

## IMPLICATION OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDE TO THE LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS IN SYNCHRONOUS CLASSES

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### Abstract

*Language reconnoiters the speaker's background and points towards the holistic overview of what seen and felt in real socio-cultural engagements. Through the performance of language, the behavior of it is observed and may imply to the proficiency of the student's fluency in the verbal ability. With this, the researcher conducted an assessment of this linguistic performance in the classroom set-up during the synchronous class to determine the existing language attitude and problematize the sociolinguistic implication of it so that certain measures may be raised to improve the current classroom language management. This study conducted is a qualitative study that involved class observation, recording, transcription, analysis, and interpretation in a college English class. The findings of the study concluded that the attitude of students in the English language use involves code-switching and -mixing, language fillers, literacy in technology use, language misuse, and language variety. These identified language attitude implies Linguistic Turn in Academic Conversation and Expressive Language is Linguistic Competence.*

**Keywords:** *Implication, Language Attitude, Linguistic Competence, Linguistic Performance, Synchronous Classes*

### INTRODUCTION

The sudden shift of traditional classes to online synchronous and asynchronous mode brought a lot of changes in classroom management as well as in the pedagogical technique. This led to CHED and DepEd's trainings for the educators to usher them in the paradigm shift and competence building for the change in the implementation. In college online classes, flexible learning pedagogy is the most recommended modality of teaching in which all colleges and universities were provided by guideline to follow through CHED Memo No.4, Series of 2020. The amplification of the university's needs for the shift created a domino effect also in the pedagogical skills as well as the varied implementation of the assessment tasks. (Persuad, 2021; De Vera, 2020) This led to the unprecedented advancement of classroom learning and conversion of it to distant via synchronous and asynchronous mode.

Synchronous and asynchronous classes are the terms that were introduced to the teachers who are just new to the online modes of teaching. Synchronous classes are often conducted in a real-time learning environment creating a platform for students and instructors to interact in the same session and phase. This is a session where students and teachers create a sense of connection and interacts at the same time even if they are in different places. Cameras are important to see the classmates and the people whom they are interacting with. (Weitzel, 2020) Usually the teachers use different platforms that are recommended by the school or are free for use such as the google classroom and others. Thus, synchronous classes would not work well if it is only done on its own because there might be instances where the internet shall be the impediment.

On the other hand, synchronous classes would better blend when asynchronous mode is implemented. Asynchronous classes allow the students to finish their tasks at their own phase. It means that instructors are providing materials, lectures, tests, and assignments so that students

would continue learning wherever they are. The asynchronous classes are support to the synchronous classes so that the expected output shall be collected from the students who perform (Synchronous vs Asynchronous Learning, 2021)

These changes in classroom pedagogy also affected the classroom management and interaction of the students and the teachers, thus, conversation is encouraged for the students linguistic and cognitive learning. Adjustments both for the learners and the educators were seen as evident and this has disrupted their usual mode in face-to-face, however, this is a notable change because of the technological intervention turned the conversation in a more complex exchange due to simultaneous conversation in varied platform. The engagement and disengagement of the students were seen in the classes because of the inter-communication and – relationship as depicted in their recitation, report, participation, and collaboration both in oral and written communication course through by the technological competencies and available softwares/applications. (Schnitzler, Holzberger, & Seidel, 2021; Shernof, et al., 2017)

By zooming in to the language attitude, a bridge toward evaluative reactions to different language varieties, social categorization, behavioral consequences, linguistic competence, and language policies is to be inhabited. Thomas Hartherley Pear pioneered in 1930s in which he noted that the voice in the syntactic grounding may be a cue towards a reliable understanding of a valid personality assessment and accurate reflection of the speaker's natural intention. The ability of draw out the linguistic behavior may also carry out the inner intention of the speaker. (Dragojevic, 2017; Melander, Dalarna, & Cunningham) Therefore, language is essential to the human way of life for it states what it wants to express through verbal and non-verbal communication. This is also seen as integral to the human's ability to flourish for it becomes the medium of interaction that is an advantage to progress since communication is a verb that commands action.

In 1960, Chomsky defined linguistic performance as an actual use of the language in concrete situations which leads to the concepts of production and comprehension. Production is being referred to the continuous use of the language for it contributes to the sustainability and continuous development because language is naturally growing. Moreover, the comprehension of the speaker in its use also depicts the competence of the user in the language so that expression and utilization help in shaping the linguistic structure. (Matthew, 2007) This denotes that language is a performance in itself for whatever the speaker produces and comprehends becomes an action despite its ability to be uttered. Derrida mentioned in his structuralism theory that everything is written even before it is uttered because the cognitive linguistic knowledge of a person is concretely written in the metacognitive reality. (Tyson, 2006) This means that the things perceived and expressed by the speaker is a representation of the psychological and cognitive behavior in which it becomes an imitation of the perceived reality shared through verbal and non-verbal communication.

