

POLITENESS Strategies and Perlocutionary Acts in the Media Interviews of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.: A Socio-Pragmatic ANALYSIS

Mark Jude B. Ansing¹, Danilo G. Baradillo, PhD, FRIRes²

¹Teacher II, Department of Education-Liliongan National High School
mjbansing@gmail.com

²University of the Immaculate Conception, Davao City
dbaradillo@uic.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

This socio-pragmatic qualitative analysis aimed to unveil the politeness strategies and variations, perlocutionary acts, and power dynamics in the 51 media interviews of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. The findings revealed the themes of the politeness strategies: bald-on record, don't do Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs), negative, off-record, and positive. For perlocutionary acts, the following themes derived from individual in-depth interview responses from 10 participants selected through purposive sampling technique with the utilization of the expert-validated researcher-made interview guide questions: uncertainty and confusion, disappointment and skepticism, diminished public trust, mild persuasion, informing (limited effect), mockery/ridicule, creating awareness, setting the national agenda, and reassurance (limited effect). Finally, on the insights drawn from the power dynamics, the following themes have emerged: directness, indirectness, rhetorics, power through alliance building, and power through avoidance.

KEYWORDS: *Education, English, politeness strategies, perlocutionary acts, media interviews.*

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of media interviews, language is not just for communication; it is a powerful tool that influences how the public thinks and behaves. Analyzing the language used in media interviews is intriguing due to the complex perspectives it provides. Keeping this in focus, further research into how media employs language to shape and uphold societal norms and values is essential (Nealy & Ringrow, 2018). In every community, there exists a connection between social-intellectual beliefs and the way information is presented in media interviews. Hence, one can uncover this connection by elucidating suitable linguistic solutions in textual analysis and ultimately discerning its nature and use.

Political leaders always face challenges in highlighting its significance in framing political messages, negotiating power relations, fostering good relationships, and affirming high degree of appropriateness in handling social interactions effectively. The primary difficulty for all countries is the increase in the portrayal of the sociolinguistic phenomenon, regarding how it is perceived from using language and tones that may not be universally accepted. The language we employ can interpret and distinguish elements into processes, the individuals involved in these processes, and the conditions under which these processes take place (Emilia, 2014).

Building on the ideas of Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999), the authors highlight 'mediatization' as an important development. This refers to the way political leaders are increasingly altering their actions and strategies to align with the desires and requirements of the media. Moreover, the language employed in media interviews can pose challenges in various ways, such as the use of abbreviations and informal contractions that may result in a decline in traditional communication skills like grammar and syntax, less formalized language that complicates comprehension for non-native speakers, older viewers, and others, and the possible absence of awareness and integrity, which hinders the ability to shape as well as reflect on how this language is created and conveyed during media interviews. This can be achieved by effectively communicating in language and articulating their ideas with the usual level of courtesy (Yasmeen, 2014).

The connection between power and ideology significantly influences how messages are conveyed in media interviews. As stated by (Kentjono, 2009), language serves three purposes: it functions as a tool for cooperation, a medium for communication, and a way for self-identification. Megah (2020) noted that he analyzed the speeches of Donald Trump, indicating that the most frequently used strategy is strategy 10, utilized 9 times (29%) as he aimed to sway the American populace by offering something to enhance their happiness so that the American public would be inclined to vote for him in the upcoming election.

This current research investigates position as an important social factor in the president's media interviews. Nonetheless, there has yet to be extensive research on the stances presented in the president's media interviews. The present research seeks to address this gap by identifying variations in questions made by the media and how the president appears in the data under scrutiny. The researcher has not come across local researches that concern the socio-pragmatic

analysis like politeness strategies, perlocutionary acts, and power relations in the media interviews of the 17th President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

Research Questions

1. What are the politeness strategies and variations observed in the media interviews of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.?
2. What are the perlocutionary acts embedded in the media interviews of President Marcos Jr.?
3. How do these politeness strategies and variations exhibit power during media interviews?

