

From “welcome to my channel” to “please like, share, & subscribe”: A conversational analysis of the opening and closing strategies of Filipino Youtube vlogs

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Abstract

In the field of communications much is still to be known about Filipino vlogs. And yet vlogs are subject to much public discourse. Anchored in Jessica De Boeck's (2015) work, this study determines the purposes that vlogs serve in this computer-mediated communication by examining the opening and closing strategies in 10 Filipino YouTube vlogs. Generally, the results of the study are constitutive of De Boeck's findings. However, Filipino vlogs have interesting additions to these identified strategies. For the opening strategies, some Filipino vloggers identify their viewers by denoting names to their fan base. They also include short clips or video previews, which I argue as “digital markers.” And as for the closing strategies, some Filipino vloggers operate the discourse marker “so” as a final closing strategy. Lastly, the topic shading forecasts vloggers' arrangement and framing. By and large, the vlogs' employed strategies are deemed to provide a profound sense of involvement, engagement, and belongingness.

Keywords: vlogs, YouTube vlogs, opening strategies, closing strategies, conversation analysis

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Context and Significance

In the advancement of communication technology, many online platforms have been created that allow Internet users to express and engage themselves in virtual or digital storytelling. These forms of digital storytelling include chat rooms, podcasts, blogs, social media sites, e-mails, and video blogs or vlogs (Jukić, 2018). Among these, vlogs have gained immense popularity as a relatively new phenomenon in terms of interaction. Adhering to its “Broadcast Yourself” tagline, YouTube, the primary repository of vlogs, has created a venue open for everyone’s engagement and an online communication with the absent audience.

Vlogging has been a phenomenon since 2005. It often comes in the form of a diary-like video (Mustonen, 2017) where people take a video of themselves, tell a story, and upload it on the Internet. These vlogs follow a traditional means of storytelling that takes place online (Jukić, 2018). Likewise, Bryan Alexander (2011) observes that:

[d]igital stories are narratives built from the stuff of cyberculture. ...Digital stories are currently created using nearly every digital device in an ever-growing toolbox. They are experienced by a large population. Their creators are sometimes professionals, and also amateurs. They can be deeply personal or posthumanly otherwise, fiction and nonfiction, brief or epic, wrought from a single medium or sprawling across dozens. We are living in a time of immense creativity, with new opportunities for creators appearing nearly every day. (p. 3)

Vlogs capture different themes and diverse topics. They do not follow a static format and there is no exact vlog template. Vloggers, the content creators of vlogs, are free to exercise their creative license, which makes vlogs a more exploratory venue for entertainment and interaction. However, even though diverse formats are popping out because of continuous technological innovation, vlogs have remained popular in the form of “in-front-of-camera talking” (De Boeck, 2015).

This study, patterned after the work of Jessica De Boeck (2015), aims to contribute to the study of the conversational aspect of vlogs. Only few researches have been done about the opening and closing strategies of the YouTube vlogs. Given the year of De Boeck’s study, I presume that several changes have taken place with the vlogging styles, specifically in terms of opening and closing strategies. The analysis of these dialogic features of vlogs, despite the absence of a physical audience during the shoot and

simultaneous taking of turns, sheds light on the conversational aspect of vlogs.

Problematique and Objectives

Despite the popularity of vlogs, only a few researches on them have been conducted. Also, previous conversational studies of vlogs are international in provenance. To address this lack, this study seeks to explore the Filipino vlogs' discursive pattern and determine its nuances, specifically in vlog openings and closings.

Basically, the opening and closing sequences in a talk are vital in negotiating and even establishing the turn mechanism. But if there is only one speaker in front of the camera, which is predominantly the case in my data, the need for an opening is apparently not necessary. The same goes with a closing when taking into account that the vlogger (like the viewer/audience) may end the video on the off chance that they need to.

While the dominant vlogs appear monologic, this study also includes non-monologic vlogs, which underpins the argument that storytelling in vlogs is not self-contained monologues and is not monopolized by a single speaker.

Hence, this study seeks to explore the vlog's conversational aspects and how these are operationalized to create a successful dialogical environment. Specifically, it aims to:

1. identify the opening strategies used by Filipino vloggers for the beginning sequence;
2. identify the closing strategies used by Filipino vloggers for the ending sequence; and
3. examine the purpose of the incorporated opening and closing strategies.

Study framework

For this study, I employed Conversation Analysis as the basic theoretical ground. And to learn more about Filipino vlogs' opening and closing strategies, I took on the work of De Boeck (2015) as my primary analysis guide.

Conversation analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson in the 1960s and 1970s is an approach within social sciences that studies social interaction by encompassing the verbal and nonverbal features of everyday interaction. Jack Sidnell (2016) suggested that CA

is an “attempt to describe the stable practices and underlying normative organizations of interaction by moving back and forth between the close study of singular instances and the analysis of patterns exhibited across collections of cases” (p. 1).

CA reveals that structure exists in a conversation and interlocutors participate to establish a sound conversation. It proposes that if there is in fact order to conversation, then it can be a subject for a study (De Boeck, 2015). Ten Have (1999, as cited in De Boeck, 2015) argued that the function “an utterance performs depends on its sequential position “was the ‘discovery’ that led to conversation analysis” (p. 11). CA looks at turn-taking, repair, and action sequencing as important aspects of conversational analysis.

Turns in talking are relevant to make the conversation successful, thus making turn-taking a fundamental feature of conversational organization and puts it at the heart of conversation analysis (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, as cited in Haddington, 2009). Turn constructional units (TCU) are the fundamental blocks for the turn-taking mechanism (Sacks et al., 1974). It can be lexical items, phrases, clauses, and sentences that can be recognized as units in their own right depending on context. Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) argued that there are several means by which turn-taking for conversation could be organized. Generally, they describe turn-taking as “locally managed, party-administered, interactionally controlled” (p. 696).

The next important aspect of CA is repair, which is used by conversationalists to address the “troubles for speaking, hearing, and understanding” (Sidnell, 2016). Repair can either be initiated by the speaker of the repairable item or by the recipient of the message. As described by Emmanuel Abraham Schegloff (2000), it demonstrates a “possible disjunction with the immediately preceding talk,” while a repair outcome results in either a “solution or abandonment of the problem” (p. 207).

Lastly, actions are organized into a sequence (Sidnell, 2016). In general, adjacency pairs constitute of only two turns. However, conversationalists do not use only a pair of turns. To make the talk-in-interaction flourish, “an adjacency pair may be expanded so as to result in a much more complex sequence” (Sidnell, 2016, p. 15).

De Boeck’s Catalog of Vlog Opening and Closing Strategies

I adapted De Boeck’s (2015) study, which was greatly influenced by Maximiliane Frobenius’ (2011) work, to help me analyze my own corpus. Her work, being the most recent and extensive in terms of counting paralinguistic features and technology-aided graphics as part of the opening

and closing made, is significant for the analysis. Interestingly, De Boeck (2015) studied both verbal and paralinguistic features of vlogs. Aside from that, she also considered the text displays and graphics present in vlogs. She assumed the following opening strategies:

1. putting to music images or writing to introduce the channel
2. greeting the audience
3. using a personal-state inquiry
4. using a term of address
5. using self-identification
6. mentioning the date of filming
7. using topic transition markers
8. introducing the topic of the video
9. framing the video
10. noticeably turning the camera on

Meanwhile, the following are the proposed closing strategies apparent in the vlogs that De Boeck (2015) studied.

