

## **Communication Strategies Inherent in Business Discourse by Miraa Traders of Igembe and Somali Origin**

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**Abstract:** *The main purpose of this paper was to analyse the communication strategies employed by miraa traders from Igembe and Somali origin, in their business discourse. The researchers were given the impetus to undertake this study because of the uniqueness exhibited in miraa traders' discourse. The study aimed at establishing communication strategies depicted in their discourse and was guided by the Politeness Theory as advanced by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Communication Accommodation Theory by Giles (1971) to form the basis of its theoretical framework. The study was carried out at Muringene Market and in Maua Town in Kenya. It employed the social networks approach to identify participants. The purposive sampling procedure was used. Data was collected by tape-recording negotiations as miraa traders went on with their business interactions and through non-participants observation. Data analysis was largely qualitative. The study found out that miraa traders make use of several communication strategies such as inclusion, exclusion, directness, high level of informality, and volubility and taciturnity that form the basis of this study.*

**Keywords:** *Miraa traders, Communication Strategies, Miraa, Business Discourse, Igembe*

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This study aimed at shedding light on the use of communication strategies employed by miraa traders. It is a pragmatic study that involved conversations between miraa traders from Igembe and Somali communities. In this study, miraa business discourse from the two communities was analyzed in order to identify the communication strategies employed.

Miraa is a crop that is grown in large scale mainly in Igembe region in Meru County in Kenya (Kobia & Miriti, 2014). Meru County has nine sub-counties namely Imenti North, Imenti South, Imenti Central, Tigania East, Tigania West, Igembe South, Igembe Central, Buuri and Igembe North. Although miraa is grown in most parts of Meru, it is grown largely in Igembe North, Igembe Central and Igembe South sub-counties region. This has made Igembe to be the centre of miraa business where most of the negotiations are carried out. From here, miraa is transported to various parts of Kenya and abroad hence bringing a lot of income to Igembe region. In Kenya, miraa is transported to different parts such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Isiolo, Mandera, Nanyuki, Wajir among other parts of the country.

Being a booming business with high economic value, miraa business has attracted many traders of Somali origin to do business with traders of Meru origin where miraa is produced hence making the two groups to be the key players in the business. Therefore, miraa trade is mainly carried out by traders who hail from the two communities: Meru and Somali. The negotiations take place in several markets in Igembe region particularly in Maua Town. It is worth noting that miraa business, in Maua Town, is carried out by either Igembe traders themselves or between Igembe and the Somali people. When it is between Igembe people, the language of interaction is Kiigembe dialect of Kimeru language but when the negotiations are between the Igembe and Somali people, the language of interaction becomes Kiswahili.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Over time, linguists have made attempts to break the ground on the usage of communication strategies employed by different participants in divergent contexts such as schools, hospitals, banks and in business environments (Scollon and Scollon,1980; Kohls, 1984; Cicourel, 1985; Conary et al,1993 and Hassan, 2000). There is therefore a need for more research to be conducted to explain the communication strategies in which people engage to maintain relationships in diverse contexts. This study, therefore, aimed at analyzing the business discourse that emerges from miraa traders of igembe and Somali origin in their negotiations to critically look at the communication strategies.

## **3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

This study was guided by the following objective:

1. To establish the communication strategies employed by miraa traders from Igembe and Somali origin in their business discourse.

## **4. RESEARCH QUESTION**

This study was guided by the following research question:

1. What are the communication strategies employed by miraa traders from Igembe and Somali origin in their business discourse?

## **5. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Several studies have been carried out investigating the kind of interaction that emerges when people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds intermingle. Neil (1996) observes that communication differences arise between languages as governing different cultural understanding of when to talk, what to say, conversation control like turn taking, verbal and non verbal cues, cohesion and coherence. The current study is related to this study in that it deals with two languages and the participants hail from different cultural backgrounds, Igembe and Somali, and one of its major concerns was the communication strategies employed by speakers from different cultural backgrounds.

Hassan (2000) study was based on how communication takes place in the intercultural discourse. The study noted intercultural communication entails the use of various strategies by speakers in order to repair their communication problems and interpret the meaning. The study identified repetition, explication, clarification and information questions as some of the communication strategies. This study focused on the above mentioned communication strategies among others and collected the data by use of tape recorder and non participant observation as a tool for collecting data.