Theoretical Lens

This study is grounded in Brown and Levinson's (1987) Universal Politeness Theory, which explains how speakers use politeness strategies to maintain harmonious relationships while managing face-threatening acts. The theory identifies five major strategies: Bald-on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Off-Record, and Avoiding Face-Threatening Acts, each reflecting different ways speakers negotiate social relationships, power, and politeness. The study is also anchored on Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory, particularly perlocutionary acts, which examine the effects of utterances on listeners, such as persuading, convincing, comforting, or influencing behavior. Together, these theories provide a framework for analyzing how language functions as a tool of politeness, persuasion, and power.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design. This study employed a qualitative research design using socio-pragmatic analysis to examine language within its social and communicative context. Qualitative research seeks to understand how individuals construct meaning from social experiences (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Lestari et al., 2018). Socio-pragmatics, which integrates sociolinguistics and pragmatics, was used to analyze how language reflects identity, power, and social relationships during President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s media interviews. Guided by socio-pragmatic principles, the analysis explored how communicative behavior, power relations, and media interactions shape political messaging (Duwi, 2016; Frantzich, 2019).

Research Site and Participants. The study involved 10 participants for individual in-depth interviews, consistent with Braun and Clarke's (2013)

recommendation of 6–10 participants for thematic analysis. Participants were purposively selected from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, included both males and females aged 18–55 years, and were expected to provide reactions to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s media interviews. Individuals with conditions that could significantly affect communication or participation, as well as those who declined consent, were excluded. Data were gathered through face-to-face in-depth interviews using purposive sampling. The participants consisted of six females and four males, with most being employed.

Data Analysis. Qualitative research can also be described as a useful instrument that occurs in a natural environment and allows the researcher to extract a level of detail from real-life involvement experiences (Creswell, 2003). The data were analyzed through socio-pragmatic analysis and with the assistance of Brown and Levinson's (1987) Theory on Politeness Strategies and Austin's (1962) Perlocutionary Acts. The data analysis and interpretation in this study were carried out by starting with the reading of the transcripts of the media interview of the president, followed by the classification of ideas through politeness strategies and power dynamics observed, then the research participants' significant reactions, comments, and insights from the media interview, and lastly, the generalization of the combined themes.

Trustworthiness. The study ensured trustworthiness by adopting the criteria of Lincoln and Guba (1985) credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability following Guba's (1981) framework for qualitative research. These criteria guided the planning, analysis, and reporting processes to ensure that the findings accurately reflected participants' experiences and were both reliable and transparent.

Credibility was established through accurate transcription and careful analysis of President Marcos Jr.'s media interviews. Transferability was supported by maintaining complete records of the data and analysis for future reference. Dependability was strengthened through adviser review to ensure consistency and accuracy, while confirmability was achieved by making the analyzed data available for expert validation and independent review, ensuring that the findings were grounded in the evidence rather than researcher bias.

RESULTS

This chapter presents the data gathered by the researcher. The presentation starts with politeness strategies and variations observed in the media interviews of President Marcos Jr., followed by the perlocutionary acts embedded in the media interviews. Lastly, it presents how these politeness strategies and variations exhibit power during media interviews.

Politeness Strategies and Variations Observed in the Media Interviews

Primarily, this study is based on the theoretical framework of politeness strategies. It provides an analytical frame that is of help to describe and explain the emotions associated with politeness during the interviews conducted by several interviewers on President Marcos Jr. More specifically, it helps to describe the different scenarios related to different interview behaviors and analyze each category on what is conveyed during the interview and to provide linguistic, scientific evidence.

The data were sourced from 51 different media interviews with President Marcos Jr. conducted between January 1, 2023 until December 31, 2024 in different locations in the country. Shown in Table 1 is the politeness strategies, its category, and specific responses. It involves how President Marcos Jr. answered the media interviews. The politeness strategies include bald-on record, don't do face-threatening act, negative politeness, off-record, and positive politeness.

Table 1
Politeness Strategies Observed in the Media Interviews of President Marcos, Jr.

Politeness Strategy	Category	Statements
Bald-on Record	Maximum Efficiency	But no, we will not use it as a seed fund. We will not use pension funds as a seed fund.
		Months ago. (When asked about consultations on changing the Constitution)
	Power difference between speaker and hearer is higher	No. It's not about the evidence; it's about the jurisdiction of the ICC in the Philippines.
		I do not see what their jurisdiction is. I feel that we have in our police, in our judiciary, a good system.

