THE 'PRESENTATION OF SELF' AND 'SELF-DISCLOSURE': A CONTRASTIVE RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF PHILIPPINE ADVICE COLUMNS IN ENGLISH AND FILIPINO

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ABSTRACT

This is a case study of advice columns found in Filipino magazines and/or broadsheets (newspapers). It attempts to determine the "genre" of advice columns, particularly in the area of self-disclosure and the concept of "presentation of self" or "face work strategies" of those letter writers (presumably with problems that need counseling) who seek advice and the ones who offer advice, i.e. the columnist. The importance of the study lies primarily in its use of contrastive rhetorical analysis within the bilingual context. The study is also important because it not only provides an insight into this particular genre of writing, but also has implications for the Filipino psychology of self-help, and regard for "authority."

1. INTRODUCTION

As a field of inquiry, Contrastive Rhetoric (henceforth, CR) started with investigations of student writing in an to attempt to describe differences in thinking patterns (Kaplan, 1966, and Connor, 1996). However, as the field grew, it also expanded to studying non-academic types of writing. Moreover, CR has continuously emphasized the role that culture plays in the development of writing (Kachru, 1997).

Noteworthy are several studies that relate to cultural differences in writing. Eggington (1987) studied Korean academic discourse. In his article, he cited Kaplan who characterized the Korean writing style as "marked by indirection....There is a tendency to turn around the subject and show it from a variety of tangential views. Korean writing style is also characterized by the 'some people say' formula, especially when one is taking a somewhat controversial stand" (p. 154). In addition, the Korean preferred rhetorical structure is the **ki-sung-chon-kyul** where the essay begins an argument, next few paragraphs develop that argument, the middle part states the main point, next few paragraphs state concepts indirectly connected, and the concluding paragraph ends or concludes the main theme (Eggington, 1987, p. 156).

Hinds (1983) had earlier studied Japanese writing style. He found that a common organizational framework for Japanese compositions is the **ki-shoo-ten-ketsu**, a pattern that originated in classical Chinese poetry. As defined by Takimata (1976, p. 26, as cited by Hinds, 1983), *ki* begins the argument, *shoo* develops the argument, *ten* is where an unexpected element is intruded into an otherwise normal progression of ideas, or becomes

the sub-theme which is not directly connected to the theme, while the *ketsu* attempts to bring together all previous elements to reach a conclusion. For their part, Mohamed and Omer (2000) attempted to relate texture of texts to culture, while Ostler (1987), who conducted a contrastive study of Arabic and English expository texts, highlighted the differences in terms of culture.

Moving on to another aspect of contrastive rhetoric research, Reynolds' (1993) study focused on analyzing the editorial as a genre. Scollon (2000) studied the generic variability of texts in a Chinese newspaper and its English counterpart. Kamimura and Oi (1998) attempted to study a single type of text (English argumentative essays) but written by two different types of writers, Americans and Japanese. These studies all point to the variety of ways by which to analyze written texts within the CR framework.

While these studies offer interesting insights into cultural similarities and/or differences in writing across different languages, this paper argues primarily that writing within the bilingual context such as the Philippines is also of interest. This is because there may be some distinctions in writing styles in L1 (Filipino) and L2 (English). Second, of greater interest is the need to conduct more studies on the Filipino language to significantly contribute to the field of CR. Much has been said about other "Asian" writing styles, but not much of the Filipino rhetorical style. To establish what is "Filipino" is to put it in a position uniquely its own, rather than to have it stereotyped with the others. The third important reason for doing the study is the fact that not much has been done on advice columns. Advice columns are a common sight in Filipino magazines or tabloids, even in some broadsheets, although most of them are published only occasionally. Because of this Filipino penchant for advice-seeking and advice-giving, it may be interesting to study such a phenomenon.

The focus of the research is two-pronged. First, there is a need to discover the general characteristics of the genre of Philippine advice columns. Second, since the acts of advice-seeking and advice-giving ultimately have the elements of self-disclosure due to the act of revealing the problems and seeking solutions, and "alignment" of the advice-seeker, a person who needs help, and the advice-giver, one who is perceived to be credible on the problem at hand, the paper will then look at how self-disclosure appears in advice columns and how both present themselves – how advice-seekers "frame" themselves in relation to the perceived experts and vice versa.