Neustunpy (1985) notes that participants of intercultural contact situations frequently deviate from the norms and that the ways in which these deviations are evaluated are important processes for attention. Similarly, Conary et al (1993) points out that, there needs to be more research conducted to better explain the strategies in which people engage to maintain relationships. The study further adds that there is a paucity of research investigating inter-ethnic communication apprehension and inter-ethnic relational maintenance.

Cicourel (1985) carried out several studies on doctor- patient discourse. The findings revealed that culture and language strongly influence the understanding of each participant. In the process of interaction, participants, depending on their culture may exhibit some features that are unique from other cultures. Some consider it wise to show politeness in respect to age and status. The speech acts used by miraa traders was analysed in order to identify the communication strategies used by the two communities.

Furthermore, Toale and McCroskey (2001) recommend that future research should consider focusing on specific ethnicities and should depict how individuals from each ethnic group maintain relationships with individuals from a different ethnic background. This study therefore aimed at investigating the communication strategies employed by miraa traders from Igembe and Somali origin hence filling this gap.

Kohls (1984) observed that Americans exhibit a high degree of informality in the process of interaction. This takes many forms. For instance, addressing each other even those in higher ranks by first name, greeting people informally such as touching one's arm and saying "Hi". This can however be perceived by people from other cultures as being impolite. Similarly, this study highlighted on the strategies employed by miraa traders where the aspect of formality and informality were brought to the attention of the researchers. It was observed that just like Americans, miraa traders of Igembe and Somali origin depicted high degree of informality in their greetings. They greet one another informally such that sometimes they do not bother to shake hands with one another.

Kohls (ibid) noted that misunderstanding can occur, for those from some cultures might view easy familiarity as rude and insulting but Americans consider this a compliment. Americans also value directness, openness and honesty. The great difference among cultures regarding this value has particular implications for cross-cultural understanding. This is very important as it gave some insights to this study as it largely focused on the communication strategies and how they are related to the two cultures in question. In the process of negotiation, traders from similar and diverse cultures may experience some communication difficulties.

Smith (1987) observed that communication problems can occur between native English speakers who do not share the same culture; for example between English people and Americans or between Americans and Australians. On the contrary, Igembe and Somali miraa traders who hail from different ethnic groups were not observed experiencing difficulties in communication. Therefore it is imperative to note that not all the time people from diverse cultures will face difficulties in communication as they interact.

Gumperz (1982) claims that for communication to take place effectively, participants need to draw on their background knowledge and assumptions in order to interpret the social meaning of other speakers. He also shows that perceived dissimilarity of speech conventions and mismatching interpretations contribute to cross-culture misunderstandings. Key participants in miraa business were observed to harbour dissimilarity owing to the fact that they have different cultural orientation. This therefore called for a study to investigate whether the cultural dissimilarity has anything to bear on the politeness aspect. There were no cases of misunderstanding observed.

Scollon and Scollon (1980) analysed inter-ethnic communication using politeness theory to assess the communication difficulties between Athbasken Indians and monolingual English speakers. They used politeness theory to assert that taciturnity (the avoidance of talking) reflects an assumption of deference politeness. On the other hand, volubility (much talking) reflects an assumption of solidarity. One of their basic findings was that the Athbasken interactional style is characterized by negative (deference) politeness due to reciprocal social distance. The Athbasken emphasized their distance or dissociated themselves from any infringement by the monolingual English speakers, who, on the other hand, were displaying positive (solidarity) politeness. Positive politeness assumes little distance between the participants and only a slight power difference. This mismatch made the Athbasken Indians feel incapable of adopting an intimate relationship with monolingual English speakers and were thus discovered to be uncommunicative, that is, said very little or showed little interest in conversation compared to their counterparts. Being an inter-ethnic study of the communication strategies and the way in which miraa traders, from Igembe and Somali origin, accommodate one another, the current study is related to the above study in that it investigated volubility and taciturnity as some of the communication strategies used by miraa traders. It found out that traders exhibited positive and negative politeness although there were many instances of volubility than that of the taciturnity. In addition, the study demonstrated that positive politeness was a means that was used by traders to converge in their speech

Walya (1996) studied the Kenyan banking discourse, and outlined the strategies that the interactants apply in their conversation and the effects they have on banking interaction. It is evident from the study that the structure of Kenyan banking discourse and strategies were influenced by both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. Karambu (2009) studied the polite forms used by students in secondary schools using Politeness Theory as a theoretical framework. The current study was neither carried out in a banking sector nor in the school

context but in a market place. Just like the study carried out by Walya, this study focused on the strategies used by the interactants in the miraa market and used Politeness Theory in the analysis of the data.