With this, it is very interesting to note that the online classes have altered the language attitude of the learners which may have not been explored by researchers. Thus, further exploration of it through the discourse analysis provided an overview that can address the future concerns in language learning. This study determined the different language attitude that are observable in the classes and understood the Sociolinguistic implication of the language attitude to the linguistic competence of the college students during the conducted synchronous classes.

The study of Larasati and Simatupang (2020) shared that language attitude of the students as observed in the class is essential in the language learning. The study presented that the classes

reaped a dominant positive attitude due to their social status and access to education despite being hampered by the difficulty in learning English. Nevertheless, the motivation draws positive influence to the student's learning. Language attitude and motivation are interrelated because when one increases, the other one also improves. The experiences of the students in the use of the language affects their attitude in learning and utilization of it. However, educators should invest on the emotional, affective, and cognitive factor in improving their communication skills. (Todor & Degi, 2016)

Furthermore, language attitude of students in classroom has also shown that flexibility of the use of language ensures depth-ness of content in the participation. Thus, content teacher shall be judicious and should not be restrained by the code-switching and mixing because the ability of the students to express their ideas comprehensively is much better than being un-participative in discussions and learnings. (Teklesellassie & Boersma, 2018) With this, it is critical that the educators should encourage more expressive and communicative learning with unrestricted use of language so that the natural ideology and attitude would be evident. Understanding the process of language acquisition and language utilization provides an overview that language is continuously changing and it is a representation of one's identity.

This study on language attitude in classroom provides a reflection of the student's language ideology through the analysis of the discursive practice, social interaction, and sociolinguistic interface. This study is novel because it has not been exactly studied based on researcher's exploration since these focuses on the synchronous conversation of the students.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study is quantitative research which focuses on the process of understanding the data collected through a naturalistic inquiry that focuses on the experiences of human beings and brings out meaning through a qualitative data. (UTA Libraries, 2022) This study utilized the discourse of the students in the selected classes which the researcher recorded and analyzed. The transcription of the videos was successfully done through the help of the fellow researchers, Allaine Agna, Jeremy Ignacio, and Chabelina Molina, from the Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges (CSPC). The transcribed data utilized the three (3) English classes in the English Department of CSPC. The research secured permission from the program head English department in CSPC to collect the data in their classes through the researchers mentioned. The researchers also asked for permission from the students involved in the class and the transparency of the study was made through an explanation so that they are fully aware of the research procedure and proceedings. The transcribed data was analyzed through close reading and coding in which language attitude as the lens. Then, the language attitudes were coded to depict the themes which represents the implications of the language attitude in the class.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### ***Language Attitude of Students in English Classes***

The discourses that transpired within the class is subjected to the analysis and the following are the language attitude that the researcher was able to draw from the analysis: *Code Switching and Mixing, Language Fillers, Literacy in Technology, Language Misuse and Overuse, and Language Variety.*

### ***Code Switching and Mixing***

Code switching is the ability of the person to move back and forth in the use of two languages or registers depicted in the conversation, dialogues, or writing. This is unpopularly known to a confusion of the two language or a hindrance in the proficiency of a person in the language skills. Hence, further studies showed that code-switching is a positive indication that the speaker acquired linguistic competency since they can express themselves comfortably through the language that they are used to with a correct grammatical structure since complexity on the differences of the language becomes an utterance that is significantly stronger in terms of the person's grasp of the language. (Quin Yow, Tan, & Flynn, 2017; 2019)

The attitude of the students in their conversation and discussion in their class includes their imminent switch and mix of the language that they are used to which includes the Filipino, and English.

*“So I would like to share lang po my ano, my misconception...”*

Despite its few indicator of the switching, it shows that this is unscripted and is naturally an overflow of the student's conversation use of the language. This portrays the tendency of the students to be more comfortable at the discussion in which language mix and switching becomes evident and they may have been used to this kind of language syntax.