1. using a pre-closing
2. using a topic transition
3. framing
4. requesting a response or action
5. using an endscreen
6. using a terminal exchange
7. thanking the viewer
8. turning the camera off

The explored opening and closing strategies share functions necessary for relationship building. For vlog openings, for example, vloggers begin with a greeting, which implies the importance of viewers as co-participants in the talk. The vlogger is not merely talking to the recording device. A greeting also works as a conversation starter. According to De Boeck (2015), a greeting establishes among viewers a sense of bond. Soon after the greeting, vloggers may introduce themselves. Although they have their name clearly imprinted on YouTube's website, this is still practiced by some to "draw extra attention to the vlogger's identity" (p. 34). She also mentioned that to build and provide context, vloggers tend to disclose the date, time, and place of their vlogs. This strategy helps in extending a message to the viewers, and also in framing them. In addition, vloggers employ discourse markers to ensure a smooth flow from one strategy to another. Words like "so" and "anyway" are commonly found markers in the discourse of vloggers.

Adjusting the camera is another popular marker. Vloggers reposition their camera to provide viewers with better viewing angles.

De Boeck (2015) identified the abovementioned strategies in the closing of vlogs as well. She observed that

[v]loggers can decide to end their video without having to negotiate that ending with another person. However, it would be odd if a vlog were to end very suddenly, especially now that YouTube automatically plays another video once a video has ended. (De Boeck, 2015, p. 41)

Another significant finding of the study is the vloggers' request for comments, likes, subscription, social media followings, among others, and the inclusion of an endscreen. These strategies are said to increase audience engagement. Lastly, vloggers show their gratitude toward their viewers. De Boeck (2015) argued that the "Thank you/Thanks" remark is a sign of the power of viewership. "If nobody were watching, most vloggers would not be vlogging as many say that the interaction with the audience is what they enjoy most about making and sharing these vlogs" (p. 45).

Study Findings

For this study, I collected a small corpus of ten YouTube vlogs. I followed a similar procedure as De Boeck's (2015): I opened the YouTube application, typed "Filipino vlogs" in the search bar, and chose the first ten vlogs that appeared. To identify the operated vlog opening and closing strategies, and to discover if there was indeed a recurring pattern of vlog openings and closings, I chose only one vlog from each YouTube channel. I filtered the search result by choosing channels or videos only from Filipino content creators or vloggers.

The use of the vlogs in this study complied with internet research ethics, specifically with the ethical considerations of Vern Jan Goh (2014) in his study. First, YouTube is a publicly accessible site. Anyone can open and browse the application except if the owner of the YouTube channel puts an age restriction or privatizes the video or the account. My gathered corpus all came from non-restricted channels. Second, the vloggers' invitation to like, subscribe, and comment indicates the publicness of the vlogs and their creators. Third, the "Your Content and Conduct" section of the Youtube's Terms of Agreement states that contents uploaded to the site grants users the ability to "use the Content, including to reproduce, distribute, prepare derivative works." This means that whatever content the vlogger shares online may be used by others as long as they abide by ethical considerations like copyright protection. And lastly, this study of vlogs does not necessarily

harm the vlogger since the subject of analysis is not the content but the opening and closing sequences. In addition, the vloggers' names and the videos' titles are not disclosed. Similar to De Boeck's (2015) censorship practice, a working title for each vlog that is not significantly related to the video title on YouTube is used. Also, the vloggers' real (user) names are exchanged for pseudonyms, and their name-calling and labeling (e.g., fan groups or fan's club like Sarah Geronimo's Popsters, Vilmanians for Vilma Santos' fans, and Noranians for Nora Aunor's fan's club) are censored to ensure the vloggers' anonymity. Some other information are likewise hidden especially those that will sketch out the vloggers' identity.

Similar to De Boeck's (2015) procedure, data is transcribed using the broad transcription system, i.e., only the openings and closings of vlogs are transcribed. To determine the extent of the transcription, the vlogger's use of opening and closing strategies is taken into account (e.g., topic transition, linguistic marker, et cetera). Both verbal and nonverbal cues in vlogs are transcribed. Aside from that, the texts and images that appear in the vlogs are also included in the transcription. Below is the transcription system.

Table 1. Broad Transcription System

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS	
?	Question marks indicate rising intonation.
-	Dashes signal cutoffs, whether that be when the speaker is interrupted or corrects himself/herself.
=	The use of two equals signs marks the latching of two turns.
BUT	Capitals indicate heavy stress.
°you know°	Degree signs frame utterances that are spoken more softly.
"hey"	Quotation marks indicate a shift in the speaker's voice, often for comic effect.
..	Truncated ellipsis is used for short pauses, usually shorter than one second.
...	Ellipsis is used for pauses longer than a second.
so::	Colons indicate the prolonging of the preceding sound, longer prolonging is marked with multiple colons.
>guys<	Angled brackets turned inward signal utterances spoken more quickly than surrounding discourse.

<and>	Angled brackets pointed outward frame utterances spoken more slowly than surrounding discourse.
[that down below] [{{points down}}]	Square brackets indicate overlapping speech. This speech may overlap either with other speech or with important visual information.
()	When an utterance cannot be transcribed due to uncertainty, empty parentheses are used.
(us)	If there is a possible interpretation, it appears between parentheses.
((laughs))	Aspects of the utterance such as laughter and coughs are indicated with double parentheses.
{}	Braces mark nonverbal behavior such as movements and text on screen.
{"SUBSCRIBE"}	Text that the user has edited into the video is quoted in its entirety. Text on the same screen is quoted between two braces.
<i>name</i>	Names for people, brands and places have been removed and replaced by a description in italics.
line numbers	Each line consists of one intonation unit.

1. Opening strategies

Vlog openings encompass a range of opening sequences by incorporating the traditional talk-in-interaction features and optimizing the use of technology which attempts to simulate naturally occurring talk. Table 1 shows the diverse opening sequence executed by vloggers.

Table 2. Observed Vlog Opening Strategies

vlog	opening credits/ video preview	self-introduction	greeting	term of address	date/ time	place/ location	asking question	topic transition & topic introduction
1	x	x						
2		x	x				x	x
3			x	x	x	x	x	x
4		x	x	x				x
5	x	x	x	x	x		x	x

6	x	x	x	x			x	x
7	x	x				x		x
8	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
9	x		x	x	x			x
10	x	x	x	x				x

1.1. Greetings and Term of Address

Typically, vloggers start their video with a greeting. This act implies that in their talk, vloggers address their viewers and not merely talk in front of the camera (De Boeck, 2015). Therefore, the greeting is a tool used to maintain social relations (De Boeck, 2015), and serves as a device to bridge the gap between vlogger and viewer. It is a platform for (virtual) interaction made possible through the aid of the Internet. Vloggers2, 3, and 6 explicitly mentioned that they produced vlogs because their audience would enjoy, relate, and even look forward to every video uploads.

vlogger 2

→ 22 I'm sure marami kayong makaka-relate dito
[I'm sure many of you can relate to this]

vlogger 3

19 and sana magustuhan ninyo [and I hope
you, guys, would enjoy]

→ 20 alam kong marami ding nag-aabang dito [I
know many of you are also looking forward
to this]

21 naiintriga sila 'di ba? [They are wondering,
right?]

