Initiation in the E-Negotiation of Facebook Ukay-Ukay Trading

Lovely P. Actub-Parungao[1,2]
Nelia G. Balgoa[1]

[1]Department of English, MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology
[2]Department of Education and Social Sciences, MSU at Naawan

Abstract

The rising attention to e-negotiations has resulted from the forceful presence of the internet which has enabled the design and the distribution of software capable of supporting negotiators. However, most studies on e-negotiation are still on support systems and other areas such as communication are unheeded and are mostly experimental. Qualitative and empirical investigations are widely open for execution. In the characterization of negotiation as communication, stage models presuppose that negotiations pass through a series of expectable phases toward agreement: initiation, problem solving, and resolution. Consequently, the dearth of studies on e-negotiation as communication has resulted in the neglect of the examination of the initiation stage which is considered an essential stage in understanding and establishing the context and culture of the communication process. The current study attempted to fill the wide gap of initiation studies by inductively categorizing the initiation practices in the e-negotiation of second-hand clothing business in the Philippines. Although widespread and a phenomenon in the Philippines, this business, commonly known as *ukay-ukay* is still an understudied field, particularly the online *ukay-ukay* trading. Using inductive categorization, multimodal critical discourse as theoretical framework, and discourse-oriented online ethnography as data gathering procedure, the study determined the initiation practices of the e-negotiation of Facebook *ukay-ukay* traders, their representations, and their reconstruction of the *ukay-ukay* trade. The study found five categories of initiation practices, determined representative words, phrases, sentences, emojis, and images and further concluded that the initiation stage of the e-negotiations has not only clarified and intensified colonial memories but has reconstructed the presentation, perception, pricing and target market, and threats.

Keywords: *initiation, e-negotiation, second hand clothing, ukay-ukay, multimodal critical discourse analysis, discourse oriented online ethnography*

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Introduction

Negotiation is a way where participants reach a specific agreement through planned interaction or symbiotic decision making Young (1975) and a means of productive interaction by which two or more conflicting parties decide to solve their issues together Lax & Sebenius (1986). In the characterization of negotiation as communication, the phase model suggests that a negotiation follows an evolutionary process (Putnam, 1990). The two types of phase models are stage models and episodic models. The s*tage models* presuppose that negotiations follow a sequence of expectable stages toward agreement from issue definition (initiation) to problem solving and finally a resolution (Holmes, 1992). On the other hand, the *episodic models* observe unified periods of coherent activity, such as an uninterrupted series of offers defining a phase on the basis of an obviously identifiable pattern of tactics with a clear start and finish (Baxter, 1982). A major distinction between the two is that stage models treat phases as fixed while episodic models treat phases as flexible, permitting distinctions in both their spans and orders. Moreover, Koeszegi et al. (2011) suggests that because of unclear phase structure asynchronous E-negotiations can be better elucidated by stages.

Being a planned action, studying initiation in negotiations is essential. However, the studies of Bear (2011), Magee et al. (2007) and Volkema & Fleck (2012) suggests that even if it is deemed important in the negotiation process, the initiation stage has received limited scholarly attention. According to Lewicki et al. (2009) research on the negotiation processes are largely about the influence of factors leading to agreement. Kapoutsis et al. (2013) also suggests for the investigation of electronic negotiations positing that an electronic medium could alter the initiation dynamics. Interestingly, in many non-western cultures, the relevance of the initiation stage is given attention as globalization of world markets increases (Brett,2007; Miles,2010).

One way to examine initiation in e-negotiations is on the global phenomenon of second-hand clothing. Herjanto et al. (2016) did a **c**ontent analysis of 131 published academic articles about second hand clothing (SHC) and claimed that the findings from the studies do not offer a full picture of the SHC phenomenon. In the Philippines, the imported secondhand clothes are called *ukay-ukay* and although illegal are actually sold in physical stores. In previous studies, *ukay-ukay* trading is seen as an equalizing agent in terms of fashion (Locsin, 2007) and a tool that empowers vendors in the arenas of public power (Milgram, 2012). The force of the internet also stirred *ukay-ukay* trade in virtual space. During the pandemic, it established an unstoppable online presence that paved the way for the e-negotiations of not only of a livelihood but also of values, attitudes, and beliefs signified by different semiotic resources.

The suggestion to investigate initiation in e-negotiations (Kapoutsis et al., 2013), the dearth of studies focused on the initiation stage of e-negotiations (Bear, 2011; Magee et al. 2007; Volkema & Fleck, 2012), the strong presence of online *ukay-ukay* page in the New Normal, and the demand for alternative perspectives on SHC studies (Herjanto, 2016) led to the conduct of the current research. This study particularly aimed to:

a. categorize the initiation practices of Facebook *ukay-ukay* trading;

b. analyze the semiotic modes used to represent the initiation practices; and,

c. discuss how the initiation stage of the e-negotiation Facebook reconstructed the *ukay-ukay* trade.

