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Navigating Facework: Interactional Strategies in Facebook Discourse

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Abstract:

This research investigates the pragmatic aspects of language use in Facebook posts, focusing on linguistic features, themes, communicative purpose, identity construction, and facework strategies. A mixed-methods approach was employed to analyze the posts of 40 participants, revealing fascinating findings. The study identified linguistic innovations facilitated by Facebook, including capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and abbreviation changes. These innovations align with previous research on language change on the Internet and highlight the pragmatic adaptation of linguistic forms to suit the online context. Additionally, the emergence of novel language creations and modifications reflects the creative expression enabled by Facebook, particularly among youth users. The analysis of participants' posts unveiled prominent themes such as family, friendship, emotional expression, seeking recommendations, and valuing others' opinions. These themes underscore the importance of family and relationships in Filipino culture, emphasizing the collective nature of Facebook users in this context. Moreover, assertives dominated as the primary communicative purpose on Facebook, indicating the pragmatic intentions of the participants. Student participants' lack of engagement in social and political issues suggests differing interests and knowledge levels compared to professional participants. The study also revealed the complexity of language use, as longer posts demonstrated overlapping speech acts, highlighting nuanced ways speakers convey meaning. Facebook served as an extension of participants' offline selves, allowing for identity construction through sharing personal experiences, cultural preferences, and opinions. Humor on the platform served as a positive politeness strategy, fostering social connections and group solidarity. Few instances of inappropriate behavior reflected the pragmatic notion of appropriateness in language use, emphasizing the importance of adhering to social conventions for effective communication. Consequently, a proposed code of conduct for Facebook usage aims to address these concerns.

Keywords: Facebook Discourse, Online, Strategies

Introduction:

Language is a powerful tool for individuals to express their identities, as it reveals various aspects of who they are, their social position, age, and affiliations (Coulmas, 2005, as cited in Gervasio & Karuri, 2019). Furthermore, Hozhabrossdat (2015) suggests that linguistic identities can integrate individuals into communities, "creating new ways of being" (p.198). During conversations, individuals maintain their linguistic identities while collectively creating a third space where linguistic repertoires converge or diverge based on the interaction and the positions they consciously or unconsciously adopt.

The Internet, mainly through social media platforms, has revolutionized how people work, interact, and communicate. Taking and sharing pictures, posting updates, and engaging online have become commonplace in the virtual realm. As a result, communication has undergone significant changes, giving rise to new genres, styles, and vocabularies that reshape writing practices. Crystal (2011) observes that the Internet has radically altered language usage, transforming how people appeal to and interact with their online networks. Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) exhibits a unique blend of spoken and written language features, reflecting the hybrid nature of online communication.

The Facebook prompt "What's on Your Mind?" encourages users to share their thoughts with their social network. It allows them to construct identities, connect with specific audiences, exchange information, and engage in discussions. Users carefully consider how to appeal to their network before updating their status, particularly if they seek more likes and meaningful conversations.

The popularity of Facebook has made it a subject of research across various disciplines, as it has become a cultural and social phenomenon. Through status updates, users express their opinions, convey attitudes, shape their identities, interact with others, and strategically appeal to their Facebook networks. However, some posts on social media deviate from offline norms, including sexually suggestive content, taboo expressions, online arguments, and revealing images, especially among female users.

Although no provisions exist from the Department of Education (DepEd) regarding responsible social media use, a collaborative effort between DepEd, Facebook Philippines, and a telecommunications company in 2018 aimed to promote responsible Digital Citizenship among teachers and students in public and private schools. The program



focused on critical thinking online, providing tips for verifying online sources and fostering respect for diverse opinions (Inquirer.Net, 2018). Nonetheless, there is still a need to include such in the school curriculum.

As language evolves and expands on the Internet, language educators face challenges regarding students' inability to differentiate between formal and informal written language. Issues such as misuse of capitalization, punctuation, and uncommon abbreviations arise. Does the Internet hinder people's, especially students, language proficiency? Does it foster a sense of absolute freedom online, allowing individuals to post anything while hiding behind computer screens? Why do people share status updates?

