



Critical Discourse Analysis of Intercultural Communication through the Lens of Multiculturality and Interraciality

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Abstract: Recent research on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has focused on the identity construction of agents within discourse. This study delves into intercultural communication through the lens of multiculturalism and interraciality. Employing the CDA framework, the research investigates how online Filipino Chinese writers construct their identities and those of their readers, examining the dynamics of dominance and subordination in selected intercultural discourse. The study is guided by three central questions: how online intercultural writers position themselves in terms of their social identities, how the relationship between the writer and readers is linguistically realized, and how the representations and relationships of the writer and reader manifest in terms of discursive strategies. By concentrating on identity construction through the analysis of linguistic items, the study offers critical discourse analysis an alternative method for unveiling power and dominance in written texts. Furthermore, the examination of discursive strategies allows this CDA study to perceive texts as dual in nature, serving not only as a means for writers to influence their readers but also as instruments to endorse ostensibly positive values. In conclusion, the study presents an approach for analyzing intercultural discourse, enriching the field of CDA with a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between writer, reader, and text within the rich tapestry of intercultural communication.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Critical Discourse Analysis, Hegemony, Chinese Filipinos, Social Media

1. Introduction

Intercultural discourse, derived from intercultural communication (Gudykunst, 2003; Croucher et al., 2015), henceforth referred to as IC, primarily deals with how individuals from different countries and diverse cultural backgrounds behave, interact, and perceive the world around them. The study of IC focuses on scenarios and discourses where people from varied cultural backgrounds engage with each other. A topic of interest among linguistic scholars in the analysis of IC is the examination of how writers construct their identity within their discourse. An examination of intercultural discourse, with a focus on agents' identity construction, may be approached using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Here, 'agents' refer to the writers of intercultural texts and the readers engaging with these texts. CDA scrutinizes texts to determine the use of language by writers to further their own agendas and influence readers' perceptions to align with the intended portrayal. These aims range from simple objectives, like prompting the readers to take specific actions, to more complex ones, such as expressing ideologies or representing the writers' identities through discourse. Krisagbedo et al. (2021) note that manipulation in discourse has both positive and negative implications. Positively, it is perceived as persuasion, encouraging people to process information and make decisions based on personal assessment. Negatively, it implies domination (p. 843).

In the current multicultural environment, it is increasingly common for writers to have mixed origins. Termed interracial writers (Nemoto, 2009), they often use English—a global language (Rao, 2019)—as the medium of communication in their texts. A pertinent question arises in this context: given the mixed origins of these writers and the added complexity of using English, which aspect of their identity is emphasized more in their discourse? This question also seeks to uncover "the play of dominant dominated" within intercultural discourse. This inquiry is vital for two reasons. First, it challenges the traditional notion of identity, which seeks to trace the inner psyche of an individual, by recognizing the emergence of a modern understanding of social and collective identity (Benwell & Stokoe, 2007) as expressed through language. Second, as Coulmas (2005) suggests, the same language can serve varying functions as the vehicle of group identity (p. 175). The considerations mentioned above fall squarely within the realm of intercultural discourse.

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2. Literature Review

Intercultural communication intersects diverse fields such as anthropology, cultural studies, linguistics, psychology, and communication studies. Research on intercultural discourse includes studies on Indian English (de Ramos, 2019; Mehrotra, 1998), as well as Chinese English and American English (Liu, 2007), which investigate how cultural orientation and first language influence second-language writing. In linguistics, Scollon, Tsang, Li, Yung, and Jones (1997) conducted research on how bilingual university students in Hong Kong represent voices and appropriate those voices in their writing. They maintain that all texts are dialogic in nature, utilizing multiple voices. The study's questions were aimed at identifying the dominant voice in the texts, determining the voice's origins, understanding the historical, cultural, and social practices embedded in the voice, and pinpointing linguistic mechanisms utilized for representing voicing and appropriation. 'Voice,' as referred to by Scollon, Tsang, Li, Yung, and Jones (1997), pertains to the amalgamation of three notions: firstly, the personal voice owned by the writer; secondly, the voice reflecting the writer's uniqueness; and thirdly, the voice that portrays the ideological stance of the writer. To explore this, they had 60 Hong Kong Chinese students write three personal letters in response to varied prompts that called for the adoption of different generational voices and viewpoints concerning the future of Hong Kong. Their findings exposed polyvocality within the letters, revealing the incorporation of the voices of both the fictionalized authors and readers, as well as a third voice representing the students' insertion of external citations. Discourse representation within the students' letters was indicated by marked boundaries such as direct and indirect quotations and scare quotes, alongside unmarked boundaries including presupposition, negation, hedging, irony, and paraphrase, following Fairclough's (1992) concept of discourse representation.

Dumanig's (2010) dissertation investigates the language preference of Filipino-Malaysian couples in interracial marriages within the home domain and the influences of ethnicity, gender, and first language on language choice. With a demographic profile constructed for 60 couples of Filipino-Malay, Filipino-Malaysian Chinese, and Filipino-Malaysian Indian descent, Dumanig employed both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. His findings highlighted a preference for English usage in domestic interactions, with instances of code-switching to first languages and the implementation of other linguistic strategies. The study concluded that language choice is affected by factors such as ethnicity, gender, and first language.