Politeness Strategy	Category	Statements
	Task oriented way of instruction	So that is what we have asked them to do.
		That's why my advice for him is to just face the questioning in the House and in the Senate.
Don't do FTA	Avoidance	When asked about the ICC probe: I don't approve or deny. You know, but they haven't done anything illegal.
		I cannot give you the details yet because that was — we are now — that is what we are doing.
	Avoiding face-threatening acts altogether	All of these we are trying to put together.
		When asked about ICC investigation: We have ended up now at the end where we really started.
	Avoid the FTA completely	We have ended up now at the end where we really started.
		I don't want to pre-empt the Secretary in making any of these announcements.
Negative Politeness	Apologizing	And apparently the conviction has stood and one of ours has been taken away. But — yes, very unfortunate.
	Being conventionally indirect	Well, we have to adjust to it in the sense that we must resign ourselves to the fact that that is the new normal.
		I think we should also be careful to not read too much into it.
	Being pessimistic	The first part, well, we just started with the Food Stamp Program and it's really --- we're still in a pilot stage right now.
	Giving deference	I don't want to pre-empt the Secretary in making any of these announcements. Let us allow him to - pumasok muna siya (he should enter first) and let him have a look.
	Hedging	So far basta't kung ano iyong kaya nating gawin together with --- kasama pa iyong ating mga LGU ay ginagawa ang lahat para maayos natin iyong mga nasira.
	Impersonalizing the speaker and the hearer	So, all of these is really being done to normalize the situation of relatively cheap rice for Filipinos.
		But now we are starting and slowly that system, that value chain that I always talk about, we are slowly building.

Politeness Strategy	Category	Statements
	Minimizing the imposition	It's really a storm in a tea cup because this has been decided very long ago from both the leaders of both Houses.
		But once we go to the process... But we have a very... That was one of the major, major concerns.
	Questioning or hedging	I suppose you will just have to put up with me as DA Secretary.
		Maybe it will decrease when the economy is doing well.
	Stating FTA as general rule	There's no deadline for the cleanup. I cannot make a deadline for the cleanup.
		These things if you are in government long enough, you'll have seen many of these.
Off-record	Be ambiguous	Well, it turns out it was a secret agreement. We don't know anything about it.
	Be incomplete by using ellipsis	Well, let me naman preserve some... Keep it until the time comes.
		But now he's the oldest farmer. So yes, it was... I could talk to him for a long time.
	Be ironic	[laughter] The U.S. --- the cases against him in the US were filed before I became President. So, I guess he's very worried.
	Being vague	Kami manhid na kami diyan sa mga insulto na kung ano-ano, personal na insulto, policy, lahat, manhid.
		So, there are many... There are security issues. Of course, we have to be conscious of that.
	Giving hints	I'm asking them all. I'm waiting for them to volunteer to be the Secretary. I don't want to be fired.
		You know these things don't come very quickly. Slowly, slowly...
	Over-generalize	That's the way the world is today. We are a global economy and we have to compete in the global economy.
		The cooperatives generally speaking our average is 50 to 100 hectares per cooperative
	Presuppose	As you can imagine all through these past months, all the intelligence services were involved.
	Understate	Well, I'm glad that – ako'y nagpapasalamat naman sa kanila na sa palagay ko ay

