

STUDENT-INSTRUCTOR LINGUISTIC POLITENESS STRATEGIES AND SOCIAL PRACTICES IN COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT: *This ethnographic study explored the Linguistic Politeness Strategies (LPS) used in instructor-student conversations through Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) and the social factors that influence these strategies. The non-participant observation method was used and thick description was employed as a technique for analyzing data, describing verbal and non-verbal elements, and determining other social behaviors in context. Results showed that LPS is observed in some social behaviors among Filipinos which include deference to authority, application of the one-in-need approaches-first principle, and politeness in making requests. The negative Linguistic Politeness Strategy was most commonly used along with hedging in making apologies and requests. Lesser power required more effort in making requests, and greater power suggests more control in the flow of communication. The less familiar the one is with the other, the greater the social distance and the more formal the language use becomes. The more inconvenient the imposition, the more LPS were used to increase the possibility of the imposition being addressed.*

Key Words: Linguistic Politeness Strategies, Negative Politeness, Power, Social Distance, Imposition, Computer Mediated Communication, Social behavior

INTRODUCTION

Communication, whose etymology could be traced to two Latin terms *communis* (common, public) and *communicare* (to impart, inform, to make common), is an indispensable part of human existence [1–3]. Whether verbal or non-verbal, it aims to connect and bring people together regardless of the objectives, ideas, and emotions involved, and let people interact with each other [4].

It is also part of human nature to look for means to facilitate faster and better communication. The advent of technology brought about a drastic change in the way people connect and communicate. Changes in the environment, such as the COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to the widespread use of different tools and gadgets to facilitate interaction, build models of communication, and program social media platforms until such time that synchronous and asynchronous interactions gradually became an interwoven way of life [5-7].

Consequently, the term “digital world” or “digital environment” were taken to mean environments where methodological approaches and digital tools are combined, and where digital networks are constantly used and relied on for various functions and purposes such as communication, coordination, and expression. These are readily found in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) where the internet, digital and smart devices, and other technologies are widely used [8–10]. Different virtual communities populate the virtual world and connect, depending on which media, network, services, or application they use to pursue common interests or goals; and since these take place asynchronously, the usual concerns on time and space, as well as geographical and political boundaries often do not pose problems [8, 11].

In educational institutions, for instance, there was an abrupt shift in the teaching and learning process in recent years from face-to-face classes to purely online classes, video conferencing, and virtual interactions between teachers and the students. CMCs became a part of the new normal, and both the learner and the teacher are enclosed in completely different contexts and experience different manners of adjustment [5, 6, 12, 13].

In online interactions, particularly between teachers and students, there would be expected protocols or codes of behavior that would be integrated. Facebook Messenger and other similar social media platforms which are being widely used for communication even in the academe have

common and distinct characteristics and restrictions and can deliver services according to the individual or group needs of the users. Several users could be accommodated in a group chat (GC), and at the same time, a separate one-on-one exchange of messages between two users who are also chatting in the said GC could take place simultaneously. Following the generalities of a typical face-to-face conversation, one could approach another user, chat with each other, end the chat for the meantime (or not respond to the message at all), and pick up where they ended at a later time or date.

Over time, and especially if there are many members in the GC, there could form a noticeable observance of cultural elements evolving from social behaviors such as who observes social practices, who sets the norm and who follows, and what happens to those who break these norms or to those who do not want to participate. There could also be strategies for communicating ideas, such as linguistic politeness strategies, depending on the goal that the speaker wants to achieve. Observable differences may also be apparent with time [14].

Linguistic politeness is culturally-defined as it is observed to thrive in social practices that conform to the norms of a particular community [15]. Strategizing polite behavior focuses on the awareness that in every conversation, the listener’s image or face needs to be addressed. This need is more pronounced in collective cultures than in individualistic cultures and focuses on power, social distance, and degree of imposition. [16] in [17] and [18] discussed four politeness strategies: the Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off Record. These politeness strategies serve to appeal to and/or save face, project the speakers or listeners as valuable members of the society [19] and thus uphold friendship and avoid face threatening acts or FTA [18, 20].

An earlier study of Indonesian participants suggested that politeness is undergoing a degradation process as seen in virtual conversations of the younger generation. The terms of address, proper diction, non-verbal cues, and linguistic devices are not given much consideration by the younger Indonesian participants during virtual or face-to-face communication compared with the older participants [17]. This apparent absence of politeness, the researchers proposed, may imply that social norms are being disobeyed, and in turn may create disappointments and loss [21].