Through a multimodal critical discourse analysis, the study presented e-negotiation initiation practices of both sellers and buyers of *ukay-ukay* on Facebook, critically analyzed the array of linguistic and visual representations of the initiation practices, and discussed how the initiation of e-negotiation reconstructed the *ukay-ukay* trade.

Negotiation as Communication and Electronic Negotiations

Despite an abundance of Negotiation definition, the conduct in which negotiators communicate received less investigations (Weingart & Olekalns, 2004). Recent study indicates that the frequency, phasing, and sequencing of communications influence settlement formation (Donohue & Roberto, 1996).

The first method to characterize negotiations is to view integrative and distributive processes as distinct approaches to the problem at hand, the second method is to view integrative and distributive strategies as interconnected components of a sole strategy (Putnam, 1990) while the third method deals with the time aspects of negotiations, done at a more aggregated level—in terms of negotiation phases (Douglas, 1962; Gulliver, 1979; Holmes, 1992; Morley & Stephenson, 1977). *Phase models* presume that a negotiation advances through an evolutionary process (Putnam, 1990) and can either be Stage or Episodic. The s*tage models* presuppose that negotiations undergo predictable stages to agreement: issue definition (initiation), problem solving, and resolution (Holmes, 1992) while e*pisodic models* presuppose combined periods of clear activity, such as an incessant series of offers defining on the basis of a clearly identifiable pattern of tactics from start to finish (Baxter, 1982). The major distinction between the two is that *stage* treat phases as fixed, whereas *episodic* treat phases as flexible, allowing variations in both span and the sequence.

With the dynamic occurrence of electronic commerce, demand for online negotiation studies is increasing. Segev and Beam (1999) and Kersten and Lo (2001) posit that more internet means more business hence higher possibility and desirability to conduct online negotiation. As suggested by social science studies, Larson (2003) posits that humans are facing a histrionic global cultural change as they learn to interpret non-verbal signs online, positing further that e-negotiations already equal the face to face, in terms of the effectiveness of the communications.

Various studies already have claims on the conduct of e-negotiation postulating that traditional frontal negotiations often lead to ineffective outcomes (Rangaswamy & Shell, 1997) while e-negotiations alleviate biases, fast, and undeviating (Carmel, et al., 1993). E-negotiations also exclude status differences between groups (Hewstone & Brown, 1986) and people (Kiesler et al.,1984; Sproull & Kiesler, 1986), increase the resources of low-network

people (Weisband et al.,1995), and may lessen and prevent hostility and suspicion (Carnevale & Probst, 1997). Croson (1999) further suggests that most face-to-face negotiating tricks do not play well in the electronic media and the study of Galin et al., (2007) also advances that the kind of media used has a substantial effect on the length and schemes of the negotiation.

Interestingly Hine et al. (2009) found that agreeable language is preferred in e-negotiation but the complex role of emotions still requires further study especially in realistic contexts. Moreover, Yuan and Turel (2008) claimed that only few negotiation support systems have been successful hence the call to investigate the gap between the perceived usefulness and the actual adoption of such systems, to which Rahmawati et al. (2019) rejoined suggesting that utilizing social sciences expertise are needed, because involvement of the social factors are compromised in the production of e-negotiation provisions. Most studies mentioned tackled the advantages of e-negotiations in an experimental setting.

Initiation in Negotiations

Few studies already emphasized the relevance of studying the initiation stage of negotiation. In non-western cultures, due to the swelling globalization of world markets, the roles of relationship-building and public identity (face) for individuals were initially examined by both scholars and practitioners (Brett 2007; Miles 2010). The study of Miles (2010) developed a model suggesting that people will not negotiate if it will result in a loss of face. The assumed antecedents for such behavior are social context, individual differences, and knowledge.

Conceptual models of initiations in negotiations are scarce; nevertheless, they could already be read in the aspects of gender and negotiation studies (Babcock et al.,2003; Bowles et al.,2007). Babcock et al. (2003) encouraged women to initiate negotiation at work. Moreover, Bowles et al. (2007) theorizes that the differential treatment of male and female negotiators results to the greater hesitancy of women to initiate negotiations over salary increase. Also, Babcock et al. (2006) proposes recognition of opportunities, perceptions of entitlement, and apprehension as the predictors of propensity to take the first step in negotiation.

