

Digitalized Communication Between Teachers and Students: An Ethnomethodological Study

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This study examined digitalized teacher-student communication on Facebook Messenger at Notre Dame of Marbel University (NDMU) amid limited institutional guidance on boundaries, etiquette, and professional conduct in online academic interactions. Using a qualitative ethnomethodological design, the researchers collected (1) naturally occurring Messenger screenshots of school-related conversations and (2) in-depth semi-structured interviews. Participants included five full-time college teachers and five students (one pair from each of NDMU's five colleges). Chats were transcribed verbatim, preserving emojis, punctuation, capitalization, and message timing, then analyzed through corpus-based coding and ethnomethodological interpretation; interview data underwent modified thematic analysis to elaborate and validate corpus patterns. Findings show that digital communication extends classroom interaction beyond physical spaces while preserving institutional roles: Teachers remained authoritative yet approachable, and students maintained deference through polite markers and careful tone management. Participants used interactional cues (e.g., emojis, capitalization, acknowledgments, clarifications, and response timing) to express emotion, manage misunderstandings, and sustain relational harmony without dissolving professional boundaries. The study produced a data-driven framework describing how authority, warmth, boundary-setting, and instructional coordination are co-constructed to support academic clarity, relational trust, and digital professionalism.

Keywords: digitalized communication, teacher-student interaction, academic interaction, digital professionalism, ethnomethodology

Introduction

In the digital age, applications such as Facebook Messenger have created a new chapter in communication history—one defined by immediacy, accessibility, and constant connectivity. In the Philippines, this transformation is especially pronounced. Facebook records a 94.6% monthly login rate among active Filipino social media users, while 92.1% regularly use Facebook Messenger for communication. Following the shift to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, digital communication platforms became essential tools for academic continuity. However, while access and usage are widespread, there remains limited institutional guidance on appropriate boundaries, etiquette, and professional conduct in digital teacher-student interactions.

In educational settings, digital communication has broken down physical barriers between teachers and students, enabling faster coordination, clarification of academic concerns, and sustained engagement beyond the

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classroom. Yet this growing reliance on digital platforms has also introduced new challenges. Questions about tone, timing, professionalism, and relational boundaries have become increasingly evident. Dabbagh and Kitsantas (2012) highlight the need to examine how digital communication practices influence engagement and learning outcomes. Despite this, few local studies have explored how Philippine higher education institutions navigate the complexities of everyday digital interactions between teachers and students.

At Notre Dame of Marbel University (NDMU), platforms such as Facebook Messenger are integral to academic communication. While these tools offer flexibility and convenience, they also generate uncertainty: When is it appropriate to message a professor? How should students behave in a group chat? What tone should be used in academic exchanges? What happens when informal digital habits blur professional boundaries? Teachers report receiving late-night messages, while students struggle to determine what constitutes respectful and appropriate communication. This lack of a clearly articulated digital communication framework creates confusion that may affect academic relationships and performance.

This study addresses this gap by examining how teachers and students at NDMU construct, interpret, and manage their digital interactions. Specifically, it seeks to identify the methods and practices embedded in their communication, the challenges they encounter, and the coping mechanisms they employ, with the goal of formulating a data-driven digital communication framework.

This study aimed to gain insights into digitalized communication between teachers and students at Notre Dame of Marbel University. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: How do teachers and students communicate on a digital communication platform in the context of school-related interactions? What digital communication framework can be formulated based on the findings?

Review of Literature

Digital Communication

The integration of digital communication platforms in education has reshaped teacher-student interactions, offering convenience while blurring professional and personal boundaries (Guraya et al., 2024; Madsen, 2014). Informal online communication may compromise academic relationships, highlighting the need for clear institutional guidelines and responsible digital practices. Communication dynamics, which examine how interaction patterns shift across contexts (Han & Lang, 2019; Solomon et al., 2021), can now be studied more precisely through traceable digital data such as message frequency and response timing (Brinberg et al., 2021), enabling deeper insights into mediated communication in real-world settings.

Teachers and Students in the Digital Age

Technological advancement has reshaped the traditionally hierarchical teacher-student relationship into a more collaborative and adaptive one (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2020). Digital tools, virtual classrooms, and messaging applications have expanded communication beyond the physical classroom (Dhawan, 2020; Greenhow & Lewin, 2016). While some studies report increased engagement and motivation through technology integration (Fiksl et al., 2017), others highlight risks such as weakened personal connection and overreliance on digital tools (Akyürek & Afacan, 2018).

