Politeness Strategies vis-à-vis Genders and Exposures to Western Culture: The Case of 'The Voice of the Philippines' Coaches

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Abstract
Politeness is one of the key concepts in Speech Act Theory, a major field in pragmatics. Mills (2003) defined it as the expression of the speakers' intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts toward the listener. In a television platform, a number of studies were done to determine the politeness strategies performed by hosts and judges; however, none so far has focused on comparing them based on gender and cultural background. Using a corpus composed of 30 Blind Auditions video-clips randomly selected from YouTube, the present study aimed at describing the politeness strategies employed by The Voice of the Philippines' coaches with emphasis on their genders and exposures to Western culture. Coaches' utterances were classified following Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies which include (a) bald on record, (b) perform speech acts using positive politeness, (c) perform speech acts using negative politeness, (d) indirect speech act or off the record. Results show that the coaches performed positive politeness (66.23%), negative politeness (20.58%), bald on-record (10.29%) and off-record (3.43%). Comparisons on the coaches' politeness strategies when they are grouped according to genders and exposures to Western culture were also explored.

1. INTRODUCTION

Socio-cultural, interactional and strategic competences refer to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge. Kasper (1997 as cited in Senowarsito, 2013) defined pragmatic perspective as knowledge beyond the level of grammar and use of communicative action, and the ability to use language appropriately according to context. Barron (2003) gave a comprehensive definition of the term pragmatic competence as the knowledge of the available linguistic resources in a language for the realization of certain illocutions, knowledge of speech acts' sequential aspects and contextual use of a language's linguistic resources.

One of the key concepts in Speech Act Theory, a major field in pragmatics, is politeness. Mills (2003) defined it as the expression of the speakers' intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts toward the listener. In the communication process, conveying the message from the speaker to the listener becomes

possible through language use. In everyday communication, every individual is unique in terms of conveying intention to listeners. Holmes (1992 as cited in Nasution, 2015) stated that language provides a number of ways in expressing the same thing, enabling one to say his intention in different ways. Therefore, politeness also deals with the factors that can influence how speakers and listeners express intentions in a communicative event.

While establishing a communication system, interlocutors in talent shows use various functions of language. Hence, talent shows in television can also be viewed as linguistic environment and discourse community. In a talent search show format, celebrity judges, as public figures, have image to maintain in front of the grinding camera lenses in particular and of the viewing public in general. Hence, in giving their comments, they, as much as possible, employ a number of politeness strategies in dealing with contestants. Whenever a contestant has done showing a routine, judges will have to ask questions and give comments about the performance, and decide at that moment if a contestant made it to qualify in the next round of the competition. Such moves on the judges' part will put imposition on the contestants. Thus, instances of politeness strategies will be employed by the judges to ensure that a contestant will not be imposed upon in the national television.

CONTEXTUALISING THE PROBLEM

Since the premiere of The Voice of the Philippines on June 15, 2013, it has become one of the talent shows that captured the viewers' attention. In the show, the coaches who gave critical comments were Lea Salonga (Maria Lea Carmen Imutan Salonga), Sarah Geronimo (Sarah Asher Tua Geronimo), Bamboo (Francisco Gaudencio Lope Belardo Mañala) and Apl de Ap (Allan Pineda Lindo). Aside from gender, one significant difference that these coaches have has to do with their cultural background. While all of them are Filipinos, they too have varying   exposure to the Western culture. Coach Lea was born and raised in the Philippines, but in the latter part of her teenage years she lived in London to pursue her career as theater actress. Coach Sarah has been living in the country since she was born. Coach Bamboo was born and raised in San Francisco, California and later moved to the Philippines while Coach Ap was born in the Philippines and migrated to US at the age of 14 and has been living in US for more than 30 years.

In a television platform, a number of studies were done to identify the politeness strategies performed by hosts and judges but none so far has focused on comparing them based on gender and cultural background. Like the previous studies, this research approached coaches and contestants' interaction from a pragmatic perspective. It is believed that coach-contestant interaction in a talent show is affected by their pragmatic knowledge. With coaches' differences in gender and cultural background, it is interesting to explore whether politeness strategies they perform vary and how the two important aspects of politeness influence the kind of politeness strategies they perform.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the politeness strategies performed by the The Voice of the Philippines' coaches?

2. How may the coaches' politeness strategies differ in terms of gender and their degree of exposure to Western culture?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Safa and Kurniawan (2015) investigated whether Gordon Ramsay, celebrity judge in Masterchef, performed any different politeness strategies between the Masterchef and Masterchef Junior contestants. Findings reveal that Ramsay performed bald on-record

strategy, positive politeness, and off-record strategy. Further, it was found that Ramsay performed different varieties of politeness strategies in Masterchef and performed only positive politeness strategy in Masterchef Junior. Likewise, Utami et al. (2013) found that X-factor judges performed positive politeness, bald on record and off record. Meanwhile, Dewi (2014) and Nasution (2015) studied the politeness strategies in "Kick Andy" talk show program. They found that most of the time, the host performed positive politeness to show closeness, solidarity and seek agreement with the guests and negative politeness strategies to minimize FTA with his guests.

