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**Exploring Teacher-Student Interaction in a Synchronous Online Modality:
A Critical Discourse Analysis**

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ABSTRACT

The rise of online education, prompted by challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, has revolutionized the education landscape and challenged the traditional norms and communications that have characterized communication in the education sector. This research, drawing on the interplay between Critical Discourse Analysis and Sinclair's IRF model, peers into how language power is played out in cyberspaces of a virtual classroom. The study traces language's hidden yet palpable influence in shaping power relations through an examination of various online engagements. Findings from the study show that teachers use rhetorical questions and affirmations to guide discussions and retain power based on Sinclair's IRF model. On the other hand, Wodak's CDA framework brings out the hidden power dimensions that lie unnoticed in language, which seems inclusive but seeks control. The outcome confirms how language influences power dynamics when teachers use linguistic strategies to shape narratives and dictate conversations. The study reveals strategies instructors utilize in General Education courses at Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges, Philippines. While appearing democratic, rhetorical questions and affirmations maintain the teacher's authority as they help create an illusion of equality. The paper emphasizes the necessity of understanding language-power interplay in online education and advocates for including a course component devoted to language and power dynamics in teacher professional development programs. This awareness creates inclusive environments in online learning spaces where various voices are recognized, encouraging shared knowledge development. This research illuminates the intricate nature of language and power, laying the foundation for informed online learning teaching practices.

KEYWORDS: Online education, Critical Discourse Analysis, IRF model, language-power dynamics, virtual classroom interactions

Introduction

The field of education has experienced a significant transformation over the recent years, brought about by the adoption of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Fairclough's (1992) analytical framework has established itself as a ground-breaking approach to unearthing concealed, ideological-power-oriented patterns within texts. This study aims to explore the dynamics of teacher-student interactions in online classrooms, utilizing CDA to reveal how language enacts and reinforces power structures. The purpose of CDA is to deconstruct language, picking it apart layer by layer, stripping away hidden meanings and extracting connotations woven into it, thus making visible societal processes that are otherwise invisible in casual viewing. CDA is critical in developing students' critical thinking in the educational sphere. Therefore, it facilitates their ability to discern the hidden ideological presuppositions concealed beneath the texts, inviting them to interact more profoundly with the materials. In this case, teachers are facilitators of critical inquiry, guiding the learners through scaffolded activities.

This was further exacerbated by the emergence of online education, which was greatly facilitated by the sudden and unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, marking the transition to a new epoch in learning dynamics. But, traditional face-to-face classrooms have become virtual spaces where learning once was most intense. This change, however, is not just logistical; it constitutes an epochal change in the very nature of education as an interactive encounter. Cole et al. (2021) argue that online interactions have made access easy but have raised many problems requiring innovative measures.

Discourse Analysis is an instrumental approach to studying language, which delves deeper into human communication than mere sequences of words. Fairclough (2013) describes it as encompassing both spoken and written language, as well as semiotic communication, focusing on the various methods of meaning construction and representation. Beyond its linguistic elements, discourse acts as the 'stuff of society,' embodying ideologies, power structures, and subjectivities within any given society, according to McGregor (2004). This broader understanding is vital as it frames language as a sociological activity, where Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), according to Wodak and Meyer (2001), exposes the underlying injustices, inequalities, and power abuses concealed beneath the surface of interactions.

Building on this framework, CDA is recognized for its ability to transcend disciplinary boundaries, integrating sociolinguistic theories with educational practices to explore how language shapes and is shaped by educational contexts. Gunnarson, Linell, and Nordberg (1997) emphasize that discourse is socially constructed, interacting dynamically with other institutions and social structures. This interaction reveals the power of CDA as a tool for educational researchers, where, as Wodak and Meyer (2009) note, it dissects language layers, showing the embedded beliefs often hidden in metaphors and conceptual expressions. The approach is especially practical in educational settings as it unravels the intricate play of language and power, a theme explored extensively by Fairclough (2013).

However, the relevance of CDA extends beyond traditional classrooms into the rapidly evolving domain of online learning. The shift towards virtual education, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has surfaced unprecedented challenges in pedagogy, particularly around student engagement and interaction quality, as noted by Cole et al. (2021). Moreno-Marcos et al. (2020) further discuss how these digital learning environments, while offering flexibility, also introduce new challenges, such as technological barriers and the need for personalized attention. These issues

necessitate innovative approaches to interaction that consider the nature and quality of relations between students and teachers, reshaping the educational landscape.

As online learning environments become more prevalent, a critical need emerges to understand the intricacies of interactions within these spaces. This study aims to bridge this gap by employing CDA alongside the IRF model to scrutinize discursive patterns and hidden power dimensions inherent in online conversations. The transition to online learning has not only transformed the higher education sector but also fundamentally shifted classroom dynamics, making the understanding of knowledge power dynamics in the virtual classroom crucial for maintaining discipline, student engagement, and effective teacher-student relationships, as demonstrated by Hagenauer et al. (2015).

Furthermore, the emergence of digital literacy competencies highlights the evolving demands on both educators and students within online environments. Meyers et al. (2013) and Pettersson (2018) underscore the importance of developing digital competencies that align with the realities of web-based education. In this context, understanding the variables that influence perceived learning success becomes essential for devising strategies that effectively manage power structures and create productive online learning settings, as explored by Kang and Im (2013).

The COVID-19 epidemic influenced the higher education sector, changing the way we deliver online courses, supporting hybrid formats, and improvising bioscience curricula (Bashir et al., 2021). Such a shift proves that learning about barriers to success in online courses should serve as a starting point for professional development and change management for future online offerings.

