a broom and start cleaning the room.

### **Subject 37**

Jennifer, Jennifer, I just swept the room and look at how the room is mess up so you feel comfortable staying in this smelly room Even look at the dirty clothes you haven't wash them, do you want me to come and wash them for you too. I'm always doing everything in this room so is this what you are sending to your future husband's house

### **Subject 38**

Hilda, what's going on here? What is going on here? You are learning whiles the room is dirty Hey sister, come on get up go and get broom. I always sweep the room and today is your turn get up sister and get a broom. I don't care, so you mean you mean you are okay with the room been dirty.



**Subject 39**

Ruth, Ruth, can't you see the room is disorganized what's that? For crying out loud, I'm in the room too. So, do you expect me to clean the whole room again? Clean the room before I get back.

**Subject 40**

Helina can't you see the room is dirty? Clean it up You are careless. Do you want me to be doing the cleaning all the time? I can't take it anymore

**Subject 41**

Aahh, Mary why is the room not swept? Mary didn't you hear me talking. Do you realise I'm always the one cleaning? Are you happy sitting in this dirt? I'm going to report you. I can't be the one to be doing this every day.

**Subject 42**

Hello, please I'm talking to you (opening statement). What are you supposed to do when you wake up? Your hand is not meant for sweeping, so who do you expect to do the sweeping.

**Subject 43**

Heyit seems all the tidying up of this room have been imposed on me of late. I've been working day in and day out whiles you sit idle and do nothing. It's high time you change your poor attitude towards work (preaching) or else you will see the other side of me.

**Subject 44**

Mmmm what are all these? Oh Abigail why? Are you not a human being? This attitude of yours is going too far. See how this room have been misplaced up what kind of behaviour is this. I have tolerated this attitude of yours too much but this time around I'm not going to

spare you. In fact, you are not a lady at all, bush girl dirty and disgraceful lady. It's better you change your attitude or else I'll walk you out.

**Subject 45**

Hey girl, why? You always make this room dirty but if I order you to clean up this room, you refuse to clean. Please I don't like the way you dirty this place because this place is not any place but it is room that all of us sleep or live. So please I don't want you to see you that again . Ok thank you for accepting to help me to clean up this place every day.

**Subject 46**

Hey Ruth why? You always expect me to scrub the bath house that we all use. This is not the only thing you do; you are lazy and also dirty. You don't even try to sweep the room, how would try to scrub the bathhouse? Always dressed like a slay queen but full of laziness.

**Subject 47**

Oh, this room stinks as again Hannah, Hannah why? I always tolerate your filthy acts but now I'm fed up with it. Don't you know that cleanliness is next to godliness? And you call yourself a Christian. Take it from me today, next time you repeat, you will see the animal side of me.

**Subject 48**

Mabel, I have a conversation with you. I don't like how you have left the cleaning of the room to only me yet you make the most rubbish. In fact, I'm fed up if you don't change this your behaviour, I'll be cleaning only my part of the room if that's what you want .

### **Subject 49**

Florence, you know I love you as a sister and I would not like to see you grow in filth. There are somethings that need to end now. I'm always the one cleaning the room why? Didn't we pay for the room equally? I'm I a maid? Give me reasons, explain to me please because it's heart breaking.

### **Subject 50**

Hey Irene, I'm not happy with what you've been doing at all. Do you think I came here for you? Of cause not I have been cleaning the room all the time but you don't. I'm sick and tired of this lazy attitude of yours. It is said in our holy book that cleanliness is next to godliness so change.

### **Subject 51**

Afia I swept the compound before I returned to fetch the water but when I came back as usual, I saw some dirty things surrounding the compound and I know you are the person who did that. Afia please don't do that again because whenever you wake up from bed, the best thing you do is to brush your teeth, take your bath and have your meal without doing nothing in this room. I just hope you won't marry in future.

### **Subject 52**

Hey Amanda. Come here you good for nothing girl (insulting). Why didn't you sweep the room today? I never knew you were this lazy. You have to go find some broom and start sweeping or else you are going to see the true colours of me today.

### **Subject 53**

Kate please I want to discuss something very serious with you. It's about the cleaning of the room and the compound. You know we are two girls in the house but only me work all the

time. So I want to tell you that wake up from your laziness help me clean the compound and the room otherwise I will stop. Make sure this will not happen again.

### **Subject 54**

Chelsea please come here! Am I the only person living in this room? Why do you always want me to do the work? Chelsea be very careful, you are a lady when you get married and you don't know how to do all this work, your husband will leave you for another woman who will do all these house work. There is the saying that, cleanliness is next to godliness so Chelsea, stop being a lazy girl and learn how to do this house work for your own future sake.

### **Subject 55**

Anita I want to discuss something serious that has been bothering me since we moved into this room. I have been watching you since we came you don't clean the room neither do you scrub the bathroom. Even if I do it you will mess it up for me. What kills me most is that you don't wash your clothes. Because I do it for you doesn't mean I'm a fool. It is because I'm a lady and have to keep my home and myself clean. Sometimes I wonder who trained you or is that you don't know how to do it? I'm your sister so if you don't know how to do it, you can at least tell me so that I can help you out with this your attitude no gentleman is going to ask your hand in marriage (preaching). Please tell me what's wrong with you so I can help you.

### **Subject 56**

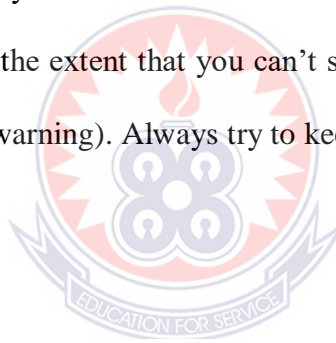
Cecilia why don't you sweep the room? You know that you are the one suppose to sweep this room and empty the dustbins so why don't you do so? Why are you behaving like a child? Please I want you to do your things like a senior in this room and tidy everything and make sure you have arranged all things properly. From now onwards, you are going to sweep this room and empty the dustbins.

**Subject 57**

Nina is that how you are? Why do you always leave the room dirty without cleaning it. All you know is to wake up in the morning and bath to school. Is this what your mum taught you as a lady? As a lady you have to make your room always clean after you have woke up from bed. I won't tolerate this laziness again. If you know you can't sweep this room after the mess up then its better for you to leave.

**Subject 58**

Sandra I have study you in this room but every day you will just dress up and you will go I have never see you sweeping here before. Am I the only one to sweep here? Cleanliness is next to godliness so you can't stay in a room without sweeping here (preaching). You are a lady and so you can't be lazy to the extent that you can't sweep your own room. Let this be your first and your last (remedy-warning). Always try to keep here neat before you will leave. This is a sign of good habit.



**Subject 59**

I am always in this room with you and I do everything for you; like sweeping the room always and you are the same person who make the room dirty. So do you expect me to do all the work in this room for you? Do you feel happy when I do all the work and you still dirty the place? Please I advise you to put a stop to it and turn a new leaf.

**Subject 60**

Sister, I have been always watching you make the room dirty and I thought you will stop but it seems you have remained adamant to this attitude of yours. I always frown this attitude of laziness. There is a saying that Cleanliness is next to Godliness So please try to abandon that lazy spirit of yours.

### **Subject 61**

Janet so today too you refused to clean here before leaving to school right? I don't know how many times you want me to tell you that you are also a lady so you have to perform all this chores too you know that I am sick and tired of doing all this work by myself. From tomorrow forward you are the one to clean and sweep this room if you refuse to do all these things, I will put a stop to living in the same room with you period.

### **Subject 62**

Jane I want to have a word you know that I don't have any problem with you but there is something going on if I don't discuss it with you it will not be good with good with both of us. firstly janet, you are very lazy and dirty. You don't clean the room and when I did it by myself, you start to mess things up in the room. Janet, I want you to change your attitude and sweep the room so that there will no problem between us

### **Subject 63**

Mabel please come, you see what is going on in this room, I don't like it since form one, I have been studying you, you haven't sweep here before Please Mabel I see you as friend, so please try to stop those behaviours and keep clean okay.

### **Subject 64**

Anita please, off late, things has being happening in this room which is quite disturbing and annoying I can't bear your laziness and dirtiness in this room anymore so I'll be very delighted if you will change your ways and behaviours.

## **Situation 2: Dirty roommate (Males Speakers)**

### **Subject 1**

Please what is all of this? You know that when it comes to cleanliness, I don't joke with anybody, then why do you always push me to the wall? You don't do anything here. You do not sweep but when I sweep then you mess up things. Neither are you a Sickler nor a cripple so why do you tempt me. From now onwards if you don't sweep neither will I.

### **Subject 2**

Ah boy, why are you lazy like that? So, you always expect me to clean here for you to stay. What kind of attitude is that? From now going when it your turn and you don't do it, I will report you to the headmistress. I'm not a fool to always do the work alone. I'm I your houseboy? Nonsense!

### **Subject 3**

The nonsense you have been putting on lately, I am fed up with that. And since you are my best friend, I'm giving you a piece of advice; as a lady you won't stay with your fellow woman or with me forever, you will someday get married and start a family so sit up and put a stop to those lazy acts henceforth, because nobody is going to let you know except me. A word to a wise is enough.