Rucker (2011) scrutinized how three U.S. newspapers and weblogs construct discourses about race, mixed race, and racism, focusing on key moments related to President Obama's mixed-race identity and the public's perception of racial identity. Ideological criticism and framing analysis identified three primary frames—race, dialogue, and history—in the news articles, while awareness, personalization, and racism were predominant in the blogs. These findings confront ideologies concerning "the invisibility of Whiteness, the Black and White binary, and the erasure of racial identity" (pp.115–117).

Kim and Lee (2020) applied Fairclough's method of CDA to analyze Korean texts, namely textbooks designed for international and foreign students learning Korean. The analysis uncovered social and cultural biases, including the promotion of gender stereotypes.

The review illustrates the dynamism and variability within the realms of intercultural communication, identity construction, and critical discourse analysis. Studies reveal language's dynamic nature, showing that language users' peculiarities continually yield intriguing results. Variability is also reflected in these studies, affected by multiple variables like age, gender, ethnic origin, and culture. Nevertheless, the intersection of these variables often centers around themes of dominance and power, given language's inherent lack of neutrality (Fiske, 1994), especially in written texts by intercultural writers of mixed ethnicity, where the issue of dominance is not limited to the social participants but extends to the predominant identities the writers convey.

The present study analyzed how Filipino-Chinese writers construct identities in intercultural texts via CDA. It hypothesized that Chinese Filipino writers in online business newsletters craft their language to present positive identities, positioning readers to foster favorable relations. The study posited that linguistic strategies reveal how intercultural discourse shapes online media agents' identities. Furthermore, the analysis of power and dominance is significant, indicating that active participants in the discourse command power, making the interplay of dominance-relative. The research sought to answer three key questions related to the social identity of Chinese Filipino intercultural writers, the linguistic realization of writer-reader relationships, and the manifestation of dominant-dominated dynamics in online intercultural periodicals.

Examination of identity construction is realized through the utilization of different approaches. According to Bakhtin (1981) and Weigand, (2015), identity construction is dialogic in nature. He postulated that identity is not simply a personal characteristic of an individual or the self, but rather a function of shared interaction within the community where the individual operates. This same notion of identity construction was put forth by Tappan (2000), who further proposed a sociocultural approach to account for identity formation. In his article, he examined how moral identity is reconstructed in the autobiography of Ingo Hasselbach, the founder of the National Alternative Neo-Nazi Party in eastern Germany. Employing a sociocultural dimension of analyzing identity formation, Tappan (2000) established that moral identity is never static and that an individual's moral actions are influenced by the surrounding sociocultural context. This was substantiated by scrutinizing Hasselbach's autobiographical recounting of his childhood, his growth years, his Neo-Nazi orientation, and his ultimate renunciation of that ideology.

Benwell & Stokoe (2007) take an integrated approach to studying identity construction. Although, in their scholarly work, they acknowledge the soundness of defining identity categories such as relational, ethnic, gender, and analyzing these categories from different perspectives—such as narrative approaches (Dahl & Thor, 2009), social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982), and psychoanalysis (Freud, 1927)—they formulated a new dimension for examining identity construction. Their research work suggests analyzing identity according to a wide array of discourse contexts, including institutional settings, commodified contexts, virtual environments, spatial locations, and everyday conversations (p. 5).

Another study on identity construction (Dahl & Thor, 2009) proposed merging two perspectives—social constructivism theory and oral history—into one methodological framework for examining agents' identity construction. In their study, they posit that the agents' (interviewees') construction of identity is influenced by various factors, such as the interviewers conducting the interview, the different situations the interviewees wish to disclose, and the contexts in which the interview is situated—shaped by the interviewers' objectives and the interviewees' assumptions about the purpose of the interview.

Another scholar of identity construction, Tracy (2002), provides a different perspective on analyzing identity. She advocates that oral texts can be examined by paying close attention to the selection of words in everyday speech and how this selection is governed by the cultural patterns and processes ingrained within the cultural makeup of individuals.

The studies on intercultural communication, identity construction, and critical discourse analysis reflect the dynamism and variability inherent in these fields. Dynamism is evident as the focus of these studies is on language, which inherently possesses dynamic properties. Thus, the findings from these fields are continually yielding intriguing insights based on the unique characteristics of language users. Regarding variability, it is apparent that studies in intercultural communication, identity construction, and critical discourse analysis are shaped by a multitude of variables that researchers employ (Sierra-Huedo & Foucart, 2022; Chudnovskaya & Millette, 2023). These variables, such as age, gender, ethnic origin, culture, status, and others, have been utilized in prior research to explain or understand phenomena under investigation. Nonetheless, the convergence point among the variables used in the discussed studies is the issue of dominance and power. As previously established, language is never neutral (Fiske, 1994), as demonstrated by the typical CDA of written texts produced by writers from a single ethnicity. This aspect of non-neutrality is even more pronounced when the writers are of mixed races, where the issues of dominance and power extend beyond the social participants—writers and readers—of the texts to the dominant identities that intercultural writers are portraying.