This two-pronged approach leads to the following research questions:

1. How is the genre of Philippine advice columns characterized? What are its features? What is the dominant organizational pattern?
2. How is self-disclosure developed in the advice column? When does it occur? To what extent is self-disclosure evident in advice columns?
3. How do the advice seeker and advice giver present themselves? What framing devices are used?

The study has adapted some theoretical frameworks in order to further define the scope of the research.

A. Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is defined as "not simply providing information to another person. Instead scholars define self-disclosure as sharing information with others that they would not normally know or discover. Self-disclosure involves risk and vulnerability on the part of the person sharing the information" (Borchers, 1999). Borchers also enumerates several functions of self-disclosure:

1. a way of gaining information about another person;
2. to be able to predict the thoughts and actions of people we know; and
3. to learn how another person thinks and feels.

Furthermore, once a person engages in self-disclosure, it is implied that the other person will also disclose additional information. This is known as the "norm of reciprocity," the mutual disclosure that deepens the trust in the relationships and helps both people understand each other's move. One also feels better about oneself when the other person accepts what was told. Despite these functions, self-disclosure (henceforth or alternately as SD) is not without risks. Some of these risks are the following:

1. the other person will not respond favorably to the information;
2. SD does not automatically lead to favorable impressions;
3. the other person may gain power in the relationship because of the information they possess; and
4. too much SD early on may damage the relationship (Borchers, 1999).

B. Presentation of Self through Face Work

The second theoretical framework is taken from Goffman's (1967, pp. 5-27) concept of face work. To provide a summary of the important ideas as it related to face work, this section of the theoretical framework will enumerate terminologies which might be of use to the study.

Line. A pattern of verbal and non-verbal acts by which the person expresses his view of the situation and through this, his evaluation of the participants especially himself.

Face. A positive social value a person effectively claims of himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact; "face" is an image of the self delineated in terms of approved social attributes.

"Have, be, in or maintain face." When a line one person effectively takes presents an image of him that is internally consistent, and supported by judgments and evidences conveyed by other participants.

"In the wrong face." Happens when information is brought forth about his social worth could not be integrated into the line that is being sustained for him.

"Out of face." When one participates in a contact with others without having ready a line of the kind participants in such situations are expected to take.

"In face." When one typically responds with feelings of confidence and assurance.

"To lose face." To be in the wrong face, out of face or to be shamefaced.

"To save one's face." This refers to the process by which the person sustains an impression for others that he has not lost face.

"To give face." This is to arrange for another to take a better line that he might otherwise have been able to take.

Mutual acceptance of lines has an important conservative effect upon encounters.

Maintenance of face is a condition of interaction.

The basic kinds of face-work are as follows:

a. The avoidance process includes such acts as keeping off topics or changing topics, claims about self may be made with belittling modesty, hedging, front of diffidence and composure, etc.

b. Protective maneuvers include politeness and respect, discretion, circumlocutions and deception, courtesy, slight modifications on demands, etc.

c. Corrective process includes moves such as challenge where participants take on the responsibility of calling attention to the misconduct; offering whereby a participant (typically the offender) is given a chance to correct the offense, acceptance (that happens when the persons to whom the offering is made accepts it as satisfactory), and the terminal move (what is called gratitude - the forgiven person uses this to those who have given him forgiveness).

      d.   Making points which is the aggressive use of face work.

      e.   Cooperative face work consists in being tactful; reciprocal denial; favorable judgments of himself that come from others; unfavorable judgments coming from himself; and negative bargaining.

2. METHODOLOGY

Twenty samples from the health advice column *Salamat Po, Duktor* (in *Liwayway*, a weekly magazine) constituted the Filipino corpus, while twenty samples taken from the relationships advice column *A Touch of Magic* (in *Mirror Weekly*) comprised the English corpus. The columns included in the Filipino corpus were published from February 18, 2002 to August 19, 2002, while those in the English corpus appeared from   August 20, 2001 to January 28, 2002.

The unit of analysis of the study was Ostler's (1987) notion of discourse bloc, the largest unit of thought in the advice letters. The discourse blocs were divided into the following segments or portions: (a) introduction, (b) body, and (c) conclusion, for ease in the analysis and interpretation of the data. Much of the analysis was framed within the said discourse blocs. In this paper data are presented in simple frequency counts.

