



## “Double padded” politeness: (Im)politeness in broadcast interviews by GMA-7’s Jessica Sojo and ABC-5’s Raffy Tulfo

Rafael Ibe Santos

Published: December 2022

### Abstract

Corresponding author  
**Rafael Ibe Santos**  
University of Asia and the  
Pacific  
rafael.santos@uap.asia

Additional information is  
available at the end of the  
article

©2022 The Author(s).  
Published by the UST  
Department of English,  
University of Santo Tomas  
Manila, The Philippines

This study examines how Filipino language news interviews in television broadcasting fit into Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness concepts and Culpeper’s (1996) impoliteness theory. It focuses specifically on what (im)politeness strategies are employed within the confines of two key elements in broadcast interviews, namely, turn-taking and question design. Underpinned by (im) politeness theories and with conversational analysis (CA) in media discourse as a method, this qualitative inquiry is an attempt to fill in the gap from a lack of empirical data in CA involving broadcast texts in Southeast Asian and Filipino contexts. Findings show a tendency for broadcast interviewers to use polite markers, honorifics, and pluralized address pronouns as a show of pseudo-politeness and extreme forms of impoliteness in one interview, and a demonstration of deference in another while also maintaining a straightforward and adversarial language. The latter stance demonstrates use of positive politeness and of off-record, negative, and positive impoliteness. Results point to a *double padded* Filipino politeness and two types of linguistic cushioning to lessen or mitigate the confrontational nature of interviewing, thereby redressing the positive face of the interviewee. Mystifying and intriguing, this multi-layered local brand of politeness in TV news interviews provides new vistas on Asian and Filipino politeness.

**Keywords:** broadcast, cushioning, double padded politeness, interview, impoliteness, politeness

### 1. Introduction

Broadcast organizations exist to disseminate information about events and discuss issues of great significance via news commentaries and news interviews commonly referred to as

public affairs programs to “enlighten the citizenry...” (Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, 2011, p. 5). In 2011, the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP), the governing body with oversight over member media companies, clarified the guidelines on the content and conduct of broadcast shows including those aired by television networks. Section 6: A and B of the KBP code states:

Interviews must be presented in the proper context. *Replies of interviewees to questions must not be edited or editorialized in a way that would distort their intended meaning...* Selecting and phrasing of questions during an interview shall be the primary responsibility of the interviewer (italics added). Such text must be determined primarily by the public interest to be served (p. 8).

On the aspect of on-air decorum, Section 2 of Article 28 of the same code states that “[p]ersons who appear in live programs, variety shows, game shows and other similar programs *shall not be embarrassed, insulted, ridiculed, harassed or humiliated in whatever manner*” (p. 31). While such provisions underscore what is “professional and ethical [in] broadcasting” (Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, 2020, para. 1), the rules do not specifically address the question-and-answer or turn-taking design in broadcast interviews. In addition, the guidelines lack provisions concerning the framing of interview questions and the designing of responses.

Journalism in the Philippines is touted as one of the freest in Asia, and on various occasions, network interviewers find themselves embroiled in controversies for going beyond the scope of their roles as purveyors of truth and information (Arao, 2021; Cabico, 2018; Rappler, 2019). In broadcasting, news interviews (NI) participants including the interviewees are obliged to uphold a social norm seen particularly in turn-taking and question-and-answer designing by demonstrating some form of cooperation and acceptable demeanor in terms of language use and behavior (Greatbatch, 2006).

In the realm of media discourse, broadcast news interviews are considered as major examples of formal interaction in media discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2012). Usually, the programs are presented using a turn-taking system that is specialized and more restrictive than ordinary conversations (Atkinson, 1982, as cited in Clayman, 2012). Common NI focuses on newsmakers such as public officials or those vying for elective positions, and other so-called movers and shakers. Expert interviews and accountability interviews are listed as the two major genres of broadcast interviews. The first is intended to provide opinions from experts and/or other high-profile interviewees, while the second is designed to entertain and address people’s or media’s concerns (Montgomery, 2007, as cited in Clayman, 2012).

Specific genres of broadcast interviews include primary newsmakers interview (PNI), expert commentators (EC), vox populi (vox pop) or interviews with ordinary people, campaign interviews (CI), and panel and debate interviews (PADI). PNI tends to focus on interviewees’ own conduct, and responses are critically assessed for possible evasiveness. In EC interviews, the emphasis is on the conduct of others and they hardly entail the same

emphasis on accountability. Non-straightforward answers may, in some contexts, be seen as “striving for accuracy” rather than evasiveness (Clayman, 2012, p. 653). Vox pop shows are concerned with a different set of tasks and issues, focusing on interviewees’ thoughts and feelings as survivors, beneficiaries, or citizens whose lives have been touched by recent news events. Interviewees may be asked about their direct observations as eyewitnesses. Hosts can be relatively deferential toward the interviewees. CI programs tend to put the guests’ status as potential officeholders under the spotlight. Lastly, PADI programs feature multiple panelists from various backgrounds and perspectives. This “entails special affordances and challenges regarding the maintenance of interviewer neutralism and the management of participation and conflict among interviewees” (Clayman, 2012, p. 653).

Turn-taking system and question-and-response design are two of the key elements of a typical western broadcast news interview (Clayman, 2012; Fairclough, 1995). In turn-taking, the host and the guest/s are expected to exhibit elaborateness in the framing of interview questions and designing of responses, respectively. It is both the role and responsibility of the broadcasters to provide sufficient background to the questions to facilitate understanding and to do otherwise violates the turn-taking system. In the same manner, program panelists must cooperate in the process by providing “elaborate answers” (Clayman, 2012, p. 631), again, in observance of the turn-taking guideline in news interviews. The practice of turn-taking and elaborateness relates to the field of pragmatics, echoing, for instance, the cooperative principle (CP) by Grice’s (1975), which posits that every conceivable social interaction is guided by an intent on the part of the interlocutors to cooperate in order to achieve success in communication. This idea of cooperation in news interviews is to avoid offense. In the NI context, the use of polite language is meant to minimize hostility—both the “possibility of confrontation occurring at all, and the possibility that a confrontation will be perceived as threatening” (Lakoff, 1989, as cited in Romer & Shulze, 2009, p. 102).

According to Clayman (2012), conversation analysis involving news interviews began in the 1980’s with English and American data, concentrating primarily on the distinctiveness of NI as a form of institutional talk. Later on, the focus expanded geographically to include Australia and some countries in Europe, which made attempts to add to the corpus of research on the topic. However, literature on the subject is dearth. In fact, according to Clayman (2012), conversation analysis involving data within the Asian context is very limited. Given this one-sidedness and the tendency to provide a western slant on the analysis of news interviews, he recommends a shift from English and North American data to non-English and that of the other side of the world, implying particularly Asia and even Africa.

There have been attempts among Asian researchers to investigate news articles as reported in media, and such studies usually rely on a single linguistic framework such as critical discourse analysis (CDA). Often, the tendency is to analyze published news materials instead of public affairs broadcast interviews in the field of broadcasting, leaving out this vast realm of media enterprise. To cite a few examples, West Asia or the Middle East scholars have collected data from a local English-language daily and examined the same using the CP by Grice (1975), examining how the Gricean maxims were either adopted or violated in news

reports (Qassemi, Ziabari, & Kheirabadi, 2018). South Asian scholars also explored the news terrain but concentrated on editorials of two nationally circulated English daily newspapers, examining content using CDA (Khan & Shabir, 2012). Data in both studies was taken from available printed text, that is, English language newspapers.

As Clayman (2012) has observed, NI analysis is an area that is not well explored in pragmatics in Asia, and this appears to be the case as well in the Philippines. For example, in 2015, Brown and Malveda analyzed the discourse production of foreign affairs news in the country using a fusion of communication and language theories. Predictably, data was sourced from printed and English language news items as published in three Philippine broadsheets, suggesting a preference for readily available material for ease in conducting research. Another research by Montejo (2018) delved into an English-and-read-only text, limiting it to the examination of headlines of online news portals using a CDA framework. Earlier, Goheco (2009) attempted to examine politeness in broadcast context, but her data was confined to mediated political campaign advertisements on television instead of NI. It does appear that the use of a language and pragmatics paradigm in studying naturally occurring data in broadcast news interviews is a relatively new territory to be explored. Additionally, “attempts have been made to characterize the Philippine brand of politeness” (Santos, 2022, p. 51) in language use, but studies on the subject including language power have been found lacking (Labor, 2011).

Based on Clayman’s (2012) endorsement to consider non-English data, the study scrutinizes excerpts of interviews in Filipino as broadcast by two major TV networks in the Philippines. It relies on the dimensions of turn-taking and question and answer framing in Clayman’s (2012) conversation analysis framework, combining them with politeness and impoliteness concepts. The main objective is to determine how politeness and impoliteness are reflected in the Filipino language news interviews. To reiterate, literature on politeness in the study of Philippine media tends to lean towards analyses of the printed text such as books, magazines, newspapers, and online news portals. Obviously lacking are studies on Filipino language broadcast interviews, specifically those that utilize CA-(im)politeness lenses as proposed in this paper. Therefore, the results of this study contribute significantly to literature on language studies and pragmatics in the local context, particularly on (im) politeness. Moreover, news programming hosts are afforded a ground-breaking study in a field closest to their hearts.

## 1.1 Of Politeness and Politeness Strategies

The politeness domain, although a lot is credited to Brown and Levinson (1987), is heavily influenced by Lakoff’s (1973) politeness strategies in conversation. Building on Grice’s (1975) Maxims and Goffman’s concept of face (Chang, 2008; Mao, 1994), Lakoff (1973) proposed a set of guidelines that ensures acceptable conduct between interlocutors, and these are: *Don’t impose, Give options, and Be friendly*. Compliance to these rules of conversation accounts to what she calls as pragmatic competence. More importantly, these maxims underscore the central role of politeness in every interaction. Although indebted to Grice

(1975), Lakoff (1973) differs from the latter’s emphasis on the pursuit of clarity in discourse, positing that in dialogues, the exchange of ideas “is secondary to merely reaffirming and strengthening relationships” (Arendholz, 2013, p. 297). Conversely, sameness of meaning—achieved through cooperation and negotiation between two communicators as per Grice (1975)—is inferior to sensitivity to the sensibilities of interactants. In Lakoff’s (1973) view, the transfer of a message and success in communication in general, although considered critical, are not as paramount as that of avoiding offense. Succinctly, being truthful, factual, relevant, and clear as intended in Grice’s (1975) maxims of quantity, quality, relevance and clarity may be disregarded if relationships are in jeopardy. As Arendholz (2013, as cited in Santos, 2022, p. 58) aptly states, observing the rules of politeness “inevitably leads to the breaching of the rules of conversation, which is ultimately the reason why the CP is violated fairly regularly.”

