| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# *Messaging Beyond the Lines*: A Pragma-Crafting Analysis on the Academic Interactions Using a Social Media App in the New Normal

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| **ABSTRACT**

The paper delves into the pragma-crafting communication acts of the academic interactions on Messenger—utilizing a qualitative lens focused on selected ISU English major students and their instructors. It seeks to present communicative strategies, structures, and meaning-making by exploring the features that explore even the inexplicable messages. Through the pragma-crafting method, the researcher scrutinizes linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, and psychological acts inherent in these exchanges. Moreover, the research analyzes the group interviews conducted on Zoom to further explain the acts. The findings delineate the diverse language contexts present in the application, which serves as an alternative online classroom for academic instruction and interactions. This further emphasizes the importance of considering each learner's language proficiency amidst the dynamics and complexities of social media apps.

| **KEYWORDS**

Pragma-crafting, linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, psychological acts, academic interactions, Messenger.

| **ARTICLE INFORMATION**

## 1. Introduction

Language is the classic core of communication, which mitigates the barriers that every connection has between people and their circumstances. To partake in vigorous yet effective communication, people apply a certain language that is intrinsically incorporated with a set of values and beliefs. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, online platforms have become beneficial as alternatives for learning interactions. This situation has provided "a plethora of whys and wherefores of learners"—together with the educators—who have been continuously adjusting to challenges and other areas of concern since then. Striving for meaningful, adequate academic interactions is necessary to yield a new, conducive place for education.

Social media has greatly influenced the English language. Words that had existing meanings have now been given other meanings in an online context. In the new normal, specifically on the use of the online modality of the teaching-learning process, teachers and students rely much on texting and instant messaging platforms, which are becoming more popular across social classes—and with this popularity comes the need for its acceptance for formal and informal purposes. In today's era, technology profoundly influences the way people live every day, communicate with others, and behave themselves. This implies that our cognitive processes operate at a smoother pace when assisted by modern technology, particularly in various aspects of life, including education (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018).

Facebook Messenger, Viber, WeChat, and WhatsApp are just some of the instant messaging platforms that are utilized in the online classroom setting. This shows, as stated by Oriji and Anikpo (2019) that the advancement of technology has enabled various approaches to doing things that deviate from the traditional ways. Interestingly, Messenger has become essential nowadays

because of its capacity to address learning disparities and struggles. In fact, it includes the opportunity for teachers to deliver instructions in an alternative method and provides a platform for students to seek clarifications regarding their academic concerns (Pedroso et al., 2023).

Every individual can now expose what he or she wants and make it available to as many audiences as possible. Being a popular medium, Messenger has evolved in terms of its purpose, going beyond its typical function to become a multifaceted communication platform with noteworthy features and capabilities. Based on the research findings of Tananuraksakul (2018) about Messenger as a medium of academic consultation, the students hold favorable perspectives regarding the usage of the app, as they believe that it is a convenient and practical channel.

While the application boasts many advantages, linguistic challenges emerge as it diverges from established norms and reshapes conventional communication practices. In the past, students could only interact with their teachers during class hours, but the current advantage of online communication allows students to be active anywhere in the world; however, one drawback of using social media platforms like Messenger is that it blurs the boundaries between one's "professional and personal life" (Antazo et al., 2022). In addition to matters about privacy and boundaries, the comprehension of messages can become unclear from both viewpoints, leading to miscommunication and a lack of mutual understanding. The intended meanings may be different from the interpreted ones due to diverse factors, including variations in cultural context, personal experiences, and linguistic nuances.

With the help of pragmatics, this study aims to pragmatize the English academic exchanges between University students and their teachers in an English class. This becomes relevant to discover the hidden meanings, factors, and reasons behind every message from the perspective of those who are learning the language applied in an online classroom setting. Thus, the discursive realizations—along with the various pragma-crafting acts employed—could provide great resources for researchers in linguistics. This study intends to analyze the interactions made by participants to find out about the features and purposes that student users utilize to communicate with their teachers.

Furthermore, the study employs a newly-developed research framework specifically designed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying motives and influencing factors at play among students and teachers. This innovative framework is crafted to offer a deeper understanding of the dynamics of their exchanges, shedding light on the intricate nuances that shape their perspectives within the educational context. The interactions, specifically the responses, could be a pivotal factor for successful learning, as highlighted by Tampal et al. (2019), and continuous feedback for student comprehension and teaching improvements is helpful.

The study is significant to schools, especially state universities, and beneficial to providing quality education with the "No Filipino learner left behind" initiative by the Department of Education. It seeks to innovate educators' methods to meet learners' needs and provide effective academic exchanges in online settings. This research also analyzes language usage to inform training improvements. For the public, it emphasizes the importance of diverse insights for mutual understanding between teachers and learners. Overall, the study enhances awareness of effective communication and management in both online and offline classrooms.

To better understand the potential messages and interpretations evident on Messenger during the academic exchanges, the paper seeks to answer the research question: *What are the pragma-crafting communication acts from the academic interactions in terms of linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, and psychological acts?*

## 2. Literature Review
There have been academic challenges for the past few years because of the lack of readiness and information. Consequently, there is a focus on prioritizing education to lessen the pandemic's impact. Despite many preferring traditional face-to-face classes, the shift to online education became necessary. However, online tools often require internet access, including social media apps, for collaborative learning. This shift has led to a "new normal" in education, ensuring safety while maintaining learning quality. Yet, the rise of online learning raises questions about its continuity post-pandemic for students and parents.