Digital Literacy

Digital literacy—the ability to effectively use, evaluate, and communicate through digital tools—is now essential in education. While digital platforms support personalized learning and engagement (Pew Research

Center, 2022), disparities in access and teacher preparedness remain significant challenges (ISTE, 2023). Frameworks such as DigCompEdu and TPACK emphasize the integration of technology with pedagogy and content knowledge to enhance instructional effectiveness (Amilusholihah, Ahman, Kurniawati & Sutarni, 2024; OECD, 2023).

Sustained institutional support, targeted teacher training, and equitable access to technology are critical to maximizing the benefits of digital communication while minimizing its risks.

Theoretical and Technical Foundations

Grounded in Social Constructionist Theory (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), this study recognizes that communication norms are socially constructed through interaction. In educational settings, teachers and students negotiate expectations regarding digital conduct, shaping shared standards of appropriateness.

Ethnomethodology further informs this study by focusing on how individuals use everyday practices to construct social order (Garfinkel). It emphasizes examining naturally occurring interactions to understand how participants produce meaning, maintain accountability, and sustain relational order within specific contexts.

Method

This study employed a qualitative ethnomethodological design to examine the communication dynamics between teachers and students through Facebook Messenger at Notre Dame of Marbel University (NDMU). The research focused on understanding the everyday methods and practices participants use to construct meaning, maintain relationships, and manage academic interactions in digital spaces. Data were collected from two primary sources: (1) a corpus of naturally occurring Facebook Messenger screenshots of school-related conversations and (2) in-depth semi-structured interviews. The corpus, consisting of authentic chat exchanges between five full-time college teachers and five bona fide students (one teacher and one student from each of the five colleges), was transcribed verbatim, preserving emojis, punctuation, message timing, and other micro-features essential to interactional meaning.

Corpus analysis followed a systematic process involving text segmentation, coding, concept generation, and ethnomethodological interpretation, with particular attention to sequential organization, interactional context, temporal dimensions, and communicative practices such as acknowledgments, clarifications, emotional cues, politeness strategies, and displays of understanding or misunderstanding.

The findings from the initial corpus analysis informed the development of the interview guide, ensuring that interview questions were grounded in observed linguistic patterns and interactional themes. Each participant underwent a one-hour interview (conducted face-to-face or virtually), and transcripts were analyzed using a modified thematic analysis to further elaborate, validate, and enrich corpus findings. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent secured, confidentiality ensured through anonymization and pseudonyms, and the option to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Data gathering spanned approximately two months, and analytical tools included a validated Corpus Analysis Matrix and a researcher-led systematic text-based analytic process, integrating corpus and thematic insights to comprehensively address the study's objectives.

Results and Discussion

The Results and Discussion section presents an integrated analysis of both the corpus data and the interview findings. Insights from the corpus analysis of Facebook Messenger conversations were combined with themes derived from the in-depth interviews, allowing for triangulation and deeper interpretation of the observed

communication patterns. By merging naturally occurring digital interactions with participants' reflections on their practices, experiences, and challenges, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of teacher-student communication dynamics in the digital context.

Data Set 1

Data Set 1.1. This theme illustrates how conversational authority helps teachers and students navigate roles, expectations, and cooperation in everyday classroom exchanges, keeping the learning environment orderly and socially unified. As stated by T1:

Mag aral din kayo sa kasaysayan ng wika.

In this instance, the teacher upheld their authority while still appearing open and approachable. This fosters a classroom climate that balances professionalism with the development and preservation of positive relationships, all while maintaining appropriate boundaries between teachers and students.

The findings reveal that students use visual and textual cues, such as emojis and capitalization, to express emotions while maintaining contextually appropriate tone. The generational familiarity with such digital expressions also reflects evolving communication norms shaped by technology use. Furthermore, students' pragmatic approach to concluding conversations signifies an awareness of communicative efficiency and boundary maintenance, highlighting how digitalized interactions blend emotional expressiveness with practical professionalism.

Data Set 1.2. Balancing authority, approachability, and relational alignment is essential to create a productive, socially cohesive classroom environment. Authority allows teachers to establish expectations, maintain structure, and guide instructional flow. When authority is exercised effectively, students experience clarity, predictability, and a sense of academic direction. However, a purely authoritative stance can create emotional distance, discourage student participation, and limit open communication. Thus, authority must be complemented by approachability, which refers to a teacher's warmth, openness, and willingness to engage with students in a supportive manner. An approachable teacher fosters psychological safety—students feel comfortable asking questions, seeking help, and expressing concerns without fear of judgment or reprimand.

Alongside authority and approachability, relational alignment is pivotal in classroom interaction. Relational alignment refers to how teachers “tune in” to students' social and emotional needs, build rapport, and communicate respect and understanding. This alignment supports a relational climate in which students feel recognized as individuals and valued members of the learning community.

