

Power Distance Between Teachers and Students in Online Language Learning

Rodelyn B. Enguerra¹ and Marigrace D. Carretero²

^{1,2}Sorsogon State University, Philippines

Email: ¹enguerralen@gmail.com and ²nenne565@gmail.com

Abstract— Online language learning has been a new modality of learning since the outbreak of pandemic in the country. The situation highlighted the power distance gap between the teachers and the students. This study focused on power distance between teachers and students in online language classroom. It sought to determine the power index levels between teachers and students in online language classroom. This study is descriptive and used mixed-method of research. Survey questionnaires were utilized to identify the challenges encountered along cultural background and instructional strategies of junior high school STE (Science, Technology, and Engineering) students and teachers of Gallanosa National High School. Meanwhile, scheduled- online interview was conducted to determine how teachers and students accommodate power dynamics that exist in the online language classroom. It was found out that the power distance index level of the teachers and students in online language learning along attitude, social status of teachers, social status of parents and gender varies. It was recommended that the school may hold capacity building for teachers to improve their skills in conducting online language classes and conduct orientation with the parents to inform them about their roles in online learning teachers and teachers should utilize strategies to handle power gaps in online language learning. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers developed interactive language learning activities to address the language learning gap in online language classrooms.

Keywords— Power distance, Online Language Learning.

INTRODUCTION

The primary source of communication is language, and it is the method through which we share our ideas and thoughts with others (Ilyosovna, 2020). Hence, language learning is a foremost skill that a person expects to acquire with excellence. In light of the pandemic in the country, the current situation induces the decline of the 21st-century skills and may generate another effect on language education as Cabigon, 2015 bannered in his article, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, that there is a decline in the quality of English in the Philippines.

Cognizant to the need for quality education in the Philippines midst COVID-19 Pandemic, DepED Order No.012, s. 2020, reiterated the utilization of online learning modality as one of the learning modalities to be utilized in teaching and learning amidst the pandemic. Language teachers can now sustain language learning with the best skill that they can provide the students in conducting the lessons online.

However, the crisis presented the real situation of the country's capability to conduct online classes. It exposed the many inadequacies and inequities in the education systems like access to the broadband and computers that are needed for online education, the supportive environments needed to focus on learning, and the misalignment between resources and needs (Schleicher, 2020). In a developing country like

the Philippines, constant learning of strategies to employ on how the English language can be taught online are priorities to the language teachers who will adapt to online learning.

Considering the situation experienced by teachers and students being shifted from traditional face-to-face classes to online classes, the effectiveness of the online learning modality in language learning is a consideration to ponder. In the report poster by Akamai, the Philippines has the slowest internet connectivity in Asia (ICT Knowledge Portal, DICT, 2017). This results in compromising the learners' quality of learning and will lead to poor assessment and evaluation.

The traditional classroom in the Philippines offers traditional face-to-face classes and students listen to the lesson discussion of the teachers in eight different subjects taught in school. This modality of teaching-learning has been the source of acquiring information of the students in the country where teachers are considered responsible for the acquired knowledge and are the authority inside the classroom.

Teachers exercise authority over the students and make them do what they do not do usually (Alshahrani, 2016). Even though classes are conducted online, students being submissive to their teachers still exist. This is to show respect and a custom they have long been practicing in their home and in the school where they

usually spend most of their time. The Philippines is a country where the people are deeply rooted in their culture and tradition. Respecting people in authorities and those of elder people are one of the characteristics of a Filipino. Hence, it is reflected in the behaviors of the Filipino students even in the online classroom setting where teachers are always in command and students are followers therefore, there is an invisible bar that is drawn between them that limits both side to maximize teaching and learning.

A Dutch social Psychologist, Geert Hofstede describe the situation as power distance where it refers to the degree to which individuals, organizations, and society accept inequalities in relation to power, status, and wealth. The Philippines belongs to high power-distance culture (Catanduanes Tribune, 2010) and the children and students are expected to follow the parent's and teacher's authority whatever the learning modality is implemented.

One of the schools in the province of Sorsogon is the Gallanosa National High School which offered an online virtual class this pandemic.

The interaction between students and teachers happens but in a different platform of learning like the online virtual classroom where teachers exercise their authority over their students and where the invisible bar between them is situated. Therefore, this study will be conducted to the said school to determine how power distance act in accordance with the online language learning scenario this new normal.

The response of the learners in the online language classroom of the said school is perceived as passive.

Language teachers objectively performed their tasks as facilitators of learning. Students compliantly obliged to accomplish the language activities required of them to finish.

The online classroom became a place where the teachers impose, and students conform and created routine that draw more lines to isolate them from each other.

In view of the need to address the challenges, the present study was conducted so as to determine the power distance index level in the context of online language learning between teachers and students amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

This study determined the power distance index levels between teachers and students in online language learning. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the power distance index levels between teachers and students in online language learning?
2. What are the challenges encountered by Junior High School teachers and students with power distance along:
 - a. Cultural background
 - b. Instructional strategies
3. How do students and teachers accommodate power dynamics in online language learning?
4. What can be proposed to address the power distance gap in online language classroom?

METHODOLOGY

This study identified the power distance index levels between teachers and students in online language learning of junior high school STE students and teachers in Gallanosa National High School for SY 2021-2022. A mixed-method of research, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research was used and descriptive in nature. According to Wisdom and Creswell (2013), this design refers to an emergent methodology of research that advances the systematic integration, or "mixing," of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation or sustained program of inquiry. Using a qualitative methodology, the researchers have been able to explore meanings and insights in a given situation and collect meaningful data (Strauss and Corbin 2008).

