

Politeness Strategies of Commenters in Online News Portals

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ABSTRACT

In the midst of the discussions surrounding drug related violence in the Philippines and how people interact with this topic on online platforms not only reflects their viewpoints but also reveals the subtle approaches they take to navigate potentially challenging conversations. This study uses discourse analysis to explore the politeness tactics seen in comments shared on news websites. Following Brown and Levinson's framework. This qualitative study employs discourse analysis to delve into the politeness strategies evident in commentaries posted on online news portals. By applying Brown and Levinson's framework, the study categorizes and examines the utilization of both positive and negative politeness strategies within these commentaries. Results showed that, commentaries were presented utilizing negative and positive politeness. Claim common ground, strategic conflict avoidance, satisfying shared expectations, and social politeness were the commonly used positive politeness strategies. On the other hand, redress other wants of hearer's, communicate speaker's want to impinge on hearer, and maximizing the potential for conflict and confrontation were the negative strategies embedded in the commentaries.

Keywords: Politeness Strategies, Commentaries, Online News Portals

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital landscape, the dynamics of communication have undergone a profound transformation, driven by the proliferation of online dialogical spaces. These platforms serve as avenues for individuals to share opinions on matters of common concern, particularly within the realm of online news portals. However, amidst this technological advancement, a concerning trend has emerged – the erosion of civility in online discourse. The caution exercised in traditional forms of communication to preserve dignity and uphold relationships seems to be waning in the face of anonymity granted by online interactions. Pitts (2010) and Schultz (2010) observe a pervasive incivility in online dialogue, particularly evident in reader comment sections following news articles. While some comments maintain civility, a significant portion devolves into malevolent exchanges, undermining the essence of constructive communication.

Anonymity, as identified by Pitts and Schultz, often emboldens individuals to express themselves in a manner devoid of politeness and respect. This phenomenon raises concerns about the quality of social interaction facilitated by online platforms. Moreover, the absence of vocal and body language cues in written communication, as highlighted by West (2010), further complicates matters, leading to misinterpretation and potential conflict. The impetus to understand and address these challenges has prompted calls for a reevaluation of online commenting practices. Journalists and industry observers, echoed by Rieder (2010), advocate for an end to anonymous commenting due to its contribution to incivility. Wolf (2011) underscores the potential consequences of unchecked online behavior, emphasizing the need for accountability in digital discourse.

Furthermore, the shift in language variation, particularly among younger participants in online communities, introduces nuances in communication norms. Bergs (2016) suggests that the absence of face-to-face interaction leads to a disregard for traditional politeness rules, further exacerbating the incivility prevalent in online exchanges.

Amidst these complexities, this study aims to explore the quality of commentaries within online news portals, with a specific focus on the application of politeness principles in online communication. By analyzing the politeness strategies employed in online interactions, this research seeks to enrich theoretical literature on politeness in digital contexts. Through a comprehensive examination of online dialogue, this study endeavors to shed light on effective communication strategies and foster a more conducive online environment conducive to constructive discourse and mutual respect.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Politeness Theory

Many researchers have contributed different viewpoints to the decades-long scholarly debate on the idea of politeness. Leech (1980) viewed politeness as a strategic way to avoid confrontation, while Brown and Levinson (1978) first proposed the idea as a way to maintain face. The complexity of politeness, however, emerges when academics like Mills (2013) stress context-specific functionality and challenge the idea that politeness is the exact opposite of impoliteness.

According to the framework developed by Brown and Levinson in 1978, politeness is a spectrum that includes both positive and negative politeness tactics. Positive politeness seeks to improve rapport and mutual comfort, whereas negative politeness tries to minimize face threats (Brown & Levinson, 1978; Hill et al., 2012). But to attribute cultures exclusively to one tactic over another is to oversimplify politeness, which is a dynamic behavior (Brown & Levinson, 1978).