In the present study, I explored how writers of intercultural texts in the Philippines construct their identities and those of their readers, using the lens of CDA. The study hypothesizes that Chinese Filipino writers, authoring articles for Chinese Business online newsletters, carefully craft their language to present a positive identity. Consequently, intercultural writers, having crafted positive representations of their ethnic group, position their readers in ways that establish favourable relationships. I contend that the linguistic strategies, once unraveled, will reveal how intercultural discourse constructs the identities of intercultural agents—writers and readers—in online news media. Furthermore, I assert that unraveling the identities of the writers, as manifested through language, initiates further analysis of power and dominance, indicating that the active participant in discourse is the locus of power. In other words, the interplay of dominance and submission is relative. Given the specific research orientation identified, the study aimed to answer three questions:

- How do online Chinese Filipino intercultural writers position themselves in terms of social identity?
- How is the relation between writer and reader realized linguistically in online intercultural periodicals?
- How is the play of dominant-dominated acted out in the relationships of writer and reader in the online intercultural periodicals?

2.1. Theoretical Framework

In Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), terms like manipulation, text structure, hegemony, and technologization of discourse are frequently employed by analysts to elucidate the concealed meanings behind the writers' choice of words. These terms have definitive relevance to this study. The concept of manipulation, as van Dijk (2006) posits, is anchored in the interplay among society, cognition, and discourse. Firstly, within society, manipulation fosters social inequality. Secondly, it involves mind control, thus impinging on the mental processes of those manipulated. Thirdly, the manipulator utilizes discourse as a vehicle to disseminate manipulative activities and advance their ideological stance. Grasping this triangulation of elements is crucial for a critical understanding that the manipulated, by altering their mindset and acting upon their condition, can ascend to the role of manipulators. This role reversal signifies that once the manipulated become text producers and exercise mind control over their readers—who were the initial manipulators—they can reclaim control and power, primarily because discourse is the instrument of manipulation.

Fairclough's (1989) notion of structure incorporates various philosophical and political schools of thought to elucidate how ideologies are constructed through language. He details how ideologies embedded in language are shaped by the structure of the text and the unfolding events within the discourse. This shaping of ideology by structures and events sets expectations for the reader (Charles & Bradley, 2002). Likewise, linguistic structures

instill expectations in the discourse analyst regarding the meaning-making potential of a text, as these structures delve into linguistic elements like semantics and syntax.

The study focused on news media as a form of news discourse, which are publications often specializing in a particular topic and presenting brief news pieces. News media serve as an influential communication tool, especially for organization members or business affiliates, keeping them informed about internal news and activities. The coverage of news media spans various topics, including politics, finance, and events both past and forthcoming.

Gramsci, 1971 as cited in van Dijk (1993) and Weigand, (2015), introduces the concept of hegemony as a form of subtle dominance that manipulates the minds of the dominated, causing them to accept and legitimize the dominator's control. This hegemonic manipulation is precarious, as even with a clear target of domination, objection is not inevitable unless that dominance is challenged. For instance, the dominance of Whites over Blacks or males over females may be ingrained as background knowledge until contested by the notions of racism and feminism, respectively. Herein lies the value of CDA: it fosters the emergence of new concepts that challenge established ones.

The current study examined the identity construction of selected intercultural writers through the CDA lens. CDA scholars assert that texts, both written and spoken, hold more meaning than meets the eye, revealing the discursive roots of power, dominance, inequality, and bias, and how these elements are enacted, perpetuated, and transformed within society. As society is context-bound, the texts it reproduces embody specific socio-economic, political, and historical contexts.

The study also delved into news media as a form of discourse, noting that typical newsletters cover a breadth of topics intended to update affiliates on internal happenings. Benwell and Stokoe (2007) maintain that CDA regards identity in language as a semantic component, as outlined by Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which described three metafunctions of meaning within texts—ideational, interpersonal, and textual. However, in their view, identity can be dissected by examining three textual elements: the writers, the relationship between texts and readers, and the expressive dimension, revealing writers' attitudes and ideologies (Fairclough, 1989). Identity as representation in language is how writers envision being perceived by readers, akin to the ideational metafunction, and can be analyzed by examining aspects like transitivity and metaphor. Identity as relation, or positioning, analogous to the interpersonal metafunction, examines how text language constructs reader identities through features like pronoun usage. Lastly, identity as expression, which reflects the textual metafunction, delves into how writers and readers interact and how language expresses evaluative positions, with focus areas including modality and attitudinal vocabulary.

3. Methodology

The Filipino Chinese community was selected based on their prominence and apparent influence in Philippine society. They have been around as early as the Spanish times in the Philippines when they were referred to as *Sangleyes* or frequent visitors (See, 1997; Chu, 2022). To date, there are about 1.3 million Chinese Filipinos in the Philippines.

The Chinese Filipino writers of the business articles of the online news stories are members of their intercultural community because they are a product of mixed marriages. They are classified as mestizos because they are the children of parents who are not full Filipinos. Their parents have Chinese ethnicity but have chosen the country as their place of residence and have married Filipinos in the Philippines. Chinese Filipino writers are termed such because they are a mixture of Filipino and Chinese races. In the second category, the ethnic Chinese residing in the Philippines are known as Filipino Chinese.

The study covers the electronic news media from the intercultural community of Chinese Filipinos. *China Business Philippines Online* is the official homepage of China Business – Philippines, a monthly magazine that is published in English. The articles from this magazine were selected to form the cover features of its online newsletter counterpart. China Business - Philippines is the flagship publication of Fairnews Media Inc. which holds its office in the north of Manila. It has been publishing electronically news covering the Chinese Filipino community in the Philippines since 2007. Its regular columnists are mostly Chinese Filipinos or the mestizos.