### **Subject 4**

Hey chairman I have studied a lot from you and it is not helping me oo. You are too lazy and dirty, let this be your last warning. In the Bible koraa God said cleanliness is next to Godliness. The next time this happens again it might be 'sikan twee' ' Se wate wogyimi no'. You just put a stop to that.

### **Subject 5**

You this guy (attention-getter), you think you are smart. You don't want to do anything in this room including sweeping but if someone sweeps you are the first person here to mess up this place. Please you must stop this thing or else you are going to see the bad side of me.

### **Subject 6**

Kombat, who do you think you are? I've been tolerating this your attitude for a long period of time, but not again. Listen! The next time you will do such a thing, I'm talking about your attitude of not sweeping the room, the next time you do such a thing I will personally sack you from this room.

### **Subject 7**

Yo, sup bro you keep messing up the whole room every time I tidy up the room. Since we moved into this room, I am the only one who tides up the place and you are the one who messes up the place whenever I clean up. My friend, you have to wise up or else the next time it happens again, you'll be sorry.

### **Subject 8**

Hey you Prince I've been watching you for a while now. You are supposed to sweep the room with me but the thing that hurts me most is that, every day you are the one who messes up the place. You throw rubbish on the floor and when our colleague tells you to pick it up you won't mind them and you will be there insulting him. See, let me tell you something; nobody is afraid of you. I want to warn you not to mess up in room again. Excuse me.



### **Subject 9**

Mike, you always provoke me to talk but I have been quiet every day. When is your turn to sweep you won't do it, even you will not wake up early to sweep. You think we are afraid of you, silly boy be very careful when I sweep you will be the first person to mess the room (justification), one day you will see the bad side of me.

### **Subject 10**

Ahh!! Why do you always make the room dirty? This thing is getting worse. I really hate what you always do.

### **Subject 11**

Yo!!bro, I have studied you from day one or my eyes dey on top of you (opening statement). Why? You be dirty ruff. Bro, bro, bro, buh in everything you for change your habit. From Monday going, you will sweep or I prince I will report you to the academics. Stupid boy.

### **Subject 12**

Bro, I don't like the way you keep the room dirty. You don't sweep or clean the room but when I do, you decide to litter around, leaving polythene bags in the room. No is time you change because for some time now I have been spoiling you. I thought you will change but still you have not change. From now, before you move out with your friends, you have to sweep the house before leaving.

### **Subject 13**

Boy I don't like what you have been doing in the room. Everyday I'm the one who sweep the room, you don't participate in the cleaning of the room let alone wash dishes. I'm tired of always doing that and it's time you start helping, I'm not a slave here.

**Subject 14**

Yoo! What's going on? You keep messing up the whole place without tidying it. There is nothing you do here. When did you sweep the place?

**Subject 15**

Man, why do you litter the place like that? Are you a kid? If you lived with your mom or girlfriend would litter the place like that? is here a refuse dump? Change your behaviour is not good, you are a nice gentleman, you need to be clean.

**Subject 16**

Young man, what's wrong with you? Are you mad? You are supposed to sweep this place but you didn't do. You are the one who always mess up the place but you don't like sweeping.

**Subject 17**

Ah why Alua, here is still dirty? I swept yesterday and you still want me to sweep today too. Do you have a girlfriend because you are too dirty? You have money but you lack sense. Pick that broom and sweep.

**Subject 18**

Ei felix, why is this room still not swept? Sit down and let me talk some sense into your mind. Even in the Bible, or Quran, they say cleanliness is next to godliness. Be hygienic.

**Subject 19**

Tayo, what do you think you are doing? Have you seen here? Mensah sweep here before you go. Here is not your house oo I can beat you here if you don't sweep. Then you are not going to sleep here again. We are all standing here until you sweep the room.

**Subject 20**

Ah, why didn't you sweep the room today? Better go for the room and sweep again. I don't want the house master to come for inspection and punish me. Then I will report you to the house master.

**Subject 21**

Borga, I'm pissed off. Why didn't you sweep the room today? I've been doing the sweeping every day and you keep disarranging the things in the room. We've been leaving together for years and I've been doing everything on my own meanwhile the room is not for me alone. Better take the broom and sweep or I'm going to report you to the headmaster.

**Subject 22**

Ransford, why are you sleeping in this dirty room like that? Why didn't you sweep the room, you know it's dirty? I've been staying with you for years, all you do is to sleep and wake up, I always keep the room neat, today, when I refused to do it, you didn't do it?

**Subject 23**

Do you think I'm your servant or what? You didn't sweep yet you have messed up the room. If you joke, I'll beat you and send you to the senior house master.

**Subject 24**

Tayo, what do you think you are doing? Because I swept the room before I went out and look at how you have messed up the room. My friend, go for a broom and sweep the room right now.

### **Subject 25**

Hey friend, what is your problem? Oh, every day I make sure that this room is neat but you scatter things everywhere. No, no, I don't like that. The room looks very dirty, I can't even find my bag. I'm trying to advice you to stop that.

### **Subject 26**

Bro, there's something you're doing that I don't like. Every day I clean the room but you eat and leave the rubbish there. I'm warning you, from today onwards if you do that again I'll sack you. You know you're not my brother, I'm only helping you so if you do that again, I'll sack.

### **Subject 27**

Mandes, not again bro. I've kept the place tidy and you've spoilt the place again! You know if you finish searching for something you have to keep the place tidy again. Ah bro, I was angry but I don't want to reprimand you again so you better next time not do that again, hope you hear me.

### **Subject 28**

Ah why are you dirty like that? Everyday you've been messing up the room and you don't sweep too. Then better stop that dirtiness otherwise I myself will take you out of this room.

### **Subject 29**

Hey, I have something that I want to discuss with you. Something that I don't like in this room. You are always messing up this room. I've been seeing you always eating and leaving those rubbers here. I've been tolerating you since the day we became friends in this room. I don't want to see you in this way again or else you will leave this room. Now hurry up and tidy the room.

**Subject 30**

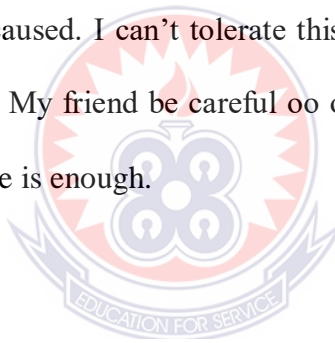
Hey Jacob, I have to tell you something. You keep embarrassing me in this room before my friends with your dirtiness. I've had enough! I give you 2 hrs to pack your things and leave this room.

**Subject 31**

Yo bro, get up. I want to discuss something with you. How can you mess up the room like that? I've been complaining about this behaviour since we stayed together but you've refused to listen. You have to stop it.

**Subject 32**

Ah bro. see the mess you have caused. I can't tolerate this again oo. Every day I clean this room but you always mess it up. My friend be careful oo or else you'll leave this apartment and rent yours. A word to the wise is enough.



### **Situation 3: Disobedient Junior (Female Speaker)**

#### **Subject 1**

This world is indeed changing. A whole me asked you to sweep and you refused. What stopped you from doing your morning duties? Look at this form one girl. So, sake of your classes I should take a broom and sweep for you My friend, go look for a broom and start sweeping. Rubbish.

#### **Subject 2**

Why didn't you sweep the place? How dare you? In fact when did you come to school? Herh, lower your level, in fact lie down till it's prep over. From tomorrow onward, you're going to sweep the head girl's classroom and her room till you vacate.

#### **Subject 3**

I punished you and you didn't do it. Where were you when I was going for prefectship? Well its not your fault, form ones like you having boyfriend at universities, how would you respect your senior. Come on kneel down there.

#### **Subject 4**

Ahaa sister, why didn't you sweep today? Eii so you are proving adamant too ooo Back when I was a fresher, you dare not question any prefect. I think it will be best you took the broom before hell break loose.

#### **Subject 5**

Where is the shirt I gave to you so that you wash for me? I gave it to you on Friday and I told you I will be needing it on Sunday evening, you better go and find way you will wash it and right it now.

### **Subject 6**

Herh, herh, sister. You, I punished you and you didn't do it. How, was it because I wasn't in belt (interrogation)? Then sister kneel even sit.

### **Subject 7**

Herrr! So this stubborn girl didn't sweep. Konaduuuu! Konaduu! I will bury her alive today. What did I tell you to do before I left? So you didn't sweep tell me, you didn't sweep? You don't know the person you are dealing with. Kneel down.

### **Subject 8**

Olivia, Olivia, I asked you to fill the Veronica bucket and you refuse to do it. Don't you know the consequences of what you have done? Now go down, kneel down.

### **Subject 9**

Hey, herh, I told you to clear this place before noon and I can see is not done yet. Go on your knees. Be aware you are going to work all day. Foolish girl like you!

### **Subject 10**

Sarah, Sarah, are you done with my skirt? So have you ironed my skirt? Hey, hey, go and do the ironing again. What were you doing at the canteen moving up and down?

### **Subject 11**

Hey Evelyn, come here, where are you going? As form one student, you're supposed to sweep the prefects room and you're going to class. My friend don't make me angry. hey just go down on your knees.

### **Subject 12**

Herh!! You didn't work oooh! God. Herh! Sister come, come, I ask you to do something, you didn't do. The other time you just didn't see my belt or what? Sit down on the floor.