## **6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study utilized two theories eclectically; Communication Accommodation Theory and Politeness Theory that are discussed below.

### **6.1 Communication Accommodation Theory**

Communication Accommodation Theory (henceforth CAT) was developed in 1971 by Howard Giles. CAT explains some of the cognitive reasons for code-switching and other changes in speech as individuals seek to emphasize or minimize the social differences between themselves and their interlocutors. Giles posits that when speakers seek approval in a social situation they are likely to converge in their speech to that of their interlocutor. This can include, but is not limited to the language of choice, accent, dialect and paralinguistic features used in the interaction. In contrast to convergence, speakers may also engage in divergent speech. In divergent speech, individuals emphasize the social distance between themselves and their interlocutors by using linguistic features characteristic of their own group. This study investigated the ways in which traders converged or diverged in their speech during the negotiation process and what motivated them into doing so. By so doing, the researchers were able to account for inclusion and exclusion as strategies employed by the miraa traders in Maua Town and Muringene Market in Kenya.

### **6.2 Politeness Theory**

This is the other theory that was used in this study. It should however be noted that the researchers made use of the notion of the face (positive and negative) that is outlined in the theory. Face is the public self image that every adult tries to project. Brown and Levinson (1987) defined positive face as the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others or the positive consistent self-image or personality (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. Negative face on the other hand was defined as the want of every competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others, 'or' the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non distraction -the freedom of action and freedom from imposition. The two aspects of face are the basic wants in any social interaction, and so during any social interaction, co-operation is needed amongst the participants to maintain each other's faces. The study used this tenet of the Politeness Theory to analyze the communication strategies used by the traders during the negotiation process.

## **7. METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted in Maua Town and at Muringene Market, Maua. Maua Town was used because it is a big town that has many miraa traders from the two communities; Somali and Igembe. This ensured that the sample was balanced in terms of ethnic representation. The study was also conducted at Muringene Market which is near Maua Town. Ten negotiations recorded from Maua Town and ten negotiations recorded from Muringene Market were used. This implies that twenty negotiations were recorded from both places. Ten negotiations involved negotiations between Igembe and Somali traders while other ten were between Igembe traders themselves.

Further, the study employed purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is non-probability sampling that is done with purpose in mind. It is through this technique that the researchers got samples from the two categories- negotiations between traders from Somali origin and Igembe and between traders from Igembe origin themselves. Purposive sampling enabled the researcher identify the right samples from the two categories. Data was collected by use of a powerful small tape recorder. This means that the researchers used audio recording to obtain the verbal data. Through observation, the researchers were able to account for such things as tone and intonation, gestures and facial expressions among other non-verbal and paralinguistic features. In addition, the researchers used note books to note down anything observed that was related to the study.

To ensure that the data obtained through recording was free from biases, the researchers employed the social network approach so as to create confidence between the researchers and the informants. The informants were approached in the capacity of a friend of a friend. This

minimized the observer's paradox because it built trust with the respondents. It also increased the chances of observing in a prolonged informal interaction without suspicion (Milroy 1987).

The data was analyzed using qualitative approach to data analysis. The first step was to transcribe the tape recorded data on paper. The tape recorded data was then summarized and described qualitatively. The notes made by the researchers from the observation were availed at this stage to supplement the recorded data. The qualitative approach was then used to describe the communication strategies used.

## **8. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

In the process of negotiation, miraa traders make use of various communication strategies. These strategies are there to enable them transact effectively. Some of these strategies were realized in the light of the Politeness Theory while others in the light of Communication Accommodation Theory. In this study, S stands for seller while B and T stand for buyer and turn respectively. The following communication strategies were noted by the researchers to have been employed by miraa traders of Igembe and Somali origin in their negotiations.

### **8.1 Exclusion Strategies**

Miraa traders, depending on their motives, were forced to exclude one another from their conversation. Exclusion was achieved through code switching in cases where both traders from Igembe and Somali origin were engaged in the negotiation. The following is an example of their negotiation.