The *chinabusinessphilippines.com* showcases events, businesses, and food in as much as these aspects relate to the Chinese Filipinos or the Chinese mestizos in the Philippines. The twenty-four business articles were taken from different sections of the newsletter like the cover feature, investment update, rev up, consumer update, cuisine, gabfest, as well as the environment. These sections were chosen since they highlighted certain business topics and themes. In addition, the business articles that formed the corpus were selected only if they contained reference to the word Philippines. The rationale behind this criterion is that other articles in the selected online intercultural news media also cover business-related topics concerning other countries or personalities outside the Philippines.

There are no full-time writers. Most part-time writers are Chinese Filipinos, who write for the publication but have professional employment. Most of the writers are Millennials (between 1981 and 1994), while a few are Gen Xers (between 1965 and 1980).

In this study, all articles were numbered based on the order of their publication and were coded sequentially with the numbers 1 – 24 for easy reference. Twenty-four business articles make up the data for the online *China*

Business Philippines newsletter. The coding CHB was given to the newsletter. This is followed by the number of each of the twenty-four articles.

Using SFL, this study examined the articles in representative issues of the Chinese Filipino newsletter at the clausal level. Analysis at the clausal level determined construction in terms of the modal verbal operators (MVOs) and the voice types (VOs) that are predominant in the texts. For instance, the independent clause 'one time, our brand of coconut oil was discontinued due to constant production breakdowns' is set in the passive construction that downplays the agent responsible for the discontinuation of the supply of coconut oil. The clause therefore forces the reader to focus on the event rather than the agent that caused the event. In another clause, the action performed by the pronoun *me* (Chinese Filipino) in the article is given prominence as the active construction in 'the values I learned from my parents—plus my business acumen—are the secrets of my staying power in the industry.' What the construction highlights is the image of a shrewd individual adept at dealing with matters related to business. To determine the manner relation is constructed and maintained in the newsletters, a frequency count of the words that fall under the categories of personal pronouns (PP) and mood element (ME) was done. Then, the messages represented in the texts and the PP were analyzed further to realize how the newsletters position their readers in light of how the intercultural writers view themselves.

4. Results and Discussion

The presence of the Modal Verbal Operator (MVO) 'will' reveals three identity frames among the Chinese Filipino intercultural writers in the Philippines writing for online news media. From an in-depth analysis of clauses containing 'will' in articles from the 'China Business Philippines' newsletter, these writers emerge as shrewd analysts, strategists, and certainty seekers.

4.1. Linguistic Strategies

Table 1 displays the frequency of Modal Verbal Operators (MVOs) in the 24 articles from the studied online intercultural news media in the Philippines. The MVO 'will' appears with the highest frequency at 91 instances for 'China Business'. Following in density is its past form, 'would', occurring 32 times, and then 'can'. The other six MVOs examined—'could', 'may', 'should', 'must', 'might', and 'shall'—showed minimal or negligible occurrences.

Table 1: Summary of MVOs and their Percentages of Signaled Relations in the 24 Articles of the Chinese Filipino Newsletters in the Philippines

| MVOs | # of Times Present | # of Signaled Relations |
|--------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| will | 91 | 49.46 |
| can | 25 | 13.59 |
| must | 8 | 4.35 |
| may | 8 | 4.35 |
| would | 32 | 17.39 |
| could | 15 | 8.15 |
| shall | 0 | 0.0 |
| might | 2 | 1.08 |
| should | 3 | 1.63 |
| Total | 184 | 100 |

Source: China Business Philippines Online (2009-2012). chinabusinessphilippines.com

4.1.1. The Chinese Filipino Writers as Shrewd Analysts

The MVO 'will' conveys the writers' authority after presenting logical arguments systematically. Thus, the use of 'will' constructs an image of the Chinese Filipino community as shrewd analysts in the country's business affairs. Article nine opens with a definitive clause positioning the writer's confident assessment of the mining industry's potential in the Philippines as both a business venture and an investment opportunity. Despite a subsequent interrogative clause that seems to contradict the initial statement, this is merely a rhetorical device inviting the reader to consider the mining industry's prospects. This is supported by historical references to the Philippines' rich gold deposits, establishing the country's mining significance. In CHB9, an expert's projection about the industry's future serves as a credible response to the hypothetical query posed earlier. The use of 'will' in this context crafts an authoritative identity, particularly regarding business acumen—a domain in which the Chinese Filipino are known to excel. A similar depiction of business savvy is evident in CHB13, which laments the plight of contractual workers and criticizes traditional politics while calling for a morally upright president to steer the country away from corruption.

Examples from the text:

- (CHB9) "Chamber of Mines of the Philippines President Benjamin Romualdez said the country will see US \$1.5 billion in investments this year."
- (CHB13) "While short-term employment is enabled, the quick turnover of contractual workers virtually ensures that they do not develop their skills and will remain stuck in the cycle of contractual employment."

The articles portray Chinese Filipino writers as quick to analyze business-related eventualities, but such assessments are always grounded in plausible scenarios:

- (CHB6) "Sanez is optimistic that the immediate feedback and test result turnaround will greatly benefit the academy in improving their curriculum, thus enlarging the window of opportunity in the industry for students."
- (CHB20) "By the time the Jollibee buy-in is finalized, the Chinese food chain will have set up five additional outlets."
- (CHB23) "Exporting to Europe, America, and Japan means they are advanced in quality standards and will comply with customer expectations."