With academic concerns, pragmatics eventuates in language teaching and real-life communicative contexts. Similar to Nurhidayat's (2021) perspective, pragmatics exemplifies the effective use of language, where comprehension aligns with the intended meanings. Within social contexts, Lo Castro (2003), as mentioned by Abrams (2020), highlights that it studies the communicative choices of every speaker in certain circumstances he/she makes to impart meanings related to factors such as roles, conditions, ages, and the like. Yus (2018) strengthens the importance of the aforementioned contexts, especially in human connections—as pragmatics has progressed to approaches and branches which may appear somewhat diverse within this linguistic framework.

Elaborating on the contribution of pragmatics in language teaching, the online environment introduces distinct learning challenges where pragmatic understanding becomes crucial. With all the good points feedback giving provides, Jurs and Špehte (2021) argue that while feedback undoubtedly inspires learners to develop self-awareness and engage in the learning process, there is still a lack of human connection, body language cues, and virtual assessment of learners' understanding. Providing inputs online may be tricky and challenging because of limitations and adjustments, but it is high time for educators to recalibrate and reassess the respective ways of communication process for better reception of pieces of information.

Delving deeper into language proficiency, Alhozali (2023) discusses that pragmatic competence is the proficiency that elaborates how a person recognizes, produces, and articulates effective and acceptable accounts in socially-and-culturally distinguished situations. This encompasses the ability of every speaker to use the language with the consideration of politeness, tone, and cultural nuances. Pragmatic competence goes above and beyond syntactic accuracy because it emphasizes the practical application of language to master effective communication.

The inclusion of pragmatics in social media helps determine the implicit factors of academic exchanges and interactions. Similar to what the majority perceives, it is invaluable to learn the pragmatic approach to understanding the schema of language in a technology-based platform. Based on the data collected from Khasanah's (2019) study on EFL learners' social media interaction, the students' online interaction contrasts with traditional offline communication regarding forms and structures. This implies that because of the lack of available resources in the communication process, language use is being compromised and challenged.

The Pragma-Crafting Theory presents discourses through certain communication strategies and structures and transcends meaning-making because of the available categories which elucidate and divulge even the inexplicable messages. According to Acheoah John Emike (2015), who coined the term "pragma-crafting" patterned from "pragmatic crafting"—this theory introduces a manifold set of components for a more integrative and interdisciplinary pragmatic analysis of both spoken and written communication.

This theory encompasses the speaker's meaning and explanation from "sentential and extra-sentential borders" (Mohamed, 2020). The utterances in the communication process are perceptible because of the elevated sentence patterns in specific forms. The structure of the Pragma-Crafting Theory shows how a certain conversation may be evolved into something that would go further for the reason that it extends to a large-scale discourse.

The linguistic approach plays a vital role in verbalizing thoughts and messages and humanizing social interactions. The speech act theory by Austin and Searle highlights the concept of the illocutionary act, which features language that talks about performing actions and not only delivering information. Mabaquiao (2018), in his discussion regarding the said theory, elucidates the indicators and elements that intensify the speaker's intended communicative actions. Recognizing these elements, such as performatives and sentence structures, would help the recipients understand the purpose of the speakers behind every statement.

Semiotics is a way to analyze meanings and/or intentions through the presence of signs such as words, pictures, and symbols that give certain messages (Al-Majdawi & Jabi, 2020). People can express themselves verbally or nonverbally. Due to the sudden emergence of social media, platforms have designated emoticons to depict such emotions through the use of icons. Users of social media are adaptable and versatile with regard to message construction and production. Emojis are added to messages and chats to bring a lighter approach and mood to situations. The usage of this strategy gives clarity and excitement when it appears alongside texts. Iqbal et al. (2020) agree with this idea as emojis—just like gestures in speech—explain the messages more so others can easily and smoothly comprehend them.

Through linguistic and extralinguistic acts, the emotions that are being expressed are psychological acts. Wharton and de Saussure (2022) explicates that "emotional communication" is explored in different levels and approaches. They believe that interjections, facial expressions, and affective tone of voice could provide in-depth interpretations of how one learner produces messages and texts. Delving into the psychological aspect of how learners understand the language in real-world interaction enriches the pragmatic competence of the communication process.

## 3. Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach using a pragmatic analysis, which focuses on the pragma-crafting communication acts to interpret the gathered data—the academic interactions via Messenger and group interviews via Zoom meeting. The said analysis is focused on the meaning of the exchanges in communication based on how the participants interpret and comprehend the responses in the context of the new normal.

A pragmatic approach is used to determine the pragmatic communication acts, namely linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, and

psychological acts. According to Padilla Cruz (2015), pragmatics "goes well beyond semantics insofar as its scope is not limited to the study of the encoded meaning of words, phrases or sentences in a vacuum." This means that it encompasses a broader perspective that is not limited to linguistic elements because it covers a lot of situational contexts that depict interlocutors' identities and relationships. This, as per Delute (2019), is needed to detect what the learner intends to say and how it should be analyzed by the teacher. She then believes that the context, the online setting for this study, may be a great factor as to why meanings are often not revealed, which could possibly lead to unintended interpretations.

The researcher also looks for hidden messages as pragmatics scrutinizes what is unknown as well (Siddiqui, 2018). This reveals how the participants generate responses via Messenger.

### 3.1 Participants of the Study
To determine the participants of the study, purposive sampling for this approach is considered to select the participants to emanate relevant information for the benefit of the study (Maxwell, 1996, as mentioned by Taherdoost, 2016). The participants include 35 students of Bachelor of Secondary Education (Major in English), along with a teacher-in-charge from Isabela State University - Echague, enrolled for the school year 2021-2022.