Gender and culture are two important aspects of politeness which have been the central focus of many studies. Lakoff (1973 as cited in Keikhaie & Mozaffari, 2013) is renowned for her works on language and gender. She studied the differences between the speech of men and women. According to her, men are taught to speak more politely with women than with other men and that women are often marked for using politer structures than men. Such belief has been questioned by some researchers and one of which is Mills (2003, p. 202) who believed that such judgments are just personal assessments. She argued that certain practices that are considered to be polite are in fact "stereotypically gendered" and not based on the truth. As regards to culture, a number of researchers have become interested in identifying for trends of cross-cultural differences in relation to different politeness phenomena. Brown and Levinson's concept of face has by far been the most investigated aspect. Matsumoto (1987 as cited in Maha 2014) found that what constitutes face in Brown and Levinson's view does apply for Western societies but not for Asian ones. In the Asian stance, positive face has been partially accepted and negative face as the claim for freedom from imposition is not equally important since they prefer emphasizing the recognition of interpersonal relation instead.

Theoretical Framework

Mills (2003) considered Brown and Levinson's theoretical approach to the linguistic politeness to be the most significant and developed model of politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 70) defines politeness as "a regressive action" counterbalancing the possible face damage of the face-threatening acts. They refer to face-threatening act as an illocutionary act that might make threats towards another person's face, while regressive action as "an action that gives face to an addressee" and that the face-threatening acts are modified via using various means that speaker employs through the conversation. The principle of politeness is to make all the parties relaxed and comfortable with one another in common social situation.

The use of politeness strategies is governed by the rules of politeness and the principle of Goffman's face work theory. Face is "the public self-image that even member wants to claim for himself" (Brown and Levinson 1987, p. 61). Huang (2007) considered face as universal notion in any human society. He further said that participants in speech events, as rational agents, will ideally try to preserve both their own face and their interlocutors' face. Based on Goffman's theory, Brown and Levinson (1987) classified face into three categories: positive politeness (the expression of solidarity), negative politeness (the expression of restrain), and off-record politeness (the avoidance of unequivocal impositions). Claim to territories, freedom of action and freedom from imposition are part of one's negative face while the needs for social approval, or the want to be considered desirable by at least some others pertain to positive face. Lakoff (1990 as cited in Senowarsito, 2013) enumerated three conditions to consider speech act as polite: (a) does not contain and claim that the use of each strategy depends on social determinant; (b) gives the option to the speaker to do something; and (c) provides comfort and is friendly to the hearer.

Conceptual Framework

Illustrated in Figure 1 is the conceptual framework of the study. Since the whole format of The Voice of the Philippines' revolve on coaches search for a batch of talented new artists, who would then become the country's new singing superstar, the producers of the show decided to put four coaches who are top caliber on their respective genres. In the coaches' line up, there are two males (Coach Apl and Coach Bamboo) and two females (Coach Lea and Coach Sarah). Aside from gender, coaches have also different orientations when it comes to their exposure to Western culture. In this study, coaches' degree of exposure to the Western culture ranges from very high, high, average and low.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
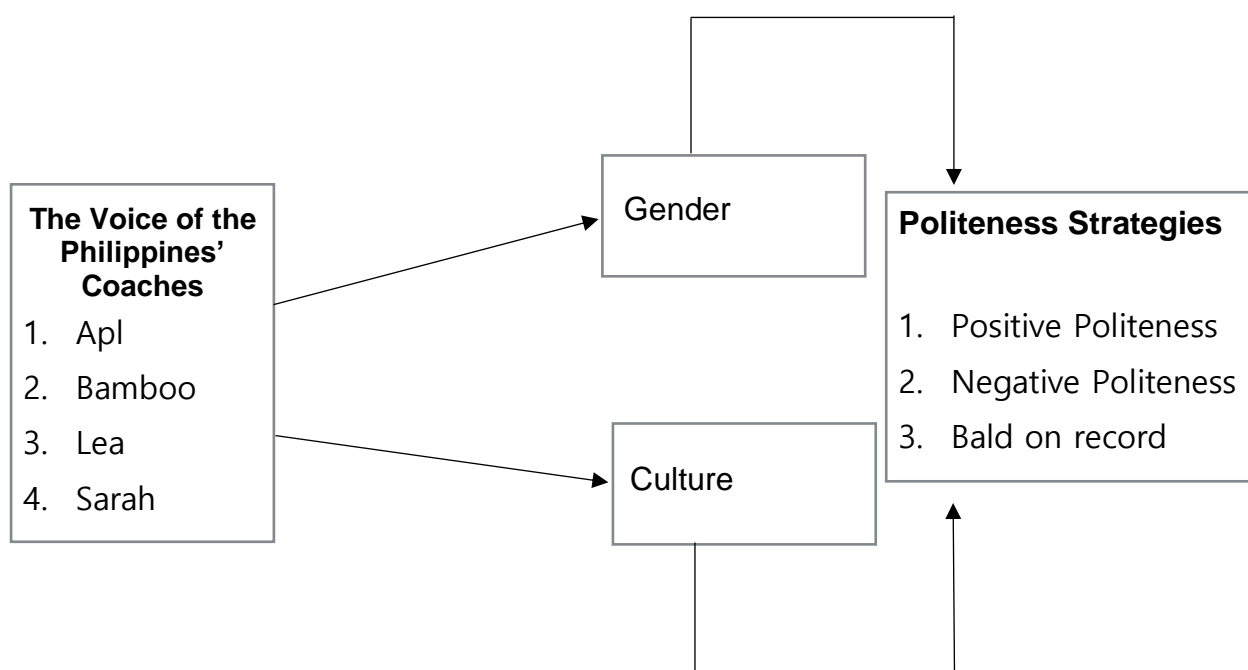
As shown in the figure, the coaches are marked based on their gender differences and exposure to Western culture. It is viewed that the kinds, frequency and variations on the politeness strategies performed by the four coaches are influenced by their gender and exposure to Western culture. Coaches' utterances were classified following Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies which include (a) bald on record, (b) perform speech acts using positive politeness, (c) perform speech acts using negative politeness, (d) indirect speech act or off the record.