Politeness Strategy	Category	Statements
		naramdaman nila, they have made their point and they have.
	Use contradictions	Slowly, slowly... But we are slowly making progress because the key to that was really the improved communication between the Philippine government and the Chinese government.
		They can produce as much evidence as they want but they cannot act upon it in the Philippines. That's the point.
	Use of metaphors	You know when coordination is good, especially in the military, the multiplier effect is huge and that's why it's important that we continue that.
		It seems to me a little bit tail wagging the dog.
	Use rhetorical questions	I do not think that that is sufficient for it to trigger the Mutual Defense Treaty.
		Where will we get that replacement?
	Using vagueness	I'm sorry? (when not hearing the question clearly)
Positive Politeness	Acknowledging the hearer's interest, wants and needs	That's a big problem here in Mindoro. You're the most, the most lacking.
		But, there is still something wrong and there are many affected barangays. And that's what we are trying to do.
	Asserting common ground	Well, we had a convergence meeting on the rice sector of agriculture... because I've been saying for a long time that the value chain of agriculture has elements of the value chain that are there.
		We continue to foster the friendship, the relationship, the partnership that we have been developing with China since 1974 and 1975 when it became official.
	Assertion of reciprocity	Like I said during the election, during the campaign, anyone, regardless of their political affiliation, if they are willing to help, why don't we include them?
	Assertion of speaker's knowledge	I'm excited that --- I know that we can do this because all the elements that are necessary are here.
		We are not looking for trouble. As long as we do, we will continue to defend the Philippines.

Politeness Strategy	Category	Statements
	Assuming or asserting reciprocity	We do that quite often. [Regarding AFP-Police cooperation]
	Avoidance of disagreement	I'm sure he'll be very anxious to give his own interpretation of what he was trying to say.
	Exaggeration	This is precisely what I was talking about is the value chain.
	Finding agreement	The use of... ah yeah, of course. Ah no... I perfectly agree. We have no intention of using ng— kukuha tayo ng pera ng pension fund (we will get the money from the pension fund).
		The opportunities that China has given the Philippines and the Philippine corporations and Filipinos in general have been invaluable to the Philippines and that's why that continues.
	Giving or asking for reasons	Okay, how do I explain this? We will not use it as a seed fund. However, if a pension fund, which is what pension funds do is they invest.
		Very simple. Exactly as she says... She has too much work to do that she cannot be involved in any of this. She cannot allow herself to be distracted. That's the way I read it.
	Giving rewards to the hearer	"Ang gagaling talaga ng piloto natin. That's why we have to continue to encourage the modernization of our Armed Forces para iyong capabilities natin ay mas tumibay pa."
	Inclusion of both speaker and hearer in the activity	So that was our temporary solution. Let's go back to the system we created during the lockdown if those school buildings, those facilities can't be used.
	Joking	No, this last one. We've already missed two of our dates. [laughter] So, I have to do something, I have to make up for it when I get back from the States. I'm starting to feel a bit grumpy.
	Offering solution/promise	One thing we thought we could do to really get the fishermen back quickly is to ask permission from other towns.
	Optimism	But so far, I have to say, mukhang maganda naman ang nagiging resulta (the results are somewhat good).

Politeness Strategy	Category	Statements
	Participation of speaker and hearer	So far, the investigation is going well. They are getting a lot of information, so our suspects are being caught quickly.
		So that we no longer --- Mindoro no longer depends on other places for their electricity.
	Use of in-group identity marker	Like any SONA, it will be a report to the nation as to what the situation has, what happened in the last year since the last SONA; where we are now.
		That's just --- that's what's becoming a problem, it's becoming an obstacle to the price, that's why it's so high.
		Instead of one company doing something, one becomes a trader, one becomes marketing, one becomes retail. When those are different, there's a lot of cost to move.

Based on the table provided, the bald-on category is broken down into three main types: maximum efficiency, power difference, and task-oriented instruction.

Bald-on-Record Strategy. The **Bald-on-Record** strategy was observed through direct statements, explicit denials, and task-oriented instructions. President Marcos Jr. used clear and unambiguous language when discussing government policies, denying claims, and giving directives. This strategy emphasizes efficiency, authority, and clarity, particularly when responding to issues that require decisive communication.

Don't Do FTA Strategy. The **Don't Do Face-Threatening Act (FTA)** strategy was manifested through avoidance, redirection, and the deliberate withholding of information. Instead of directly responding to sensitive or controversial questions, President Marcos Jr. often chose to postpone discussion, avoid criticism, or refrain from giving specific details. These responses helped minimize potential conflict while maintaining control over the interview.

Negative Politeness Strategy. The **Negative Politeness** strategy was evident through apologizing, hedging, indirect expressions, deference, and minimizing imposition. President Marcos Jr. frequently softened his responses by using cautious language, acknowledging uncertainty, and avoiding overly forceful statements. These linguistic choices conveyed respect for others while allowing him to discuss politically sensitive matters in a diplomatic manner.