Increasingly, studies demonstrate that a lot of negotiations fail even before they start, as individuals prefer to suspend a request or evade in appealing a potential negotiation altogether. Curhan & Pentland (2007). In addition, Magee et al. (2007) conducted five experiments to investigate the effect of possession and power experience on debates and found that individuals with high power exhibited a superior propensity to initiate a negotiation suggesting that power augmented the likelihood of initiating in a variety of competitive interactions.

Patton & Balakrishnan (2010) experimentally tested differences in pre-negotiation behavioral influences under the expectation of future negotiation interaction (EFNI) versus no expectation of future interaction (non-EFI). They found that bargainers in EFNI contexts are more likely to bargain again, enter negotiations with pleasant characters and deliberate for win-win solutions. Rousseau (2005) further taught employees how to personally initiate

the negotiation in the workplace and outlined how workers and bosses can drive influence for win-win innovations. Furthermore, Wheeler (2004) posits that a human being's anxiety from the radiating uncertainty in the negotiation processes are not entirely harmful because of the activation of creativity resulting in productive dealings and agreements.

Meanwhile, according to the general model of planned behavior process (Ajzen, 1988, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein 1969, 1972), the intention of a person is affected by his/her attitudes or beliefs therefore predicting his/her behavior. In negotiation and initiation behavior, an individual's propensity of appealing a counterpart, requesting, and elevating a request would follow from having a similar intention, which in turn is a function of the individual's attitude towards initiation (Volkema & Fleck, 2012). One's attitude toward starting a negotiation is a product of his/her beliefs and personality influenced by his/her culture (Brett, 2007) and could affect one's motivation in acting upon an opportunity where social conduct matters (Bandura 1999; Cho & Lee 2006; Huppertz 2003). Moreover, the supposed importance of a desired outcome, perceived substitutions, period, place, counterpart and other factors could also shake the relations between attitudes, intentions, and initiating behavior. Evidence of the potential importance of personality and situational factors to the initiation process can be found in the study of Huppertz (2003) who studied consumer complaining behavior which is a kind of initiation. Ultimately, a consumer's decision to initiate a complaint or not could be affected by his/her attitude (Ngai et al. 2007; Thøgersen et al. 2009), personality (Bodey & Grace 2007; Kim & Chen 2010; Sharma et al. 2010; Thøgersen et al. 2009), and other situational factors (Chebat et al. 2005; Kim & Chen 2010; Thøgersen et al. 2009). Hence, initiation practices are not linear but depend upon various factors.

The developments in technology enabled websites and applications like Facebook to reach wider scope, use rich media, and employ varied semiotic resources. Subsequently, initiation in the e-negotiation of the Facebook *ukay-ukay* follows the nature of the virtual space where it occurs; hence, it uses rich media, and employs varied semiotic resources which could be analyzed using a multimodal perspective.

Thrifted Clothes Studies

Ukay –ukay is considered a culture in the Philippines with Baguio City presumed as the *ukay-ukay* capital. The word *ukay-ukay* is a derivative of the Filipino word *hukay*, which means to dig up. In Filipino, *Ukayukay* is synonymous with *wagwag*, which is the act of dusting off a piece of clothing by taking hold of one end and snapping it in the air (Locsin, 2007). In Cebuano, this is synonymous to "ukay" meaning "to mix". Today, *ukay-ukay* is not only popular in Baguio City but in the entire Philippines. In almost every part of the country, one can find an *ukay-ukay* stall or *ukay-ukay* area. In Davao City, there are 203 vendors as of the 2012 record of the Davao Business Bureau. The business capital is Php30,000-50,000 and gross sales is about Php50,000.00 -Php70,000.00 (Sagarino et al., 2013). Although widespread in the Philippines, studies on thrifted clothes or *ukay-ukay* are still scarce. Herjanto et al. (2016) did a **c**ontent analysis of 131 published academic articles about second hand clothing (SHC) and found that studies are mostly on its history, consumption and disposal, and its impact claiming that the findings from the studies do not offer a full picture of the SHC phenomenon.

Abueg (2005) studied the economic side of *ukay-ukay* and shared that in Baguio City where *ukay-ukay* is legal, retailers earn about PhP20,000 to PhP50,000 per month but on buying season, like Fiestas or Christmas, their earnings would be higher. On the average, a small *ukay-ukay* stand could earn between PhP500 and PhP1,000 per day; although, some report zero income on certain days. The study further found differing attitudes toward the trade. The proposal for the legal importation of *ukay-ukay* and its promise of more jobs and more income was already brought to Philippine Congress several times. One of which is House Bill 4055 which calculated an increment of Php700 million per year for the Philippine income; unfortunately, it failed to get a majority vote (Gavilan, 2017). Jesus Arranza, Federation of Philippine Industries 2011 Chairman, opined health threats from *ukay-ukay* and added that the move "*will just embolden the smugglers of ukay-ukay [and] dissuade investments in the textile and garments industry that is now on the verge of collapse*" (Yamsuan, 2019).