Positive politeness strategies were classified into 15 sub-strategies which include: (1) notice, attend; (2) exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy; (3) intensify interest to the addressee; (4) use-in group identity markers; (5) seek agreement; (6) avoid disagreement; (7) presuppose/raise/assert common ground; (8) joke; (9) convey understanding of addressee's wants, (10) offer, promise; (11) be optimistic; (12) include the addressee in the activity; (13) give or ask for reasons; (14) assume or assert reciprocity; and (15) give gifts to the addressee.

There are 10 sub-strategies under negative politeness which include the following: (1) perform the FTA on record; (2) use hedges; (3) be pessimistic; (4) minimize the imposition; (5) give deference; (6) apologize; (7) impersonalize speaker and hearer; (8) stat the FTA as a rule; (9) nominalize; and (10) go on record.

The sub-strategies under off-record strategies include: (1) give hints; (2) give clues of association; (3) presuppose; (4) understate; (5) overstate; (6) use tautologies; (7) use contradictions; (8) be ironic; (9) use metaphors; and (10) use rhetorical questions.

3, METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive-Qualitative method was used in this study. Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies served as framework in the pragmatic analysis. The researcher followed Spradley (1980 as cited in Senowarsito, 2013) model analysis, which involves making a domain analysis, a taxonomic analysis, and a componential analysis, and discovering cultural themes.

The Corpus

The Voice of the Philippines, franchised by ABS-CBN from Dutch TV producer (John de Mol), is a Filipino reality television singing competition. In the show, the four coaches will judge a singer hopeful termed by the show as "artist" only with his or her vocal talent without prejudice to his/her physical bearing. The show has four stages: on-ground and producers' audition, blind auditions, the battles, and the knock-out.

Blind audition is the first televised stage in the competition. During this stage, 90 seconds will be given to artists to render their audition piece while the coaches are seated on a chair facing away from the stage and artist. This concept is observed so that the coaches will only based their judgment on the artists' singing capability. If coaches like the artist's voice, they will have to push the buttons so their chairs will turn around. It is only at that time when coaches will have the first time to see artist and get to encounter the one who is behind the singing voice. Once a coach turns for an artist, it signals that the artist will be part of his or her team. In instance in which more than one coach turns around, it is then the artist who has to pick one coach from those who turned. Artists' journey in the competition ends if none from the coaches pushed the button for his or her chair to turn.

To build the corpus, the researcher randomly selected and transcribed 30 video clips during the Blind Auditions of The Voice of the Philippines Seasons 1 and 2 that are posted in Youtube. Of the 687 utterances from the 30 video clips, 379 came from the coaches while the remaining were those from the artists. Hence, only the 379 coaches' utterances were the ones considered in the analysis.

Fumi (1997) cited Goffman (1981) as regards the advantages of choosing television programs as corpus in pragmatic analysis. One of which is that there is no ethical problem in using the conversation of television personalities since what is televised is already a common property. Another advantage has to do with the avoidance of the usual problems caused by observer-participation.

Assigning Coaches' Degree of Exposure to Western Culture

To determine the influence of culture to politeness strategies employed by the coaches, the researcher categorized them based on their degree of exposure to Western culture. The degree ranges from: very high, high, average, and low. In order for the researcher to assign the coaches to a certain level, he had to read and gather information about the life of the coaches. While reading their biographical accounts, the researcher put special attention to the following: coaches' parents, place of birth, childhood years, teenage years, length of stay in the Philippines and in the United States. After considering all these information, the researcher   then assigned the coaches to a certain level.

Having born to Filipino and American parents and spent only less than 14 years in the Philippines and the remaining 30 years were spent in US, Coach Apl was considered to have very high exposure to Western culture. Meanwhile, Coach Lea, who has been going to London and US to perform since the age of 16 was considered to have high exposure. Coach Bamboo, though born in the US to Filipino parents, was perceived to have an average exposure to Western culture since he already went back to the Philippine during his teenage years. Coach Sarah, who has not lived yet to the Western part of the world for more than three months, was considered to have low exposure to Western culture.