Within the frame of an online learning environment, Huda et al. (2018) give evidence of a new approach to the educational environment, which is online learning, and discuss the influence of big data and emerging technology. Such knowledge about radical new learning environments can be key for teachers, and it can facilitate the management of power relationships in an online classroom.

Pedagogy's dynamics are highly dependent on teachers' and students' interactions in a classroom, whether in physical or virtual learning settings. Vandenbroucke et al. (2018) conducted a meta-analysis referring to the predominating role of teacher-student interaction domains characterizing executive functions mainly due to the general structure of teacher-student power interactions in the online classroom.

Exploring the discourse represented by teacher-student interaction through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in synchronous online modes is essential in becoming aware of who is in power and in what actions it manifests in our student engagement, discipline, etc., and the discourse of our relationship with teachers, especially when teaching English. This may be an ultimate step towards uncovering and designing successful teaching modules of the digital space that rely upon digital literacy and emotional function in the relationships of teachers and learners. Introducing CDA is relevant to English teaching as it proves to align with the theme by offering a critical lens of evaluating patterns of interaction while tending to teach improvement and learning outcome enhancement in a digital context.

The study draws on two fundamental theoretical frameworks: Sinclair's IRF model (Atkins & Brown, 2001) and Wodak's (2001) Critical Discourse Analysis. Using linguistic and institutional approaches, Wodak developed a structured model examining communication patterns, initiatives,

problem-solving procedures, and verbal negotiations. The framework offers an intricate perspective on interactions, highlighting the value of empathy and active engagement in communication. It is essential for evaluating the quality of online educational interactions. In addition, the IRF model provides a stage-by-stage analysis of the content of classroom discourse, dividing it into initiation, response, and follow-up stages. The model serves as a lens to explore the depths and completeness of teacher-student interactions in online classroom settings, thus highlighting power dynamics and instructional efficacies.

The study proposes blending these frameworks to scrutinize online interactions among students and their teachers to illuminate some of the dynamics of virtual classrooms. The research aims to reveal the communication strategies using Wodak's categories and analyze the sequential flow of discussions using the IRF model. The combined approach enhances our understanding of online pedagogy for practice purposes. To design viable online educational strategies, one must comprehend how empathy and active engagement manifest online and how the IRF model operates in virtual settings. In conclusion, these insights will help design online learning platforms and improve pedagogical practices that enhance virtual education quality.

This study explores the complexities of teacher-student interaction in the online classroom. The study seeks to use the powerful instruments of Critical Discourse Analysis and the IRF model to deconstruct the ideologies and power structure concealed in these interactions. A wise analysis strives to gain profound knowledge about the nature of online education and makes significant contributions to the discussion around current educational processes. Simply put, this study is a significant leap forward in untangling the online academic complexities, leading to a better understanding of this emerging education model.

The current paper addresses the issue of online interaction between teachers and students to explore the success of communication strategies in virtual learning environments. The study objectives include exploring the dynamics of virtual interactions, evaluating communications methods, and assessing power imbalances in virtual educational contexts. The study examines the points mentioned earlier, which would offer valuable information about specific features of online teacher-student communication and add value to comprehending efficient approaches to distance learning.

Methodology

Research Methods

The study is based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a linguistic theory that explores the relationship between language and power in social practices (Janks, 1997; Fairclough & Kress, 2001; Rogers, 2011). CDA aims to reveal how language reflects the underlying power relations, ideologies, and social inequalities. It also explores the intricate link between language and power dynamics in virtual learning environments (Rogers et al., 2005).

By using CDA, the researcher can explore language use and ideologies. Ideology can shape teaching methods, curriculum choices, and power relations between educators and students in education. This analysis can disclose education's underlying assumptions, ideals and cultural aspects by examining language through a critical perspective. It explains the cultural and social aspects of the virtual learning environment to understand this topic.

In virtual classrooms, it takes a different approach to communication than would be used in face-to-face encounters. The CDA allows us to analyze these strategies in minute detail – by spoken word, chat messaging, and forum discussion. The study aims to discover effective communication patterns and how they influence power dynamics by analyzing how lecturers and students engage with each other using language to assert authority, dissent expression, and negotiate ideas.

Participants

The participants in the research study were four (4) educators and 172 students from different undergraduate programs within the College of Arts and Sciences at Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges, Camarines Sur, Philippines which included: Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies, Bachelor of Public Administration, Bachelor in Human Services, and Bachelor of Science in Mathematics during the second semester of the 2022-2023. It was intentional that people were chosen from different programs to obtain various viewpoints and experiences. The diversity enabled a comprehensive exploration of language and power dynamics in virtual learning environments.

This decision concentrated on general education courses since they are commonly open to a wide range of student majors – making the student population diverse. Knowing how power operated in such a diverse collective became necessary for capturing these complexities. Furthermore, the study focused on virtual learning environments, acknowledging that the popularity of online education was rapidly growing. The online participants also gave insights about the specific challenges and inherent power dynamics of digital classrooms, which indicates the changing face of education today.

To achieve this, the study involved interactions from various classes to cover a wide range of online learning scenarios. Different classes helped capture multiple communication strategies used. It is relevant in viewing any new developments or changes that may have occurred in contemporary online education methods and technologies in the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023. Names used in the study are pseudonyms of the participants.