Politeness is exhibited in varying degrees, from least polite to most polite. The level of politeness is connected to, if not determined by, the extent of directness of the utterance. Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that the more direct the interlocution, the lesser the degree of politeness; and the less direct the statement, the greater the degree of politeness shown. In other words, a less direct language is interpreted as polite or more polite while a direct or very direct utterance is construed as impolite or the least polite. The politeness strategies, known as bald-on-record politeness, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness approach, and off-record politeness are paralleled with the level of directness as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
*Connection between politeness strategies, degree of politeness, level of politeness, and quality of relationship*

Politeness Strategy	Degree of Politeness	Level of Directness	Degree of Closeness; Quality of Relationship
1. Off-record Politeness	most polite	indirect to very indirect	very distant socially
2. Negative Politeness	very polite	less direct	distant socially
3. Positive Politeness	polite	more direct than negative politeness	close
4. Bald-on-record	least polite	most direct	very close, intimate

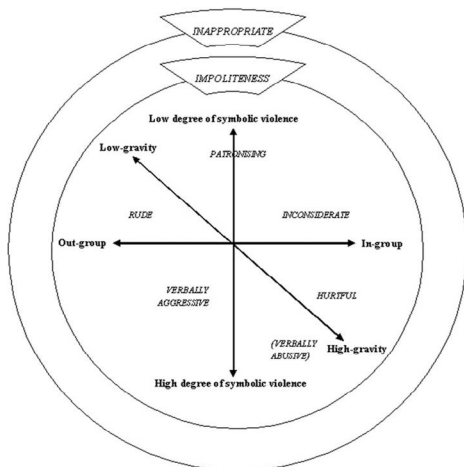
As Table 1 shows, off-record politeness is a strategy employed to avoid any hints of imposition, demands, or even requests on the part of the person being spoken to, among others. This is achieved by utilizing an indirect or very indirect language. Giving hints, use of ambiguity or vagueness, irony, sarcasm or joking, resorting to metaphorical language, understating or overstating, contradicting, overgeneralizing, and giving incomplete utterances are some of the examples. This kind of politeness is usually employed by individuals whose relationships are formal such as in business, government, and academic contexts. Like off-record, negative politeness also uses indirect language although the relationship between the

interactants may be closer. Impositions, if they must be made, are minimized or trivialized, and the hearer’s sense of space and privacy is taken into consideration, according to Brown and Levinson (1987). Deployment of question hedges, showing deference via the use of address forms, reluctance, and overdependence on apologies are some of the forms of negative politeness usage. Positive politeness, considered more direct than negative politeness, is the desire to belong to a community, appealing to the positive face (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This strategy is exhibited in a number of ways: avoiding disagreement, assuming agreement, attending to the hearers’ needs or situations, and hedging one’s offensive opinions. Bald-on-record, viewed as the most direct approach, is the least polite among the four strategies because face-saving is not a concern. In other words, interlocutors are not bothered by any signs of directness; thus, linguistic hedges and apologies are not part of the norm. Because of the intimate relationship that exists between the interactants, offense is often a non-issue. The direct statements “Feed the dog.” and “Hand me the knife.”, for instance, are indicative of intimacy that redress is unwarranted and the chances of being threatened are slim, if not totally absent. Additionally, the choice of words is for functional reasons only and the emphasis is on semantics. Whereas Brown and Levinson (1987) emphasize avoidance of offense, Culpepper (1996) sees offense as a natural strategy in interaction, thus, his theory on impoliteness.

## 1.2 Impoliteness: Dimensions and Superstrategies

Impoliteness intersects with sociology, psychology, communication, business, history, and literary criticisms. Impoliteness refers to “negative attitude towards specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts” (Culpeper, 2011, p. 23). Culpeper finds a strong connection between impoliteness and power relations, and he believes that the higher the social status of people, the more impolite they become in their interactions with those of the lower ranks. Conversely, those in the lower strata in power relations refrain from impolite behaviors as dictated by their social status or roles, meaning they are not at liberty to speak and act recklessly. In his words, Culpeper (1996) says “[impoliteness] is likely to occur in situations where the speaker has more power, for example in courtroom discourse” (p. 354) where the judge can sanction and scold erring lawyers or uncooperative witnesses.

Impoliteness consists of multiple dimensions. One dimension reflects the degree of so-called symbolic violence. Another dimension is concerned with “the extent to which the term is associated with in-group impoliteness as opposed to out-group impoliteness” while the third has “to do with gravity of offence” (Culpeper, n.d., para. 12). Certain behaviors that are more “symbolically violent and more likely to occur in in-group contexts (such as the family) are likely to be more offensive” (para. 12). In short, impoliteness is expected or normal in contexts where interactants have close relationships.



**Figure 1. Different dimensions of impoliteness as theorized by Culpeper (n.d.)**

Impoliteness, explains Culpeper (n. d.), is often equated with “rude(ness), aggravation, aggravated/aggravating language/facework, aggressive facework, face-attack, verbal aggression, and abusive language” (p. 6). He adds that compared with rudeness, impoliteness appears to be more serious and unacceptable. The demarcation is the level of intentionality. While rudeness may be an unintentional behavior, impoliteness is seen as an action that is planned or intentional. Additionally, speakers who engage in an in-group interaction tend to ignore the self-image of the hearers. In fact, on many occasions, communicators are said to behave impolitely by hurting or attacking the face of others.

There are five impoliteness superstrategies, and these are: bald-on-record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, off-record impoliteness, and withhold politeness. According to Culpeper (1996), there are situations wherein communicators are not free—by virtue of their social position or authority—to be direct or even use unambiguity in discourse. In such scenarios where their face is at stake, bald-on-record is employed. Positive impoliteness is employed when one intends to destroy another person’s positive face while negative impoliteness is a strategy designed to injure another person’s negative face. With off-record impoliteness, the face is damaged using indirect language such as implicatures which are subject to cancellation by the speaker. Finally, the fifth strategy, withhold politeness, refers to either the failure of the speaker or the writer to act or to demonstrate silence in situations where hearers expect politeness. Some manifestations of positive impoliteness as well as of negative impoliteness are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
*Examples of Culpeper’s positive impoliteness and negative impoliteness*

Positive Impoliteness	Negative Impoliteness
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ignore, snub, fail to attend to other’s interests, wants, needs, goods, etc.</li> <li>2. Exclude others from activity</li> <li>3. Disassociate from the other, deny common ground, or association</li> <li>4. Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic</li> <li>5. Use inappropriate identity markers</li> <li>6. Use obscure or secretive language</li> <li>7. Seek disagreement – select sensitive topic or just disagree outright</li> <li>8. Avoid agreeing with others (even if speaker does)</li> <li>9. Make others feel uncomfortable</li> <li>10. Use taboo language – swear, be abusive, express strong views opposed to others</li> <li>11. Call other names – use derogatory nominations</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Frighten – instill a belief that action detrimental to other will occur</li> <li>2. Condescend, scorn or ridicule – emphasize own power, use diminutives to other (or other’s position), be contemptuous, belittle, do not take others seriously</li> <li>3. Invade other’s space – literally (positioning closer than relationship permits) or metaphorically (ask for intimate information despite distance in the relationship)</li> <li>4. Explicitly associate others with negative aspect – personalize, use pronouns “I” and “you”</li> <li>5. Hinder – physically (block passage), conversationally (deny turn, interrupt)</li> </ol>

Culpeper (1996) provides an alternative way of understanding impoliteness, referring to impoliteness strategies as triggers. He argues that triggers or formulae are a person’s ways of getting things done, not abstractly but concretely. These are: insults, pointed criticisms, unpalatable questions/or presuppositions, condescensions, message enforcers, dismissals, silencers, threats, negative expressives, and non-supportive intrusions. Examples are provided below:

- a. Examples of insults:
  - a.1. Personalized negative vocatives: “What a stupid pervert!”
  - a.2. Personalized negative assertions: “You are a hopeless case!”
  - a.3. Personalized negative references: “Your empty mind!”
  - a.4. Personalized negative third-person negatives references: “That bimbo.”
- b. Pointed criticisms/complaints: “That was a horrible performance!”
- c. Unpalatable questions/or presuppositions: “Do you know that you’re causing me so much stress?”
- d. Condescensions: “Oh, don’t act like a child.”
- e. Message enforcers: “Did you get that?” (tag)
- f. Dismissals: “Get lost!”
- g. Silencers: “You shut up!”
- h. Threats: “I will punch your face!”



- i. Negative expressives (i.e. curses, ill-wishes): “Get out of here and go to hell!”
- j. Non-supportive intrusions: interruptions, shouting, eavesdropping

The preceding concepts theorize the deployment of impoliteness depending on the situations and power relations. In such situations, interactants deploy various impoliteness strategies and even insults and threats given the power and influence that some speakers (e.g., TV broadcasters) may have over their hearers.

### 1.3 Filipino Broadcast News Interviewers

Broadcasters in the Philippines, including news interviewers, are regarded as people of influence. Their power is attributed not only to their popularity but to the influence of the media in general (Fairclough, 1995, 2012). Two of the most prominent broadcasters, both on TV and radio, are Jessica Soho and Rafael “Raffy” Tulfo. Soho, a veteran journalist, first made a name for herself during the 1989 coup attempt against then President Corazon Aquino, providing a timely and “fearless coverage” of the rebellion at a time that she was trying to gather a story from a military camp in Metro Manila (Magsino, 2018, para. 15). That has led to more exposure via her home network, the GMA-7 company, hosting a number of programs such as her vox pop show *Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho* (One Heart with Jessica Soho), which has won international and local awards (Carrasco, 2022). She has been “hailed as Philippines Most Trusted News Presenter” for four years and has won multiple international awards including two George Foster Peabody Awards (PEP.Ph, 2014, para. 1). One interview that gained people’s attention and admiration was Soho’s brave and straightforward questioning of a senator over *24 Oras* (24 Hours) news program (Garcia, 2020). The erring senator had previously admitted to having violated Covid-19 safety protocols by showing up at a major hospital despite having tested positive of the deadly corona virus (GMA News Online, 2020).

Tulfo, who was elected as a member of the Philippine Senate on May 9, 2022, has been the host of the *Raffy Tulfo in Action*, aired over ABC-5 and also uploaded on his YouTube channel of the same name (Raffy Tulfo in Action, n.d.). That he received overwhelming support from the voting public during the May 2022 election (Pasion, 2022) indicates his influence. As of September 15, 2022, his YouTube channel had over 34 million subscribers, highlighting the immense popularity of the TV-host-turned-lawmaker. Although Tulfo has conducted numerous interviews for the past several years, his 2019 episode on the alleged abuse of a student by a teacher remains one of the most talked about and controversial. In the same interview, Tulfo was criticized for his “thunderous hectoring, bullying and public shaming” and for having summarily “embarrassed a public school teacher” (Quijano, 2019, para. 3 & 19). An online news company describes the broadcaster in these terms: “Raffy is the mediator and judge of his court, with the broadcaster and his millions of followers as jury” (Talabong, 2022, para. 9).

## 1.4 Research Questions

This paper attempts to find answers to this major research problem: How are politeness and impoliteness reflected in television news interviews in Filipino? The specific questions are:

- a) What politeness strategies are used by the interviewers in both turn-taking and question-and-answer designs?
- b) What impoliteness superstrategies are used by the interviewers in both turn-taking and question-and-answer designs?
- c) What are the implications of the politeness and impoliteness strategies on Filipino brand of (im)politeness?

## 1.5 Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on the politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987), particularly their politeness strategies, and on Culpeper’s (1996, 2007, 2010, & 2011) impoliteness theory in analyzing excerpts of news interviews on Philippine television. In politeness theory, all utterances are considered speech acts, and that politeness is a universal characteristic of every language. Interlocutors, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, follow certain politeness rules in the use of their language. “This politeness is connected to the preservation of one’s face, which is believed to be universal” (Redmond, 2015, as cited in Santos, 2022, p. 54). Further, the theory also assumes that many speech acts are injurious to this self-image because they are contrary to the face wants of either the speaker or the hearer or both. In short, a face threatening act is an utterance (verbal or paraverbal) or behavior (including non-verbal cues) that is incongruent with the desires of the other. According to the politeness theory, individuals deploy polite tactics such as bald on-record politeness, positive politeness tactic, negative politeness, and off-record politeness approach when interacting with others. Of the four tactics, bald-on-record is considered to be “the most direct” while off-record is the politest (Santos, 2022, p. 56). In impoliteness theory, impolite language is used in interactions depending on the power relations involved and to get things done. Impoliteness is said to occur when an interactant causes social disruptions so that politeness is not always desired; thus, it is not automatic contrary to politeness theory claims. In fact, it is a normal occurrence for others to work against maintaining social harmony. Culpeper (2010) writes:

Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and/or beliefs about social organization, including, in particular, how one person’s or group’s identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviors are viewed negatively when they conflict with how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be and/or how one thinks they ought to be. Such behaviors always have or are presumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence (p. 3233).

