

## Rhetorical Persuasion in Sara Duterte's Basic Education Curriculum Advocacy: A Sociopragmatic Analysis

Geterel John M. Abregana<sup>1✉</sup>, Almira Luz M. Mabale<sup>2</sup>, Laica M. Mendiola<sup>3</sup>, Christian Jay O. Syting<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1-4</sup> College of Teacher Education, The University of Mindanao, Davao del Sur, Philippines

✉ email: g.abregana.527708@umindanao.edu.ph

### Received:

July 2, 2024

### Revised:

July 9, 2024

### Accepted:

July 10, 2024

### Published:

August 1, 2024

### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to describe the pragmatic features of Sara Duterte's advocacies regarding the Basic Education Curriculum in the Philippines. The research data, gathered from 2022 to 2023 during Duterte's tenure as Secretary of the Department of Education, included an interview and speeches totaling 5 hours and 16 minutes. Using dimensions of pragmatics, including presupposition (Stalnaker, 1973), implicature (Grice, 1975), felicity conditions (Searle, 1969), and politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987), the analysis revealed several key findings. The presuppositions identified included learner success and employability, inclusive education, a supportive learning environment, teacher support and development, education system improvement, and learner values and development. Implicatures conveyed messages of resiliency, heroic qualities, perseverance, and involvement beyond education. The illocutionary forces identified were assertives, directives, and commissives, each examined for adherence to the conditions necessary for their validity. Additionally, Duterte strategically employed politeness strategies such as positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on-record, and off-record strategies. These findings offer a deeper understanding of how political figures strategically use language to shape public opinion and policy agendas, particularly in critical areas such as education. By comprehending the pragmatic underpinnings of political discourse, stakeholders can better discern the intentions and potential impacts of such advocacies, facilitating informed decision-making and societal progress.

**Keywords:** *education; interviews and speeches; Philippines; pragmatic analysis; Sara Duterte's advocacies*

---

## INTRODUCTION

The core challenge in effectively conveying advocacy to the public through discourse revolves around the skillful use of language. This requires balancing emotional appeal, logical argumentation, and authoritative projection within the discourse. This issue encompasses various linguistic elements, including the interaction of rhetorical techniques, pragmatic considerations, and linguistic framing. Pragmatic challenges include the use of speech acts, specifically utterances of emotion and feeling (Balaanz, 2023), targeting a positive face per Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of

politeness (Mariana, 2021), and implicatures (Khairat, 2018). When these pragmatic challenges are unchecked, discourses may become ineffectual, reducing the speaker's persuasive power (Beltrama & Papafragou, 2023).

Balaanz (2023) found that expressives were the least occurring speech act in presidential election speeches, while commissives were the most common. Expressives reveal the speaker's psychological state and are used to establish an emotional bond with the audience (Mišić et al., 2015). A lack of expressives can decrease emotional appeal in political discourse. Communication verbs targeting a positive face are also used sparingly in political speeches (Mariana, 2021). This lack of positive face diminishes the likelihood of connecting with the public, as a positive face is crucial for expressing solidarity (Holmes, 1995).

Khairat (2018) notes that implicatures, though not intended to deceive, can cause uncertainty and misinterpretations, further complicating political discourse. Pragmatic gaps, as identified by Sălăvăstru (2016), can impede a speaker's ability to persuade, making the discourse seem disjointed or unconvincing. Oraibi and Fadhel's (2022) study indicates that indirect speech and a lack of information in political discourses can render them misleading and unconvincing. Maintaining relevance and cultivating positive relationships are essential for effective political communication. Additionally, Gelilang et al. (2021) found that President Duterte's direct language use highlighted his commitment to truth, influencing public perception.

This study employs sociopragmatic analysis to examine rhetorical persuasions in Sara Duterte's discourse on the Basic Education Curriculum. Takada et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of understanding political messaging's tactics, intentions, and impact, as they shape public opinion and policy outcomes. Pragmatics and sociopragmatics provide valuable analytical tools for dissecting political discourse, allowing citizens to critically assess political messages. Examining these features is vital for understanding political communication and avoiding discrepancies. This study aims to analyze the nuances of political communication, focusing on Sara Duterte's rhetorical techniques, pragmatic considerations, and linguistic framing in her advocacies.

The study has significant implications for institutions, government, society, and researchers. It provides insights into sociopragmatic features in Sara Duterte's discourse, contributing to knowledge by highlighting the reception of discourse by the audience. This research can guide the government in creating reliable public images and fulfilling pledged advocacies. It can also help society critically discern relevant topics for social change. Furthermore, this study serves as a foundation for future research in expanding the horizons of sociopragmatic analysis in political discourse.

This descriptive qualitative study aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis within a sociopragmatic framework. It investigates the strategic use of presuppositions, implicatures, felicity conditions, and politeness strategies in advocacy discourse. The research specifically examines these features in Sara Duterte's education advocacy discourses, focusing on her rhetorical persuasion strategies. By analyzing presuppositions, implicatures, felicity conditions, and politeness strategies, the study

aims to uncover the sociopragmatic features that influence public perception and engagement.