Data Collection

The researcher observed and analyzed the selected Google Meet classes during data collection. For Purposive Communication class, 63 minutes were the total duration of the online class; 74 minutes for Science, Technology, and Society; 82 minutes for Gender and Society; and 88 minutes for Philippine History. Various courses from different disciplines within the College of Arts and Sciences were selected to provide a multifaceted angle from the world of virtual interaction. Four online courses were chosen purposely to have knowledge of different aspects of educational dynamics in various settings.

The main dataset was obtained from class discussions conducted by the teachers through Google Meet. These invaluable artifacts captured virtual classrooms' language, power relationships, and interaction patterns. With this, the researcher explored real conversations, which offered more opportunities to study effective communication strategies teachers and learners use. The researcher complemented the dataset with direct observations and recorded class discussions. The data were gathered using all-encompassing methods in the course of an extensive study that was based on the lessons' content. Both video and audio were recorded. This allowed the researcher to look into the classroom dynamics and the environment atmosphere in the online classroom setting.

The transcribing of all the audiovisual materials was done verbatim to strive for a concise analysis. Although the whole recording was transcribed, those that were directly related to the issues dealt within the paper were analyzed in the course of this research. By focusing on the essential relationships between teachers and students, the researcher established evidence that led to answers to the research questions; in addition, the data gathered generated a picture that encapsulated the online classroom as a whole.

The transcription was done manually. There were two other intercoders, who were language majors, who helped the researcher transcribe the recordings. Since the Philippines is an English as a Second Language (ESL) country, different courses on subject matters are usually taught in the English language. In the Philippines, English is not just a subject for schools at all levels; it is also a medium for the conveyance of all subjects in schools and colleges. The Philippines has become one of the leading countries with English as the most spoken language, and the language used is dominant in all three sectors: government, media, and business. Learning the English language in education is seen as an embodiment of enabling Filipino students to maintain their competitiveness in the job market on a global scale, especially in sectors such as information technology, customer service, and healthcare, where proficiency in English is a desirable skill. Also, English as the common language can bring together the country's linguistic diversity, which is robust across its various ethnic groups.

The dataset is not only large but also multi-dimensional. The participants included educators and learners from different disciplines, contexts, and perspectives. The diversity provided a rich dataset with a multifaceted perspective on language-power dynamics. This diverse participant pool was used to capture various communication strategies ranging from the authoritative language used by teachers down to the subtle assertiveness used by students.

The dataset was appropriate in-depth and offered a strong base for analyzing the complicated language-power interplay. The research examined conversations and direct observation and delved into implicit power dynamics; it also dug up less apparent characteristics like how gestures, facial expressions, and pauses can affect virtual communication. The multiple ways of gathering data enabled diverse and holistic interpretation, leading to understanding the intricacy of language and power in virtual learning settings.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study was extensive and uncovered the intricate levels of virtual dynamics, communication channels, and the understated but relevant aspect of power in online classrooms. The analysis used a qualitative approach to explore the diverse interactions between teacher and student, trying to unpack the hidden patterns and subtleties that form the current power dynamics in virtual education.

The research involved qualitative analysis exploring virtual classroom conversations and direct observation between teachers and students. With many kinds of data available, the study has thoroughly analyzed the two parties' communication strategies. The main aim of the analysis was to uncover the inherent characteristics of the interaction between teachers and students in online classes. Language choices, rhetorical strategies, and the style adopted while conversing with the learners were analyzed to ascertain the teachers' role in guiding the discussions. In addition, a study on how students reacted to these strategies was conducted: their engagement level, assertiveness, and openness to the information received.

In addition, the analysis explored the different types of communication channels utilized during the online classes. The study extended beyond the verbal exchanges to focus on writing communication, such as chat messages and forum discussions, which shaped power dynamics. The text data revealed how the students expressed their views and sought explications or contested concepts, significantly shaping the virtual classroom's power relations.

In the analysis, central was the evaluation of the efficacy of different techniques used by the teachers and students. In addition, the research aimed to discover the nuances of power relations and how authority was asserted and challenged in the virtual sphere. Rigid coding methods were applied to classify and structure the qualitative data obtained during the analysis. The themes and patterns that emerged from the coded data facilitated a systematic investigation of the power issues and communication strategies.

The analysis explored the virtual dynamics behind communication channels and elements of power in virtual classrooms, providing an understanding of the nuances behind teacher-student interactions. This understanding established the ground for a thorough exploration of language and power in online learning environments, providing a deep insight into the complex nature of language and power.

Ethical Considerations

During the research process, ethical guidelines were carefully adhered to. All participants gave informed consent, indicating voluntary enrollment in the study. Privacy and confidentiality were ensured, keeping the identity of both teachers and students. The study adhered to principles of honesty and decency while carefully reviewing the online communications in the selected classes, guaranteeing the participants' security and confidentiality.