Culpeper (2010) explains that an action becomes impolite only if it is understood to be so by the hearer. Intentional impoliteness is to be taken as such but one that is unintended cannot cause an offense. Here, the perspectives of both the speaker and the hearer matter unlike in politeness perspective which puts emphasis on the role of the speaker.

## **2. Method**

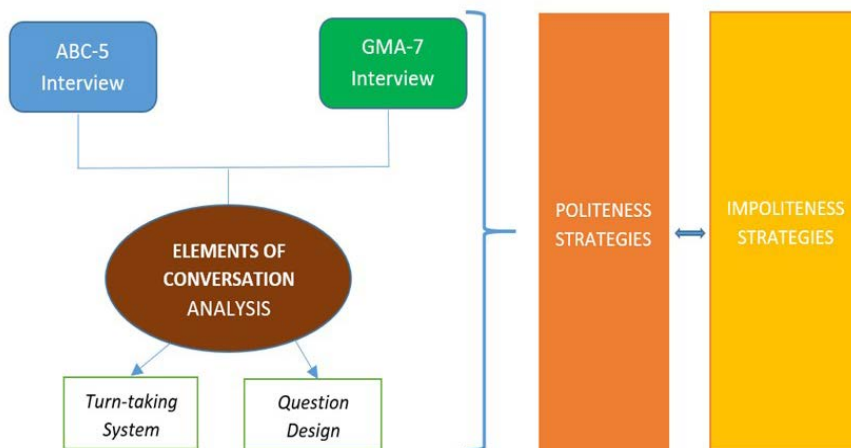
### **2.1 Research Design**

Pragmatics, considering its interfacing nature, inevitably transcends linguistic and social science boundaries, penetrating discourse analysis and its subset, conversation analysis, in the case of this investigation. O’Keeffe (2012) believes that CA “has been the prevailing methodology in the study of spoken media discourse” (p. 443). Two key dimensions of Clayman’s (2012) CA framework, namely, the turn-taking and question design, are adopted and merged with pragmatic politeness and impoliteness, thus, the conceptualized CA-politeness-impoliteness schema which guides the conduct of this qualitative inquiry (see Figure 2). Thus, this study analyzed news interviews using conversation analysis approach on media discourse.

### **2.2 Source of Data**

Two news interviews are the sources of data for the study: *24 Oras* televised over GMA Channel 7 (GMA News, 2020) on March 25, 2020, and *Raffy Tulfo in Action* aired over ABC Channel 5 on November 22, 2019. The YouTube versions of the two shows were the basis for the transcription (see Appendices A and B). The Filipino language interview in the Channel 7 news is a special feature which is also classified under primary newsmakers interviews. Segments of such nature are intended to augment stories dealing with the most pressing or controversial issues. ABC-5’s program is considered a public affairs or public service show that involves vox pop, featuring a plethora of issues affecting ordinary citizens and addressed by the host who seeks quick solutions during the program (Ramos, 2019).

The data sources are illustrated by the two small rectangular boxes that are labeled accordingly (see Figure 2). Tulfo and Soho, owing to their fame in the broadcast industry, have conducted countless interviews. Although there are more current interviews on various issues, Tulfo’s 2019 interview on alleged abuse of a child by a teacher and Soho’s questioning of a senator, deserve a space in language/pragmatics studies; hence, a careful scrutiny of the two interviews is warranted and remains relevant.



**Figure 2.** *Conceptual framework showing the fusion of conversation analysis and (im)politeness theories in this study*

Focus is limited to the transcriptions of excerpts showing two significant turn-taking and question design (as illustrated by the two rectangular boxes), based on or using the CA template for NI by Clayman (2012). In the same NI features, politeness strategies are identified; thus, the tall rectangular shape labeled as *Politeness Strategies*. The same data are analyzed to determine the extent of usage of impoliteness strategies as signified by the presence of another rectangular shape labelled as *Impoliteness Strategies*. The line with arrows pointing in the opposite directions (the strategies boxes) represent three minor concepts. The arrow pointing left indicates that the turn-taking and question-answer designs are to be analyzed using politeness strategies. The arrow pointing right indicates that the same CA elements in news interviews are to be examined using impoliteness strategies. The two-sidedness of the line with two arrows shows a connection or relationship between politeness and impoliteness. Alternatively, the two opposite arrows can be replaced with a plus symbol (+) indicating simply that the study is concerned with both sets of strategies.

### 2.3 Data Analysis

The study employs a qualitative design by relying on conversation analysis of media discourse. The focus of the investigation is the norms of turn-taking and framing of the questions to identify (im)politeness strategies. Thus, both questions and responses as separate units are scrutinized and so is the manner by which questions are designed. Turn-taking and question design are two of the dimensions in Clayman’s (2012) CA framework. The paper determines which politeness and impoliteness strategies are employed and then makes a comparison between the two interviewers in terms of (im)politeness usage. Finally, implications on the Filipino brand of linguistic (im)politeness are discussed.

### 3. Results and Discussion

This section identifies the (im)politeness strategies used in *24 Oras* news interview by Jessica Soho of GMA-7 and Raffy Tulfo of *Raffy Tulfo in Action* over ABC 5, compares their usage of these strategies, and then considers some of the implications of their actions. The analysis focuses on turn-taking system and question design. The emphasis is on the broadcasters’ interaction with their guests and how they frame their questions using the lens of politeness and impoliteness theories as bases. Soho’s interview transcript is found in Appendix A while Tulfo’s is in Appendix B.

#### 3.1 Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies in *24 Oras* News Program

In *24 Oras*, news anchor Jessica Soho interviews Senator Martin Pimentel III who potentially exposed hospital patrons to the corona virus for violating health protocols imposed by the medical facility. The issue was the perceived resentment of the viewers over the alleged preferential treatment extended to lawmakers over Covid-19 testing as well as the disregard of quarantine rules by the high-ranking government leader.

##### 3.1.1 First-Order (Politeness1) in Interviews

The design of the interview begins with a greeting by Soho, “Magandang gabi **po**, Senator Pimentel [Good evening, Senator Pimentel]” (line 1). “Po”, a polite marker in Filipino, reflects basic politeness ascribed to people of higher rank, authority, and age. Watts (2005, as cited in Culpeper, 2010) calls this first-order politeness or politeness1. The title “Senator” is an honorific, another form of politeness1. In both instances, positive politeness is demonstrated because of an attempt to esteem the official.

Turn-taking ensues with a response from the legislator, “Jessica, magandang gabi **po** sa lahat. [Jessica, good evening to all.]” (line 2). The host is acknowledged but her polite marker “po” is not directly reciprocated; instead, Pimentel reserves the marker for the viewers whom he addresses at the end of the sentence. While the TV host maintains a formal stance by attaching the lawmaker’s position before his name, the legislator is informal as shown by the first-name basis address. Soho then asks, “How are you feeling right now?” (lines 3-4). In NI, this is called prefacing (Clayman, 2012), which further sets the stage for turn-taking. A scrutiny of the manner of turn-taking indicates a cordial atmosphere, and politeness1 is generally perceived. Soho’s initial question, as previously stated, implies concern or sympathy, reflective of the (*pakikipag*)*kapwa* concept [sociocultural norm of esteeming another person or treating them as one’s equal] in Filipino culture (Reyes, 2015). This may as well mirror Jocano’s (1999) idea of *pakikisama* [adjusting with], a Filipino trait of trying to get along in interactions and relationships (Peña et al., 2006). Again, all these dimensions of politeness concept show conventionalized politeness or politeness1. The design of Soho’s question reflects positive politeness, which involves attending to the interests or needs of the interviewee who is asked about his health condition. Pimentel’s response, “Well, I’m, I’m up

and about...okay naman **po**...[I’m doing just fine.]” (line 7) shows politeness<sub>1</sub>, particularly positive politeness, as indicated by the word “po”. Within the political arena, this type of language is referred to as “alignment” (Kádár & Zhang, 2019, p. 229). Soho’s utterances are formal just like in line 1, but Pimentel’s answer is bordering on the informal, indicating power distance between the two. This is elaborated in the succeeding sections.

### 3.1.2 Pluralized Address (Object) Pronouns and Power Distance

Of interest in the interview is the fact that Soho demonstrates a common practice among Filipinos to pluralize their second person pronouns to show respect, reflecting positive politeness. The plural and formal word “kayo” [you], which can be used both as a subject or as an object pronoun in Filipino, is used rather than “ikaw” [singular of you] or “ka” [a variant of ikaw], which are characterized by directness. The host refrains from using the latter, reflecting positive politeness and hints of bald on-record. This linguistic flexibility is done seven times (lines 5, 15-16, 38-39, 65) such as in the statement, “Hindi ho ba **kayo** nag-err on the side of caution, ika nga?” Soho also uses the object pronoun “inyo”, a formal and plural form of “iyo” meaning “you” (line 38). “Niyoy” (lines 63, 65) is preferred over the singular and direct “mo”, showing an attempt to sound courteous and illustrating power distance between the newscaster and the lawmaker. Based on Soho’s linguistic choices, more power is ascribed to the interviewee owing to the latter’s role as a senator. In social interactions in the context of the Philippines where the use of “po” or “opo” is a custom (Batang & Sales-Batang, 2010), the second person pronouns are pluralized when addressing referents deserving of respect due to age, social status, or authority (Santos, 2022). It is not uncommon for both the polite markers and the pluralized pronouns to be employed in formal conversations as in the case of this interview.

### 3.1.3 Double Padded Politeness

The deployment of multiple politeness strategies seems to veer away from the politeness terrain as popularized by Brown and Levinson (1987). Further, this Filipino approach in broadcasting informs pragmatics or politeness researchers of the preponderance among Filipino news interviewers to resort to *double padded* politeness instead of the simple politeness (politeness<sub>1</sub>) that relies on a single or default polite expression. I posit that in Filipino (news interviews) context, simple politeness should suffice such as in the statement, “Kumustahin muna namin **kayo** [We would like to ask how you are doing].” *Double padded* politeness, on the other hand, demonstrates a unique pragmalinguistic strategy in Filipino interaction where two or more polite linguistic codes/terms are deployed to redress the negative face of the other interlocutor, thus, avoiding any possible offense. In Soho’s statements, she blends “ho” or “po” with any of the formal and deferential pronouns such as “kayo”, “niyoy” and “inyoy” as in the statements, “Bago **po** ang lahat, kumustahin **po** muna namin **kayo** [Before anything else, we would like to know how you are doing]. May symptoms **po** ba **kayo** nararamdaman? [Do you feel any symptoms?]]” (lines 5-6). The deployment of “kayo” in the second sentence

would have already rendered the utterance polite such as in, “May symptoms ba **kayo**? [Do you have any symptoms?]” (conventionalized politeness) because of the plural pronoun.

Using “ho” and pairing it with the singular “ikaw” would have been problematic because the pronoun has a sense of informality and is more direct, which goes against the norms of formal interaction. The pairing would have also sounded awkward because the polite marker does not go well with informal expressions. Soho wraps up the questioning and translates her words into English and asks, “How are you feeling right now?” in which a politeness marker is not only unnecessary but may also seem out of place or awkward. While Soho’s English news interview question is not rendered impolite, her Filipino language questions would have been impolite had the words “kita” and “ka” [singular, informal, and direct form of “you”] been used. We see that in formal interactions such as in Filipino news programs, formality is maintained, and such norm seems to demand a *double padded* or multi-layered type of politeness.

Power relations between Soho and Pimentel must also be considered, and, in this context, the latter being a legislator appears to have more power than the broadcaster, necessitating formality, distance, and thus, a *double padded* form of politeness. Contingent with the *double padded* politeness that appeals to the positive face of the senator, Soho also replicates the western way of conducting primary newsmakers interview, which is direct, confrontational, and even adversarial (Clayman, 2012), showing impoliteness. For example, she asserts, “You knew that there was a danger that you were exposed tapos pumunta pa **ho kayo** sa isang ospital [You knew that there was a danger that you were exposed but then you still went to a hospital.]” (lines 38-39). The statement (less the phrase “ho kayo”) is confrontational; it is a sensitive topic that makes the lawmaker feel uncomfortable, reflecting positive impoliteness. But sandwiched within the utterance are the polite marker “ho” and the plural pronoun “kayo”, reflecting *double padded* politeness.