Data Coding

Data came from the utterances of the four coaches.   Data were then split into chunks of utterances, and were classified based on Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies. To answer the first research question, description and manual frequency count of the politeness strategies performed by the four coaches were done.   The second research question was answered through getting the frequency of politeness strategies when participants were grouped based on gender and when they were individually assigned to their degree of exposure to Western culture.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interlocutors in the communication process do not only exchange information, but they too at the same time shape their interpersonal relationships unconsciously. The study explored the politeness strategies used by celebrity coaches in The Voice of the Philippines using Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies. This part presents a comprehensive and detailed analysis of individual coaches' politeness strategies as well as politeness strategies performed in relation to gender and degree of exposure to Western culture.

Coaches' Politeness Strategies

Reflected in Table 1 is the frequency of the overall politeness strategies performed by the coaches. Of the 379 coaches' utterances, it was found that more than half (65.70%) was classified as positive politeness and the remaining were classified negative (20.58%), bald (10.29%) and off-record (3.43%).

Result as regards the dominance of positive politeness strategies employed by celebrities, specifically the coaches, conformed to the findings of Safa and Kurniawan (2015), Utami et al. (2013), Dewi (2014), Nasution (2014) and Ramanwang (2009, as cited in Hayati, 2015).

Table 1. Overall Politeness Strategies Performed by the Coaches

Politeness Strategies	Positive		Negative		Bald		Off-Record	
Coaches	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Apl	59	15.57	7	1.85	9	2.38	3	0.79
Bamboo	63	16.62	7	1.85	16	4.22	1	0.26
Lea	66	17.41	27	7.12	8	2.11	8	2.11
Sarah	61	16.12	37	9.76	6	1.58	1	0.26
Total	249	65.70	78	20.58	39	10.29	13	3.43

The dominance of positive politeness strategies stemmed from the inherent needs of the interlocutors to feel comfortable with each other on the social, personal, and emotional levels to facilitate the effective and efficient transfer of information (Olutayo, 2015). Man's natural tendency is to pay attention to the person in instances in which he felt that the other interlocutors, the speaker for instance, can provide a conducive environment so that the purpose of the discourse could be realized.

Positive Politeness

Presented in Table 2 is the detail of the realization of the coaches' use of positive politeness' sub-strategies. Of the 15 sub-strategies, sub-strategy 2 (exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy) was the most frequently used. The excerpt below, taken from Video Clip 28, is an example of sub-strategy 2 performed by coaches.

Excerpt 1 (Video Clip 28)
B: Oh man, that was amazing! That was amazing!
Ar: Thank you!
B: I was blown away by that.
L: You put the "o" in Oh my God! Wow! Wow
       (B= Coach Bamboo; L= Coach Lea; Ar= artist)

In the above excerpt, positive politeness was realized by the two coaches through the use and repetition of the adjective (*amazing*) and interjection (*wow*), and the use of the sentences (*I was blown away by that; You put the "o" in Oh my God*). Coaches use of those structures in their utterances exaggerated their interest and approval of the artist's performance during the Blind Auditions.   Positive politeness of this kind occurred 118 times (31.13%) followed by sub-strategy 1 (notice, attend = 6.86%) such as in Excerpt 2, and sub-strategy 10 (offer promise = 6.60%) an example of which is illustrated in Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 2 (Video Clip 22)
S: Ms. Radha!
Ar: Hello!
S: Ms. Radha in the house.

Excerpt 3 (Video Clip 20)
 B: Mike (referring to auditionee), I will just guide you. You'll gonna win this. I will not change you. You will be an artist on your own.
       (S= Coach Sarah; A= Coach Apl)

Table 2. Detail of the Realization of Positive Politeness Strategies

Positive Politeness Sub-Strategies *Total Utterances for Positive Politeness = 249*	Coach Apl	Coach Bamboo	Coach Lea	Coach Sarah	Total
	f	f	f	f	
1- notice, attend	5	5	6	10	26
2- exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy	25	20	44	27	116
3- intensify interest to the addressee	4	9	4	2	19
4-use of in-group identity markers	1	6	-	1	8
5-seek agreement	1	1	1	2	5
6-avoid disagreement	-	-	-	1	1
7-presuppose/raise/assert/common ground	4	2	6	5	17

Table 2. Detail of the Realization of Positive Politeness Strategies

8- joke	4	2	-	2	8
9-convey understanding of addressee's wants	-	-	-	-	-
10- offer, promise	8	10	3	4	25
11- be optimistic	3	2	2	1	8
12-include the addressee in the activity	2	6	-	5	13
13-give or ask for reasons	-	-	-	-	-
14-assume or assert reciprocity	-	-	-	1	1
15- give gifts to the addressee (goods, sympathy, understanding)	2	-	-	-	2

Other politeness strategies were sub-strategy 3 (intensify interest to the addressee = 5.01%), sub-strategy 7 (presuppose/raise common ground = 4.49%) and sub-strategy 12 (include the addressee in the activity.