4.1.2. The Chinese Filipino Writers as Strategists

The MVO 'will' positions Chinese Filipino writers as proactive contributors to the subjects they address. They first outline key issues in their articles and then highlight actions taken by involved parties to resolve these issues. 'Will' is employed as a decisive effort to assuage any fears harbored by their readers. In CHB9, for instance, the MVO 'will' characterizes the writers and, by extension, the Chinese Filipino community, as strategists intent on addressing the mining industry's future. The writer, channeling the perspective of the DENR Mines and Geosciences Bureau, zeroes in on the bureau's planned interventions. CHB12 discusses the safeguarding of minors from online casinos, assuring guardians through MVO use that access will be tightly controlled. CHB14 foretells an almost impossible prospect for electoral fraud, backed by stringent safeguards and transparent processes. These articles collectively illustrate the strategic mindset attributed to the Chinese Filipino, with a focus on analytical foresight and sound investment practices, such as in CHB20, where Jollibee's international expansion is detailed as a calculated move by Chinese Filipino business leaders.

Examples from the text:

- (CHB9) "The bureau will then check the legitimacy of both parties."
- (CHB12) "Identification cards will be issued upon registration, ensuring that minors will find it hard to gain access to a PEGS café."
- (CHB14) "With safeguards in place, political operators will find it near impossible to cheat."
- (CHB20) "By the time the Jollibee buy-in is finalized, the Chinese food chain will have established five additional outlets."

4.1.3. Chinese Filipino Writers as Certainty Seekers

Note that the writers employ general references to an authority and a combination of tentative verbs in their clauses if they express uncertainty over some declarations of facts or events. Hence, these Chinese Filipino writers cite statements from other sources but remain indefinite about naming them because they themselves do not fully subscribe to these perceptions. In this way, their earlier representation of themselves as being logical remains untarnished since they are merely reporting the opinions of others. In an earlier statement in the tenth article, the writer mentions the Department of Tourism (DOT) leveraging the concept of "health and wellness" as a marketing strategy to attract foreigners to the Philippines. The writer, endorsing this strategy, lists top hospitals in Manila as examples of providing quality service that caters to both the medical and comfort needs of foreign patients. It then becomes surprising for the writer to follow up with the announcements in (CHB10), suggesting that this strategy is still in the planning stages rather than being fully implemented. This apparent inconsistency could detract from the earlier depiction of astuteness for which the Chinese Filipinos are known. To resolve this, the writer uses a tentative verb followed by the MVO 'will' to indicate that although this statement is included in the article, its truth is not claimed by the writer, as it is merely a report of an authority's statement. Moreover, to ensure readers understand that this illogicality does not originate from the writer, a simplistic cause-effect solution proposed by the DOT is reiterated immediately after.

Table 2 below summarizes the VO types in the news media examined. The data supports the findings on the identities revealed through the use of 'will'. Findings show that intercultural writers display a strong tendency to feature agents or doers of action as subjects in their clauses. This preference for active over passive construction underscores the intercultural writers' inclination for tangible outcomes rather than abstract concepts, as demonstrated by the high average turnout of active voice construction in the Chinese Filipino newsletters at 95.7%.

Table 2: Summary of VO Types used in CHB Philippines

| AN | VO /A | % | VO/P | % | TS |
|----|-------|-------|------|------|-----|
| 1 | 44 | 100 | 0 | 7 | 70 |
| 2 | 54 | 98.18 | 1 | 1.82 | 55 |
| 3 | 135 | 99.3 | 1 | 0.7 | 136 |
| 4 | 87 | 96.7 | 3 | 3.3 | 90 |
| 5 | 12 | 85.7 | 2 | 14.3 | 14 |
| 6 | 24 | 80 | 6 | 20 | 30 |
| 7 | 35 | 85.4 | 6 | 14.6 | 41 |
| 8 | 28 | 90.3 | 3 | 9.7 | 31 |
| 9 | 48 | 87.3 | 7 | 12.7 | 55 |

| AN | VO/A | % | VO/P | % | TS |
|-----|------|-------|------|------|-----|
| 10 | 76 | 95 | 4 | 5.0 | 80 |
| 11 | 37 | 92.5 | 3 | 7.5 | 40 |
| 12 | 32 | 97 | 1 | 3.0 | 33 |
| 13 | 34 | 91.9 | 3 | 8.1 | 37 |
| 14 | 37 | 92.5 | 3 | 7.5 | 40 |
| 15 | 46 | 100 | 0 | 0.0 | 46 |
| 16 | 11 | 100 | 0 | 0.0 | 11 |
| 17 | 53 | 98.1 | 1 | 1.9 | 54 |
| 18 | 37 | 86 | 6 | 40 | 43 |
| 19 | 42 | 87.5 | 6 | 12.5 | 48 |
| 20 | 47 | 97.9 | 1 | 2.1 | 48 |
| 21 | 36 | 97.1 | 1 | 2.9 | 37 |
| 22 | 33 | 91.7 | 3 | 8.3 | 36 |
| 23 | 100 | 100 | 0 | 0.0 | 100 |
| 24 | 55 | 93.2 | 1 | 1.8 | 56 |
| AVE | | 93.47 | | 6.53 | |
| | | > | | > | |

AN – Article Number

VOA – Active Voice

VOP – Passive Voice

TS – Total Number of Sentences

Source China Business Philippines Online (2009-2012). chinabusinessphilippines.com

4.2. Linguistic Realization of the Relation Between Reader and Writer in Online Intercultural News Stories

This section determines the target readership of the news stories and examines how social identities impress upon the readers' minds, as well as how readers' identities are perceived and presented.