### 3.1.4 *Cushioning in Filipino Politeness*

Aligned with *double padded* politeness are other polite expressions that are found in the turn-taking and question-and-answer aspects of the interview. The use of “daw” four times, which may mean *allegedly*, *supposedly* or *according to*, (line 14-16, 84), is an obvious attempt on the part of the interviewer to sound neutral or unbiased in the context of a news interview as in the statement, “you were reckless **daw** at...nabawasan pa tuloy **daw** yung kanilang mga tauhan dahil naka-home quarantine...[You were allegedly reckless and...as a result, some hospital workers reportedly had to be quarantined.]” In (im)politeness theories, this strategy is an attempt to soften the impact of the positive impoliteness employed by Soho as reflected by the phrase “you were reckless”. This appears to be another version of double padding in interaction, almost similar to the use of hedges to introduce or show caution or probability (Kranich, 2011), which I refer to as Filipino *cushioning* in interaction. The word “parang”, which can be understood as “apparently”, “as if”, “allegedly”, “reportedly”, “looks like”, etc. is another example of *cushioning* in Filipino language use. When this word is used in Filipino conversations, it merely suggests relaying of known facts or criticisms from an

external source. Note that “parang” is paired with “daw”, which makes the utterance even more indirect and cautious. The following compares the actual statement and one that does not use cushioning:

Original statement: “...you were being reckless **daw** and uh as a result, the number of their [health] workers had to be streamlined **daw**, because you...”

Without cushioning: “you were being reckless and uh as a result, the number of their [health] workers had to be streamlined because you...”

Without “daw”, the host would sound blunt and accusatory, constituting an offensive use of language because of the pronoun “you”, a blaming word in this context, and the strong adjective “reckless”, the exact term used in the interview. In line 19, the host also uses “ika nga” or “as they say”, another form of cushioning. Again, the presence of double padded politeness, as well as cushioning in news interviews, as seen in the preceding examples, reveals some layers of politeness or the multiple facets of Filipino politeness.

Raising the issue of preferential treatment toward government officials in the Covid-19 testing (lines 83 to 87) that makes the legislator uncomfortable, Soho repeats the same tactic used earlier, employing positive impoliteness while also drawing from the Filipino politeness strategies of double padding and cushioning. Specifically, the TV host uses honorific, polite markers, cushioning, and other forms of hedging that show empathy—a form of sociopragmatic competence—and yet uses positive impoliteness in her utterances. She retorts, “Okay, **Senator** (honorific), I have to say that **we’re sorry you tested positive** (hedges: empathy) pero kailangan ko **ho** (polite marker/conventionalized politeness)...**Bakit parang** (cushioning) may palakasan **daw** (cushioning) diyan sa testing at yung mga politiko natin ay nakapagpatest kahit wala naman silang symptoms gayung yung PUI [persons under investigation], na may malalang symptoms, lalo na **po** (polite marker) yung ating medical frontliners ni hindi, hindi mabigyan ng pagkakataon para makapagtest at mahaba **po** (polite marker) ang pila, paano **po** (polite marker) ba nangyari ito?[Okay, Senator, I have to say that we’re sorry that you tested positive, but I need to... Why is it that, allegedly, some individuals are being favored more than the others regarding COVID-19 testing and our politicians are able to avail of the tests even though they did not have any symptoms when those who are PUI or people under investigation, who had serious symptoms, especially our medical frontliners didn’t even have, were not given even a bit of a chance to be tested and the lines were so long. How could this have happened?]

The interview is sustained with more confrontational questions. In line 14, Soho emphasizes the complaint against Pimentel with the word “mabigat”, literally, “heavy”, which implies the seriousness of the senator’s offense. Here, the TV programmer abandons her propensity to show indirectness. In fact, at this juncture, she does not employ any of the four politeness strategies. By qualifying the allegation as “mabigat”, the interviewer is making a personal judgment and is disagreeing with the behavior of the interviewee. This



constitutes off-record impoliteness, which is cancelled by the official being interviewed. The official responds with cancellation in lines 18 to 22. It should be noted that the TV host, while disagreeing and castigating her guest with the phrases “you were being reckless” (line 14), remains consistent in her use of “ho” and “po” (lines 14-16), pluralized second person pronouns (lines 15-16), and cushioning such as “daw”. This is interesting because it appears that the speaker is vacillating between negative politeness and positive or off-record impoliteness rather than combining the two as Correo (2014) previously found among Bikolano online interactants. Based on this interview, positive politeness and positive impoliteness can be paired in interaction given the sociocultural norm of non-confrontation and *pakikisama* in the country (Peña et al., 2006). Reflected here is a multi-layered Filipino linguistic politeness as seen in the TV news interview. Directness is shown in lines 38-39 and 63-65 as in the statement, “You knew there was a danger that you were exposed but still you insisted on entering *ho* a hospital.” The host shifts from Filipino to English, preferring to use the more direct “you”. However, she tries to soften her statement with her “ho” marker towards the end of the utterance. This statement is uniquely crafted. While the senator holds more power because of his status as a high-ranking government official, hence, the use of “ho” by Soho, he is not exempted from scrutiny. At the same time, the first part of the sentence is critical of the lawmaker. This adversarialness, which in Culpeper (1996) is “pointed criticisms/complaints”, reflects a kind of off-record impoliteness combined with a basic form of courtesy or politeness1 (p. 356).

To sum up, Soho, although consistent in her confrontational stance which shows positive to off-record impoliteness, attempts to camouflage such demeanor by employing politeness1 strategies such as double padding (polite markers plus honorifics) and cushioning (“daw” and “parang”). Her politeness1 strategies further demonstrate positive politeness which makes her sound professional and pleasant.

### 3.2 (Im)politeness Strategies in *Raffy Tulfo in Action*

In a controversial interview in the *Raffy Tulfo in Action*, a vox populi interview, broadcaster Raffy Tulfo features an angry grandmother who complains of child abuse against the teacher of her grandson. In the same program, Tulfo talks to the accused, pointing to her the alleged violation. The turn-taking commences with questions for the complainant. The broadcaster then proceeds with his set of questions for the accused. In framing his questions toward the complainant, he sounds accommodating, gentle, and without any hints of antagonism, typical of Clayman’s (2012) characterization of a *vox pop*. Example is found in line 4 which reads, “Noong November 13, pinahiya yung apo ninyo at pinalabas sa classroom. Bakit po? [Last November 13, your grandchild was humiliated and told to get out of the classroom. Why is that so?]” The turn-taking flows smoothly until it reaches the portion involving the teacher, who is the object of the complaint. At this point, the framing of questions changes; Tulfo no longer sounds accommodating but is blunt and antagonistic.

### 3.2.1 Pseudo-politeness through Negated Honorifics

A closer look at the interview excerpts reveals that politeness is minimal while impoliteness is prevalent. Using frequency statistics, data shows the use of the honorific terms “ma’am” and “madam” several times, reflecting hints of negative politeness on the basis of giving deference by use of formal address forms. Positive politeness are reflected as well since “ma’am/madam” appears to esteem the teacher. On the other hand, although the honorifics are employed 20 times (lines 58, 63, 67, 72, 75, 78, 84, and 87), their use seems to be more of a substitute for the interviewee’s name. Further, their occurrences may also be attributed to the fact that the interviewee is a teacher. In the Philippines, it is a matter of practice to address educators as “sir” and “ma’am” as a courtesy or as a matter of habit. The prevalence of “ma’am/madam” is combined with an assertive and castigating tone of the TV host (e.g., line 75), thereby negating the negative politeness strategy. In other words, the supposed honorifics are not meant to elevate the status of the addressee or to show deference, rendering them as pseudo-polite terms. An example reads, “Ma’am (assertive, scolding). Hindi po ako pulis ano [I am not a police officer]”. When one is respectful or polite, the tone and other paralinguistic behaviors are congruent with the words used in the interview as Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest. The cultural value of *pakikisama* in interaction is also disregarded. Scolding is also expressed by the castigating tone of the broadcaster’s voice in lines 93-94 as shown in “Ma’am kung talagang iyan ang nangyari still hindi pa rin ang ganun klaseng way na para iyong bata na disiplinahin at pahiyain sa buong eskwelahan [Ma’am, granting that you were correct, still the way the child was disciplined and humiliated in school was unacceptable].” Power relations are at play here; but unlike in *24 Oras* where the senator holds more power than Soho, Tulfo wields more power than the teacher, thus, the show of negative and positive impoliteness. Negative impoliteness is demonstrated as Tulfo enforces his own power upon the teacher, while positive impoliteness is shown by disagreeing with her and “using strong views opposed” to her (Culpeper, 1996, p. 356). It also follows that when one unleashes both impoliteness tactics, withholding of politeness—Culpeper’s fifth superstrategy—is also at work.

### 3.2.2 Preference for Direct and Singular Address Pronouns

At first glance, Tulfo appears to demonstrate respect with the occurrence of the polite marker “po/pong” which is used eight times (lines 67, 69, 78, 80, 134, 137, and 139), reflective of the general category of politeness I. However, these markers are used together with a number of second person singular pronouns “mo”, meaning “you” which occur 14 times (lines 71, 79, 80, 81, 97, 126, 132, and 134). They are also interspersed with “ka” and “kang” (variants of *you*), used 10 times (lines 72, 77, 79, 108, 131, 133, and 134) and “ikaw”, used once (line 132). Therefore, the supposed politeness based on the presence of “po” is negated by the strong and offensive language. The prevalence of these second person singular pronouns indicates directness. The use of a strong and unsympathetic language via the direct, singular pronouns expresses positive impoliteness. Compared to Soho, Tulfo uses less pluralized

second person address pronouns: “inyo” and “ninyo” six times (lines 88, 89, 126, and 139), “kayo” twice (lines 58 and 136), and “inyo” once (line 87). Again, Tulfo asserts control over the less powerful interviewee, while Soho considers the higher position of the lawmaker.

In Tulfo’s interview, the direct and condescending language and the presence of threats such as the mention of chances of administrative and criminal cases being filed (lines 63-64), “child abuse”, and “trauma” are enough to frighten the teacher. These words communicate an idea that action detrimental to the interviewee is in the offing, thereby frightening her to the point that she agrees to have her teaching license revoked (lines 131 and 135). Instances of threats read as follows: “Ma’am pwede kayong makasuhang criminal, hindi lang administratibo, or mas matindi rito [Republic Act] 7610 Child Abuse.” [Ma’am you could be slapped with criminal charges, aside from administrative, or worse under the child abuse act.] (lines 63-64). The phrase “child abuse” is repeated a number of times such as in line 108. The strongest statements are found in line 108, which reads in part, “dito ka namin yayariin. Pansensya na sa word. Yayariin ka namin dito.” [...we will make sure you’re finished. Pardon the word. We will go after you and ensure you’re finished.] “Yayariin” is a street term or a slang that connotes vengeance. In line 131, the TV personality is very stern telling the interviewee via phone, “Hindi ka kakasuhan ng child abuse. Deal! Ikaw na kusang magresign sa ‘yong trabaho...” [You won’t be charged with child abuse. That’s the deal! You just have to resign from your job...]. This directs the interviewee to take action against her will, which emphasizes the power of the broadcast journalist over the interviewee. This also shows disrespect and belittling of the teacher, and the utterances constitute negative impoliteness. Positive impoliteness is also seen since there is a lack of sympathy and because the needs of the teacher are not attended to. Further, withholding of politeness becomes automatic as both positive and negative impoliteness are unleashed.