In terms of gender, [22] observed that females use more politeness strategies in a more frequent manner compared with males, although gender is not the only factor because in Computer Mediated-Communication (CMC), the context of conversations influences the participants' use of various language patterns and politeness strategies. Using Spreadly's theory and ethnography to analyze findings, this view on gender was supported by [23] and [24] in later studies stating that women use more politeness strategies and demonstrate polite behavior more often.

[25] found out that communication patterns include those which do not meet the standard variety of the language, emoticons, and other nonverbal representations and enunciation. Power and degree of relationship between the speaker and the listener influence the choice of utterance and these are strategized through linguistic politeness using both internal and external modifications.

It is in this light that this research endeavored to describe the verbal and non-verbal politeness strategies that are used in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), the factors that influence the use of these strategies, and the observable social behaviors that are reflected therein.

METHODS

This qualitative employed virtual ethnography to study particular linguistic and social behaviors associated with the use of Computer-Mediated Communication. As such, it does not deviate very far from the ethnographic methodology in terms of basic principles, although it would necessitate a different analysis in the organization, especially in terms of time and space.

The domain of data is a series of Facebook Messenger conversations between a female freshmen student and a female instructor and such domain enabled the transportation of messages and information between the participants. The non-participant observation method is used so as not to influence the flow of conversation. The researcher obtained permission from the participants and fully informed them of the purpose and the results of the study. Thick description is also used as a technique leading to the analysis of the data and to describe not only the verbal and non-verbal behaviors but also the context of the conversation, and in the process traces the factors that influence the choice of strategies and the patterns of cultural practices in context. The data were first divided into parts and then analyzed according to politeness strategies and social factors influencing the choice of these strategies [16, 26].

RESULTS

The Participants and the Context

This research involves an exchange of messages between an instructor and a student in a Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) using Facebook Messenger over a period of 12 days.

The student is a freshman, female, and a beneficiary of a scholarship sponsored by the local government unit of the city where the student resides. At the end of every semester, the LGU will require the scholars to submit a complete set of grades from all the subjects that their scholars have taken. She is also a class representative and the admin of the GC used by the class. She monitors how her classmates are faring and regularly updates the

instructor about problems and issues that her classmates are experiencing.

The instructor is a regular, full-time female faculty in a state university. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the mode of instruction for the entire class this particular semester was purely online – via google meet, Zoom, and the LMS of the university.

In a more informal setting though, the class has a group chat or GC via Messenger where the instructor and the students interact about their requirements, topics, and other matters in a more informal manner. Still, there are other personal matters where students would opt to contact their instructor for a personal message or PM and have an individual conversation with them.

The topics discussed in the PMs are those that the student does not want her classmate to read. It gives the student more confidence to talk about the topic without the knowledge of her classmates.

The context involves the student's request to submit her major requirement, a portfolio, in Messenger, because according to her, she cannot submit in the university's LMS as there were no options available for her to navigate. The request was made five (5) days before the deadline for submission of final grades. The requirement to be submitted is the link to the student's ePortfolio, a generally lengthy document, so it would require some time to read. The data were taken, transcribed, and analyzed in five (5) sections.

Section 1: Student's initial request

The student was the first to approach the instructor. In her request to post the link of her requirement to Messenger, the student used the Negative LPS to ask permission to do something outside the guidelines given by the instructor. This supported the findings of [27] who also found Negative LPS as a preference of the participants in making requests but contradicted those of [26] who found out that students most often use Bald On politeness strategies in making requests. The statement was task-oriented as it was about accomplishing a submission process, and the way it was stated suggested an intention to minimize the imposition [16].

The conversation started with a greeting, a request, and justification, an expression of gratitude, and ended with a yellow heart. The student mixed two codes, English and Cebuano, a native language of the Philippines, and a non-verbal expression in her sentences. There were polite expressions used [23], but capitalization and punctuation were not observed [28], and the message contained patterns that do not meet the standard language [25]. The communication process was started by the student who was the first to approach the instructor. The approach was explicit, suggesting urgency [29], and the manner of writing of the student showed that she was already comfortable and well-versed in using the platform to communicate with instructors [30].