For the online intercultural periodicals, the primary and secondary target readers, deemed recipients of the writers' messages, are cast as confidants, especially for the Chinese Filipino media. Readers' roles are shaped by personal pronouns and mood elements, creating mental models that influence their social cognition. While the intricacies of internal acceptance of social identities placed upon readers by writers remain elusive, consistent exposure to certain social categories in written texts can stabilize these identities within readers' self-concept. Although readers are positioned to passively absorb a wealth of information, their portrayal by insightful intercultural writers is pivotal.

Textual analysis reveals writers' perceptions of their readers, highlighted by the usage of pronouns and mood framing. An examination of 24 articles utilized personal pronouns to signify the writers' perceived proximity to their audience.

Table 3 provides a frequency count of personal pronouns across 24 articles from ChinesePhilippines.com. The data underscores the frequent use of the first-person plural pronoun "we," doubling the occurrence of the singular "I," which ranks second for Chinese Filipino media. The second and third-person pronouns show less significant variation in prevalence.

Table 3: Summary of PP and Their Signaled Relations in the 24 articles of the Chinese Filipino Newsletters in the Philippines

| Personal Pronouns | CHB | % |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| A. First | | |
| I | 49 | 16.39 |
| We | 99 | 33.11 |
| Me | 5 | 1.67 |
| Our | 40 | 13.38 |
| My | 19 | 6.35 |
| Us | 10 | 3.34 |
| B. Second | | |
| You(s) | 41 | 13.71 |
| (p) | 20 | 6.69 |
| Your(s) | 10 | 3.34 |
| (p) | 6 | 2.0 |
| Total | 299 | 99.98 |

Source: China Business Philippines Online (2009-2012). chinabusinessphilippines.com

The given data suggests how readers are positioned in the periodicals. It will be remembered that the periodical examination caters primarily to members of their communities in the Philippines. The secondary target readers are

those outside the Philippines or other readers who belong to other intercultural origins and have access to or interest in reading their articles. The first-person pronoun refers to the voice the writers assume upon writing the articles they have been assigned. Writers, using the 'I' personal pronoun, may recount their personal experience to create more impact and to draw the readers into the message of their articles. On the other hand, the second-person pronoun refers to the readers the writers are addressing. However, in the examined news media, the personal pronouns represent more than what has been assumed. These personal pronouns serve as linguistic tools used by writers to manipulate readers into claiming the roles that these writers have positioned them in.

In instances where there are direct quotes, as in CHB2 and CHB22, the intercultural writers lend a touch of reality to the subjects they write about. In the second article, the writer brings the experience and disciplined life of a Filipino Chinese businessperson to the reader's consciousness, not only by narrating his life story but also by inserting direct quotes from the article. Using the pronoun 'I' can shorten the gap between the reader and the subject of the article. This is the same effect achieved by the 'I' in CHB22, where the writer uses the voice of an authority in jewelry design as this writer inserts direct quotes from the expert. The purpose of shortening the gap between the reader and the subject of the article is intended to put the image of the Chinese Filipinos in a favorable light so that the reader now views them with approval and admiration. There is a note of informality in the tone projected in CHB23 and CHB24. The writers of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth articles capitalize on this note of informality, once again, to build a closer relationship with the reader. This informality somehow forces the reader to accept, understand, and appreciate why Chinese Filipino businesspeople deal with their customers and employees in a manner that sometimes warrants their disapproval.

36 "If I'm doing my job, I need you to tell me whether I'm doing good or not. 37 That's the first part of leadership." (CHB2) 20 Asked why she decided to return to her origins as a jewelry designer, Pamintuan replies, "I have always been interested in designing jewelry. 21 Despite my seeming preoccupation with furniture and sculpture, I kept making jewelry pieces, although I did not market them." (CHB22) 21 My boss wanted to keep me as a stockholder, but I wanted to do it on my own here in the Philippines. (CHB23) 5 Well, I may have gotten on one on rare occasions, but taking a two-wheeled machine on a long trip is something I am not exactly familiar with.

The reference to 'we' to designate the individual writer suggests that this writer is involving the reader in actively participating in the act of questioning. Since the question raised by the writer in CHB7 is one of national importance, the writer is assuming the reader's interest in retrieving the information collected from this question. The use of the first-person pronoun plural 'we' in the clause found in the fifteenth article (CHB18) suggests a community of experts in the field of winemaking who seem to express their disbelief in the idea posed in the preceding imperative clause, 'wine from coffee?' The 'we' is addressing a reader who is being deemed as even more clueless about the notion of coffee wine. In the twenty-third article of CHB, the article immediately opens, without so much as a preamble, with a marked accusatory statement in its initial line – an opener that uses the personal pronoun plural 'we' – to encompass not only the real strippers of nature in the issue of illegal logging but also seem to include the writers themselves and the reader reading the article. This places the reader in a defensive mode as he is made party to the act without his consent.

