'No to *halata*, *astig* to *astig* only': The emerging bisexual lingo and the (un)marketable identities on PlanetRomeo

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Abstract

This study critically analyzes different linguistic expressions that are ideologically and indexically used by self-identified bisexual members of PlanetRomeo, a gay-dating website. Using lexico-grammatical analysis and selective self-presentation as lens, the study examines the textual areas of 167 online dating profiles of Filipino bisexual men. Findings indicated an emerging subcultural lingo, which is characterized by word connotations, echoic binomials, and negations. Moreover, the study offers insights into the identity-construction efforts of bisexual men through their language use, which allow them to occupy attractive and marketable identities in the contemporary period. More importantly, it sheds light on how these men's linguistic constructions of desired and desirable identities also work toward the marginalization and disenfranchisement of other identities. Overall, this study hopes to contribute to the area of sexual identity construction in and through discourse and to contemporary understandings of the ways in which identities are read as either desirable or undesirable by a particular community, and the hierarchies and judgments that such readings entail for members of the community.

Keywords: Bisexuality, bisexual lingo, lexico-grammatical analysis, online dating, self-presentation

1.   Introduction

In the Philippines, words such as *astig* (tough) or *barako* (muscular) and expressions such as *discreet to discreet* or *straight-acting for same* are often used for self-descriptions and partner preferences within the profiles of online dating apps/websites designed for gay men and men who have sex with other men (MSM). Similarly, words and expressions such as *malamya* (effeminate) or *No to halata* (out or obvious gay) and *chubby* also proliferate in online-dating spaces. According to Miller (2016b), these words and expressions are a frequently occurring feature of online life among users of MSM-specific dating apps (e.g., Grindr, PlanetRomeo, Hornet, Scruff, and the like). In the context of online search for potential sexual or romantic partners, these linguistic practices are strictly controlled by the demand for discretion and stereotypical or hegemonic masculinity on the one hand, and the refusal of effeminacy on the other. Therefore, this linguistic construction privileges attractive and marketable identities while, at the same time, marginalizes and disenfranchises other identities online.

Online dating has features that allow its users to post their self-description (including their interests and personality type) and partner preferences (Hancock & Toma, 2009; Miller, 2015) within the profile texts. Here, language serves as a tool to communicate about the self with others in social networking (Baym, 2010). As described by most scholars, social-networking platforms designed for gay men, or more broadly, MSM, are a mechanism for sexual partnering (Landovitz et al., 2013); a space to negotiate intentions and personal preferences (Marron, 2014); "purveyors and promoters of idealized western gay male identity" (Lim, 2019, p. 9); and breeding ground for femmephobic language (Riggs, 2013). Similarly, communication and linguistic practices in online-dating applications reveal that a certain language is favored (Marron, 2014), and the privileging of masculinity and muscular bodies appears to be the dominant theme (Miller, 2016b). This means that there are linguistic expressions of positive and negative discrimination against users to be wanted and avoided (Callander et al., 2012) in online-dating spaces among gay men.

More crucially, studies on online-dating spaces underscore that the language used by bisexual men in their online-dating profiles is quite hostile, exclusionary, and categorizing, which results in deliberate practices of sexual racism and misogyny (Birnholtz et al., 2014; Miller, 2015). Sexual racism and anti-effeminate attitudes often manifest themselves as superficial preferences in dating profiles among MSM (e.g., 'Not attracted to Asians,' 'White boys only,' 'No to Sissies'). According to Miller (2016b), there is a privileging of specific kinds of identities, which borders the separation of the desired in-group from the undesired out-group, based on a set of criteria present within their cultural repertoire. For example, a profile that calls for 'manly' or 'straight-acting men' produces demarcations between those members who can pass as 'straight' and those who fall outside this in-group due to inability to pass because of their relative effeminacy. Similarly, when a profile advertises for a muscular partner (e.g., 'muscular guys only'), it would not only create an in-group of muscular men, but also create an out-group that encompasses all those who do not possess this body type based on stereotypical or hegemonic notions of masculinity (Miller, 2016b).