Results and Discussion

Navigating Global Conversations: Cultivating Cross-Cultural Communication in Purposive Communication

Data Extract 1: Purposive Communication Offsite Synchronous Class

1 T1: During our previous session, we delved into the subtleties in successful communication approaches. Now we shift our attention to the practical use of these strategies in actual conditions of life. I

2 T1: In many countries, communication skills are necessary. In our previous analysis we looked into these ways, combining linguistic subtlety with grammatical concepts, comprehending their crucial importance for the integrated world. I

3 T1: Now that that is out of the way, let us dig a little deeper. Can you identify or describe these communication methods in terms of today's international scene? Let's explore together. Would you give me a second to call your classmate into the conversation? (Continues discussing) I

4 T1: And what is 'Working Memory' about? As a cognitive structure, working memory includes the temporary storage of information that is processed along different cognitive pathways and is vital for communication among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds in today's world. I

5 T1: Picture speaking to someone of a different culture. But how does information disseminate among these interactions across boundaries? I would like to include your classmate in our conversation. I

6 T1: I would love to hear your thoughts. What is your perception and reception of information in cross cultural dialogue? Any volunteers? Hey, Mr. Ramos! I

7 S1: Hello, Sir? R

8 T1: Hello, Angelo! Regardless of the cultural context you find yourself in, I hope you're having a great day. I

9 S1: *Likewise, Sir. R*

10 T1: *Could you describe the way you have been observing information in cross-cultural talks? By what cognitive powers do you use to bridge the communication gaps between countries? R*

11 S1: *Sir, gumagamit po ako ng cognitive abilities ko para ma-perceive and maintindihan ko po yung message, as well as ma-adjust ko rin yung patterns ko in communication.*

[Sir, I apply my cognitive abilities to perceive and understand the message, as well as adjust communication patterns for successful understanding across different cultures.] R

12 T1: *Thank you, Angelo. That certainly is a precious technique especially in inter-culture. For example, this applies when talking about different languages and cultures. I*

13 T1: *Am I making sense to all that follow me? For instance, semantics is concerned with semantic memory, which is retained involuntarily in the brain and is vital when it comes to international negotiations.*

14 T1: *Next, please share with me the episodes or semantic/episodic memories of your own when situated in a larger context. Will you give some incidents from life? It's your turn, Angelo Ramos. Based on your experiences? I*

15 S2: *Ah, Sir. Good morning. R*

16 T1: *Good morning, Angelo. For example, if you have had experiences from the past or events from last year, describe how cultural nuances influenced your semantic memory before knowing about a particular global event. I*

17 S2: *Noong Grade 8 po ako, namatay po isa sa aking family member and the reason could not be explained po. Napakahirap po talaga sa akin noon, and may mga cultural variations din po for mourning rituals.*

[For instance, when I was in Grade 8, one of my family members passed away and the reason could not be explained. Back then, everything was difficult for me, highlighting cultural variations in mourning rituals.] R

18 T1: *I see, Angelo. That is one factor that has molded your recollection in the form of episodic memory which you have just responded. I appreciate the opportunity to learn from this global experience. Anyone else want to add anything? How about you, Ms. Andrea? R*

19 S3: *Sa Semantics of English po namin, nag-research po kami noon and I realized na it's about understanding the nuances of language in global communication. Na-discover ko na may problematic aspect sa semantic memory ko po.*

[I began researching into the subject of semantic English and realized it was about understanding the nuances of language in global communication. That is when I discovered my problematic aspect in my semantic memory.] R

20 T1: *Interesting insights, Andrea. Certainly, this makes our understanding of the global dimensions of communication more complicated. So, anything more or maybe a cross-cultural commentary?*

This excerpt of discourse on the Purposive Communication class discusses the subtle use of various communication strategies and practices in the global arena. The teacher facilitates a participatory environment and encourages students to examine communication techniques critically. This discourse with open-ended questions and collaborative exchanges constructs the space of knowledge co-construction. From the inviting “*Let’s explore together*” to the affirming “*Thank you, Angelo.*” That is a wise approach towards shaping an environment conducive to learning, which extends beyond basic instructing and becomes a mutual exploration of the world of effective communication across borders.

Using CDA as a framework, this dialogue is revealed to have hidden and rich layers of communication dynamics. Inclusive phrases and affirmations make the teacher’s linguistic choices become linguistic bridges that tie together the teacher and students into a shared quest for meaning. The linguistic strategies reflect Paulo Freire’s critical education theories based on his pedagogical methodology (Gadotti & Torres, 2009). The reciprocal conversation also creates a dialogic space where ideas are integrated through interaction to develop shared knowledge. These discourse markers, such as “*I’d like to hear your perspectives*” and “*Can everyone follow my train of thought?*”, create an atmosphere which is characteristic of the dialogical philosophy promoted by Mikhail Bakhtin (Renfrew, 2014).

This interaction can be understood as a reflection of society’s globalized mode of communication. The need for fine-tuned communication skills in cross-cultural encounters is reflected in emphasizing an understanding of diverse cognitive processes such as working memory and

semantic memory. Facilitation as teacher is similar to the Sociocultural theory of Lev Vygotsky, through which one believes that social interactions lead to cognitive development (McLeod, 2014). The discourse highlights the intersectional nature of language, cognition, and culture by emphasizing memory and perception. On the other hand, it expresses Hall's concept of high context and low context communication culture, where the emphasis on shared experiences is in line with high context and is implied (Kim, Pan, & Park 1998). This classroom discourse embodies the intricacies of global communication in general, wherein understanding is shared, and mutual respect is crucial.

It aligns with Fairclough's critical discourse analysis regarding how language can subvert power structures (Fairclough, 2013). The dialogic nature is very similar to the ideas of dialogic educating; both focus on the collaborative creation of common sense based on mutual respect (Wells, 2000). Moreover, the assimilation of cultural cognition by examining semantic and episodic memory supports the view of cognitive anthropologists such as Dorothy Holland and Margaret Eisenhart, who advocate for the cultural construction of cognitive processes (Holland & Eisenhart, 1990). This decodes the intricate nature of the Purposive Communication class discourse. It mirrors pedagogical techniques and is a mini-world of global communication puzzles in which respect, understanding, and shared knowledge constitute the basis for successful intercultural dialogue. In this profound analysis, discourse is revealed as a sociolinguistic artifact representing the essentiality of communication in today's interconnected globe.