Off-Record Strategy. The **Off-Record** strategy appeared through ambiguity, vagueness, hints, metaphors, rhetorical questions, irony, understatement, and incomplete statements. Rather than expressing ideas directly, President Marcos Jr. often relied on indirect language that allowed listeners to infer the intended meaning. This strategy provided flexibility in responding to complex issues while avoiding firm commitments or direct confrontation.

Positive Politeness Strategy. The **Positive Politeness** strategy was demonstrated through acknowledging the audience's concerns, asserting common ground, finding agreement, expressing optimism, giving reasons, offering solutions, using inclusive pronouns, and employing in-group identity markers. President Marcos Jr. consistently emphasized shared goals, cooperation, and mutual understanding, creating a sense of solidarity while encouraging public confidence and support for government initiatives.

Profile of the Participants. Table 2 shows the profile of the participants in the study. They were categorized based on sex, age, and socio-economic status. Further, they were given codes using the capital letters IDI which stand for In-Depth Interview with a corresponding number.

Table 2
Profile of the Participants

Participant's Code	Sex	Age	Socio-economic Status
IDI 1	M	27	Employed
IDI 2	F	40	Self-employed
IDI 3	F	31	Self-Employed
IDI 4	F	22	Student
IDI 5	F	21	Student
IDI 6	M	55	Employed
IDI 7	F	35	Employed
IDI 8	M	22	Student
IDI 9	F	19	Student
IDI 10	M	25	Employed

As shown in the table, there are 10 participants who were included for an individual in-depth interview. There are 6 females and their age ranges from 19-40 years old and there are 4 males and their age ranges from 22-55 years old. In reference to the participants' socio-economic status, most of the participants are employed (60%).

Perlocutionary Acts Embedded in the Media Interviews of President Marcos Jr.

Based on the responses of the participants pertaining to the media interviews of President Marcos Jr., the following perlocutionary acts were derived: Uncertainty and Confusion, Disappointment and Skepticism, Diminished Public Trust, Mild Persuasion, Informing (Limited Effect), Mockery/Ridicule, Creating Awareness, Setting the National Agenda, and Reassurance (Limited Effect).

Uncertainty and Confusion. The findings indicate that President Marcos Jr.'s responses sometimes created uncertainty and confusion among listeners. Participants described his answers as unclear, indirect, or not fully addressing the questions, causing hesitation and uncertainty about his actual position on important issues.

Disappointment and Skepticism. Participants expressed disappointment and skepticism when they perceived a gap between the President's statements and actual outcomes. They questioned the credibility of some promises and felt that his messages did not always inspire confidence, leading to increased doubt about his leadership.

Diminished Public Trust. The findings show that repeated inconsistencies between statements and perceived actions contributed to diminished public trust. Participants believed that unfulfilled commitments and inconsistent communication reduced confidence in the President and weakened the credibility of government pronouncements.

Mild Persuasion. The interviews revealed mild persuasion, particularly through the President's calm delivery and positive speaking style. While some participants acknowledged that his speeches initially inspired confidence, others noted that this persuasive effect had gradually weakened over time.

Informing (Limited Effect). Participants recognized that the President's interviews served an informative function by explaining government programs, policies, and proposed solutions. However, the informational impact was viewed as limited because some participants desired clearer explanations and stronger evidence of implementation.

Mockery/Ridicule. Some participants reported that the President's communication style became a source of mockery or ridicule, particularly regarding his manner of speaking. These reactions suggest that aspects of his speech occasionally shifted public attention from the message to the delivery itself.

Creating Awareness. The findings demonstrate that the interviews contributed to creating public awareness by informing citizens about political issues, government programs, and national concerns. Participants also noted that the interviews encouraged greater public scrutiny of government actions and decisions.

Setting the National Agenda. Participants viewed the President's interviews as influential in setting the national agenda. Topics discussed during media interviews frequently became the focus of public conversations, influencing how citizens and the media discussed current national issues.