The present study used the descriptive qualitative method of research for it undergoes an in-depth examination of the teachers' and students' approaches to accommodate power dynamics that exist in an online language classroom. The teachers' and students' responses were gathered through scheduled-online interviews and a qualitative method was used to analyze the responses gathered. In identifying the power distance index level, a descriptive quantitative method was used. Aliaga, and Gunderson (2002) describe quantitative research methods as the explaining of an issue or phenomenon through gathering data in numerical form and analyzing with the aid of mathematical methods, in particular statistics. A survey questionnaire was used to gather the power index level between students and teachers in the online language classroom. The highest value was interpreted as strongly agreed and the lowest value was strongly disagreed. While frequency ranking was used to determine the challenges encountered by teachers and students along with cultural background and instructional strategies. Ranking is defined as the relationship between two mathematical values where each value can be less than, greater than, or equal to the second value

(Jackson,2021). The data gathered from the quantitative method will be a validating aspect to support the qualitative analysis as Verhoef & Casebeer (1997) asserted that the combined data collected from the quantitative and qualitative methods achieve a degree of comprehensiveness.

Thus, how the teachers and students accommodate power dynamics will substantiate the responses collected through the quantitative method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Power distance index level between students and teachers in online language learning along: attitude, social status of teachers, social status of parents, and gender.

A. Attitude

Students and teachers behaved according to what they believed was appropriate. The behaviors were reflected in the online language classroom based on how they perceived proper conduct to conform with each other.

A.1 Student

TABLE A.1

Power Distance Index Level of Students in Online Language Learning along Attitude

Indicators	WM	Description
1. I believe that my online language teacher is always right.	3.69	Agree
2. I ask my online language teacher to explain again if the lesson is unclear.	4.08	Agree
3. I blame my online language teacher when I fail an online test.	1.48	Strongly Disagree
4. I like it when my teacher respects my opinion.	4.48	Agree
5. I am more likely to listen to female online language teachers than male online language teachers.	2.52	Moderately Agree
6. I address my online language teacher formally (Mr./Mrs./Ms.)	4.73	Strongly Agree
7. I can study for an online test without the help of my online language teacher.	2.79	Moderately Agree
8. I expected my online language teacher not to make mistakes in online class.	2.71	Moderately Agree
9. I expect to be punished by my online language teacher when I do not do my homework.	3.10	Moderately Agree
10. I like older online language teachers than younger online language teachers.	2.67	Moderately Agree
11. I like it when my online language teacher tells personal things in online class.	3.58	Agree
12. I believe that online language teachers know everything about their subject.	3.73	Agree
13. I explain to my online language teacher why I do not do my homework.	3.85	Agree
14. I expect my online language teacher to force me to pay attention in the online class.	2.83	Moderately Agree
15. I believe that it is human for online language to make mistakes.	4.5	Strongly Agree
16. I believe that older online teachers know more than online students in most things than younger online teachers.	2.79	Moderately Agree
17. I expect my online language teacher to prepare me for an online test.	4.00	Agree
18. I prefer my online language teacher to punish students who misbehave in an online classes.	3.27	Moderately Agree
19. I do my homework to please my online language teacher.	3.17	Moderately Agree
Overall Mean	3.37	Moderately Agree

It is reflected in Table A.1 the power distance index level of the students in online language learning of the teachers along Attitude. The students strongly agree about their teachers who believed that it is human for online language to make mistakes and address their

online language teacher formally with the computed weighted means of 4.73 and 4.5 accordingly.

On the other hand, the students agree and moderately agree about the other exhibited attitudes of the students in online language learning, but they strongly disagree agree about their students who blame their online language teacher when they failed in an online test.

Presented in the next table below were the responses of the teachers along attitude. The indicators were on the perspective of the teacher when attitude was concerned in online language setting.

A.2 Teachers

TABLE A.2

Power Distance Index Level of Teachers in Online Language Learning along Attitude

Indicators	WM	Description
1. I believe that I am always right.	2.25	Disagree
2. I explain the lesson again when my student said that it is unclear.	4.75	Strongly Agree
3. I blame myself when my student fails an online test.	4.00	Agree
4. I respect my students' opinions.	5.00	Strongly Agree
5. I require my online language students to be more respectful to female online language teacher.	1.75	Disagree
6. I require my students to address me formally.	4.25	Agree
7. I encourage my students to study for an online test without my help.	3.75	Agree
8. I am expected not to make mistakes in online classes.	2.25	Disagree
9. I punish my students when they do not send their homework online	2.00	Disagree
10. I encourage my online language students to be more attentive to the older online language teachers.	1.75	Disagree
11. I disclose personal things in my online language class.	3.75	Agree
12. I know everything about my subject	2.5	Moderately Agree
13. I let my students explain to me why they do not do their homework	4.5	Strongly Agree
14. I am expected to force my students to pay attention in the online language class	2.25	Disagree
15. It is human for online language teachers to make mistakes	4.75	Strongly Agree
16. I believe that older online language teachers know more about most things than younger online language teachers.	1.75	Disagree
17. I usually prepare my online language students for an online test.	4.5	Strongly Agree
18. I punish students who misbehave in an online class	2.25	Disagree
19. I expect my students to do their homework to make me happy.	2.00	Disagree
Overall Mean	3.16	Moderately Agree

It can be gleaned from the table that the teachers strongly agree that they respect their students' opinions, they explain the lesson again when their students said that it is not clear, it is human for online language teachers to make mistakes, students explain to them why they do not do their homework, and students expect them to prepare them for an online test with the computed weighted means of 5.0, 4.75, 4.75, 4.5 and 4.5 respectively.

Further, they agree and disagree to the other indices or gaps between them and their students with an overall weighted mean of 3.16, described as moderately agree.