How do individuals establish their online identities? How can language foster harmonious relationships?

The researcher aims to contribute to the academic community by recommending codes of conduct for online behavior through the findings of this study. These are recommended to be integrated into the school curriculum, especially in language classes. These guidelines would outline appropriate behaviors on social media and raise awareness about the extent to which one's true self is revealed online. Additionally, teachers should be well-informed about language changes occurring on the Internet to incorporate them into writing classes, emphasizing the importance of adjusting writing style based on the context.

Objectives of the Study:

This study aimed to conduct a pragmatic analysis of Facebook posts, specifically focusing on how users effectively use language to engage and appeal to their audience.

Specifically, it seeks for answer to the following questions:

1. How are participants' status updates characterized in terms of the following linguistic features?
 - a) Code Switching and Code Mixing
 - b) Abbreviation and Acronym
 - c) Discourse Particles
 - d) Spelling
 - e) Punctuation/No Punctuation
 - f) Emoticons/Emojis
 - g) Capitalization/No Capitalization
 - h) Taboo
 - i) Hashtags
 - j) Coinage
2. How are participants' Facebook posts characterized in terms of theme categories and communicative purpose?
3. How are participants' identities established in their Facebook posts?
4. What facework strategies are utilized by participants in their posts and how are they linguistically implemented?

Literature Review:

The Social Responsibility Theory of Media allows a free press without any censorship but, at the same time, calls on the media to observe self-regulation (Galgitele, 2010). This theory emerged due to conflict between professionalism and self-regulation of the press and pressure for greater regulation of the media (Obe, 2008). The theory emphasizes freedom of the press but prioritizes media practitioners to abide by specific social standards (Obe, 2008). Establishing a code of conduct in the media contributed to the development of professionalism by promoting accuracy, truthfulness, and the dissemination of reliable information. This initiative aimed to elevate journalism standards, protect the interests of journalists and journalism as a whole, and establish consequences for any code of conduct breaches.

Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) Theory focuses on the functions of language; the system part of the name has to do with how these functions are organized (Fontaine, 2013). This theory, developed by Halliday in the late 1950s and early 1960s, emphasizes language as one type of semiotic system organized systematically and represents a resource for speakers to create meaning by selecting suitable options (Fontaine, 2013). In other words, SFL acknowledges that language is itself "full of resources for negotiating community – both across metafunctions and across strata" (Martin, 2010, p. 24). Halliday argues that language structure assumes a less prominent role since it is seen as the outward form taken by systemic choices and not as the defining characteristic of language. Structure, however, is still necessary to express function.

Research Method:

This section describes the components of the study which relate to the research methodology, such as the research design, participants, research instrument, data gathering procedure, data analysis procedure, statistical treatment, and ethical considerations.

Research Design



Cognizant of the primary objective of the study – i.e., to conduct a pragmatic analysis of participants' Facebook posts and exploring how language is utilized to appeal to their audience, the descriptive research design was employed in this study. Descriptive research design involves observing and describing subjects' behavior without exerting influence (Shuttleworth, 2008). It aims to address critical questions regarding how participants' status updates are characterized in terms of specific linguistic features, how Facebook posts are characterized based on theme categories and communicative purpose, how participants establish their identities through language use on the platform, and what facework strategies they employ and how they are linguistically implemented. This research used Content Analysis in analyzing and describing quantitative and qualitative data in terms of linguistic features, themes prevalent in participants' FB posts, communicative purpose, identity construction, and facework strategies in thread interactions in each status update. Since Content Analysis could be either conceptual or relational, the researcher utilized conceptual content analysis wherein the process involves selecting a concept for examination, and the analysis entails quantifying and tallying its occurrence. The primary goal is to examine the occurrence of selected terms in the data.