Coaches' tendency to use positive politeness strategies most frequently can be attributed to their status as celebrities or public figures who have image to maintain especially because the utterances they make in front of the viewing public can be subjected to public scrutiny too. In general, celebrities' ultimate aim is to give entertainment to the viewing public. As such, they are inclined to provide atmosphere that is relaxed and less antagonistic. In addition, they aim to safeguard their professional identities and avoid being ridiculed by the viewing public.

Negative Politeness

Detailed realization of coaches' negative politeness strategies is shown in Table 3. Of the 78 utterances classified under this type, sub-strategy 2 (use of hedges = 10.55%) was the most frequent followed by sub-strategy 5 (give deference = 5.01%) and sub-strategy 6 (apologize = 4.49%). The use of these sub-strategies can be can be attributed to Brown and Levinson's (1987) observation that deference, apologies, and hedges are the typical features of this strategy as such they are more likely to be employed by interlocutors in their utterances. Samples of coaches' utterances belonging to these sub-strategies are presented in Excerpts 4 to 6, respectively.

Excerpt 4 (Video Clip 7)

S: Bakit nga ba ako hindi umikot? Hinahanap ko lang siguro yung pagiging feminine muna sa umpisa na medyo soft muna.

(Why I did not turn for you?

Perhaps, I was just looking for the feminine side, which is a little soft, in the beginning of the song.)

Excerpt 5 (Video Clip 8)

B: Sir, anong pangalan ninyo at ilang taon na kayo?

(Sir, what is your name and how old are you?)

Ar: Hello, I'm Darryll Shy. I'm 40.

Excerpt 6 (Video Clip 3)

S: Nakikita ko po ang lungkot sa mukha ninyo at nalulungkot po ako kasi alam kopoiyong hirap ng buhay. Pasensya na po, may iba lang po kami hinanhanap.

(I can see the sadness in your face and I'm saddened because I know how challenging life is. I'm sorry, we're just looking for somebody else.)

The underlined structures in the above excerpts enable the coaches to realize the use of those sub-strategies. The use of "perhaps" in Excerpt 4 signifies hedging, "sir" in Excerpt 5 shows deference, and "I'm sorry" in Excerpt 6 marks apology.

Table 3. Detail of Realization of Negative Politeness Strategies

Negative Politeness Sub-Strategies *Total Utterances for Negative Politeness = 78*	Coach Apl	Coach Bamboo	Coach Lea	Coach Sarah	Total
	f	f	f	f	
1- perform the FTA on record	-	-	-	-	-
2- use hedges	2	2	20	16	40
3- be pessimistic	-	1	-	-	1
4-minimize the imposition	-	-	-	-	-
5-give deference	1	2	-	16	19
6-apologize	4	2	7	4	17
7-impersonalize speaker and hearer	-	-	-	1	1
8- state the FTA as a rule	-	-	-	-	-
9-nominalize	-	-	-	-	-
10- go on record	-	-	-	-	-

Coaches' high frequency of using hedges as sub-strategy in negative politeness was similar to what Tifani (2016) found in the judges of American Idol. Since celebrities have their faces to maintain in front of the camera, they use hedges to soften their words. The use of hedges helped them in giving their comments without having it appeared and sounded judgmental. Hedges too can lessen utterance's impact. Through the use of hedges, coaches allow the artist to assess the truth value on the former's statement.

Off-record

Detail of the off-record politeness strategies used by the coaches is presented in Table 4. Only five sub strategies (sub-strategy 1 give hints = 1.58%; sub-strategy 2, give clues of association = 0.26%; sub-strategy 6, use tautologies = 0.53%; sub-strategy 9, use of metaphors = 0.53%; and sub-strategy 10 = use of rhetorical questions) were used by coaches when interacting with the artists. Sample narrative showing the realization of sub-strategy 1 is presented in Excerpt 7.

Excerpt 7(Video Clip 20)

B*:   Match made in heaven…
A: I got a feeling!

L: *It's all up to you kung saang team mo gusto pumunta kung saan ka siguro matututong napakaraming matututunan.*

(It's all up to you which team you want to be part of where you think you could learn a lot of things.)

B: Yes. I agree. I agree.

L: *Kung saan ka, kasi nga yung ginagawa ni Bamboo ay ginagawa mo na eh, so meron ka na nung gusto mo.*

<u>(You're already doing what Bamboo is already doing so you already have his style.)</u>

The realization of the excerpt above for being classified as off-record politeness strategy was achieved on Coach Lea's reliance on the addressee's ability to decode and interpret her illocution. By saying that the latter is indirectly telling the artist to not consider Coach Bamboo as his coach since the style and voice he possesses are similar to what Coach Bamboo has.