### 3.2 Data Gathering Procedure
Given the potential risks of the pandemic situation, the researcher completes the data gathering online, maximizing Messenger and Zoom. The selection of students is determined by their mode of instruction and learning, with emphasis on their capability to understand the practical side of using Messenger as one of the primary platforms. The chosen individuals are selected based on their participation in classes conducted predominantly on Messenger with their teacher. Upon reaching out to the teacher, the researcher receives a welcome, showing a willingness to share this instructional approach, especially to assist those facing challenges in the online learning environment. The participants are contacted by the researcher through Messenger with the help of the subject adviser. The teacher and batch representatives are asked to provide access to the academic exchanges on Messenger for the primary source of data. To further understand the interactions, the research seeks permission from the Dean of the College of Teacher Education to conduct virtual interviews. The researcher then develops a series of open-ended interview questions aimed to validate, substantiate, and explain the meanings and interpretations of the academic exchanges. There are follow-up questions in between to help the participants express themselves better. The questions center on the inclusion of Messenger for classroom interactions, thoughts regarding feedback reception, and strategies for online responses.
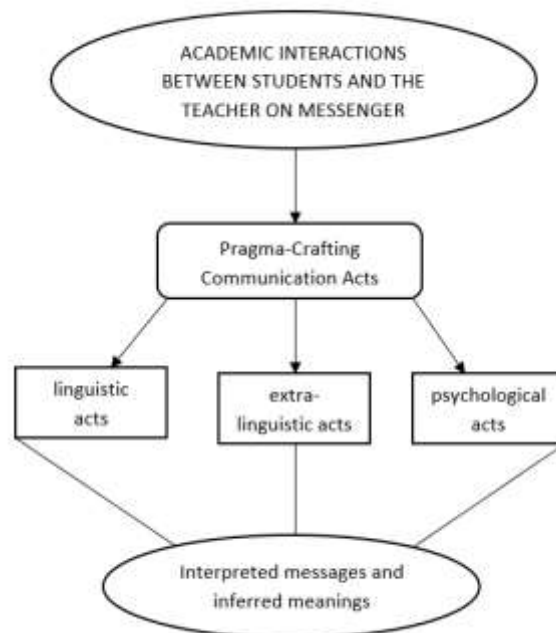
### 3.3 Data Analysis



Figure 1 Derived from Acheoah's Pragma-Crafting on Communication Acts

Following the theoretical framework by Acheoh (2015) on the Pragma-Crafting Theory, this research aims to investigate the academic interactions on Messenger and the group interviews on Zoom. The Pragma-Crafting Theory exists to target

interdisciplinary areas, giving this an idea of being broad yet comprehensive in nature. In this study, the researcher selects the pragma-crafting communication acts to further understand the exchanges among the interactive participants of the study.

This diagram shows how the interactions are realized on a social media app, being an alternative to classroom instructions. The exchanges of the participants are scrutinized to see how they respond to each other. The researcher studies the data through linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, and psychological acts. Academic interactions and interviews are the basis for the analysis of the selected p-crafting acts.
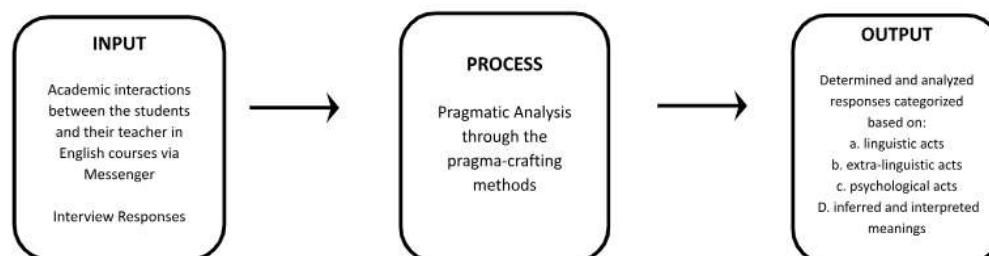


Figure 2 Paradigm of the Study

Figure 2 describes the paradigm of the study, which consists of the input, process, and output. For the input it includes the academic interactions between the students and their teacher in certain English courses via Messenger, but this is mainly focused on the tasks given by the teacher. To suffice, the data from Messenger—answers from the interviews with the participants are also considered and interpreted.

As per the process, pragmatic analysis is utilized to discover the meanings of the responses from the students in learning during the new normal context. The pragma-crafting methods are considered to analyze the pragma-crafting communication acts of the data from the input. On the other hand, the output is produced through the determined and analyzed linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, psychological acts, and inferred meanings and interpretations.

### 3.3. Ethical Considerations
To adhere to the ethical considerations, a consent form about the study and proof of permission is provided to all participants. After all the preparations, the schedule for the group interview was settled depending on the participants' availability. The interview was conducted in seven batches based on the participants' availability. In case of internet disruptions, Messenger was the backup to continue and complete the procedure. Additionally, the researcher was given academic interactions by the batch representatives with the teacher's permission.

### 4. Results and Discussion
This part comprises a detailed presentation and discussion of the analysis, as well as the findings resulting from this study. The analysis and interpretation of data are carried out in a qualitative manner based on the answers in the interview and responses from the selected screenshots on Messenger. In this part, the pragma-crafting communication acts from the students' responses are explained through linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, and psychological acts.

### 4.1. Linguistic Act
A linguistic act, also known as a speech act, is a concept in linguistics that refers to the intention or purpose behind a speaker's utterance beyond the literal meaning of words. Hidayat (2016) states that the "speech act" is the use of language to perform a certain action, and the "act" itself is the action or intention being carried out through that linguistic expression. This means that when people speak or write, they are not only conveying specific information but also performing specific actions or functions through words.

Speech acts are a fundamental component of pragmatics, the study of language use in context. Pragmatics explores how language is used for different purposes, and speech act theory provides insights into how meaning is conveyed beyond literal words. In the classification of speech acts, based on Searle (1979), classifications are representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. These categories are relevant in analyzing the participants' intentions and thoughts, their utterances and their effects on the other parties. These would contribute to the field of pragmatics and to the language used in general. The following academic interactions between the participants were lifted from Messenger.