## **METHOD**

This section covers the parts of the method which are research materials, research design and procedure, and data analysis.

### **Research Materials**

The linguistic corpora for this scholarly work are 12 of Sara Duterte's spoken discourses on Basic Education Curriculum advocacies from August 2022 to May 2023. Since discourse analysis focuses on the variety of ways language is employed, sample size is typically not a major concern (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The researchers' linguistic corpora include interviews and speeches from Sara Duterte's official website and media outlets such as ANC 24/7, Manila Bulletin, and YouTube. The transcriptions of Sara Duterte's speeches were accessed and lifted from the Office of the Vice President's official website. Moreover, Sara Duterte's inaugural speech and other speeches unrelated to the Basic Education Curriculum were excluded as it is outside of the study's main criteria in selecting research materials, which are her official statements for the country's Basic Education Curriculum as the appointed secretary of the Department of Education. The identified advocacy discourses fit the aim of the study, which is to unveil the intricate workings of language in policymaking and communication.

### **Research Design and Procedure**

This study is a qualitative research that employed sociopragmatic analysis. As Creswell (1998) explained, a qualitative study highly centers on interpreting diverse data under natural conditions. By employing a qualitative research design, this scholarly study analyzed language and provided comprehensive insights into its complexities in the context of public discourse in a natural light.

The main lens of this research, sociopragmatic analysis, was coined by Leech (1983) to describe the study of how conditions on language use can reflect pragmatic meanings, distinguishing the sub-field of pragmatics from a more 'general' pragmatic meaning. This study specifically focused on the dimensions of pragmatics, namely presupposition (Stalnaker, 1973), implicature (Grice, 1975), felicity conditions (Searle, 1969), and politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

### **Data Analysis**

This study employed Leech's (1983) sociopragmatic analysis to examine Sara Duterte's advocacy discourses, focusing on presuppositions, implicatures, felicity conditions, and politeness strategies. Following Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework, the research proceeded through three phases: data reduction involved gathering Duterte's advocacy discourses on the Basic Education Curriculum from sources like ANC 24/7, Manila Bulletin, YouTube, and the Department of Education's

website. Data display encompassed analyzing her statements using Grice's (1975) Theory of Implicature, Stalnaker's (1973) concept of presupposition, Searle's (1969) felicity conditions, and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies. It should be noted that illocutionary acts were first identified and then analyzed whether or they are felicitous. The study concluded with in-depth explanations and implications drawn objectively from the analyzed data.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Using dimensions of pragmatics, including presupposition (Stalnaker, 1973), implicature (Grice, 1975), felicity conditions (Searle, 1969), and politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987), the analysis revealed several key findings. They are as follows:

**Presuppositions.** Sara Duterte used presuppositions effectively in her speech to convey her advocacy for education. Presuppositions are implicit assumptions or background beliefs taken for granted or assumed to be accurate within a conversation. Also, referring to how the speaker characterizes the level of knowledge their audience has about themselves, their lives, and the country as a whole (Balogun & Murana, 2018). Presupposition develops the audience's understanding and aligns with Sara Duterte's aims and values for creating the Basic Education Curriculum.

**Learners Success and Employability.** This refers to allowing students to explore several career possibilities and learning opportunities, enhancing their chances of finding gratifying and meaningful work after completion (Janeke, 2023). Sara Duterte emphasizes this by stating, "To make our graduates employable, we appeal to the industry, and to employers, to accept our students in work immersions, and hire them when they graduate." This presupposition underscores the speaker's belief that ensuring learners' employability and future success is a top priority. Moreover, Duterte emphasizes the need for students to be globally competitive by stating, "We aim to produce learners who are ready and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to shine on the competitive world stage." This aligns the audience's values with the advocacy for real-world readiness in education, stressing the importance of future success and excellence.

**Inclusive Education.** It encourages diversity and distinct contributions, provides a higher-quality education for all learners, and plays a vital role in eradicating discriminatory attitudes (Becker, 2019). Sara Duterte emphasizes this by stating, "We will undertake initiatives to provide schooling to many more children and youth in situations of disadvantage, regardless of gender, abilities, psycho-emotional and physical conditions, cultural and religious identity, and socio-economic standing." Sara Duterte's commitment to inclusive education presupposes that the audience believes that every child, regardless of their background, should have access to quality schooling. Furthermore, Sara Duterte acknowledges that learners' backgrounds should not hinder accessing learning opportunities and services by stating, "We will endeavor to ensure that all learners, no matter what their backgrounds are, will be afforded

quality learning opportunities and services." Using this presupposition, Sara Duterte aligns her advocacy with the audience's shared value of inclusivity in education.