Table 4. Detail of the realization of using Off-Record Strategies

Off-record Politeness Sub-Strategies *Total Utterances for Off-record Politeness = 13*	Coach Apl	Coach Bamboo	Coach Lea	Coach Sarah	Total
	f	f	f	f	
1 - give hints	-	1	4	1	6
2- give clues of association	-	-	1	-	1
3- presuppose	-	-	-	-	-
4- understate	-	-	-	-	-
5- overstate	-	-	-	-	-
6- use tautologies	-	-	2	-	2
7- use contradictions	-	-	-	-	-
8- be ironic	-	-	-	-	-
9- use metaphors	2	-	-	-	2
10- use rhetorical questions	1	-	1	-	2

Hence, the utterance of the underlined structure is an indirect way of saying to the artist that there is nothing new that he might learn should he choose Bamboo as his mentor.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), since the addressee does not abide by cooperative principle and the conversation maxims, notions of uncertainty is associated to this strategy since no single and clear illocutionary force could be attributed to the utterance. With such, this strategy relates to the Grecian notion of flouting.

Bald on-record strategy

This type is performed through direct speech acts not trying to lessen the threat as well as imposing and creating pressure on the addressee. Analysis show that all coaches employed this strategy while interacting with artists. Of the four coaches, Bamboo (4.22%) used the strategy most frequent followed by Apl (2.38%), Lea (2.11%) and Sarah (1.58%). Coaches' utterances classified in this type are shown in Excerpts 8 to 10.

Excerpt 8(Video Clip 17)

      B: It sounded to me that you are just singing like a sing-alike. It sounded too close that you are imitating the original. I need to hear your voice.

Excerpt 9(Video Clip 21)

      A: This is your first time and I needed more emotion. I mean you brought it out at the chorus part but I needed it from the beginning.

Excerpt 10 (Video Clip 24)

      L: *Kasi pati sa pagkanta eh narinig ko yung hawig ng boses mo na parangsinasadya mo yung pagkakahawig ng boses mo kay Bamboo. Pero kailangan morin hanapin iyong sarili mong boses, kung ano talaga yung sayo.*

      (Even in singing I can hear Bamboo in you. You need to look for you own voice, the one that is really yours.)

A: You lack conviction, diction and emotion.

S: You want to make hit in the business, use your own voice, have your own identity.

      Coaches fewer instances of using the bald-on record strategies can be attributed to the fact that they are reluctant in unleashing their antagonism, hence sending a message that they focus on the face needs of their addressees (Holmes 1984, Ng & Bradac, 1993 cited in Tang, 2015).

Gender and Politeness Strategies

      This part presents the results on the coaches' politeness strategies based on their genders.

Gender and Positive Politeness Strategies

      When grouped according to gender, data in Table 5 show that female coaches (129 or 34.04%) had higher frequency use of positive politeness strategies than their male counterparts (122 or 32.14%). However, with a slight difference of less than 2%, it could be said that male and female coaches employ almost the same frequency of positive politeness. Of the 15 sub-strategies under this type, male coaches employed more positive politeness in the seven sub-strategies (sub-strategy 3, intensify interest to the addressee; sub-strategy 4, use of in-group markers; sub-strategy 8, joking; sub-strategy 10, offer promise; sub-strategy 11 = optimism; sub-strategy 12 = include the addressee in the activity; and sub-strategy 15, giving gifts to addressee). Meanwhile female coaches used more politeness strategies in four sub-strategies (sub-strategy 1,

notice/attend; sub-strategy 2, exaggerate interest/approval; sub-strategy 5, seek agreement; and sub-strategy 7, presuppose/raise common ground).

Table 5. Gender and Positive Politeness

Positive Politeness Sub-Strategies *Total Utterances for Positive Politeness = 249*	Male Coaches	Female Coaches	Total
	f	f	
1- notice, attend	10	16	26
2- exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy	45	73	116
3- intensify interest to the addressee	13	6	19
4-use of in-group identity markers	7	1	8

Table 5. Gender and Positive Politeness

5-seek agreement	2	3	5
6-avoid disagreement	-	1	1
7-presuppose/raise/assert/common ground	6	11	17
8- joke	6	2	8
9-convey understanding of addressee's wants	-	-	-
10- offer, promise	18	7	25
11- be optimistic	5	3	8
12-include the addressee in the activity	8	5	13
13-give or ask for reasons	-	-	-
14-assume or assert reciprocity	-	1	1
15- give gifts to the addressee (goods, sympathy, understanding)	2	2	2

The foregoing result shows that males have higher tendencies to use in-group identity markers such as "brother", "bro", "man" and "men" than females. Another aspect that distinguishes male from female coaches is the latter's higher tendency to   joke, offer and promise, and give gifts. Female coaches, on the other hand, are marked to have higher tendency of noticing or attending to someone, and exaggerating interest or approval. The finding as regards the slight difference on the use of positive politeness strategies between two genders strengthens Holmes and Lakoff's (1978 as cited in Tang, 2015) assertion that linguistic politeness behavior does always denote powerlessness as well as Mill's (2003) dissenting opinion on the belief that females are often identified for employing politer structures than men. Male coaches' higher frequency use of positive politeness politeness strategies such as compliment, joking and reciprocity is similar to what Hobbs (2003 as cited in Aulia, 2013) found. Male coaches' sample use of sub-strategy10 is presented in Excerpt 11 and female coaches' sample realization of sub-strategy 2 is shown in Excerpt 12.