3. RESULTS

3.1 The Genre of Philippine Advice Columns

A careful examination of the data shows that *Salamat Po, Duktor* (henceforth or alternately, *Salamat* or Filipino column) is clearly a medical advice column, while *A Touch of Magic* (henceforth or alternately, *A Touch* or English column) is an advice column specializing on family or love relationships (See Appendix 1 for a complete profile of advice seekers). Moreover, there was an almost equal mix of male and female writers for *Salamat* and more females sought advice for the *A Touch* column. There were more advice seekers who revealed their ages and profession in *Salamat* perhaps to give the advice giver more insights about the problem. There appeared to be less in the *A Touch* column perhaps because age was thought of as not as relevant in the framing of the problem and offering of the solution. However, the majority still indicated their professions. It could also be inferred that the advice seekers in the Filipino column were mostly overseas Filipino workers (which may indicate the type of market the column caters to), while the English column had more varied advice seekers.

In the absence of data from interview with the advice giver, it would suffice to say that the advice giver of *Salamat* was a medical doctor, a popular one as he would also appear occasionally on television. The advice giver of *A Touch* was a person knowledgeable of astrology and analysis of handwriting, as indicated in some of his/her remarks (e.g. *based on your handwriting*).

With regard to the content of the advice seeking letters, Table 1 summarizes the data. As stated previously, the content of each portion of the letters and responses was divided into discourse blocs arbitrarily labeled as introduction, body, and conclusion. Recurring contents of each portion were itemized and included in the table. Occurrences of the types indicated may vary from one letter to another, i.e. a letter may only contain one type of content per portion, or a letter may contain two or more than two of the contents as indicated in the data.

Table 1. Content of advice seeking letters per discourse bloc

Content/Discourse Bloc	Salamat Po, Duktor		A Touch of Magic	
Introduction	N	%	N	%
Profile of letter sender (SES)	8	40.9	16	53.3
Direct preview of problem	10	45.4	7	23.3
Indirect preview of problem	3	13.6	7	23.3
Others	0	0	0	0
TOTAL (from 20 articles)	**22**	**100**	**30**	**100**
Body				
Details/Elaboration of problem	14	66.7	19	48.7
Partial remedies done to solve the problem	4	19.0	6	15.3
Others	3	14.3	14	35.8
TOTAL (from 20 articles)	**21**	**100**	**39**	**100**
Conclusion				
Acknowledgements/Advanced thanks	12	50	11	37.9
Awaiting responses	7	29.1	0	0
Final question	1	4.16	16	55.1
Others	4	16.7	2	6.89
TOTAL (from 20 articles)	**24**	**100**	**29**	**100**

Contents of the discourse blocs were as follows: for the introduction, the letters usually started with a profile of the letter sender, or if not, a direct or indirect preview of the problem. The body as a discourse bloc contained mostly details or elaboration of the problem which may or may not include a recount of some of the remedies that the seeker had already done to solve the problem. The concluding part contained mostly utterances that sought to ask a final question, or thank/acknowledge the giver for the solution and for responding to the letter (even if it had not been done but only as an assumption that they would be responded to), among other types of endings. Table 1 shows some interesting contrasts between the Filipino and English advice columns. As regards the content of the introduction of *Salamat*, the total numbers obtained for the introduction, body and conclusion, did not significantly vary (22, 21, and 24), which implies that the content was almost distributed evenly throughout the letter. More senders focused on the direct preview of the problem (66.7%), whereas 40.9% had introductions that gave a profile of the letter sender. Content of the *Salamat* body focused on the details or elaboration of the problem, and as for the concluding portion, a majority ended the letters with advanced thank-you or acknowledgments.

As for the *A Touch* column, it appears that the focus was more on the body as indicated by more occurrences of this portion (N=39), and because of more elaboration of the problem. In addition, the "others" category in the *A Touch* body means that some other side issues or related incidences were explicated perhaps as an attempt to provide a clearer scenario of the problem. On the introduction, focus was also more on the socio-economic status of the sender (age, sex, profession), while the conclusions centered on senders asking

a final question on what they should do to solve the problem, which was followed by acknowledgments and advanced thank-you.

Another point of comparison is that there were relatively more occurrences of content per discourse bloc in the English than in the Filipino column. This could be supported by the "surface" length of the letters for the English compared with the Filipino letters, i.e. the English letters were lengthier a bit, as stated in Table 1.

Table 2 presents the content of the advice giving letters per discourse bloc.