### **Subject 13**

Herh! Form 1 girl, I told you sweep and you have the guts not to do. Yo kneel down (command)

### **Subject 14**

Hey! Are you the one who works here? So why didn't you work? My friend, in this house we do our own work. Who is that form 3 girl who told you to disrespect my authority? Come and do your work.

### **Subject 15**

Did you work today? When? look at her, I have mock to write today but I'm here inspecting the work and you're her telling me you have an exam, end of term exam just two sheets, two sheet to learn. You're telling me you've an exam so you won't work, who should go and work? No, tell me who should go and work? This isn't the first time, this isn't the second time fifififififi!! come on go and do the work.

### **Subject 16**

Jamila come here, this girl has reminded me of Rashina's time who dare you form one student. You've been punished and you didn't do the work. Hmm ! when I was coming to form one 2018 most of you were applying for toilet prefect in JHS. Do you know how much I bought the forms? 10 cedis plus belt 2 cedis making 12 cedis and that 12 cedis can take care of you for two weeks and I punished you, you didn't do. Form one student because you're dating university boy you don't respect again. I reserve my comments.



### **Subject 17**

Hey! Do you know I was reported for not doing my work ? I thought I was going to have a peaceful day (justification of the speaker), Ama why, why, come here, come here, i finally find your class and you're hiding. Please don't speak for her, picking eraser from the floor ooh okay, in fact kneel down, kneel down, mmm so have you been there? Just pick up a broom and lets go. I don't care if you don't do that in your house. Just kneel down.

### **Subject 18**

Hey ain't you the girl supposed to be sweeping here? Are you not Michel Akam, are you sick? I came here the last time, you were sick, last two weeks you were sick. Hey what's wrong with you? You're not only going to pick, you are also going to weed.

### **Subject 19**

Hi. Junior sister, I gave you some work to do and you refuse to do it for me. Does it mean I play with you or you don't have any respect for me? I give you from today till tomorrow, if you don't do it, I will punished you myself or I will send you to mistress to deal with you severely so that next time when a senior gives you some work to do, you will do it and do it properly.

### **Subject 20**

Hey come here. What did I ask you to do in the morning? So, you remember I told you to go and sweep room 2 and you did not do it. Don't worry yourself trying to go and do it because someone else has done it.

**Subject 21**

Hey(attention getter),Why didn't you wash the plate that I gave you? So, you think sister Ama is better than me, right? Get up and go and wash it for me or else you'll scrub the room until lights out.

**Subject 22**

Dorothy, why did you disobey me? I ask you to scrub the room by the time I return from class and you didn't do it, go down (command).

**Subject 23**

Hey you come here! Where is the book that I asked you to take to my room? You juniors have proved to be very disrespectful right? I sent you to take my important books to my room and you did not obey me. By the time I reach my room, my books should be there.

**Subject 24**

Jane, what did I tell you please? I inform you that we are going to have a short meeting with the chaplaincy board and I told you to clean the chairs and you refuse to do it. Because of what you have done, I'm going to punish you seriously. Next time when a senior sent you, you'll always be punctual to him or her.

**Subject 25**

Sister, come here, what did I told you to do that time? You don't respect me. I'm angry because I repeated several times to scrub the bath house but still, you refuse to do it. Better go and do it now or I will go and report you to the senior house mistress.

**Subject 26**

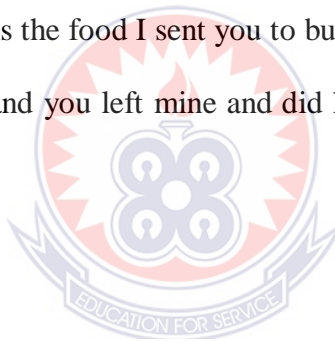
Herr Franklina come here! What did I ask you to do when I was about to go to prep? I asked you to sweep and clean this place but you refuse to do that work. Respect the ground for me else I will report you or you'll see the bad side of me. Come on, go and sweep. Next time try it again and you will see who is who.

**Subject 27**

My dear sister, I gave you a work to do and you didn't do it If I come back and you didn't done it, you'll see the real bad side of me.

**Subject 28**

Hey Rebecca come here. Where is the food I sent you to buy for me and why did you keep so long? A certain senior sent you and you left mine and did his right? Go and get my food for me this instant.



**Subject 29**

Junior sister, why didn't you do the work I gave you? Does that mean you don't respect me? How can you leave the work undone just like that and tell me that you were washing your shoes? What if madam had come here and saw this dirt here? Hurry up and finish with the work before I report you to the housemistress.

**Subject 30**

Hey Priscilla, why did you leave the work I asked you to do? It seems you do not respect anyone in the school. Due to this, I will make sure you will be punished mercilessly because you don't want to work when you are asked to. I will report you to the house mistress so that she will know the type of person you are.

**Subject 31**

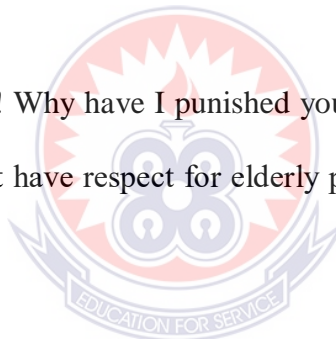
Hey, come here. How dare you disobey the rules and regulations of this school. As the girl's prefect, I asked you to work and you ignored it. Kneel down. Whenever a senior asks you to work, do it immediately, do I make myself clear?

**Subject 32**

Hey Shafawu, the work I gave you in the morning did you do it? You are in form 1 and me your senior has given you a work to do and you refuse to do it. I will punish you. Sleep on the floor till breakfast time. If you refuse to do it, I will report you to the house mistress. Foolish girl like you.

**Subject 33**

Maame(addressing), kneel down! Why have I punished you and you did not do it? I came to the school before you. You don't have respect for elderly people. I'm going to report you to the house mistress.



**Subject 34**

Berlin come here! Why didn't you bring the book I asked you to bring to my class? Berlin give me one reason why one reason why you did not bring the book I asked. This should be your first and last, ok? Don't repeat it again because it is a bad manner. Sleep on the floor when its lights out and you go and sleep.

**Subject 35**

Bernice, please come. If I could recall, I told you yesterday to scrub the pavement but you didn't do it. Why didn't you do it? Is it because I'm free with you or something? In short, I want to tell you to get back to the dormitory to scrub the pavement.

**Subject 36**

Sally, why didn't you do the work I assigned to you? Classes so you want to tell me that I didn't know you have class to attend? Kneel down, kneel down, so you have the guts to refuse my command, ? There will be no dining for you.

**Subject 37**

Hey, are you not this same girl I told you to go and scrub the gutter? So what happen to the work I told you to do? I'm going to punish you severely for disobeying me You will scrub the gutter and the ICT lab Keep quiet, when I'm talking don't talk Kneel down.

**Subject 38**

Her, are you not the girl I told to sweep the room, then why is the room still dirty? Before we continue kneel. Why is the room still dirty? I'm going to punish you.

**Subject 39**

Are you the girl I told you to go and scrub? Are you done? I told you to go and scrub and you went there to watch What do you take me for? kneel down. For your information juniors are supposed to respect their seniors. You are sorry, sorry for yourself

**Subject 40**

Ain't you the lady I instructed her to scrub? And what are you standing there doing? Yes you, are you not the girl they call Matilda? You mean that washing powder is meant for washing not scrubbing let me tell you something you are here with your seniors and mistresses not your mom Okay squat till I come, just squat till I come

**Subject 41**

I told you to sweep the compound and I just found out you didn't do it So why did you refuse to do it? You went to report what? Just lie down Don't let me talk much Lie down,.

**Subject 42**

Josephine please come here. Why didn't you did the work I assigned you to do? Do you know I can punish you for this? Do you know I can also send you to the house mistress for her to punish you? If a senior asks you to work, it doesn't mean she hates you . I was once like you when I came to form 1, I didn't respect anybody but it reached a time that I realized I was making a big mistake but we don't come here only to study but also to be formed. Sweeping or scrubbing won't kill you, it will make you become a wife material after school so do your best and do any work a senior asks you to do.

**Subject 43**

Grace, I tell you that you have to scrub the room because the room is dirty when our mistress is calling me, I'm back and still you didn't do it why? Grace let me tell you something, when you work, you will not die and the same time, practice make a man perfect so I'm advising you that when you work you will not die. Don't repeat what you have done again else I'll report you to the senior master and punish you

**Subject 44**

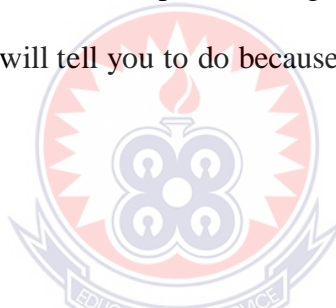
Samuella, I told you to clean, scrub and dust the room but why are you not yet done? You have made your mind up not to perform any task asked by a senior right? Then don't worry I will definitely report you to the senior house mistress for a punishment I know as for her you will not dare to fail her

**Subject 45**

Berlin why didn't you do the work I gave you? Do you know that this is a sign of disrespect? Please let this be your first and last warning. Don't repeat this again. Don't do this to any of the seniors very soon you will become a senior and you will ask someone to do something for you that person will not do it. don't repeat this in your life again. Respect every senior

**Subject 46**

Jess I told you to scrub here but you refused to do it, why? Are you sick or you are feeling tired? Jess, why have you refused to do the job that I personally gave you? Doing this job does not mean I disgust you but rather gust you more because you are the one who is supposed to scrub here please try as much as possible to give maximum respect to any senior and obey the rules that he or she will tell you to do because its our responsibility to supervise you to do your work



**Subject 47**

Stephanie come right here. I am of the believe that you already heard what I told you to do this morning before you leave for school so why did you refuse to do the work ? by the time I will enter the room and come out I want to see you scrubbing five pavements I told you to scrub three but because you refused to obey my words do that before dining and if you're a girl like me don't do it you will see the bad side of me leave my sight.