Participants of the Study

A total of 40 Facebook users were included in this study. These are the researcher's Facebook friends who consistently post online and whose posts gain five likes or more and generate at least three or more comments from their Facebook friends. Twenty males and twenty females were chosen for this investigation, consisting of ten female students, ten female professionals, ten male students, and ten male professionals. Furthermore, participants were categorized according to the following: Students, whose age range is 17-21; and, Professionals, who are College Graduates whose age range is 22-50—all Facebook friends of the researcher. The selected data for this study were the participants' posts from February–March 2020. Data were collected a month after. The participants were chosen based on the following considerations: the frequency of posting on Facebook and the number of their Facebook friends, which should at least be 200, to ensure that the account is active; the length of existence of their Facebook account, which should at least be five years old or more; their consistency of updating their status, which should be at least every day, every other day, or every week; and the FB profile name which should bear the participant's actual name to ensure the authenticity of the information they disclose in their profile. During data collection, however, some participants changed their profile names. The researcher did not have control of this.

Frequency of post means that the participants update their status in the form of text, which may or may not include attachments such as photographs, memes, or videos, or shared a video link, a news link, a meme, or a shared post from another user, at least twice or more per day or each week. However, during data collection, which took place for a month, there were Facebook users (who were pre-selected) who only posted a total of 10 status updates for one month. The researcher did not have control of this. Moreover, only Facebook status updates in the form of texts; or texts with attached photographs, memes, videos, shared video links, a news link, meme, photograph, or another post, were the ones that were subjected to analysis. Posts made on "My Day" were not included in the analysis since the researcher had no access to the participants' friends' comments on them.

Data

The data for this study were the status updates on the "walls" of participants wherein friends can leave messages or write comments on these posts. These were the different posts from February 2020-March 2020. Data were collected a month after. Participants' Facebook posts were recorded and saved for a month using Facebook's status compiler app for future analysis. These posts were either in English, Hiligaynon, Cebuano, Tagalog, or a combination of any of these codes; or texts that attached links, photographs, memes, music, and videos, or posts from other Facebook users that were shared by the participants on their walls.

Due to the varying number of status updates among participants, only 20 were selected for analysis from those with more than 20 posts. Meanwhile, all the status updates from participants with fewer than 20 posts were included in the study. Facebook comments made by the FB Users' friends on their posts were likewise analyzed to determine the facework strategies used by the participants in their online interactions and how they are linguistically implemented. Due to the variability in the number of comments on each participant's posts, the analysis focused on the first ten comments that directly pertain to the participant's post. Furthermore, the analysis included the participant's and other FB friends' replies to each comment, recognizing their significance in understanding the overall conversation dynamics and communication patterns on Facebook.

Research Instruments

Coding sheets were used for the content analysis of Participants' Facebook posts: Linguistic Features (Appendix B, G), Themes Prevalent in participants' FB Posts (Appendix C, H); Communicative Purpose Based on Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts (Appendix D, I); Identity Construction (Appendix E, J); and Facework Strategies in Thread Interaction (Appendix F, K).

Data Gathering Procedure



Forty participants were first chosen based on their frequency of posting on Facebook and the number of their Facebook friends. Twenty males and twenty females were chosen in this investigation: 10 female students, ten female professionals, and ten male and ten male professionals. Furthermore, participants were categorized according to the following: Students, whose age range is 17-21; and, Professionals, who are College Graduates, whose age range is 22-50—all Facebook friends of the researcher.

The researcher also ensured that the account has existed for five years or more, with the account holder constantly updating his or her status every day, every other day, or every week.

For a month, from February 2020—March 2020, the researcher monitored each participant's FB wall to check each post. The researcher then documented the post's date and comments on each post. The posts were saved for future analysis using Facebook's status compiler app. The participants' profiles, including their names, ages, sex, and occupation, were also noted. Only those users who use their real name or identity in their FB accounts were considered by the researcher to ensure the authenticity of the information they disclose in their profile. Following one month of monitoring participants' status updates, informed consent was subsequently obtained to uphold the ethical standards of data collection. The participants were only informed after this to preserve the authenticity of the data. Once consent was obtained, the researcher promptly explained the data collection and analysis procedures. Additionally, the researcher reassured the participants that their true identities would be kept confidential. Since the number of posts for a month varied for each participant, 20 posts were subjected to analysis from participants whose status updates were more than 20, whereas those whose status updates were less than 20 were taken as is.