The data indicated that the students could understand the weaknesses of their teachers and have shown respect to them at the same time reacted to the positive initiative of the teacher. Students' attitude contributes to the

success of online learning. It was highlighted in the study of Gordan (2014), that positive motivation is needed in learning and that giving a positive response will benefit the learners. She also added that when the learners did a remarkable action, they will be rewarded which will benefit the learners. This was an implication that the students exhibited good attitudes in treating their teachers when they were also motivated very well, and this would result to a deeper teacher-student relationship between them. Teachers understood the predicaments of the students and applied effective ways to help these students. More so, teachers should also consider individual differences when it comes to online language learning. Some of them are not so interested or inclined in online learning, especially if there are things which were unavailable at home such as gadgets, internet connection and conducive place to for online study. It is emphasized in the study of Means, et.al. (2010), where they stated that reflection, self-regulation, and self-monitoring promote positive online learning outcomes. This is an indication that the teachers accept and do some remediation for the students to be able to cope with the lessons. Furthermore, this was an implication that training in online language learning needs to be provided to teachers to widen their understanding. There was also a need to strengthen factors associated with teachers' positive attitudes towards online learning.

B. Social Status of Teachers

Teachers were a great influence on the students. In an online language classroom, how the teacher behaved toward the students reflected how complacent they were to teachers.

B.1 Students

TABLE B.1

Power Distance Index Level of Students in Online Language Learning along Social Status as perceived by students

Indicators	WM	Description
1. I easily get close to my online teacher and love to respond to her chats/messages.	3.79	Agree
2. I address my online language teacher in the same manner I address my classmates.	2.46	Disagree
3. I express my disagreement to my online language teacher.	3.04	Moderately Agree
4. I always listen to new online language teachers.	4.23	Agree
5. I share my personal problems with my online language teacher.	2.33	Disagree
6. I am afraid to ask questions to my online language teacher.	2.90	Moderately Agree
7. I can make my online language teacher change his/her mind.	2.71	Moderately Agree
8. I obey the rules of my online language teacher.	4.27	Agree
9. I am free to say anything I want in my online class.	2.21	Disagree
10. I tell my teachers when they make mistake.	3.63	Agree
11. I tell my online language teacher when I disagree with him/her.	3.27	Moderately Agree
12. I ask my online teacher if I am allowed to speak in online class.	4.08	Agree
13. I tell my online language teacher when I feel bad.	3.10	Moderately Agree
14. New online language teachers had to earn my respect.	2.79	Moderately Agree
15. I believe that my online language teachers' decisions cannot be changed	2.54	Moderately Agree
Overall Mean	3.17	Moderately Agree

This denotes that the students showed openness to their teachers and their teachers have good responses to them.

This is an implication that with this kind of relationship, there could be more meaningful and good results as far as teaching and learning are concerned. If the relationship between teacher and student is positive, it has several benefits at all levels of an educational establishment, inside the classroom, and across the whole school environment. There are a number of advantages from increased engagement to the self-esteem of establishing a positive teacher-student relationship between instructors and pupils of all age groups. The presence of positive student-teacher interactions alone does not change to academic success, but learners that create a strong bond with them to perform better than those learners who have some conflict with their teachers. On the other hand, the students, moderately agree on the other information regarding the social status of their teachers but they disagree that they address their online language teacher in the same manner they address their classmates. The overall weighted mean is 3.17 described as moderately agree. It is also emphasized by Muega et.al. (2016), who described the communication, social, and critical thinking skills of grade 9 and grade 10 students from a laboratory school of the college of education of a state university in the Philippines. The study showed that most of the respondents agreed that teachers have significantly contributed to the advancement of social, communication, and critical thinking skills owed to the low-level power distance relationship that exists between them and their teachers. It is also revealed that the possibility for a lower distance relationship between students and teachers to exist is attainable even if the students are raised in a high-power distance home environment. It was reflected in Table B.1 the power distance index level of the students in online language learning along with social status of the teachers as perceived by the students.

B.2 Teachers

TABLE B.2

Power Distance Index Level of Teachers in Online Language Learning along Social Status of Teachers

Indicators	WM	Description
1. I am friendly and love to respond to my students' chats about their hobbies	4.00	Agree
2. I am addressed in the same manner my online language students address their classmates.	2.00	Disagree
3. I have opinions that are disagreed upon by my students.	3.5	Agree
4. I observed that new online language students listen to me more than the old language students	2.5	Moderately Agree
5. I am trusted by my students of their personal problems.	4.5	Strongly Agree
6. I observed that my online language students are afraid to ask questions in my online class	1.75	Disagree
7. I am easily persuaded by my students.	4.00	Agree
8. My online learning rules are obeyed by my online language students.	4.25	Agree
9. In my online language class, students are free to say anything they want.	2.00	Disagree
10. I am open to students' comments whenever I commit mistakes.	4.00	Agree
11. I let my students disagree with me.	4.00	Agree
12. I require my students to ask permission to speak in my online language class.	3.75	Agree
13. I allow my students to tell me when they feel bad.	4.00	Agree
14. I believe that new online language teachers had to earn students' respect	3.75	Agree
15. I stand by my decision all the time.	2.00	Disagree
Overall Mean	3.33	Moderately Agree

Table B.2 shows the power distance index level of the teachers in online language learning along social status. It can be observed that the teachers agree strongly that their students share their personal problems to them with the computed weighted mean of 4.5. On the other hand, they agree that their students obey their online learning rules, they are friendly and love to respond to their students' chats about their hobbies, their students can make them change and the students tell them when they commit mistakes with the computed weighted means of 4.25, 4.0, 4.0 and 4.0 accordingly. The overall weighted mean yielded to 3.33 which is described as moderately agree.