The yellow heart emoji used at the end of the request is non-verbal [25] and suggested that the student felt comfortable exchanging messages with the instructor and that she meant well with her request. This supported the research findings that emojis sometimes substitute non-verbal cues by suggesting the intention or emotion of the sender of the message tone [31-34]. Used properly, they could soften or tone down the verbal message even if there

is an imposition in it [35] and therefore contributes to good interpersonal relationship and rapport [3].

Power is a factor that is seen to influence the choice of strategy of the student. Here, the student was at a lower rank and has lesser power, and yet is the one making an imposition. It was then expected to see evidence of effort in observing formalities and maintaining harmony, as was customary in Filipino society, but these were surprisingly very minimal, considering that she was addressing her instructor [17, 23]

The instructor replied with a thumbs-up emoji and then the word “ok” right after the thumbs up and this suggested that the instructor is more particular about the nuances of writing in an instructor-student context [17]. The instructor, having higher power deemed this emoji confirmation enough [32], although she affirmed it verbally afterward. This was a very simple but understandable response that may ease the mind [3] especially of the person making the request and may also affirm the quality of social relations in a certain context [16].

Though the student used a yellow heart emoji in the first statement, the confirmation was not given any emoji response and there was no expression of gratitude. This is expected to be expressed by one whose request has been granted [17]. This was noteworthy considering the initial style of communication used by the student.

The link for the ePortfolio and another message that carried the same style of communication used in the beginning statement was sent later using the Bald On Record LPS. The instructor did not reply but it was indicated in Messenger that she has seen the message. Silence may not be a verbal message and is not really considered a politeness strategy but was noted here, nevertheless, because it affected the choice of communication style and manner of showing linguistic politeness on the part of the student.

The student later replied to the link that she sent with a period. This was a contrast to the previous approach of the student and to the general principles of social interaction especially in urgent situations [29] which expected students to pay attention to polite language when approaching an instructor [26]. On the other hand, this also supported the view that social media platforms generally adopt communications mechanisms that do not follow the accepted patterns of standard language [28]. This was also not within the accepted patterns of politeness because it suggests that the speaker had lesser regard for social distance and power, and gives more imposition.

Again, having more power in this context and being the one being imposed upon, the instructor did not reply. This punctuation mark may function as a prompt, but cannot fall under any politeness strategy because it only intensified the imposition being made, as there are no hedges and no effort to lessen the effect on the receiver [17]. And having no reply despite being able to read the message, may also suggest that the receiver or the instructor felt the impact of the imposition and was not happy about it.

This is one of the limitations of reading asynchronous messages; the period is suggestive of many meanings, and a face-to-face conversation could have been more definite where all the other cues are present for better interpretation. Communication could fail, if not given due consideration, because the intention of the sender could be

inconsistent with the interpretation of the receiver [36] and because of poorly worded messages [21, 37].

Section 2

The Instructor gave a direct response that the submission was still incomplete. The student asked what was lacking. This time the rules of sentence formation were more carefully observed [26]: the first letter was capitalized, and there was a question mark. Here, the student applied Bald On Record LPS according to the context of their conversation [22] which was different from the previous punctuation message and realized that she has to follow the rules of formalities if she wants to make progress [3].

This also implied an increase in the social distance [25, 26]. The instructor made clear that her opinion mattered and the student sensed it, which explained the sudden observance of formalities in writing to avoid troublesome social interactions [38], especially in Computer-Mediated Communication [39]. The student employed the said LPS to convey that she was paying attention and was ready to do what the instructor told her to do [40].

This strategy did not work on the instructor as she replied vaguely that there are so many lacking documents. She then imposed power and established a clear boundary on the student-instructor relationship by using Negative LPS and saying that the student should check the layout of her output because it was incoherent, although she also inserted “pls” to lessen the imposition of power. The instructor gave no chance for negotiation and maintained their social distance [35, 40].

The student did not argue, negotiate, or give any excuse. Instead, she immediately accepted the feedback and promised to act accordingly [25, 40] using the Negative LPS. She still followed some rules in writing, but some punctuations were missing [28] and there is the indirect acknowledgment that she submitted an output with lacking parts. Again she ended with a thank you. The word “ma’am” was correctly spelled in all the sections, which suggested that the student was very careful in writing the word to address the instructor and maintain a degree of respect and social distance [25, 26] as expected of a student. The response itself was aimed at appeasing the instructor through a promise to redo the requirement and resubmit “later.” The instructor still maintained the upper hand and did not give any response but the Messenger app showed that she had seen the student’s reply.