In line 105, the interviewer asks the complainant of her preferred punishment for the accused. The question goes, “Ano pong leksyon ang gusto niyo ma’am?” [What lesson (meaning, punishment) would you want imposed, ma’am?]. The statement reflects lack of sympathy and concern, reflecting positive impoliteness. Similar instances occur repeatedly. In line 77, the host insists, “Pero nakikita ko rito mayroon ka talagang intensyon na pahiyain iyong bata.” [But, I can see here that you have an intention to humiliate the child.] In lines 79-81, the broadcaster says sternly, “binagsak mo pa ang upuan at galit na galit ka. Nandun pa ang facial expression mo at pagkatapos sabay pasok mo at iyong bata nakaupo doon. Pinabayaan mo na nakaupo doon pinabayaan mo siyang mapahiya sa kanyang kapwa estudyante.” [You even slammed the chair on the floor, and you were furious. Your facial expressions say it all, and you immediately entered the room, leaving the child seating alone outside. You caused him to be humiliated in the presence of other students.]

The scolding, the stern tone, and the TV host’s insistence that the interviewee erred in her treatment of a student show that the latter’s interests and responses are being ignored. In addition, the language reveals a lack of concern and sympathy, all of which characterize positive impoliteness. By emphasizing his power, the host also demonstrates negative politeness, and as previously stated, when both strategies are unleashed, withholding of politeness becomes automatic.

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendation

In the turn-taking and question design in the two news interviews, politeness and impoliteness strategies are employed. We see that in Philippine broadcast interviews, hosts may resort to impoliteness strategies consistent with the typical western newsmakers interview, but depending on power held by the interviewers, levels of (im)politeness vary. The *Raffy Tulfo in Action* interview utilizes two approaches in question design—one that is accommodating to one interviewee (politeness), usually a complainant, and another that is antagonistic (impolite) to the other guest. The questioning is almost a judgment against the second interviewee, reflective of positive and negative impoliteness and withholding of politeness. In fact, the show is littered with occurrences of threats, reprimands, and stern or strong statements.

Tulfo does his interviewing differently and has the tendency to focus on issues affecting ordinary citizens who make up most of his viewers and social media followers (Ramos, 2019). The radio-TV-YouTube host is described as:

...“a hard-hitting, no-holds-barred commentator on issues pertaining to abuses and injustices committed...against ordinary citizens. He is a known champion of the poor. He fights for the downtrodden – many of whom are laborers – who flock to his radio show every day to seek for his help. He is known among his followers as ‘Mr. Action Man’ and ‘Idol Raffy’ (Texnologia.net., 2022, para. 1).

It is obvious that Tulfo’s audience consists not only of the have-nots but also of angry followers whose only recourse is to seek help from their “idol” who is seen “as a human alternative to our justice system, a one-man all-in-one court of all levels, one that cooks decisions as fast and as easily as clueless husbands would whip out a steaming hot cup of instant noodles” (Abellar, 2021, para. 1). This explains his direct, informal language as well as his antagonism toward those whom he considers as taking advantage of the ordinary people. His unconventional ways of conducting interviews known locally as “instant, mob, radio-show justice” (Quijano, 2019, para. 7), however, has led to censures because of lack of sensitivity and for violating common courtesies and broadcast standards (Ramos, 2019) through his “vigilante journalism” (Talabong, 2021, para. 7).

In the *24 Oras* news interview, the CA dimensions of turn-taking and question design elements are replete with positive politeness and positive impoliteness superstrategies. Soho, owing to the indirect and polite nature of Filipino culture, resorts to layers of pragmalinguistic codes to minimize offense. This is seen in the deployment of double padded politeness and Filipino cushioning to mitigate the necessary confrontational stance—a form of positive impoliteness—in interviewing. Soho tends to focus on issues that affect a greater majority of the viewing public such as the violation of Covid-19 quarantine rules. It is safe to say that her audience represents a variety or even a cross-section of the viewing population including college-educated ones (LIONHEARTV, n.d.), and this appears to have a bearing on the broadcaster’s attempt to gravitate more toward positive politeness. Deference to her interviewee also indicates power distance and greater power held by her guest.

To iterate, in 24 *Oras*, there are many instances of directness and confrontational approach but are cushioned or carefully padded with layers of Filipino politeness such as respect markers, honorifics, and pluralized second person pronouns. Moreover, there are attempts on the part of the TV host to distance herself from offensive questions which she herself brings to the fore. This paper finds this kind of Filipino politeness news interviews mystifying and intriguing because it makes one wonder how, in the context of an indirect culture, can people be confrontational only to vacillate and resort to politeness elements of double padded politeness, polite markers, honorifics, and cushioning. In western news interviews, hosts confront their guests and are hostile toward them (Clayman, 2012), something that has been creatively adopted and adapted in Philippine broadcasting, consistent with the *pakikisama* aspect of the local culture and the audience’s expectation of respect and formality in news interviewing. Again, this seems to showcase a doubly padded and multi-layered Filipino brand of politeness present in Philippine TV news interviews.

This research finds that the supposed universalness of politeness strategies does not apply fully in the Philippine context as shown in the analysis of Soho’s and Tulfo’s interviewing styles. Exploring this brand of (im)politeness in various situations is recommended. Further studies involving broadcast interviews (e.g., radio, TV, internet) can help explore and explain this mystifying aspect of pragmatic politeness in this part of the world. Also worth investigating is the seeming two-faced strategy employed by the interviewers. There are many implications here in the field of communication, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and politeness theories that are worthy of examination. One is the need to revisit and revise the politeness theory (Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000) and consider one that reflects Asian and Filipino contexts.

## References

- Abellar, A. (2021, November 14). *Isumbong mo si Tulfo*. Inquirer.net. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/146384/sumbong-mo-si-tulfo>
- Arao, D. A. (2021, November 2021). *Press freedom is no joke in the Philippines*. East Asia Forum. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2021/11/07/press-freedom-is-no-joke-in-the-philippines/>
- Arendholz, J. (2013). *(In)Appropriate online behavior: A pragmatic analysis of message board relations*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Batang, B. & Sales-Batang, R. (2010). Politeness and compliments in selected Ilocano radio dramas. *ISU-Cabagan Journal of Research*, 19(2), 9-23.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. (*Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 4*). Cambridge University Press.

- Brown, M. L. T. & Malveda, B. A. D. (2015). Friends with benefits: A critical discourse analysis on framing US-Philippine relations in print media through the coverage of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). *The Asian Conference on Media & Mass Communication 2015 Official Conference Proceedings. The International Academic Forum*. [http://25qt511nswfi49iayd31ch80-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wpcontent/uploads/papers/mediasia2015/MediAsia2015\\_19548.pdf](http://25qt511nswfi49iayd31ch80-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wpcontent/uploads/papers/mediasia2015/MediAsia2015_19548.pdf).
- Cabico, G. K. (2018, April 25). Philippines down 6 notches on World Press Freedom Index. *The Philippine Star*. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2018/04/25/1809344/philippines-down-6-notches-world-press-freedom-index>
- Carrasco, R. (2022, October 18). What makes Jessica Soho’s ‘KMJS’ stand out. *The Manila Times*. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/10/18/entertainment-lifestyle/show-times/what-makes-jessica-sohos-kmjs-stand-out/1862716>
- Chang, Y. Y. (2008). Cultural “faces” of interpersonal communication in the U.S. and China. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 17(1), 299-313.
- Clayman, S. E. (2012). Conversation analysis in the news interview. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of conversation analysis* (pp. 630-656). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Correo, C. (2014). Politeness strategies deployed by Filipinos in asynchronous computer-mediated discourse. *Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 2(2), 76-102.
- Culpeper, J. (1996). Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 25(3), 349-367. DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(95)00014-3
- Culpeper, J. (2007). Reflections on impoliteness, relational work and power. In D. Bousfield & M. Locher (Eds.), *Impoliteness in language* (pp. 22-53). Mouton de Gruyter.
- Culpeper, J. (2010). Conventionalised impoliteness formulae. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42(12), 3232–3245.
- Culpeper, J. (2011). *Impoliteness: Using Language to cause offence. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511975752
- Culpeper, J. (n.d.). *Impoliteness: Using and understanding the language of offence*. <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/projects/impoliteness/terms.htm>
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media discourse*. Redwood Books.
- Fairclough, N. (2012). Critical discourse analysis. In J.P. Gee, & M. Hanford (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 9-20). Routledge.
- Garcia, C. E. (2020, March 27). ‘24 Oras,’ Jessica Soho, and Vicky Morales praised by netizens in handling Koko Pimentel interview. *GMA Entertainment*. <https://www.gmanetwork.com/entertainment/showbiznews/news/61054/24-oras-jessica-soho-and-vicky-morales-praised-by-netizens-in-handling-koko-pimentel-interview/story>

- GMA News Online (2020, March 26). *Jessica Soho, Vicky Morales go viral for professionalism while reporting on Koko Pimentel's COVID-19 gaffe*. <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/hashtag/content/731399/jessica-soho-vicky-morales-go-viral-for-professionalism-while-reporting-on-koko-pimentel-s-covid-19-gaffe/story/>
- GMA News (2020, March 26). *24 Oras: Panayam kay Sen. Koko Pimentel*. <https://youtube/r5PXQQNBMLw>
- Gocheo, P. M. (2009). The use of politeness marker *po* in television mediated political campaign advertisements in the Philippines. In V.K. Bhatia, W. Cheng, B. Du-Babcock & J. Ling (Eds.), *Language for professional communication: Research, practice & training*. (pp. 71-82). The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
- Goldsmith, D. J. & MacGeorge, E. L. (2000). The impact of politeness and relationship on perceived quality of advice about a problem. *Human Communication Research* 26(2), 234–263. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.2000.tb00757.x.
- Greatbatch, D. (2006). A turn-taking system for British news interviews. *Language in Society*, 17(3), 401-430.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J.L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics* (pp. 41-58). Academic Press.
- Jocano, F. L. (1999). *Working with Filipinos: A cross cultural encounter*. Punlad Research House.
- Kádár, D. Z., & Zhang, S. (2019). (Im)politeness and alignment: A case study of public political monologues. *Acta Linguistica Academica*, 66(2), 229–249. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26723045>
- Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (2011). *Broadcast Code of the Philippines 2007 (as amended 2011)*. [https://www.kbp.org.ph/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/KBPBroadcast\\_Code2011.pdf](https://www.kbp.org.ph/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/KBPBroadcast_Code2011.pdf)
- Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (2020). *Responsible broadcasting*. <http://www.kbp.org.ph/responsible-broadcasting>
- Khan, M. R. & Shabir, G. (2012). Nuclearization of South Asia: A discourse analysis of the Hindustan Times and Dawn. *South Asian Studies: A Research Journal of South Asian Studies*, 27(2), 421-438.
- Kranich, S. (2011). To hedge or not to hedge: The use of epistemic modal expressions in popular science in English texts, English–German translations, and German original texts. *Text & Talk*, 31, 77–99. doi:10.1515/text.2011.004.
- Labor, J. SJ. (2011). Interdisciplinary discourses in language and communication. In A. J. West, K. Getkham, & J. Singhakowinta (Eds.), *The 3rd international conference on language and communication 2011, Bangkok, Thailand*. [http://iclc.nida.ac.th/main/images/proceeding\\_iclc2011.pdf](http://iclc.nida.ac.th/main/images/proceeding_iclc2011.pdf)