Reassurance (Limited Effect). The President's calm demeanor and measured responses provided limited reassurance to some participants. His composed communication style helped reduce anxiety during sensitive issues, although not all participants found it sufficient to strengthen confidence in government actions.

Table 3
Perlocutionary Acts Embedded in the Media Interviews

Perlocutionary Acts	Description of Acts
Uncertainty and Confusion	-Malibog panagsa. (IDI 2) -Mag duha duha na ang mga tawo. (IDI 4) -Parang malayo ang sagot sa reply sa questions. (IDI 1)
Disappointment and Skepticism	-Disappointed siguro. Di ko ma explain ng maayos pero medyo kulang jud ang motivation to let the people believe more. (IDI 7) -It made me realize that everyone can lie even you're the president. (IDI 5) -His words rarely leave people feeling hopeful. Instead, they raise doubts. (IDI 9)
Diminished Public Trust	-Naga lower sa trust sa tawo kay murag wala lang man actions sa kanyang salitang binitawan. (IDI 1) -Dako jud siya na impact kay public trust sang tawo. (IDI 2) -Walang maniniwala sa kanya. Murag walay mutuo sa iyahang gi sulti. (IDI 2)

Perlocutionary Acts	Description of Acts
Mild Persuasion	-As a listener, the way he talks he wants to always make sure that the Philippines feels relaxed parang gusto niya na magkaroon ng trust the way he delivers his speeches. (IDI 1) -Noon nung naga campaign palang siya, na persuade talaga ako na iboto siya because of the speech na binitawan niya, pero ngayon [...] parang wala ng effect na na persuade ka. (IDI 3)
Informing (Limited Effect)	-He gives information and also gives solutions. (IDI 1) -His program on education and agriculture was eloquent. (IDI 6) -He wants to give information, and influence what people think. (IDI 8)
Mockery/Ridicule	-Parang ginawa lang naman na katatawan. Kung paano sya magsalita. (IDI 4) -Na pu-persuade or nag ca-cause na gayahin sya kung paano magsalita like yung may pagka bulol. (IDI 4) -A number of people I've observed now refer to the government as a 'clown show. (IDI 10)
Creating Awareness	-They are now aware of what happened in the government in terms of politics and health issues and their rights. (IDI 1) -The interviews open them to trust the president and also they are now able to scrutinize the issue. (IDI 1)
Setting the National Agenda	-He definitely sets the tone. Whatever he says becomes the talking point for the next few days, or even weeks. (IDI 8) -It connects by the people with the use of interviewing him. (IDI 1) -His interviews do influence how people talk about national issues. (IDI 9)
Reassurance (Limited Effect)	-He's generally very calm and collected, which can be reassuring. (IDI 8) -The way he talks, relaxed lang siya. (IDI 1) -First parang, he prevent escalation. Provocative sa situation against war. (IDI 1)

Power Dynamics in Politeness Strategies During Media Interviews

Based on Table 1, the politeness strategies and variations in media interviews serve as tools for exhibiting and maintaining power. The tabulated politeness strategies reveal several key patterns in how power is displayed and negotiated through language.

Directness. Directness in speech means talking in a clear and straightforward way. It is about saying what you mean without unnecessary words or confusion. Directness is the overt demonstration of one's strength,

authority, or control to influence others or achieve goals. It involves explicit actions that make one's power immediately visible and felt, such as issuing commands, making demands, or showing physical dominance. This acceptance can be due to

Table 4
Power Dynamics in Politeness Strategies Exhibited During Media Interviews

Politeness Strategies	Power Dynamics	Core Ideas
Bald-on Record	Directness	-Unmitigated statements -Task-oriented instructions -Power difference markers
Negative Politeness	Indirectness	-Being conventionally indirect -Impersonalizing speaker and hearer -Minimizing impositions
Off-Record	Rhetorics	-Being vague -Using rhetorical questions -Giving hints
Positive Politeness	Power Through Alliance Building	-Finding agreement -Assertion of common ground -Acknowledging hearer's interests
"Don't do FTA" Strategies	Power Through Avoidance	-Redirect and avoidance of sensitive topics -Completely avoiding face-threatening acts

historical experiences, cultural values, or the need for strong leadership during a crisis. These statements include

We will not use pension funds as a seed fund.
No, I don't show confidence and authority to shut down
lines of questioning.
That's why my advice for him is to just face the
questioning.