Table 2. Content of the advice giving letters per discourse bloc

Content/Discourse Bloc	Salamat Po, Duktor		A Touch of Magic	
	N	%	N	%
Introduction				
Preliminaries/Pleasantries	0	0	0	0
Direct offer of solution	2	10	9	40.9
Indirect offer of solution (e.g. through stories or retelling of similar cases)	2	10	1	4.54
Others	16	80	12	54.54
TOTAL (from 20 articles)	**20**	**100**	**22**	**100**
Body				
Details/Elaboration of the solution	20	100	16	72.72
Partial elaboration of the problem	0	0	3	13.63
Others	0	0	3	13.63
TOTAL (from 20 articles)	**20**	**100**	**22**	**100**
Conclusion				
Final "admonitions" or advice	20	100	17	29.31
Acknowledgments	0	0	14	24.1
Throwing back decision to sender	0	0	0	0
Seeking divine intervention/praying for guidance	0	0	17	29.31
Predictions	0	0	4	6.89
Others	0	0	6	10.34
TOTAL (from 20 articles)	**20**	**100**	**58**	**100**

Content of the introduction of advice giving columns focused on directly or indirectly addressing the problems of the letter sender. Occurrences of the relative proportion of the introduction for both English and Filipino columns were almost the same (20 vs. 22). The same trend was true for the body of the advice, whose focus was on the details or elaboration of the solution to the problem. What made the difference was that from the medical doctor's point of view, all samples or advice were consistent (100% direct solution), while the relationships advice columns had the tendency to solve the problem in other ways than directly offering a solution. As for the concluding portion, both English and Filipino advice givers had the final words or specific advice on what to do (100% for the medical and 29.31% for the relationships column), along with acknowledging the sender for

writing them (24.1% for the English column). The English column used other methods of concluding such as telling them to pray for guidance or seek the help of the Lord (29.31%). Other ways of ending the letter were reverting back to the implications of the handwriting, with some predictions or telling of similar cases and offering solutions to these cases.

The clear distinction is that the Filipino column seems to give advice in a direct manner from the introduction to the body and to the conclusion, which is typical of what most doctors do in face to face consultations, an approach that is very transactional. The English columns, on the other hand, emphasized the sort of "last few words" part of the Conclusion discourse bloc as more types of ways to follow up on the solution offered were suggested (i.e. 58 occurrences vs. 20 in the Filipino columns). Because it appears that topics of the English columns centered on relationships but that the specific circumstances were different, there was no one clear-cut manner by which a single conclusion could be reached and therefore they needed to further explain the preferred solution and to further "console" or "appease" the letter sender. The medical columns, by virtue of their scientific nature, could only offer one major solution to each type of problem, but variations may vary slightly depending on the gravity of the problem. In addition, gender differences are partly reflected in the data. The doctor of the Filipino column was male, and tended to be direct to the point, while the advice giver for the relationships column was a female and so might be more "flavorful" and detailed in the responses given. This claim still has to be proven in another study that would perhaps investigate gender as it affects advice giving.

3.2 Overall Patterns of Philippine Advice Columns Based on Content per Discourse Bloc

The text features and patterns of the advice seeking letters may be characterized as follows (see figures below).

Fig. 1. Text features and pattern of *Salamat Po, Duktor* (letter sender)

Text Features	Overall Pattern
Identification of letter sender	Profile of sender
Problem driven (direct preview + elaboration + partial remedies done)	↓ Problem
Optimism regarding the solution	(preview/description + elaboration)
More or less direct in manner of recounting problem	↓ Seeking remedy/solution
Logically arranged ideas	(with advanced acknowledgments)

Fig. 2. Text features and pattern of *A Touch of Magic* (letter sender)

Text Features	Overall Pattern
Identification of letter sender	Profile of sender
Problem driven but with varied ways of introducing the problem (+ additional side comments or incidences related to problem)	↓ Problem (elaboration + additional incidences)
Seeking solution through asking of question (+ advanced thank you or acknowledgements)	↓ Asking for best solution
Less direct, more detailed and descriptive	(with advanced acknowledgements)

**Fig. 3. Text features and pattern of *Salamat Po, Duktor*
(response from advice giver)**

Text Features	Overall Pattern
Definition of the disease or ailment, its characteristics scientific/a bit impersonal approach	Description/definition of disease (+ explanation of why it happens)
Explanation of the seeker's problem and elaboration of the solution	↓ Link to sender's problem
Direct statements of the prescribed solution or ways of treating the problem	↓ Solution/ways of treating problem
Logically arranged ideas Used technical terms/scientific names Unashamed to treat sensitive matters in a casual manner (e.g. sexual terms)	