- LIONHEARTV (n.d.). '24 Oras,' immovable in the #1 spot of the NUTAM rating. <https://www.lionheartv.net/2022/03/24-oras-immovable-in-the-1-spot-of-the-agb-nielsen-rating-chart/>
- Magsino, D. (2018, January 22). Jessica Soho: Lessons from a life in journalism. *GMA network.com* <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/specials/content/43/jessica-soho-lessons-from-a-life-in-journalism/>
- Mao, L. R. (1994). Beyond politeness theory: 'Face' revisited and renewed. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 21(5), 451-486.
- Montejo, G. M. (2018). A critical discourse analysis of headlines in online news portals. *Journal of Advances in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(2), 70-83.
- O'Keefe, A. (2012). Media and discourse analysis. In J.P. Gee & M. Hanford (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 441-454). Routledge.
- Pasion, L. (2022, May 12). *First-time senatorial bets Robin Padilla, Raffy Tulfo to get Senate seats, as expected*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/results-first-time-senatorial-bets-2022/>
- Peña, I., Domigpe, J., Idos, R. V. Nacu, J. S., Doming, N. P., Paz, L. & Peñaranda, O. (2006). “Pakikisama”: In the spirit of camaraderie. *University of California Consortium for Language Learning & Teaching (UCCLLT)*. <http://www.language.berkeley.edu/ucfcp/unit4/intro.php>
- PEP.Ph (2014, June 11). *Jessica Soho hailed most trusted news presenter for fourth time*. <https://www.pep.ph/lifestyle/29586/jessica-soho-hailed-most-trusted-news-presenter-for-fourth-time>
- Qassemi, M., Ziabari, R. S., & Kheirabadi, R. J. (2018). Grice's cooperative principles in news reports of Tehran Times: A descriptive-analytical study. *International Journal of English Language and Translation Studies*, 6(1), 66-74.
- Quijano, Jr., N. V. (2019, November 28). False justice. *Daily Tribune*. <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2019/11/28/false-justice/>
- Raffy Tulfo in Action (n.d.). *Teacher na namahiya ng kanyang estudyante, inireklamo ng lola*. <https://www.youtube.com/c/RaffyTulfoInAction/playlists>
- Ramos, M. S. (2019, November 24). Netizens slam Raffy Tulfo for shaming public school teacher on radio. *Inquirer.net*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1193805/netizens-slam-raffy-tulfo-for-shaming-public-school-teacher-on-radio-show>
- Rappler (2019, November 23). *Raffy Tulfo in hot water after persuading teacher to have license revoked*. <https://www.rappler.com/move-ph/245583-raffy-tulfo-in-action-netizens-reaction>



- Redmond, M. V. (2015). *Face and politeness theories. English technical reports and white papers*. University of Iowa Digital Repositories. [https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=engl\\_reports](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=engl_reports)
- Reyes, J. (2015). Loób and kapwa: An introduction to a Filipino virtue ethics. *Asian Philosophy*, 25(2), 148-171.
- Romer, U., & Shulze, R. (2009). *Exploring the lexis-grammar interface*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Santos, R. I. (2022). (Re)examining politeness concepts and contentions: Implications on Filipino brand of politeness. *International Journal of Humanity Studies*, 6(1), 51-67.
- Talabong, R. (2021, October 3). Raffy wants to bring Tulfo brand of justice to Senate. *Rappler*: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/raffy-wants-tulfo-brand-justice-senate/>
- Texnologia.net (2022). *Raffy Tulfo in action*. <https://texnologia.net/influencer/user/youtube/UCxhygwqQ1ZMoBGQM2yEcNug>

## Appendix A: 24 Oras Interview

[Start of Recording]

Soho: Magandang gabi po, Senator Pimentel.

Pimentel: Jessica, magandang gabi po sa lahat.

*(Soho: Good evening [“po”, a polite marker], Senator Pimentel.*

*Pimentel: Jessica, good evening [po] to all.)*

Soho: Oho. Bago po ang lahat kumustahin po muna namin kayo. May symptoms ho ba kayo nararamdaman? How are you feeling right now?

Pimentel: Well, I’m, I’m up and about. O, o, okay naman po. Sa, sana, kalaban kasi di natin nakikita kaya mahirap magsalita eh.

*(Soho: [“Oho”, another politeness address which also signifies agreement or confirmation]. Before anything else, we would want to ask how you [“kayo”, plural form, is used instead of the singular “ka”] are doing. Do you experience any symptoms? How are you feeling right now?*

*Pimentel: Well, I’m, I’m up and about. I am okay [po]. [I wish...we do not see our enemy, so it is hard to tell.)*

Soho: Okay, mabigat po yung statement ng Makati Med. Uh, you were reckless daw at uh nabawasan pa tuloy daw yung kanilang mga tauhan dahil naka-home quarantine kayo eh bakit pa ho kayo nagpunta daw ng ospital? Tuloy eh nagkaroon ho ng problema sa kanilang ospital.

Pimentel: Well, una sa lahat, uh, yung home, yung home quarantine ko is the general quarantine natin lahat diba? Na kung non-essential movement, huwag na tayong gagalaw. Eh, wala pa po akong, wala naman akong positive, uhm uhm test noon at manganganak ang misis mo, eh sa mata ko this is an essential uhhh movement kasi manganganak eh so, sinong, sinong sasama sa manganganak na misis kung hindi si mister. And then, basta nalaman ko po iyun. Tinawag ako ng RITM, 9:00 PM na po kagabi nasa ospital na ako. Kasi 6 o’ clock nandoon na po kami, 6:00 to 7:00 PM.

*(Soho: Okay, the statement from Makati Med[ical Center] is serious. Uh, you were being reckless, according to them, and uh as a result, the number of their [health] workers had to be streamlined, according to them, because you [“kayo”, plural form, instead of “ka” singular form] were under home quarantine and yet why did you [“kayo” instead of “ka”] still go to the hospital? Consequently, the hospital [“ho”, a variant of “po”] experienced a problem.*

## Appendix A continued...

*Pimentel: Well, before anything else, uh, my home, my home quarantine is the general quarantine for us all, right? It prescribes that for non-essential movement, we should not be going about. Actually, I did not...I did not have positive, uhm uhm test in the past, and if your wife is going to give birth, so in my perspective, this is an essential uhhh movement because she was going to give birth so, so, who, who should be accompanying a wife who is about to give birth to a baby except*

*the husband? And then, [“basta”, can’t be translated] I just learned about that [complaint]. RITM called me up. That was 9:00 PM last night and I was already in the hospital. We were already there [in the hospital] at 6:00 ‘o clock, 6:00 to 7:00 PM.)*

Soho: Okay, so you’re qualifying na ‘home quarantine’ iyun. Kasi ho di ba earlier eh may nagpositibong senador, kaya ho uh, medyo may ‘baka’ noh, baka may iba ba, yung mga ganyan. Hindi ho ba kayo nag-err on the side of caution, ika nga? I think iyon ho ang hinahanap po sa inyo eh. You knew that there was a danger that you were exposed tapos pumunta pa ho kayo sa isang ospital.

Pimentel: Yes, general, general danger because sa Senado nga mayroong guest na nag-ano, yeah, but that was March 5? Tandaan po natin iyon. March 5 na hearing po iyun, Jessica.

*(Soho: Okay, so you’re qualifying that that was a ‘home quarantine’, but isn’t it earlier [po] there was a senator who had tested positive, that’s why [ho], maybe, maybe, there were others, who, you know. Didn’t you [kayo, plural object pronoun, instead of ka, singular] [ho] err on the side of caution, so to speak? I think that is [ho] what is being pointed out about you [inyo, plural object pronoun instead of iyo, singular]. You knew that there was a danger that you were exposed but still you insisted on entering [ho, respect word] a hospital.*

*Pimentel: Yes, general, general danger because at the Senate; indeed there was one who guested who, yeah, but that was March 5? We have to remember that. That was a March 5 hearing [po], Jessica.)*

Soho: Oh, okay.

Pimentel: So, ang gusto kong sabihin basta when I went to the hospital wala po akong word, confirmation na ako po ay positive. And then two hours later, nalaman ko and then tinawagan ko agad ang doctor, ang OB-gyne na in-charge sa wife ko. Tinawagan ko siya na I got his information, sabi niya ‘You must leave the hospital’; alis po ako. Umalis naman po ako after, after explaining it to my wife kasi siyempre kailangan kong ipaliwanag sa kanya dahil siyempre medyo anxious din yung tao dahil manganganak the following morning.

*(Pimentel: So, what I wanted to say, [basta], when I went to the hospital, I had received no word yet [po], no confirmation whatsoever that I was positive [po]. And then two hours later, I learned and then I was phoned by the doctor, the OB-gyne [doctor] who was in charge of my wife. I called back that I got his information, saying ‘You must leave the hospital’, that I had to leave. So I left [po] after, after explaining it to my wife because, of course, I needed to explain to her because she was a bit anxious also because, of course, she was going to give birth the following morning.)*

Appendix A continued...

Soho: Oho, paano ho kaya iyan ngayon sa dinami-dami po ng mga nakasalamuha niyo? Is it even possible to trace kung paano ho kayo nahawa and likewise kailangan din po kasi ngayon i-contact trace, sino yung mga nakasama niyo baka macheck din po baka nakahawa po kayo?

Pimentel: Okay, uh, impossible na siguro malaman kung saan galing ito, pero hindi naman ako maraming activities na. So madali na naming nasabihan kung sino yung mga uhm na-encounter ko from March 11 hanggang kahapon. Tapos even yung kilos ko naman sa ospital, ano lang eh. Kwarto, uhm, doon sa koridor, umupo ako dahil di naman ako pinapasok ng kwar--, ng examination room which is very good development. Di ako pinapasok. And then, doon lang po sa walkway, yung bridge, and then of course yung pasok at labas ng hospital. So these are all, these are my only movements po sa hospital.

*(Soho: [Oho], so what will happen [ho] now because a lot of people [po] have been exposed because of you [niyo, plural, instead of inyo, singular]? Is it even possible to trace [ho] how you contracted the disease and likewise it is also necessary [po] to contact trace, who were with you [niyo, plural] so that perhaps they could also be checked [po] because you [po] could have infected others.*

*Pimentel: Okay, uh, I think it is impossible to determine where I got it [the disease], but I did not have so many activities lately. So, it was easy for us to inform those who uhm I had encounter with from March 11 until yesterday. Then, even my movement in the hospital, it was just minimal. I was just in the room, uhm, in the corridors; I sat there since I was not allowed to enter the ro... of the examination room which is very good development. I was not allowed inside. And then, I was just in the walkway, the bridge, and then of course the going and, and out of the hospital. So these are all, these are my only movements in the hospital.)*

Soho: Okay, Senator, of course, I have to say that we're sorry you tested positive pero kailangan ko ho ring tanungin ito kasi issue ho the past days noh? Bakit parang may palakasan daw diyan sa testing na iyan at yung mga politiko natin ay nakapagpatest kahit wala naman silang symptoms gayung yung mga PUI, na may malalang symptoms, lalo na po yung ating mga medical frontliners ni hindi, hindi mabigyan ng pagkakataon para makapag-test at mahaba po ang pila, paano po ba nangyari ito?

Pimentel: Ngayon siguro di ba, may 100,000 additional test kits tayo. Pero tingnan niyo, tingnan niyo din kami. Pagka negative kami bina-bash, kapag positive kami bina-bash ka din. So, so sa yung, yung example ko siguro shows na kailangan ding magpa-test ang mga senador natin kasi ang iba din sa kanila nagkakasakit nga din talaga din.

*(Soho: Okay, Senator, of course, I have to say that we're sorry you tested positive, but I also need [ho] to ask this because this has been the issue [ho] the past days, right? Why is it that, allegedly, some individuals are being favored more than the others regarding [COVID-19] testing and our politicians are able to avail of the test even though they did not have any symptoms when those who are PUI[ people under investigation], who have serious symptoms, especially [po] our medical frontliners didn't even have, were not given even a bit of a chance to be tested and the lines are long [po]. How could this have happened [po]?*

Appendix A continued...

*Pimentel: Right now, I believe, right, there are around 100,000 additional test kits that we have. But consider this, look at our situation. If we are negative, we are being bashed, and if we are positive, just the same we are being bashed. So, so my example, maybe it shows that testing is necessary for our senators because some of them are also getting infected.)*

Soho: Okay, maraming salamat---

Pimentel: Yun po iyun. I hope, I just, I, I, I, I hope for the, I beg for the understanding of everybody.