Indirectness. Strategic power management involves wisely using your influence, authority, and resources to achieve long-term goals while keeping good relationships. It means knowing when to use your power directly, when to partner with others, and when to hold back, all based on understanding the situation and thinking about the future. Effective management requires balancing immediate goals with long-term plans.

Rhetorics. Subtle power assertion involves influencing situations quietly. Instead of showing clear control, it gently shapes outcomes to your

favor. This is done by controlling information, choosing discussion topics, or using social situations to guide decisions without direct commands.

Power Through Alliance Building. Power through alliance building means teaming up with others to increase one's influence. By collaborating with people who have similar goals or resources, individuals can build networks that help them achieve more than they could on their own. These partnerships allow for a bigger impact, open new opportunities, and help tackle challenges more effectively than going solo.

Power Through Avoidance. Power through avoidance is the strategic withdrawal from direct confrontation or competition to preserve resources and maintain autonomy. By selectively disengaging from power struggles that offer unfavorable conditions, one can redirect energy toward more advantageous positions while denying opponents the opportunity to exercise their strength.

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the literature and studies supporting the results derived from the study.

Politeness Strategies and Variations Observed in the Media Interviews

Based on the politeness strategies drawn from the media interviews, shown here are the discussions for the main categories observed:

Bald-on-Record Strategy. The Bald-on-Record strategy delivers messages directly, clearly, and without mitigation (Brown & Levinson, 1987). It prioritizes efficiency and authority over politeness, making it appropriate for giving instructions, denials, or official statements. President Marcos Jr. frequently employs this strategy through direct responses such as *"No, I don't"* and *"We will not use pension funds as a seed fund,"* reinforcing decisiveness and leadership.

Positive Politeness Strategy. Positive Politeness seeks to strengthen rapport by emphasizing friendliness, shared identity, and mutual respect (Brown & Levinson, 1987). It includes expressing agreement, optimism, appreciation, and concern for others. In the interviews, President Marcos Jr. builds solidarity through statements like *"I completely understand it,"* *"I perfectly agree,"* and

"We will exercise all the compassion," fostering trust and cooperation with the public.

Negative Politeness Strategy. Negative Politeness respects the hearer's autonomy by minimizing imposition through indirectness, deference, hedging, and apologies (Brown & Levinson, 1987). President Marcos Jr. uses expressions such as *"My position hasn't changed," "I'm sorry,"* and *"It seems to me"* to address sensitive issues carefully while maintaining respect and avoiding unnecessary confrontation, particularly on politically delicate matters.

Off-Record Strategy. The Off-Record strategy communicates indirectly through hints, metaphors, rhetorical questions, or vague expressions, allowing the speaker to avoid full responsibility for the intended meaning (Brown & Levinson, 1987). President Marcos Jr. demonstrates this strategy with statements like *"Alam mo na these things do not come very quickly," "Parang jukebox iyan,"* and *"Why? I don't see the reason behind that."* This approach enables him to address sensitive topics cautiously while preserving flexibility and minimizing conflict.

Perlocutionary Acts Embedded in the Media Interviews of President Marcos, Jr.

Uncertainty and confusion occur when a speaker's message leaves listeners unsure of its meaning or intent. Participants observed that President Marcos Jr.'s unclear, inconsistent, or hesitant responses particularly on issues such as the ICC often created confusion about his position. Such ambiguity may keep political options open but can also reduce message clarity and make it difficult for audiences to understand government policies (Maalej, 2022; Chen & Li, 2021).

Disappointment and Skepticism. Disappointment and skepticism arise when public expectations are not met or when inconsistencies between promises and actions become evident. Participants cited campaign commitments, such as lowering rice prices and statements regarding major political issues, as examples that led to frustration and doubt about government credibility. These reactions reflect expectation management failures, where optimistic promises are not fully realized (Ramos et al., 2023; Rodriguez, 2022).