Additionally, as Santana (2011) points out, politeness is entwined with cultural norms and values, reflecting societal expectations and shared beliefs (Sifianou, 2010). It facilitates easy communication (Ide, 2009), encouraging deference and respect in interpersonal relationships (Pitts, 2010; Yule, 2009). Furthermore, politeness can be seen as an instrument for controlling interpersonal relationships and reducing the likelihood of conflict (Lakoff, 1990; Fraser, 2008).

First-order and second-order politeness are distinguished by Fraser (2008). First-order politeness is concerned with social conventions and manners; it places a strong emphasis on appropriate behavior and social suitability (Fraser, 2008; Kasper, 2011). On the other hand, second-order politeness refers to practical language use that aims to avoid confrontation and uphold amity (Leech, 1980; Barron, 2012). More specifically, Watts (2013) defines political behavior as a sociocultural determined approach to interpersonal relationships that includes socially acceptable behavior in addition to basic etiquette.

Still, defining impoliteness is difficult. According to Culpeper (1996), rudeness is defined as speech acts that cause harm to another person's face, although a clear definition is made difficult by the variable context in which it occurs. According to Watts (2013), a thorough understanding of politeness and impoliteness must be developed by looking into them as related phenomena.

Because politeness has many facets, studying it requires a nuanced approach. It functions in cultural contexts, fulfills a range of interpersonal roles, and engages in dynamic, rude interactions. To improve our comprehension of politeness in a variety of social contexts, future studies should carry out more investigation into these complexities.

Evolution of Online Comments

The 1990s saw an explosion of Internet service providers, which sparked the widespread use of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), particularly through online forums and message boards that functioned as virtual forums for discussion of news and current affairs (McMillen, 2013). Online contributors are motivated by a variety of factors, such as the desire to share knowledge and voice personal opinions about public issues. These activities serve a social purpose and may also aid in the contributors' personal growth (Milioni, 2011; Nagar, 2011).

However, new research indicates that there may be a drawback to making comments online, with studies indicating that Internet users will be less happy (Mitchell et al., 2011). Anonymized contributors raise special concerns about the detrimental effects of commenting because they can use their anonymity to engage in abusive or offensive speech (Hlavach & Freivogel, 2011; Shepard, 2011). This mistrust also extends to call-in anonymous newspaper sections, where users' ability to remain anonymous may encourage antisocial behavior like "flaming," or exchanging angry and hurtful comments with one another (Diakopoulos & Naaman, 2011). Such conduct not only lowers the standard of online discourse but may also discourage possible sources from participating in fruitful discussion (Diakopoulos & Naaman, 2011).

Although online commenting platforms facilitate social interaction and knowledge sharing, worries about their possible negative effects—particularly with regard to anonymity and antisocial behavior—call for additional research and preventative measures.

Research Question

This study investigated the politeness strategies commenters employ in the online news portals. Specifically, it aimed to answer the question:

What politeness strategies do commenters use in posting comments in online news portals?

METHOD

Data Source and Collection

Data selection is based on readership criteria, with three top online news portals in the Philippines chosen for analysis. Ninety commentaries from these portals, comprising 3 comments from 10 news articles per site, are collected. The commentaries cover various issues, including extrajudicial executions and related topics such as killings by law enforcement, armed conflict, and corruption.

Rigorous steps are taken in data collection, starting with obtaining approval from the Ethics Research Committee. The data consists of commentaries posted on selected online news portals during the specified time frame. Each portal contributes 30 commentaries, ensuring diversity in topics and perspectives represented in the dataset.

Research Design and Analysis

The study employs a qualitative research design to analyze commentaries on online news portals using the framework of Politeness Theory by Brown and Levinson. Qualitative methods, including Discourse Analysis, are utilized to interpret data, emphasizing the theory-dependent nature of qualitative research. Discourse Analysis is particularly suited for studying language use in online commentaries, focusing on serious speech acts and institutionalized talk.