Fig. 4. Text features and pattern of *A Touch of Magic* (advice giver)

Text Features	Overall Pattern
More personal More elaborative, descriptive	Direct suggestion of solution (or additional positive feelers)
May use examples from other similar cases (do not just attack the problem with a simple solution)	↓ Elaboration of solution to problem
Shows more empathy to sender May see and offer solution from a variety of angles	(+ occasional side comments or cases) ↓
More emotional, less logical Even a bit spiritual	Giving of advice directly to solve problem (+ acknowledgments or additional advice to pray/prediction of outcomes)

Figs. (1) to (4) reveal that there are still slight differences in the way advice columns were constructed as reflected by the nature of the column, content of the discourse blocs, and the language used.

3.3 Self-Disclosure in Philippine Advice Columns

Self-disclosure, as defined earlier, has been fulfilled in the "genre" being investigated. The content per discourse bloc and the organizational pattern reveal that during the first part of the letter of the advice seekers for both the English and Filipino columns, SD was evident. Whether or not a letter sender chooses to reveal his or her identity, there must be some information that has to be revealed to offer insights into what the problem is all about. The initial information can give the advice giver sufficient background to support whatever a solution is to be offered. The identities of the advice seekers could not be determined on the basis of their names at the end of the letter, for some may choose to use pseudonyms or codenames to hide their identities. While the names do not appear to be a major factor in the kind of solution sought, the profile seems to play an important role in this regard.

A greater amount of SD appears in the body portion of the letters because this is where elaboration of the problem takes place. Whether the problem is socially or medically situated, advice givers have indeed provided more information and revealed more insights on their problem. However, the difference between the Filipino letters is that elaboration comes

in the form of partial remedies done to solve the problem. In the English letters, elaboration is an expansion of details that seeks to further describe the problem, whether or not a remedy has been given.

With regard to obtaining a concrete description for the kind of SD in advice giving letters, the advice givers for the Filipino columns have revealed themselves in the relationship by drawing out their expertise in the field of medicine. They do this by elaborating on the disease and how it affects the letter sender, before a concrete advice or solution is offered. SD through personal experiences is almost absent in the giver's comments, reflecting the doctor's often somewhat detached stance. Rather than sympathizing with the aches and pains, doctors often just hear the problem and tell the patient what to do. The same case is true for the type of SD found in the medical column. This is still characteristic of a linear and logical way of attacking the problem. A different kind of SD happens in the relationships column. Although the expert has often refrained from using her personal opinions, the kind of advice given is that coming from the point of view of the seeker. Attacking a problem or offering a solution is based on all the facts given by the seeker, rather than based on personal intuition. However, the approach is more friendly, sympathetic, more personal as if to continue "establishing a personal relationship" with the seeker itself. The giver aligns herself in a variety of ways to the seeker depending on the problem - she could be an expert, a mother, an aunt, sister, etc. but uses words and phrases that are more consoling and reflective. This strategy makes the seeker reflect on his/her decisions and what s/he intends to do about the problem. Finally, the spiritual angle provides another view of SD that through divine intervention, the advice giver reveals his/her belief that there is a Supreme Being guiding the actions of mortals.

Finally, unlike SD in the Filipino column, SD in the English column is more evened out in the introduction and body. Although the body is an elaboration of the solution, since the giver provides insights from a variety of angles, it does not seem as though SD in the body is really an extension of the SD established in the introduction.

The types of SD are summarized in Figs. 5 and 6.

Fig. 5. Self-disclosure in *Salamat Po, Duktor* and *A Touch of Magic* (letter sender)

Dimensions of Self-Disclosure	*Salamat Po, Duktor*	*A Touch of Magic*
Location of self-disclosure	Introduction and body	Introduction and body
Degrees of self-disclosure	Initial SD: profile Greater SD: elaboration of medical problem	Initial SD: profile and identification of problem Greater SD: more explanation of the problem and side issues
Type of self-disclosure	Personal + physical aspects	Personal + incidental details

Fig. 6. Self-disclosure in *Salamat Po, Duktor* and *A Touch of Magic* (advice giver)

Dimensions of Self-Disclosure	*Salamat Po, Duktor*	*A Touch of Magic*
Location of self-disclosure	Definition and description of the illness + elaboration	Acknowledgement of the problem and the effects it brings
Degrees of self-disclosure	Initial SD: introduction (definition and description) Greater SD: effects of problem if remedy not done, and the solutions to the problem	Even SD: explanation of the possible solutions from intro to body
Type of self-disclosure	Professional	Professional + personal

3.4 Framing Structures in Philippine Advice Columns

Table 3 presents findings relating to face work of the letter senders.