### 4.1.1. Representatives

Representatives convey information, describe facts, make claims, or express beliefs. As Suryanti & Afriana (2020) believe, this shows that the utterance performed is generally correct and true.

**Academic Interaction #1**

**Task:** Group Poster Making

**Teacher:** *"Conflicting yung color sa photo niyo sa una* **S27***, anak. Hindi ko mabasa ang content."* (The color of the photo is conflicting at first. I could not read the content.)

**Student #27:** *"Yung* color *po kasi na pinili namin* is representing existentialism *po kaya parang* conflict *kasi po* in existentialism is finding the meaning in life *po."* (The color we chose represents existentialism, which is why there is a conflict because existentialism, it is about finding the meaning of life.)

The student justified her group's poster creation process to address the teacher's concerns. The teacher then acknowledged the explanation, emphasizing the importance of critical thinking. This student-teacher interaction improves the learning environment (Soares & da Luz, 2015), as justifying answers bridges the gap between arriving at an answer and understanding the concepts.

**Academic Interaction #2**

**Task:** Interview

**Student #34:** "In our group *po* ma'am, can we use Tagalog questions to ask our parents' respondents? So that they can express what [they want] to answer [us], and also for gaining a better answer from them."

**Teacher:** "Of course, even Ilocano. But make sure there will be [subtitles] on your output *po*."

To achieve a balanced academic interaction, the teacher needs to consider meeting halfway for the students. This is relevant, especially in the online setup, to empower learning, build trust and confidence, and to cultivate inclusivity. Students would feel their inclusion and this is what makes them eager to always be part of the discourse. According to Rahardi's (2020) study of culture-specific pragmatics, certain pragmatic markers may stem from the backgrounds of both the speaker and the listener. The respectful word "po" in Filipino contributes to fostering a sense of connection, enhancing relationships between individuals.

### 4.1.2. Directives

Directives are designed to prompt a specific response from the recipients, such as making a request, giving an order, or offering advice (Kissine, 2013).

**Academic Interaction #3**

**Task:** Poem Criticism

**Teacher:** "Learn to recognize the owner of the image you inserted in your paper. Avoid bulleting. Make it as one continued essay form. I love the subdiscussions on the literary devices; however, you have to elucidate well how it impacted the poem."

**Student #11:** "Yes, ma'am. Noted *po*."

The student accepted the constructive comments with a positive perspective. Embracing feedback holds various significant advantages in professional and social contexts. According to Peng (2020), it is widely understood that the goal of teachers' criticisms is to objectively highlight students' areas for improvement, allowing them to recognize, correct, and learn from these issues. Learning to separate the feedback from personal identity, focusing on growth and improvement, and developing a growth mindset can all contribute to becoming more open to receiving and benefiting from constructive criticism.

**Academic Interaction #4**

**Task:** Paragraph Writing

**Student #31:** "Good morning, ma'am. I just have a query regarding our [activity,] which is to write a paragraph about our weakness/es in grammar. How are we going to submit *po*? Do we need to post it, or you'll create a post *po* where we can attach our works in the comment section?"

**Teacher:** "Activity. 1. State your weaknesses [in] grammar. Reasons for having it as [a] weakness. 2. Research [on] modern day grammar about excellent strategies that can be useful to overcome these weaknesses. 3. Propose to your pair how you would help him/her in developing grammar competence."

Clarifying information is a crucial step in various texts, especially in the education setting, preventing misunderstandings, enhancing tasks accuracy, saving time and resources, promoting active learning, and showing initiative. The students have the desire to broaden their knowledge or correct some gaps and/or discrepancies in their learning (Chin & Osborne, 2008). When the student inquired about the submission process, the teacher promptly provided instructions, including details about pairing. The teacher recognized the need to resend the initial instructions about the paragraph creation. Subsequent submission details were then sent.

### 4.1.3. Commissives

From the words of Roberts (p. 2, 2018), commissives delineate how the speaker commits to "some future course of action: promising, planning, vowing, betting, opposing."

**Academic Interaction #5**

**Task:** Reflection Paper

**Teacher:** "Miss **S29***, bakit may* apostrophe *ang* teachers *mo?* Check *muna* before submitting." (Miss **S29**, why does the word "teachers" have an apostrophe? Check first before submitting.)

**Student #29:** "Sorry, mam. Wait lang po, 'di ko napansin." (Sorry, ma'am. Kindly wait. I did not notice it.)

The participant apologized for not checking the submitted reflection and committed to sending it again with a better structure. The response suggests that he overlooked the said error and did not see it. This only shows how proofreading really proves its worth in helping every student in so many aspects. To analyze, he may know the correction and it is just a normal typographical error. However, it is also possible that the participant is not familiar with the needed adjustment with the punctuation marks. Bouachiba (2013) asserts that some students struggle with coherence in writing due to a lack of awareness about organizing words, ideas, and thoughts effectively.

**Academic Interaction # 6**

**Task: Research**

**Student #5:** "Good morning, ma'am. I am **S5** from BSE English 3, your student in the Literary Criticism class. I simply want to request formal instruction regarding our research on this subject. This will allow us to begin our research immediately. Thank you, ma'am, and God bless."

**Teacher:** "Yes, *po*. I will talk to your class later about that, *anak*. I have an existing [schedule] with the 1st year at present. Thank you for reminding!"

Commitments are not solely the responsibility of students; teachers also have a role to accomplish. The application gives teachers an opportunity to provide reminders, especially when expected outcomes are not yet achieved. In this instance, the student was brave enough to remind the teacher about their research activity instructions. The situation has enabled communication to be effective because of the platform's ease and flexibility.