Akala availability ko ang kailangan mo? Hayst! Muna, kailangan mo ng criminology para may mag-remind sayo ng good morning at may rason ka na bumangon ng maaga.

Data Set 1.3. Negotiating approachability and hierarchical boundaries in classroom interaction involves a subtle balancing act where teachers manage their institutional authority while creating a relational environment that feels accessible and socially comfortable for students. In your corpus, teachers frequently soften hierarchical distance through humor, informal language, and light relational cues, such as when a teacher responds with

Tuod? HAHAAHHA.

These interactional moves reflect what Mortimer and Scott (2003) describe as moments in which teachers shift toward dialogic discourse to foster interpersonal ease while still maintaining their leadership role. The

students, in turn, perform respect and deference through polite markers (“opo”, “po”), careful greetings, and expressive but socially appropriate humor, such as when a student uses “hehe” or emojis to maintain warmth without violating formality. Teachers reciprocate by blending friendliness with directive clarity, creating an environment where respect, warmth, and instructional order coexist. Thus, the corpus demonstrates that negotiating approachability and hierarchical boundaries is not merely a matter of tone but a continuous, interaction-driven process where both teacher and student collaboratively maintain social harmony while upholding the authority structures necessary for effective classroom functioning.

Data Set 2

Data Set 2.1. Maintaining relational harmony and role awareness in classroom interaction requires balancing respectful interpersonal relationships with clear recognition of teacher and student roles. Teachers foster harmony through supportive, empathetic communication that reduces anxiety and encourages participation, while role awareness ensures order by clarifying expectations, responsibilities, and boundaries. In digital contexts, this balance is reflected in digital professionalism—timely, clear, and respectful communication that upholds instructional leadership while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

Individual.

The teacher’s direct, individual chat response demonstrates professionalism through clarity, precision, and timely guidance. By responding in this focused manner, the teacher provides targeted support to the student, ensuring understanding of the task while maintaining authority and effective instructional communication.

Data Set 2.2. Negotiating professional boundaries and cooperative interaction in academic communication involves balancing the formal roles of teachers and students while fostering collaborative, respectful exchanges that support learning. Professional boundaries ensure that the teacher’s authority, expertise, and institutional responsibilities remain clear, thereby protecting academic integrity and maintaining a structured learning environment. These boundaries include expectations regarding appropriate language, tone, turn-taking, and respect for institutional hierarchies.

Okay lang. No worries. Thank you.

Negotiating professional boundaries and cooperative interaction involves balancing authority with collaboration, allowing teachers to maintain structure while encouraging shared participation. In contemporary classrooms, authority is no longer purely top-down but relational, shaped through ongoing negotiation of roles, expectations, and responsibilities. Students demonstrate agency by taking initiative, clarifying information, and contributing to academic tasks, while teachers reinforce this engagement through supportive guidance. Through directives, clarifications, and shared decision-making, authority and participation become co-constructed realities—reflecting the social constructionist view that institutional roles and power dynamics are continuously enacted through communication.

Data Set 2.3. Guiding understanding and sustaining cooperative teacher-student relationships are central to creating a learning environment where students feel supported, valued, and engaged. Guiding understanding refers to the teacher’s role in providing clear explanations, scaffolding complex ideas, and responding to students’ needs to help them make sense of academic content. This involves using comprehensible instruction, clarifying expectations, checking for understanding, and providing feedback that directs students toward better performance.

Will send it pag uwi ko.
Study niyo male and female reproductive parts.

In this context, the teacher's direct, responsive action to a student reminder demonstrates authority while providing support. The teacher's approach reflects professional responsibility, timely guidance, and reassurance, showing how individualized responses in digital environments strengthen learning, maintain authority, and foster trust between teacher and student.

Data Set 2.4. Balancing respect, authority, and cooperative communication in academic contexts requires managing interpersonal dynamics that shape teacher-student interaction. Respect establishes an emotionally safe environment where students feel valued and recognized, while authority provides structure, direction, and clear expectations. When authority is exercised with relational warmth, it sustains engagement and preserves dignity, ensuring that instructional guidance remains firm yet supportive rather than authoritarian.

Yes may activity kayo.
F2f.

The teacher's direct communication about completing a face-to-face activity illustrates how individualized digital guidance maintains authority, reinforces instructional expectations, and helps students engage effectively with learning tasks. This example demonstrates that digital platforms not only support interaction but also enable teachers to sustain presence and structure in hybrid learning environments.

Data Set 2.5. Sustaining respect, relational warmth, and cooperative learning practices is essential for promoting both academic and socio-emotional development in teacher-student interactions. Respect establishes a safe and inclusive environment where students feel valued and confident to participate, while relational warmth—expressed through empathy, encouragement, and genuine care—builds trust and strengthens rapport. Together with cooperative learning practices that support shared engagement and intellectual collaboration, these elements create a balanced classroom climate that is academically productive, socially cohesive, and conducive to meaningful learning.