This study is an examination of the language use of self-identified bisexual members of the gay-dating website PlanetRomeo, and its indexical and ideological value within the site. Overall, this study envisions to contribute to the literature of sexual minority (which remains an understudied area of research) when it comes to its linguistic practices and identity in queer online spaces. Since no previous studies in the Philippines have investigated the linguistic production among bisexual men, this current study provides a first look at how detailed and variable the engagements of this language in online spaces are. More specifically, the study aims to contribute to sexual-identity construction in and through discourse and to contemporary understandings of the ways in which identities are read as either desirable or undesirable by a particular community, and the hierarchies and judgments that such readings entail for members of the community.

1.1   Literature Review

1.1.1   Brief History of Gay Male Performance

In the late 19th century, the denigration of cross-dressing and effeminacy became more

pronounced when sexual inversion theories emerged in the Western biomedical and psychology texts (Nardi, 2000). For instance, the emergence of the medicalization of people as "congenital inverts" (Nardi, 2000, p. 2) happened roughly at the same time as the popularization and equation of the heterosexuality and homosexuality constructs with the "normal and abnormal" (p. 2). Examples of the exterior notions of inverted gender behavior were effeminate men and butch women who were perceived as cause for alarm because both threatened traditional conceptions of masculinity and femininity (Nardi, 2000). In the West, the term 'queer' was adopted by the middle-class same-sex attracted men in order to avoid persecution against them as effeminate gays. The label 'queer' was not meant to symbolize effeminacy, but it was used as a positive term to distinguish these gay men from the mainstream society. However, these 'queer' men have developed derogatory terminologies such as fairy, faggot, or queen to describe effeminate gay men or those who stood out as openly gay (Chauncey, 1994, as cited in Miller, 2016b). Another term used to eliminate the tension between straight-acting and effeminate gay men was 'gay' to refer to MSM identities. However, with the advent of the 'gay male clone' of the 1970s, the use of the label 'gay' just further intensified the conflicts between the two oppositional identities (Nardi, 2000, as cited in Miller, 2016b).

The macho gay male clone of the 1970s, which is "a specific constellation of sociosexual, affective, and behavioral patterns that emerged among some gay men in urban centers of American gay life," became a prototype of gay masculinity in the Western world (Levine, 1998, p. 7). Gay male clones are glorified in media and advertisement for their extremely macho look—gym-fit bodies, facial hair, and short haircuts (Levine, 1998). By the mid-1970s, the emergence of "the newly hegemonic hard and tough gay masculinity" marginalized and subordinated the "effeminate gay men within gay communities" (Messner, 1997, p. 82). In addition, the concept of metrosexuality (i.e., a term greatly attached to male overemphasis on aesthetics and male physical body) may account for a more butch performance of gay men and other MSM identities. For instance, metrosexuality is strongly linked to male vanity, which explains the efforts of men in making themselves look good by focusing on personal wellness (e.g., going to the gym, participating in sports activity, dieting) and appearance. Since a metrosexual is very much concerned with the outward appearance, aversion toward nonconforming bodies or behaviors is more likely to occur.

In an article published in Salon.com, Simpson (2002) explained that "a typical metrosexual is a young man with money to spend, living in or within easy reach of a metropolis—because that's where all the best shops, clubs, gyms and hairdressers are" (para. 7). Simpson (2002) added that gay men did provide the early prototype for metrosexuality. In fact, his definition locates the metrosexual within the proximity of a metropolis. These Western-amplified stereotypes reinforced the imperial imagination that places the white/male Americans as superior and dominant, while the colored/feminized Asians as inferiors and subservient (Cañete, 2014).

1.1.2 Homosexuality and the *Bakla*

The public's concept of a homosexual is still dominated by male transgender categories as in other Southeast Asian societies (Tan, 1996). In the Philippines, the term used is *bakla* labelled

traditionally as effeminate. Effeminate gays are characterized as cross-dressers, *parlorista*, or someone with a flamboyant lifestyle and show feminine mannerisms (Benedicto, 2008). Tan (1996) elucidates, "The *bakla* is distinguished from 'real men' (*tunay na lalake*); conversely, the *bakla* is, properly, sexually attracted to these 'real men' and not to other *bakla*" (p. 205). According to Garcia (2008) in his book *Gay Philippine Culture: Binabae to Bakla, Silahis to MSM*, the *bakla* was believed to be influenced by older, precolonial notions of gender-crossing. The practice of gender-crossing or cross-dressing (usually from male to female) in the precolonial era was performed only by spiritual intermediaries or indigenous priests such as the *babaylan*. Gender-crossing gave the *babaylan* not only a respected position but also a "social and symbolic recognition as *binabae* ('womanlike')" in the precolonial Philippine society (Garcia, 2013, p. 53). However, the introduction of the Spanish culture of machismo has negatively affected the position of women and those who are considered 'essentially' female in Philippine society, including the gender-crossers. In fact, the practice of homosexuality during the Spanish period was considered more or less anomalous or an act of sodomy. The Christian disdain for this reversal of identity may partly account for the explanation why the *bakla* were held in contempt. This negative attitude has important consequences for the *bakla* identity in influencing how the society at present responds to it (Garcia, 2008, as cited in de Jong, n.d.).