### 4.1.3. Expressives

Expressives, on the other hand, convey the speaker's emotions, feelings, attitudes, or psychological state. As referenced by Septiani (2020) on Yule (1996), when people are expressives, they may showcase either pleasure, pain like, dislike, joy, or sorrow. Essentially, they express their personal reactions to a particular situation.

**Academic Interaction #7**

**Task: Activity Submission**

**Student #9:** "Ma'am*, pwede po bang i-submit na lang nila* thru *PM sa inyo yung* groups *na 'di pa naka-present at dito na lang sa GC 'yung tapos na? Para* fair *po sa lahat ng* groups *na ang* submission *ay* today, ma'am." (Ma'am, is it possible for them to just submit the groups that haven't presented yet to you through a private message, and for those who are done to be here in the group chat? To be fair to all the groups that, the submission is today, ma'am.)

**Teacher:** "Approved. Fairness and objectivity. Very good! I overlooked it."

Prior to the conversation, the participant asked the teacher if the other groups who did not present would still submit their outputs. The teacher said that only the students who presented would do it. Apparently, it was originally declined, but the student respectfully raised a question and highlighted the relevance of fairness in times like this. The learning opportunities that the application brings would really test the values of everyone. Voicing out the perception of fairness is beneficial to realize open communication, conflict resolution, and a positive atmosphere.

**Academic Interaction #8**

**Teacher:** "Attach file *lang mga anak sa fb* page *kapag...[pwede ba yun] magkaroon ng* privacy *na [hindi] nabasa ng kaklase?"* (Children, just attach the files to the Facebook page. Is it possible to have privacy and not be read by classmates?)

**Student #25:** "If we attached our activities [to Facebook] page, ma'am, our classmate can see and download it. I suggest *po* you can create a classroom in [Google Classroom] and [Edmodo] where you will post, and we can attach our file *po*."

One significant online concern is privacy. The participant believes that uploading attachments should be private because they are accessible to all, and not everyone is comfortable with this. It can sometimes lead to embarrassment for the owners of the files. Privacy is what others are screaming silently, especially if the comments are too personal and/or negative, to begin with.

### 4.1.4. Declaratives
From the study of Kiuk and Ghozali (2018), the act of making a declaration is an illocutionary act that, when successfully carried out, establishes a correspondence between the expressed content and reality.

**Academic Interaction #9**
**Task:** Activity Submission
**Student #9:** "Good evening, ma'am. May I ask where we can pass our activity? Or someone will compile our files again, and s/he will submit our activity [once]? Sorry for disturbing [you], ma'am. Thank you."

**Teacher:** "Don't use pass, *anak*. [Please] use submit."

The use of the Filipino word "anak," which translates to "child," exemplifies the teacher's genuine care and concern. This linguistic choice establishes a connection similar to that of a parent, suggesting that even delicate suggestions are conveyed with empathy.

**Academic Interaction #10**
**Task:** Video Viewing
**Teacher:** *"Guys, please prepare your videos. Let's watch all and critic today. Pipili ng mag-share screen."* (We will choose who will share his/her screen.)

While the teacher's words may not have directly changed the external world, the researcher believes that the education world has a profound impact on shaping it. This strategy of the teacher offers students a new perspective, and openly sharing suggestions can also be an effective strategy for mutual learning. It promotes healthy discussions and creates a safe learning environment.

### 4.2 Extra-linguistic Act
Extralinguistic acts are actions or behaviors that go beyond the use of language itself and involve nonverbal cues, gestures, expressions, and physical actions to convey meaning. Extralinguistic acts are essential for effective communication, as they add layers of meaning and context to spoken or written language. They help convey emotions, attitudes, intentions, and social dynamics that enrich the overall understanding of a message. According to Acheaoh (2015), Pragma-crafting includes the following variables: sociolinguistic variables, semiotic particulars (emojis and emoticons), and pauses and silences. The following data sources are a combination of academic interactions on Messenger and transcribed interviews on Zoom:

### 4.2.1 Sociolinguistic Variable (Sex)
In sociolinguistic variables, the biological or assigned sex is one of the factors in how people respond to different situations. Niyazova and Abduraxmanova (2022) believes that sex is not a role dictated by circumstances but rather an inherent characteristic, potentially constituting an integral aspect of one's personality. The idea that female students are more verbose than male students is a stereotype that doesn't hold true for everyone. Verbal behavior, including verbosity, varies greatly among individuals and can be influenced by a multitude of factors beyond preferences.

| Data Source | Context | Participant's Response | Inferred Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Zoom** | **Response Online** | *Female:*<br><br>**Student #18:** "It's [easier to react through emoticons] than responding in or typing something your opinion like that." | Based on Sabra (2018), boys tend to engage in more talking or verbal communication than girls within a classroom setting in Sweden. In comparison, some female participants of this study seem to be less verbose in answering the questions during the |

| | | Student #20: "Ma'am, just like *po* **S18**, I just also I'm reacting *po* and then [I respond] *po* if it is required *po*." | interview. When the participants below were asked about how they usually respond to their teacher's feedback, the disparity between the female participants and male participants is apparent. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Male:* | |
| | | Student #9: "Ma'am, sometimes I every time that our professor is disseminating information to us, what I usually do is that [I] usually react to his or her message, ma'am, and I don't send any response anymore ma'am, through chat *kasi ayoko pong natatabunan yung information na sine-send* and that's the way I give my response to my [teacher], through reactions." | Generally, the female participants have more direct answers during the interview. On the other hand, most male participants were surprisingly proactive in elucidating their standpoints as to why they use certain reactions on the responses or instructions given to them on Messenger. |
| | | (…I don't send any response anymore, ma'am, through chat because I do not want the information sent to be overlooked…) | |
| **Messenger** | **Activity Suggestion** | *Female:* | On Messenger, female students tend to be more vocal in their communication with their teacher. Suggestions, corrections, and other interactions are often initiated by female participants. The participant, who is a batch representative, frequently offers suggestions. Ochangco (2023) highlighted in their study on female student leaders that a key informant noted a strong sense of accountability as an essential quality among female leaders. |
| | | Participant #15: "Ma'am, our estimated time for each group is 25 minutes since the class is divided into 18 groups (with 5 members each). Meaning that would be more than an hour. Therefore, we are suggesting having one day or half day for the whole program to be finished. However, we will respect your decision, whatever it may be. Thank you very much and God bless, ma'am." | |