Unraveling the Nexus of Science, Technology, and National Identity

Data Extract 2: Science, Technology, and Society Offsite Synchronous Class

1 T1: *When we look at Science, Technology, and Society, we explore the intricate interrelation among these branches and the bedrock of society. Now, it is time to explore how science and technology have played a significant role in defining who we are and where we are heading as a society. I*

2 T1: *Science and Technology are not just mere tools; they are the builders of our nation's future. To construct a sustainable and prosperous society, we have to understand the societal implications behind them. I*

3 T1: *What does Technology do to our Cultural Identity and National Pride? Let's examine this together. Before, I will ask your classmate to express his/her views? (Continues discussing) I*

4 T1: *Let us think about how science can improve our national healthcare system. With technology, physicians have been revolutionizing medical practises, leaving individuals healthier and workers stronger. I*

5 T1: *Let's now consider technology enabled learning. Technology integration in classrooms create a generation which is hungry for knowledge vital for nation building. I*

6 T1: *I suggest you think about this: how do scientific advances help us improve national security? Let's explore this dimension. Does anyone want to start the talk? What do you think about this Ahmed? I*

7 S1: *Hello, Sir? R*

8 T1: *Hello, Ahmed! It is your insights that help to unveil the complex interplay between technology and national security. I*

9 S1: *Sir, sa tingin ko po, ang mga surveillance technologies ay talagang nakatulong ng malaki sa security ng ating bansa. They've reinforced our security system effectively, making us all feel secure as a whole.*

[Well, sir, I think surveillance technologies have reinforced our countries security system very well making us secure as a whole.] R

10 T1: *Precisely, Ahmed. Such developments underscore the interplay of science, technology, and protecting our country. (Continues discussing) I/F*

11 T1: *How does genetic engineering in agriculture for food security implicate our country? This will be important in the continued application of sustainable farming methods for economic advancement of the country. (Continues discussing) I/F*

12 T1: *However, it is time to take a look at the moral aspects. What is the balance between technological progress and societal well-being? What are your thoughts about this dilemma, Ms. Sarah? I*

13 S2: *Magandang umaga, Sir. Ethical concerns ang kasama dito. Progress is driven by technological advancements, at mahalaga na ang mga ganitong pag-unlad ay makatugon sa ating kultura at hindi taliwas sa layunin ng environmentalism.*

[Good morning, Sir. This involves ethical concerns. Progress is driven by technological advancements and it is important that such advancements conform to our cultural values and do not contradict the objective of environmentalism.] R

14 T1: *Well said, Sarah. This is precisely what science, technology, and society represent in the context of our nation-building. (Continues discussing) I*

The given text extract illustrates the proceeding of a talk in a classroom about “Science, Technology and Society in nation building”. As the teacher addresses this issue rhetorically, the teacher views science and technology as pillars of the nation’s identity. The teacher skillfully leads the conversation by asking questions and making affirmations. The teacher shapes the narrative and highlights some central ideas like healthcare, education, security, and dilemmas that come with technological advancements.

Unpacked are the teacher’s intricate strategies in manipulating the language and power dynamics within the discourse. The use of rhetorical questions such as “*Can one understand the full implications of genetic engineering in agriculture to our national food security?*” plays a double role. First, it asks for a reaction; it provokes students to participate in learning actively. Second, it implicitly indicates a teacher’s power, presenting the issue and marking the limits of the dialogue. The interrogative format presupposes enlightening answers and strengthens a teacher’s role as a knower.

Moreover, the language choice underscores a synergistic connection between science, technology and the country, representing that they are interconnected entities. Such phrases as “*architects of our nation’s future*” and “*synergy between science, technology, and our nation’s protection*” create a discourse on scientific progress related to national pride and defense. This methodology portrays science and technology as fundamental components of the country’s identity and image. Intentionally employing inclusive pronouns such as “*our nation*” cultivates common ownership and a joint identification towards students and teachers that eventually reinforce the power dynamics embedded within the discourse.

The discourse reflects a power structure, and the teacher is portrayed as a controlling figure navigating the narrativity and constructing a students’ reality. Rhetorical questions (Kaufman, 2004), inclusive pronouns (Uzum, Yazan, & Selvi, 2018), and positive adjectives establish and maintain a power dynamic. At the same time, discourse builds a story about knowledge as something powerful, enlightening the students’ thinking and asserting the instructor’s rightness (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2001). Implicitly, the hierarchy has its basis in knowledge impartation, respect for scientific expertise, and submission to the instructor’s guidance, leading to an authoritarian power relationship (Gale, 1996).

Foucauldian notions of knowledge and power are apparent in language and power dynamics in the discourse (Hook, 2001). Using strategic language choices, the teacher exercises a particular type of discursive power by deciding what is to be discussed and in what manner. This discourse is made through rhetoric, creating a language that impacts students’ thoughts about science, technology, and even their country. Scientific advancements have profound implications for us and are integral to our progress. Thus, they make it look like scientific knowledge has value and

irreplaceable. More so, the discourse resonates with Bourdieu's theory on symbolic power, where language is a symbolic force that constructs the social reality (Grenfell & James, 2003). Through the teacher discourse, the limits of knowledge are fixed in the classroom, specifying what is acceptable and valuable (Bergström, Mårell-Olsson, & Jahnke, 2019). By selecting themes and forming questions, a teacher has symbolic power in bestowing cultural capital upon specific knowledge forms. This process of specifying what is essential in science, technology, and nation-building consolidates the teachers' positionality, perpetuating a discourse where scientific expertise becomes sacrosanct and unquestionable.