After the participants gave their consent to use their respective FB statuses in data collection, their posts were scrutinized using Content Analysis, which was analyzed in terms of linguistic features, themes prevalent in participants' FB posts, communicative purpose, identity construction, and facework strategies in thread interactions in each status update. For the latter, the researcher classified the comments as either unmarked, negatively marked, or positively marked behavior. The researcher likewise considered the factors affecting these interactions online: topic, audience, text producers, and site for interaction—in this Study, Facebook. According to Powers and Knapp (2006), as cited in Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas (2013), Content analysis serves as a research instrument employed to identify the existence of specific words, themes, or concepts within a given set of qualitative data, such as a text. By using such, researchers can quantify and analyze the presence, meanings, and relationships of certain words, themes, or concepts. Thus, the researcher finds this method appropriate in analyzing the themes present in the Facebook posts of the respondents, their communicative purposes, identity construction, facework strategies, linguistic features, gender similarities or differences, and interactions through comments gained by their posts. Coding sheets were later prepared for each research question. After that, the data were tabulated to determine the frequency of responses for areas/categories where needed.

Data Analysis Procedure

As for the steps the researcher took to analyze data, the researcher first identified each research question and chose samples for analysis. As mentioned earlier in this Paper, 20 status updates were subjected to analysis. The researcher analyzed each according to linguistic features, themes, communicative purpose, identity construction, and facework strategies. The data were coded into manageable content categories to focus on specific words and patterns that inform each research question. The researcher then decided on the level of analysis. For this study, words; sentences; conversational turns in each thread; and theme categories of each post were analyzed. Next, the researcher examined each status update based on each area: linguistic features, common themes, communicative purpose, identity construction, and facework strategies. Coding for the frequency of concepts appearing in the text later followed. The researcher then decided on how to distinguish among concepts. For this research, data were precisely coded as they appeared on posts. At the same time, words that imply the concept and those that are explicitly stated were likewise coded. The researcher prepared coding sheets for each participant for the linguistic features, themes, communicative purpose, and identity construction. A column indicating the posts and the area for analysis is indicated on the coding sheet. As for facework strategies, the researcher employed a classification system to categorize each post and comment as unmarked, positively marked, or negatively marked. The coding sheet included a column specifying the posts and areas designated for analysis.

Each comment associated with a post was labeled as "C." In contrast, the corresponding replies to each comment were labeled as "R." Sequential numbering was used to distinguish the first, second, third, and subsequent comments and replies. Additionally, a color-coding scheme was implemented to indicate the relationship between comments and their replies visually. Lastly, developing the rules for translating the text codes was done to keep the coding process organized and consistent.

Analysis of the Common Linguistic Features

Status updates in the form of text were analyzed to discover their standard linguistic features using the combined constructs of Hassam and Hashim (2011), Gustilo and Dino (2017), and Gustilo and Dino (2015) on the features of electronic English, namely: code switching/code mixing; abbreviation and acronym; discourse particle; punctuation/no punctuation; emoticons/emojis; capitalization/no capitalization; taboo; hashtag; coinage; and spelling. Wikström's (2014) linguistic pragmatics approach was used to further analyze hashtags' communicative function. Words were



analyzed to determine the use of code-mixing and code-switching, abbreviation, acronym, discourse particle, coinage, capitalization, non-capitalization, coinage, taboo, and spelling. Sentences were likewise analyzed to determine if usage of capitalization and non-capitalization of words at the beginning of every sentence, if punctuation marks were used to end each sentence, and the use of hashtags and emojis between, before, or after each sentence. Below is a sample analysis of linguistic features in one participant's Facebook posts. The same set of sample data was used to demonstrate the different analysis levels according to this study's specific objectives.

Analysis of Communicative Purposes of Posting on Facebook

Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts was used to analyze participants' communicative purposes of posting on Facebook. Individual posts were read, analyzed, and interpreted and then assigned the appropriate speech act category based on the definition of each speech act. The researcher likewise considered the contextual factors that influenced the interpretation of speech acts on each post. These factors included hashtags, emojis, images, the participant's profile, Facebook features, and the overall conversation or thread surrounding the post, as all these provided a deeper understanding of the intended meaning and purpose of the post.