Additionally, Locsin (2007) posits that fashion, through the *ukay-ukay* practice in Baguio City, no longer serve as an instrument of otherness, but has become a homogenizing tool between the rich and the poor, emphasizing that a house help who is paid only Php2,500.00/month could afford certain brands. Milgram (2012) further claimed that in Bagiuo City *ukay-ukay* selling has aided vendors in asserting their place as valid actors in arenas of public power by altering public streets into vibrant social spaces. In the global arena, the perspective on secondhand clothing evolved from being a benevolent endeavor to becoming a valuable yet stylish goods sought across class and space. In the Philippines, *ukay-ukay* shoppers attain a certain pride because the origin of the clothes matters (Trubek, 2008 in Milgram, 2012).

The *halukay* or *ukay-ukay* culture was born out of the longing for "*good quality, unique design, fashionable, same as brand new*" apparel that would not cost much (Isla, 2013 in Biana, 2020) however among the *ukay-ukay* sellers there also persists a colonial mentality (Abueg, 2005) that is why when they initiate the pricing for the "*branded*" one, they put the price ceiling at 75% of the actual price of brand new. This finding agrees with Lemire (1997) and Palmer and Clark (2005) that "*the trade and consumption of secondhand clothing have long provided an avenue through which people crafted not only their livelihoods but also personal spaces, feelings of well-being, and identities in a changing world*.".

The local studies on *ukay-ukay* were set in the physical *ukay-ukay* setting in Baguio City while the current study is on the online space and are owned by Cebuano speakers representing online Northern Mindanao traders who negotiate not only their livelihoods but also their values, beliefs, and attitudes. In doing so, it can be shown that interrogation of how the complexities of the used clothing business in the Philippines can lead to negotiation of values and spaces. The Philippines' penchant for *ukay-ukay* goes beyond economics and livelihood; it also reflects our behaviors towards fashion, clothing and these in return define our social and economic classes.

Methodology

The study employed a qualitative approach that inductively categorized initiation practices, analyzed representations, and discussed implications found in the initiation stages of the E-negotiation of *ukay-ukay* trade on Facebook.

The gathering of data followed the guidelines of the Discourse Oriented Online Ethnography (DOOE) by Androutsopoulos (2008). DOOE is a mixture of systematic observation of activities online and interviews with online actors, which was developed as a complement to the linguistic (or multimodal) analysis of log data. In addition, DOOE targets sets of relationships in two levels. First, within a particular site of discourse that sum the discourse units making up a particular space for Computer Mediated Discourse (CMD), such as a lone website or discussion board. Second, a field of CMD such as a set of interrelated websites that represent a lifestyle or social scene on the web (Androutsopoulos, 2007). In this study, Facebook is the site of discourse while the 5 *ukay-ukay* pages selling women's clothes and owned by women Cebuano speakers living in Northern Mindanao, are the sets of interconnected websites that represent a lifestyle.

From October – November, the posts on *5 ukay-ukay* pages on Facebook were observed and buying activities were also participated by the researcher. After initial participant-observation, the owners of the pages were contacted and interviewed. While all 5 owners gave consent for the continued observation of their *ukay-ukay* pages, only 3 agreed to be interviewed.

When screenshots were gathered and interviews were done, the initiation practices were inductively categorized. Since there is still a scarcity of e-negotiation studies in the realistic setting, this also led to the dearth of published categories in the initiation stages that could have been used to deductively categorize the initiation practices. The existing frameworks were deemed inappropriate since they are not on social commerce like Facebook nor are they about secondhand clothes or *ukay-ukay* selling.

After inductively categorizing the initiation practices, representations were determined and a multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) (Machin & Mayr, 2012) was done. First was the lexical analysis of the words, phrases, and sentences. Having examined the kinds of words, phrases, and sentences used in the *ukay-ukay* pages, it signified certain types of identities, values, and sequences of activity which were not necessarily made obvious. The second analysis done is iconographical analysis where individual elements in images, such as objects and settings were explored; foregrounded, backgrounded, and excluded visual elements and features were scrutinized; and iconography, meaning potential, attributes, setting, and salience were also deliberated.