**Supportive Learning Environment.** A supportive learning environment is safe, employs effective and equitable learning procedures, and encourages excellent student safety and security (WWC, 2020). Her statement emphasizes this: "We will improve our learning environments to encourage support, discourage bullying; strengthen the implementation of child protection policies; make students feel safe and respected; and make them, including our IP learners and those with disabilities, feel that they belong." Also, Sara Duterte acknowledges the importance of the learner's safety and mental well-being in a learning environment by stating, "We will continue to strengthen the mechanism in safeguarding our learners against all forms of discrimination and dangers.". This implies that the audience shares a belief that learners should have a positive and relevant learning environment, significantly promoting their overall skills and growth as they progress through their educational lives. Using this presupposition, Sara Duterte underscores the importance of creating an environment conducive to learning and aligns the audience's values with her commitment to learner well-being.

**Teacher Support and Development.** Place a high value on the efficacy and accessibility of chances for teachers' professional development, which includes self-sufficient or directed programs and activities that aim to improve their expertise, abilities, and proficiency in their method of instruction (Qualtrics, 2023). By stating, "We will continuously provide professional development programs, including graduate degree scholarship programs to teachers focusing on their learning area specialization and graduate certificate programs for nonmajors.", Sara Duterte acknowledges the fundamental importance of teachers in the educational system. It implies that the audience believes that teachers are indispensable to the success of education. Sara Duterte emphasizes the commitment to supporting teachers' growth and development in their respective fields.

**Education System Improvement.** Continuous growth in education is an essential process that helps guarantee that children obtain the most remarkable quality education possible, always aiming for excellence (Courtney, 2023). Sara Duterte emphasizes this by stating "The lack of school infrastructure and resources to support the ideal teaching process is the most pressing issue pounding the Philippine basic education." Sara Duterte acknowledges the existence of challenges and deficiencies in the education system. It assumes that the audience recognizes the need for continuous improvement to address these challenges. Furthermore, Sara Duterte recognizes the value of collaboration and partnerships in addressing challenges in the education system by stating, "We will work closely with Congress to push for the expansion of GASTPE coverage to include kindergarten and elementary learners." By using this presupposition, Sara Duterte emphasizes the urgency of improving the education system to overcome obstacles and enhance the quality of education.

**Learner's Values and Development.** A person's values play a crucial role when adopting learning techniques, as these values greatly determine an individual's character (Dehideniya et al., 2021). Sara Duterte is dedicated to forming and nurturing

learners' values and development as they progress in their academic lives by stating, "By imparting moral values to young Filipinos at a young age, we equip them with the tools necessary to make sound decisions as adults." Furthermore, Sara Duterte values the importance of improving the learner's character, such as being responsible and compassionate in a learning environment by stating, "The formation of our learners' values and the development of their characters will be intensified — in adherence to RA 11476 or the GMRC and Values Education Act of 2020.". It implies that the audience recognizes that a learner should grow and develop to be a better individual in and outside the school. Sara Duterte uses this presupposition to highlight their goal of ensuring learners have a bright mind and a good heart.

**Implicature.** Implicature effectively conveys implicit meaning or inference beyond its literal interpretation in Sara Duterte's advocacy speeches for education. Implicatures present in discourse will be analyzed by paying importance to how politicians favor them to conceal specific details (Khairat, 2018). In using implicature, Sara Duterte effectively conveyed specific points and improved her advocacy by adding meaning beyond the literal understanding of words.

**Resiliency.** Sara Duterte recognizes the challenges the Department of Education will face in the coming years. Nonetheless, they have a clear plan and path by stating "We know that the road will be bumpy, but our direction is clear. We know the challenges are vast, but we Filipinos are resilient." Sara Duterte uses this implicature to highlight the dedication needed to withstand upcoming issues and achieve their objectives.

**Heroic Qualities.** This statement implies that the speaker represents noble, admirable, valiant, and honorable concepts by stating, "Our children are the children of heroes.". The choice of words like "children of heroes" suggests that our children are not regular individuals but have heroic qualities such as determination and bravery. Sara Duterte uses this implicature to emphasize the characteristics that learners possess.

**Perseverance.** Sara Duterte highlights that successful bidders can fail despite their success. By mentioning, "There were successful bidders who failed to deliver on time. Moreover, worse, some successful bidders failed to make deliveries." It suggests that despite their remarkable qualities, they are not exempt from failure and must meet their obligations. Sara Duterte uses this implicature to emphasize the presence of failures alongside every accomplishment.

**Involvement Beyond Education.** Sara Duterte values teachers' efforts and fundamental duties. This is emphasized in her statement, "Teachers have essentially helped build our country." It implies that teaching is a critical profession with societal impacts beyond academic learning. Sara Duterte uses this implicature to convey that a teacher's involvement extends beyond education and leads to the nation's development and progress.

**Felicity Conditions.** According to Yule (1996), the felicity conditions refer to specific expected or acceptable circumstances that must be present for a speech act to be acknowledged as intended. Searle (1969) outlines four conditions that must be met for

a speech act to be considered felicitous. These are the preparatory condition, essential condition, sincerity condition, and propositional content condition. In Sara Duterte's discourses, she employed illocutionary acts (assertives, directives, and commissives) and fulfilled the felicity conditions to achieve the purpose of her utterances on the Philippines' basic education.