Shifts in Speech Acts

While analyzing participants' communicative purposes behind posting status updates on Facebook, a fascinating finding emerged regarding shifts in speech acts within specific posts. As the researcher meticulously examined each post, delving into the content of every sentence, these shifts became apparent. The units of analysis for participants' communicative purpose in this study are sentences. Since some posts consisted of more than one paragraph, the researcher carefully assessed each sentence and each section individually to determine its communicative purpose, meticulously labeling them accordingly. A double slash (//) indicated the shifts in speech acts within each sentence or paragraph.

Coding the Data

In the analysis of the Facebook posts of the participants, the researcher developed a comprehensive coding scheme covering all the essential items found in the participants' Facebook posts. The contents of the 20 Facebook posts of each participant were numerically recorded. The frequency of means was calculated for FB Status updates in text form or text forms that included attached videos, photographs, memes, video links, news links, shared FB status updates, and other users' comments on these status updates, which was to identify the frequency of occurrence of each linguistic feature, theme category, communicative purpose, the form of identity construction, and facework strategies. For problems 1, 2a, 3, and 4, which centered on the standard linguistic features present in the participants' FB posts; the themes categories; how identity is constructed online; the facework strategies utilized in each post, and how they are linguistically implemented, Content Analysis was utilized. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within some given qualitative data, such as a text (Powers and Knapp, 2006, as cited in Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, 2013).

Validity and Reliability

Validity pertains to the capacity of a test to accurately measure its intended construct (David, 2005). In this investigation, ensuring validity was crucial to collect appropriate data sets and applying precise coding procedures for analyzing the data in line with the research questions raised. The data collected, and the prepared coding sheets were presented to at least three authorities in the field of Linguistics for face and content validity. Corrections to the coding sheets were made and applied where necessary.

Statistical Treatment

This section presents the statistical tools that the researcher employed after the analysis of the Facebook posts of the participants:

For Problems 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, which focused on the linguistic features, theme categories in the participants' FB posts; the participants' communicative purpose; identity construction, and facework strategies utilized; incidences of positively and negatively marked online behavior; and the standard linguistic features, respectively, frequency count, percentage, and rank were utilized. A code of conduct in using Facebook is proposed, which may be integrated into language classes.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher prioritized transparency by informing the participants about the upcoming study as an ethical consideration. However, to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the study's results, the researcher recorded the posts from February-March 2020 before informing the participants.

The study implemented the following measures to ensure ethical practices:



1) Participants were provided with detailed information about the study, and their consent was obtained before data analysis. The consent process occurred after the data collection phase to minimize any potential influence on the validity and authenticity of the data.

2) Participant identity and privacy were protected throughout the study. Participants' names and Facebook friends who wrote comments on each post were covered to maintain confidentiality. Moreover, Facebook friends who were tagged in the post were likewise changed by the researcher to *tagged friends. Additionally, pictures were blurred to safeguard privacy further. Participant names were not included in the coding sheet; instead, they were referred to using coded labels such as FP (Female Professional), MP (Male Professional), FS (Female Student), and MS (Male Student). Each participant was assigned a corresponding number for identification purposes.

3) The study adhered to the American Psychological Association referencing style to acknowledge the works of other authors appropriately to ensure proper recognition of external sources and promote academic integrity.

4) The study maintained high objectivity throughout discussions and analyses. Objectivity was prioritized to minimize bias and ensure the impartiality of the study's findings.

The dataset utilized in the study consisted of Facebook status updates from 40 participants, which were compiled using Facebook's Saved Items feature. It is important to note that these saved posts were only visible to the researcher, further ensuring participant privacy.