Results and Discussion

Initiation Practices in the Facebook Ukay-ukay Page

1. *Seller Initiation*

a. Mooding

Mooding means curating a Facebook page like that of a physical shopping store. In the Facebook *ukay-ukay* pages, the sellers design their pages like that of an attractive physical shop or boutique "*para mustand-out*" (to be unique from other sellers) and "*para dali madumduman*" (to be easily remembered). The attractiveness and uniqueness of the pages inspired by other Facebook *ukay-ukay* pages and websites like Pinterest, affect buyers' attitude and awakens a buyer's impulse to buy. Store-induced pleasure is a cogent determinant for spending behavior while store-induced excitement or alertness could increase shopping enthusiasm specifically time spent in stores and interaction with personnel (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982); hence, in the Facebook *ukay-ukay* pages, sellers design their pages as pleasant as they could to enhance positive shopping mood. When customers are in a positive mood, they tend to have a positive evaluation for consumer goods (Isen et al.,1978; Srull,1983; Gardner, 1985; Sherman and Smith, 1987; Dawson et al.,1990;) and retail products (Obermiller and Bitner 1984) leading them to purchase or repurchase an item.

b. *Legitizing*

Legitizing means convincing buyers that an *ukay-ukay* Facebook page is trustworthy, in the absence of a physical store. This is done by showing and growing followers, likers, and doing legit checks. According to Kim (2020), followers on social media can be taken as a social capital since they provide brand support and activate a network effect that works favorably for the brand status through positive feedback and contents initiated by the users. While it is customary for Facebook to show the total likes and followers of a certain page, it is the seller who works for their page to be visible on Facebook and encourage more likes and follows. When a buyer is hesitant about the page, the seller posts a legit check where followers and likers confirm that a certain page is not a scam, by liking or commenting. An *ukay-ukay* Facebook page's legitimacy is also validated when a prospect buyer sees a common friend or an acquaintance as a liker or a follower of the page.

c. Caveating

Caveating means giving soft warning or proviso of specific stipulations, conditions, or limitations. In the *ukay-ukay Facebook pages,* caveats state buyer consequences when seller conditions are not met. Page owners or sellers warn the buyers that while the clothes are in wearable condition, they are not perfect because they are "*ukay*" (thrifted or secondhand). They also warn buyers that some items do

not appear as pictured and colors could be changed by lighting. They do this to minimize bogus buying since there are prospective buyers who reserve items but will not send payments because they do not have any money for the said payment schedule, have taken the wrong size, or did not read certain warnings. Such situations compel the sellers to repost the items which is considered as an additional workload. Wright et al. (1982) claims that consumers will no longer read warnings for products they use frequently while Godfrey et al., (1983) found that individuals will be more likely to look for warning only when they perceive a product as hazardous. In the Facebook *ukay-ukay* selling, it is more likely that these caveats are not read or are taken for granted since most buyers have already used *ukay-ukay* and do not perceive the items as dangerous; hence the prevalence of bogus buyers.

d. Detailing

Detailing means posting and providing complete information about the items and the Facebook *ukay-ukay* page. Information given include description of items, location, contact number, order instructions, duration of buying, schedules of delivery, preferred couriers, and modes of payment. Consumers prefer complete information to help them make sound buying decisions (Novak et al., 2000) while rich and quality information is a component of e-satisfaction (Szymanski & Hise, 2000); However, posting complete information is a necessity for the seller in the Facebook *ukay-ukay* page since they do not have an online store attendant who can immediately answer customer's queries. Seller-owners hire part time employees only for laundry and delivery services. While giving necessary information will ease consumers' doubts towards a product or a retailer (Deeter-Schmelz, et al., 2001), in the Facebook *ukay-ukay* page, detailing is done so sellers no longer have to answer recurring questions from buyers. When buyers have questions that are already posted, sellers would answer "*basaha lang ang details ma'am*" (just read the details ma'am); detailing is done to save time.

e. Humanizing

Humanizing means presenting each *ukay-ukay* item being worn by a manikin projecting a fashionable atmosphere. In physical stores, *ukay-ukay* items are in heaps, other items are hung, and only one or two *ukay-ukay* items are worn by a manikin. Using a virtual manikin enhances the buying sensation where consumers are able to interact with the product (Janda et al., 2002). In the Facebook *ukay-ukay* selling, there is no interaction with the product, only visual presentation because the manikins are manually dressed, pictured, then posted by the seller. Also, since there is only one manikin used for all items, it is up to the buyers to imagine how it will look on them, based on the sizes posted.

2. *Buyer Initiation*

a. Acknowledging

Acknowledging means the buyer has seen the initiation done by the sellers. This does not necessarily mean that the buyer will buy the items but is an action that would tell the buyer that his/her initiation is visible among the likes and followers of the page. In the Facebook *ukay-ukay* pages, only few would outrightly acknowledge the buyers' initiations. In fact, those who stayed reactionless could buy more than those who reacted to the initiation. Buyers acknowledge the seller's initiation by reacting, commenting, tagging friends, or by asking questions.