### 4.2.2 Semiotic Particles

Speaking of reactions, semiotic particulars such as emojis and emoticons convey emotions and tone and add depth, clarity, and emotional richness to text-based communication. These are a relevant and effective tool for modern communication in various contexts. As stated in the findings of Konrad et al. (2019), conveying feelings is the primary rationale for sending an emoji or a sticker, particularly in the case of emojis.

| Data Source | Context | Participant's Response | Inferred Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Zoom** | **Usage of Emoticons** | Student #3:"Ma'am, [I'm] a type of participants po na I'm using emoticons, emoticons po, ma'am, *because nakakahiya po kasi minsan ma'am especially kapag may mga ano po may mga words po na baka mali po yung ano po masasabi po, ma'am.*"<br>(…because it is embarrassing sometimes, ma'am, especially if there are words that I might say incorrectly, ma'am.) | Students often use emoticons to minimize misunderstandings, believing in 'less talk, less mistakes.' Some find comfort and conciseness in them to maintain interaction integrity. |
| | | Student #1: "Using emoticons doesn't give the thought or the real meaning of what you're about to say. So, | On the other hand, there are also students who prefer to verbalize their thoughts so that misinterpretations are lessened. Semiotic elements greatly impact |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | instead of using emoticons, I just used to type it all, so the receiver will understand what I'm about to say." | language flexibility, which potentially leads to confusions. The informal nature of common platforms, especially in the education sector, poses risks. |
| **Messenger** | **Giving Details** | **Message #1:**<br><br>**Teacher:** "Guys, *send ko* Module 1 today. I overlooked the other day." (Guys, I will send...)<br><br>**Message #2:**<br><br>**Teacher:** "Please like this message if you have shared the song already."<br><br>❤️ 🧡 💛 💚 💙 💜 | More than half of the participants responded to the messages through different kinds of *heart reactions* on Messenger. Schneebeli (2018) asserts that emoticons and emojis can convey a stance effectively, even without verbal communication. This suggests that using icons like hearts and likes is sufficient, particularly in situations where elaborate responses are not necessary. |
| | **English Usage** | **Student #35:** "Ma'am, [we have a] short power interruption, that's why I suddenly disappeared earlier."<br><br>**Teacher:** "Wow, this is a great sounding message! It is pure English! 😎Good! Watch that [YouTube] channel for your demo teaching of sounds." | Adding a surprise factor, the teacher replied to the student with an emoticon that shows coolness. Flayyih (2018) suggests that emoticons act as facial expressions which can support the meaning of the message. In this case, the emoticon conveyed positivity and amazement at the student's use of English, improving the overall tone of the interaction. |

### 4.2.3 Pauses and Silences

For pauses and silences, these can indicate thoughtfulness, uncertainty, or emphasis. If pauses are used effectively, these can improve one's speaking skills. Otherwise, it would distract the performance or the recipients of the message. The participants in this study showed different pauses, but one kind of pause seems to be dominant in most of them; it is the pause when they could not process their thoughts in an organized manner.

To pragmatize some responses with pauses and silences, the responses were lifted from the Zoom interviews.

| Data Source | Context | Participant's Response | Inferred Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Zoom** | **Messenger Inclusion** | **Student #2:** "Uhm, for me, ma'am, uhm, the inclusion of Messenger is for me, ma'am...m*as na-eexpress po ng* student *yung gusto niyang sabihin sa...sa...sa* teacher *or sa ano...sa* teacher *or sa* classmate *niya, ma'am, kasi parang mas* confident *kasi, mas* confident *yung* student...*mas* confident *yung* student *na mag-uh, mag-express ng sarili niya or tanong niya kasi parang 'di kailangang ng* personal appearance ma'am *ganun.*"<br><br>(For me, ma'am, the inclusion of Messenger helps the student express himself of what he wants to tell his teacher or classmate. He is more confident to express | Amiri and Puteh (2022) emphasize that McCroskey's communication apprehension (CA) stresses its essential role as a significant hindrance, influencing an individual's willingness to partake in communication and creating obstacles to the development of effective communication skills. Moreover, CA is the anxiety felt by the speaker when conversing with someone, especially in public. In this case, the participants may feel |

| | | himself or to ask because the situation does need personal appearance, ma'am.)<br><br>**Student #8:** "The positive side *po* ma'am, is you can get an information through Messenger ma'am uh and and also you, you you can…The information that that that prof is *na chinat ka niya,* ma'am*,* through your activities and then the the the negative side ma'am is some for me, ma'am, using the Messenger is not uh, good for me *kasi* I'm using a data ma'am, so that *minsan 'di po ako nakakapag…nakakasabay sa kanila, ma'am. Yun lang po,* ma'am."<br><br>(You can get the information that is sent by the professor, ma'am. The negative side for me, ma'am, is that using the Messenger is not good for me because I am using data, that is why I could not keep up with them sometimes. That is all.) | anxious as they speak and might stutter or even pause because of fear in speaking or even just using the English language.<br><br>Emotions significantly impact how individuals interpret, perceive intentions, and understand meanings. Responding to online queries, addressing concerns, and answering interview questions can induce anxiety, specifically for participants with limited exposure to public speaking. Hesitations and nervousness, especially when receiving feedback accessible to others, can be discerned through pauses and silences. |

*4.3 Psychological Act*

To better understand the academic interactions on Messenger, this part focuses on the group interviews conducted via Zoom. It intends to discuss the interpretations and standpoints of the participants—especially with the inclusion of the said social media app.