Example 1

- B: T1 Wewe Waria unalala hapa? Uza miraa (You Waria are you sleeping here? Sell miraa.)  
S: T2 Wewe Waria ngoja miraa iko. (You Waria, wait there is miraa.)  
B: T3 We Waria, nataka miraa. (You Waria, I want miraa.)  
S: T4 (To another Igembe trader) Thania mukundo yu miraa yutikira (Give miraa to this anus.He will not keep quiet.)

Here, the buyer of Somali origin became so impatient and this made one of the sellers of Igembe origin to code-switch to Kiigembe so as to exclude the Somali miraa traders who were there. The Igembe traders just wanted to do him a favour by excluding all of them but serving the one who was impatient first. In fact, it worked because the other traders of Somali origin never understood what happened but the one who was impatient was served first. Below is another example.

Example 2

- B:T1 Wewe Waria uza miraa. (You Waria, sell miraa.)  
S: T2 Unataka miraa ipi wewe Waria? (You want which type of miraa you Waria?)  
B: T3 Nataka hiyo leta miraa wewe. (I want that one, let me have miraa.)  
S: T4 Leta pesa we Waria. (Bring the money Waria.)  
S2: T5 Reka na mukundo yuu we. (You leave this anus alone.)  
B: T6 Nitachapa wewe iko na matusi sana. (I will beat you up, you are so insulting.)  
S: T7 Hapa Maua ni kwetu bwana. (This Maua is our home.)  
B: T8 Wewe ni jinga ya Meru funga miraa vizuri. (You are fool from Meru, pack miraa properly.)  
S: T9 Leta elfu moja mia moja we Waria. (Give me one thousand, one hundred Waria.)  
B:T10 Chukua pesa yako na ulete miraa yangu. (Have your money and bring my miraa.)  
Nasema leta miraa wewe jinga. (I am saying you bring miraa you fool.)  
S: T11 Wacha matusi wewe Waria, chukua miraa yako. (Stop being insulting Waria, have your miraa.)

The two Meru traders exclude the Somali trader by code-switching to Kiigembe. In T5, the seller insults the Somali buyer and tells the other seller to stop bargaining with the buyer. Unfortunately,

the buyer realizes that he was insulted and threatens to beat up the seller. In T7, the seller distances himself from the buyer and tells him that Maua is his home meaning that there is sense of pride if you are born in Maua. On the other hand, the buyer downplays what the seller says in T7 and T8 by telling him that he is a fool from Meru. This implies that there are attempts by traders from Igembe traders to exclude traders from the other community in their business discourse.

This exclusion through code-switching is viewed differently by different scholars. For instance, Marriott (1993) posits that different cultures have different norms that indicate politeness and that selection of language to be used in a business encounter is of importance, as is maintenance of this language for the duration of that period. Australian informants report that extensive sequences of code switching from English to Japanese sometimes occur in Australian-Japanese interaction. It can be argued that code-switching is a direct violation of English norms of politeness for it acts to exclude certain participants in the encounter from the ensuing discourse.

This study established that miraa traders do code-switch to exclude their fellow traders from the other community. There were several instances where Igembe miraa traders excluded Somali traders by code-switching to Kiigembe and this can be viewed as impoliteness since most of the instances the motive of doing so was not good at all. By all standards, even without putting into consideration the aspect of motive, exclusion in speech is out-rightly impolite.

## 8.2 Inclusion Strategy

Inclusion strategies were also evident in the negotiations between miraa traders of Somali and Igembe origin. Somali traders sometimes tried to speak in Kiigembe accent when interacting with miraa traders of Igembe origin. It was also noted that they called Igembe traders in Kimeru words like murume (a word commonly used by men in Meru to refer to one another in general terms). It was also observed that they called Meru men “waria” which is a word of Somali origin that refers to a person of Somali origin. On the other hand, Igembe traders tried as much as possible to communicate in Kiswahili that was awash with Somali accent. In addition, they also used those words- murume and waria- to refer to one another. The example below is negotiation that can ascertain this assertion.

Example 3

B:T1 Habari Murume, iko miraa? (Hi Murume, do you have miraa?)

S:T2 Miraa iko mzuri sana. [Points at some bunches, picks and gives him] Hii elfu tatu Waria. (I have the best miraa. That is going at three thousand Waria.)