**Subject 48**

Vero come here, why didn't you do the work I asked you to do? Is that how you are? Do I look like a child to you ahh you have now grown wings so you don't respect anything As a girls prefect, I ordered you to work for me and you ignored it. Kneel down and hand up for

five minutes. When a senior ask you to do something for her you and you refuse to do it then it will be worse than this.

### **Subject 49**

Hey girl so this is how your lifestyle is? I ask you to do the bathhouse and refuse to do it. Don't you know that I came to school before you? You don't respect me at all. One thing, from today going, when I ask you to do something for me and you refuse, you will see what I will do to you, Is that clear, you can go, goooo!! And let me think.

### **Subject 50**

Hey junior you come! I just realised the work I gave to you, you decided not to accomplish it. Instead of you to give me a reason behind for not doing it you rather dare me this moment. For your punishment I would like you to do scrubbing after light out. If you dare to not do it you will be sent to your mistress for your disrespect acts towards me.

### **Subject 51**

Hey Christabel come here! I told you to scrub the bathroom and sweep here, why didn't you do it? You are sick and you didn't even bother to come and tell me in my room huh! I can even see it from your face that you are lying. It is clear that you intentionally didn't do this work. I'm very jovial but not to lazy pupils. I'm giving you just ten minutes to finish this work, after the ten minutes I will be back to check whether you've done it or not. To be frank with you, I will punish you severely if you fail to do this work. Being lazy will not help you okay, just desist from this okay.



**Subject 52**

Hey Rose come here, why didn't you do the work I gave you? You see nowadays you have been become a disobedience person. Look at her whiles I'm talking she is going come, come here kneel down I will make sure I will report you to the prefects come follow me.

**Subject 53**

Rose come, I asked you to sweep the room when I was going out. What happen or what were you doing that make you busy that you refuse to sweep the room? So tell me and I want to hear a tangible reason from you or you will knee till 3am.

**Subject 54**

Sarah! I asked you to do something and you refused to do it. Why didn't you do it? Or is it because you are older than me or what? Let this be the last time you will ever refuse to do my punishment and by hook or crook, you must scrub the whole of form three's bath house and it should be clean, I mean neat without fault, you can go.

**Subject 55**

Hey sister, I told you to arrange the chair at the chapel for us to have the first service why haven't you done this simple work? You know in this school we have our morning and first service around 6:30am so take note of this, I will punish you after the chapel before you do anything. Quickly arrange the chairs before i lose my temper. For your punishment, failure to come I will deal with you intensively.

**Subject 56**

Berry, I asked you to throw the rubbish in the dustbin way when I was leaving for class right? Why it is that the task is not done and you are on your bed relaxing as if you won a national lottery? My dear, will you stand up right now and clear the rubbish immediately as you can.

### **Subject 57**

Elsie, please come here! I think I gave you a job to do for me right? I told you to go and empty the dustbin in front of madam's house but I've realised that you haven't done that work. Listen and listen to me carefully, you are aware that our house mistress does not like dirt that is why I gave you that work but you decided not to do it. In case she asks me why the garbage is still there, I'll tell her exactly what you did, for her to take the necessary actions on her own. So, if you don't want to any problem, you have to go and do that work now before she calls you to punish you.

### **Subject 58**

Adwoa why didn't you do that work I assigned you to do for me? If you were in form three and you ask one of the form ones to do something for you and the person didn't do what will you do to her? I don't want this to happen again or you will see the bad side of me.

### **Subject 59**

Okay, hey you come here, are you not the girl I told to fold the cloths I washed yesterday? Why are they not unfolded by this time? You went and then slept because you think you are in Malaysia. Well you didn't do the work so this is your punishment, from today onwards you are to sweep this room before and after class or you will scrub the KVIP for one week which is morning, afternoon and evening. So choose one and it starts tomorrow at dawn. Leave my sight, you wretched girl from the forest.

### **Subject 60**

You come here, I gave you a work to do and you refused to do it what were you doing that you didn't do the work? so it means your friends who did the work are fools right. So you don't have respect huh, I will give you another punishment and if you refuse to do it again I

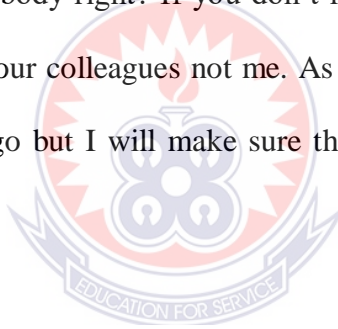
will report you to the house mistress do you take me as a fool come on follow me and I will give you another punishment.

**Subject 61**

Serwaa! I asked you to dump the refuse and wash the bin after dumping it but you decided not to do it and you left there in the room for me to dump myself. The bin is full of refuse and because of that we cannot put anything into it. You are not to put any rubbish in the bin again neither are you to put it on the floor for someone to sweep you hear me?

**Subject 62**

Law come here why didn't you do the work I gave you? You this girl you think you are older than us so you don't respect anybody right? If you don't respect anybody not in ST Joseph here okay? You can disrespect your colleagues not me. As for me am respecting myself so I want talk much. Okay you can go but I will make sure that I send this report to the senior house mistress.



**Subject 63**

You why didn't you do the work that I assigned you to do? I told you to scrub the bath house but you refused to do it. do you even think I'm your mate or what? I will report you to the house mistress.

**Subject 64**

Sister come here. Why didn't you do what I told you to do this morning before you leave for school? By the time I open my eyes, I want to see you scrubbing as I told you and if you refused to obey my words again you will see who came to this school first. Nonsense!

### **Situation 3: Disobedient Junior (Male Speaker)**

#### **Subject 1**

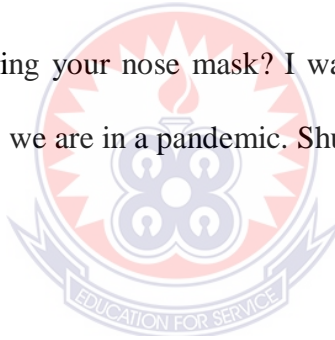
Hey Kneel down, kneel down. I gave you my shirt to wash it for me and you didn't do. I told you I will come for it at 9am but is been two days now I have not seen the shirt. I will punish you.

#### **Subject 2**

Herrr, this boy is doomed today, kneel down! You refuse to scrub the gutter. You are lucky I'm in a good mood today. I would punish you today.

#### **Subject 3**

Hey, hey, why are you not wearing your nose mask? I warned you yesterday to wear your nose mask every time. You know we are in a pandemic. Shut up. I told you to wear your nose mask.



#### **Subject 4**

Hey, young boy, where is the water I told you to fetch? Ahhh! Where is the water I told you to fetch? I told you I was going to sleep.

#### **Subject 5**

herr you this boy, the last time I told you to wash my shirt for me, you didn't wash it and you are here standing at my face looking me like that Go on your knees fucking boy. Do you think I'm your type? You said not even my younger brother can....., go and say that to your parents.

### **Subject 6**

Achasaka, andriloko, eeeeeiii so you are not afraid of king selassie, the conqueror of all form three students you are not afraid of me. I ask you to sweep this place and you are here chatting with a lady. The boy is doomed. So is the senior house master bigger than me? Wait, wait, So you this boy you are not afraid of king Selassie. Herr! you are doomed, if you don't erh, the way I will beat you mercilessly.

### **Subject 7**

Long -Talk come here. I told you to call that lady for me, Where is she? You are talking to your senior and look at how you are standing. So where is she now? Aaah you paaa. Herr lie-down, lie-down. I don't want to listen to It again.

### **Subject 8**

Yo junior. When did you become this stubborn? I've assigned you a work one week today and the work is still not done huh? You will kneel here till lights out.

### **Subject 9**

Hey man, yesterday I asked you to sweep here but you refused to do it. Do you think I am a fool? You see if you push me to the wall, I will bounce back and that means real trouble for you.

### **Subject 10**

Hey boy. I assign you yesterday to fetch me water but immediately I left, you refused to do it and when you see me you just vanish but today I have seen you live and coloured. I will really punish you this night.

**Subject 11**

Hey boy, come here, I ask you to sweep the room and you refuse. Go on your knees what reason do you have to refuse to sweep the room? Today I will punish you mercilessly.

**Subject 12**

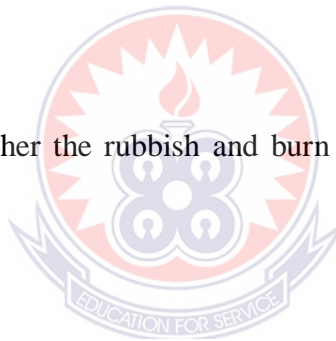
Hey kid. I assigned you to weed that portion at the back of the bathhouse and you haven't done it. It has been three hours already. Come on kneel down and stretch your hands for me.