Representations of Initiation

1. *Seller Initiation*

a. Mooding

Figure 1. Cover photos of the facebook ukay-ukay pages.

The primary representation of the mooding practice in the initiation stage is the cover photo. The cover photos are designed using a shop's name, mix of colors, a tag line, and images of women that resemble models posing for a specific clothing line. The cover photos show "pre-embedded definitions" (Hall,1973) that hint at the ideologies found on the page.

In the Facebook *ukay-ukay* selling, the term "pre-loved" has been commonly used to refer to an *ukay-ukay* item. The Facebook page names include words like "branded", "elegant", "gem", "sky" implying a sense of glamour. For the sellers, these words make their product special, attractive, and affluent. They believe that although they are selling *ukay-ukay*, theirs are unlike those from the physical stores since they are washed, ironed, or steamed, and posted with sophistication. In many contexts a desire for glamour represented a brave defiance of class and gender norms and expectations (Dyhouse, 2010). On Facebook, sellers rebranded a dusty and wrinkled piece of *ukay-ukay* to a glamorous and classy pre-loved item.

The cover photos reflect dominant colors of pink, white, and white gray which the sellers perceive as attractive. White and pink colors arouse happiness and excitement among people (Hemphill, 1996) while gray is more tolerated by men than women (Khouw, 2002). The sellers admitted that they took inspiration from

design websites like *Pinterest* or other online shops saying "*ning-ana man pud ang color sa uban"* (the same colors are used by the other sellers).

One cover photo shows a line of slim women while one presents a line of four women in different sizes including a Muslim woman. The former represents the thin ideal of beauty that initiates consumption (Germove & Williams, 1999) and makes the beauty industry profitable because of women's insecurity (Faludi, 2009) while the latter acknowledges the different sizes and beliefs of women encouraging their empowerment and healthy self-regulation. Nevertheless, there is a pattern of sophistication in both cover photos. Images of seemingly empowered working women, Luo (2012) argues, are problematic as it depoliticizes the struggle of women especially the Asian woman. Their sophistication covers the fight of women against oppressive gender rules or institutional power. These types of images only represent the fortunate and cultured, middle-to-upper-class woman, usually Western woman, therefore becoming a symbol of oppression in the microcosm of media representations. Correspondingly, the claim for *ukay-ukay* as a homogenizing tool between rich and poor (Locsin, 2007) is dubious in the Facebook platform since prices are 2 to 3 times higher than in the physical shop. With prices ranging from Php300-800, only the privileged, middle-to-upper-class woman can afford.

Consequently, the tagline of the shops like "*It's okay to wear ukay*" tries to convince a target market that is still hesitant in wearing *ukay-ukay* most of the privileged, middle to upper class women. Another tagline says "*Stay home, shop online*.", promotes the convenience of online shopping rather than going to warm, cramped, and dusty *ukay-ukay* physical shops.

b. Legitizing

Legitizing means convincing buyers that an *ukay-ukay* Facebook page is trustworthy. In legitizing, numbers frontline the representation. The more digits for likers and followers, the more a page attracts responses from prospect buyers. But these likes and follows were not achieved solely by sharing the page or by posting regularly. Online sellers also sought help and paid virtual assistants to "*boost*" their Facebook page. Boosting makes the page become more visible in the online arena. If a seller could not or could no longer afford a virtual assistant, they learn these skills from YouTube videos

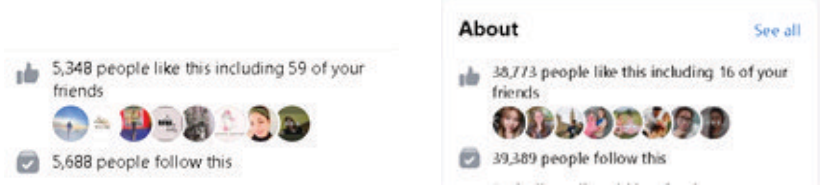

Figure 2. Screenshots of followers and likers.

c. Caveating

Caveating, when pertaining to the buying process, are represented by an outline of declarative sentences but appears to be imperative because of the stop icon and the capital fonts. When caveats are about the *ukay-ukay* item, the declarative sentences are already presented with small fonts. The icons used are red exclamation marks and gray wave icons.