B:T3 Waria iyo pesa nyingi sana, napea wewe ngiri mbili (That is too much Waria, I will buy at two thousand shillings.)

S: T4 Iyo iwezi, ngiri mbili mia tano na usiongee. Wewe ni kastoma yangu Waria. (That is not enough to buy that miraa, buy at two thousand five hundred and do not complain. You are my customer Waria.)

From this example, it is explicit that the traders are trying to include one another. The Somali trader uses a Kimeru word, murume, in T1 to call the seller and both of them later in T3 and T4 use the word Waria which is a Somali word when addressing one another. This attempts to make them identify with one another. It was noted that there were many instances of inclusion in the negotiation compared to exclusion. This was as a result of the traders' effort to make as many transactions as possible by negotiating meaningfully. This argument coincides with Communication Accommodation Theory that asserts that when speakers seek approval in a social situation they are likely to converge in their speech to that of their interlocutor. This can include, but is not limited to the language of choice, accent, dialect and paralinguistic features used in the interaction.

## 8.3 Taciturnity and Volubility

Scollon and Scollon (1980) used Politeness Theory to assert that taciturnity (the avoidance of talking) reflects an assumption of deference politeness. On the other hand, volubility (much talking) reflects an assumption of solidarity. Taciturnity and volubility

were investigated by the researchers as some of the communication strategies employed by miraa traders during the negotiation process.

It was observed that although traders talked very fast they were not ‘mean’ with words”. In other words, there was much talking, to an extent of digressing or engaging in issues outside the business. The traders were observed to be willing to talk more and more though time was limited because of the nature of the business that requires traders to conduct their business very fast. The example below can elucidate this claim.

Example 4

- B:T1 Hii mtu ashiki simu bwana bado anakata simu.(This person is not picking my phone, he is ignoring it.)
- S:T2 Usisumbue hawa watu bwana ni wapande ya kwetu wewe Waria. (Do not disturb these people, Waria, they come from our place.)
- B:T3 Miraa hiyo ni mbaya. (That miraa is of poor quality.)
- S:T4 Wacha hayo wewe, wacha tuongee kwanza bwana. (You leave that, let’s talk first sir.)
- B:T5 Hiyo inataka pesa ngapi? (How much does that one cost?)
- S:T6 Ishirini moja bwana. (Twenty shillings each sir.)
- B:T7 Kwani hawa watu nawapigia simu ni wapande ya kwenu ama? (Are those people that I am calling come from your place or?)
- S:T8 Nimetoka hapa chini bwana, unajua Antubochiu? (I come from down here bwana, do you know where Antubochiu is?)
- B:T9 Wacha nione miraa bwana. (Let me see that miraa.)
- S:T10 Miraa hii iko sawa. (This miraa is good.)
- B:T11 Shika pesa. (Take the money.)
- S:T12 Chukua miraa.(Have the miraa.)

Here, the traders were negotiating but as they proceeded, they resulted in changing the topic hence positive politeness. They involved themselves in talking about things that were different from the price negotiation. In T1, the buyer’s topic has nothing to do with the business and the seller participates in the topic before the buyer changes the topic so as to bargain the price. After sometimes, the buyer changes the topic again in T7 and the seller still participates in T8 where he directs the buyer where he (seller) comes from. This is an indicator that the traders were showing volubility. In several other instances, the traders made jokes and talked about their own personal things.

Although traders exhibited volubility, there were some instances when they resulted to taciturnity. The following is a good example.

Example 5

- S:T1 Bwana Waria niliaamka saa tano kulinda hii miraa. (Bwana Waria, I woke up at eleven at night to guard this miraa.)
- B:T2 Unauza hii kitu ama? (Are you selling this thing or what?)
- S:T3 Ndio bwana, nikupatie? (Yes sir, should I give you?)
- B:T4 Funga vizuri bwana ( Pack properly sir.)
- S: T5 Wachana na miraa bwana wewe. (You leave miraa alone bwana.)
- B:T6 Hizo ni ngapi?(How much are those?)