**Table 1. Illocutionary Acts employed by Sara Duterte and its fulfillment of the felicity conditions**

ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS	AREAS OF CONCERN	FELICITIOUS	
		YES	NO
<b>ASSERTIVES</b>	Lack of School Infrastructure and Resources	✓	
	Curriculum Improvements	✓	
	Pedagogical Upscaling	✓	
	Alarming Literacy Rates	✓	
<b>DIRECTIVES</b>	Inclusive Education Programs	✓	
<b>COMMISSIVES</b>	Curriculum Revisions	✓	
	Learner Well-Being Betterments	✓	
	ICT Integration	✓	
	Foundational Skills Development	✓	

**Assertives.** According to Yule (2006), assertives are speech acts that express the speaker's beliefs about matters of external reality. In her speeches, Sara Duterte made assertions about several educational matters, such as the lack of school infrastructure and resources, curriculum improvements, pedagogical upscaling, and alarming literacy rates. Each assertion is comprehensively discussed below, following how they met the conditions for such an assertion to be felicitous.

**Lack of School Infrastructure and Resources.** In her speech during the Basic Education Report 2023, Sara Duterte highlighted a critical issue in Philippine basic education, stating, “The lack of school infrastructure and resources to support the ideal teaching process is the most pressing issue pounding the Philippine basic education” (OVP-CPS3). She provided data showing that only 104,536 out of 327,851 school buildings are well-maintained, fulfilling the essential condition by presenting this as a factual assertion. Duterte’s sincerity was evident as she candidly acknowledged the problem, sharing personal encounters from her visits to schools affected by Super

Typhoon Odette. The preparatory condition was met since the statement was delivered in an appropriate context, with Duterte addressing her role as Vice President and Secretary of the Department of Education. Additionally, she supported her claims with detailed data on the condition of school buildings, fulfilling the propositional content condition and enhancing the credibility of her assertion.

**Curriculum Improvements.** In her Basic Education Report 2023 speech, Sara Duterte underscored the need for curriculum reforms to enhance the learning experience, particularly for students making slow progress. She stated, “We started the review of the curriculum. As we speak, the revised Kindergarten to Grade 10 curriculum is being finalized. We have also started the review of the Senior High School curriculum” (OVP-CPS3), fulfilling the essential condition by clearly informing the audience about the updates. Duterte's sincerity was evident as she genuinely aimed to inform the public about the Department of Education's efforts to improve the K to 12 curriculum, supported by her detailed discussion and her authority in the Department. The preparatory condition was met since her statement was appropriate for the context of the Basic Education Report. Additionally, her assertion was unambiguous and easy to comprehend, fulfilling the propositional content condition.

**Pedagogical Upscaling.** In her Basic Education Report 2023 speech, Sara Duterte emphasized the importance of pedagogical upscaling, stating, “And to empower our learners with the relevant skills and knowledge, we shall focus on upscaling your knowledge and capacities as public servants” (OVP-CPS3). She recognized teachers' vital role in student learning and aimed to inform the audience about enhancing educators' teaching methods, thus fulfilling the essential condition. Duterte's sincerity was evident as she acknowledged teachers as the “lifeblood of the Department of Education” and aimed to improve their skills to provide a meaningful learning experience, fulfilling the sincerity condition. Her statement was time-relevant, given the K-12 curriculum assessment showing teachers' need for support in teaching 21st-century skills, thus meeting the preparatory condition. Additionally, her message was clear and comprehensible, emphasizing the connection between teachers' competence and students' academic development, thereby fulfilling the propositional content condition.

**Alarming Literacy Rates.** In her Basic Education Report 2023 speech, Sara Duterte highlighted the urgent issue of literacy, stating, “Another alarming issue that we must address appropriately and effectively is literacy” (OVP-CPS3). By clearly stating her intent to tackle literacy problems, she fulfilled the essential condition, ensuring the audience understood her commitment to resolving this issue. Duterte's sincerity was evident as she expressed genuine concern about literacy and emphasized the need to leverage PISA results to identify and address educational shortcomings, thus meeting the sincerity condition. Her assertion was contextually appropriate, given her role as Vice President and Secretary of the Department of Education, fulfilling the preparatory condition. Additionally, her statement was straightforward and unambiguous, making it easy for the audience to grasp the urgency of the literacy issue, thereby meeting the propositional content condition.



**Directives.** According to Yule (1996), directives are illocutionary acts used by speakers to persuade the hearer to take a specific action. In Sara Duterte's speeches, she used a directive statement to emphasize the urgent need to improve existing education programs. The directive is comprehensively discussed below, following how it met the conditions provided for such a directive to be felicitous.