2 We asked the next generation of taipans what they look for in a candidate for President. (CHB3) 42 This was our reaction when we first encountered the product together with Mango Wine. (CHB18) We are stripping nature of its fruits for the sake of development. (CHB19)

The personal pronoun that really targets the reader's persona is 'you'. It is noteworthy that the singular form of the personal pronoun 'you' holds the spot as the most dominant personal pronoun used in the articles of the China Business newsletter. In the corporate world, marketing a product or image involves deploying strategies that sellers use to engage customers. A common strategy among businesspeople is personal selling. Personal selling aims to make buyers feel valued and important. This is often achieved by making buyers the 'center of attention' at the point of sale or by using 'you' to ensure that they are aware that their needs are being met by the products or services offered. This effect is achieved using 'you' in the twenty-third article (line 93 below) of the China Business newsletter. However, it is not a product that the writer is selling, but rather the idea of the risk of doing business in China. This point is made more persuasive because the writer employs an authority's voice to 'close the deal,' as the authority quoted in the article is actually engaged in business transactions in mainland China. Hence, in a manner that treats the reader as a confidante offering advice, the authority speaks in direct quotations, addressing the readers directly.

93 You go to the Filipino Chinese chambers of commerce; they will do nothing. 94 There's nothing you can do. 95 So before you commit to something, you really have to make sure that this company is okay. (CHB20).

The same is true in the fourth article, where the writer uses 'you' to directly address the reader, summarizing the writer's views on pre-need companies. Moreover, treating the reader as a trusted friend, the writer does not mince words and presents the facts straightforwardly.

3 It's like paying a company to force you to save. (CHB4)

Two extracts from CHB, as shown below, although phrased as interrogatives typical of an interview format, utilize 'you' to foster a sense of intimacy between the reader and the participants—interviewer and interviewee—of the article. The question-and-answer format cultivates the close relationship that the writers seek to maintain

with their readers. The first extract is designed to put the interviewee at ease, while the second aims to draw the interviewer's attention to something that, to the interviewee, seems obvious and commonsensical.

2. How long have you been in the Philippines? (CHB1) 28...How can you run out of mineral resources when you're reusing things like iron and steel? (CHB9)

In addition to the analysis of personal pronouns across all articles of the three newsletters to discern how readers are positioned in the intercultural discourse under study, the examination of the mood element is instrumental in detecting the type of relationship the writers wish to establish with their readers.

The three types of mood elements are declarative, interrogative, and imperative. Of the three, the declarative mood is the clear choice for all articles in the three newsletters. Naturally, the purpose of an institution or organization such as the China Business Philippines newsletter in maintaining an online newsletter is to disseminate pertinent information to the members of their community. This information might be updates on events initiated by the organization or it might concern current economic and business affairs in the country they consider relevant to their community.

Table 4 displays a summary of the mood element found in the online Chinese Filipino news articles. The data reveal that all the newsletters showed a predominance of declaratives compared to the other mood types. However, the interrogative mood is also more prominent in articles that showcase the business accomplishments of a member of a particular intercultural community. This result is found in the articles of the Chinese Filipino newsletter. Instead of using the indirect method of transposing data derived from the interviewee, the writers, acting as interviewers, adopted a less formal manner of presenting the interviewee's data. They did this by allowing readers to have direct access to the statements made by the interviewee. Some extracts showing interrogatives that function as direct questions posed by the interviewer-writer to the interviewee illustrate the informality of the texts. This informal writing style supports the treatment of the readers as confidants in the examined Chinese Filipino newsletter.

CHB1: 2 How long have you been in the Philippines?

3 I'll be three years here in the Philippines by November 2011.

12 Where are you from originally?

13 I'm Swiss but I grew up in Latin America.

19 The first time you came here, you were already with Nestlé?

20 No, I was very young in my career then.

24 How do you find doing business here in the Philippines?

25 It's very competitive here.

34 Do you have plans of bringing Dolce Gusto to China?

35 I can only talk about the possibilities in the Philippines.

CHB4: 2 Is there a way out of the mess?

3 It's like paying a company to force you to save.

7 So where does your money go in the meantime?

8 Philippine Federation of Pre-need Plan Companies Inc. (PFPPCI)

President Juan Miguel Vasquez says most of the industry's trust fund in 2006 was invested in the government's T-bills.

25 What happened?

26 Well, lots of things.

CHB14: 1 Are we ready for democracy?

2 The country's top techie says it's all systems go.

7 What influence can they have?

8 He says the COMELEC – and the COMELEC Advisory Council he leads – has focused on removing vulnerabilities from the 7.2-billion-peso system it intends to use in the 2010 elections.

CHB23: 23 What problems did you encounter in the early days?

24 Actually, I did not encounter a lot of problems then because, way back in 1998, it was just a very small company.

35 When did you begin China operations?

36 I think it was about two and a half years ago.

The presence of many interrogatives in the Chinese Filipino newsletter also serves to engage the readers in conversation with the writers of the intercultural newsletter – the readers are always interested in acquiring information from the writers or are always on the alert as to how the information acquired will best serve them. This finding of high instances of interrogatives among writers of Chinese descent supports Matalene's (1985; Cai, 1998) claim regarding the Chinese tendency to suggest rather than be direct in revealing their intentions.