22 san ba nakatira si *name* dati [Where did
name live before?]

23 so let's start

vlogger 6

10 Okay hello, everyone

11 *fan group's name*, kamusta na kayong lahat
[*fan group's name*, how's everyone?]

→ 12 alam kong nami-miss niyo ko [I know you
guys miss me]

13 and i know na marami sa inyo ang nagiging
pariwara sa tuwing [and I know many of

- you suffers when]
- 14 hindi ako nagpo-post ng a: video [I don't
post a video]
- 15 kaya ngayon magpo-post tayo [that's why
I'm going to post [a video] today]

Variants of greetings like “good morning,” “hello,” and “hey” are often used in vlogs. Vloggers use one or two or more greeting strategies to address their viewers. Sidnell (2010, as cited in De Boeck, 2015) stipulated that “hello” or “hi” as a greeting strategy presumes “some kind of a relationship.” Vloggers do not necessarily have a relationship with their audience, and the only possible connection they may have is a content creator (vlogger)-and-viewer relationship. Thus, incorporating greetings in the vlogging formula “creates a sense of familiarity” (De Boeck, 2015, p. 32). In a talk-in-interaction, shared understanding and knowledge toward communication is needed. Considering one’s willingness and agreement to interact is essential to make communication effective and continuous.

vlogger 2

- 1 HI::
2 {waves}

vlogger 3

- 1 [>Hi guys<]
2 [{waves}]
3 welcome back to my channel

vlogger 4

- 1 [HEY eve]ryone this is *name*
2 [{waves}]
3 and I: hope that before you clicked on this
video
4 [you already seen] the vlog
5 [{claps}]
6 {footage from the other related video}

The transcribed lines above show that greetings are commonly attached to the addressee. Vloggers do not know the majority of their audience or viewers or their future audience or viewers, so a more general term of address is utilized to address the general public (De Boeck, 2015). Words like “guys,” which is plural in form, and “everyone,” an example of indefinite pronoun, frame the viewer as part of a large group that watches the vlog,

evoking a wide-ranging commonality which articulates rapport and familiarity between the vloggers and viewers.

General terms of address are not the only ones used in referring to the viewers/audience. Some vloggers specifically identify their audience by assigning names to their fan base. This is one distinct feature that Filipino vlogs have compared to others mentioned in earlier studies. These fan bases are collective in nature, so they can provide a profound sense of involvement, engagement, and belongingness. While inclusivity may be the aim of this labeling activity, it may also endorse exclusivity, especially if it is the first time a viewer gets to watch the vlog. Unknown to vloggers, certain viewers may not like to be labeled with specific names/terms. For some others, meanwhile, it could be a special moment. Therefore, addressivity may affect the amount of investment and reach and participation of the viewer/audience.

vlogger 6

- 10 Okay hello, everyone
- 11 *fan group's name*, kamusta na kayong lahat
[*fan group's name*, how's everyone?]
- 12 alam kong nami-miss niyo ko [I know you
guys miss me]
- 13 and i know na marami sa inyo ang nagiging
pariwara sa tuwing [and I know many of
you suffers when]
- 14 hindi ako nagpo-post ng a: video [I don't
post a video]
- 15 kaya ngayon magpo-post tayo [that's why
I'm going to post [a video] today]
- 16 and this time we will make a challenge

vlogger 7

- 1 {graphic with username}
- 2 {wipes hair}
- 3 [mga *fan group's name* ano] [you know
what, *fan group's name*]
- 4 [{moves the camera}]
- 5 meron lang pala akong gustong itanong sa
mga tao dito [I have something to ask to the
people here]

vlogger 8
 1 {montage of pictures and username}
 2 Mon: what's up
 → 3 kamusta mga *fan group's name*
 [Hello, *fan group's name*]
 4 at yun na nga yon mga *fan group's name*
 [and that's it, *fan group's name*]
 5 panibagong araw, panibagong
 katarantaduhan [another day, another
 foolishness]

To some extent, this specific feature of address to viewers/audience, the fan bases, or fandoms, establishes the identity of the audience. This suggests that being part of the fan base and being called by the name used by vloggers (or name/identification made by the fandom and recognized by the vloggers) may not be different from being referred to by their personal name. The identity of the viewer is classified, which may determine the relationship between vloggers and viewers. It becomes more personal, lessening unpremeditated engagement. It also maximizes accord and vouches for the viewer's deliberate and conscious participation.

Another feature of the vloggers' greeting introduction is the establishment of space and time, which is beneficial in helping the viewer understand the vlog comprehensively. Frobenius (2013, as cited in De Boeck, 2015) defined the act of setting the time and space as the "creation of the context." Vloggers construct the setting by mentioning the day, time, place, and date. Situating the viewers in an environment and introducing them to the vlog's background will stipulate their discretion and perspective on the vloggers' circumstance.

vlogger 8
 11 ngayon mga *fan group's name* yan [now, *fan*
group's name]
 → 12 tonight time check
 13 it's already [10:30]
 14 [{"10:30 PM"}]
 15 Claud: one
 16 Mon: [para alam niyo naman ang mga
 evening thoughts namin] [so you
 would know our evening thoughts]
 17 [{"SUBSCRIBE" with like button and
 notification bell]

18 ni Claud
19 madalas kami nag-iisip sa gabi [we often
ponder at night]

vlogger 9

3 Hi guys↑
→ 4 Today is May eighteen or nineteen
5 I've been asking you what you wanna see in
the vlog pa

vlogger 10

1 USERNAME}
→ 2 Good morning, guys
3 *name* here

vlogger 3

→ 9 so andito tayo sa *name of place* [so we are
here at *name of place*]
10 and ito ang aking childhood house [and this
is my childhood house]

Compared to vlogger 3, vlogger 7's introduced their location indirectly with a pronoun "dito" (here). The antecedent was later introduced and specified in line 9 as a house.

vlogger 7

→ 5 meron lang pala akong gustong itanong sa
mga tao dito [I have something to ask to the
people here]
6 [dahil naalala ko lang no [because this just
suddenly came into my mind]
7 tinanong sakin to ng pinsan ko ng grade five
[this was asked by my cousin when we were
in 5th grade]
8 ako nasagot ko in thirty minutes] [I was able
to answer it in thirty minutes]
9 [goes outside the house]

Incorporating time, space, and geographical aspects in the vlogger's greeting sequence helps to set the mood (De Boeck, 2015). As backdrop information, this information clarifies things for viewers. Moreover, the above examples demonstrate a "recognizable unit of time" (De Boeck,