**Subject 13**

Hey boy, why didn't you take part in the exercise this morning? Even me your senior do work you think you are wise right? Kneel down there.

**Subject 14**

Hey, I thought I told you to gather the rubbish and burn them so why are they still here? Hurry up.



**Subject 15**

Hey small. I told you to fetch me two buckets of water right? You didn't do it isn't it? You go to my room and kneel down till I come back from the canteen.

**Subject 16**

Hey hey, did you think you can hide from me? I gave you a work to do for me and you refused to do it. Shhhhh, you are as good as dead today boy. By the time I'm through with you, you won't sly a senior again in your life

**Subject 17**

Come here. What did I ask you to do? And did you do it? That means you don't respect me.

Ok, I'll punish you for that.

**Subject 18**

Hey come here. What did I ask you to do? Why didn't you do it? As your senior, I asked you to pick the rubbish and you didn't do it. Hurry up and go and do the work, otherwise I'll go and report you to the house master.

**Subject 19**

Come here. Where are the things, I asked you to go and buy for me? You decided not to buy but rather spend my money. I don't care about anything now. Just get me back my money.

**Subject 20**

Hey, why didn't you send the books as I asked you to? Go and get the books and send them to the dormitory.



**Subject 21**

Hey form 1 boy come here. What happened to the work I asked you to do at could be more important than what I asked you to do? Make sure you do it before tomorrow ok

**Subject 22**

Hey come. What did I ask you to do before I went to the prep room? I have forgiven you today but don't ever repeat that again you hear!

**Subject 23**

Andy come here. What did I ask you to do? Why is it that the books are still here? Don't let it happen again!

**Subject 24**

Hey come here. What did I ask you to do? Whilst I've asked you to do something for me you went to do something else. Come on go and do it right now or you'll see.

**Subject 25**

You didn't sweep the room as I told you to, why? It's a lie you've been repeating this your act and I don't like that. Be very careful, I don't want you to do that again.

**Subject 26**

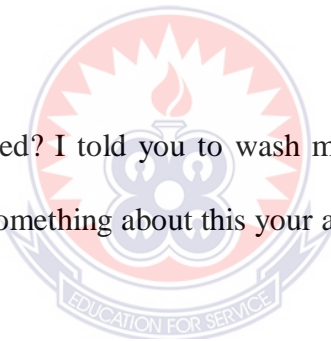
Why are my clothes still unwashed? I told you to wash my clothes because I'll need it for class tomorrow. You have to do something about this your attitude.

**Subject 27**

I told you to sweep my room, why didn't you do it? Hurry up and go and sweep my room.

**Subject 28**

Have you done the work that I asked you to do? I asked you to do something for me and you were doing something else. So, you think I'm a fool, erh. I can choose to molest you now, hope you know that You just wait, you'll be sent back home today! I'm going to report you to the house master.





**Subject 29**

Why didn't you sweep the floor when I asked you to do so yesterday? So, the work I gave you is not important eh? So, you are trying to disrespect me again I will surely punish you this evening.

**Subject 30**

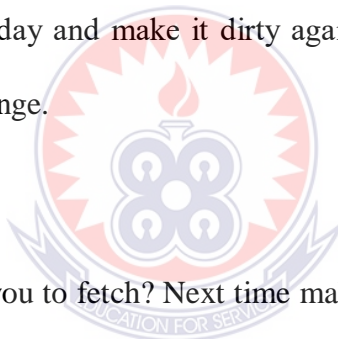
Why is the room still not swept when I asked you to? You slept when I told you to do something. The housemaster will hear of this.

**Subject 31**

Ah you Bisu paa, what do you take me for? I'm not your slave in this room oo . I am the only one who cleans the room every day and make it dirty again. I can't continue to accept this attitude of yours so you must change.

**Subject 32**

Hey, where is the water I asked you to fetch? Next time make sure you obey my instructions. On your knees!



#### **Situation 4: Noisy Neighbour (Female Speaker)**

##### **Subject 1**

Hello mistress, good morning. I'm sorry to interrupt you but can you please spare me some few time to lodge a complaint. Mistress, please I don't like the way my dorm mates makes noise after light out. Mistress I hate to say this but they are disturbing my peace. I can't even learn when I go to the dorm and it is affecting my grades in class.

##### **Subject 2**

Sir, good day. Please I came to talk to you about something bothering me. Ever since I came to this school, I have been physically unfit. The thing is, my roommate is so noisy. Yesterday, she used speakers to play music and just when I entered something sharp just entered my ear and I started bleeding in the ear. Sir could you believe they even did not care and I had to go to hospital with Oye. Please talk to her for me.

##### **Subject 3**

Mr. Okesse, please good day. Please there is something that is bothering me. I should have told you this earlier, I thought I could handle but now can't take it any longer. Please is my dorm mate Ohemaa who is as noisy as an airplane in the sky.

##### **Subject 4**

Sir, good day. You know I have a problem with noise, that's the reason why I chose this hostel. But you see, my roommate is always disturbing me. I've had quite enough, please do something about it.

### **Subject 5**

Good morning sir, I have not been able to sleep for the past three weeks, my roommate always make noise with her speakers, always singing on top of her voice. In fact, I'm very tired of all this, that is why I am reporting to you. I believe that problem shared is half solved

### **Subject 6**

Mistress, my roommate has the world's music player so she always give me headache in playing it. I can't learn neither can I sleep because the noise is too much.

### **Subject 7**

Madam, please good morning. Madam please there is something I want to discuss with you. Madam, my roommate Jane disturbs a lot during lights out When it is time for us to sleep that is when she starts to make calls, play music and even sing along with it. I have talked to her several times but she has turn a deaf ear that is why I am here to report her. Madam, please talk to her. I am always having sleepless nights because of that my head always ache. Thank you for listening to me.

### **Subject 8**

Madam please I am here to tell you that some of the girls in our room do not obey the rules that govern the dormitory. They do not sleep and also make noise during lights out. Due to their behaviour, I get some serious headache this is because I do not sleep well because they will be disturbing me with their noise making and I suggest that they should be moved to another room.

### **Subject 9**

Good afternoon madam. Madam please I want to discuss something very important to you and I believe that after this conversation, everything will be ok. Madam please you and I

know that it is in our school rules and regulations that we should not talk and make any noise when it is lights out and also we should not bring phones to school but madam this my roommate Rebecca do not let us sleep when it is lights out but rather chat with her friends from another house and when they are gone, she will take her phone and start to make calls in a loud voice and disturb us with our sleep. Madam when we are tired and want to rest our mind for the next day, she will not let us sleep. Madam please, I have asked and beg her to stop but she refuses always and I believe if you call her and talk to her, she will stop. Thank you.

### **Subject 10**

Good morning madam. Madam I came to you this morning to tell you that anytime we switch off the light at the dormitory at night most of the students make noise while others are sleeping during that time. This disturbance is affecting our health and the sick among us. So madam I want you so that you can come to the room on every light out.

### **Subject 11**

Good evening madam Dorcas, I am very sorry for disturbing you this evening. Madam the reason why I'm here is about Christiana. Whiles it's time for lights out for us to sleep, she has been making noise and roaming about. I couldn't sleep and it is also affecting my health because I have a health problem. Whenever there is too much noise, I will have an affecting problem. Please madam, I will like you to talk to her on my behalf for her to stop disturbing us.

### **Subject 12**

Madam please, when it is lights out every day, one girl called Abiba makes noise and she always disturbs the whole dormitory. So madam called her and advised her for me.

### **Subject 13**

Madam please good morning. Please can I have a conversation with you. Please madam, I have been always realised that when its lights out, some of my colleagues make unnecessary noise to disturb our peace of mind. We can't even sleep at all. They give the excuse of doing their assignment but the truth is they will be on their phones making calls.

### **Subject 14**

Good afternoon madam. Please I am in Savino room 3 and I sleep on the down bed. Please madam , I am here to make a complain about the girl who sleeps on the top bed. The rules in the dormitory is that when its lights out, nobody should make noise and this girl who stays at the top bed always makes noise when the lights are off and her voice is very loud that neither can I sleep nor learn. I've warned her so many times but she plays to be bossy. Please madam please do something about it.

### **Subject 15**

Madam please I need you to be of help to me. It really worrying me. I'm part of the students that sleep in room three and not long ago you brought a new student to our room. Madam please the new student is noisy and it's worrying my academics.

### **Subject 16**

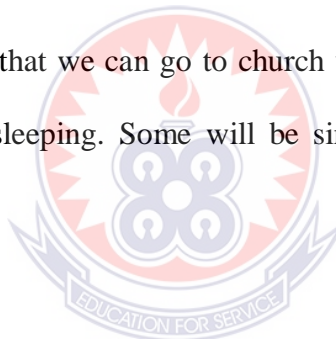
Madam I have something to tell you this evening. Please madam, there is a certain lady called Ama. She always make noise when it is lights out and this is affecting my health, my academics and my peace of mind. Please madam talk to her for me so that we all will have a peace of mind. Thank you, madam.