Discourse Analysis is employed to categorize, identify, and analyze Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) and politeness strategies present in the commentaries. FTAs, including threats to the hearer's negative and positive face, are identified through coding. The frequency of each code is recorded to understand patterns in language use. Similarly, politeness strategies, such as positive and negative politeness, are analyzed to discern communication patterns in online discourse. The identification of underlying reasons or causes of extrajudicial executions is based on information extracted from the collected data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will show the results and discussion from the investigation into the politeness strategies of commenters in online news portals based on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory.

Table 1.1: The positive politeness strategy of the commenters in the online news portals.

Positive Politeness Strategies	Sample Commentaries
<p>1. Claim Common Ground</p> <p>Notice/attend to H's wants</p>	<p>C₁: sa wakas malilinis din ang pangalan ni duterte! Mapapahiya yang UN na yan! (Finally, Duterte's name will be cleared! The UN will be ashamed of what they did.)</p> <p>PPC₆: oo nga at mapapahiya rin yung mga dilaw na mga nagbibintang sa kanya! (Yes, it's true and the Yellow would feel shame for all their accusations.)</p> <p>PPC₆: It won't hurt if senate spearheads research and maybe come up with a mandate, right? Anything to curb the drug use menace will help.</p> <p>PPC₂₃: Correct. There will be certainly (be) something that will come out as would answer the question: how are we exactly to know if the killings were simply cover-ups for the involvement of the police in the drug trade, or just simple cases of personal vendetta?</p>
<p>Express interest/approval/sympathy in/of/with H</p>	<p>Comment Thread PPC₉: Comment: like what marcos did during martial law... Reply: Correct!</p> <p>Comment Thread PPC₂₁ Comment: Not only did duterte kill drug lords and hardened criminals in Davao city, he also included street children and petty criminals Reply: ...let's make this issue viral</p>
<p>Intensify Interest for H (use question tags)</p>	<p>Comment Thread PPC₇ Comment: And who cares if all Aquino dies? No one needs them. Biggest mistake of all the Filipino people. Reply: who cares? Briefly someone will, but that too will fade away. I have no problem if no one needs them, do you? The worst mistake Filipinos ever made of all time, are the Marcoses. Don't you think?</p>
<p>Avoid Disagreement</p>	<p>Comment Thread PPC₃₀: Comment: Human rights violations in the Philippines? What about you, the US, and the UK's friendly tie with Saudi Arabia – a place where the term human rights doesn't exist? Reply: They are criticizing that too. Lol. That's the problem kutob ra cla sa sulti (They're just good in talking). Reply: Du30 should do the same ignore it.</p>
<p>Presuppose/assert common and (gossip; speak from H's of view)</p>	<p>Comment Thread PPC₁₇ Comment: these senators are digonggongs cohorts are cancer sa bayan Reply: sayo ang davao, akin ang taguig (malaki revenue sa BGC) (Davao is yours, mine is Taguig for it has huge revenue in BCG)</p>
<p>2. Strategic Conflict Avoidance</p>	<p>Comment Thread PPC₂₈ Comment: ...the DILG has brought stupidity to a new level Reply: ...level 3 pa lang yan, puro kywakyaw ka ng letche ka! (It's still in level 3, yet you speak too much, damn you!) Reply: whatever!</p>

3. Satisfying shared Expectations	well, let's just wait and hope for the best. Yeah. We still have a system of law that processes and punishes wrongdoers. (PPC25)
4. Social Politeness	<p>Comment Thread PPC₂ Comment: kasi naman before accuse the mr. President make sure that its true! Reply: Tama hindi yung basta basta magjujudge ng walang katotohanan. (True, not that he will judge without any truth in it)</p> <p>Comment Thread PPC₄ Comment: kailangan naman nyo munang kausapin and pdu30 bago ang lahat na akusasyon sa Kanya (You need to talk to Pres. Duterte before accusing him) Reply: hayaan mo na at mapapagod din yan (Just let them do it and they will soon get tired)</p>