This means that the teachers and the students are open with each other and showed good relationships, deeper understanding, and sharing inner personal information. The relationship between a teacher and students can be considered as one of the most influential factors in a learning environment. This is a significant component affecting students' progress, engagement of school and academic motivation, and a teacher-student relationship from the basis of the social context also.

Positive and compassionate relationships between students and teachers eventually increase the intelligence of belonging and inspire students to eagerly take part in different online activities. It is very important that the interaction between a teacher and student should be supportive of the learning environment. The relationship between teacher and student has been found to have immense effects on the learning and schooling experience of the student.

The finding is also given emphasis in the study of Terzi (2011), where he examined the relationship between power distance and autocratic and democratic tendencies of 116 research assistants and 162 prospective teachers. The study is designed quantitatively and showed that the research assistants and prospective teachers have low power distance and autocratic tendency scores and with high democratic tendency scores.

This is an implication that teachers can help in improving the academic success of the students by expressing confident expectations for every student, giving students similar opportunities to take part in online class discussions and motivate students that they are self-confident in their ability to get success when it comes to their homework or coursework.

In this kind of scenario, there could be more meaningful results with regards to the teachers' personal relationships with their students. Thus, an educator

should plan to enhance their communications with students to allow for quality learning.

C. Social Status of Parents

In the teaching-learning process, parents are equally important. However, in online language learning, students and teachers vary in how they perceive the importance of parents.

C.1 Students

TABLE C.1
Power Distance Index Level of Students in Online Language Learning along Social Status of Parents

Indicators	WM	Description
1. My parents always think that online language teachers are right.	3.13	Moderately Agree
2. My parents take side with my online language teacher when I misbehave in online class.	3.5	Agree
3. My parents prefer me to learn from old online teachers than young online teachers.	2.46	Disagree
4. My parents show more respect for older online language teachers.	2.65	Moderately Agree
Overall Mean	2.94	Moderately Agree

Table C.1 shows the power distance index level of the students in online language learning along social status of the parents as perceived by them. The students agree that their parents take their side with their online language teacher when they misbehave in online class with the computed weighted mean 3.5.

On the other hand, the students moderately agree when their parents think that online language teachers are right, and their parents show more respect for older online language teachers with the computed weighted means of 3.13 and 2.65 respectively.

The students disagree that their parents prefer to learn from old online teachers than young online teachers with the computed mean of 2.46. The overall weighted mean is 2.94 with an adjectival description of moderately agree.

This goes to show that the students can justify and witness the concerns of their parents regarding their misbehavior in class.

They appreciate the way their parents treated the online language teachers regardless of their ages. Parent involvement in a child's education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance, Kohl et.al.,2000.

More so when parents are not tolerating the misbehavior of their child in class.

It has been defined and measured in multiple ways, including activities that parents engage in at home and at school and positive attitudes parents have towards their child's education, school, and teacher.

C.2 Teachers

TABLE C.2

Power Distance Index Level of Teachers in Online Language Learning along Social Status of Parents as perceived by teachers

Indicators	WM	Description
1. My students' parents always think that online language teachers are right	2.00	Disagree
2. Parents take my side when their child misbehaves in class	3.00	Moderately Agree
3. My students' parents prefer their child to learn from old online teachers than young online teachers	2.00	Disagree
4. My students' parents show more respect for older online language teachers	2.00	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.25	Disagree

Table C.2 shows the power distance index level of the teachers in online language learning along social status of parents. The table shows that the teachers moderately agree that the parents take their side when their children misbehave in class with an average weighted mean of 3.0. The teachers disagree that their students' parents always think that online language teachers are right, parents prefer their child to learn from old online teachers than young online teachers and show more respect for older online language teachers with the average weighted means of 2.0, 2.0 and 2.0 respectively. The overall weighted mean is 2.25 which is described as disagree.

This goes to show that teachers are amenable that parents do not tolerate their children's misbehavior in class. The parents show their concerns about their children. The teachers are witnesses to the parents being able to become fair and just with their children's actions in class. In addition, it is very important, that teachers and parents are working together in disciplining the students. Parent's support is indeed a big help for the teachers to inculcate right manners and attitude towards learning.

This is an indication that teachers are open to the parents' consent and sentiments regarding their children's behavior in the class. Further, the parents do understand the predicaments of the teachers when their children exhibited misbehavior in class. The teachers are determined that the parents respect the online teachers regardless of their age and whatever decisions that these teachers made because these parents know that it is for the betterment of their children.

The study of Jacobs et.al. (2020), emphasized that learning should be done cooperatively. They also emphasized that even in distance learning working cooperatively will yield positive results.

D. Gender

The preference of students and teachers reflects their importance in society. In the context of online language

learning, gender is interrelated with the age preference of students.

D.1 Students

TABLE D.1

Power Distance Index Level of Students in Online Language Learning along Gender

Indicators	WM	Description
1. I have more respect for female online language teacher than male online language teacher.	2.10	Disagree
2. Male online teacher deserves more than female online language teachers.	1.94	Disagree
3. I prefer to listen more to my online language teacher.	2.44	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.16	Disagree

Table D.1 reveals the power distance index level of the students in online language learning in terms of gender of the teachers. It is reflected in the table that the students disagree that they have more respect for female online language teacher than male online language teacher, that male online teacher deserves more than female online language teachers and prefer to listen more to their online language teacher with the computed weighted means of 2.10, 1.94 and 2.44 correspondingly with an overall weighted mean of 2.16 which is described as disagree.