Soho: And we wish you well, Senator Pimentel. Sana po ay gumaling po kayo at mag-negative kalaunan.

Pimentel: Maraming salamat po.

Soho: Maraming salamat, Senator Koko Pimentel.

*(Soho: Okay, thank you very much---*

*Pimentel: That's what I was trying to point out. I hope, I just, I, I, I, I hope for the, I beg for the understanding of everybody.*

*Soho: And we wish you well, Senator Pimentel. We hope that you get well soon [po] and be declared negative later on.*

*Pimentel: Thank you very much.*

*Soho: Thank you very much, Senator Koko Pimentel.)*

[End of Recording]

## Appendix B: Raffy Tulfo in Action

[Start of Recording]

Rafael Tulfo (host/interviewee)

Salve Banez (grandmother), Rosemil Edroso, and her husband, complainants (interviewees 1, 2, & 3)

Melisa Limjuco, teacher (interviewee 4)

Tulfo: Noong November 13, pinahiya ‘yung apo n’yo at pinalabas sa classroom. Bakit po?

Banez: Dahil lang po sa card na hindi niya po nadala at isasauli sa teacher.

Tulfo: Yun lang?

Banez: Yun lang po.

Tulfo: O, tapos mayroon po kayong sinasabi na binabatukan pa ang apo n’yo.

Banez: Opo. Nung mga previous na ano, di nagsusumbong ang apo ko. Yung previous na mga ginawa niya sa apo ko doon ko lang nalaman nung nagsumbong na ‘tong apo ko, yung ginawa sa kanya. One time doon na nag-ingay ang apo ko, pinukpok pa niya ng ganun sa ulo tapos sabi nung classmate niyang kambal, tinuktukan ng suklay yung apo ko kaya nagtaka ang mommy niya nung pinaliguan niya may sugat-sugat sa ulo.

Tulfo: O.

Banez: Opo

Tulfo: Tsk.Tsk.Tsk. Ito po ay naiparating n’yo sa principal?

Banez: Opo, ser. Yung principal naman po nag-ano siya kung ano gusto naming mangyari.

Tulfo: Okay. Ano po’ng sinabi n’yo kay principal?

Banez: Isa lang ser ang gusto kong mangyari diyan sa teacher na ‘yan na mabigyan siya ng leksyon dahil yung ginawa niya sa apo ko di makatarungan.

Tulfo: Korek!

Appendix B continued...

Banez: Kasi malaking ano iyon eh, yung impact no'n [Tulfo: Trauma] iyon, matu-trauma siya [Tulfo: trauma] although ang sipag ng apo kong pumasok. Matalinong bata. Nandiyan ser ang card, kahit ngayon ipapakita ko sa 'yo. Dala-dala ko, [Tulfo: Sige po] na dahil lang sa card na 'yon, pinalabas niya ang apo ko; binalibagan ng upuan. Ilang upuan inistay ang apo ko sa labas. Ang sabi niya nakalimutan niya raw balikan dahil nagsulat na siya sa backboard ng lesson niya. Opo, ayun po sa teacher; ayun yung teacher, naka-red na 'yon.

Tulfo: Yung naka-red ang teacher? [Banez: Opo]

Tulfo: Yung teacher. Ayan ang apo n'yo? [Banez: Opo, yung tinuturuan niya], ipinaupo sa labas?

Banez: Galit na galit siya. Iniwan siya.

Tulfo: Buti na lang may CCTV para di niya maitanggi.

Banez: Sinabi niya naman, 'Manigas ka diyan!'

Tulfo: Ayun yung apo n'yo? Nakaupo roon?

Banez: Opo

Tulfo: Ayun, pinagtitinginan ng mga estudyante.

Banez: Opo. Ang dami n'yun, di ba? Yun, yun. Pati yung parents na iyan, napalingon sa kanya.

Tulfo: Napahiya nga talaga ang bata diyan, [Banez: Opo, yung apo ko], ang apo n'yo [Banez: Opo] n'yo. Hiyang-hiya sa sarili at nakayuko. [Banez: Opo]

Tulfo: Nakausap n'yo na po yung guro tungkol dito? [Banez: Opo] Ano po'ng sinabi niya tungkol dito?

Banez: Opo. Noong una, dine-deny niya. Hindi niya raw ginawa ito sa apo ko. Nung sinabi ko na makita ko po yung footage ng CCTV [Tulfo: Okay] sa hallway, kaya po huwag ka nang tumanggi. May ano kami [Tulfo: Ebidensya] ebidensya kami para...tsaka

Tulfo: Ano po'ng tugon niya doon?

Banez: 'Yon. Inamin niya na iyon daw ang pagkakamali niya, yung pagpapalabas niya sa apo ko.

Tulfo: So ah nung ah inamin niya na may pagkakamali, ano po'ng sumunod na mga pananalita niya sa inyo?

Banez: Iyon lang po. Humingi ng dispena. Ano na raw, dahil doon sa ginawa niya

## Appendix B continued...

Tulfo: Mmm.

Banez: Sabi ko, ‘Ma’am, para sa akin, di kita ma[pag]bibigyan sa ginawa mo sa apo ko kasi di makatarungan ‘yun eh’, sabi ko, ‘dahil lang sa card palalabasin mo.’ Pwede mo naman ‘kakong sabihin, ‘Rizen, bukas ng umaga pag pasok mo kailangan dala mo na yung card.’ Ganyan lang sana ang magandang approach.

Tulfo: Tatawagin yung magulang.

Banez: Opo. Yan ang sinabi ng witness na, ‘Gusto mong tawagan ang daddy nito, ipadala namin yung card para maano?’ ‘Wag na! Hayaan mo siyang manigas diyani!’

Tulfo: Ay parang pinag-iinitan niya talaga ang apo ninyo.

Banez: Pero ser, ang ganda ng feedback niyan. Pag every time na magkikita kami ng teacher ng apo ko tatanungin ko kung ano ang feedback, sabi niya, ‘Ah mommy, okay ang apo mo. Marunong po sa klase.’

Tulfo: Baka mainit ang ulo niya ng mga oras na ‘yon, ng araw na ‘yon.

Banez: Kasi, may mga pupils siya eh.

Tulfo: Korek.

Banez: May tendency na sa init ng ulo niya, makadisgrasya siya ng estudyante.  
I agree. Miss Melita Limjuco madam, andito si Lola Salve Banez gusto raw kayo makausap.

Banez: Gusto ko pong makarating sa inyo dahil po inirereklamo ko dito na magkaroon kayo ng leksyon sa di makatarungan na paggawa niyo sa apo ko. Dahil kung sa pamilya mo ginawa iyon siyempre maaano mo rin iyon kung ano nararamdaman ko.

Limjuco: Opo

Tulfo: Ma’am pwede kayong makasuhang criminal, hindi lang administratibo, or mas matindi rito [Republic Act] 7610 Child Abuse. Kasi po pinahiya n’yo ang bata; natrauma iyong bata, pasok ito sa 7610.

Limjuco: Ser, iyon pong nagawa ko mali lang po pagdisiplina pero wala po akong intensyong saktan po ang bata.



## Appendix B continued...

Tulfo: Wala po kayong physical na pananakit ginawa sa bata pero ma’am yung emotional, psychological na pananakit dito kasi iyong bata napahiya, nakayuko siya at uh hindi natin alam kong ano pa talagang trauma ang uhh nararamdam nito ngayon gawa nitong insidente. Kitang-kita naman po sa video, sa footage na iyong may ibang estudyanteng nagsilapitan sa kanya tinitingnan siya at siya’y nakayuko, hiyang-hiya sa sarili. So that’s trauma by itself. And pag nagkatrauma iyong bata dahil sa kagagawan mo meron kang kasong child abuse madam...

Limjuco: Ser iyong pong ginawa ko, ang intensyon ko lang po du’n aahh, bigyan ng disiplina... wala po ‘kong intensyong saktan yung bata.

Tulfo: Ma’am (assertive, scolding tone) Hindi po ako pulis ano.

Limjuco: Opo

Tulfo: Pero nakikita ko rito mayroon ka talagang intensyon na pahiyain iyong bata. Wala kang intensyon to abuse him physically but emotionally and psychologically the intention was there kasi nga po ma’am yung paglabas mo, dala-dala ang upuan niya, binagsak mo pa ang upuan at galit na galit ka. Nandun pa ang facial expression mo at pagkatapos sabay pasok mo at iyong bata nakaupo doon pinabayaan mo na nakaupo doon. Pinabayaan mo siyang mapahiya sa kanyang kapwa estudyante. That by itself is child abuse.

Limjuco: Ser, kung yun pong mali kong iyon eh hinihingi ko po ng sorry.

Tulfo: Okay sige ma’am gusto mong humingi ng sorry kay madam.

Limjuco: Hindi ko naman po intensyon na gawin iyon sa bata na ganun. Humihingi po ako ng pasensya; humihingi po ako ng tawad.

Tulfo: Ma’am matanong ko lang po. Ma’am sa inyo, ganun lang po para sa inyo ang tamang pagdidisiplina ng bata kapag halimbawa nakalimutan lang dalhin yung card na as supposed to dapat ang ginawa niyo tinawag ninyo ang magulang na ‘Magulang, pumunta kayo rito dalhin niyo ang card.’ Bakit kailangan pang pahiyain pa yung bata dahil lang sa napakaliit na kasalanan ng bata?

Limjuco: Nasabay lang po iyong sa away ng katabi iyan. Nasabay na yong galit ko kaya iyon po napalabas ko po siya.

Tulfo: Ma’am kung talagang iyan ang nangyari still hindi pa rin ang ganung klaseng way na para yung bata na disiplinahan at pahiyain sa buong eskwelahan.

Limjuco: Opo ser.

Tulfo: Di ba? Pwede mo naman ma’am ang gagawin ipapalipat siya sa ibang upuan—

Limjuco: Opo

Appendix B continued...

Tulfo: -- kung nasa first row, ilagay mo siya sa back row.

Limjucu: Naiintindihan ko po ser.

Tulfo: Pati yung ulo niya pinupukpok niyo ng suklay.

Luimjucu: Wala po akong hawak ng suklay that time. Wala po.

Banez: Ma’am hindi po iyon that time yung inaano mo siya sa ulo ng suklay niyo. Previous na po iyon. Naikwento lang po iyon sa akin ng classmate niya. Kasi iyong mga time na iyon hindi ka nakacover ng CCTV kaya kaya mong i-deny iyon. Hindi makatarungan ang ginawa mo sa apo ko kaya dapat mabigyan ka ng leksyon!

Tulfo: Ano pong leksyon ang gusto niyo ma’am?

Banez: Gusto kong magpahinga na siya sa bahay nila. Iyon ang sinabi ko sa kanya.

Tulfo: Alam mo ma’am doon po sa admin case matagal-tagal iyon; di kami aasa diyan. Dito sa mabilisang kaso—child abuse—dito ka namin yayariin. Pasensya na sa word. Yayariin ka namin dito.

Limjucu: Kaya nga po humihingi po nga ako ng sorry para ho...

Banez: Baliktarin natin ang sitwasyon. Ako ang gumawa nu’n sa apo niyo, humingi lang ako ng sorry papayag ka ba? Hindi makatarungan yung ginawa mo! Ang taas ng ekspektasyon ko sa apo ko; matalinong bata iyan, malayo pang mararating niyan. Ikaw nagsabi matalino ang apo ko. May pangarap yung apo ko. Sa ginawa niyo sa kanya, sa takot niya sa iyo baka mamaya tamarin nang pagpasok yung apo although ang sipag-sipag na nga po kung pumasok. May nararamdaman iyan; pinapapasok namin siya. Well, ayaw niyang um-absent tapos gaganyanin mo lang, hihingi ka sa kin ng sorry, ng sorry?

Limjucu: Parang awa n’yo na po. Ako na nga po humihingi ng sorry. Humihingi na po ako ng ano, ng tawad. Please po.