Sa last part if mag pay ka na. Isa sya ka tab sa treasury.

It examines teachers individualized digital communication in clarifying tasks, maintaining instructional authority, and providing reassurance. In the various scenarios clarifying a scheduled activity, responding to a delayed submission, reminding about a PPT, or confirming a face-to-face task—the teacher's direct and timely responses illustrate how digital communication platforms allow for both academic guidance and emotional support. By combining clarity, authority, and reassurance, teachers help students understand expectations, stay engaged, and feel supported, showing that effective digital communication extends beyond instruction to include relational and motivational dimensions.

Data Set 2.6. Balancing authority and relational warmth in teacher-student interaction is essential for creating a learning environment where structure, respect, and emotional safety coexist. Teachers who communicate clear expectations, instructional clarity, and firm yet fair guidance establish an authoritative presence that helps maintain order and academic focus. At the same time, relational warmth—expressed through approachability, empathy, conversational openness, and respectful responsiveness—helps students feel supported, valued, and motivated to participate. This alignment of authority and warmth supports relational trust, reduces

communication anxiety, and encourages students to view interactions not as power struggles but as opportunities for shared meaning-making.

Hi. Please work on your PESTEL Interpretation. It's 100% AI generated.
Indi man. Isend la h kung free na kamo.

Balancing authority and warmth enhances relational alignment, enabling students to view the teacher as a supportive guide rather than a distant authority. Polite, non-pressuring requests—such as allowing students to submit requirements at their convenience—reflect digital professionalism, courtesy, and consideration for students' well-being. At the same time, clarifying previously discussed instructions, such as reminding students about the revision matrix, demonstrates how digital communication reinforces expectations, maintains continuity, and prevents misunderstands, effectively supporting both academic guidance and respectful relationships.

Wala kamo new revision matrix? Diba gipa add ko ni?

This message highlights how digital communication serves not just to answer questions, but also to reaffirm earlier academic guidelines, helping maintain clarity, accountability, and smooth coordination between teacher and student.

Data Set 3

Data Set 3.1. From an ethnomethodological perspective, negotiating respect, warmth, and collaborative engagement in digital teacher-student communication involves examining the interactional methods that participants use to sustain social order within online spaces. In platforms such as Messenger, Google Classroom, or LMS chats, teachers and students construct meaning through message formatting, turn-taking sequences, timing, and repair practices. Respect is not treated as a fixed personal trait but as a *practical accomplishment* achieved through members' methods—such as how teachers frame instructions, how students display deference through politeness markers (“po”, “ma’am/sir”), and how both parties manage clarification without threatening each other's face. These coordinated practices allow participants to maintain the hierarchical structure of schooling while sustaining cooperative and meaningful communication in digital settings.

Good evening po, sir! As is lang po na zero ang ilagay if wala po may nag take ng board exam sa NDMU?

The findings highlight students' reflexivity in adjusting their tone based on relational closeness and situational appropriateness, reflecting a hybrid communication style that merges personal authenticity with professional deference. This indicates an emerging communicative competence wherein digital fluency coexists with socio-emotional intelligence in academic contexts.

Data Set 3.2. Sustaining respect, relational warmth, and cooperative learning in teacher-student interaction depends on everyday communicative practices that maintain social order. Respect is achieved through observable actions such as politeness markers, proper forms of address, attentive responses, and orderly turn-taking, reflecting recognition of institutional roles while preserving harmony. Relational warmth is similarly constructed through empathetic tone, supportive language, and understanding responses that soften hierarchy without removing it. Together, these interactional practices create a classroom environment where students feel valued, safe, and encouraged to participate.

Data Set 3.4. Balancing authority and relational warmth in teacher-student interaction is a continuous interactional accomplishment that relies on the subtle communicative methods participants use to maintain both

hierarchy and interpersonal connection. From an ethnomethodological perspective, authority is not simply a formal position but a *locally produced* outcome—achieved through practices such as directive formulations, instructional clarity, and teacher-managed turn-taking that establish legitimate control in the learning environment. Social constructionism argues that roles such as “teacher” or “student” are not fixed categories but are continually shaped through communicative practices. This can be seen in the one-way conversation:

Hi. Please work on your PESTEL Interpretation. It's 100% AI generated.

The teacher's authority is evident here, as the student understands the reminder and does not argue with the teacher. This shows respect and professionalism maintenance between teacher and student.