Table 3. Face work in *Salamat Po, Duktor* and *A Touch of Magic* (letter sender)

Face work/ Discourse bloc	*Salamat Po, Duktor*		*A Touch of Magic*	
	Applicable	Non-Applicable	Applicable	Non-Applicable
Introduction				
Maintain face	X		X	
Out of face		X		X
Lose face		X		X
Save one's face		X		X
Give face		X		X
Body				
Maintain face	X		X	
Out of face		X		X
Lose face	X		X	
Save one's face	X		X	
Give face				
Conclusion				
Maintain face	X		X	
Out of face		X		X
Lose face		X		X
Save one's face		X		X
Give face	X		X	

The table above shows that maintenance of face is consistent in all three discourse blocs. This may be explained by the fact that the letter sender has to maintain the image of one who seeks the help of the expert; therefore, he/she must not appear to be more knowledgeable about the topic. This maintenance of face is shown by the structures that have been revealed through the organizational pattern and the type of self-disclosure. For instance, the letter sender's profile was intended to provide a framework with regard to his.

identity. Then the problem was stated in a very polite manner, through the use of *po* in the Filipino column most of the time and the use of *Tita* Anthea in the English column, which are markers that acknowledge authority of the advice giver.

The concept of "out of face" was not applicable in the letter of the seekers in any part of the discourse bloc. This is because having maintained face, one cannot afford to be out of face. It may be inappropriate for a letter sender to make any move that will offend the advice giver, given the fact that seeking the advice giver's help is already an "imposition." To "lose one's face" is not applicable in the introduction. However, it may be applicable in the body because this means revealing more of the problem, which might, in effect, reveal the possible weaknesses of the letter sender, i.e. despite partial remedies done or reflection of the effects of their action, the advice giver still has not solved the problem and therefore needed help. To "lose one's face" is the advice seeker's willingness to reveal his/her inadequacies in the elaboration of the problem or situation. The concept of losing one's face is also not applicable in the conclusion part because the goals for the conclusion are different. In fact, the said goals are parallel to the concept of "to give face" which is not applicable to the introduction and body. In the conclusion, the letter senders review their problems, thank the advice giver in advance for the possible solution, thank him/her for responding to the problem even though no response has been made yet. In some cases, senders accord the expert some emulatory statements to reiterate the seeker's confidence in the giver. These markers indicate that the "glory" and "success" of the problem lies in the hands of the advice giver, and so the senders in effect "give face" to the givers. Both Filipino and English columns accord the same face work as far as the letter senders are concerned.

Table 4 presents the data on face work as it applies to the advice givers.

Table 4. Face work in *Salamat Po, Duktor* and *A Touch of Magic* (advice giver)

Face work/ Discourse bloc	*Salamat Po, Duktor*		*A Touch of Magic*	
	Applicable	Non-Applicable	Applicable	Non-Applicable
Introduction				
Maintain face	X		X	
Out of face		X		X
Lose face		X		X
Save one's face		X		X
Give face		X		X
Body				
Maintain face	X		X	
Out of face		X		X
Lose face		X		X
Save one's face	X		X	
Give face		X		X
Conclusion				
Maintain face	X		X	
Out of face		X		X
Lose face		X		X
Save one's face		X		X
Give face	X		X	

The data for the advice givers present a somewhat different scenario. In all discourse blocs, advice givers maintain face, that of being the expert. As such, they cannot afford to lose face or be offended by the letter sender. The advice giver is never out of face since solutions given to the problems are carefully thought out and given in a way that would best match the intimacy that the medium allows to prevent offending the letter sender. The fact that the medical solutions are presented in a direct impersonal manner, reflects an attempt to save face, implying that with the suggested procedure, one can never go wrong. In the English column, the fact that suggestions are given using a variety of angles is an act of playing the solutions, except that in case one alternative does not work, there is always another alternative. Giving of face is more pronounced in the English column where various options are left open for the letter sender to choose from, in addition to giving recommendation to seek divine intervention or giving some predictions. Giving of face is almost minimal in the medical Filipino column because it is only seen when the doctor refers the letter sender to a specialized clinic or another doctor who can really cure the latter's disease. Otherwise, general procedures on how to cure the ailments are given.