Presented in table 1 is the positive politeness strategy found in the commentaries. The commentaries were analyzed through Brown and Levinson’s categorization of positive politeness strategies such as claim for common ground, strategic conflict avoidance, satisfying shared opinions, and social politeness. From the sample comments based from Table 1, the use of claim of common ground strategy was expressed in the comment, oo nga at mapapahiya rin yung mga dilaw na mga nagbibintang sa kanya! (PPC₆), and ...Correct. There will certainly be something that will come out as would answer the question:.(PPC₂₃). With the use of oo nga and correct, the speaker establishes a strategy that lets the hearer feel that they are on the same idea. The commonality is that both hearers believe that the killings we’re made to conceal the involvement of the police in the drug trade. In other words, to silence those who knew who are involved among the law enforcers, the suspects were killed. Another way to establish claim of common ground strategy is seen in the comment that expresses interest with the hearer’s inkling.

Comment Thread

Not only did duterte kill drug lords and hardened criminals in Davao city, he also included street children and petty criminals ...

...let's make this issue viral (PPC₂₁).

The response of the hearer in PPC₂₁ shows a positive interest towards what the speakers say about the heartlessness of Duterte on drug trade that even minors, street children, were allegedly killed by Duterte. The speaker reciprocated by indicating some future action which is to make the issue on killings viral or trending. Hence, the speaker avows interest towards the hearer’s feeling.

In addition, avoidance of disagreement was also noted from the utterance ...They are criticizing that too... Lol. That’s the problem kutob ra cla sa sulti (They are only good in talking. PPC₃₀). The statement implies that many are just good verbally, but no one in the government would stop drug trade because many are from the government itself. This further implies that these people just kept on commenting on EJK and the work of the government, but that is all they can do. The lol which means laugh out loud is the act that the speaker does when he or she delivers the lines as manifestation that he or she is amused of the comments about the issue on EJK. The speaker here shows cooperation to the hearer by affirming the former’s statement a good rapport. In this manner, smooth communication is achieved and damage to both faces is lessened.

Comment Thread

...these senators are digonggongs cohorts are cancer sa bayan...

...sayo ang davao, akin ang Taguig, malaki revenue sa BGC

(Davao is yours while Taguig is mine because of high revenue on BCG) (PPC17)

It was observed from Comment Thread the use of pre-suppose/assert common ground strategy by speaking in behalf of the hearer's point of view. In the thread, it is obvious that the hearer presented his negative comment about senators in the Philippines accusing them to be Duterte's allies. The hearer even built a negative image of the senators, describing them to be digongongs, a blended word from digong, referring to Duterte and gonggong meaning dumb. In other words, this hearer consider Duterte's cohorts as non-intelligent cannot think of better things to do. In the thread, the speaker's response speaks in behalf of the hearer, the line, sayo ang davao, akin ang taguig (PPC17) tells us that the speaker is from Davao while the hearer is from Taguig. He or she is trying to voice out whatever unaired opinion she has on the hearer. In addition to positive politeness strategies employed by the commenters is the conflict avoidance strategy as presented in the comment:

Comment Thread

...the DILG has brought stupidity to a new level

...level 3 pa lang yan, puro kywakyaw ka ng letche ka

...whatever! (PPC28)

This strategy can be measured in terms of the degree of effort put into the avoidance of a conflict situation. Conflict avoidance is one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is dodging the possibility of producing discomfort to the hearer. In the comment thread above, the hearer showed an act of avoidance by saying ...whatever... (PPC₂₆) in reply to the negative and uncivil comment of the hearer. This word suggest that the hearer does not care with what the speaker says, hence, he does not need to say more words to avoid igniting a conflict since the speaker is somewhat inviting a conflict with the use of violent words.

Comment Thread

...well, let's just wait and hope for the best.

..Yeah. We still have a system of law that processes and punishes wrongdoers. (PPC₂₅)

From the Comment Thread, the sample comment, ...Yeah. We still have a system of law that processes and punishes wrongdoers...(PPC₂₅) suggests that in the Philippines, wrong doers are punished as accepted system, hence, addiction on illegal drugs and drug trading are never left unpunished once caught. This is a manifestation of politeness since the speaker has established a set of social values and consider other interactants by satisfying shared expectations.