Section 3

Section 3 was very much a one-sided activity on the part of the student. After five days, this was already past the deadline for submission of final grades. The statement started with the usual Negative LPS style of communication used in Section 1, a consistency indicating that it was her usual way of writing when she approaches her instructors. The ending was a thank you, with a “very much” this time.

After almost an hour, another period was sent, just like the one sent in Section 1 where it would be assumed that the intention was the same. A follow-up message was sent by the student the following day using another Negative LPS. However, the instructor did not open Messenger and was not able to read these.

This added sentence used a new approach, the introduction of the concept of God, something which was not present in their previous conversations. Also, it was written in a complete sentence and observed proper capitalization and

punctuation [23, 25, 30], a clear observance of power and social distance [40], along with hedging to minimize imposition [41]. There was a hint of pleading on the part of the student which implied that she was earnest for an answer, as indicated by the mention of God in the sentence. Two days later, another message was sent by the student asking if her submission still had a chance of being accepted. This is an Off Record Strategy as she did not give a direct question about her grade. She was aware that the deadline for submission of grades was June 30, and that she submitted the requirement on July 1. She was worried that the instructor ignored her submission and would eventually replace her P grade with a failing grade and the matter was already very urgent to her [29] because she had to submit complete credentials to continue her scholarship.

Section 4

The next message was sent the next day and was completely stated in English, with commas where they should be and appropriate punctuation, suggesting a very strict observance of formality in language use [20]. There were very minimal grammatical mistakes indicating how careful the student was.

It started with a greeting, and a mention of her complete name, course, and section. What followed was an apology and very evident hedging [27] in a statement using Negative LPS. The use of “so much” suggested some exaggeration on the part of the student, as if the messages were much of a bother to the instructor who was not replying up to that time. The last phrase in the sentence was more direct: she asked the instructor when her grade would be submitted. The sentence was formulated to look like an appeal but had some hints of demand as she asked for a definite date of submission even though she knew that the deadline for submission of grades has already passed [20, 35]. She was also hinting some degree of urgency to the statement [29] because she was required to submit her grades in 2 days' time. She admitted that the delay in submission was her fault, followed by the reasons why. These were not revealed in the previous messages. It was only after she was given a deadline to submit her grades for her scholarship and she thought the instructor was ignoring her that she felt compelled to give reasons for the delay in submission: physical and mental health issues. This development from her end gave more detail as to why the student, despite being a class representative and admin of their class GC, and who was aware of the deadlines and other details, was not able to submit her requirement on time. The honesty was evident in her statement which made it more sincere. Deference to authority (Power) was also evident in this statement which was recognizable in her message tone [32].

These reasons for not submitting on time look valid. First, the university asked the instructors to show compassion to students who may be having anxiety or mental health issues due to the pandemic and to be considerate of the student's plight. Second, the situation happened during the pandemic – a situation where one was advised to stay at home or even self-isolate if some symptoms of COVID-19 were observed. Since the student was sick, the most probable advice for her would be to rest and stay at home or self-isolate. Hence, she may not be able to do any school-related activity for the duration of her sickness. As a class rep, she was fully aware of these.

She then proceeded to another sentence which was crafted so as not to make her appear too demanding and to point out that even if she was in a predicament, she knew her place. With evident hedging and still maintaining social distance and recognition of Power, she stated that she understood and respected the decision of the instructor, and would wait until the instructor was ready to post her grade. The student thanked the instructor for her “thoughtful consideration” despite the unresponsive behaviour; this served as a clue that the student expected the instructor to consider her submission as it was the right thing to do [22]. The ending statement again has “God bless” which aimed to lessen the social distance that the instructor established and may also function as a hint that the student was trying to foster a better relationship through her words [23].

The instructor responded by saying that she has seen the submission and proceeded to explain why she was not able to respond immediately to very persistent messages. After justifications, the instructor proceeded to gain the upper hand and retain power and social distance.

The student was reminded that she cannot always get what she wanted when she wanted it and that there were processes that even faculty should adhere to. It should also be noted that this was the end of the second semester of the school year, which meant that the registrar's office was giving priority to graduation matters. There was no attempt to use a politeness strategy and that highlighted the importance of power in the communication process [40]. She reacted negatively to the reasons the student gave for late submission but later apologized for being blunt. She then informed the student that her change of grade form was already being processed.