**Context #1: Receiving Negative Feedback**
**Student #25**
**Response:** I receive both positive and negative [feedback], ma'am, sometimes since I'm aware that I have errors or sometimes I make [mistakes] and I feel grateful and shy…I feel grateful because it [helps] me balance out my strength and weakness in English and [I'm shy] because there are many students, ma'am."

Negative feedback can guide students to improve, focus on opportunities, and highlight strengths. However, educators must ensure it is truly helpful and constructive. Feedback should be specific, actionable, timely, and perceived as fair by students. Ypsilandis (2010) notes that feedback acts as an "assistance mechanism" supporting students' learning processes. Emotional support and allowing students to voice concerns without judgment can mitigate negative feelings. Yet, since Messenger is not the usual academic platform, it may convey a different tone. Hence, fostering open communication and a supportive online environment is crucial to prevent students from feeling excluded or left behind.

**Context #2: Providing Feedback through a Group Chat**
**Student #32**
**Response:** "Ma'am, I do not agree with the giving of feedback being sent on a group chat. [I] prefer to get [feedback] through direct messages, ma'am, because I believe it's my own concern, so might as well I am just the only one who can read the message because there are cases that some of feedback aren't good and can cause me [embarrassment]."

The statement is expressing a disagreement with the practice of providing comments in a group chat. The participant prefers to receive feedback through direct messages because he considers it a personal matter. He believes that improvement suggestions should be given privately because there have been instances where comments, when misinterpreted, were shared publicly, leading to embarrassment for the receiver. This, one way or another, becomes an issue for some students as they are not comfortable receiving feedback with their classmates in the same space—be it constructive or not. Providing feedback online in a public space where other students can see it depends on the context, the nature of the feedback, and the platform being used.

**Context #3: Feedback Accessibility**
**Student #15**
**Response:** "At first, ma'am, I am very anxious whenever I receive some [feedback] on Messenger *po*, because of course I'll be happy if the comments are positive. However, it's a little bit awkward when it is negative feedback because my classmates could also see my mistakes. And I feel ashamed of it. I feel like they can criticize me at any moment. *So nasanay na lang din po as time*

*goes by*, we became used to it *na*. So it teaches us to be humble at all times that we need those [feedback] and able to grow and should not repeat those mistakes *po*." (So we just got used to it as time goes by…)

While others have mixed feelings with how interactions are accessed online, there are still students who wish to make it open to all for awareness.

**Student #3**
**Response:** "For me *po ay mas gusto ko po sa ano,* ma'am*, sa GC* so that others *ma-inform din po sila kung ano po yung mga* lapses *ko on my* grammars*, sa* writings *ko,* at least others are informed about it so that they can correct their mistakes too." (For me, I prefer ma'am to GC so that others can also be informed about my lapses on my grammar, on my writings, and at least others are informed about it so that they can correct their mistakes, too.)

The lessons that students may get from the situation strengthen the need to extend the comments to others as a form of awareness. Students helping each other in online learning may achieve collaborative learning, active engagement, a sense of community, peer empowerment, and support for struggling students. The small community that is built offline and online has an impeccable factor because of its sense of belongingness and social presence. There is a commonly accepted understanding that feeling connected to a community and having a social presence significantly contribute to improving the overall quality of learning and increasing students' motivation to engage in their studies (Haythornthwaite and Andrews, 2011).

**Context #4: Possible Interpretations**
**Student #11**
**Response:** *"…medyo uncomfortable din po talaga sa* Messenger since we might get misinterpreted or our message might be misinterpreted by someone, especially our teachers, *kasi po uhm,* we don't know…how…how our reactions in that…that particular message."* (…it's also a bit uncomfortable on Messenger since we might get misinterpreted or our message might be misinterpreted by someone, especially our teachers, because we don't know how to react to that particular message.)

Chang (2021) believes that an online environment also raises difficulties for learners, which causes restrained performances from learners. Interactions in social media applications or any online platform can lead to anxiety for the students, impacting their self-confidence and academic performance. It can be misconstrued by other students or taken out of context.

**Context #5: Thoughts on the Inclusion of Messenger**
**Student #22**
**Response:** "For me, Messenger can still be effective. As maybe as long as it can be used and can be utilized properly to avoid misinformation or misunderstandings, then it still can be effective, ma'am, because we use Messenger as an alternative a platform in order for us to use during the pandemic."

**Student #26**
**Response:** "It is really helpful like it has a lot of [advantages], but it is not perfect. I also believe that there's nothing wrong in using messenger only when we use it properly.

**Student #6**
**Response:** "I don't like the setup, ma'am, the learning through the use of Messenger. Actually, I want face to face learning because we can through face-to-face learning, we can actively communicate with our classmates and to our professors, especially that we need to, that we have our OJT this year for this upcoming school year."