Excerpt 11(Video Clip 21)
　　A: You're now a Lord (referring to an artist/auditionee whose name is Lord) but I will turn you into a king!

Excerpt 12(Video Clip 23)
　　S: Wow! Heartfelt rendition. It was good. You sound like a very professional.

In Excerpt 11, Coach Apl's utterance "I will turn you into a king" is the realization of his promise to the artist that once the latter picked him as coach, something great and wonderful awaits. The use of interjection, adjective and comparison to a professional singer enable the utterance in Excerpt 12 to be classified as speaker's way to intensify interest to the addressee.

Gender and Negative Politeness Strategies
　　Data in Table 6 reveal that female coaches (16.89%) performed more negative politeness strategies than male coaches (3.69%). A detailed analysis of the negative politeness used by each gender shows that female coaches employed more hedges, respect/deference and apologies than their male counterparts. The said finding contradicts that of Tang (2015), who found that female judges in a talent reality show in Taiwan were

not as soft as believed and found in previous studies. Likewise, it disputes Hameed's (2010) finding that males are good in performing negative politeness strategies. However, the above finding adheres to Speer (2002 as cited in Nasution, 2015) who said that women used more apologies and hedges.

Table 6. Gender and Negative Politeness

Negative Politeness Sub-Strategies *Total Utterances for Negative Politeness = 78*	Male Coaches	Female Coaches	Total
	f	f	
1- perform the FTA on record	-	-	-
2- use hedges	4	36	40
3- be pessimistic	-	-	-
4-minimize the imposition	-	-	-
5-give deference	3	16	19
6-apologize	6	11	17
7-impersonalize speaker and hearer	-	1	1
8- state the FTA as a rule	-	-	-
9-nominalize	-	-	-
10- go on record	-	-	-

Gender and Off-Record Strategies

Off-record strategies were performed more often by female coaches as revealed in Table 7. Of the total 12 utterances classified to this type, 8 utterances came from female coaches.

Table 7. Gender and Off-Record Strategies

Off-record Sub-Strategies *Total Utterances for Off-record = 13*	Male Coaches	Female Coaches	Total
	f	f	
1 - give hints	1	5	6
2- give clues of association	1	-	1
3- presuppose	-	-	-
4- understate	-	-	-
5- overstate	-	-	-
6- use tautologies	-	2	2
7- use contradictions	-	-	-
8- be ironic	-	-	-
9- use metaphors	2	-	2
10- use rhetorical questions	1	1	2

Female coaches used sub-strategies 1 (give hints), 6 (use tautologies), and 2 (give clues of association) more often than male coaches who preferred sub-strategy 9 (use of metaphors).

Gender and Bald Strategies

As revealed in Table 8, male coaches performed more bald strategies. This is in line to what Trudgill mentioned that women's speech is expected to be less aggressive (Hameed, 2010).

Exposure to Western Culture and Politeness Strategies

Culture to which the communicators belong to attributes to the differences in communication behavior. While all the coaches are Filipinos, they have different degree of exposure to the Western culture. Table 9 shows the degree of coaches' exposure to Western culture and the frequency of using politeness strategies.

For positive politeness, coaches who have average to high exposure to Western culture performed more positive politeness strategies compared to the coach who has low exposure to Western culture. Similar trend was discovered when bald on-record and off-record strategies are considered. However, result was different when negative politeness strategies are considered since analysis of the corpus shows that the coach with low exposure to Western culture performed more negative politeness strategies than those who have average to very high exposure to the western culture.

Results on positive and negative politeness strategies vis-a-vis exposure to Western culture conform to what Brown and Levinson (1987) observed that American culture is generally referred to as a culture highly utilizing positive politeness, while Asian culture like that of the Japanese is often referred to as a prototypical negative face culture with a strong emphasis on indirectness and politeness in interpersonal communication. The use of more bald-on record strategies of coaches with average to very high exposure to Western culture can be related to the knowledge that Westerners are considered to be more direct than Asians (Sifianou, 1997 as cited in Huggins, 2014).

Table 8. Gender and Bald on-record Strategies

Off-record Sub-Strategies Total Utterances for Off-record = 39	Male Coaches	Female Coaches	Total
	f	f	
Bald on-record strategies	25	14	39

Table 9. Coaches' Degree of Exposure to Western Culture vis-a-vis Use of Politeness Strategies Interaction of Culture and Politeness Strategies

Coaches and exposure to Western Culture	Positive Politeness		Negative Politeness		Bald on-record		Off-record		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Very High (Apl)	59	15.57	7	1.85	9	2.38	3	0.79	78	20.58
High (Leah)	66	17.41	27	7.12	8	2.11	8	2.11	109	28.76
Average (Bamboo)	63	16.62	7	1.85	16	4.22	1	0.26	87	22.96
Low (Sarah)	61	16.12	37	9.76	6	1.58	1	0.26	105	27.70
Total	249	65.70	78	20.58	39	10.29	13	3.43	379	100