Modern notions about gender and sexuality started to proliferate in the Philippines during the American occupation through the public system of education (Garcia, 2013). During this time, the figures of the *babaylan* and gender-crossers faded away and were replaced by new identities. As early as 1970s, Philippine gay culture blossomed as news and media documented the high visibility of different homosexual identities in the Philippines. The terms 'homosexual' and 'gay' are now used in several Philippine languages. For the Tagalog, the term *bakla* is used as synonymous to the Western construct of homosexual or gay (Tan, 1996). In addition, the small *bakla* enterprises, which introduced the terms *parlorista*, *manicurista*, or couturier all known to be *bakla*, have multiplied in different cities as the demand for their services increased (de Jong, n.d.). In the same period, beauty pageants also became popular and professionalized (Johnson, 1997). Because of these representations, the *bakla* are considered unfit for masculine work.

Since the late 1980s, local gay activism has begun to emerge in response to the HIV epidemic and the need to launch community-based prevention programs. Some of the emerging gay communities (still very much middle- and high-income based) self-identify as 'gay' as well as *bakla*. However, those middle-class Filipino gay men self-identify as 'gay' but not as *bakla* because the latter are associated with low-income and relative effeminacy (Tan, 1996).

Kabaklaan in the Philippines is not only limited to the effeminate *bakla*, but it also conflates the masculine *bakla* who do not perform cross-dressing and effeminate public presentation (Manalansan IV, 2006). Because of Western influences and the changing concept of society in general, discreet gays became part of the Philippine society. These include (but not limited to) bisexual men or the *silahis*.

1.1.3   Bisexuality and the *Silahis*

Western concepts of *bisexual* have several meanings, and the term is used interchangeably. Bisexuality, as a term used to describe sexual acts and desires, was first utilized in the late 19th century (Ault, 1996). According to Tan (1996), it was the Americans who introduced and conceptualized the term *bisexuality*, including heterosexuality and homosexuality. Callis (2009) explains: "Bisexuality can refer to a series of acts, and/or a behavior. To be behaviorally bisexual is to be sexually active with men and women, regardless of sexual identity" (p. 217). Finally, bisexuality can be used to refer to an identity.

The term *silahis* is used as a slang to refer loosely to bisexuals (Tan, 1996) whose cultural marker of sexual being is mostly not sexuality but gender. Tan (1996) avers: "The term *silahis* is used fairly widely, mainly to refer to males who are 'attracted' to both males and females, a definition clearly derived from Western biomedical and psychology texts" (p. 210). According to Garcia (2008), *silahis* is a Visayan term straight out of swardspeak, which means a straight-acting male who may not self-identify as homosexual. *Silahis* is defined as "a genitally male person whose erotic life, in being centered around both genital females and males, becomes perceived to be a function as much of his sexual activities as of his gendered selfhood. The *silahis* is a male who looks every bit like a 'real man' who may even be married and with a family" (Garcia, 2008, p. 134). In other words, his sexual preference is defined by some internalized identity and not necessarily by the sexual act itself. Thus, bisexuality reveals an overt sexuality and is sometimes understood as an exclusive function of sexuality. It does not depend on the bisexual object choice; rather, it is conflated on the masculine-gender-identity image of a person.

Western constructs of bisexuality are fixated on the sexual-partner choice. However, the *silahis* may not even consider that choice. For instance, there are quite a number of men who have had sex only with men and would be classified as 'homosexual' based on a Western framework and yet be *silahis* in the Philippines simply because they do not fit into the stereotype of an effeminate male (Tan, 1996). Here, the *silahis* is consistently being seen and constructed as stereotypically masculine. However, Garcia (2008) noted that there are *silahis* and MSM who will not mind being called as *bakla* or gay, even if that means they will be associated with the feminine and/or effeminate gay.