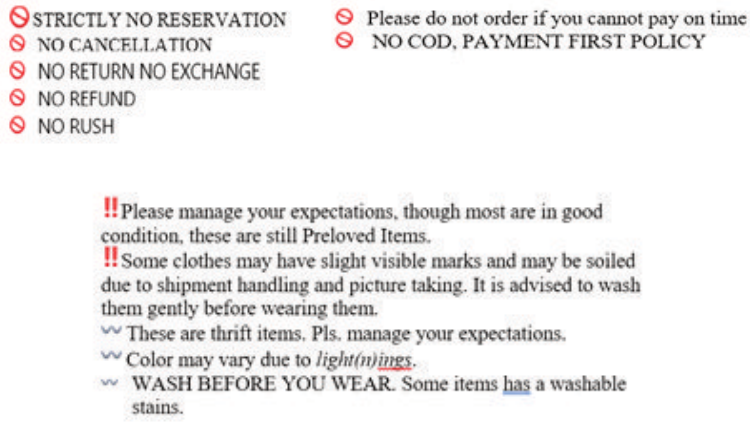

Figure 3. Screenshots of Caveats

The presence of emojis is positively associated with consumer engagement (Ko et al.,2022) but making it red implies that such statement should be taken with caution since Red is found to be linked with hazard and threat (Gerend & Sias, 2009; Wogalter et al., 1998) while the caps lock font indicates strong emotion as uppercase increased orthographic processing (Choi et al., 2018). Warnings in outline form are read and compiled more than in paragraph form (Desaulniers, 1987) but symbols added to text warnings do not necessarily increase levels of compliance (Frienmann,1988); hence, the presence of bogus buyers but at a minimum. According to the sellers, even though they put the line "BUGOS BUYER WILL BE POSTED", they no longer pose bogus buyers which explains the absence of the threatening red icon, as seen below.

~ BUGOS BUYER WILL BE POSTED ~

The presence of a red emoji beside the problematic line like "NO RETURN NO EXCHANGE" conveys an authoritative tone which denies buyers of their rights as consumers. In addition, lines like "*Please manage your expectations…" "Color may vary due to light(n)ings"* and "*No Rush*" suggest that bargaining power is on the sellers. The first two lines imply that a buyer has to be content however an *ukay-ukay* item reaches him/her, even if it doesn't look like how it is presented on screen while the latter implies that even if he/she has made a purchase and paid an item, one has to wait when it will be delivered at his/her doorstep.

d. Detailing

In detailing, English words and phrases like "pre-loved", "good as new", "select", "no flaw(s)", and "premium" are used to describe the *ukay-ukay*. These words signal that the items sold even if second-hand are still of superior quality and suggest glamour. Researches in international advertising suggest that the usage of English is linked to modernity, quality, innovation and glamour (Bhatia and Ritchie, 2006, Kelly-Holmes, 2000, Kelly-Holmes, 2016) which is also suggested in the cover photos of the Facebook *ukay-ukay* page. Another description used are "Aussie-Dubai", "Korean", and "US bale" which describes where the *ukay-ukay* items come from. One source of pride for the Philippine shoppers of *ukay-ukay* is its provenance (Trubek,2008). On Facebook, "Aussie-Dubai" and "US bale" are priced higher than the "Korean".

Other details like mode of payment, location, and delivery are represented by words paired with colored icons which are done to attract consumers.

e. Humanizing

In humanizing, a white skinned mannequin dressed in an *ukay-ukay* item with a made-up look is foregrounded while high ceiling curtains are backgrounded. The manikin plays a significant role in the Facebook page because it is what will project the *ukay-ukay* as a valuable item that could make a prospective buyer think of glamour and affluence. Weis (2006) posits that mannequins are striking and influential marketing tools but are understudied according to Arjo & Dahl (2018) who also believe that since mannequins represent what society deems as physically attractive, they will make noticeable the normative standards of beauty. The Facebook *ukay-ukay* mannequins project a Eurocentric standard of beauty. Slim and tall, long hair, fair skin, big breasts, large eyes, small nose, and high cheekbones are ideals of Western beauty standard (Chen et al, 2020; Mckay et al, 2018; Tirona, 2023) which are all found in the mannequin representing humanizing. Sellers prefer such because accordingly the skintone manikin looks good for all dress colors saying "*mubagay tanan color sanina sa skin tone nga manikin*" (All cloth colors fit with the skin tone manikin) and "*maoy guapo tanawon*" (It's the one that is pleasing to the eyes)". Nevertheless, the preference of the Eurocentric beauty standard excludes other standards of beauty especially the Filipina beauty.

Another conceptual idea of the mannequin is a fashionable woman who doesn't seem to struggle with unrealistic expectations of women, projecting a façade of hurdling patriarchy (Goldman et al, 1991). This is called performative feminism or "*femvertising*", a marketing strategy that superficially present women to have control over their bodies (Hartono et al., 2022) when in reality, are still presented under the standard of a male-defined society, reflecting Western-beauty attributes (Burgos, 2023). Lirola (2009) calls the skewed media presentations of women as

Symbolic Gender Violence.