Data Set 3.5. Sustaining respect, empathy, and cooperative learning in Filipino teacher-student interaction is a culturally grounded accomplishment shaped by everyday communicative practices. From an ethnomethodological perspective, respect is enacted through honorifics (“po”, “opo”, “ma’am/sir”), acknowledgments, and deference markers that signal recognition of institutional authority and reflect the Filipino value of *paggalang* (Garfinkel, 1967; Heritage, 1984). Teachers reinforce this respect by managing turn-taking, clarifying instructions, and repairing misunderstandings in ways that preserve students' dignity and interactional harmony. Cultural values such as *bayanihan* (collective effort) and *pakikipagkapwa* (shared humanity) further shape cooperative dialogue and classroom engagement, embedding respect and empathy within the broader fabric of Filipino educational practice.

Data Set 3.6. Managing urgency, politeness, and relational harmony in teacher-student interaction involves balancing the competing demands of timely academic communication and the interpersonal norms that maintain social order in the classroom. From an ethnomethodological perspective, urgency is not simply an objective condition, but a communicative accomplishment produced through message formatting, directness, and explicit time references (“please submit today”, “urgent clarification needed”) that signal the immediacy of the situation. Students respond to this urgency through quick acknowledgments, compliance tokens (“noted po”, “on the way po”), or repair sequences that clarify expectations—interactional methods that demonstrate their orientation to the teacher's authority and the institutional timeline. Despite urgency, participants work to preserve politeness and relational harmony, showing that efficiency and respect are negotiated simultaneously.

Data Set 4

Data Set 4.1. The teacher sent a message to the student at 6:58 p.m., likely right after the event or activity, *expressing gratitude for the student's role in facilitating the event*. By initiating the communication, the teacher not only acknowledges the student's effort but also models appreciation and recognition in a timely manner. This kind of positive reinforcement demonstrates how digital communication can be used to maintain motivation, strengthen relationships, and encourage continued engagement in school activities. The teacher's message reflects a supportive and affirming approach, showing that acknowledgment of student contributions is a key aspect of effective teacher-student interactions.

Hello, good evening. Thank you so much kanina sa pag facilitate. 😊

The teacher's initiative in sending a thank-you message demonstrates proactive teacher engagement through digital platforms. By recognizing the student's contribution immediately after the event, the teacher reinforces motivation, nurtures a positive teacher-student relationship, and models a culture of appreciation that supports student participation and continued effort.

Data Set 5

Data Set 5.1. At 8:03 p.m., the student responded quickly and provided complete details to the teacher’s question regarding their availability for the HistoLab exam. By giving a full and timely response, the student demonstrated attentiveness, responsibility, and respect for the teacher’s inquiry. Such responsiveness facilitated clear scheduling, minimized potential misunderstandings, and enabled the teacher to make informed decisions about the exam. This exchange highlights the importance of active participation and timely feedback in maintaining smooth academic coordination, particularly in time-sensitive scenarios such as laboratory exams.

Good evening, sir! Available po kaming 2C-A for the 1:30 PM on Wednesday. But as for the 1C-A na kasama po namin sa Laboratory waiting pa daw po sila sa confirmation ng ibang scheds so if possible baka isabay daw po sila ni sir JM sa ibang first years din.

The student’s detailed and prompt response exemplifies effective digital communication, showing how students can actively support the efficiency of academic processes. By providing timely and comprehensive information, the student ensures that the HistoLab exam can proceed smoothly, reflecting responsibility, engagement, and collaborative participation in the learning process.

Data Set 5.2. The teacher sent a message to the student informing them about a scheduled written quiz. Despite the message’s potential to cause stress, the teacher maintained a gentle, reassuring tone, using “ga” as a *culturally affectionate term*. This choice of language demonstrates how teachers can communicate important academic instructions while still ensuring approachability, emotional support, and relational warmth. By combining clarity with a supportive tone, the teacher reduces student anxiety, encourages compliance, and maintains a positive teacher-student relationship in a digital context.

Quiz ga then activities. Written muna tayo na quiz. Open ko in awhile ang portal.

In the context of this study, the teacher’s message demonstrates supportive instructional communication, showing that academic tasks, such as a written quiz, can be communicated effectively while maintaining emotional support and cultural sensitivity. The use of “ga” exemplifies how digital communication can balance authority and care, ensuring that students feel guided, respected, and encouraged to perform without unnecessary stress.

Data Set 5.5. The student proactively messaged the teacher to inquire about the next topic for the Bacteriology subject. This action demonstrates the student’s initiative, responsibility, and engagement in their learning process. By seeking clarification, the student ensures they are prepared for upcoming lessons and can align their study plan with the course requirements. Such digital interactions allow students to take ownership of their learning, promote active participation, and strengthen communication with instructors in a timely and efficient manner.