Bisexuality may also operate in the homosexuality and heterosexuality continuum. Although it shares both elements of homosexuality and heterosexuality, it is not regarded as a disguised identity but another sexual expression that characterizes the capacity of any individual for physical and emotional intimacy (Klein, 1978). In an online article titled *The 'Bisexual' Conundrum* published in *Outrage Magazine* (the first Web-based publication for LGBT Filipinos), Tan (2013) argues that bisexual people are not confused and closeted homosexuals. He further explained that these stereotypes and the erroneous usage of the term 'bi' do not only promote an internalized homophobia but also an exclusion from LGBTQ spaces. Because of this, the term 'bi+' has started to be adopted by many bisexual-advocacy organizations (e.g., Bisexual Organizing Project) because of its inclusive approach toward attractions to people with more than one gender (Human Rights Campaign, 2016). In fact, this idea was strongly supported by Robyn Ochs, a long-serving bisexual leader and activist, who provided a broad definition of bisexuality:

> I call myself bisexual because I acknowledge that I have in myself the potential to be attracted - romantically and/or sexually - to people of more than one sex and/or gender, not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way, and not necessarily to the same degree (Human Rights Campaign, 2016, p. 4).

The several faces of bisexuality in the Philippines were further explored through studies. For instance, Hernandez and Imperial (2009) enumerated the variations of concepts in defining men, and bisexual falls under the labels 'Bahid/Pa-men' and 'Silahista.' According to their description, the *Bahid* or *Pa-men* are "male sex workers who dress masculine and are (heterosexual) straight-acting. In sexual acts, he is more of an insertor, less of a receiver. The biological sex of the partner varies but the preference is for male partners," while the *Silahista* are "male sex workers who swing both ways. They can be straight-acting at one time and effeminate in another time depending on their clients. In sexual acts, they are less [of an] insertor and more [of a] receiver. The biological sex of the partner is not important" (Hernandez & Imperial, 2009, p. 32). These labels describe bisexuality in terms of bisexual behavior and not merely of self-identity.

Bisexuality can also be explained through sexual roles. The label *silahis* in Tan's (1996) study is made sense of differently by two particular groups—the male sex workers and the *bakla*. Based on the perspective of the male sex workers, the *silahis* represents a configuration of the following attributes:

> The *silahis* is the married client whose wife is away; the action star (actor) who 'becomes a woman in bed'; or the high-ranking government official who may or may not be married. The *silahis* is also described through linguistic hybrids: the *macho gay*, the *baklang hindi ladlad* (the closet *bakla*) (Tan, 1996, p. 211).

On the other hand, the *bakla* does not believe that *silahis* exists, simply because of nondisclosure. This is the reason why the *bakla* refers to the *silahis* as a category of a closet *bakla*. In addition, the *bakla* asserts that 'all Filipino males are bisexual,' referring to the potential, in terms of availability for sex, in every Filipino male. These findings are quite consistent with the benevolent persecution of the *silahis* by the gay communities of the 1960s and 1970s that bisexuals were "merely fence-sitters trying to ride out the ravages of homophobia in the face of the war against heterosexism and homophobia" (Garcia, 2009, p. 136). In the local context, being bisexual disqualifies the *silahis* from the gay ideal of what a real man is. The charge that he is 'unreal' alludes exclusively to his internal self, inasmuch as his external features are similar to those expected of the 'real man' displaying the macho straightjacket, well-built physique, and a low-pitched voice (Garcia, 2009). These key observations support Tan's (1996) findings based on the Philippine report on 'Being LGBT in Asia,' which states that:

> The bisexual community remains under-represented in the LGBT community in the Philippines, not only because of the stigmatization of bisexuals by both heterosexual and homosexual communities, but also because of the conflicting perceptions among Filipinos on who is bisexual (p. 18).

This is probably the reason why bisexual individuals remain to be minoritized, especially in the Philippines. In fact, it was only recently that the bisexual sector came to be included in the Gay and Lesbian or Queer Movements in the United States soon after the last decade that bisexuality was able to be recognized as a legitimate sexual orientation (Garcia, 2009).