Findings and Discussion:

Table 1

Common Linguistic Features in Participants' Facebook Posts

Linguistic Features	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
<i>Capitalization</i>	580	17%	1
<i>Punctuation</i>	494	14%	2
<i>Code Switching/Code Mixing</i>	416	12%	3
<i>Emoticon/Emojis</i>	377	11%	4
<i>No Punctuation</i>	351	10%	5
<i>Discourse Particle</i>	286	8%	6
<i>No Capitalization</i>	216	6%	7
<i>Hashtag</i>	209	6%	8
<i>Abbreviation</i>	202	6%	9
<i>Acronym</i>	136	4%	10
<i>Coinage</i>	121	4%	11
<i>Spelling</i>	34	1%	12
<i>Taboo</i>	27	1%	13
TOTAL	3449	100%	

Table 1 shows the results of the linguistic features in participants' status updates, with 13 linguistic features found in participants' Facebook posts, which consists of capitalization, punctuation, code-switching/code-mixing, emoticons/emojis, no punctuation, discourse particle, no capitalization, hashtag, abbreviation, acronym, coinage, spelling, and taboo.

**Table 2*****Themes Categories Prevalent in Participants' Facebook Posts***

Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
<i>Assertives</i>	488	51%	1
<i>Expressives</i>	197	21%	2
<i>Directives</i>	195	21%	3
<i>Declaratives</i>	34	4%	4
<i>Commissives</i>	30	3%	5
TOTAL	944	100%	

Table 2 presents a quantitative account of the themes prevalent in participants' Facebook posts. The table displays the total number of occurrences of themes in order of frequency, followed by their percentage distribution and rank. It shows the results of prevalent themes in participants' Facebook posts, which showed Personal posts as the prevalent theme identified on the participants' Facebook status, which has a total of 448 occurrences, at 67%; whereas posts about Social Issues, followed with a total of 90 occurrences, at 13.

Table 3***Participants' Communicative Purpose in Facebook Posts***

Table 3 displays the total number of occurrences of speech acts in order of frequency, followed by their percentage

Theme	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Personal	448	67%	1
Social Issues	90	13%	2
Education	89	11	3
Entertainment	46	6%	4
Politics	21	13%	5
TOTAL	694	100%	

distribution and rank. Data shows that assertives is the most common illocutionary act that participants use when posting status updates on Facebook, with 488 occurrences. Directives follow with 195 occurrences; expressives have 197; declaratives have 34, whereas commissives have 30.

Table 4***Online Identity Construction***

Identity Construction	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
<i>Enumerative</i>	369	53%	1



<i>Visual</i>	248	36%	2
<i>Narrative</i>	54	8%	3
<i>Self-Labeling</i>	19	3%	4
TOTAL	690	100%	

Table 4 displays the occurrence types of identity construction in terms of frequency, followed by their percentage distribution and rank. Furthermore, data shows how participants construct their identities online through status updates. Results indicate that *enumerative* has most of the number of occurrences at 369 (53%), followed by *visual*, at 248 (36%), which implies that the majority of the participants inform their audience of the going on in their daily lives highlighting their interests, and at the same time communicating an image or persona that involves strategic use of visual cues to communicate one's identity, values, and beliefs to others.

Table 5
Facebook Strategies Utilized by Participants in their Posts

Relational Work	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Unmarked (<i>non-polite, appropriate</i>)	5,111	70%	1
Positively Marked (<i>polite, appropriate</i>)	2, 108	29%	2
Negatively Marked (<i>impolite/rude, inappropriate</i>)	114	2%	3
TOTAL	7, 333	100%	

Table 5 shows the results of the quantitative analysis of 40 *Facebook* status updates and their separate comment threads, which indicates that 70% of all behavior are *unmarked (non-polite, but appropriate)*. In contrast, 29% are *positively marked (polite and appropriate)*, and only 2% are *negatively marked (impolite and inappropriate)*. Arendholz (2015), who investigated online behavior in 50 message board threads, and who likewise utilized a modified Locher and Watts (2005) Relational Work framework, found 92.3% of behavior appropriate; 85.6% are unmarked; while 7.7% are inappropriate, and where various facework strategies were utilized by participants during the online interactions.