**Inclusive Education Programs.** Sara Duterte emphasized the need for inclusive education by highlighting the necessity of improving participation rates for learners from marginalized communities, stating, "With such a disparity, inclusivity in education remains to be a concern. Despite gains in bridging gaps, learners from Indigenous People's communities, Geographically-Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas, Muslim youth, learners with disabilities, and out-of-school youth and adults still require the attention of the community. We need to improve their participation rate in basic education" (OVP-CPS3). Her clear call to action achieved the essential condition by urging community involvement to address this issue. Duterte's genuine commitment to inclusivity was evident, fulfilling the sincerity condition. The preparatory condition was also met as her statement was made in the appropriate context of the Basic Education Report 2023, and her authority as the Secretary of Education validated her call for action. Additionally, her straightforward language ensured the audience understood the need for improving participation rates among marginalized learners, thus fulfilling the propositional content condition.

**Commissives.** As explained by Yule (1996), commissives are a type of illocutionary act that obligates the speaker to take a specific action in the future. In her speeches, Duterte employed commissives to express her commitment to improving the quality of basic education in the country through curriculum revisions, learner well-being betterment, ICT integration, and foundational skills development. Each commissive is comprehensively discussed below, following how they met the conditions provided for such a commissive to be felicitous.

**Curriculum Revisions.** Sara Duterte recognizes the value of curriculum improvements since they promote learners' employability and future success. In her statement, "First, we will make the curriculum relevant to produce competent, job-ready, active, and responsible citizens" (OVP-CPS3), clearly articulated her commitment to improving the curriculum, fulfilling the essential condition. Her sincerity is evident as she spoke from her authoritative position as Vice President and Secretary of the Department of Education, genuinely aiming to transform the curriculum. Delivered in response to the identified issues within the current curriculum, her announcement is timely and appropriate; hence, her utterance met the preparatory condition. By also being clear and straightforward about her objective, Sara fulfilled the propositional content condition by ensuring that the audience understands her commitment.

**Learner Well-being Betterment.** Sara Duterte recognizes the necessity of increasing child protection and maintaining learners' safety; she believes learners should be in a secure and protective atmosphere to feel more comfortable and safe in an educational setting. Her commitment to enhancing child protection mechanisms in

schools is unequivocally stated in her declaration, "DepEd will ensure a safe and nurturing learning environment by strengthening child protection mechanisms in schools" (OVP-CPS2), fulfilling the essential condition by clearly outlining her pledge to safeguard learners. Her sincerity is apparent as she speaks from her authoritative role as Secretary of the Department of Education, ensuring her capability to fulfill this promise effectively. Given the prevalence of violence and threats to learners' safety, her statement is both timely and relevant, meeting the preparatory condition. By articulating her plan to strengthen these mechanisms with clarity and directness, Sara ensures the audience understands her commitment to improving learner well-being, thus fulfilling the propositional content condition.

**ICT Integration.** Sara Duterte recognizes the use of technology to enhance education and address challenges such as accessibility, efficacy, and equality. Her commitment to optimizing technology in education, as stated in her declaration, "We will optimize the use of technology, both online and offline, to ensure that learners have opportunities to learn even in the event of a pandemic or other emergencies" (OVP-CPS3), met the essential condition by clearly outlining her dedication to leveraging technology for uninterrupted learning during crises. Her sincerity is evident through her acknowledgment of the challenges students face during emergencies and her capacity as the Vice President and Secretary of the Department of Education to implement effective solutions. This sincerity reinforces her commitment to using technology to enhance educational accessibility and efficacy, fulfilling the sincerity condition. Furthermore, Sara's authoritative position allowed her to make such commitments and announcements, ensuring the preparatory condition is met by the appropriateness of her statement during the Basic Education Report 2023. By addressing the audience's concerns and emphasizing the relevance of technology in education, Sara ensured her message is comprehensible and pertinent, thereby meeting the propositional content condition.

**Foundational Skills Development.** Sara Duterte is committed to prioritizing establishing fundamental skills for young learners; she believes that young learners should garner these skills as early as feasible since these can be building blocks for more complicated skills. Her commitment to prioritizing the development of foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills for kindergarten to grade 3 learners, as stated in her declaration, "DepEd will give greater emphasis on the development of foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills to our Kinder to Grade 3 learners" (OVP-CPS6), met the essential condition by clearly outlining her intent to focus on these crucial skills early in students' educational journeys. Her sincerity is evident through her dedication to allocating resources and efforts towards enhancing these skills, underscoring her role as both Vice President and Secretary of the Department of Education. This authority enabled her to make commitments and ensure they are implemented, thus fulfilling the preparatory condition by also delivering this statement during the MATATAG K to 10 Curriculum launch—a fitting occasion to announce educational priorities. By specifying literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills as the target areas for

improvement, Sara ensured her message is clear and relevant, thereby meeting the propositional content condition.

**Politeness Strategies.** The findings of this study revealed that the four strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987) are present in the utterances of Sara Duterte relative to her Basic Education Curriculum Advocacies. These include positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on-record, and off-record strategies. The sub-strategies in each of the strategies involved the following: positive politeness involved the use of in-group identity markers, notice, attending to the hearer, intensifying interest to the hearer, including both speaker and audience in the activity, being optimistic, asserting or presupposing speaker's knowledge of and concerns for the audience's wants, give/ask for reasons, offer/promise, and give gifts to the hearer; negative politeness involved be pessimistic, state the face-threatening act as a general rule, be conventionally indirect, hedge and apologize; bald-on record strategy involved no face redress in great urgency and metaphorical urgency for emphasis; and off-record strategy involved use contradictions and presuppose.