Good morning, sir! We would like to ask po sana if ano po yung next topic natin for bacte. Thank you po!

The student’s message inquiring about the next Bacteriology topic shows self-directed learning and proactive engagement. By using digital communication to seek clarification, the student not only ensures preparedness but also builds a positive, collaborative relationship with the teacher, thereby contributing to an effective and supportive learning environment.

Data Set 5.6. The teacher initiated a message to the student, saying “Congratulations” with a heart emoji and adding “Kayang kaya” to convey support and encouragement. This interaction highlights the teacher’s

proactive approach in recognizing student achievements and providing motivational reinforcement. By celebrating the student’s accomplishment and expressing confidence in their abilities, the teacher fosters self-efficacy, positivity, and continued engagement. Such supportive digital communication not only strengthens the student-teacher relationship but also encourages students to maintain their efforts and strive for further success.

Congratulations! 🎉
Kayang kaya.

The teacher’s message demonstrates supportive and motivational communication. By initiating contact to congratulate and encourage the student, the teacher reinforces confidence, celebrates achievement, and nurtures a positive, student-centered learning environment, illustrating the role of digital communication in fostering both relational and academic growth.

Data Set 5.7. The teacher responded to the student’s “My Day” story with a message that conveyed empathy, encouragement, and moral guidance: “This is so sweet! Thank you so much! I will be praying for all of you. Rest but do not give up, okay? And when the time comes to help others, pay it forward. Ingat kayo palagi 🍎”. This message demonstrates the teacher’s supportive role in students’ lives beyond academic instruction. By acknowledging the student’s efforts, offering encouragement, and providing moral guidance, the teacher reinforces emotional well-being, resilience, and social responsibility. Such communication exemplifies how digital platforms can foster holistic teacher-student interactions that balance both relational and educational support.

This is so sweet! Thank you so much! I will be praying for all of you. Rest but do not give up, okay? And when the time comes that you’ll be able to help others, pay it forward. Ingat kayo palagi 🍎.

The message reflects empathetic and motivational communication, highlighting how digital interaction can extend learning beyond academics to nurture students’ emotional and moral growth. By offering encouragement, prayers, and guidance to “pay it forward”, the teacher models care, resilience, and social responsibility, strengthening the student-teacher relationship while promoting holistic development.

Data Set 6

Data Set 6.1. Balancing authority and relational closeness in teacher-student interaction is an ongoing, socially constructed accomplishment shaped by everyday communicative practices. In digital platforms such as Messenger or LMS chats, participants use greetings, honorifics, emojis, tone modulation, and response timing to negotiate when to emphasize authority (e.g., giving deadlines) and when to express warmth (e.g., offering reassurance). Teachers maintain structure through clear directives softened by polite language and supportive cues, while students display respect through address terms, gratitude, and careful message framing—reflecting Filipino values such as *pakikisama* and *paggalang*. In the absence of physical cues, these linguistic choices become central to sustaining both hierarchy and approachability, showing that authority and warmth are co-constructed through interaction rather than fixed traits.

Sir, HAHAHAH. Saan ka po ngayon? Hehe, may class ka po?

Data Set 6.2. Managing engagement and relational norms in teacher-student interaction is a continuous negotiation of participation, respect, and social order. From an ethnomethodological perspective, engagement is accomplished through observable practices such as turn-taking, acknowledgments, clarifications, and timely

responses, while relational norms are enacted through honorifics, polite phrasing, softening strategies, and supportive feedback. In digital platforms like Messenger or LMS, message design, emojis, and response timing become key resources for maintaining both attentiveness and harmony. Through structured prompts and empathetic communication, teachers invite participation, and students reciprocate with respectful, cooperative responses—showing that engagement and relational norms are actively produced and sustained in interaction.

Ano mana sila man. Wala sense of urgency. Ako na mag post. (Data Set 6: Table 2)

Viewed through a social constructionist lens, engagement and relational norms are socially constructed realities; meanings of “active participation”, “respect”, and “cooperation” emerge from repeated communicative practices within culturally and institutionally embedded contexts. Managing engagement and relational norms represents both a micro-level interactional achievement and a broader social construction that sustains classroom order, collaboration, and learning outcomes.

Data Set 6.3. Negotiating authority and relational harmony in classroom interaction involves a delicate balancing act between hierarchical structures and interpersonal relationships to maintain both academic order and social cohesion. From an ethnomethodological perspective, authority is not simply a static attribute of the teacher, but a social accomplishment produced through moment-to-moment interactional practices, such as directing tasks, managing turn-taking, repairing misunderstandings, and responding to student contributions. Teachers demonstrate authority by providing clear instructions, establishing expectations, and guiding participation, while students orient to this authority by signaling compliance, acknowledgement, and attentiveness.