The data extract presents a complex play of language and power, with the teacher's linguistic tactics functioning to create and consolidate hierarchical order within the classroom. The discourse creates a story that puts science and technology at the heart of national identity. Words, interrogative forms, and inclusive pronouns build a discourse that ensures the undisputable authority of the teacher, while science becomes the emblem of social progress and people's pride in common. This thorough analysis reveals language and power as essential for constructing a national discourse about science and technology.

Navigating Societal Currents: Empowering Voices on Sexual Orientation

Data Extract 3: Gender and Society Offsite Synchronous Class

1 T1: For our discussion today, we explore the complex terrain of sexual orientation in modern society. To grasp various experiences and problems encountered by individuals in varying sexual orientations, we have a specific purpose. I

2 T1: Sexual orientation, being a part of human identity, affects people's relationships, interaction within society and their self-image. Shall we delve into issues relating to the societal dimensions of accepting and perceiving sexual orientations? I

3 T1: What is the effect of the societal view of a person's sexual orientation on their sense of self and psychological health? Critically examining the psychological implication of society's attitude towards divergent sexual orientations. Now, kindly let me call for your classmate's input on this issue. (Continues discussing) I

4 T1: Look at how other social identities like gender, colour, and religion play out together with sexual orientation. In what ways does these intersection of social locations create specific challenges and possibilities towards people of different sexual orientation? I

5 T1: Creating inclusive spaces where everyone who are homosexual feel respected and appreciated. Break Stereotype and Promote Acceptance. Isn't any one ready to start this dialogue? In this regard, Ms. Jordan, your viewpoint counts a lot. I

6 S1: Hello, Sir? R

7 T1: Hello, Jordan! You play a critical role in shedding light on the intricacies of societal perceptions. It is great that you are ready to have a conversation about this. I

8 S1: Opo, Sir. Sa tingin ko po, mahalaga ang edukasyon. Ang mga paaralan ay maaaring maglaro ng mahalagang papel sa pagtanggap ng lipunang iba't ibang sexual orientation kung sila'y magpo-promote ng pag-unawa and empathy.

[Yes, Sir. I think education forms a key factor. Schools may play an important role in the societal acceptance of diverse sexual orientations if they promote understanding and empathy.] R

9 T1: Well said, Jordan. Certainly education is the driving force of social transformation. (Continues discussing) I/F

10 T1: How do people explore their sexual orientations in conservative societies, and can anyone understand these challenges? Shall we examine the stories of resilience and empowerment within these communities? (Continues discussing) I/F

11 T1: Let me now ask you to pause and think about the portrayal of various sexual orientations in media and popular culture. What are the impacts of these portrayals on societal attitudes? How do they facilitate acceptance or stigmatization of various sexual orientations? If you agree with this opinion, then Mr. Taylor, please say so. I

12 S2: Good morning, Sir. R

13 T1: *Good morning, Taylor. In order to understand the impact of media representation on societal perceptions, it is critical to consider your perspective on media representation. Please share your insights. I*

14 S2: *As for me, media is capable of challenging stereotypes. Positive depiction of various sexual orientations in media creates an accepting environment for viewers. R*

15 T1: *Absolutely, Taylor. Media can transform societal orientation. (Continues discussing) I*

As a teacher-driven classroom-based interaction, the present discourse delves into the intricate implications of sexuality in society. This is the role played by the teacher as a facilitator directing a dialogue toward the questioning and analysis of social stereotypes concerning different sexual identities. The discourse addresses numerous topics like psychological implications, intersectionality, role of education, challenges in traditional society and impact of media representation.

Power is interwoven in the thread of the discussion's discourse. Using carefully selected language, the teacher constructs the conversation, acting the authoritative figure, leading the communication and shaping its tone. These questions like "*How does society's opinion about sexual orientation affect people's self-esteem and mental health?*" are rhetorical tools that trigger active students' response to the discussion while implicitly giving the teacher, the one directing the argument, authority. Including pronouns such as '*our*' and '*we*' creates a sense of togetherness and shared responsibility within the classroom, but indirectly underlines that teacher controls the flow of the conversation.

The power dynamics can be decoded by their linguistic details. Acknowledgement tools like positive affirmations and appreciative language like "*Your insights are critical in unveiling the intricacies of society's perception*" support the view that the teacher can recognize the worth of a student's contribution (Reigel, 2008). The discourse uses a subtle blend of broad open questions, which creates an atmosphere that prompts students to share their thoughts while confined by the rules of the teacher.

This discussion aligns with previous research on classroom interactions, the status quo, and how society perceives sexuality. The pivotal role of teachers in creating inclusive environments has been stressed by research carried out in education (Jordan, Schwartz, & McGhie-Richmond, 2009; Kamens, Loprete, & Slostad, 2003). The choice of language in such studies brings home the point of language and power relations. Other studies have examined the rhetorical use of questions as power in steering conversations (Brown, 1982; Ilie, 1996). Moreover, the discourse is similar to research exploring inclusive education's transformational power, highlighting how discussions can challenge society's accepted norms and attitudes (Harmon & Wilson, 2012; Schoerning, et al., 2015).