*“Yes, Sir but Mr. Oliveros is not yet online like kanina pa po ako naghihintay.”*

*“Sir I did not know kasi po di ako nkaattend last meeting po.”*

*“Hello Sir, Uhm About social strategies and effective strategies po. And, also yung cognitive strategy and compensation strategy and meta static...po.”*

The switching is an indicator of the student's competency of the languages for they are capable of mixing its used without altering the syntactic grammar and function of the words used. This presents that the student's attitude towards language is positive indication that they are comfortable and confident in the language use of Filipino and English for they can use it interchangeably. Psychologically, this language mix and switch is a phenomenon that is mostly present to bilingual speakers who are able to interchange the two language in an internal level of sentence construction. This also indicates the intertwined mind of the speaker in which that adapt the grammar and linguistic rules proactively. (Alexiadou & Lohndal, 2018)

#### *Language Fillers*

Language Fillers refers to the meaningless words in the phrases and sentences that are used whenever they are pausing while speaking. This in an indication of their hesitation and thinking process so that they could have a short time to refresh their minds in their speaking. (2019) This is uncontrolled manner of speaking and this depicts the speaker's emotion or competency in their speech. However in the classes, the recording shows that the speakers use filling not because of their less competency but because of their linguistic pattern of speech and thinking process.

*“Yes po, So hello po, ma'am.”*

*“Okay uhm Sir Dan you raised your hand.”*

*“Uhm its Gelit po”*

*“Sir ahhyyy poetic form sya, sir.”*

The pattern of the students as their attitude in the use of language is by starting the word “so” at the start of the start of the sentence which could have been their behavioral linguistic pattern that naturally being said because they are conditioned to speak in that manner. The use

of “uhm” is also a filler that they use to indicate an additional time for them to spend in thinking process or an indication of unsure answer or recommendation towards uncontrolled reaction to state the situation. Lastly, “ahhhhhyy” is an interjection of Filipinos to express epiphany on a certain matter that becomes a natural filler every time there is a second or third attempt of stating the correct answer from a sudden realization. Shapira (2019) explained that there is nothing wrong with the use of fillers for as long as this will not be used repeatedly because it discredits the speaker’s credibility in speaking and indicates lack of confidence in the important ideas being shares. Nevertheless, it would be necessary to learn reducing and removing this mannerism in speaking to increase the speaker’s proficiency.

#### *Literacy in Technology*

In most of the cases, another patter of the students when they are presenting is the technological verification of being heard by the participants. This becomes a standard way of checking their sound if it is functional.

“Hello naririnig po ba ako?”

“Am I audible po Ma’am?”

“Good afternoon, Audible po ako Sir?”

These lines in the classes that are often uttered before the students start speaking shows their awareness of verifying the functionality of their device before uttering to avoid the audience to miss out the interaction. This makes the student proficient in showing how aware they are in the proper use of language in checking their audibility. However, the repetition of it makes it annoying for the readers because it may also indicate lack of preparedness and double checking of the device before entering in the zoom class. An etiquette that should be fixed to have a smooth flow of interaction. In the study of Martin, Parker, and Deale (2012) supported the idea of the checking of the sound before starting to class to ensure that the flow of engagement shall be notable. But, in this case, it should be done from the start of the class such as simple greetings. The case of this repeated asking of “audible” sound before start talking is a conditioned pattern for the students which indicates lack of confidence.

#### *Language Misuse and Overuse*

The use of the filler “so” is also taken in another way because the use of this in almost all of the sentences or at every start of the sentence makes its function misused and overused. “So” is a conjunction that functions as an introduction of the clause or a result of a decision. (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022) This means that the attitude of the students in ten sue of “so” in the sentences creates a distraction to the English learners and may also lead to a syntactic error of the use of the language.

“Okay so language have sound...”

“So according to the video we watched....”

“So I would like to share lang po my ano...”

“So good afternoon everyone...”

This misusage and overusage of “so” came from the technology silicon valley which was also a norm for Mark Zuckerberg whenever delivering a speech. A lot of students unconsciously adapted this as a filler that is adapted as another alternative for “uhm” and “like” which may be annoying for the listeners. This is considered as an incorrect practice that should be corrected to help the speaker improve in their conversational and oral skills. (Wilson, 2022; Word Connection, 2020)

#### *Language Variety*

Language variety refers to the overlapping categories in dialect, register, jargon, and idiolect. This refers to the emerging languages that are evident in the present contemporary society. (Nordquist, 2020) With this, the language continually evolves and this is presented also in the discourse within the classroom in which acceptance of the terms in academic conversation is also acknowledged. In the classroom conversation, the following are the emerging terms that has been drawn:

“GC”  
“Po”  
“OMG”  
“Shocks”

These are the examples of language variety that have been shown in the discourse transcription. The “GC” and “OMG” are the words which are under the acronym, yet considered to be a word in the NetLingo. There are a lot of abbreviation semantics that are commonly used in the contemporary times yet the sue of these words are interestingly important since even in the academic conversation, these terms are already used. Abbreviation semantics is a phenomenon that should be studied and be documented so that the use of it may be studied further especially in various formality and informality of the words. (Zerkina, Kostina, & Pitina, 2015) The attitude of the students portrays their flexibility in the use of language variation in having a more conversational situation yet formal and matches the environment.