### **Subject 17**

Please madam, we all know that when it is ten o'clock, it is lights out. Meaning all students should be on their beds but in our room, it is not like that. There is a girl in our room who intentionally disturbs after lights out. I have tolerated it for long but madam this noise making of hers is affecting me in my academics since I can't sleep early because of this noise, I always wake up late but first it wasn't like that. So please, madam I want you to do something about it since you are our mother in this school.

### **Subject 18**

Please madam good morning. There is something I want to tell you and is that my roommate makes much noise when it is lights out. When it is time for us to sleep so that we can wake up early and do our house work so that we can go to church without any punishment, my mate will disturb the juniors while sleeping. Some will be singing others joking and this bad attitude during lights out.



### **Subject 19**

Good morning madam. Please I'm very serious in telling you this problem in the dormitory. When it is lights out, there is this girl in my room disturbing me and making unnecessary noise in the room. She always makes noise when the lights go off. She neither sleeps nor learn, all she does is make noise. When I called her and talked to her she insulted me. I have been quiet about for long but not anymore. Madam I need you to talk to her for me.

### **Subject 20**

Good morning madam. Please I'm in Savino room 3. Please madam in our room when it is lights out there is a girl called Loretta who always make noise to disturb us. She don't want

us to sleep and she always make noise she use to play during lights out so madam please I want you to call her and warn her.

### **Subject 21**

Please madam, sorry to disturb you this time of the day. I want to tell you something that is happening in the dormitory when its lights out. When it is lights out, one of my mates will start making noise in the room. The noise disturbs me always whenever I'm about to sleep. So please I want you to come and talk to them to stop.

### **Subject 22**

Madam, please I want to make a complaint about Eunice. She always makes noise after lights out. Whenever you tell her to be silent, she would tell you unpleasant words. Madam please her continuous behaviour of making noise after lights out has brought a decrease in my academics because I don't get enough sleep and it puts stress on me and whenever I go for class the next day, I sleep in class and I don't participate in listening to what the teacher is teaching. So please madam call her to put a stop to that.

### **Subject 23**

Good evening madam. Madam please I want to discuss something with you about one of our roommates in the room. Madam please when its lights out Rosemary always makes noise. Sometimes when it is lights out that she will be talking about her boyfriend with another mate in the room. Madam, please due to this we can't have enough sleep because of the noise she always makes during lights out and this has affected me because when the next morning I'm in class and there is a teacher in class, I would be sleeping and this is making my academics in class poor. So, madam please I hope you can talk to her and advise her to stop making the noise because we came here to learn and not to talk about unnecessary things. Madam please, I hope you would talk to her to stop. Thank you.

### **Subject 24**

Madam please good afternoon, there is something going on at the dormitory which I'm not really happy about it Madam can you imagine last night, light out is supposed to be 10 o'clock so I called a girl to off the light but she said who am I to tell her that, because she will off the light when she is done with whatever she is doing. So, madam I'm here to tell you to change her from the room, just move her to another room. So I will be happy with it because she has been making noise during light out madam we are supposed to off the light and sleep because there is a sick lady among us then she started insulting me. Madam please, I hope you are going to change her.

### **Subject 25**

Good afternoon madam, please I would want to make a complaint about girl called Nihat. I'm with her in the same room. Madam whenever is light out she makes noise to disturb the whole room and when I told her about it she started insulting me So I decided to come and report her so that you take her out of the room.

### **Subject 26**

Good afternoon, please madam there is something going on in the dormitory that I wanted to come and tell you. There is a girl called Hannah who disturbs during light out and threatens the form ones, then if they talk about it she will punish them. So madam I want you to change her for me.

### **Subject 27**

Please madam good afternoon. there is something going on at the dormitory that I'm here to complain to you about. There is a girl called Miriam who always disturb during light out and siesta so it has been affecting us a lot Can you do something about it for us.



### **Subject 28**

Please madam, there is a complaint I want to draw your attention to, it has been happening at the dormitory. There is a certain girl who always makes noise when is light out. The time that we want to sleep she will be disturbing and she thinks that no one can stop her so I want to draw your attention to it so that your will punish her for her to know that someone can stop her. Madam is really affecting us because we don't have enough time to sleep since she is always making noise.

### **Subject 29**

Good afternoon madam, I will like to make a complaint about what is going on around the dormitory. Is been my notice that people make noise even after light out people are always making noise no matter what you tell them they are always making noise and I have tried to talk to them but still they are doing it so I decided to come to the high authority and since you been the house mistress I think if you could do something about it, I will be happy. They disturb us a lot and you know me are writing our WASSCE. Okay thank you madam.

### **Subject 30**

Please madam good morning. Madam please I want to make a complain about an issue that has been bothering me since we came. Madam, there is a girl in our room whose name is Chelsea who makes unnecessary noise during lights out. Due to this, I have not had enough sleep which results in a headache every morning when I wake up. Also, during classes I dose off due to the lack of enough sleep.

### **Subject 31**

Madam please I want to complain this to you. Madam when it is lights out and we're suppose to sleep at that time Bridget always make noise in the room and when I tell her to shut her mouth, madam she is also shouting me that when I'm coming here, I didn't bring light here.

### **Subject 32**

Good morning madam. Please something has been bothering me for a while now. Please Dede has been making unnecessary noise in the room after lights out. I have been telling her to stop but she always insult me and give silly comment. The other mates in the room have also given their complaints to me as the room prefect so I decided to inform you about since it is bothering us.

### **Subject 33**

Good morning madam. I hope by the grace of the almighty god you are fine as I am (opening statement). Please madam the reason why I am here is that I came here to tell you what is worrying me at the dormitory after lights out. I know lights out is compulsory for us at exactly 10 pm but one of my friend is worrying us every day when its lights out. She always makes noise during lights out and this is worrying me in my academics because I can't sleep while she is making noise. Please madam I hope if you tell her something, she will stop what she is doing. This is the reason why I came here. thank you.

### **Subject 34**

Good morning madam. Please I want to have a chat with you if you don't mind I want to make a complaint about some bad practices being exhibited at the girl's dormitory which has been going on at the dormitory for a while. Some girls are fond of making noise and disturbing others who are asleep late after lights out this disgusting noise is ruining our sleep

at the dormitory. As a result of this most of us don't sleep at night therefore in class we can't concentrate when a teacher is teaching and this brings about sleeping in class.

**Subject 35**

Madam please good morning. Madam please I have something to tell you madam please when it's lights out one lady do not allow me to have my peace to rest at all madam when its lights out and everybody is asleep, Priscilla don't allow us to sleep you will see her murmuring, chackling, talking and doing a whole lot of unnecessary things that disturb me so please madam quickly take an action about it for me thank you.

**Subject 36**

Please madam good morning. Please madam I want to have a chat with you concerning a certain girl in my room called Janet. Please madam when its lights out, she will not sleep but all she does is making unnecessary noise and disturbing my peace of mind. Please madam I want you to talk to her for me so that she will change her behavior. Ok madam, thank you.

**Subject 37**

Please madam good afternoon. Please I want to have a word with you. Madam please when it is lights out, my roommate makes noise and disturb me when I'm about to sleep. I have been telling them to keep quiet but they always refuse to stop they do. So please Madam I want you to take an action so that she will stop disturbing me when it is lights out. Thank you.

**Subject 38**

Please madam good morning. Madam please I want to make a complain about an issue that has been bothering me since we came. Madam, there is a girl in our room whose name is Chelsea who makes unnecessary noise during lights out. Due to this, I have not had enough

sleep which results in a headache every morning when I wake up. Also, during classes I dose off due to the lack of enough sleep.

### **Subject 39**

Madam please I want to complain this to you. Madam when it is lights out and we're suppose to sleep at that time Bridget always make noise in the room and when I tell her to shut her mouth, madam she is also shouting me that when I'm coming here, I didn't bring light here.

### **Subject 40**

Good morning madam. Please something has been bothering me for a while now. Please Dede has been making unnecessary noise in the room after lights out. I have been telling her to stop but she always insult me and give silly comment. The other mates in the room have also given their complaints to me as the room prefect so I decided to inform you about since it is bothering us.

### **Subject 41**

Good morning madam (opener-combination). I hope by the grace of the almighty god you are fine as I am (opening statement). Please madam the reason why I am here is that I came here to tell you what is worrying me at the dormitory after lights out. I know lights out is compulsory for us at exactly 10 pm but one of my friend is worrying us every day when its lights out. She always makes noise during lights out and this is worrying me in my academics because I can't sleep while she is making noise. Please madam I hope if you tell her something, she will stop what she is doing. This is the reason why I came here. thank you.

### **Subject 42**

Good morning madam. Please I want to have a chat with you if you don't mind I want to make a complaint about some bad practices being exhibited at the girl's dormitory which has

been going on at the dormitory for a while. Some girls are fond of making noise and disturbing others who are asleep late after lights out this disgusting noise is ruining our sleep at the dormitory. As a result of this most of us don't sleep at night therefore in class we can't concentrate when a teacher is teaching and this brings about sleeping in class.

**Subject 43**

Madam please good morning. Madam please I have something to tell you madam please when it's lights out one lady do not allow me to have my peace to rest at all madam when its lights out and everybody is asleep, Priscilla don't allow us to sleep you will see her murmuring, chackling, talking and doing a whole lot of unnecessary things that disturb me so please madam quickly take an action about it for me thank you.