Diminished Public Trust. Diminished public trust occurs when audiences lose confidence in a leader's consistency, competence, or sincerity. Participants associated this with perceived inconsistencies in policies, rising economic concerns, corruption, inflation, and other national issues. The findings suggest that when public statements are not matched by visible actions, confidence in government leadership and institutions declines.

Mild Persuasion. Mild persuasion refers to modest influence on audience attitudes without coercion. Participants described President Marcos Jr.'s calm speaking style, positive messaging, and campaign slogans such as "*Bagong Pilipinas*" and "*UniTeam*" as effective in creating favorable impressions. While this communication style encourages trust and cooperation, participants noted that, by itself, it may not be sufficient to sustain public support without corresponding policy outcomes.

Power Dynamics in Politeness Strategies Exhibited During Media Interviews

Media interviews involving high-status political figures like President Marcos Jr. serve as arenas where power dynamics are actively constructed and negotiated through language, particularly via politeness strategies. While the interviewer holds institutional control over questioning, the interviewee's societal status grants them significant power, which is reflected in their strategic use of language. The results found in Table 3 details how various politeness strategies employed by the interviewee manifest power in distinct ways within this asymmetrical communication setting.

Bald-on-Record Strategy as Directness. The **Bald-on-Record** strategy reflects power through direct, unmitigated statements, clear denials, and authoritative instructions. Responses such as "*No, I don't*" and "*We will not use pension funds as a seed fund*" demonstrate confidence, decisiveness, and leadership. This directness reinforces authority, particularly in situations where power differences reduce the need for face-saving politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Siregar, 2021, as cited in Sari et al., 2023).

Negative Politeness as Indirectness. **Negative Politeness** enables President Marcos Jr. to maintain authority while minimizing confrontation. Through indirect language, hedging, and impersonal expressions, he manages sensitive issues, preserves diplomatic relationships, and controls the narrative

without appearing overly imposing. This reflects the strategic use of politeness to protect both the speaker's and hearer's face (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Banat et al., 2024).

Off-Record Strategy as Rhetoric. The **Off-Record** strategy employs hints, vague statements, metaphors, and rhetorical questions to communicate indirectly while avoiding explicit commitments. This approach allows President Marcos Jr. to influence public interpretation, maintain flexibility, and manage politically sensitive issues without direct confrontation (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Jamieson, 2017).

Positive Politeness as Alliance Building. **Positive Politeness** strengthens power by fostering solidarity and shared identity. Expressions of agreement, empathy, and inclusive language such as “we” reinforce collective responsibility, build public trust, and position the President as a representative of national interests while promoting cooperation (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Probosini, 2020, as cited in Sari et al., 2023).

Don't Do FTA Strategy as Power Through Avoidance. The **Don't Do FTA** strategy demonstrates power through avoidance or redirection of sensitive topics. By withholding details or sidestepping criticism, President Marcos Jr. maintains control over the conversation, minimizes conflict, and protects institutional authority (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Klepper & King, 2023).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that President Marcos Jr. strategically employs politeness strategies to assert, negotiate, and maintain power during media interviews. Through directness, indirectness, rhetoric, alliance-building, and avoidance, he manages public discourse, reinforces leadership, and navigates complex political interactions (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Van Dijk, 2014).

President Marcos Jr. employs a wide range of politeness strategies including Bald-on-Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Off-Record, and Don't Do FTA demonstrating a flexible communication style that adapts to different interview contexts and objectives. These communication strategies can serve as valuable instructional materials in English, Oral Communication, and Public Speaking courses to help students develop effective and context-appropriate communication skills. The study found that President Marcos Jr.'s media interviews generate varied audience responses and

significantly shape public perception. These findings highlight the importance of integrating media literacy into the curriculum, enabling students to critically analyze media messages, recognize multiple perspectives, and become responsible communicators. Lastly, the findings show that politeness strategies are closely linked to the exercise of power. Through directness, indirectness, ambiguity, and alliance-building, President Marcos Jr. strategically manages information, relationships, and authority, illustrating that politeness functions not only as communication etiquette but also as a powerful tool for leadership and political discourse.

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