The student was relieved that the instructor replied as shown in her message. Unlike the previous sentences where she started with greetings, she started her reply using Positive LPS by thanking the instructor “so much” for responding to her concern, that she understood and respected the process, implying that they had a common view of things [40]. She also decided to tell more about how she lost focus in her studies balancing school activities and carrying responsibilities as the eldest daughter. She ended with a direct expression of appreciation for the response, and “God bless” which becomes more frequent and suggested that the student was succeeding in her attempt to foster a better relationship. Again, some grammatical mistakes are observed but there were no problems in capitalization and punctuation. The student was reassured and was back to her usual writing style again.

Interestingly, the instructor did not respond negatively to this as she did when the student first stated these reasons in previous messages and instead gave a thumbs-up emoji. The way the student's message was stated reflected more sincerity as perceived by the instructor, hence the thumbs-up emoji. This signified that the excuse and gratitude of the student were accepted. The intention of the student at the start of the request was already received and acknowledged by the instructor, that the flow of communication changed favorably based on the context of the conversation [22] and showed that they both knew how to be flexible in some instances to accomplish objectives [23].

Section 5

The last section contained a positive atmosphere as the student thanked the instructor for something using Positive

LPS and added a yellow heart. This was the second yellow heart sent by the student. It was apparent in the previous sections that the student used emojis sparingly [34] and placed them in statements where their function was to foster better relationships [42], in this case, it could be seen as a pre-designed form of expression of gratitude [32] and [33] and happiness [43].

The instructor seemed to get the idea immediately, so she asked if the P grade has been changed already, which was confirmed by the student who used another Positive LPS and gave another thank you with a smiley face at the ending – the first instance of a face emoji in addition to the heart. This showed that the student was now interacting more freely and happily [43] and was indeed very thankful [32, 33].

The instructor once more succeeded to gain the upper hand by being calm and by giving unsolicited advice to the student through a Negative LPS, remembering that the student was a scholar and was facing a lot of responsibilities. She ended with the Korean expression “Aja!” which was translated as “fighting” or “don’t give up” or “keep fighting/moving forward” [44]. In other words, this was an encouragement and deemed by the instructor as an appropriate level of language for the younger generation [45].

This encouragement was obviously appreciated and deemed agreeable by the student [31, 42] because she reacted to the statement with a red heart emoji – also the first in this set of series.

The student gave a promise using Positive LPS that she will do her best to achieve good grades in the coming year and added another smile [42]. This statement was also given a heart reaction by the instructor [42] which affirmed that emojis also have other functions aside from expressing plain emotion [32, 34]. It is noteworthy that in the last part where more sincere statements were exchanged, more emojis were also used for messages that may not be adequately given in words [34].

Linguistic Politeness Strategies and Social Factors Influencing the Strategies:

Both student and the instructor employed Linguistic Politeness Strategies (N=14), but in terms of frequency, the student used more politeness strategies. The most frequent strategy used was Negative Politeness, Bald On Record, Positive Politeness, and Off Record.

Table 1: Linguistic Politeness Strategies used by the Instructor and the Student

| Participant | Linguistic Politeness Strategy (LPS) | | | | Total |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|----------|---------|------------|-------|
| | Negative | Positive | Bald-On | Off Record | |
| Student | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 12 |
| Instructor | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 7 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 14 |

All three social factors influencing communication according to [16], namely power, social distance, and imposition were observed to be present in the sections. In terms of power, the instructor is at an advantage. There was a great social distance between the instructor and the student, and the imposition was made by both the student (Section 1, 3, and 4) and the instructor (Section 5 and 2).

DISCUSSION

I. Linguistic Politeness Strategies

It was observed that the person who employed more linguistic politeness strategies was the one making the imposition. In the data, the student used the strategies more often than the instructor and was the one who approached first.

This is reflective of a Filipino culture “*Kung sino ang may kailangan, siya ang lumapit*” (whoever is in need should approach first) and is observed not only between people of great social distance but between those who have close relationships. This does not necessarily mean that the person requested does not know about the need, as in the case of the instructor in this study, but that the effort to resolve or meet a need should start from the person affected, who therefore should be the one to make the request.