In the Philippine context, the term 'self-identified bisexual' means 'straight-acting,' although both terms refer to MSM (men who have sex with other men). Coined by Western researchers as a behaviorist term, MSM is a unique and 'neutral' cultural term to describe those Men who have sex with other Men regardless of their personal identification as homosexuals, heterosexuals, bisexuals, and the like. Dr. Michael L. Tan, an anthropology professor from the University of the Philippines, stated that the label is useful for exploring the sticky issues of identity including its association with sexual behavior (Garcia, 2009). Although it is descriptively adopted to refer to sexual behavior, it has also become an identity that is grounded in sexual activity (Garcia, 2008). Garcia (2009) underscores the following assumptions:

> We can almost safely say that the MSM may well be the "closet queens" and the *silahis* of the earlier decades, and that by adopting their own nomenclature they signify the wish to no longer be hierarchically inferior to the out-and-out gays whose cowardly counterparts they were always seen to be in the past. (p. 232)

What Garcia (2009) is trying to imply here is that the insistence on a regularity of identity as 'men' seems to suggest that MSM will dispose of the possibility of identifying themselves as visibly gay. If the *silahis* accurately denotes some kind of bisexuality for some cases, he need not be the same as a 'closet queen,' because he might be a case of exclusive homosexuality who may not prefer genitally male partners over genitally female ones (Garcia, 2009).

1.1.4   Hegemonic Masculinity

The ongoing discourses on masculinity established that construction of masculinity is anchored on aesthetics and the physical body. Masculinity is a term that refers to a set of practices and behaviors associated with men in society including the effects of these practices (Connell, 1992; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). In American patriarchy, for instance, masculinity has very rigid requirements. A real man is described as "young, married, white, urban, northern, heterosexual Protestant father of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight, height, and a recent record in sports" (Goffman, 1963, p. 128). These descriptions have become the ideal marker of all other kinds of masculinities (Billman,

2006). In an attempt to achieve these very high and rigid requirements, scholars (e.g., Carrigan et al., 1987; Hanke, 1998) believed that there is an attainable version of masculinity called 'hegemonic masculinity.' Hanke (1998) defined it as the "social ascendancy of a particular version or model of masculinity that, operating on the terrain of 'common sense' and conventional morality, defines 'what it means to be a man'" (p. 186). Hegemonic masculinity as argued by Carrigan et al. (1987) "should not be understood as the 'male role' but as a particular variety of masculinity to which women and others (young, effeminate, or homosexual men) are subordinated (as cited in Hanke, 1992, p. 190). By emphasizing the traditionally masculine traits—tough and competitive—and at the same time requiring subordination and marginalization of women and gay men, hegemonic masculinity maintains its power and agency (Connell, 1990, as cited in Eguchi, 2009).

As argued by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), hegemonic masculinity can be adopted when it is desirable; it is fluid and can be strategically performed. In other words, this ideal form of masculinity is not fixed to individuals, but it can be worn by adopting the stereotypically masculine ways of self-presentation. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) claim that this masculine presentation might not be available to the effeminate gay men who cannot possess sufficient masculine traits. This exclusion by heterosexual men necessitates some gay men and other MSM identities to achieve the very traditional form of hegemonic masculinity, and they use the rhetoric of 'straight-acting' to gloss over effeminate personas (Eguchi, 2009). Straight-acting rhetoric, according to Martino (2006), "functions as a compensatory mechanism for displacing an already internalized sense of inferiority that is attributed on the basis of identifying as gay, constituted as failed masculinity," and is based on standards, "reinforcing and rearticulating the hegemonic force of a hierarchical gender binaric system, built on a misogynistic repudiation and denigration of the feminine" (p. 43).

The term 'hegemony' was used by Gramsci (1971, 1985) to refer to the leading role of a dominant group or class. The idea of physical and cultural dominance constitutes the key concepts of hegemonic masculinity (Coffey, 2013). According to Demetriou (2001), hegemony can be understood in two forms in terms of masculinity. The first one is called external hegemony, which refers to the establishment of males' dominance over females. The second form is internal hegemony, which is concerned with the social superiority of one group of men over all other men (Demetriou, 2001). In Demetriou's notion of internal hegemony, the one that asserts dominance over the effeminate ones is the assembly of 'straight-acting' or masculine men. By rejecting femininity in gay men, the more masculine gay men are able "to achieve and embrace their masculine images in this heteronormative society" (Eguchi, 2009, p. 203).