2015). Some vloggers tended to show the time by stating “ngayon” (now/ today) as can be seen in vlogger 5’s line 5 and vlogger 6’s line 15. This gave the impression that the viewer was part of the vlog, thus establishing sense of collaboration between the vlogger and viewer. The engagement and collaboration were made evident by the vlogger’s recognition of the viewers’ presence by means of the word “tayo” (we), as if not separated by time and geography. I assumed that the usage of this time feature promoted a more reflective engagement with the viewers.

vlogger 5

→ 9 for today’s video gagawa tayo ng panibagong
[for today’s video, we are going to make
another]
10 [ha? ha: video]
11 [{hand gestures}]
12 [{explosion graphics}]
13 for today’s video gagawa tayo ng panibagong
video [for today’s video, we are going to
make another video]

vlogger 6

10 Okay hello, everyone
11 *fan group’s name*, kamusta na kayong lahat
[*fan group’s name*, how’s everyone?]
→ 12 alam kong nami-miss niyo ko [I know you
guys miss me]
13 and i know na marami sa inyo ang nagiging
pariwara sa tuwing [and I know many of
you suffers when]
14 hindi ako nagpo-post ng a: video [I don’t
post a video]
15 kaya ngayon magpo-post tayo [that’s why
I’m going to post [a video] today]
16 and this time we will make a challenge

Although this approach of setting the time in vlogs was effective in initiating engagement, the communication flow was still happening asynchronously. The vlog had been uploaded already, and simultaneous and synchronous exchanges was not possible unless the vlogger used the comment section to interact and respond to the viewers’ feedback (De Boeck, 2015).

1.2. Self-Introduction

Given the high degree of anonymity online, self-introductions can significantly build intimacy among Internet users (De Boeck, 2015). In the same way that self-identification is needed in discourse, vloggers provide their diverse audience with an orientation of their (vloggers) profile, specifically by stating their names, in order to create cooperative and graceful interactions. The spontaneous and perspicuous self-identification provides viewers access to the vlogger's identity, even before the presentation of the yet-unseen video content.

vlogger 4
→ 1 [HEY eve]ryone this is *name*
2 [{waves}]
3 and I: hope that before you clicked on this
video
4 [you already seen] the vlog

vlogger 5
1 {montage footage from the video}
2 {montage of introductory video of the
vlogger
3 "*fan group's name*"
→ 4 ITZ UR BABY *name*}

Vloggers, as demonstrated in the examples above, explicitly introduce themselves in vlogs. In this corpus, only a few mentioned their names. One of the reasons for this could be because the vlogger's name or user name is already flashed on the screen of the YouTube application (De Boeck, 2015). The majority of vlogs actually employ graphic introduction. De Boeck (2015) argues that graphic introductions, which comprise of video and photo montage, animations, et cetera, are similar to verbal self-identification. This one unique feature can provide a series of identification by attributing characteristic as displayed and described in the graphics. Through the effective utilization of graphics, vloggers can grab their viewers' attention and establish identity.

vlogger 1
→ 1 {footage from the video}
2 {animated graphic of username}

vlogger 6
 → 7 {footage from the video}
 8 {montage of pictures with username and
 9 “YEAR 2”}

1.3. Asking Questions

As in other social interactions, questions are commonly used in vlogs to further participation and to make the talk-in-interaction effective, and the same formulaic exchange of information may also be followed. Vloggers ask questions as a matter of personal-state inquiry, which can be classified as rhetorical, because the viewers’ immediate response is typically undiscoverable—the spontaneity of the interaction is not visible to the vlogger, unlike in close contact or physical interaction or online synchronous interaction like phone calls, teleconference, and video chat (De Boeck, 2015).

vlogger 2
 → 21 ano nga ba ang kinaibahan ng Pinoy no:on sa Pinoy ngayon. [What is the difference between the Filipinos before and the Filipinos of today?]
 22 Im sure marami kayong makaka-relate dito, [I’m sure many of you can relate to this]
 23 >KAYA TAG MO NA ANG MAKAKA-RELATE DITO< [That’s why you tag know who you think could relate to this]

vlogger 6
 → 10 Okay hello, everyone
 11 *fan group’s name*, kamusta na kayong lahat [fan group’s name, how’s everyone?]

vlogger 8
 → 2 Mon: what’s up
 3 kamusta mga *fan group’s name* [Hello, *fan group’s name*]
 4 at yun na nga yon mga *fan group’s name* [and that’s it, *fan group’s name*]

The words “kumusta” and “what’s up” are in the interrogative form but function not as a question but as a greeting. The viewers’ responding to

these greetings (e.g., saying “I’m fine”) may seem to be too much to expect just for them to be polite (De Boeck, 2015). Still, vloggers incorporate such questions even when knowing that they are talking to a camera and that the viewers/audience may not really reply. For example, vlogger 2 answers his own question.

- 12 gusT:O mo yon? [You like it?]
- 13 {points to the camera}
- 14 GUSTO KO YO:N [I like it!]
- 15 {points to himself}

Vloggers know that asking questions may be a futile effort considering that they will probably not be answered, or that the vloggers themselves end up answering them anyway. However, it is a strategy to encourage involvement by inducing the viewers to think, or making them feel excited about what they are watching.

1.4. Topic Transition and Topic Introduction

Jessica De Boeck (2015) stated that discourse markers are necessary in “structuring any conversation,” and that vloggers are aware of using discourse markers and so include them in their vlogs. The majority of vlogs that I collected used discourse markers.

vlogger 4

- 3 a::nd I: hope that before you clicked on this video
- 4 [you already seen] the vlo:g
- 5 [{claps}]
- 6 {footage from the other related video}
- 7 hmm:: because saya:ng para din ma-excite kayo [because what a waste, that’d also excite you all]
- 8 each time you open each box within a box within boxes
- 9 so: yung *group name* nagbigay kami ng gift sa isa’t isa [so we *group name* gave each other a gift]
- 10 for each other’s channel

vlogger 10

- 2 Good morning, guys
- 3 *name* here

- 4 new hairstyle
- 5 (laughs)
- 6 a:nd ngayon magkakaroon tayo ng morning routine [and today we will have a morning routine]

Like in a conversation, discourse or linguistic markers are used in vlogs to support natural and spontaneous talk. These markers spot the boundary of the talk, address turn-taking, and signal a topic transition. The filler “hmm” of vlogger 4, for example, did not mean she did not know what to say next; she only tried to stretch the viewing time. Professor Michael Handford, in Olivia Blair’s (2017) article, stated that discourse markers are both interactional and cognitive. Interactional has something to do with politeness while cognitive is “trying to process information that might be more complex” (para. 6). Vlogger 4’s “hmm” in her utterance followed a clear polite function. Her utterance in line 3 implied suggestion and request. Additionally, “hmm” made the utterance more polite in terms of asking the audience to perform the request and preceded the justification of her utterance with an explanation why it was important to see the other vlog. Also, the filled pause “hmm” before the explanation, “because sayang para din ma-excite kayo” [because what a waste, that’d also excite you all], positioned the vlogger as being considerate of the words she was about to speak so as to elucidate and expound the reason for a request in line 3. This presumes the idea that the vlogger did not just stop with making a request.