Moreover, the use of “po” in their discourse shows the inseparability of the second language from their first and primary language. In Filipino, “po” is commonly used to be the word in every sentence to depict respect for the person they are speaking to. The use of this word clarifies the personality of the person who is acknowledging the reverence to the person they are dealing with. Nevertheless, the mixture of this “po” with English makes it a comfortable attitude for conversation but may cause linguistics mismatch when this is used to receiver from different geographic location or with different culture.

Furthermore, the use of the interjection as a way of natural reaction towards a circumstance such as “shocks” and “OMG” to show a reaction towards a situation is also a natural thing for the Filipino bilingual students. This is a positive attitude since this also shows engagement with the topic being discussed and the epiphany that happened. Overall, language variety emerge in many ways and it is necessary in contributing towards the growing language in the society and development of the usage of language in varied situation. This provides a concept that language attitude in academic discourse may already define formality in a more conversational manner where acceptance becomes natural.

### ***Sociolinguistic Implication of Language Attitude***

Based on the language attitude depicted from the discourse, the researcher was able to take note two (2) sociolinguistic implication of language attitude in the classroom discourse such as the linguistic turn in academic conversation and the expressive language in linguistic competence. Sociolinguistics is the representation of the fundamental use of language and the interrelation of social behavior and human interaction that establishes significant interpersonal relationships of language, culture, and society. (Wolfram, 2022)

#### ***Linguistic Turn in Academic Conversation***

The linguistic turn in academic conversation refers to the detour of the linguistic perspective and focus in the present academic conversation. The continuous growth and

development of language studies has continued to open opportunities for a wide array of linguistics perspective, hence the paradigm shift of the educational system in the Philippines also affected the language usage within the classroom. The conversation in the classes has been an interrelation of the language usage within the social circle which is being normalized in the online interaction through varied platforms.

The mentioned language varieties that are present in the discourses of the students are the manifestation that these emerging languages used in the public spaces opened a space for its use in the academic discussion because it is becoming the language of the contemporary anchored on the sociocultural interrelation. In the discussion of the automata theory, formal languages are taken seriously when the proper use of the language is appropriately defined through its symbol, alphabet, word, and language itself. The proper documentation of the emerging language varieties within the context of classroom interaction are the expressions that are accepted by the persons immersed in this conversation and the part of its use should be noted so that a formal grammar system may be introduced to create a significant depiction that language development. (Standford University, 2004)

This linguistic turn is the present practice of expression performed in academic classes that shall create a wave of exploration on other function of language deviating from one system. This shall be an incorporate of language, culture, and societal development of linguistic scope.

#### *Expressive Language is Linguistic Competence*

In the course of paradigm shift, classes were shifted to flexible learning done online. Everything becomes accessible but not everything effects change because the manner of communication also impacted the linguistic lives of the students. The students' reception becomes stronger yet the ability to express themselves becomes more difficult. (Communication Community, 2022) In the usual face-to-face classes, students are adhered to a conversation in which individual performativity of language is actively done yet, online classes made it difficult for the educators to allow their students to speak up and be heard.

With this, linguistic studies showed the need to accept the varied language attitude such as the code-switching and mixing, language fillers, and language misuse and overuse to ensure that the students are able to express themselves clearly. This linguistic pattern in the classroom discourse is an indicator that language use may be evolving in, however, it is necessary that these are properly entertained because the highlight is the expressive content of the message to ensure that the students are still practicing its verbal communication. This will also ensure that the student's linguistic competence of students is continuously practiced to become more learned as second language learners. (Coloquit, Canabal, & Paderan, 2020)

The significant indication of the student's expressive language is its confidence to converse in a language that is comfortable in delivery and follows the unrestricted grammar that continuously manifests growth and development both in linguistic skills.

## **CONCLUSION**

Verbal Communication is a considered as a performance of language. This means that what may have been spoken may also imply a representation of ideologies, constructed realities, and an imitation of life. Language reconnoiters the speaker's background and points towards the holistic overview of what seen and felt in real socio-cultural engagements. Through the performance of language, the behavior of it is observed and may imply to the proficiency of the student's fluency in the verbal ability.

Based on the data presented, language attitude varies on the person's cultural, social, and linguistic background. However, the manifestation of these language attitudes opens a door for conversation of the emerging trends in language discourse which is a redirection of language development and alignment of language in use. The possibility of opening perspectives in the interrelation of languages across linguistic concepts is an indication of language development and growth. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to focus on the language competency and comprehensive development of language.

Furthermore, this study is also necessary for the language educator to be receptive of these development so that the classroom interaction may serve as a basis for future language policies and ideologies. This research may also serve as a reference for other researchers who wants to seek further opportunity in linguistic studies.

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