Also, as can be gleaned from the data, the teacher attempts to develop a favorable reflection about science and technology, which is intended to be in line with family members, people of the region, and the nation's target to boost innovations, inclusivity, and progress in these areas. Besides leading to the conclusion that education may play a significant role in future autonomous societal beliefs towards a wide variety of sexual orientations in the fields of science and technology, this way of thinking also represents in complexity the desire of the authorities to introduce diversity and the doctrine of acceptance into the curriculum. Moreover, such a teacher not only has a positive image of the academic field but also deeply challenges and tries to change outdated narratives of gender over the years of its domination in the subject area, thus making the exchange critical and aimed at questioning and challenging the norms and stereotypes already established.

Discourse within the Critical Discourse Analysis framework exposes multiple levels of power dynamics. Rhetorical questions, affirmations and other language moves the teachers choose become power tools. The language gently strengthens the instructor's power by highlighting the limits of the talk and stimulating students' engagement in these limits. Inclusive language and affirmations can be utilized strategically to create a feeling of belonging and validation. This reveals the complex interplay of language and power in a classroom. The teacher maneuvers through the dialogue, guiding the story, validating people's input, and indirectly exercising power. The discourse shows society's attitude towards sexual orientation and illustrates with an example how language can shape power structures in educational institutions.

Exploring the Intersections of Culture, Identity, and Power in Philippine History

Data Extract 4: Readings in Philippine History Offsite Synchronous Class

1 T1: *And so we begin today a voyage of discovery through the corridors of Philippine history, not only the dates and events, but more importantly the very meaning and significance of what lies behind what the nation has had in the past. I*

2 T1: *History is not merely a narrative of past events; it is a mirror that throws light on the intricacies of human experiences, fights and victories. Narratives of identity, let's hear them out. I*

3 T1: *What is the importance of knowing the history of our indigenous cultures? What effect does this knowledge have on our understanding of multiculturalism and modern multiculturalism? Let's ponder together. Let me ask your classmate to take a minute and tell us about them. (Continues discussing) I*

4 T1: *From textbook accounts let us look at the unexplored history of ordinary people in important historical events. These narratives reveal the resilient nature of our nationhood. I*

5 T1: *History, A Compass for Our Future Activities. Let's explore this idea. Who wants to get started with this discourse? Mr. Reyes, do you think that history has any meaningful role to play in our lives today? I*

6 S1: *Good morning, Sir? R*

7 T1: *Good morning, Reyes. I want to hear from you. I*

8 S1: *[Totoo po iyan, Sir, ang kasaysayan ay hindi lamang tungkol sa nakaraan. Parang isang plano na nagbibigay sa atin ng mga mahahalagang aral. Ito ay nagsasabi sa atin kung ano ang ginawa nating tama at kung ano ang nagiging mali, patungo sa mas magandang kinabukasan.]*

Indeed, Sir, history is not only about the past. It's like a blueprint which gives us important lessons. It tells us what we did correctly and what we did wrong, leading us toward a better tomorrow. R

9 T1: *Excellently put, Reyes. After all, history is our teacher. (Continues discussing) I/F*

10 T1: *Narratives of Filipino Heroes. What messages do we receive from their stories apart from their bravery? What do you think about it, ms. Santos? I*

11 S2: *Sir, good morning! Our heroes' stories tell a story of our common heritage and the efforts made to ensure our independence. These stories give us the incentive to conserve freedom we have fought for. R*

12 T1: *Absolutely, Santos. Stories about our heroes are woven into the fabric of our national history. (Continues discussing) I*

The following classroom discourse shows the history teacher going beyond chronological account, but rather a mirror of human experiences, the intricate struggles and triumphs that make the nation. The discourse places importance on comprehending the histories of the indigenous cultures, with further analysis of untold stories of ordinary people, which reveals their resilience. The teacher also leads a discussion about how the tales of Filipino heroes have contemporary relevance by questioning students to ponder the meanings hidden within each story. This discourse utilizes language to create the power dynamics between teacher that leads the forum and determines the narrative of history. Using rhetorical questions, the teacher stimulates critical thinking and student involvement in learning. History's mirror and blueprint in the discourse implies reflection and a guide. Such teacher's affirmations like "*Well said, Reyes*", give authority to the teacher and

approve student contribution. It creates a feeling of shared understanding (Chin, 2006). In the discourse, a dialogical form of teaching echoes Freirean pedagogy. Education is a process of mutual learning and critical thinking. Metaphors like *'mirror'* and *'blueprint'* signify the transformative character of historical consciousness (Marshall, 1990). It implies that historical thinking shapes perspectives and guides actions in future. The emphasis on unexplored tales and the role of native cultures highlights the importance of different perspectives when building up a complete narrative of the nation's history.

This discourse aligns with critical pedagogical theories that underscore dialogue, critical thinking and transformative learning. The idea of education as liberating can be seen since students participate in building up a historical meaning. These metaphors correspond with Lakoff and Johnston's conceptual metaphor theory, where abstract concepts such as history are conceived and organized through concrete concepts like a mirror and a blueprint. Such a construction can be explained through some Hayden White's historiographic concepts. Discourse, here, is connected with some narratological principles, implying that narration, stories, is what formulates historical narratives (White, 1980). This is an example of how language and power interactions occur within a classroom. Using strategic language choices and metaphors, T1 enables students to see history as a dynamic, multiformity. The analysis leads to the formation of discourse representing historical narratives as an essential force that shapes shared identity and orientates current and future social actions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Language and power manifest themselves in complex analyses involving the context of Purposive Communication, Science, Technology, and Society, Gender and Society, and Readings in Philippine History. Both Sinclair's IRF model and Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis offer theoretical perspectives that unravel the complexities of language in the classroom context. These perspectives come in handy in understanding the intricate nature of how power is distributed.