Comment thread

...kailangan naman nyo munang kausapin and pdu30 bago ang lahat na akusasyon sa kanya (You need to talk first to pdu30 before you judge him)

...hayaan mo na at mapapagod din yan (Just let them and they will get tired eventually. (PPC₄))

Furthermore, social politeness strategy is observed from the sample in comment thread, in which the proper social conduct and tactful consideration were practiced through etiquette and social appropriateness. The use of ...bago ang lahat ng akusasyon (...before all accusations...) is an expression that implies consideration of other facts and evidences that will prove allegations before throwing judgement to a person or to an issue. Likewise, speaker of PPC₄ showed politeness by not giving harsh comments but an advice instead to the hearers that those who condemn EJK will get tired of commenting and soon will learn to accept that this has become a reality in the Philippines.

For linguists, as Cutting (2012) notes, politeness does not refer to the social rules of behavior such as letting

people go first through a door. Politeness is the term we use to describe the extent to which actions, including the way things are said, match addressee’ perceptions of how they may be performed (Grundy, 2012).

In the claim for common ground strategy, the categorizations found in the commentaries were notice to hearer’s wants, expression of interest, intensify interest for hearer, avoidance of disagreement, and assertion of common ground. These categories conform to Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness (1987). Results were anchored to Holme’s (2013) criteria of politeness which refers to behavior which actively expresses positive concern for others.

In commentary sample notice to hearer’s wants, PPC23, the speaker politely suggested the senate to spearhead a research pertaining to drug addiction to solve this problem once and for all and come up with a mandate. The speaker wants the government to set a goal for this long time problem which was also approved and sympathized by the hearer as he or she says “correct” in PPC23. This result is also seen through the lenses of Hill et al. (2012), which explicates that the assertion of common ground is an expression of rational ability to achieve certain goals. Politeness is socio-culturally dynamic property changeable thorough interaction with others (Kasper, 2011). To maintain the smooth communication flow, speakers, as rational agents, accept its vulnerability (Leech, 1980) and are prepared to cooperate with others (Ide, 2009).

Strategic conflict avoidance strategy was also noted from the data gathered. According to Leech (1980), conflict avoidance is a strategy that can be measured in terms of the degree of effort put into the avoidance of a conflict situation. In sample commentary PPC30, the speaker tried to avoid conflict by diverting the blame not to the CHR in the Philippines but to countries where CHR has no voice like US and the UK. He or she tried to hit whoever the hearer by diverting the issue at them, hence, treat is lessened.

Finding of this study showed that commentaries used conflict avoidance strategy as a method of reacting to conflict, which attempts to avoid directly confronting the issue at hand. Methods of doing this can include changing the subject (Sifianou, 2010), putting off a discussion until later (Yule, 2009), or simply not bringing up the subject of contention (Fraser, 2008). In addition, Lakoff (1990) defined politeness as a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interaction.

Satisfying shared expectations strategy was also observed from the data collected. According to Sifianou (2010), an act can be categorized as politeness when it is seen to be a social values which instructs interactants to consider each other and share understanding that is common to both hearer and speaker. In addition, Fraser in 2008 presented four perspective of politeness and one is on conversational maxim. The conversational-maxim view, suggested in the works of Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983), finds its grounds in Grice’s (1975) cooperative principle which assumes cooperation between the interlocutors and assure a successful communication.

Moreover, results showed the utilization of social politeness strategy which according to Kasper (2011) is the proper social conduct and tactful consideration of others. Fraser (2008) views this strategy as etiquette and social appropriateness of conduct during encounter. Likewise, Watts (2013) proposes that polite behavior is the enhancement of individual’s own image in the eyes of the others.

Positive politeness strategies seek to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face (Brown and Levinson, 1978). These strategies are used to make the hearer feel good about themselves (Lakoff, 1990), their interests or possessions (Villki, 2008), and are most usually used in situations where the audience knows each other fairly well (Grice, 1975).

Table 1.2: The negative politeness strategy of the commenters in the online news portals.