**Subject 44**

Please madam good morning. Please madam I want to have a chat with you concerning a certain girl in my room called Janet. Please madam when its lights out, she will not sleep but all she does is making unnecessary noise and disturbing my peace of mind. Please madam I want you to talk to her for me so that she will change her behaviour. Ok madam, thank you.

**Subject 45**

Please madam good afternoon. Please I want to have a word with you. Madam please when it is lights out, my roommate makes noise and disturb me when I'm about to sleep. I have been telling them to keep quiet but they always refuse to stop they do. So please Madam I want you to take an action so that she will stop disturbing me when it is lights out. Thank you.

**Subject 46**

Madam good evening, I'm fine, and you? Madam, please Eunice has been disturbing our peace of mind in the room since we came back from vacation. Madam could you imagine that

she always make noise after it is light out? Madam it is our all-embracing decision to tell you about Eunice but no one have the courage to come and tell you but it is bothering all of us in the room that's why I have come to tell you. I think she will comply to your advice that's why said I will not keep this to myself. Thank you madam. Goodnight

#### **Subject 47**

Please madam good afternoon, please madam, I want to tell you what is going on at the dorm when is light out, please when is light out, some of us won't sleep and they will be making unnecessary noise and even when you off the light some of them will come and on it telling you that they are hungry so they are now coming to eat. Please madam I for instance I normally go for classes at dawn so by the time I will wake up is too late. So please madam that's my problem, that is why I have come to you this afternoon.

#### **Subject 48**

Good morning madam, please Roli, always does something after light out which I want to tell you. Madam during light out she always make noise and it hurts me and I want to inform you about. Madam you see as student we always want peace of mind especially when we go to the dormitory, we are tired so when we enter the room, we suppose to rest but she always make noise to disturb us especially me. So please talk to her for me. Thank you

#### **Subject 49**

Madam please good morning, madam I will like to make a report to you which has been happening in my room (room 1) for the two weeks now madam, I think have had enough of the noise they're doing after lights out. I will be very pleased if you will talk to them to change their manners. Lights out is time to rest and restore the brain from hectic day.

**Subject 50**

Madam, there is something that has going on in our dormitory of late. And will like to tell you the outrageous behaviour my fellow colleagues have been putting up in the dormitory. When it's light out, that's when they begin to sing and pray seriously without thinking about us. Madam, I really know is good to pray and sing but what my colleagues are doing is unbearable and that has really affect my academic status, my health and relation with others. Please I hope you will call them and do something about it.

**Subject 51**

Good morning madam, madam please can you give a warning to my roommates on their behaviour of noise making. It is so sad and unfortunate the rate at which they make noise these days is becoming too alarming.

**Subject 52**

Good afternoon madam, please I have something urgent to tell you about. Is about one of my roommates, whose name is Janet. Madam, we all know that at 10:00pm, we are supposed to switch all kinds of light out and sleep but Janet decides to make unnecessary noise during that time. Please madam, because of what she does, I cannot get enough sleep and I always end up being punished by my teachers in the classroom because I always sleep in class. Also, it has affected my health tremendously because, I keep on having migraines frequently. So madam please I am pleading that you call Janet out and give her a vivid warning to stop what she has been doing. Ok, thank you madam!

**Subject 53**

Madam Dorcas please, I would like to bring a report to you on certain issues which goes on at the dormitory which constantly affecting my health, my peace of mind and my academics

physically. Adwoa has been making unnecessary noise at the dormitory after lights out every day. Please madam I would be very pleased if you talk to her so that this bad attitude of her stop during light out so we can peacefully have our peace of mind and sleep well for the next morning class.

#### **Subject 54**

Madam please good afternoon. I am here to talk about an attitude Comfort is showing up when is light out. This girl will disturb us when we and the other colleagues in that room are asleep. These her acts are making those of us in the room, most of us can't sleep because her disturbance and noise making and it also after our health. Madam please we want you to call her and talk her about this issue. If not we want you to change her from the room. Thank you madam.

#### **Subject 55**

Hello madam, good afternoon. Please I want to discuss some issue that have been bothering me for some weeks now. Madam, please there is this girl in the same dormitory that I am with, her name is Brynlee and she always makes noise after lights out which all the students in the school know that is against the school rules. With this her behaviour I am now fed up so I approached her last night and what she told me is that I have no right to approach and to tell her what is right with my filthy mouth. And madam what the girl is doing is really affecting my relaxation and my academics too, madam please do something about it urgently.

#### **Subject 56**

Please madam good morning. Madam please I want to make a complain about an issue that has been bothering me since we came to school this semester. Madam, there is a girl in our room called Evine who makes unnecessary noise during lights out. because of this, I have not had enough sleep which results in a very bad headache each morning when I wake up.



**Subject 57**

Madam please I want to complain this to you about an issue. Madam when it is lights out and we all want to sleep, that is the time that Agnetta make noise in the room and when I tell her to shut up, madam she will insult me.

**Subject 58**

Good morning madam. Please something has been bothering me for a while now. Please Diana has been making unnecessary noise in the room after lights out. I have been telling her to stop but she always give silly comment so I decided to inform you about since it is bothering us.

**Subject 59**

Good morning madam (opener-combination). Please madam the reason why I am here is that I came here to tell you what is worrying me at the dormitory after lights out. We all know lights out is compulsory for us at exactly 10 pm but one of my friend is worrying us every day when its lights out. She always makes noise during lights out and this is worrying me in my academics because I can't sleep while she is making noise. Please madam tell her something, so that she will stop what she is doing. thank you.

**Subject 60**

Good morning madam. Please I want to have a word with you if you don't mind Some girls in my room are fond of making noise and disturbing those of us who want to sleep after lights out As a result of this most of us don't sleep at night so in class we can't concentrate when a teacher is teaching. Ok, thank you madam

### **Subject 61**

Madam good morning. Madam please I have something to tell you please madam when it's lights out one girl does not allow me to have my rest at all madam when its lights out and everybody is asleep, she you will be talking and doing a lot of unnecessary things that disturb me so please madam try talk to her about it for me thank you.

### **Subject 62**

Good day madam. Please madam I want to discuss something with you concerning a certain girl in my room called Abigail in my room. Please madam when its lights out, she will not sleep but all she does is making unnecessary noise to disturb my sleep. Please madam I want you to talk to her for me so that she will change her behaviour. Ok madam, I'm grateful you.

### **Subject 63**

Please madam good afternoon. Please I want to have a word with you if you don't mind is lights out, my roommate makes noise and disturb me when I'm about to sleep. I have been telling her to keep quiet but they always refuse to stop. please Madam I want you to take an action so that she will stop disturbing me when it is lights out. Thank you.

### **Subject 64**

Hmm madam good afternoon. Madam is it something? My dormitory prefect who is suppose to observe the rules has decided not to do so. Whenever we go to the dorm and it's time for us to sleep, she will take her phone and start making calls and laughing. When she does that, I struggle to fall asleep early and so I wake up with a head ache. Madam please because she is the house prefect no one can make her stop what she is doing. Please talk to her for us.

#### **Situation 4: Noisy Neighbour (Male Speaker)**

##### **Subject 1**

Please sir good morning, please sir the way some of my dorm mates make noise after lights out is unbearable. Although I always go to prep but I am not able to learn all what I am supposed to learn so I try to learn at the dormitory but because of the noise I have become frustrated. In fact, the way and manner in which they make this noise is disturbing me. So, I will like to bring to your notice so you use your power to reverse this situation and punish those who misbehave at the dormitory as stipulated in the article 5 in the school rules and regulations. Thank you sir.

##### **Subject 2**

Good afternoon Mr. Opong, please I will like to tell you one of the most difficult problem I am facing in the dormitory that hampers my habit of learning which perhaps I think need to be solved immediately. Sir, one of my room-mate by name Asante always make unnecessary noise when it's time to sleep. I have talked to him about it but it seems he is always reluctant to that.

##### **Subject 3**

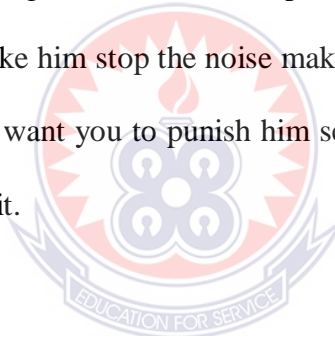
Please sir good afternoon, please I am here to report to you about some irresponsible behaviour which is going on in my room and such behaviours are practiced by Francis Owusu. Sir during lights out he will start unnecessary and gibberish noise which is affecting the people in the room especially me. Please sir due to this condition it is affecting us as I said especially in my academic because getting am not getting a chance to sleep on time and due to it am not the chance to.

#### **Subject 4**

Good day sir there is this bad behaviour of my roommate which I would like you to warn them to put a stop to it. Of late some of the guys will be jubilating and making all sort of unnecessary noise whenever its lights out. Sir, this there is not helping us the innocent ones at all so we will be struggling to sleep and there by waking up late the next day.

#### **Subject 5**

Please sir, good evening it's me Bismark Yeboah Asiamah. There is someone making noise in our room and I have informed him to keep quiet because the school rule says that when its lights out nobody should talk or make anything to disturb others in the room but I have said to him also and he said I was talking foolish words. So please sir I want you to go and punish him or talk to him for me and make him stop the noise making because it disturbs many of us and it also makes us sleep late. I want you to punish him severely for us so that all the room members will take a lesson from it.