D.2 Teachers

TABLE D.2

Power Distance Index Level of Teachers in Online Language Learning along Gender

Indicators	WM	Description
1. My students have more respect for female online language teacher than male online language teacher	2.0	Disagree
2. Male online teachers deserve more respect than female online language teachers	2.0	Disagree
3. My students prefer to listen more to male online language teacher	2.25	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.08	Disagree

Table D.2 shows the power distance index level of the teachers in online language learning along Gender. It is gleaned from the table that the teachers disagree that their students have more respect for female online language teacher than male online language teacher, another is that male online teachers deserve more respect than female online language teachers, and students prefer to listen more to male online language teacher with the computed weighted means of 2.0, 2.0 and 2.25 respectively. The overall weighted mean is 2.08 described as disagree.

This means that regardless of the gender of the teachers, the students still have the same respect for them. This also shows that students are now open-minded and knowledgeable on gender equality where both female and male teachers can excel, both can manifest equal potential and therefore they both deserve respect.

This indicates that the students showed fairness to their male and female teachers. An implication is that this time, equality dominates, and respect is given to both genders. The results were also emphasized in Hu and Cheung (2021) where 616 participants in total were involved, after selecting those participants who were not first-year students. The correlations between academic performance and cultural distance, between gender and cultural distance, and between gender and academic performance were not significant. Therefore, there is no collinearity problem in the interaction effect of gender and cultural distance on academic performance. The moderating effect of gender on the effect of cultural distance on academic performance was significantly negative. This means that teachers believe that their students do not exercise favoritism either for male or female teachers. They do not accept the fact that male teachers are better than female online teachers. This means that regardless of the teacher's gender, the students show respect to them. Also, the teachers do not believe that both male and female can do their work equally as far as online teaching is concerned. The results are also emphasized by Li and Gou (2012) in their study which was conducted to 26 teachers from a comprehensive university with 16 colleges. It also revealed that teachers' major, gender, and professional titles bear no mutual effect on teachers' power distance value.

2. Challenges encountered by the students and teachers with power distance along Cultural Background and Instructional Strategies

E. Cultural Background

Culture in every sense is interrelated in language and behavior. The variations of cultures from where students and teachers are used to are challenges which contribute on how they perceived each other in online language classroom.

E.1 Students

TABLE E.1
CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Indicators	YES	RANK
1. My parents require me to respect more the online language teachers than younger online teachers.	23	3
2. My family members laugh at me when they hear me talking in English to my online language teacher.	15	7
3. My online language teacher makes me nervous every time he/she asks me to share something about my family in class.	37	1
4. My online language teacher pays more attention to my classmates whose families are well-known in the community.	16	6
5. My parents show more respect to my online language teachers whose family members are a friend of them.	24	2
6. My online language teacher is attentive to those who are using high-end gadgets in online learning.	19	4
7. My online language teacher shows interest to my male classmates whose grades in English subject from the previous school year is high.	17	5

Table E.1 presents the problems experienced by the students with power distance along Cultural Background. The table reveals that the most encountered challenges of the students are: their online language teacher makes them nervous every time they were asked to share something about their family in class which ranks first among the problems that were identified.

This means that the students are hesitant and feel shy about revealing information about their families. This is an indication that the students are observing privacy about their personal information and the risk of revealing details about their families.

Relatively, some students also considered other information regarding their cultural background as far as their language teacher and their families are concerned.

Second in rank is that their parents show more respect to my online language teachers whose family members are a friend of them. The third in rank is that parents require their children to respect more the online language teachers than younger online teachers. The culture of being connected, familiarization and respect to elders were also some examples to become the problems of students.

In the study of Kang (2014), he focused on the role of culture in online learning. In his study, he employed document analysis, particularly the Keywords-in-context technique to analyze the data. The respondents are student sojourners learning in the Western online learning context. The study revealed that culture matters in online learning and its influence should neither be underestimated nor overestimated or stereotyped.

E.2 Teacherr

TABLE E.2
CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Indicators	YES	RANK
1. The parents of my online students require their children to respect more the older online language teachers than younger online teachers.	1	4-5
2. The online language students are being laughed at home when they hear them talking in English.	3	1
3. The online language students are getting nervous every time they are asked to share something about their family in class.	2	2
4. The online students who came from well-known families received much attention during online language class.	0	6.5
5. The parents of the online students respect more the online language teachers whose family members are a friend to them.	1	4-5
6. The online students with high-end gadgets are much given attention during online class	0	6.5
7. The male online students with high grades in English subject from the previous school year are interesting to the online language teachers.	2	3

Table E.2 presents the problems experienced by the teachers with power distance along Cultural Background. The table reveals that the problems most experienced by the teachers are: the online language students are being laughed at at home when they hear

them talking in English, the online language students are getting nervous every time they are asked to share something about their family in class, and the male online students with high grades in English subject from the previous school year are interesting to the online language teachers.

It goes to show that it is still in the culture of the students of being conscious, hesitant, and cautious which became attributed as problems to the teachers. These problems can be resolved by motivating the students that learning is fun, and if they do mistakes there are lot of chances to correct and do better next time. Teachers should create a positive class environment for them to learn comfortably and happily.

This implies that cultural background of the students is still considered barriers or contributors to the students' development. Fair treatment is also a must so that the students may not feel intimidated and despite their cultural background they will feel that learning is just and fun.

The findings can also be verified in the study of Jayatilleke and Gunawardena (2016), who described how cultural context influences online learning. The study showed that it was still crucial to examine the cultural framework and expectations students and teachers bring with them to build inclusive online learning environments.

F. Instructional Strategies

The delivery method of the teachers when conducting online language lesson may impact the learners' understanding and motivation of the language lessons. One contributing factor to have a positive online language classroom is the effective online language activities utilized in teaching and learning.