**Table 2. Politeness Strategies used in Sara Duterte’s Basic Education Curriculum Advocacies**

Politeness Strategy	Sub-strategies	Sample Utterances
Positive Politeness	Use in-group identity markers	“Mga kababayan” [ANC-CPS11] <i>“Fellow countrymen” (translated)</i>
	Notice, attend to H	“Nakikita ko po ang iba’t ibang uri ng problemang nararanasan nila sa kanilang pag-aaral araw-araw.” [OVP-CPS3] <i>“I witness the various struggles that students encounter every day.” (translated)</i>
	Include both S and H in the activity	“Together, let us embrace this transformative change. For our children. For their future.” [OVP-CPS3]
	Give/ask for reasons	“The Department is not blind to the reality...” [OVP-CPS3]
	Offer, promise	“We will improve English proficiency while recognizing linguistic diversity.” [OVP-CPS3]
	Give gifts to H	“We will provide e-classroom packages... consist of 46 laptops, 2 charging carts, 2 wireless routers, and 1 smart TV.” [OVP-CPS3]
Negative Politeness	Be pessimistic	“Filipino learners are NOT academically proficient.” [OVP-CPS3]
	State the FTA as a general rule	“These are caused and triggered by conditions present at home, in our communities, and even in our schools as a result of problems ingrained in our system.” [OVP-CPS3]
	Be conventionally	“The lack of school infrastructure and resources to support the ideal teaching process is the most

	indirect	pressing issue pounding the Philippine basic education.” [OVP-CPS3]
	Hedge	“Among the significant roadblocks to our education infrastructure program are earthquakes, typhoons, landslides, flooding, and even armed conflicts.” [OVP-CPS3]
	Apologize	“The destruction left by Super typhoon Odette in these schools were heartbreaking...” [OVP-CPS3]
Off-record Strategy	Use contradictions	“We know that the road will be bumpy, but our direction is clear.” [OVP-CPS3]
	Presuppose	“We will review the implementation of the Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education Policy...” [OVP-CPS3]
Bald-on Record Strategy	No face redress in great urgency	“WE NEED TO ACT NOW.” [OVP-CPS4]
	Sympathetic warnings of advice	“We cannot afford to waste more time. As education leaders, we cannot allow ASEAN children to miss out on the beauty and benefits of learning...” [OVP-CPS4]

**Positive Politeness.** This strategy aims to restore the public's positive perception and the speaker's intent for her wants to be regarded as desirable (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This strategy involves expressing that the speaker's desires align with those of the public, as seen in Sara Duterte's use of positive politeness to recognize the public's desire for respect and to save their positive face. Duterte employed various techniques, including in-group identity markers, to assert common ground with the audience, using address forms and language or dialects to create a sense of closeness and inclusivity as illustrated by her use of "Mga kababayan" (Fellow countrymen). She also acknowledged the challenges faced by students daily, showing empathy and fostering a connection with her audience: "I witness the various struggles that students encounter every day." By presenting compelling narratives and using inclusive language, as in consistent with the study Syting (2018), Duterte engaged the audience in the conversation, emphasizing a collective responsibility for shaping the future. She projected a positive vision of the future, instilling hope and confidence, and aligned her desires with those of the public to foster unity and collective responsibility, as reflected in her statement, "Together, let us embrace this transformative change. For our children. For their future."

Duterte's communication was further enhanced by providing reasons for her actions, engaging the audience in practical reasoning and fostering cooperation. "The Department is not blind to the reality," she stated, inviting the audience to consider the rationality behind her perspective. She offered promises to address certain issues and make improvements, showing her commitment to the public's desires within the realm of education: "We will improve English proficiency while recognizing linguistic diversity." By giving tangible resources and proposing initiatives to support teachers

and learners in utilizing technology, Duterte demonstrated her awareness of the public's needs and her willingness to meet them. "We will provide e-classroom packages... consisting of 46 laptops, 2 charging carts, 2 wireless routers, and 1 smart TV." This approach not only addressed the public's immediate desires but also symbolized a commitment to human-relations desires, fostering a positive perception of her intentions and actions.

**Negative Politeness.** In this situation, using negative politeness is a corrective measure meant to address the negative impression held by the general public. The speaker desires unrestricted attention and freedom of action (Sari, 2016). In her Education Report Speeches, Sara Duterte employs various sub-strategies of negative politeness. She expresses skepticism about the appropriateness of her speech act to highlight the urgency for reform in basic education, emphasizing issues like academic proficiency and calamity-proofing of schools: "Filipino learners are NOT academically proficient". She generalizes the responsibility for educational failings as systemic problems found in homes, communities, and schools: "These are caused and triggered by conditions present at home, in our communities, and even in our schools as a result of problems ingrained in our system". Duterte's use of conventional indirectness conveys the severity of educational issues without directly assigning blame, stressing the urgency: "The lack of school infrastructure and resources to support the ideal teaching process is the most pressing issue pounding the Philippine basic education".