Negative Politeness Strategies	Sample Commentaries
Redress other wants of H’s (to correct something unfair or wrong)	Comment Thread NPC₃₂ Comment: Mayor Espinosa was brutally murdered by cops while he was in

	<p>detention. This is the new" due process" Idioterte- Style</p> <p>Reply: mali ang sinabi mo hindi cops kundi CIDG ang nagdala ng search warrant para kay mayor espinosa (you were wrong, it was CIDG and not cops who brought the search warrant for mayor Espinosa....)</p>
<p>Communicate S's want to impose on H</p>	<p>Comment Thread NPC₁₁</p> <p>Comment: gagawin talaga lahat ni de lima para hindi malaman na kasabwat sya sa drug trade sa bilibid.</p> <p>Reply: out of topic</p> <p>Comment Thread NPC₁₄</p> <p>Comment: splitting hairs... We are known to love "extra" ... Extra-marital, extra- massage, extra rice...</p> <p>Reply: ang layo nyo naman po sa punto ng news dito... Parang nasa Earth lang kami, nasa Mars po kayo...lol (your point is too far from the news...As if we are on earth and you are on Mars)</p>
<p>Maximizing the potential for conflict and Confrontation</p>	<p>Comment Thread NPC₁₉</p> <p>Comment: I'd trust EU MEP's rather than a developing country's statements</p> <p>Reply: And who's asking for your trust, no one cares</p> <p>Comment Thread NPC₁₅</p> <p>Comment: No EJKs , yet the president encouraging ordinary citizens to go out and commit murder Yeah, right</p> <p>Reply: come to my country and you'll be dead if you won't stop illegal drugs.. U (You) moron</p>

Illustrated in Table 1.2 are the negative politeness strategies entrenched in the commentaries. Categorization under negative politeness strategy is the redress, communicate speaker's want to impinge on hearer, and maximizing the potential for conflict and confrontation. One notably observed category used by the commenter is the redress strategy, which is trying to correct an undesirable or unfair situation.

Comment Thread

...Mayor Espinosa was brutally murdered by cops while he was in detention. This is the new" due process" Idioterte- Style.

...mali ang sinabi mo hindi cops kundi CIDG ang nagdala ng search warrant para kay mayor espinosa (you were wrong, it was CIDG and not cops who brought the search warrant for mayor Espinosa....)

In comment found in thread, the speaker imposed that Mayor Espinosa's death case did not undergo due process of law which implies that the cops committed a grave violation of law by killing an alleged "druglord" even at the midst of his helplessness since he had no weapon to protect himself while in detention cell. He implies that the cops got the style from Duterte who does things like an idiot as reflected in the phrase "Idioterte style".

However, to counter this statement to present redress strategy, the comment, ...mali ang sinabi mo...(NPC32) was expressed. In the commentary, the hearer established the idea that the speaker presented a wrong information about the topic, thus, the hearer corrects it to make it desirable. Besides, the speaker does not have any proof of Duterte's involvement in the killing, so it was just proper that the speaker's statement was contradicted. Also, communicate speaker's want to interrupt on hearer strategy was observed in the comment:

Comment Thread

...splitting hairs... We are known to love "extra" ... Extra-marital, extra- massage, extra rice...

...ang layo nyo naman po sa punto ng news dito... Parang nasa Earth lang kami, nasa Mars po kayo...lol (your

point is too far from the news...As if we are on earth and you are on Mars)

In the comment, ...ang layo nyo naman po sa punto ng news dito..., the speaker hits the hearer by saying that the information posted by is out of context, it is far from the message of the news. He went on by comparing the location of the former to the latter. This strategy was used to interfere the hearer and restrict him from giving additional comment. Furthermore, the most often used negative strategy is maximizing the potential for conflict and confrontation. It was observed that most of the comments to the news articles posted in online news portals contain profane words that creates arguments and expression of strong negative emotion. In comment thread 19, the speaker says that he trusts the words of the presidents of European countries rather the Philippines which is a developing country. The hearer then retaliated an implication that Filipinos need not to ask for trust from the speaker for he does not care about it. This can be seen from the sample comments:

Comment Thread

...I'd trust EU MEP's rather than a developing country's statements

...And who's asking for your trust, no one cares

Comment Thread

...No EJKs , yet the president encouraging ordinary citizens to go out and commit murder Yeah, right

...come to my country and you'll be dead if you won't stop illegal drugs. U (You) moron

In the comment threads above the speakers made use of negative statements such as ...no one cares ... (NPC₁₉) and ...u moroon... which connotes uneducated or unlearned (NPC₁₅). In addition, speaker blames President Duterte for the extrajudicial killing in the Philippines for encouraging citizens to kill those who are addicts and pushers, but the speaker definitely does not approve of EJK. The hearer then refuted and released a negative statement by threatening the speaker not to come to the Philippines if he or she is into using illegal drugs. This comment insinuated that EJK truly exists in the Philippines as in ...you'll be dead if you won't stop illegal drugs...(NPC₁₅). These expressions are potential expressions that may invite conflict and confrontation. The main focus for the speaker in using this strategy is to assume that he is imposing on the hearer, and intruding on other's face. Therefore, this automatically assumes that there is some social distance and awkwardness in the situation

In the data gathered, presence of negative strategy was observed. The commentaries fall under redress, communicate speaker's want to not impinge on hearer, and maximizing the potential for conflict and confrontation categories.

Fraser (2008) elaborates on four possible perspectives on politeness. One is the social norm view which presents politeness as socially appropriate behavior, pleasant towards others. However, there were commentaries in this study that were expressed in a form of redress where one commenter corrects the other, imposing that he has expressed incorrect information over an issue as in NPC 32. The speaker was corrected by the Hearer that it is not the Philippine National Police (PNP) but the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) who killed Espinosa. The commentary does not embody social norm and does not possess socially appropriate behavior, thus contradicts Fraser's view.

Moreover, Grice's (1975) conversational maxims which assure a successful communication was not evident in the commentaries since it contains negative opinions and views that maximize the potential for conflict. Brown and Levinson (1987) emphasized in their theory that politeness strategy is a total conflict avoidance.

Lastly, the face-saving view (Fraser, 2008) which defines politeness as a linguistic behavior with the objective of preserving and/or enhancing one's face was not found in the commentaries under negative strategy. Data implies that there were expressions of intention to interrupt hearer's wants. Lakoff (1990) explained that negative politeness is a system that creates barrier to the interpersonal relations that hinders the designed interaction by

maximizing the potential for conflict and confrontation.

CONCLUSION

On the whole, Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies were present in the commentaries specifically the utilization of negative and politeness strategies. It was further noted that commentaries were presented utilizing negative and positive politeness. Claim common ground, strategic conflict avoidance, satisfying shared expectations, and social politeness were the commonly used positive politeness strategies. On the other hand, redress other wants of hearer's, communicate speaker's want to impinge on hearer, and maximizing the potential for conflict and confrontation were the negative strategies embedded in the commentaries. Based on the findings of this study, commenters may be able to evaluate his stand and determine on what particular message the act is suggesting to the hearer. With knowledge on linguistic behaviors as categorized by politeness theory, commenters may become conscious of the ideologies and standpoints embedded in each comment and of how these categories have helped in the realization or attainment of such ideologies.

Ethics and Committee Approval

Crystal (2008) points out that uncertain copyright and privacy issues embattle the Web. To date, there is no question that the swarming used of social networking sites or web applications blur the aspect of privacy and publicity. Subsequently, disclosing information and revealing secrecy of conversations are tantamount, and this speaks the integrity and ethics that a researcher is keeping. In this study, the name, details, and accounts of the commenter were dealt with utmost confidentiality. In particular, I blacken the account details of the commenter and never mentioned their names in the context of the analysis. This also confirm that ethical approval was acquired from the Research, Innovation, Development, and Extension office in Agusan del sur State College of Agriculture and Technology, Bunawan Campus, First Semester, 2023-2024.

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