1.1.5   Language and Masculinity in MSM Dating Networks

Quite a lot of research has examined gay-dating apps/websites for MSM identities, concerning the issues of racism, masculinity privilege, body-shaming practices, and anti-effeminacy (e.g., Birnholtz et al., 2014; Callander et al., 2012; Gudelunas, 2005; Miller, 2015; Riggs, 2013; Rodriguez et al., 2016). However, limited work has examined the types of linguistic expressions used by bisexual men when communicating their self-description and partner preferences in dating websites (e.g., Callander et al., 2012; Miller, 2016b) nor have previous

studies focused on the linguistic analysis of different expressions of identity among bisexual men in online-dating apps designed for MSM.

According to Miller (2016b), previous research on masculinity has consistently established that MSM favor the masculinity and/or body-focused language over femininity for their self-descriptions and partner preferences (e.g., Bailey et al., 1997; Bell & Weinberg, 1978; Laner & Kamel, 1978; Lumby, 1978; Miller, 2015). For instance, racism was labelled as personal preference in Marron's (2004) study titled "'Whiteness' and 'Asianness' in Gay Dating Profiles: Articulations of Identity, Sexuality and Ethnicity." Marron (2014) explored the issues encountered by users of various ethnic groups when using dating apps. He argued that dating apps encouraged self-commodification and market activity among gay men where they are required to present their packaged self. The study also noted that online ads greatly focused on physical attributes and promoted a culture where white gay men are idealized as the most attractive, while other ethnic groups (e.g., Asian men) are stereotyped to be subservient. In this study, it was revealed that there is a hierarchy and language preference on dating apps where Asian men are ranked close to the bottom rung.

This notion of racialized partner discrimination as a matter of personal preferences was also illuminated in the study of Callander et al. (2012) who investigated the presence of racialized language (e.g., *white boy*, *Latino, Black*, *Not attracted to Asians*) on a dating and sex-seeking website called Manhunt.net. This research used the content within Manhunt profiles to develop a framework that describes the race-related content evident within the 2,177 profiles included in the study (Callander et al., 2012). It was revealed that whenever White gay men describe their racialized attraction toward potential partners, they are often found to be privileged and, at the same time, privileging those identities who pass their physical requirements, including race (Callander et al., 2012).

Aside from race, other personal trait categories such as age and physical attractiveness were identified by Mudraya and Rayson (2011) in their study on the language of over-50s people in online-dating classified ads. Using a web-based corpus processing software tool for linguistic analysis, the study examined keywords and key semantic domains in the data collected from the online classified ads on the Telegraph co.uk dating website KindredSpirits. Specifically, the findings on the language of men looking for men in online-dating classified ads revealed that the 'sexiness' category on the semantic domain level is statistically significant. On the keyword level, consistent vocabulary expressions used by a group of men looking for men are the following: *discreet*, *straight-acting*, *younger*, *mature*, and *looking for*. This suggests that, in the language of classified ads, gay men give importance to the age and physical characteristics (including discretion) of their prospective partners (Mudraya & Rayson, 2011).

More recent studies on MSM dating networks have uncovered distinct privileging of masculinity. For instance, in Gudelunas's (2005) study on PlanetOut.com (a web portal for the gay community, offering news, feature stories, and dating services), an analysis of online gay men personals revealed that masculinity was a priority for sexual minority men from small towns, who explicitly mentioned looking for "other straight-acting" or "masculine" and not "femme" partners in the textual areas of their advertisements (p. 20). In a dissertation, Miller (2016b) investigated the privileging of masculinity in online spaces of mobile-dating apps for MSM. Findings revealed that there is a clear preference for masculinity and muscularity.

In addition, the study explored the presence of face-disclosing and/or shirtless photos as visual presentations in online spaces. It was found that men's use of shirtless photos was significantly related to demographic and attitudinal variables such as age, self-perceived masculinity, anti-effeminacy attitudes, and drive for muscularity (Miller, 2016b). In a content analysis of profiles of MSM on Jack'd (an MSM-specific online-dating application), Miller (2015) reported that a group of masculine-presenting gay men was inclined to privilege masculinity and muscularity as they described and mentioned expressions pertaining to fitness or muscular bodies in the texts of their profiles. He found that 6% of the men described themselves as masculine and not one in 300 pertained to himself as feminine or lacking masculinity in his profile.