Her hedging strategy, referring to obstacles like natural disasters as "roadblocks," acknowledges the complexity of the issues while asserting their significance: "Among the significant roadblocks to our education infrastructure program are earthquakes, typhoons, landslides, flooding, and even armed conflicts". Furthermore, Sara Duterte employs apologizing to express empathy and regret for the hardships caused by events such as Super Typhoon Odette, using terms like "heartbreaking" to convey her compassion and sense of responsibility: "The destruction left by Super Typhoon Odette in these schools were heartbreaking..." (Alavidze, 2019). This approach aligns with her advocacy for addressing the immediate needs of affected communities, showing a governmental stance of care and responsiveness. By employing these strategies, Duterte effectively communicates the critical issues in the Philippine education system while maintaining a respectful and empathetic tone toward her audience.

**Off-record Strategy.** If a communicative act is performed in a way that makes it impossible to associate it with a single, distinct communicative intention, it is performed off-record (Syting and Gildore, 2022). For example, Sara Duterte subtly suggests perseverance in overcoming challenges with statements like, "We know that the road will be bumpy, but our direction is clear." Additionally, she implies dissatisfaction with the implementation of the Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education Policy by stating, "We will review the implementation of the Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education Policy," demonstrating openness to adjustments. These strategies help maintain her diplomatic demeanor while effectively influencing audience perception.

**Bald-on Record Strategy.** This sub-strategy is assumed to comply with Grice's maxims (Grice, 1975). According to Putri & Santoso (2020), these maxims provide an intuitive description of conversational concepts that would serve as guidance for obtaining the highest level of efficiency in communication. This strategy prioritizes clarity, urgency, and directness, eschewing face-saving techniques to deliver firm statements. Within this framework, two sub-strategies are evident: "No Face Redress in Great Urgency," where urgency overrides social politeness with statements like "WE NEED TO ACT NOW," and "Sympathetic Warnings of Advice," combining directness with empathy to foster shared responsibility among education leaders. For instance, she asserts, "We cannot afford to waste more time," emphasizing the urgency while appealing to cooperation. These approaches enhance communication effectiveness by addressing immediate needs while maintaining relational sensitivity.

## CONCLUSION

This study revealed that Sara Duterte employed implicatures, presuppositions, speech acts, and politeness strategies in her advocacies for the Philippine Basic Education Curriculum. Sara utilized implicatures to give her advocacy messages more depth and complexity and, therefore, increase audience engagement and recognition. On the other hand, she conveyed presuppositions to make her utterances more persuasive and relatable as she matched them to the target audience's pre-existing goals and beliefs on quality education. In terms of speech acts, particularly illocutionary forces, she performed assertives, directives, and commissives in her advocacies. For these speech acts to be felicitous, she fulfilled the four felicity conditions: the essential condition, sincerity condition, preparatory condition, and propositional content condition. As a result, Sara Duterte's advocacies are readily comprehensible, resonating further with the audience. Lastly, Sara Duterte's tactical use of Politeness Strategies manifests her efficiency in preserving the positive image or reputation the public holds towards her and redressing any possible face-threatening acts. By employing the sub-strategies of positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on record, and off-record strategy, she successfully communicated her advocacy in an influential and compelling manner.

Throughout the study, the researchers realized how powerful language can be to politicians, such as Sara Duterte, as they can maneuver it to shape public understanding and support for their advocacies in the realm of policy-making and communication to be successful. Hence, it will be beneficial for government officials to comprehend and learn the sociopragmatic intricacies of language and apply them in their speeches and utterances to appeal to the citizens effectively. However, this kind of knowledge is a double-edged sword because it can be exploited to deceive people. Therefore, as future citizens of the country, it is also critical for students to become knowledgeable about the sociopragmatic aspect of language. Through this means, they will be able to evaluate the utterances of politicians from a sociopragmatic perspective and thus become perceptive of their hidden motives, agendas, and rhetorical strategies.