As far as cooperative face work is concerned, both the English and Filipino columns exhibit features of cooperative face work as defined by Goffman (1967). As advice seekers self-disclose to achieve the goals of seeking solutions to their problems, the advice givers cooperate by revealing what they know of the solutions to the problems given. There are no avoidance strategies, as both giver and seeker cooperate to achieve a goal. Protective maneuvers are also present – from the seeker's selective revelation of information about themselves or selection of main incidents to include in the letter as they relate to the problem. There are also some occasional disclaimers of the experts on whether the problem could be directly solved, partially solved, or could not be solved, hence the need to approach it differently. Since cooperative face work is evident in the data, based on how the seeker and the giver frame themselves, there is not much variation in the Filipino and English columns. As both seeker and giver cooperate in maintaining face work, both benefit from the amount and type of self-disclosure being contributed; thus, self-disclosure helps to maintain the face work rather than stifle or damage the relationship. What has been given and said is enough to fulfill each one's goals for the interaction.

4. DISCUSSION

This paper was an attempt to investigate the "genre" of advice columns by analyzing its text features and basic organizational structure. From this analysis, the paper also aimed to find out the dynamics of self-disclosure and face work vis-à-vis the relationship of the advice giver and seeker. This was an initial attempt at contrastive rhetorical analysis of English and Filipino advice columns (both written by Filipinos).

This section of the paper will try to answer the research questions as follows.

How is the "genre" of Philippine advice columns characterized? What are its features? What is the dominant organizational pattern?

In general, Philippine advice columns are characterized by an organizational pattern consisting of the following: revealing the profile of the advice seeker, identification of the problem, expansion of the problem (details or partial solutions made), a final question or advanced thank you addressed to the advice giver. The Filipino column, being medical in nature, is more impersonal and technical, while the English column, being about relationships, is more descriptive.

Regarding patterns of advice-giving letters, they offer direct solutions, along with other alternatives. The medical column provides a scenario of the possible effects if the problem is not solved, while the English column gives more options for the sender to use,

making it less prescriptive, in addition to the offering of an option to consult with the Lord. The logical-linear characteristic of this column reflects the Problem-Solution type of organization.

How is self-disclosure developed in the advice column? When does it occur? To what extent is self-disclosure evident in advice columns?

Self-disclosure develops as the letter moves from the introduction to the body sections. Initial SD in the letters begins as the senders introduce themselves and becomes more evident as their problems unfold. SD in the advice givers is more or less consistent in terms of content from the introduction to body portions of their responses. But personal SD does not come in the form of personal opinions but in the form of professional advice and solutions being offered. SD is evident only as a means to maintain face work and in relation to the nature of the problem and solutions sought. No other types of information except those that relate to the problems are revealed. This in effect works well for the efficient carrying out of roles of both the seeker and giver.

How do the advice seeker and advice giver present themselves?

The presentation of selves is demonstrated through an initial analysis of face work strategies. To be effective, advice givers, the perceived experts, maintain face, never lose their face or are out of face. In the case of the English advice column giver in this study, she even gave face to the sender to appear more sympathetic and to give a little room for decision making of the sender.

The letter senders in the introduction part of the letter already try to maintain face. In the body of the letter, they perform some loss of face by the revelation of their weaknesses and expansion of the problem. However, they attempt to regain it through the last part of their letters where they even give face to the advice givers as if to reiterate the cost of the imposition.

Advice-giving and seeking require both participants to be in line, or in the face, thus the need to maintain it by cooperative face work. Although this particular aspect of the Filipino culture was not given emphasis in this paper, Filipinos do a lot of face work as it relates to the attitude of maintaining SIR or smooth interpersonal relationships. Both advice giver and seeker tried not to impose on each other, but adequately supplied each other with enough information to get by.

The study, although exploratory, can be a source of some ideas worth exploring or considering.

First, the data have shown slight differences in the patterns for both letter senders and advice givers. The patterns also differed slightly due to the differences in language. This means that the analysis done for the study has suggested that contrastive analysis may not be an explication of the differences of writing in different languages but that certain analyses may prove to be beneficial and substantial as they relate to CR. For instance, focusing on SD and face work as elements of writing moves beyond an analysis of the possible differences in writing, and are valuable for detecting nuances in writing in a given culture.