F.1 Students

TABLE F.1
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Indicators	YES	RANK
1. My online language teacher gives me a minus point every time I submit my homework after the deadline.	36	3
2. My online language teacher makes me uncomfortable when he/she listens attentively while I talk.	24	7
3. My online language teacher gives me a difficult individual activity to keep me focused more on language learning.	25	6
4. My focus diverts from the lesson to my online language teacher's pronunciation when he/she is discussing.	41	2
5. My online language teacher is delayed on giving his/her feedback on my outputs.	35	4
6. My online language teacher pays less attention to my classmates who seldom participate in the discussion.	34	5
7. My online language teacher needs to modify into the simplest form his/her lessons discussed in online class for better understanding.	44	1

Table F.1 presents the challenges encountered by the students with power distance along instructional strategies. It is reflected in the table the first three most

encountered problems are: the online language teacher needs to modify into the simplest form his/her lessons discussed in an online class for better understanding, the focus of the students diverts from the lesson to their online language teacher's pronunciation when he/she is discussing, and the online language teacher gives a minus point every time they submit their homework after the deadline.

This means that the students are being punished for their faults and mistakes in complying with requirements. This denotes that the students could adapt and understand situations while their teacher is delivering the lessons which will result in a good student's performance. Other problems were also experienced by the students but not to the extent as the mentioned problems.

F.2 Teachers

TABLE F.2
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Indicators	YES	RANK
1. The online language students received a minus point from their online language teacher every time they submit their homework after the deadline.	2	6
2. The online students are uncomfortable when their online language teacher listens to them attentively	3	3.5
3. The online language students are given a difficult individual activity by their online teachers to help them focus more on language learning	3	3.5
4. The attention of the online language students is diverted from the language lesson to their online language teacher's pronunciation while discussing the lessons.	3	3.5
5. The online student received late feedback of their outputs from their online language teacher.	4	1.5
6. The online students who seldom participate in an online class are given less attention of their online language teachers.	1	7
7. The online language teachers need to modify the lessons into simplest form to understand better by the online students.	4	1.5

Table F.2 presents the problems experienced by the teachers with power distance along instructional strategies.

The table reveals the following problems experienced by the teachers which are: The online student received late feedback on their outputs from their online language teacher. The online language teachers need to modify the lessons into the simplest form to understand better by the online students. These are the common problems that the teachers encountered which means that teachers shall see to it that all outputs must be given the respective ratings for the information of the students. Henceforth, the students really deserve to be informed of their works. Sometimes, it is needed to explain the lessons to be more understandable to the students when the students do not really understand the lessons.

Other problems that were identified were also considered by some of the teachers like online students are uncomfortable when their online language teacher

listens to them attentively, online language students are given a difficult individual activity by their online teachers to help them focus more on language learning and the attention of the online language students is diverted from the language lesson to their online language teacher's pronunciation while discussing the lessons.

In the study conducted by Zhang (2013), it was found out that undergraduate students from Confucian-heritage culture revealed that Chinese learners often seek help from peers of similar culture and linguistic background because of intimidation they felt from their instructors. The study used the qualitative approach, and the data was collected through audio-recorded face-to-face interviews and transcribed verbatim. Findings revealed that asynchronous features of online learning has been helpful to the students, instructors' lack of participation frustrates the students, avoidance of offensiveness and conflicts of students to their instructor's build-up anxiety, and communication with fellow students is less intimidating compared to the instructors.

In the same idea of Govea (2007), which resulted from his study that a teacher's choice of methodology highly affects the learners' interaction with each other. Understanding what the learners felt during the process of learning must be considered also.

3. How do students and teachers accommodate power dynamics in online language learning?

The following presents the results and discussions of the findings of the scheduled online interviews conducted with four (4) online language teachers, and twelve purposively chosen STE online students (12) from grade 7, grade 8, grade 9, and grade 10 of Gallanosa National High School.

Five themes emerged as to how STE students and teachers cope with power dynamics in online language learning. They were (a) understanding the concept of power, (b) interesting teaching practice, (c) establishing positive connections, (d) engaging activities, and (e) constructive resolve.

A. Understanding the concept of power

Teachers and students have their own way of understanding how power inside the classroom is exercised. This helped both to compromise as to what they wanted their online classroom will be. Below are some responses gathered from the scheduled online interview.

Hope was a Grade 7 student. Her parents are supportive of her attending the online class. She was always told to be obedient because her teachers are responsible for their language learning. Her parents made her understand that her teachers may be strict, but it is all for her learning. Hope always remembers that her online language teacher has the power to affect her grades.

“Teacher’s power for me is their ability to make others do what they want others to do, and they have the control of everything. When my teacher told us to do the writing activity in English, *masunod ako* (I’ll do it) even sometimes I don’t want to do it because I have to use English words which I find difficult. I know my teacher is higher than me and I do not want her to get angry. I am also concerned about my grade *na maapektuhan* (to be affected) if I will not do it. And because she is my online language teacher, and she had the control to discipline us, students.”

Ellie is a Grade 9. Her parents are both occupied at work, so they have no time to assist her in answering the activities given by her language teacher. For Ellie, even though she found her online language teacher strict, she understood that it is one of her teacher’s ways for her to be a good person and a good communicator in the future.

“Teacher’s power inside the classroom is a moral obligation to influence others. When the strict teacher guides us, we do good and will always think of the common good. I think we will always remember strict online language teachers though we can only see them on screen. In the future, when I am able to pass the interviews and written exams in English, I will be grateful to my strict language teacher for sure.”

Hope and Ellie, though very young have their interpretation of why their teacher should exercise power inside the classroom. Both reasoned out positive ideas on their teachers imposing of authority inside the online language classroom.

On the part of the teachers, Ma’am Bella and Sir Oliver imposed boundaries between them and manipulated students’ behavior inside the online classroom could help them effectively learn the target language.