#### **Subject 6**

Hello Mr.Osei, I have an issue to discuss to you which has been affecting me. since we came back from home. I am in Bishop Sarpong room 4 with my friends, classmates and some of the form 1 students and there is another guy called Osei Owusu Ansah Derrick, also in the room who is in form 2 when it was lights outs when it was time for the students to rest and have peaceful sleep, this guy who is called Osei always disturbs the students this has affected our health, education and peace. Madam I have discussed with him about this situation but he don't want to take my advice. Sir I came here to report him to you for you talk and give him an advice because you are the head of this place.

### **Subject 7**

Good morning, sir please I want to discuss an issue with you. There is a certain guy in Bishop Sarpong room 2 who always disturbs when its lights out he has been behaving like this since we returned from home, he makes noise in a manner that disturbs our night, our health as well as our academic we have been complaining but it seems he is not yet to stop. So I came to report to you, he is Alex by name in 2 Arts 2B4.

### **Subject 8**

Good day Sir, please sir I want to report some behaviour that is going on about a certain guy at the dormitory after every lights out in the night that I need to sleep and relax my mind because I study throughout night that I need to rest but sir anytime it gets to lights out that we need to sleep as for him that's the time he will be making noise here and there and he also knows that after lights we need to sleep and ease our stress but he won't and it's not affecting only me but the juniors too but since they are juniors they can't say anything so sir I have come to report it to you to do something about it because it's affecting my health and academics.

### **Subject 9**

Please Madam good morning I want to discuss something serious with you and please I need your help. When its lights every night one of our roommate always disturb us we have told him several but it seems like he doesn't want to accept it because of that we can't even sleep well and that affects our health so please am begging you to talk to him for us I know that he will listen to you because you are his teacher. Thank you for wasting some of your time to listen to some of our problems.

### **Subject 10**

Good morning sir something is bothering me in the dormitory and I want to tell you so that you can help put a stop to it. Please sir when I'm in my room every night during lights out there is a certain guy who always make noise to disturb us and this is a bad behaviour because it is against the rules and regulations sometimes, we hardly sleep because of him and I want you to go and warn him or punish him so that he will put a stop to it. Thank you sir for your attention and time.

### **Subject 11**

Sir Good afternoon, please sir when it is lights out a boy called derrick makes noise for the disturbance of our condition due to this issues a guy who is a Sickler complains about that but we couldn't make the boy o stop so this is the motive why am here

### **Subject 12**

Please sir good morning, my name is Frank and I am a member of Asenso house and am here to lodge a complain majority of the seniors of numerously been making noise in our room after lights out and these noise had affected a lot in both my academics and health I do refresh my mind after lights on what I learnt during prep time for about 10 minutes and after that I sleep so that I can wake up early on time but unfortunately for me nowadays after lights out majority of the seniors makes noise and this noise making has affected me a lot that's why I came here to complain.

### **Subject 13**

Please Sir good morning, there is a student in our room who always makes noise when its lights out this has been affecting our academics, our health and we are not able to sleep well

please help me solve the problem by taking the student out of the room or punish him severely so that he will stop making noise.

#### **Subject 14**

Sir good morning, please sir I have an issue to discuss with you. Sir there is one guy in my room who always disturbs when its lights out. Sir the reason why I want to report this issue to you is that the noise that the guy makes disturbs me a lot sir when I'm sleeping and there is noise in the room I can't sleep so it's affecting me in my health and academics so sir I want you to tell him to stop or change him from that way to another way.

#### **Subject 15**

Please house master, please I have some problems I am facing and I want to tell you about these problems. There are four house members who make a lot of noise even after lights out which disturbs our sleep. So house master I want you to help solve this problem.

#### **Subject 16**

Please sir good morning, sir I would like to discuss some issues that worries me always sir please you really know that lights out is the time for us to sleep and have a peace of mind also it is said in this noble institution that after evening studies no one should talk till the next morning but sir there is one guy in our room who always makes noise and disturbs us he always makes noise shouting even disturb those who are asleep, this issue is affecting my academics and health so sir please do something about it.

#### **Subject 17**

Good afternoon madam, I want to complain about the terrible noise which have been going on in Savino room 2 some boys always come there and disturb after lights out. As the

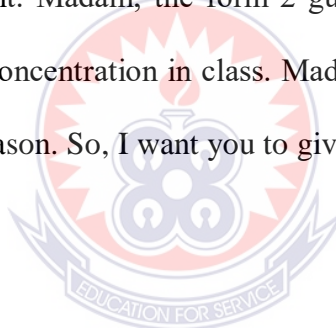
mistress of the school, I want to use this privilege to tell you and find some ways and means to solve this problem.

### **Subject 18**

Good afternoon madam. Madam please there's something going on in that boys' dormitory that I don't like it. Those guys make noise after lights out, I couldn't even sleep yesternight. Please this is just a suggestion, I want you to eliminate them from that room or rather punish them. Madam, please, please.

### **Subject 19**

Good afternoon. Madam, please I want to complain about something which is going on in the dormitory I'm not happy about it. Madam, the form 2 guys have been making noise after lights out and it's affecting my concentration in class. Madam, when you asked why I failed in the test, this was part of the reason. So, I want you to give them punishment or you can tell them to not to do that again.



### **Subject 20**

Good afternoon madam, please I have a report to make. There's a fellow roommate who has been disturbing during lights out. He decides to make his food and other things which make so much noise so I want you to change his room.

### **Subject 21**

Please madam good afternoon. I'm here to make complaints about my friends at the dormitory. They make noise after lights out. They've been singing during after lights out. I've warned them several times but they still do it. I've told them that, if I come to you, I'll let you punish them. So, punish them because they are stubborn.



**Subject 22**

Good afternoon madam, please I have a serious problem I want to talk to you about. It's about the boys who have decided to be devils in the dormitory, who don't let anyone sleep. He has a music speakers that makes noise every time its lights out.

**Subject 23**

Sir please good morning. Please sir, can I have a discussion with you. Please sir when its lights out there are some boys there, they will be making noise when we are sleeping. And the thing is, we'll be having classes at 4am so I have to sleep and have some rest so that I'll be able to wake up at that time and go for the classes and they keep on disturbing even though I've been telling them so I'd be glad if you could get me a new room or change their room for them so that I can have some rest and go for the class.

**Subject 24**

Please sir I want to make a complaint to you. There are some students in the room that use to make noise. I've told them several times but they don't listen. I don't know if it's because I'm their mate or what? So please I'm here to make a complaint to you so that you talk to them or you change the room for me.

**Subject 25**

Please sir good morning. Sir, please I want to make some complain that is going on at the dormitory during lights out. Please sir, there are some people at the dormitory that always make noise to disturb those of us who want to take our rest during lights out. Sir, I want you to come there immediately to talk to them or punish them because that's the reason we can't concentrate in class because we will be tired.

**Subject 26**

Good morning sir. Sir please I'm Emmanuel and I'm here to make a complaint about some of my roommate who make a lot of noise after lights out. Sir you see, after lights out I like to recall whatever they've taught me through out the day but because of the noise making I can't recall whatever they've taught me and sometimes when you tell them to keep quiet, they try to fight with you so, I want you to punish them.

**Subject 27**

Please sir good morning. Please I'm Alex. Please there are certain things that are going on at the dormitory that I don't like. Please when its lights out my colleagues make noise while selling food to some of our mates. So due to that, we that want to organise what we have learnt cannot do so. So, I want you to do something small for me so that they'll stop disturbing.

**Subject 28**

Sir good morning. Sir, there are some problems at the dormitory which I want to draw your attention to. Sir, they're fond of making noise after lights out. I have the belief that after you've learnt you need not talk about unnecessary things. I believe that if you listen or talk about unnecessary things you'll easily forget about what you've learnt so, I suggest that you either give them a severe punishment or change me from that room.

**Subject 29**

Good morning sir. Sir, please (formulaic adjunct) there is something going on in our dormitory that I want to talk to you about. After lights out, when we all are trying to sleep, some of our mates keep disturbing with the excuse of learning. Sir, this has been going on for long and we've all complained but they won't listen. Sir, please, change them from our room.

**Subject 30**

Please sir good morning. Please I'm Mensah. Please sir, there are certain things that are going on that deters me. Sir, after lights out the boys, they will not allow you to sleep some are roaming about and some are also doing calls at the dormitory so, I'm here to report them to you to tell them to stop

**Subject 31**

Good morning. Please sir, something baffles my mind and I want to tell you. Please whenever its lights out at the dormitory, some of our seniors make a lot of noise. I tell them about it every day but they don't want to listen. Please I want you to punish them for me.

**Subject 32**

Good afternoon sir, please there is a serious problem I want to talk to you about. Sir, please whenever is time for us to sleep, a colleague of ours always chooses to make calls at that time. Sir, please his calls disturb me a lot and even though, I've told him to stop he doesn't mind me. Sir, I have frequent headaches because of this and it affecting my studies. Please do something about it for me. Thank you!

## APPENDIX C

### INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL VARIABLES ON COMPLAINTS PRODUCTION