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Filipinos' appreciation for talents and fondness in seeing success stories on contestants' journey from audition, elimination up to stardom have driven the country's leading television networks to venture more on producing and franchising talent-search shows. For a number of years, talent shows have changed not only the viewing preferences of Filipinos but most especially in introducing new faces in the entertainment industry. Aside from the aspirants' showcase of talents, celebrity judges/coaches' comments after each talent rendition have added spice and color to a talent show. TV talent shows producers attribute audiences' warm acceptance to these show genres to judges or coaches' comments. Coaches' comments could be in the form of appreciation, congratulations, suggestions and even critical examination on their performance. The present study aimed at describing the politeness strategies employed by The Voice of the Philippines' coaches. Gender and exposure to Western culture were two factors identified to influence the politeness strategies performed by the coaches. The corpus composed of 30 Blind Auditions video clips randomly selected from YouTube. Results show that the coaches performed positive politeness (66.23%), negative politeness (20.58%), bald on-record (10.29%) and off-record (3.43%).

In a television platform, which is considered as public situation, there is a need for individuals (such as celebrities, guests, contestants) to maintain self-esteem in front of the camera and the viewing public in general. In a talent show, viewers' entertainment should come side by side with polite treatment to contestants. Brown and Levinson (1987) view positive politeness as approached-based aiming to show that the speaker's wants are to some extent related to hearer's wants (Hayati, 2015). It is believed that positive politeness establishes common ground or familiar situation between the speaker and addressee, hence breaking the formal conversation through minimizing speaker and addressee's distance.

The format, concept, nature of a television talent show in general and the position of artists or contestants in particular, require coaches or judges to frequently employ positive politeness strategy to make the addressee still feel good about himself in spite of the comments they receive based on their performance or rendition. Positive politeness aims to establish a friendly and non-confrontation atmosphere.

Joking, as sub-strategy in positive politeness, is used to manipulate the social and psychosocial distances between the participants and to minimize and satisfy the positive face of the individuals. In the corpus, it was found that instances of joking do not only intend to make people laugh but an act to build solidarity.

To ensure that coaches or judges' image will be maintained and to avoid contestant's faces of being imposed upon, hedging is used by the judges. As Tifani (2016) mentioned, the easiest way to ensure that the contestants' face would not be imposed upon hedging is used. It could also lessen the impacts of the judgments and can make the contestants feel comfortable when they are judged.

Talent search show like The Voice of the Philippines does not only intend to look for the next singing superstars but also to help the contestants to improve on their crafts. Having such notion in mind, it has become inevitable for coaches not to perform bald on-record strategy on their aim to unleash the best out of the contestant. Another reason for performing this type is for the coaches to show concern to the contestant by letting the latter feel that they are family. Hence, there is a mutual understanding as regards coaches' responsibilities in guiding and making contestants aware of what they should be incorporating for their performances to improve and make good in their chosen career. From this point, the use of bald on-record strategy aims to ensure that message will come across to the addressee clearly (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

In a television discourse, it was found that bald on-record strategy, is preferred over off-record strategy since the latter requires more effort and time to process. Hence, in one's aim to effectively and efficiently send the message to the addressee, bald-on record strategy is employed. Since the use of such strategy is inevitable, it is suggested that celebrity judges or coaches must first let the addressee feel where they are coming from and that they are concerned to the contestants and that the only reason why they have to comment using bald on-record strategy is to help contestants improve on their craft and not to ridicule nor embarrassed them in the public.

As regards gender and positive politeness strategies, it could be said that male and female do not differ much on the use of this strategy. This strengthens the assertions of Holmer and Lakoff (1975), and Mills (2003) that gender difference in positive politeness are just personal assessment and not based on truth. On the analysis of the corpus it was found that what accounts for the gender difference is on the male and female preference on the use of the sub-strategies. Off-record and negative politeness strategies were frequently performed by female coaches, while bald on-record strategies were preferred by male coaches.

In terms of degree of exposure to Western culture and politeness strategies performed, it was found that coaches who have average to very high exposure to Western culture use more positive, bald-on record and off-record politeness strategies than the coach who has low exposure to Western culture who would employ more negative politeness strategies in the utterances. The differences on the kind of politeness strategies in relation to exposure to Western culture strengthens the widely accepted truth that politeness is a reflection of a specific cultural values

In future research, looking at the relationship of politeness strategies to age variable might be worth exploring. Politeness strategies employed by judges/coaches in a talent show to their fellow judges/coaches might also be looked at.

In closing, it is worth reiterating that with the influence and status celebrities have there come along with greater responsibility of how to serve as role models to the viewing public by displaying polite behavior that are worthy of emulating. Television has formed parts of every household and because of the integral part it plays to our everyday life, we think that it is now impossible to live without it. Aside from information, entertainment and the comfort television provides, it also shapes and influences the way people think to some extent.

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