“Teaching in an online language class is different from face-to-face classes. Since I only see my students on screen, I gave the online rules and instruct them how to behave when the online class is ongoing. When I am discussing, especially if it is about grammar and correct usage, I always remind them that it is me, their teacher discussing, and because of that, they should listen

carefully as a student because it is to train them how to communicate effectively. I don't usually befriend them because they tend to take advantage of my kindness. By doing this, I kept my online students disciplined and focused on language learning." Mam bella

"Power is making the students move or letting them do what a teacher wants. In online learning, I gave them instructions on how to behave accordingly while the language class is ongoing like the microphone is off and avoiding having background noise. I remind them to carefully follow the instructions given for example in writing an essay. I gave a minus point sometimes when the instructions are not followed. I also see to it that I remind them to be responsible in submitting the tasks online or else there will be consequences and that as STE students is not an appropriate thing to happen to them." Sir oliver

The online language students above communicated their understanding as to why their language teacher exercises power to the students. Language teachers' power and authority inside the online classroom is to make the students disciplined and to achieve effective language learning. Online students considered their teacher's power as a moral obligation and influence for them to become good communicators in the future.

Turner (2005) said that leaders acquire power not by owning resources theoretically but by standing for, representing, believing, working for something, or being perceived to do so, with which at least some others concur. Online language teachers are leaders, and their online social presence impacts the students by emphasizing to the students their roles as leaders in the online setting. Believing and working for something that will help the students are a consideration while exercising power in the language classroom.

Paying attention to power in learning environments is an important component of teaching and learning (Reid & Kawash, 2017). Online students being aware of the role of their language teacher in developing their language skills understand the importance of exercising power in online learning thus, improper comprehension of the reason behind exercising different language teachers' power inside the online classroom will lead to ineffective language learning skills.

B. Interesting teaching practice

In online language learning, the online teachers play a major role in encouraging the learners to love the subject area that they are teaching. Online language students are also adjusting to the new setup of learning thus, online

language teachers improvise and exert effort to let their virtual students hook in learning the language.

Angel is a grade 7 online student. The online modality of learning is a new experience for her. She came from a Barangay elementary school and was not exposed to the internet. She said that she had to practice using the Google meet so that she would be able to cope with her online lessons. Learning a language online is a difficult venture for her, especially the internet connection. She wants her teacher to give friendly activities like puzzles and riddles to have a positive mood inside the online classroom. got used to her language teachers being hands-on in teaching them English where they are tutored one by one. She is also given the task of helping her other classmates to read and answer different English activities. She also said that she wants her online teacher to be considerate and show them first how to answer to difficult tasks.

"Hali po ako mam sa Barangay Elementary School. Dere po kami masyado nag internet pero maaram ako. Kaya san nag online learning na challenge po ako. Gusto ko po na mag hatag si mam friendly activities para masaya an amo classroom. Gusto ko po na pirme si mam mag start san activities like puzzles and riddles para po maging motivated kami. Gusto ko din po na halimbawa mahirap na an activities mag hatag muna si mam san sample na answer nan maging mapag pasensya po saamo pirme."(I came from a Barangay Elementary School. We are not expose to the internet, but I know how to use it. When I learned that we would have an online class I was challenged. I want my English teacher to give us friendly activities so that there is a positive vibe in the online classroom. I want my teacher to start with activities like puzzles and riddles so that we will be motivated. And when the activity is difficult, I want my teacher to lead us on how to answer the task.)

Sir Felix, a grade 10 teacher with more than five years of teaching in public school said that the ambiance of his online classroom is a priority. He designs a routine in creating a positive vibe in the online classroom for the students to enjoy and also meets the goal of language learning in every meeting they have online.

"When a routine is established like setting tasks, online rules, and time management, the learners are guided, and the goals of the lesson are achieved. They will be functional in a way that our moves are coordinated with each other. It is also in my routine to encourage my learners to be respectful of each other even they only meet online. I am a kind of teacher who leads my learners to stress-free learning."

Even in the new modality of learning, interesting teaching practice is still a good action to build relationships with students. Teaching practice must also be improved to conform with the need of the students in language learning.

Haynie (2010), found that teachers' attitude is closely related to students' setting of high expectations of their teachers. She also said that top teachers commit to proactive planning where they spend time in learning, thinking, and sharing the best practices in the area of subject discipline. In the context of online language learning, the teaching practice of the online language teacher is also modified for the purpose of winning over the online student's attention to high-level language learning.

C. Establishing positive connections

Students being acquainted with their teacher is a good start to a good student-teacher relationship. It is such a good atmosphere to start teaching and learning in a favorable condition. But due to this pandemic and the implementation of online learning, things change, and distance serves as the barrier between teachers and students. Sharing personal issues, asking teachers for advice, and learning are mostly done on a different platform.

George, a grade 10 JHS student. He still finds online language learning awkward this pandemic. He prefers to communicate with his teachers face-to-face because it made him understand the language lesson well like the correct pronunciation of the English word and grammar rules. He still adjusts to the online language learning this pandemic and eventually admires the online language teacher's dedication, understanding, and patience while teaching online.

"There is this time when I encountered a family problem at home. I was so sad at that time, and I cannot focus on the lesson about the unity of the plot. My online language teacher noticed that and asked me if I was ok. That time I just answered no. What he did is he sent a message to me cheering me up and advised me to be strong always. After that, I used to open a short convo with my language teacher. I don't feel afraid of asking about the lesson or communicating with my language teacher."

Sir Oliver, a Grade 9 online teacher says that in his online class, he talked with his students and make sure to find out what they feel about the online language class. This is also his way of assessing the language

learning of his online students. He said that establishing good communication between teachers and students can make him adjust to create a positive language learning experience.