Moreover, the prolonged “hmm” suggests that the vlogger was not yet done with her talking. It is a strategic unit, a form of delay, which affects an interaction between the vlogger and the viewer. Therefore, the vlogger still holds the floor and has the command to continue the interaction. More so, it can be categorized as a thoughtful absorption. The “hmm” in vlogs assumes the vlogger as active, being involved in thorough thinking and observation, and focused in her discourse. According to Martin Corley and Oliver Stewart (2008), fillers like “hmm” in the beginning of an utterance suggest “a consequence of the greater demand on planning processes” (p. 2). This only shows that although vlogs are pre-recorded, vloggers, pay attention to their utterance.

Another discourse marker evident in my corpus is “so.” “So,” according to Galina Bolden (2009), is used to “characterize and constitute a particular action as advancing their interactional agenda” (p. 974). This discourse marker is commonly labeled as a cohesive device and a cause-and-effect marker. However, “so” plays numerous roles when used in vlog talks.

- vlogger 3
- 3 welcome back to my channel
- 4 so ngayon meron tayong bagong video [so
now we have a new video]
- 5 at isa ito sa pinaka-special video na ilalabas
ko sa YouTube [and this is one of the special
videos that I will release on YouTube]
- 6 kasi ipapakita ko kung saan ako lumaki
[because I'll show where I grew up]
- 7 [kung saan nag-start si *name*] [where *name*
started]
- 8 [stares at the ceiling]
- 9 so andito tayo sa *name of place* [so we are
here at *name of place*]
- 10 and ito ang aking childhood house [and this
is my childhood house]
- 11 so dito ako naglaro-laro [so here where I
played]
- 12 [dito ako nagwala-wala] [this was
where I went crazy]
- 13 [focuses the camera on her face]
- 14 dito ako naging wild [here's where I became
wild]
- 15 di pala ako wild dati [I wasn't wild before]
- 16 dito ako naging baby [this is where I became
a baby]
- 17 alam niyo yon? [you know that?]
- 18 yung cute [the cute one]
- 19 and sana magustuhan ninyo [and I hope
you, guys, would enjoy]
- 20 alam kong marami ding nag-aabang dito [I
know many of you are also looking forward
to this]
- 21 naiintriga sila 'di ba? [They are wondering,
right?]
- 22 san ba nakatira si *name* dati [Where did
name live before?]
- 23 so let's start

In vlog 3, “so” was used in various ways that supported the talk. In line 4, it was used as a topic transition marking the boundary of a new topic

after the welcome remark. It paved the way in opening and introducing the narration as discussed in lines 5-8. In other words, it prefaced the sequence-initiating action (discussed in Bolden, 2009) by commissioning and marking the forthcoming action of narration. Thus, it “launch[es] a discussion of the warrant that prompted the interaction” (Bolden, 2009, p. 996). An example of such is the reason why the vlogger constructed the vlog. This launches the main topic as well as the development of the talk in succeeding lines. This level of development proves another function of “so” as topic developer, which is present in lines 9-22. It constructs the spontaneity of the vlog talk, and so grants the continuation of the topic by means of detailing. This endorses and encourages the engagement of the viewer to maintain focus and attention.

Moreover, the detailing features of “so” as topic developer contains narration and description. This characterizes the highlights of the vlog content that enables appreciation and builds excitement in the viewers. This one important aspect does not disclose departure but supports talk continuation and progression. Furthermore, the “so” in line 23 bound the return of the vlogger to the original purpose – the showing of vlog content. As shown in lines 9-22, many details were provided that may affect the vlog’s totality. To avoid giving the whole sense of the vlog and to stop from giving details that anticipated the content, a return was made to drive back the viewers to the main point. The discourse marker “so” was accompanied by the phrase “let’s start” that signified the beginning and the launch of the content discussion. The following are other launching strategies/phrases to introduce the main discussion.

vlogger 5

	34	so iyon sige [so that’s what it’s like]
	35	isa lang masasabi ko [I can only say]
→	36	[arat na]= [let’s go]
	37	[{waves hands}]
	38	[{ARAT NA!}] [Let’s go!]

vlogger 6

	17	so ang challenge natin [so the challenge is]
	18	usong uso ang mga skin care routine [skin care routine is a trend now]
→	19	pero this time [magi-skin care routine with no hands] [but this time we’re going to do a skin care routine hands free]

20 [{{“SKIN CARE ROUTINE”} }]
 21 [{{“WITH NO HANDS”} }]

vlogger 8

97 totoong mga nangyari] ito a sa life namin
 as in walang kaekekan] [no joke nor a stunt,
 this truly happened in our lives]

→ 98 Mon: o simulan na natin sa [so let’s start
 with]

vlogger 9

9 so: today, I’m gonna mix both

→ 10 so:: and I’ll take you on and I hope you guys
 enjoy

Discourse markers are not the only venue for topic transition and topic introduction. Video previews and vlog footage are digital means of articulating transitions. These “digital markers,” as I call them, are more or less 30-second footage containing the key parts of the video. These markers are mostly found in the beginning of the vlog opening.

vlogger 1

→ 1 {footage from the video}
 2 {animated graphic of username}

vlogger 5

→ 1 {montage footage from the video}
 2 {montage of introductory video of the
 vlogger}

vlogger 9

→ 1 {footage from the video}
 2 {video montage}

These digital markers provide a quick glimpse of the content, which can capture the viewers’ interest and promote a something-to-look-forward-to portion of the vlog. I assumed that viewers tend to spend time looking for that footage which increases viewing time and interaction as well. These markers are also critical because they may influence the viewer’s decision whether to continue to watching or not. That is why it is necessary that digital markers must be attention-grabbing footage, descriptive, and interesting to prompt and support the viewers’ attention and involvement.

2. Closing Strategies

According to De Boeck (2015), vloggers have the autonomy to end the vlog. Vloggers do not require the viewers' utterance to agree to vlog talk closure. Adjacency pairs of parting do not operate in vlogs since the mode of discourse is asynchronous. But despite the lack of a closing agreement, vlog talks still share normal occurrences of conversation while also possessing some exclusive only to YouTube. Table 2 shows the different ways the vloggers closed their vlogs.