Looking into the results of this study and that of Arendholz (2015) show how participants are trying to maintain their relationships online, especially in their interactions. While Arendholz's study found some *flaming*, violent, passionate outbursts (Hardaker, 2010) resulting from insults, and heated, inflammatory, or incendiary comments, this study found only a few. Paralinguistic tools such as emojis and discourse particles such as *hehe* helped participants "neutralize" online interactions. Moreover, participants' relationships with their *Facebook* network also contributed to less negatively marked online behavior. As previously mentioned in this Paper, a post and a comment are *marked negatively* in cases where it appears inappropriate in the eyes of the interlocutors, say, being over-polite, thus considered inappropriate. Taboo, ironic remarks, and aggressive jokes may be considered impolite and inappropriate, primarily when used between individuals who barely know each other. In this case, it will be classified under this category. Unsolicited comments in posts, or those that seem unfavorable to the user, will likewise be placed under this category. A post and a comment are *positively marked* if it is distinctly polite and appropriate. A post and a comment are *unmarked* if it is counted as appropriate, although a non-polite behavior. Mock-impolite banter understood as joking behavior, will be placed under this category. Taboo, ironic remarks, and aggressive jokes may be impolite and inappropriate. However, this area may be classified depending on the relationship of interlocutors—their familiarity, solidarity, or even a signal of intimacy.

Limitations and Further Research:

This section presents the conclusion formed from the results of this study. A set of recommendations addressed to concerned stakeholders follows.

Conclusions

Facebook has been integrated into the Filipinos' daily lives, especially in providing them with a venue to share offline and online activities—update their network of the goings-on in their lives, share and comment on content, find like-minded others, build and maintain relationships, express themselves, and even construct identities of themselves.



Facebook has facilitated new forms of language use, including capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and abbreviation changes. These linguistic innovations support researchers' observations of language change online, showcasing new language and literacy practices. This language creativity, including changes in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and abbreviations, highlights the pragmatic aspect of language as users adapt their linguistic forms and practices to suit the online context and convey meaning effectively within the platform's constraints. This finding supports Crystal's (2003) and Bodomo's (2009) findings that the emergence of novel language creations and modifications of existing forms demonstrate the creative expression enabled by Facebook. Bodomo (2009) further emphasizes that such linguistic creativity, particularly prevalent among the youth, not only showcases innovation but also reflects the need to keep up with the ever-changing language in the fast-paced world of technology. Furthermore, the observation of language change on social networking sites, as evidenced by new linguistic forms and modifications of existing forms, aligns with the pragmatic notion of language as a dynamic and evolving system.

Participants' posts on Facebook often revolve around personal theme categories such as family, friendship, emotional expression, seeking recommendations, and valuing the opinions of others. These patterns indicate the importance of family and relationships in Filipino culture and highlight the collective nature of Filipino Facebook users. When participants share achievements, family-related content, or greetings for special occasions, they expect positive responses from their FB networks, reinforcing the sense of collectivity or social bonding among other users. Pragmatics acknowledges that cultural factors play a significant role in shaping language use and communication patterns. Thus, understanding the cultural values and norms, such as the importance of family and relationships in this case, provides insights into the motivations and intentions behind participants' language use on Facebook. Moreover, the expectation of positive responses from other FB users when participants share achievements or family-related content reflects the latter's desire for social validation and the sense of collectivity they experience within their Facebook community.

As for communicative purpose, the findings of this study indicate that assertives, or statements expressing a proposition, dominate as the primary communicative purpose on Facebook, which sheds light on the pragmatic intentions of the participants. Student participants' lack of posts about social issues and politics suggests a lack of interest or limited knowledge compared to professional participants, which implies that student participants may have reduced interest or knowledge in these areas. Pragmatics recognizes that social and contextual factors influence individuals' language use, including their interests, knowledge, and motivations. In this case, the lack of political engagement among student participants on Facebook aligns with the pragmatic understanding that individuals prioritize different communicative goals based on their personal preferences and the social dynamics they navigate. As David, San Pascual, and Torres (2019) observe, young citizens often prioritize entertainment over political engagement and demonstrate lower involvement than older citizens. The shifts in speech acts in longer posts demonstrate the pragmatic concept of how a single expression can perform multiple communicative acts simultaneously, thereby reflecting the complexity of language use and the nuanced ways speakers convey meaning in specific contexts.