**Student #7**
**Response:** "For me, ma'am, by means of communication, I will still use it for the next month, ma'am, pertaining to Messenger. But by means of education, ma'am, I think it is better to be done physically or face to face…"

**Student #4**
**Response:** "For me, ma'am, *malaki ang maitutulong ng* Messenger. But then *may* disadvantage *din po yung* Messenger especially *sa'ming mga* language students like, for example, we aren't able to proofread *yung mga* messages *na sine-send po namin sa mga* chat *po*, which is sometimes, *yun na po yung nagiging* disadvantage *po niya. Hindi po namin nagagamit nang tama yung* language and even the words that we are using*, ginagawa po namin siyang mas* short, shortcut *po yung* words…but then this is very essential po especially now that…virtual learning *pa tayo*, ma'am." (For me, ma'am, Messenger is very helpful. However, there are disadvantages, especially for us language students. For example, we can't proofread the messages we send in chat, which sometimes becomes a disadvantage. We can't use the language properly, and we often use shortcuts for words. Despite this, Messenger is very essential, especially now with virtual learning.)

Online learning can be successful, as seen in countries like Pakistan during COVID-19. Ijaz Hussain et al. (2020) found it effective, offering students flexibility and meeting educational needs. However, success varies by context and relies on aligning benefits with individual preferences. Advantages like cost-effectiveness and flexibility must be balanced with challenges such as limited social interaction and technological barriers. Institutions should adapt to student feedback, possibly incorporating more traditional classroom experiences if needed. Ultimately, the goal is to create a learning environment that meets diverse student needs while leveraging the benefits of online education.

## 5. Summary and Conclusion
The following are the pragma-crafting features and communication acts that emerged from the study:

### 5.1. Feature #1: Linguistic Acts (Speech Acts)
Speech acts, such as representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations, are classified based on Searle's (1979) classification system. The interpretation of speech acts in academic interactions highlights their diverse nature. The conveyed meaning can vary significantly due to multiple factors. However, by providing consistent and articulate communication, particularly on social media platforms, a mutual understanding can be attained. It is essential to raise follow-up questions and concerns to ensure comprehension and promote active learning. Meeting halfway with students empowers learning, builds trust and confidence, and cultivates inclusivity. Permission-seeking is also crucial in gaining approval or acceptance from the community or group, leading to improved activities and relationships.

### 5.2. Feature #2: Extra-linguistic Acts
1. Sociolinguistic variable
2. Semiotic particulars (emojis/emoticons)
3. Pauses and silences

The biological sex may influence responses or how one reacts to academic interactions online. This aspect can impact learning experiences and communication styles in virtual environments. McCroskey's communication apprehension (CA) is a significant hindrance to effective communication skills, and hesitations and nervousness can be discerned through pauses and silences. The findings highlight the importance of understanding and addressing linguistic and contextual factors in effective communication. Some students intentionally respond through emoticons, which are preferred for convenience, emotional expression, and brevity. They claimed that emojis can enhance non-verbal communication and provide comfort in limited-based situations.

### 5.3. Feature #3: Psychological Acts
Psychological acts concern emotions evoked by actions, like receiving feedback. Some feel sad but see negative feedback as an opportunity for learning and growth. The study found that most students often feel both sad and embarrassed when receiving negative comments, but they also take it as a lesson to improve their skills and learn from it. With regard to the usage of Messenger, participants expressed mixed feelings when it is used for education. Some students favor physical, face-to-face learning for better communication, while others appreciate Messenger's accessibility.

In conclusion, the content plays a vital role in this academic situation. The choice of the online platform and the structure of the learning environment significantly affect student engagement. Different platforms offer varied features and interactions, which can impact how students communicate, collaborate, and access resources. Also, the participants—being BSED college students—may also be a factor in how they react and respond to feedback online. The tone and style of communication used by teachers and peers influence how the participants understand the learning environment.

Transitioning to online post-pandemic learning requires evaluating both pros and cons, taking student preferences and effectiveness into account. Institutions may aim for a balanced learning environment that addresses the diverse needs of students while leveraging the benefits of online education. From the findings of Yilmazsoy et al. (2020), students are greatly affected by instant messaging applications even though they are not adequate in the academic process. The comprehension level, learning skills, productivity and academic achievements are some of the areas that may be overlooked if misuse of the platform is evident. Lack of control over content accuracy and also possible distractions due to different activity on other platforms are some of these risks (Haque, 2023).

Certainly, academic interaction represents a complex form of communication involving linguistic messages and intended meanings. It plays a vital role in effective conversations, influenced by linguistic factors, context, tone, and the like. In addition, a successful interaction requires clarity, precision, context awareness, cultural sensitivity, and active listening. Participants shared their perspectives on using Messenger for academic interaction to improve communication. Key elements included linguistic

messages, emoticons, and direct questions. The choice of the online platform and the structure of the learning environment significantly affect student engagement.

**6. Study Limitations and Future Research**

Relying on academic conversations on Messenger and group interviews presents possible limitations in the data collection process. This could elevate concerns about the authenticity of the interactions, which might impact the results and interpretations. The participants, being BSEd students, may narrow the perspective of the findings towards different academic settings or student populations. Factors such as demographic factors, cultural backgrounds, or educational levels may overlook some variations in communication patterns. Some interactions may also prompt different interpretations depending on one's lens or the supporting references. Moreover, categorizing linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts, and linguistic acts remains open to suggested focal points, potentially raising questions in data analysis and conclusion. With continuous trends online, relevant changes in Messenger usage patterns, academic practices, and participant preferences over time could impact the applicability of the findings in future contexts.

Given the aforementioned limitations, it is suggested that further studies delve into additional aspects of the utilized method within the same academic setting to fully ascertain its ability to uncover implicit messages and interpretations. Research could focus on educators' diverse online response strategies in light of emerging semiotic nuances. Additionally, investigating the discourse and pragmatic features of Messenger and its impact on student academic engagement captures interest. Other research endeavors may also assess the effectiveness of online learning outcomes by comparing academic performance across various platforms. Furthermore, exploring student motivation in a virtual learning environment, training instructors for seamless integration, exploring hybrid learning models, and addressing privacy and ethical concerns present beneficial areas for possible research exploration.

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