Table 3. Vlog Closing Strategies

vlog	pre-closing	topic transition	arrangement	response solicitation	thanking the viewer	terminal exchange	endscreen
1		x		x	x		x
2	x	x		x		x	x
3	x	x	x	x		x	x
4							x
5	x	x	x	x		x	x
6	x	x			x	x	x
7			x				x
8	x	x		x		x	x
9	x	x	x		x		x
10							x

2.1. Pre-closing and Topic Transition

Pre-closings and topic transitions are important in aiding the smooth shift from the vlog body to vlog ending. Discourse markers are also used in topic shifting, which clarifies that these markers can be used in the vlog opening (see Section 1.4) and closing. The principal use of “so” as well other markers like “anyway,” “at” (and), and “yan” (that’s it) are used to introduce the pre-closing sequence of the vlog talk.

vlogger 2

→ 24 at dyan na nga nagtatapos ang ating video
[and that’s where our video ends]

vlogger 3
 24 {animated graphic}
 → 25 guys that's the end of the video

vlogger 5
 → 39 [so:: iyon guys] [so that's it, guys]
 40 [((laughs))]
 41 [{touches hair}]
 → 70 Anyways, guys

vlogger 8
 → 99 Mon: yan mga, *fan group's name* [that's it,
fan group's name]
 100 yes

Contrary to examples above, “so” in the corpus apparently did not function only as a pre-closing device. It also operated as a final closing strategy as performed by vlogger 6.

vlogger 6
 23 Thank you so much for watching
 24 [This is brand]
 25 [{holds the product }]
 26 MP [() sa kakatawa]
 [in laughter]
 27 [we are second nagaapela pa] [we're second
 yet he's still appealing]
 28 [claps]
 29 [()]
 → 30 so
 31 [waves (goodbye)]

“So,” in this case, gave an impression that another utterance was to be made since the juncture of the utterance was dangling. However, line 31 [waves (goodbye)] supported the termination of the utterance or the interaction. Geoffrey Raymond (2004, as cited in Beck, 2015) argued that this stand-alone “so” can be categorized as “turn-final.” Therefore, “so,” in this manner, does not operate as pre-closing but as terminal exchange, which will be discussed in the succeeding section.

2.2. Arrangement/Framing

De Boeck (2015) argued, “While in openings, vloggers tend to refer to previous videos to frame their vlog, in closings they refer to future videos” (p. 43). Emanuel Schegloff and Harvey Sacks (1973) viewed arrangement or arrangement-making as a closing-relevant action. Vloggers perform this by telling when the next vlog will be uploaded or by sending see-you remarks to viewers.

- vlogger 3
30 [Please subscribe, like, and comment down
below
31 kung anong videos pa ang gusto niyong
panoorin [what videos you want to watch]
→ 32 and I will see you guys in my next video]
- vlogger 9
→ 15 I hope to see you guys soon
16 {sends flying kiss}

Another distinct characteristic of Filipino vlogs is how topic shading forecasts the vlogger’s arrangement.

- vlogger 5
42 sana nagustuhan niyo yung mga:: sagot na
nai-share ko sa inyo [I wish you like the
answers that I shared with you all]
43 at ito na yung part four [and here’s the part
four]
→ 44 sana yung part five natin maayos na [I hope
part five would be better]
61 [yeHEY so ayan] [yehey! So that it]
62 [claps]
→ 63 yung last part is yung next week [the last
part is on next week]

Line 44 preempted another portion of the vlog. The line “sana yung part five” or the “part five” suggested that another vlog will be uploaded. The request “sana” and “natin” which implied the viewers’ participation in doing the vlog was necessary. Moreover, the topic shading (part five) presided over the truthfulness of the arrangement in line 63 which will happen next week.

In addition, similar to De Boeck’s (2015) observation, arrangement is not only compartmentalized with an utterance. Vlogger 7, although there

was zero verbal arrangement in talk-in-interaction, made arrangement through graphics in the endscreen.

- vlogger 7
- 12 {"BUKAS NA"} [Tomorrow's the day]
 - 13 {endscreen: graphic with "event's title"
 - 14 "event's title"
 - 15 "GRAND OPENING"
 - 16 "MARCH 7, 2020
 - 17 "SATURDAY 5 PM onwards"}
 - 18 {footage from the video}

The graphic arrangement framed the viewers to tune in to the coming event of vlogger 7. This form of arrangement comes out from the usual computer-mediated interaction which is seeing and following the vlogger on the YouTube site. The vlogger invites the viewers to have direct and physical interaction by providing details like the event title, date, and time.

This strategy is a bit problematic and one-sided since the arrangement may not be mutual. It blurs mutual agreement because the vloggers are the only ones with the power to tell and place an arrangement. However, we can also regard the viewers as having power when they have the discretion to exercise and meet the designated arrangement. Hence, just like in normal occurrence of talk, this proposes mutual agreement as a crucial point for arrangement.

2.3. Response Solicitation

Commonly, we hear vloggers' requests for a comment, like, and subscription. Also, the request to visit the vloggers' other social media accounts is predominant. This has become formulaic and deemed significant in widening networks and building interaction.

- vlogger 1
- 13 All: SUPPORT OUR VLOGGING CHANNEL
 - 14 V1: mGA *fan group's name* LET'S GO
[*fan group's name*, let's go!]
 - 15 {graphic of username with [thumbnails]}
 - 16 V3: ["dyan sa comment sa baba Tagalog
[there in the comments is Tagalog
naman] {points down} [likewise]
 - 18 All: FOLLOW US ON [TWITTER AND ON INSTAGRAM]

- vlogger 2
- 30 >Huwag niyo na ring kalimutang mag-subscribe sa mga individual [Don't also forget to subscribe to the individual]
 - 31 channel ng *name*, sa mga *name* lahat ng mga kaibigan< ko::: [channel of *name*, to *name*, and to all of my friends]
 - 32 >huwag mong kalimutang i-like and i-share ang videong ito [don't forget to like and share this video]
 - 33 kung natuwa ka mag-subscribe ka na sa aking main channel *name* [if you enjoyed it, subscribe to my main channel *name*]
 - 34 sa aking second vlogging channel *name* [and to my second vlogging channel *name*]

Vlogger 1, for example, provided a more general means of asking for a response by asking for “support.” “Let’s go” and “follow” were inviting utterances to get participation and updates. On the other hand, vlogger 2 specified the action needed by asking for support through subscription in line 30, “huwag niyo na ring kalimutang mag-subscribe” [don’t forget to subscribe], and line 32, “huwag mong kalimutang i-like and i-share” [don’t forget to like and share]. These two are common formula in soliciting requests through subscription and sharing.

Moreover, some vlogs showed the “kung” (if/then) attribute that point toward setting conditions. Vloggers’ request comes in the form of “if you like...”, and the viewers must then give a thumbs up. This language construct demands the validity of the viewers’ experience (e.g., enjoying the video) that may cloud the vloggers’ reliability and expectation (e.g., viewers enjoying the vlog and supporting via like, share, and subscribe) which makes it hypothetical and difficult to determine.