Figure 4. Screenshots of mannequins in Facebook *ukay-ukay* pages

2. *Buyer Initiation*

a. Acknowledging

Acknowledging means the buyer has seen the initiation done by the sellers. In the Facebook *ukay-ukay* pages buyer's initiation are represented through reacting to a post using the like or heart reacts on Facebook. Buyers would also comment on some questions about the post or tag some friends to see the post of the seller.

Reconstructing the Ukay-ukay Trade

This initiation stage of the e-negotiations has reconstructed the *ukay-ukay* selling specifically its presentation, perception, pricing and target market, and threats.

The *ukay-ukay* traders originally initiated negotiations by presenting a heap of or a line of creased, unwashed, imported second hand clothing like those in Baguio City, (Milgram, 2012), Davao City (Sagarino et al., 2013), and Iligan City. Today, on post-Covid Facebook, *ukay-ukay* seller initiations are done through cover photos replacing signages of physical stores. The mound of clothes has transformed to an individually pictured clothing, each treated as a precious item. The digging of *ukay-ukay* has been replaced by clicking pictures of *ukay-ukay* while the tactile *wagwag* (Locsin, 2007) is replaced by mouse clicks. In physical set-ups it is the buyer who decides if the *ukay-ukay* fits by dusting off a piece of clothing, snapping in the air, and holding the sleeves to estimate its size but in the electronic initiation, sellers decide the information such as size while the buyer could only agree or disagree through Facebook reaction or a non-reaction. Moreover, physical stores required agility and determination against heat brought by limited spaces and muscle pain brought by constant arm movement. Alternatively, initiation on Facebook *ukay-ukay* pages requires less physicality but more creativity where the constant movement is replaced by constant camera clicking and photo editing.

The actual ecstasy of finding, touching, and smelling the "finest" cloth among the heaps is replaced with a click of a Facebook emoji. Under the hedonistic and recreational shopping motivations, Han (2013) opined that purchasing *ukay-ukay* or second-hand clothing items is a delightful activity that brings people together and encourage interaction; however, on the

initiation on Facebook shows that *ukay-ukay* can be purchased even when alone and interaction does not necessarily mean discussions nor conversation but exchange of virtual reactions. Also, the perceived bother in the physical stores is traded with an offer of convenience on Facebook *ukay-ukay* e-negotiation initiation as purchased items can be delivered to one's residence.

Unfortunately, the effort in creatively presenting a clothing resulted to a more expensive *ukay-ukay* on Facebook that which disputes claims that people go to *ukay-ukay* to find good quality clothing without being pricey (Isla, 2013 in Biana, 2020) or *ukay-ukay* being an equalizing agent (Locsin, 2007). The higher prices obviously changed the target markets from an inclusive (ABCDE) target market in the physical shops to the exclusive (AB) customers in the online shop.

Finally, while the physical trade of *ukay-ukay* has silenced RA 4653, enabled smugglers, dissuaded investments in the textile and garments industry, initiation in e-negotiations aggravates the former issues and adds some concern. Through a mannequin and English usage, initiation in e-negotiation of *ukay-ukay* promotes Eurocentric beauty standards including glamour and sophistication that others the post-colonial struggles of the Asian woman especially the Filipina.

Conclusion

The present study categorized the initiation practices of Facebook *ukay-ukay* sellers and named them as mooding, *legitizing*, *caveating, detailing*, *humanizing*, and *acknowledging* for buyers. These initiation practices are represented and sustained by words, phrases, sentences, icons, symbols, emojis and images that not only communicate a livelihood but more importantly the attitudes and beliefs of the *ukay-ukay* traders and buyers in Northern Mindanao. This study further concludes that the initiation stage of the e-negotiations has reconstructed the *ukay-ukay* selling specifically its presentation, perception, pricing and target market, and even its threats.

Moreover, the initiation in the e-negotiations of Facebook *ukay-ukay* clarified and intensified colonial memories through the preference of the English language and the foregrounding of a Euro-centric image in humanizing an *ukay-ukay*; however, despite an apparent threat to the Filipino identity, such colonial memories have become a tool for the *ukay-ukay* traders to earn a living and help families. With these contrasting issues found in the initiation stage of Facebook *ukay-ukay* trading, this study further recommends for the revision of RA 4653, a creation of import system for *ukay-ukay* trading both physical and online, the compulsory registration of Facebook *ukay-ukay* shops, the firm regulation of taxes, and most importantly for the creation of a mannequin that also gives voice to the dark-skinned and nudged-nose Filipino.

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