This can be seen in the conversation: “*How this becomes educational?*”

Relational harmony is sustained through interactional strategies that display warmth, empathy, and respect, such as hedging, polite address, and supportive feedback, ensuring that hierarchical structures do not compromise trust or approachability. In practice, classroom interaction is a negotiation: Teachers balance assertive instructional moves with affiliative practices, and students negotiate compliance with relational alignment, creating an ongoing co-constructed order.

Data Set 7

Data Set 7.1. Constructing familiarity and responsibility in teacher-student interaction involves simultaneously achieving relational closeness and accountability in classroom communication. In this conversation, it was clear that the student took accountability for their shortcomings while managing the conversation in a way that was not too formal.

Sir ma late lang gd ko damo damo gapa print po. Kay gipaliwat namon kay indico sir. Puro chat gpt tas mali mali mabaung kami sir 🙄. (Data Set 7: Table 1)

Responsibility is similarly achieved through structured interactions: Teachers establish expectations, provide instructions, and clarify tasks, while students demonstrate accountability by following directives, submitting work on time, and signaling understanding. These micro-level communicative practices show that both familiarity and responsibility are not inherent traits but interactional accomplishments, co-constructed moment by moment through ongoing engagement.

Data Set 7.2. Balancing efficiency and politeness in institutional communication involves delivering information in a timely, goal-oriented manner while preserving relational respect and social harmony. Politeness, on the other hand, is enacted through linguistic softeners, hedging, honorifics, courteous phrasing, and

acknowledgement tokens, which mitigate face-threatening acts and maintain relational balance. In institutional contexts—whether classrooms, offices, or digital platforms—participants continually negotiate the trade-off between conveying information efficiently and adhering to politeness norms. In this context, the teacher simply summons the student at a designated time.

Pls see me in sa office 10:30.

The student responded right away that the given time would not work for a meeting as they have a class. This highlights how the student navigated the communication process so it would not come across as rude to the teacher. Through simple use of reason in class, the conversation became clear and direct.

Data Set 7.3. Cultivating respect and relational warmth in academic exchange involves co-constructing interpersonal rapport while maintaining professional and institutional roles. Teachers and students negotiate these relational markers moment by moment: Teachers demonstrate approachability and fairness through encouraging responses and constructive guidance, while students reciprocate by adhering to norms of deference, expressing gratitude, and actively engaging in discussion. These micro-level interactions show that relational warmth and respect are not inherent traits but interactional accomplishments maintained through sequential, context-sensitive actions. This can be seen in the conversation:

Baka sa monday papo kami maka bigay ng papel and ng recommendation po huhu hindi gali mag report sir lynou sa school. Monday.

This only goes to show how the construction of a message is a key part of the communication process. The student ensured that a clear boundary was respected in the communication. Social Constructionist Theory further highlights that respect and warmth are socially produced and culturally mediated; they emerge from repeated interactions that define what counts as appropriate relational behavior in academic contexts.

Data Set 8

Data Set 8.1. Nurturing relational warmth and trust through informal academic communication involves using everyday interactional practices that foster approachability, empathy, and mutual understanding between teachers and students. Informal exchanges, whether occurring in-class, during office hours, or via digital platforms such as Messenger or LMS chats, enable teachers to project accessibility while students demonstrate engagement and reliability. These interactions reveal that relational warmth and trust are not inherent traits but are continuously constructed and maintained through interactional practices.

Data Set 8.2. Balancing respect, clarity, and relational warmth in teacher-student interaction involves achieving professional authority, clear communication, and interpersonal rapport simultaneously. From an ethnomethodological perspective, clarity is accomplished through structured instructions, explicit explanations, and sequential organization of tasks, ensuring that students can accurately understand and respond to academic expectations (Garfinkel, 1967; Heritage, 1984). Respect is maintained through culturally and institutionally appropriate linguistic markers, such as honorifics, polite phrasing, and acknowledgement tokens, which signal recognition of social roles and reinforce hierarchical norms. The use of this can be seen in the conversation:

Good evening sir, ask ko lang if what time po tayo mag mock defense tomorrow, hehe thanks sir.

Relational warmth, meanwhile, is enacted through supportive feedback, encouragement, humor, and empathetic responses that make teachers approachable and students comfortable in expressing difficulties. These

micro-level practices demonstrate that effective classroom interaction is a co-constructed accomplishment where authority, understanding, and interpersonal closeness are continually negotiated.

Data Set 8.3. Fostering accountability and confidence in classroom interaction involves creating an environment where students recognize their responsibilities while developing self-assurance in participating and performing tasks.