- vlogger 3
- 29 kung nag-enjoy kayo sa aking video [if you enjoyed my video]
 - 30 [Please subscribe, like, and comment down below]
 - 31 kung anong videos pa ang gusto niyong panoorin [what videos you want to watch]

vlogger 8
 → 128 Claud: kung gusto niyo ng part two
 comment lang kayo] [if you want a
 part two, just leave a comment]
 129 Mon: [one hundred thousand likes]
 130 [{thumbs up with “100K LIKES”}]
 131 Claud: [marami pa akong ikukwento guys]
 [I still have many stories to tell]
 132 Mon: [part two]
 133 BOTH: ((laugh))

Asking for request and response in vlog are not only through verbal but also operates on endscreen or graphics at the end of the vlog. De Boeck (2015) argued that “Endscreens are edited screens at the end of a video that typically contain clickable thumbnails of previous videos, a link to subscribe and the users’ social media handles” (p. 45).

vlogger 8
 136 { e n d s c r e e n : “ T U L O Y A N G
 KALOKOHAN SA
 137 social media accounts}

vlogger 9
 → 17 {endscreen: “FOLLOW ME”
 18 USERNAME

vlogger 4
 → 17 {endscreen: username
 18 “SUBSCRIBE”
 19 “NOW PLAYING”
 20 *song – vlogger’s name*}

2.4. Thanking the Viewer

Pleasantry, such as saying “thank you,” is evidence that vlog-making is intended for someone. Thus, this utterance signifies appreciation toward the viewers for spending time watching the vlog. This strategy acknowledges the viewer’s power as relevant in determining engagement (De Boeck, 2015).

vlogger 4
 → 44 V1: MARAMING MARAMING
 SALAMAT= [Thank you so so
 much]

45 = {thumbs up}
 46 V2: SA SUPORTA= [for the support]

vlogger 6
 22 So everybody
 → 23 Thank you so much for watching

vlogger 9
 → 11 Thank you guys
 12 A:nd let me know what else you wanna see
 13 If you have suggestions let me know in the
 comments
 14 Binabasa ko yung comments [I read the
 comments]

In addition, thanking the viewer can also come in graphic form or an element in the endscreen.

vlogger 10
 → 8 {endscreen: “THANK YOU FOR
 WATCHING”
 9 PREVIOUS VLOG ~ NEXT VLOG”}

Generally, articulating gratefulness can be a critical part of vlogs because it echoes appreciation and acknowledges the presence of the viewers. Moreover, it employs rapport and sends warmth to the viewers. It allows vloggers to leave a positive impression or a positive face which influences the viewers’ level of engagement.

2.5. Terminal Exchange

Adjacency pair of bidding goodbye between vloggers and viewers does not operate because of the asynchronous nature of vlogs (De Boeck, 2015). However, despite the physical absence of viewers in the vlog-making process, vloggers still perform terminal exchange or final closing utterance. They may come up with an utterance which can be partnered with a gesture like sending a kiss and blocking the camera lens.

Vlogger 2
 → 35 bYE::
 36 {endscreen: t-shirt image and “*name*
 MERCH NOW AVAILABLE”
 37 atop are the social media accounts

38 graphics with “SUBSCRIBE NOW”
 39 “CLICK THE BELL BUTTON PARALAGING UPDATED”}

vlogger 3

32 and I will see you guys in my next video]
 33 [{subscribe button}]
 → 34 [bye]
 → 35 [{waves}]
 36 {endscreen: “WATCH MORE”
 37 {*vlogger’s name* and social media accounts
 below}

vlogger 6

76 I love you all *fan group’s name*
 → 77 [babye]
 → 78 [{waves}]
 → 79 {sends a flying kiss}
 → 80 {blocks camera with hand}
 81 {endscreen: username with social media
 links}

The above examples demonstrate that vlog talks, just like any talk-in-interaction, may verbalize the word “bye” to represent finalization of talk, and they can also incorporate gestures to illustrate the farewell signals. Magnifying the roles of gestures in vlog closing, vlogger 8 showed no verbal utterance of goodbye nor performed a friendlier and politer gesture (e.g., waving, sending a kiss, etc.), unlike vlogger 6 before line 80. In line 126, the inferential and commanding closing finally came to action in line 135. Although the level of informality may be hefty, I assumed that the vloggers were not trying to be impolite by means of how they delivered their lines. The tone and the message of their body gesture expressed that they were comical, and ending in such a manner did not mean absurdity.

vlogger 8

→ 126 Mon: babe takpan mo na [babe, cover it
 (camera lens)]
 127 in [three, two–]
 128 Claud: [kung gusto niyo ng part two
 comment lang kayo] [if you want a
 part two, just leave a comment]
 129 Mon: [one hundred thousand likes]

- 130 [{{thumbs up with “100K LIKES”}}]
 131 Claud: [marami pa akong ikukwento guys]
 [I still have many stories to tell]
 132 Mon: [part two]
 133 BOTH: ((laugh))
 134 Mon: [>jusmio marimar na yan<]
 [an expression of disbelief or
 astonishment, can be equated to
 “Good Lord”]
 → 135 [{{blocks the camera}}]

Terminal exchanges in vlog talks send an away signal that the vlogger is no longer available (unless no chatting or replying to messages was made by the vlogger). Also, it frames or automatizes the final turn for talk, thus triggering the end of the turn-taking mechanism.

3. Code-switching Functions in Vlog’s Opening and Closing

One primary and unique characteristic of Filipino vloggers is their shift between Tagalog and English. I view this as one important tool that makes the vlog talk fluid and effective. Code-switching is exercised in the entirety of my corpus. From the greetings of the vlog openings until the endscreen of vlogs, the rich incorporation of Taglish is evident. Ana Zentella (1985, as cited in Nordquist, 2019) posited that code-switching has varied functionalities.

- vlogger 8
 103 kung naliwanagan ka and kung nakatulong
 ba kami [if you were enlightened and
 whether we helped]
 104 [and kung bata ka pa lang] [and if you’re still
 young]
 105 Claud: [wag ka muna magmadali] [don’t
 rush things]
 106 Mon: [wag mo munang pilitin] [don’t
 force it yet]
 107 huwag mo munang pilitin
 masasaktan ka lang [don’t force it
 yet, you’ll just get hurt]
 → 108 take this advice as a future reference
 → 109 Claud: totoo to guys [ha] [this is true,
 guys]
 110 Mon: [yeah]

- 111 Claud: walang joke [joke dito] [this is not
a joke]
- 112 Mon: [yeah yeah]
- 113 di kami kagaya ng iba na sasabihin
na perpekto kami [we are not like
other who would say we're (a)
perfect (couple)]
- 114 Claud: NO:: we're not
- 115 Mon: open kami para ipakita sa inyo kung
ano talaga ang totoong [we're open
to show you all what a real]
116 relasyon [relationship is]
117 di kami yung pabebe [pabebe]
[we are not pretentious]
- 118 Claud: [away nga kami ng away e] [we're
always fighting actually]

For example, the change of register of the two vloggers above helped them build a specific identity which aligned them to be a “true” or “real” couple vlogger that shared only the realness of romantic relationship. Line 108 placed them as emphatic, followed by an assurance in line 109 that what they were sharing was valid. Moreover, the framing of “real” couple experience is exhibited when Claud in line 114 stressed, “No, we’re not.” This sentence positioned them as a normal couple in the sense that, unlike other couple vloggers, they portrayed only a true and not “pabebe” (acting like/as) experience to their viewers.

Cierra Johnson (2000, as cited in Nordquist, 2019) explained that code-switching is also essential in facilitating interpersonal relationships. This is evident as the vloggers’ greetings varied between Tagalog and English or a combination of two. In effect, it navigates to the informality of the delivery of the vlog talk. The informality, I assume, creates an atmosphere of openness and warmth among viewers. One reason behind this could be the language register’s friendlier and more personal tone. Cook (2018) argued that the code-switching of Filipinos is integral to story-telling. *Rappler’s* news editor Miriam Grace A. Go (as cited in Cook, 2018) said that code-switching in Philippine media helps “capture the context, mood and color more accurately” (para. 9). This supports the resemblance of vlog talk to naturally occurring talk, as vloggers express spontaneity and unrestraint. Codeswitching renders and promotes not only a more personal experience for vloggers themselves but for the enriching and natural experience of the viewers as well.