## REFERENCES

- Alavidze, M. (2019). The Use of pronouns in political discourse.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321533698\\_The\\_Use\\_of\\_Pronouns\\_in\\_Political\\_Discourse](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321533698_The_Use_of_Pronouns_in_Political_Discourse)
- Balaanz, D. (2023). Analysis of speech act in presidential election speeches.  
[www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu).[https://www.academia.edu/113663777/Analysis\\_of\\_Speech\\_Act\\_in\\_Presidential\\_Election\\_Speeches](https://www.academia.edu/113663777/Analysis_of_Speech_Act_in_Presidential_Election_Speeches)
- Balogun, S. & Murana, M. (2018) "Language in political discourse: A pragmatic study of presupposition and politeness in the inaugural speech of President Donald Trump." *Bulletin of Advanced English Studies*
- Becker, M. (2019). The Power of letting children learn together.  
<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/value-inclusive-education#:~:text=Inclusive%20education%20values%20diversity%20and,in%20decisions%20that%20affect%20them>
- Beltrama, A., & Papafragou, A. (2023). Pragmatic violations affect social inferences about the speaker. *Glossa Psycholinguistics*, 2(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.5070/g601197>
- Brown, P. Levinson, S. C., & Gumperz, J. J. (1987). *Politeness: some universals in language usage (studies in interactional sociolinguistics 4) (reissue ed.)*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511813085>
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.  
[https://www.ucg.ac.me/skladiste/blog\\_609332/objava\\_105202/fajlovi/Creswell.pdf](https://www.ucg.ac.me/skladiste/blog_609332/objava_105202/fajlovi/Creswell.pdf)
- Courtney, M. B. (2023). *Striving for excellence: The Importance of continuous improvement in education*. Courtney Consulting.  
<https://www.matthewbcourtney.com/post/striving-for-excellence-the-importance-of-continuous-improvement-in-education>
- Dehideniya, D., Ekanayake, S. Y., & Gamage, K. A., (2021). The role of personal values in learning approaches and student achievements. *Behavioral Sciences*, 11(7), 102. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs11070102> (2021) The Role of personal values in learning approaches and student achievements.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8301052/>
- Gelilang, W., Tenito, P. C., & Varona, B. S. (2021) *A Discourse analysis on president Duterte's speech acts in-relation-to the novel coronavirus*.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354523607\\_A\\_Discourse\\_Analysis\\_on\\_President\\_Duterte's\\_Speech\\_Acts\\_in-relation-to\\_the\\_Novel\\_CoronaVirus](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354523607_A_Discourse_Analysis_on_President_Duterte's_Speech_Acts_in-relation-to_the_Novel_CoronaVirus)
- Janeke, B. (2023). *The Importance of considering employability while studying*.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-considering-employability-while-studying-belinda-janeke/>

- Khairat, M. E. (2018). Implicatures in political discourse on Indonesia Lawyers Club Show. *Journal Polingua: Scientific Journal of Linguistic Literatura and Education*, 5(1), 4–24. <https://doi.org/10.30630/polingua.v5i1.18>
- Leech G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. Longmans. London.  
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/studies-in-second-languageacquisition/article/abs/principles-of-pragmatics-geoffrey-n-leech-london-and-nw-york-longman-1983-pp>
- Mariana, N. (2021). Politeness and impoliteness in the political discourse - GRIN.  
<https://www.grin.com/document/1158424?lang=en>
- Mišić Ilić, B., & Radulović, M. (2015). Commissive and expressive illocutionary acts in political discourse. *Lodz Papers in Pragmatics*.  
<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/lpp-2015003/html?lang=>
- Oraibi, H. A., & Fadhel, A. P. W. N. (2023). A Socio-pragmatic study of position as power dynamic in the American political discourse. *Al-Bahith Journal*.  
[https://uokerbala.edu.iq/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Rp\\_A-SocioPragmaticStudy-of-Position-as-Power-Dynamic-in-the-American-PoliticalDiscourse](https://uokerbala.edu.iq/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Rp_A-SocioPragmaticStudy-of-Position-as-Power-Dynamic-in-the-American-PoliticalDiscourse).
- Pagdilao, A. (2018). Speech act analysis in the state of the city address of mayor.  
[https://www.academia.edu/40452569/speech\\_act\\_analysis\\_in\\_the\\_state\\_of\\_the\\_city\\_address\\_of\\_mayor](https://www.academia.edu/40452569/speech_act_analysis_in_the_state_of_the_city_address_of_mayor)
- Qualtrics (2023). Teacher development 101: what is it and why is it important?  
<https://www.qualtrics.com/au/experience-management/industry/teacher-development/>
- Rahayu, F. N., Arifin, M. B., & Ariani, S. (2018). Illocutionary act in the main characters' utterances in mirror mirror movie. *Jurnal Ilmu Budaya*. <https://e-journals.unmul.ac.id/index.php/JBSSB/article/view/1065/0>
- Sari, Y. K. (2016). An analysis of politeness strategy in Barack Obama's victory speech. <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/34405/1/yani%20kurnia%20sari-fah.pdf>
- Syting, C. O. (2018). Politeness Strategies in Classroom Interaction: A Discourse Analysis. *Tin-aw*, 2(1).
- Syting, C. J. & Gildore, P. J. (2022). Teachers' linguistic politeness in classroom interaction: a pragmatic analysis. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n8p133>
- Tian, L. (2021). Critical discourse analysis of political discourse — a case study of Trump's Tv speech. *Theory And Practice in Language Studies*, 11(5), 516–520.  
<https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1105.08>
- Tsindos, T. (2023). Chapter 23: Discourse analysis. Pressbooks.  
[https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/qualitativeresearch/chapter/\\_\\_unknown\\_\\_-23/](https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/qualitativeresearch/chapter/__unknown__-23/)



WWC (2020). Supportive learning environment interventions review protocol.  
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Document/285#:~:text=A%20supportive%20learning%20environment%20is,student%20outcomes%20and%20teacher%20practice.>