Table 4: Summary of the ME and Their Signaled Relations in the 24 Articles of the Chinese Filipino Intercultural News Media

| News Media | Declarative | Interrogative | Imperative | Total |
|------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-------|
| CHB | 1234(96.33) | 37(2.89) | 10(0.78) | 1,281 |

Source: China Business Philippines Online (2009-2012). chinabusinessphilippines.com

As earlier mentioned, based on the functions of the three mood types, there is little that can be deemed remarkable about the predominance of the declarative mood in the 24 articles of the Chinese Filipino intercultural news media. As newsletters intended to be read by members of the organizations' communities, pieces of information—declared as announcements of past, current, and ongoing projects—need to be conveyed in a way that makes the readers clear about the content. Moreover, the declarative mood does not incite antagonism on the part of the readers because information in this mood is understood to be a function of data sharing. What is observed, though, and appears to support the findings on the analysis of the personal pronouns with respect to how readers are positioned in the articles, is the high instances of the interrogative mood found in the articles of the Chinese Filipino newsletter.

4.3. Power Positioning in the Social Identities of Online Intercultural News Story Writers

The intercultural writers who produce online news stories, as indicated by Masucol et al. (2022), maintain power through language within their community and the outgroup. This power through language proliferates in three ways: first, consent is obtained; second, ideologies are disseminated; and third, practices, values, meanings, and identities are imparted and assimilated (Fairclough, 1995).

In the online intercultural periodicals within the Philippine context, the dominant Modal Verbal Operator (MVO) "will" elicits various identity representations. An examination reveals online *China Business Philippines* (CHB) writers characterize themselves as shrewd analysts, strategizers, and certainty seekers. Furthermore, it can be inferred that these identities are crafted to shape external perceptions of the Chinese-Filipino community. These identities, carefully constructed through language and writing stance—such as choices in foregrounding and backgrounding information—prime the readers to unquestioningly accept the identities posited by the intercultural writers. The wielded power becomes even more potent as readers, influenced by the writers' narrative slant, come to accept, endorse, and legitimize these identities naturally (van Dijk, 1998; Zhu, 2023). This legitimization by readers might assume the form of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Power in representing social identities lies in the capacity of intercultural communities to propagate distinctive ideologies through discourse, reinforcing their group's superiority. For instance, the business acumen ideology among Chinese Filipinos is spread by their newsletter, subtly infiltrating the readers' psyche. Furthermore, an identity devoid of bias or untainted by political agendas wields considerable power, as exemplified by the ideologies Chinese Filipinos convey through their intercultural periodicals. Lastly, intercultural writers exercise power by deciding which social identities to construct and publicize externally. Van Dijk (1998) notes that a group's social power and dominance may be reinforced internally through institutional policies and chosen themes for periodical issues.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study was able to show how the cultural differences of intercultural writers affect the interplay of dominant-dominated. Having said this, the study realizes that dominant-dominated terrains are not as clear-cut. This means that the usual labeling of which social actor plays the dominant or dominated may find itself in shifting positions. In other words, the actors in the play of dominant-dominated may find a role reversal depending on who controls language through media. Specifically, since the writers of the newsletters are of mixed origins, the notion of Filipinoness is positioned as dominant. As a corollary effect in the CDA play of dominant-dominated, the Otherness or the usual notion of powerlessness, which originally takes a negative representation, becomes the dominant power as the source of ideology. This is evident in the Chinese Filipino newsletters analyzed. In the Philippine context, the other origin or ethnicity borne by mixed marriages of Filipinos to other nationals represents the concept of Otherness.

Overall, the study used the nine-step approach in analyzing the play of dominant-dominated in the online Chinese Filipino newsletters. I offer an approach to analyzing intercultural discourse:

1. Select the intercultural discourse.
2. Determine the section and genre of the intercultural discourse to ensure comparability of data.
3. Identify the period or range of dates to cover the study.
4. Choose enough data as the corpus of the study.
5. Identify the linguistic and discursive variables to be inspected.

6. Conduct a frequency count of the linguistic and discursive items.
7. Examine the data at the clausal and sentential levels.
8. Discuss the writers' and readers' identities and how these identities fit into the dominant-dominated scheme.
9. Discuss the positive values and the manipulative control of the data on the minds of the readers.

Future research may embark on a similar CDA approach with a view to examining differences in terms of the role of dominant-dominated in formal settings, such as department meetings in institutions, and the actual reports based on the meetings. In school settings, for instance, these reports are known as Minutes of the Meeting. It would be interesting to examine if there is a shift of dominant-dominated between the oral mode performed by faculty speakers and the written counterpart produced by one faculty member whose target readership consists of the head of the department as well as other faculty members. Specifically, at the level of spoken discourse taking place in the actual meeting, there is already a kind of positioning or framing that the speakers employ to convey their messages. Within the speakers as social participants in the oral discourse context, there may still be variables that the critical discourse analyst may consider, such as age, gender, ethnicity, rank, or cultural orientation. On the part of the writer responsible for the Minutes of the Meeting, questions that may be raised concerning the dominant-dominated interplay are whether the writer is able to use language to capture the actual events and interactions as they transpire and what linguistic and discursive strategies this writer employs to serve as a vehicle for which ideology the report is promoting, that is, the writer's or the institution's.

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