Facebook likewise afforded users an extension of their offline selves through posting photographs and videos of themselves or with others as well as sharing memes and other content. Participants on the social media platform engage in identity construction by sharing personal experiences, cultural preferences, and opinions. The implicit nature of identity construction aligns with the pragmatic idea that language carries social meaning and that individuals strategically manage their self-presentation to achieve communicative goals. Moreover, participants tend to construct their identities implicitly rather than making explicit statements about themselves which shows that it may be a convenient way of self-disclosure. After all, what better way to tell one's audience that they have such a beautiful voice than by posting a video of themselves singing and getting positive remarks from their Facebook friends? Or when changing one's profile or cover photo, other users 'like' and compliments it? This practice is undoubtedly preferred rather than self-praise, which shows a consensus that humans expect at least some of their wants and needs to be fulfilled by others (Maíz-Arévalo, 2017).

Using humor on Facebook is a positive politeness strategy (Maíz-Arévalo, 2017), fostering social connections and group solidarity (Baym, 1995). Thus, mock-impolite banters among users reveal how their online interactions become an extension and reflection of their offline relationships and boost group solidarity and rapport. Pragmatics recognizes that politeness and humor are essential elements of social interactions, and their presence on the platform highlights their role in online communication.

Few instances of inappropriate behavior on Facebook, such as comments or posts that others find offensive, reflect the pragmatic notion of appropriateness in language use. Users navigate the established norms and expectations of the platform to avoid conflicts and manage interactions proactively, highlighting the need to adhere to social conventions for effective communication. The expectation for Facebook users to behave according to established norms parallels the societal expectations for individuals to follow social norms and be accountable for their behavior. The online environment may provide some anonymity, but the requirement for users to reveal their real names or personal information (Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008) suggests that individuals should act responsibly and consider the potential consequences of their actions. Since many interlocutors already have personal relationships in the physical setting, they may strive to maintain them in the virtual realm, which implies that individuals may align their online



behavior with their offline persona to ensure consistency and avoid potential conflict or negative impact on their relationships.

Furthermore, interpersonal behavior is not only dependent on the context and the users but also largely topic-driven (Arendholz, 2013). How individuals express themselves online, such as the words they use and the topics they discuss, can reveal aspects of their identity and personality. Labov (1972) suggested that language choices can reflect social factors like class, ethnicity, age, and gender. Therefore, individuals may consciously or unconsciously project specific identities or personality traits through their online posts and status updates.

In conclusion, these findings highlight the complex interplay between online communication, social norms, interpersonal relationships, communicative goals, and individual identity, emphasizing the importance of context, topic, and participants in shaping the pragmatic aspects of online interactions.

Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed.

Social media users should embrace and explore the linguistic innovations and creativity facilitated by Facebook and adapt to the online context by experimenting with changes in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and abbreviations while ensuring effective communication. Additionally, they should understand the influence of cultural factors on language use. They must develop a sense of responsibility when engaging with social media platforms, mainly when posting status updates, as these can significantly impact both them and others. Since status updates are an extension of one's offline self, social media users should exercise caution and mindfulness regarding the content they share online. Therefore, users must think before they post, considering that their online activity may influence future career opportunities. Maintaining authenticity to foster genuine connections and avoid potential negative consequences associated with misleading portrayals is also crucial.

Teachers should acknowledge the influence of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) on language and literacy practices on platforms like Facebook. Familiarity with online language innovations and encouraging their creative use can help bridge linguistic variants between CMC language and standard form, particularly in formal written communication. Moreover, they should encourage their students to reflect on their language use on social media platforms and discuss the pragmatic intentions behind various communicative purposes observed on Facebook. Additionally, teachers can create opportunities for students to critically analyze and discuss the role of social media in shaping language use, identity construction, and social interactions, as well as highlight the importance of being responsible online and adhering to social conventions.

Future researchers can explore various aspects of social media, such as identity construction, utilizing different theoretical frameworks. Investigating online interactions in an anonymous virtual setting, specifically Facebook news sites, focusing on phenomena like flaming and trolling, can provide valuable insights. Lastly, curriculum planners should develop educational programs and instructional materials incorporating digital literacy skills into the curricula that promote pragmatic awareness in online interactions and foster intercultural competence among students. It is also recommended that Codes of Conduct on the use of Facebook be included in these instructional materials.

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