Confidence, meanwhile, is co-constructed through supportive teacher feedback, encouragement, and opportunities for active participation, which allow students to assert understanding, take initiative, and engage in problem-solving. These micro-level interactions illustrate that both accountability and confidence are not inherent qualities, but interactional accomplishments continuously produced through routine classroom exchanges. The student clearly initiated the selection of the prayer leader, demonstrating initiative in the classroom setting.

Ay oo sir, naka ready na si S. hehe.

Through a social constructionist lens, accountability and confidence are socially and culturally constructed realities that emerge through repeated interactions that define what constitutes responsible and competent behavior in the classroom (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 2015).

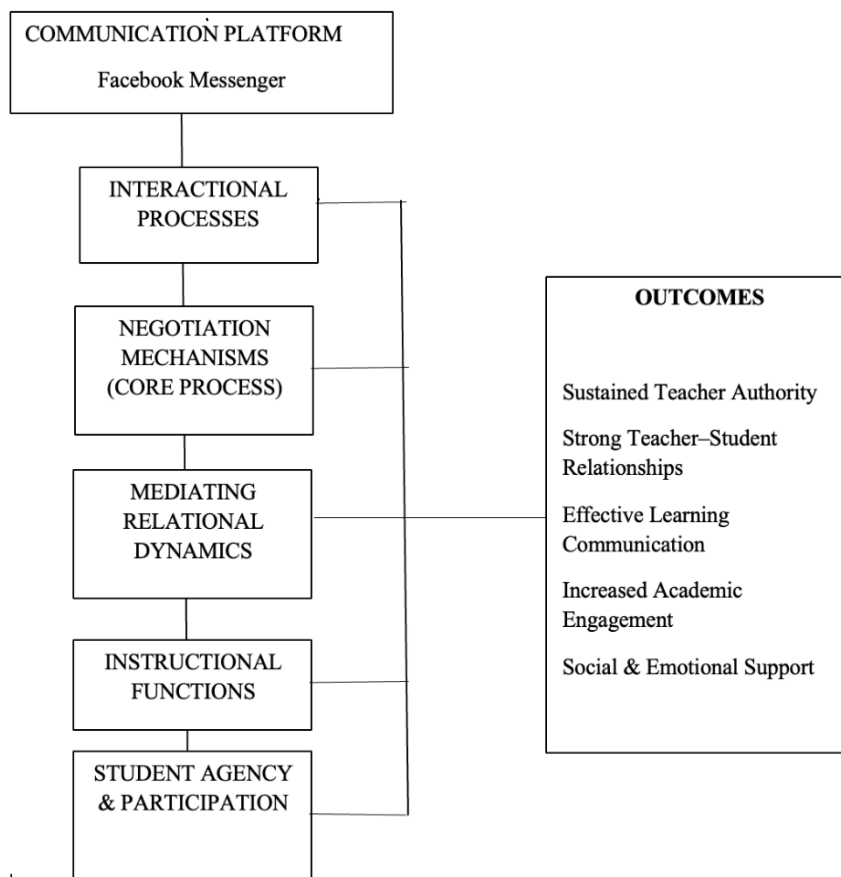


Figure 1. Formulated framework for digitalized communication between teachers and students.

Data Set 8.4. Building trust and cooperative engagement through purposeful academic interaction involves deliberately using communicative practices that foster reliability, mutual understanding, and collaborative participation in classroom settings. Teachers establish trust by providing clear instructions, scaffolding learning,

and offering supportive feedback, and students reciprocate by demonstrating attentiveness, accountability, and willingness to contribute to shared academic goals. These interactional practices demonstrate that trust and engagement are not static traits but are co-constructed moment by moment within ongoing classroom interactions.

The framework positions Facebook Messenger as the central space for teacher-student communication, shaping expectations for responsiveness, relational warmth, and instructional presence. Through practices such as polite markers, tone modulation, emojis, clarification exchanges, and timely replies, participants negotiate authority, boundaries, and culturally grounded politeness while sustaining trust, professionalism, and academic coordination. These processes support clearer communication, stronger relationships, and a digital classroom climate where authority and approachability coexist.

Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that digital teacher-student communication is not merely transactional but a socially constructed process in which meanings, roles, norms, and relationships are actively negotiated and sustained. Through everyday exchanges—such as expressions of gratitude, timely responses, structured coordination, and polite forms of address—participants co-create a shared academic reality grounded in accountability, respect, and cooperation. Relational warmth, empathy, and professionalism are not assumed but continuously achieved through localized communicative practices that balance authority with approachability. Digital platforms thus function as spaces where institutional order, instructional leadership, and emotional safety are collectively maintained, even extending beyond traditional school hours. In this way, effective digital communication emerges as a dynamic accomplishment shaped by responsiveness, mutual recognition, and shared responsibility.

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