Banez: Nandito po mommy niya, tsaka yung witness.

Edroso: Kung ano naman po, naawa naman ako na ipapakulong siya eh. Mag-ano na lang siya. Magpahinga na lang siya sa kanila. [Tulfo: okay] Mawalan siya ng lisensiya.

Tulfo: Alright.

Edroso: Mali ang ginawa niya sa anak ko eh. Pinahiya niya ang anak ko.

Tulfo: Yan ba ding gusto ng tatay?

Appendix B continued...

Tulfo: Ma’am, narinig mo po iyong salita. Kalimutan niyo na po ang napag-usapan niyo ng lola. Sorry lola, ah.

Banez: Ok lang po.

Tulfo: Respetuhin natin ang mga magulang. Sabi po ng both parents, ‘tong tatay nanay nandito...

Limjuco: Opo

Tulfo: ...hindi ka kakasuhan ng child abuse. Deal! Ikaw na kusang magresign sa ‘yong trabaho, at maging sa PRC ilalakad namin at sasang-ayunan mo para mas mabilis ang proseso na ikaw’y matanggalan ng lisensya or isang option ilaban mo sa korte. Masasampa ka ng kasong child abuse at para sa akin po ma’am kung ako tatanungin mo malaking posibilidad na makukulong ka. Ano pong pipiliin mo doon ma’am?

Limjuco: Yun na lang pong desisyon ng father tsaka mother.

Tulfo: Okay ma’am. Punta kayo rito, pag-usapin kayo para magpirmahan sa Barangay at sa DepEd. Ngayon po pag-uusapan ninyo para ahh maging opisyal na po ang pag-uusap na iyon. Okay ma’am?

Limjuco: Sabihan na lang po ako kung kailan po tsaka at saan po ser.

Tulfo: Ma’am Melita, maraming salamat po sa time na binigay niyo po sa amin Madam Melita.

Limjuco: Thank you very much po, ser.

[End of Recording]

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*(Rafael Tulfo [host/interviewee])*

*Salve Banez, Rosemil Edroso, and her husband, complainants (interviewees 1, 2, & 3)*

*Melita Limjuco, teacher (interviewee 4)*

*Tulfo: On November 13, your grandchild was humiliated at was sent out of the classroom. Why po?*

*Banez: Just because of his card which he forgot to take to school and return to his teacher.*

*Tulfo: That’s the only reason?*

Appendix B continued...

*Banez: That's all.*

*Tulfo: And you were also saying that your grandchild was being hit in the back of his head.*

*Banez: Yes. My grandchild did not tell us about such incident. I only got to know about what she did to my grandchild when he complained about it. One day, he could not keep quiet anymore. The teacher was hitting him in the head and according to his classmate, the poor child's head was hit with a comb. His mother was surprised to discover about some wounds in his head.*

*Tulfo: Oh.*

*Banez: Yes.*

*Tulfo: Tsk.Tsk.Tsk. Is this what you have reported to the principal?*

*Banez: Yes, sir. The principal asked us what we wanted to happen.*

*Tulfo: Okay. What did you tell the principal?*

*Banez: Only one thing, sir, and that is to teach that teacher a lesson for what she did to my grandchild. It was unjust.*

*Tulfo: Absolutely!*

*Banez: Her action has a big impact [Tulfo: Trauma] upon the child; it was traumatic [Tulfo: trauma] but mind you, he is a diligent student. He is smart. His card says it all; I can show it to you. I have it with me [Tulfo: Sure] Just because of the card, the teacher sent him out of the classroom; she hurled a chair near him. My grandchild stayed in that chair for long, outside the classroom. She reasoned that she merely forgot about the child because she had to continue with her lesson and had to write on the board. Yes, that's the teacher; that's the teacher, the one in red.*

*Tulfo: The teacher is wearing red? [Banez: Yes]*

*Tulfo: The teacher. That's your grandchild? [Banez: Yes, her pupil], he was told to sit outside?*

*Banez: She was very mad. She left him there.*

*Tulfo: It's a good thing that there was a CCTV and she can't deny the footage.*

*Banez: She even said, 'You rot in there!'*

*Tulfo: Is that your grandchild? The one sitting down?*

*Banez: Yes.*

## Appendix B continued...

*Tulfo: I can see him, other students are looking at him.*

*Banez: Yes. Those are a lot of students, right? Those. And also those. Even those parents, they were looking at the child.*

*Tulfo: I can see that he was indeed humiliated [Banez: Yes, that's my grandchild], that's your [Banez: Yes] grandchild. He was extremely humiliated and he was crouched. [Banez: Yes]*

*Tulfo: Have you talked to the teacher about this incident? [Banez: Yes] What did she say?*

*Banez: Yes. At first, she was denying it. She insisted that she had never done anything to the child. But when I told her that I had seen the CCTV footage [Tulfo: Okay] of the hallway, I told her it would be futile to deny her offense. We had [Tulfo: Ebidensya] evidence, and*

*Tulfo: What was her reply?*

*Banez: Well. She eventually admitted that she had made a mistake for sending my grandchild out of the class.*

*Tulfo: After admitting that she had made a mistake, what were her next words?*

*Banez: That's all. She apologized for what had happened.*

*Tulfo: Mmm.*

*Banez: I said, 'Ma'am, I don't think I could let this pass because what you did to my grandchild was unjust, and to think that it was just because of a card, and you sent him out of the room. You could have told him, 'Rizen, make sure you return the card to me when you come to class tomorrow morning.' That would have been a better approach.*

*Tulfo: You mean to call the parents.*

*Banez: Yes. That was the suggestion of a witness to the teacher who said, 'Would you like to call the father of this child to send his card to you?' But she said, 'Never mind! Let him rot there!'*

*Tulfo: Gosh, it proves that she was giving your grandchild a hard time.*

*Banez: But you know sir, she gives us good feedback about the child. Every time I see her in school and ask her about my grandchild's performance, she says, 'Ah mommy, you're grandchild is doing very well. He is smart in class.'*

*Tulfo: I think she was very angry during those times.*

*Banez: [That should not be tolerated] because she is handling children.*

## Appendix B continued...

*Tulfo: I agree. Miss Melita Limjuco madam, Grandmother Salve Banez is here. She wishes to speak with you.*

*Banez: I want to let you know that I am making a complaint here [through this program] for you to learn a lesson for an unjust action that you committed against my grandchild. Because if the same offense was committed against your own family, of course you would feel the same way as I do now.*

*Limjuco: Opo [“yes”, with respect]*

*Tulfo: Ma'am you could face a criminal charge, not only an administrative case, or worse, you could be charged under [Republic Act] 7610. Child Abuse. It is because you humiliated the child; the child was traumatized; this is a 7610 case.*

*Limjuco: Sir, my only mistake was the undue discipline, but I never intended to harm the child.*

*Tulfo: You did not hurt the child physically, but ma'am, there is emotional, psychological impact here; you humiliated the child. See the child is crouched and we don't know what trauma he feels because of this incident. It's very clear in the video, the footage, that there were even many students who were looking at him, and he was looking down, feeling so humiliated. So that's trauma by itself. A child suffered emotional trauma because of what you've done and that is child abuse madam...*

*Limjuco: Sir, I only wanted to instill discipline in the child...I had no intention of hurting the child.*

*Tulfo: Ma'am (assertive, scolding tone) I am not a police officer...*

*Limjuco: Yes.*

*Tulfo: But I see here that you had an intent to humiliate the child. Granted you had no intention of hurting him physically, but you definitely there was an intent to harm him emotionally and psychologically because ma'am when you went out, you were carrying the child's chair; you hurled it onto the floor and you were so mad. Your facial expression says it all, and you immediately entered the classroom and you left the child there sitting alone. You intended to shame him in front of other students. That by itself is child abuse.*

*Limjuco: Sir, for that mistake, I want to say sorry.*

*Tulfo: Okay, so ma'am you wish to say sorry to madam [the complainant].*

*Limjuco: I never really intended to do that [humiliation] to the child. I am asking for [their] patience; I am asking for forgiveness.*

*Tulfo: Ma'am, let me ask you, po. Ma'am, is that the only way to teach a child some proper discipline to a child who forgot to return his card to you; what you should have done was call his parents and say, 'Parents, come here and bring the card of the child.' Why the need to humiliate the child for such a small offense?*

*Limjuco: There was another incident, a fight involving his seatmate. In my anger to the other student, I sent the child out of the class.*

*Tulfo: Ma'am, if that was indeed the case, your way of disciplining the child was not right, and you humiliated him in the entire school.*

*Limjuco: Yes, sir.*

*Tulfo: Do you agree? You could have just told the child to move to another seat—*

*Limjuco: Yes.*

*Tulfo: -- if he was in the first row, then you could have moved him in the back row.*

*Limjuco: I understand, sir.*

*Tulfo: You even hit his head with a comb.*

*Limjuco: I never had a comb that time. None at all.*

*Banez: Ma'am, the comb incident happened at a different time. It happened in the past. A classmate of his told me about it. During those times, you were not captured by the CCTV that's why you had the nerve to deny what you had done. You have done my grandchild some injustice and you should be penalized for it!*

*Tulfo: What penalty do want, ma'am?*

*Banez: I want her to stop teaching. That's what I have told her.*

*Tulfo: You know ma'am, with regard to the administrative case, that might take long to progress; we're not counting on that. We will make sure you're finished. Pardon the word. We will go after you and ensure you're finished.*

*Limjuco: That is why I am saying sorry so that...*

*Banez: Suppose you were in my case. I mistreated your grandchild, would you accept a simple apology? What you have done was too much! I have high hopes for my grandchild; he is a very smart kid, and he has a promising future. You even said that he is intelligent. My grandchild has dreams. Who knows because of what you've done he might lose motivation in coming to school although I know he always looks forward to attending his classes. Even when he does not feel well, we still send him to school. Well, he does not want to be absent from school and you treat him that way, [and] then say sorry, sorry?*

Appendix B continued...

*Limjuco: I beg for your mercy. I am really very sorry. Please forgive me. Please po.*

*Banez: The mother is here and the witness.*

*Edroso: Actually, I don't want her to end up in jail. She better stop from teaching and stay at home.. [Tulfo: okay]. I want her license revoked.*

*Tulfo: Alright.*

*Edroso: What she did was wrong. She humiliated my child.*

*Tulfo: Is that what the dad want as well?*

*Tulfo: Ma'am, you heard what was said. Forget about what has transpired today. Sorry grandma, ah.*

*Banez: Yes, po.*

*Tulfo: Just respect the decision of the parents. According to both parents, the father and the mother here...*

*Limjuco: Yes.*

*Tulfo: ..they won't file a child abuse case. Deal! You voluntarily resign from teaching, and we will seek the revocation of your license with PRC and agree to it--for a faster resolution of this case—the revocation of your license or the other option is fight this in court. You will face a child abuse case but if you ask me ma'am, there is a big possibility that you'll end up in jail. Which one do you prefer, ma'am?*

*Limjuco: The decision of the father and the mother [revocation of license].*

*Tulfo: Okay, ma'am. Come over here, face the complainants and sign some documents at the village office and at DepEd[Department of Education]. That will formalize things. Okay, ma'am?*

*Limjuco: They can just tell me when and where, sir.*

*Tulfo: Ma'am Melita, thank you very much for your time, Madam Melita.*

*Limjuco: Thank you very much po, sir.)*

END OF TRANSLATION



**Rafael I. Santos** is a former newspaper journalist and a broadcaster in a US territory and the Philippines, Rafael Ibe Santos is a Ph. D. candidate from the University of the Philippines, Diliman where he has completed his Ph.D. course work in English Studies major in Language. He teaches full-time at the University of Asia and the Pacific in Pasig City, Metro Manila, handling English and media-related courses. His areas of interests include (interlanguage) pragmatics, language acquisition and development, bilingualism, stylistics, (cross-cultural) communication, and media and technology in education.