Second, aspects of SD and face work as done in the study could be modified or framed differently in future studies. In addition, a cross-cultural analysis of advice columns could be undertaken to further substantiate results found in the study. Perhaps looking at more samples, specifically including other genres (not just medical and relationship oriented) could further establish patterns, face work and SD dimensions. Furthermore, an analysis of the same topic area (e.g. all-medical or all-relationships, or all Filipino written or Philippine English written only) might address some of the limitations of the present study. Finally, since the "genre" of advice columns is a rare ingredient in the writing class, it could be used in the classroom to demonstrate that there are other forms of reflective writing (other than journal writing). This genre also offers insights on power relations, adherence to

authority, gender dimensions, cultural influences, and others. That is to say that there is more to contrastive rhetoric than the study of academic texts.

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Appendix 1. Profile of advice seekers for both the English and Filipino columns

Column	*Salamat Po, Duktor*					*A Touch of Magic*				
Ep. #	Category	Topic	Age	Sex	Profession	Category	Topic	Age	Sex	Profession
1	Grooming	Pimple	21	F		Family	Unknown identity		M	Student
2	Health	Cyst	30	F	OFW	Marriage	Child less		F	Accountant
3	Health	Breast lump		F		Love	Break up		F	Fresh graduate
4	Health	Vaginal infection	28	F	OFW	Family	In-laws		M	Manager
5	Grooming	Scar		M	OFW	Love	Drug addict		F	Employee
6	Health	Lump in testicle		M		Family	Work abroad		F	OFW
7	Health	Menses	26	F	OFW	Family	Conjugal property		F	Wife
8	Grooming	Eczema		F	OFW	Personal	Lose job		F	Former employee
9	Health	Sinusitis		M	OFW	Family	Sep. parent ofw		F	Employee
10	Health	Heatstroke		M	Student	Love	Illicit affair	38	F	OFW
11	Health	Dizziness	31	M	Businessman	Family	Unfaithful wife		F	Executive sec
12	Health	Psoriasis		F		Family	Money needed		F	Teacher
13	Grooming	Eyelid		F	OFW	Love	Reveal feelings		F	
14	Health	Sex problem	31	F	OFW	Family	Work abroad		F	
15	Health	Low sperm count	36	M	OFW	Love	Who to marry		M	Student
16	Health	Muscle strain		M	OFW	Love	2nd chance	18	F	Student
17	Health	Arthritis		M	OFW	Love	In and out of love		F	
18	Grooming	Hair and scalp	22	M	Student	Love	Illicit affair	27	F	Beautician
19	Health	Hemorrhoids		M	Working	Love	Time to marry		F	Vendor
20	Health	Hang over		M		Love	Illicit affair		F	

Appendix 2. Sample letter (Filipino column) with annotations of its textual and structural characteristics

March 25, 2002

Dear Dr. Gatmaitan, } Greetings and introductory portion of the letter;

Kamusta na po kayo? Alam ko pang maraming nahihiya na magpakonsulta tungkol sa karamdaman sa mga private parts. } Contains direct preview of problem Initial self-disclosure; "maintaining" face

Noong hindi pa po ako nagagalaw ng BF ko ay normal naman ang dating ng white mens. Pero ngayon po ay kakaiba, parating may lumalabas sa akin na tumatagos pa sa aking shorts. May amoy po ito at malapot na parang sipon. Wala naman po akong ibang nararamdaman maliban sa pagkahilo

Ako po ay 28 years old na sa kasalukuyan.

Body of the letter, elaborates on problem/description of the problem

Greater self-disclosure; "losing" face

Type of disclosure: personal + problem

Sa pagkakaalam ko po ay normal lang sa isang babae ang magkaroon ng white mens kung dumarating ang monthly period. Pero kahit katatapos ko lang ay may lumalabas pa rin. } "Saving" face

Doc, ano po ba ito? Normal pa po kaya ang nararamdaman ko? Sana po ay matulungan ninyo ako sa aking problema. Hihintayin ko po ang inyong kasagutan. } Conclusion portion of the letter Seeking remedy or solution "Giving" of face

Maraming salamat po at God bless.

Lubos na gumagalang, } Advanced acknowledgment "Maintaining" face

Miss X of Kuwait ⟶ Hidden identity