Summary and Conclusion

The results of the analysis show that vlogs incorporate various opening and closing sequences. Although the corpus studied may be small, these vlogs contained diverse topics and takes on vlogging styles and formats. Vlogging formats studied were mostly monologic while some were dialogic. However, vloggers in dialogic format seldom exchanged talks or switched roles (e.g., speaker to listener and from listener to speaker) since interaction was principally directed to the viewers.

Vlogging, a form of computer-mediated discourse, still follows a traditional conversation formula. With the presence of technology, several additions to talk sequences are introduced. These innovations promote a range of digital sequences that challenge and simultaneously attempt to support or partner with the traditional natural occurring talk.

Evidently, self-introduction and greetings had a major role in the opening sequence. Self-identification was verbalized just like in normal talk occurrence. Ideally, vloggers do not really require self-introduction because their names are already shown on the YouTube platform and so it may be a redundant effort. But taking into account technological innovations, graphics were deemed one valid way to introduce themselves. Vloggers included text and graphic designs to do the self-identification.

Also, greetings were another way to commence the interaction. Greetings and their “addressivity” (Morson, 2006) were elementary to build a sense of familiarity and interrelationship. In the data, plural or common nouns were generally used to establish inclusivity toward viewers. Yet, one unique feature of addressivity was present in Filipino opening vlog sequence, which was the addressing of a fan base or fan group. This form of addressivity fostered either a sense of inclusivity for a fanatic viewer or exclusivity if the viewer were new in the vlogger’s community.

Rarely present in the data was the availability of time, space, and location. These three features are necessary in establishing context. These are essential in delivering background information for better understanding, which may also lead to better interaction between vloggers and viewers. The above features were mostly recognizable, meaning they were specific and clear. Still, some vloggers used “ngayon” [now/today], which is an unidentified unit of time, considering that the vlogs were pre-recorded. This is an example of an attempt to involve viewers as if they were collaborating.

Another way we can view the laying of context is by means of previewing. A preview details and gives a glimpse of the body of the vlog. It played a part in establishing interaction and engagement among viewers via support in extensive viewing time.

Furthermore, the vlogs appeared to be naturally occurring by means

of adding in discourse markers for a smooth topic transition and topic introduction. It is important to note that these markers were not exclusive to vlog openings alone.

Diverse strategies were incorporated in the closing sequence of vlogs. Discourse markers were set to give smooth transition coming from the body of the vlog down to its closing. This pre-closing prefaced the “turn-final,” or the finality of the vlog talk. However, before the terminal exchange which sent an away message, several closing sequences were squeezed in through and before the final cut of the vlog.

Arrangement and asking for response were vital and imperative in vlogs. The two promoted viewers’ engagement by giving them an expectation (e.g., See you guys next week) and a call for action, typically a request (e.g. Please like, share, and subscribe) or conditional requests/demands (e.g. If you like/enjoy this video, give this a thumbs up). Through this, responses were solicited, which came in the form of liking the video, commenting or replying, subscribing, hitting the notification bell, and/or attending the vloggers’ events.

As a means of appreciating support, vloggers said “thank you” to their viewers. This create an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness for the viewers. The “thank you” preempted the idea of “turn-final.” Usually, once done with acknowledging the viewers’ support, vloggers proceeded to deliver the terminal exchange. Terminal exchange in the data was verbal (e.g. goodbye or bye or *babye*) or gestural like blowing a flying kiss, waving (goodbye), and blocking the camera’s view. Those sent a signal that the vlog was finished and the vlogger was done with vlog talk. Therefore, interaction was brought to a close. But interaction was still possible if the vlogger took to the comment section to interact. Still, this interaction was asynchronous and spontaneous talk was not observed.

After the terminal exchange, newly-introduced “post-closing” came in the form of graphics or animations called endscreen. Endscreens contained the vloggers’ social media accounts, future events, requests to like, share, and subscribe, and many more.

Code-switching was rampant in my data. All vloggers in my corpus code-switched in delivering their opening and closing sequences. The storytelling was magnified as well; it endorse the sense of natural talk even though it was computer-mediated. Code-switch, according to Cook (2018), is integral in the storytelling of the Filipinos, which confirms that vlogs are a form of digital storytelling.

Implications and Recommendations

Vloggers' practices in opening and closing suggest that they are aware of transitions and sequences of talk. We can also assume that vloggers acknowledge that opening sequences and closing sequences are necessary vlog segments and must not be left out. Hence, the attempt to provide and simulate a "normal" conversation, despite the computer-mediated nature of vlogs and the technological additions to the talk, is appreciated by the viewers.

The conscious effort of vloggers to optimize opening and closing strategies seek to express a directive. Vloggers do not want to communicate something with the audience. Rather, they want to communicate with the audience (Frobenius, 2014, as cited in De Boeck, 2015). Moreover, they attempt to leave an impression of a dialogic conversation. This is evident in their strategies like greetings, self-introductions, asking questions, soliciting responses, pleasantries, arrangements, pre-closings, and terminal exchanges. These are segments or parts of the adjacency pair where exchanges between interlocutors are significant and needed for a conversation.

The idea of dialogic attempt in YouTube vlogs implies the participatory culture of vlogs (De Boeck, 2015). The findings show that vloggers' common goal in using opening and closing strategies is to create an atmosphere of involvement and participation. Obviously, request solicitation is one good example that buttresses viewers' investment in vlogs. Vloggers ask for a like, share, and subscription. Also, they request viewers to comment, which can be the common ground for further interaction.

In addition, the interactive resolve of vlogs manifests when vloggers ask viewers to suggest ideas for the next videos and by using the pronoun "tayo" (we). This magnifies the drive for a more in-depth interaction. Situating viewers as an active and important feature in vlog-making suggests an endeavor for collaboration. Vloggers likewise introduce to viewers their other social media accounts. This encourages a wider modality of interaction aside from the YouTube application.

The informal feature and atmosphere of vlogs also add to the friendlier mood which endorses interaction between vloggers and viewers. The idea that vloggers are not A-list celebrities (Jukić, 2018) makes them approachable. The majority of vloggers are amateurs and those who practice vlogging as a job were at first amateurs. From the point of view of viewers, this is a concept that promotes "authentic" and natural experience. By means of behind-the-scene clips and vlogging mistakes, the authenticity of vlog and vlog talk is established and reinforced (De Boeck, 2015).

The study also attempted to identify a recurring pattern of vlog openings and endings and found that there is barely a formulaic vlog strategy visible

in Filipino vlogs. This suggests that vloggers may use different strategies to attain distinction and to promote interaction. If wishing to investigate recurring patterns in vlogs, a larger corpus for analysis may be needed.

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