Other practices observed in this study that reflected Filipino culture were deference to authority and being polite when making a request, especially when one knew that it was made because the person making the request is at fault and granting it would absolve him/her from the fault or mistake. This would necessitate that the person who would grant the request was not forced. The decision should then be accepted by the one requesting and if it was contrary to the request, it will not be taken against the person who made the decision. The closer the parties are, the more bargaining and pleading may be observed from the person making the request, and sometimes, it would also be harder to refuse.

A. Negative Politeness Strategy

The Negative Politeness Strategy was the most frequently used Politeness Strategy in this study and was used by both the student and instructor.

Hedging was used alongside this strategy particularly in instances when there were apologies, alibis, promises, and commitment from the person using the strategy. In the case of the student, she used alibis in Sections 1 and 4, apology in Sections 3 and 4, and commitment in Sections 2 and 5. Effort in maintaining a good relationship on the part of the student was also noticeable.

B. Bald On Record

Based on the data, the Bald On Record Politeness strategy was an option in making requests in instances when the request was urgent, when the person making the request was not very close in terms of social distance from the person being requested, and when the request needed a definite answer.

C. Positive Politeness Strategy

The Positive Politeness Strategy was used only by the student in this study. This strategy was targeted toward the instructor and was aimed at expressing gratitude and gaining her agreement. This would make sense in asking for permission and showing that someone was thankful. The positive face of the person who granted the request or imposition was given importance.

D. Off-Record Politeness Strategy

This study showed that in requests or impositions that needed direct or specific answers, this strategy was not commonly used. In the data, when the student used this strategy, it was not even directly answered by the instructor.

II. Social Factors Affecting the Choice of Linguistic Politeness Strategies

A. Power

The conversations between the instructor and the student were affected primarily by power, and as such, directed how much social distance there should be and in what manner the imposition was to be made.

The student had the lesser power between the two and was expected to exert more effort in the communication process. It was noticeable that the lesser the power, the more effort was expected to be exerted, and in this study, it meant the use of hedging, avoidance of conflict, use of formal language and address, and more elaborate expressions such as pleasantries, apologies, and alibis.

The instructor had more power between the two, and was the one who set boundaries, decided whether to reply or not, and controlled how the situation should go.

Silence is an observed manifestation of power and control. In several instances, the instructor did not reply to the messages of the student, and the student would change her approach. These were observed in Sections 1 and 3.

B. Social Distance

Social distance as a factor was also evident in the study, as the instructor would imply that the student should know her place and that she cannot get what she was requesting instantly because there were processes that needed to be followed. It also implied that the student cannot use terms demonstrating solidarity or being “in” the same group or level as the instructor because they were not equals. Hence, in all their conversations, the student was observed to maintain a certain degree of respect and social distance expected between an instructor and a student.

C. Imposition

The data in this study pointed out that it was the responsibility of the requesting person to minimize the imposition with the intent to maximize the possibility of his/her request being granted, especially if the request would give much inconvenience to the person being requested.

It was noteworthy, however, that the instructor also gave two impositions, but having the greater power, she did not pay much attention to hedging, apologies, or alibis. Instead, she used “please” or “pls” and gave the imposition directly. It was immediately acknowledged by the student which may be because the imposition was done not to give inconvenience but to improve her academic performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data gathered, the following conclusions are made:

- The LPS that is most commonly used is the Negative LPS which uses hedging as reflected in apologies and requests. Other strategies include Bald On Record LPS for urgent requests that need definite answers between people who have great social distance, Positive LPS to reflect gratitude and respect, and Off Record LPS which is the least commonly used for impositions that need definite answers;
- The one with lesser power exerts more effort in making requests, and the one with greater power controls or directs the conversation;
- Lesser power requires one to exert more effort in making requests, and greater power suggests more control in the flow of communication;

d. The greater the imposition and the more inconvenient, the more LPS is used to maximize the possibility of the request being granted or addressed; and,

e. The use of LPS is evident in some social behaviors among Filipinos such as deference to authority, application of the one-in-need-approaches-first principle, and politeness in making requests.

Future researchers are encouraged to develop the findings of this study and incorporate the Facework and Face Threatening Act Theory for a more in-depth analysis. Implications to the teaching and learning environment may also be integrated for a more innovative study which may further shed light on the present educational environment involving virtual interactions and communication.

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