"I talked to my students even the ones who are almost non-existent in the online classroom. I spent minutes doing that before I start the discussion. This way, I felt I lessen the tension they are feeling during the day. Some are hesitant but I let them feel they belong to the online class by asking them to participate in the online discussion especially when the topic is about literature where they have to express their opinion. I do not start my language class with a gloomy atmosphere. I gave them motivation like games and riddles."

In every sense, there is always a positive effect in learning when students and teachers are rooted in a deep connection that promotes a healthy learning environment. As Ulug, et.al (2011) asserted that teachers with a positive attitude have a positive effect on the learner's personality and performance level and if the teacher has a negative attitude, it will also have a negative attitude on the student's personality and performance levels. Teaching language virtually will not change the fact that online language teachers are one of the determining factors in the language development of learners. They are the guide that impacts the views and behavior of the students in the future.

D. Engaging prior learning Activities

In a normal classroom setting, engaging the students in learning activities already requires the teachers' skill and proper encouragement. It is a challenge in face-to-face language classes and correspondingly in online language learning. There is an additional difficulty when it comes to engaging the online learners in English activities and since both teachers and students are still adapting to the adjustment of learning modalities, a good strategy from the teacher and positive response of the online language learners will aid to achieve the desired target language skills.

Alice is on the seventh grade. This is the first time she attended an online class. She always loves face-to-face classes, especially the English subject and is always active in different language activities but because of pandemic, she had no choice but to attend an online class. She said that when she asks her teacher to give them activities like when they are in the normal classroom it motivated her to participate in the discussion.

“I find my online language class boring, so I ask the teacher to let us play a game before the language lesson. Then, next meeting my teacher asks us to prepare a paper and a marker. It was analyzing the sentences and we will decide if it is true or false. The task is time-pressured, so it makes me excited. We are also laughing continuously the entire activity.”

Ma'am Celine said that since she started handling the Grade 7 online language class, she found out that her students participate actively if there will be activities involving the movement of their bodies. She also said that giving games before the proper lesson serves as a motivation of the online learners and it has an effect on the mood of the online language learners.

“I gave my students interactive games which involve their body in answering. It is possible to conduct such activity in the online language classroom. It lightens up the mood that prepares them for new learning.”

Prior activities serve as a motivation for the students. Utilizing different activities in the classroom, critical thinking skills, and creative skills of the students are also enhanced (Anwer, 2019).

Ferreira, et.al (2011), concluded that teachers should also create an active learning environment that enhances students' perceived autonomy and competence, providing students with choices and opportunities for self-directed learning, and planning learning activities that might increase their feeling of mastery. It means that teacher's way of engaging the students in prior activities can greatly impact their language learning thus, online language teachers are to carefully plan the prior activity before it will be given to the online language students.

E. Constructive resolve

The harmony inside the online language classroom is the product of the collaborative effort of the online language teachers and online language students. The tension inside the online language class will affect language teaching and learning and will hinder the transfer of the basic skills in learning the language.

Ma'am Celine said that her Grade 7 students are very young and in the transition between their elementary years and junior high school therefore her students are prone to breaking the rules in her online classroom. She said that to address this kind of situation she gently reprimands her online language students right away so that it will not be repeated.

“My students are very young. Their age is where they tend to be playful all the time. Whenever they break the rules, I reprimand them right away in a humane manner. I reminded them of the online rules that they violate.”

Mary and Robert are Grade 10 online language students for almost two years now. They said that it is a plus point of a teacher if they react accordingly to their profession and in accord with the weight of the violation. They said that as online students it is beneficial for them to learn from their mistakes.

“My teacher caught us cheating in our GC. I know it is wrong. What my teacher did is to reject the result of the test. He talked to me privately and gave us an additional task to compensate for what we have done. We readily accept the consequence entailed by the violation.”

“I accidentally turn on the microphone which created resounding noise in our google meet. Despite the disturbance I made, my online language teacher calmly talk to me and give me a reminder to focus and consider the other classmates who are disturbed by the noise.”

Discipline is a must in a classroom. This includes the online language classroom this new normal. It is conclusive that positive reinforcement is a suitable classroom management tool for teachers who need to control undesirable behavior in their classroom (Rumfolo, 2017).

Ciuladiene, et.al (2017) supported the study of Rahim in 1986, that effective conflict management encourages motivation, enhances morale, and promotes individual and organizational growth. It means that proper resolution between the teachers and students in a conflicting situation will increase in promoting a positive response to teaching and learning inside the online language classroom.

The responses concluded that teachers and students have different styles in accommodating power dynamics that exist in the online language classroom. Therefore, teachers' viewpoints of their roles influenced to a great deal their way of exercising power and empowering their students in class and students' active involvement in constructing the curriculum helps their learning and gives students a feeling of ownership of what they are doing which is necessary for learning. (Sidky, 2017).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Power distance is common to exist in a culturally diverse online language classroom. There are variations in the power index levels between teachers and students along

with attitude, social status of teacher, social status of parents, and gender. There were several challenges encountered by the teachers and students with power distance along cultural background and instructional strategies. Teacher and students differ in accommodating power dynamics in online language learning. Proposed online language activities were developed to address the distance gap between the teachers and the students.

In the light of the foregoing conclusions, it is recommended that the school may hold the capacity building for teachers to improve their skills in conducting online language classes,

The school may also conduct an orientation with the parents to inform them about their roles in the online learning of their child, teachers should utilize strategies to handle power gaps in online language learning, utilization and dissemination of the activities for language teachers may be done to address the power gap in online learning and based on the findings further studies may be conducted to supplement the findings revealed in this study.

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