In the above example, the seller in T1 invites the buyer to talk about a certain thing that is different from business but the buyer avoids him and goes straight away to what he wanted from the seller. He technically avoids the topic. In our view, this can be considered to constitute taciturnity on account of the fact that there is avoidance of talking as one trader dismisses another. In a nutshell, it can be deduced that miraa traders demonstrated both volubility and taciturnity in

their speech although the findings indicated that there were more incidences of volubility compared to those of taciturnity.

#### 8.4 Directness

Miraa traders were observed to be very direct during the process of negotiations. They would for instance frankly tell their feelings about the price asked by the seller or the one offered by the buyer. The buyer, for instance, would refuse to buy if he thinks the price is too high and would tell the seller directly. At the same time, the sellers would at times even fail to sell to some buyers whom they thought were unlikely to transact successfully with.

Kohls (1984) notes that misunderstanding can occur, for those from some cultures may view easy familiarity as rude and insulting but Americans consider this a complement. He also observed that Americans also value directness, openness and honesty. The findings of this study show a great deal of similarity with the above observation in that miraa traders were observed to be very direct in their dealings and miraa traders were not perturbed by other traders being direct to them in the process of negotiation. This can be clarified by the following example.

##### Example 6

B: Kiri ngiri ijiri na maana ya tano kwongela maana yatano (I add five hundred on top of the two thousand I had offered.)

S: Ari itu nirie. (No please, let it stay.)

B: Sawa nirie. (It is okay, let it stay.)

The buyer and the seller in this negotiation never bothered to be indirect. They were direct with one another. Since they cannot reach a compromise price, they agree directly not to continue with the negotiation.

##### Example 7

B: Wewe iju njira ii bwana. (Come this way sir.)

S: Ari kampire miraa yonthe. (No let me get all the miraa.)

B: Mwenda we kwenda huko murongo. Ita buru utindetere miraa nii? (You Mwenda, go away completely, you are liar why didn't you bring miraa to me?)

Here, the buyer accuses the seller of being a liar and tells him right on the face. He does so because the seller had failed to bring him miraa as agreed there before. He dismisses him completely. It is therefore clear that miraa traders are always direct to one another and do not bother to be indirect so as to mitigate the effects of their interactions. If the trader wanted to mitigate the damage, he would have approached the seller indirectly hence indirect strategies.

#### 8.5 Informality

It was observed that miraa traders assume a very high degree of informality in their interaction. It was for instance observed that miraa traders greeted one another casually and addressed each other informally by for instance calling them by their names. It was also observed that they never bothered to shake hands while greeting one another. Sometimes, due to the fact that they were in hurry, they just went straight to the point without even greetings. The example below clarifies this assertion.

##### Example 8

B:T1 Natia Kimindo? Rete itundu biu bwana. (Hi Kimindo? Bring those bunches of miraa sir.)

S: T2 Niyana ukura bwana? (You are buying at how much sir?)

B: T3 Ngiri na mana yaili bwana. (one thousand two hundred sir.)

S: T4 Itundu bitathatu bionthe! Bwana reka nawe. (All the six bunches! Sir, stop it.)

B:T5 Yalolelia Jose itundu bii muntu uyu akwendia. (Jose look at these bunches of miraa this person is selling.)

In this particular example, the greeting was not accentuated but the miraa traders did not take it as a big issue. There was no shaking of hands. From the observation, it was evident that the

traders were doing things in hurry so as not to waste any time and therefore greetings were not prioritised though traders seemed to have cordial relationships. To the outsiders, this can be perceived as impoliteness but that may not be the case since the traders are familiar with one another. The high degree of informality can also be observed from the way these traders used abusive language. They did not use language formally. They hurled insults at one another, spoke in very high intonations and sounded like people who are shouting at one another. The miraa traders were also observed to be rude and arrogant.

This observation seems to coincide with what Kohls (1984) had observed about Americans. He observed that Americans exhibit a high degree of informality in the process of interaction. This takes forms; for instance addressing each other even those in higher ranks by first name, greeting people informally such as touching ones arm and saying 'Hi'. Despite this informality, the miraa traders were able to cooperate and interact meaningfully with one another. They negotiated and reached a compromise price very many times as opposed to when they failed.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

It is evident from this study that miraa traders make use of a number of communication strategies in their business discourse. They exhibited taciturnity and volubility and are thoroughly informal in their language use. It was also explicit that diverge and converge in their speech hence inclusion and exclusion strategies. More so, they were observed to be very direct in their conversation.

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