Sinclair's IRF model is visible in the teacher's question-questioning approach to the learner and confirmation statements in the Purposive Communication discourse. It follows a carefully laid out sequence known as the initiation (I), response (R), and feedback (F) sequence. The teacher's questions guide discussions, thus ensuring that control remains in the hands of the teacher. Affirmations provide positive reinforcement, confirming correct answers and maintaining an ordered conversation. Within this framework, language becomes instrumental as the teacher uses it to control the discourse and enable students to engage in teaching actively. In addition, Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis framework exposes power structures. The teacher's assurances and inclusive language are deceptive and imply inclusiveness to a certain extent but indirectly uphold the educator's authority. This power structure is subtly displayed in the language used in a manner typical of power situations, which hide their power attributes using deceptive language.

The use of Sinclair's IRF model in the Science, Technology, and Society discourse can be observed via the teacher's rhetorical questions and affirmations. Teacher's question prompts the conversation, guides communication direction, and steers it within specified limits. The use of affirmations acts as positive feedback to uphold the power of a teacher and accept specific perspectives. By employing such linguistic techniques, a teacher creates an authoritative pedagogical environment in which scientific knowledge takes predominance and a teacher is seen as the highest authority on some issues. The power dynamics are further scrutinized within Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis framework. These rhetorical questions shape the students'

thinking by reinforcing the narrative control of the teacher. Furthermore, inclusive affirmations develop an illusion of equal communication, which disguises the fundamental inequality between the parties involved. This analysis reveals how language can be used to preserve and strengthen existing power structures by reaffirming the dominant teacher role, even while purportedly promoting student involvement.

The Sinclair's IRF model used in the discussion 'Gender and Society' works via open-ended questions and affirmations provided by the teacher. Such queries trigger critical discussions that make students analyze society's point of view on sexual orientation. Validating affirmations make students feel part of something important, empowering them. Nonetheless, Wodak's framework unearths the latent power dimensions. Using questions, the teacher strategically shapes discussions within predestined limits. Though appearing democratic, affirmations tend to emphasize the power of a teacher and subtly muffle a teacher-centric narrative. This illusion is created through the use of inclusive language by the teacher, which hides the real power differential between them. This analysis illustrates how language can be used subtly to manipulate and control the flow of conversation, yet on the surface, encourage open communication by preserving the teachers' control.

The IRF model can be traced in the discourse on Readings in Philippine History, where the teacher utilizes rhetorical questions and affirmations characteristic of Sinclair. The questions facilitate critical reflections and direct discussions towards particular issues. Validations of students' responses help create positive learning atmospheres. Using Wodak's CDA model, the researcher examines the power play in this discourse. Strategically framed rhetorical questions quietly 'suggest' answers and shape students' narrative interpretations, enhancing teachers' control over the storyline. Affirmations may appear empowering, but they quietly confirm, shape the discourse and reinforce the teacher's authority. In addition, the teacher uses the mirrors of history and blueprint to underline the teacher's control over the story narrative. The author of this analysis shows that language can be manipulated to create historical interpretations which strengthen a teacher's position but supposedly stimulate critical thinking.

In addition, the dynamics seen in this research were that students mostly replied in Tagalog, and the teachers replied in English. Such language preferences encompass underlying power dynamics between the speaker and the side. The involvement of the teacher's English, the language representative for higher education, global business, and wider life chances, necessarily puts the English-using community within the professional and knowledgeable sphere. The language choice reflects the teacher as a keeper of knowledge. It is in accord with the social trend of linguistic inequality, where English is given a high value since it is far superior to local languages.

Language and power are entangled in all the classroom interactions, underpinning the narratives and the power dynamics within each discourse of the study. In this regard, Sinclair's IRF model and Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis provide a very revealing lens into these power relations. The effect of language on power dynamics must be taken into account in formulating recommendations for pedagogical implications in online learning. Teachers should bear in mind that the language they use creates an environment conducive to the voice and respect of various people. Online platforms should enable students to debate about the course materials interactively. In addition, teacher training programmes should include language and power dynamics modules that allow teachers to make learning spaces equitable, which could also be an extension activity for different academic institutions. Educators who understand language and power dynamics can harness the power of online pedagogy and enhance online learning by creating a space where

collaboration and knowledge creation transcend the existing and conventional power structures and embrace the diverse voices of virtual students.

Lastly, the bonding of the language and the power dynamics evidenced in different classroom talks, as analyzed by the IRF model by Sinclair and by Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis, poses a significant challenge to English teaching nowadays. The teacher is now aware that language choice and interaction patterns i.e., the way language is used to bring power centralization in a classroom, must be closely monitored. This requirement implicates a reform in the educational process, which is directed at making the language use more balanced and promoting an egalitarian communication that strengthens the society and lessens the inborn power inequalities. The language experience of the learners, especially in English, is another significant challenge for teachers in designing strategies and adopting methods that appreciate learners' languages, in addition to integrating these languages into the process of teaching and learning. By this, they can make class sessions that are not only democratic but also recognize languages that every student has many times to value their linguistic identity to turn traditional power relationships. By adopting such a method, students will have the authority themselves, and English them will be seen as a tool to understand themselves in the global world instead of as a barrier to what they must feel powerless over, in the end, increasing the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the learning language process.

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