As the most common type of exclusionary language, anti-feminine language has been found to be prevalent in MSM social networks (Miller, 2015). In another study of Miller (2016a), quite consistent findings have been observed in an online experiment of 143 MSM app users to test how they respond to femmephobic and non-femmephobic language use in their dating profiles. Femmephobic language was defined as an anti-effeminate type of language that reflects any negative feeling or aversion toward femininity or those who possess feminine traits. Results revealed that the use of femmephobic language does impact the way that MSM perceive one another in terms of intelligence, sexual confidence, dateability, and their desire for offline interpersonal interactions. In addition to anti-effeminacy or femmephobic language, Birnholtz et al. (2014) examined the preponderance of the clause 'no,' which points to the types of men Grindr (a geosocial-networking mobile app for gay and bisexual men) users wanted to restrict from contacting them. 'No fems/feminine/girly/flamers' was the most frequent exclusionary term with 1.5% of profiles from college town and 0.7% of profiles from urban centers. The devaluation of effeminacy, including gay men and women, was also noted by Clarkson (2007) in his analysis of pro-masculinity website for MSM, StraightActing.com. He found that StraighActing.com users considered femininity as an act of mockery and something to be avoided even if there is a simultaneous exhibition of some masculine behaviors.

The connection of masculinity-focused language strongly links to the body-focused or muscularity-content language, and this is quite evident in the linguistic production of gay men in describing their drive and desire for muscularity. For instance, Bartholome et al. (2000) reported that 81% of personal ads used descriptions about the male body. According to the authors, body language was used to discuss directly different features of the masculine male body. A quarter of all advertisements made mention of the terms 'in shape' or 'muscular build,' while being 'in shape' was the most desired body attribute for a potential partner (p. 138). In queer online spaces, Campbell's (2004) ethnographic study with participants in three gay male IRC (Internet Relay Chatroom) channels—#gaymuscle, #gaychub, and #gaymusclebears—revealed a certain preference for online names (nicknames) that correspond to the male gay identity. In these three spaces, the body is compartmentalized and fragmented into different faces of the male body, which conform to the body normativity such as the case of gay muscle and gay muscle bears. However, some of the bodies discussed corresponded to the MSM marginalized or nonnormative bodies, such as the obese man, the chubby gay, and the older man, to affirm their acceptability and desirability. In a content analysis of MSM-specific dating-app profiles, Miller (2015) reported that 19% of gay

men mentioned language about their body and level of fitness, while 31% also included shirtless photos in their profiles. These findings emphasize the connection between visual and linguistic bodily representation.

1.1.6   Local Studies on Bisexuality

In the Philippines, previous studies on bisexuality reported data related to sexual diseases such as HIV/AIDS, which involved the MSM and did not attend yet to the linguistic details of verbal expressions that construct their identity. Meaning, there are no studies yet about the linguistic production of bisexual people in the Philippines. However, there are some studies that focused on power relations that exist between gay men and bisexual men when it comes to sexual roles, sexual identity, relationships, and same-sex desire. Through the qualitative data from the following studies, specific linguistic practices and behaviors can be identified.

In 2013, Acaba's study explored the meanings, preferences, and power relations ascribed to sexual roles among bisexual men. One hundred and seventy-eight Filipino MSM participated in an online survey in 2010, while seven of whom were interviewed to explain the scripts attached to their sexual roles, preferences for sexual partners, and perceptions of HIV risks. The study emphasized that sexual identity does not necessarily specify sexual roles. Sexual roles as perceived by and among MSM are exclusively based on preference and mood or situation. However, MSM attribute certain qualifications, preferences, and/or stereotypes to sexual roles (e.g., pure tops must be *straight-acting*, *discreet*, and *masculine*; bottoms are *effeminate* and *submissive*). Another interesting finding revealed that there was no significant difference between sexual roles and physical traits, which suggests that physical traits are not important in looking for potential sex partners.

Different findings were observed in Hernandez and Imperial's (2009) study on identities and sexualities of MSM in the Philippines when it comes to sexual roles and physical traits. According to Hernandez and Imperial (2009), MSM population is not a homogenous group of masculinities, but its members cut across the wide spectrum of masculinities: *lalaking-lalake* (real men), *lalake* (men), *bahid/pa-men* (straight-acting), *silahista* (bisexual), *bading/bakla* (gay), and *pa-girl* (like a girl). The informants of the study revealed that they equate masculinity with all aspects of physical characteristics, regardless of their sexual orientation. Hernandez and Imperial (2009) stated that the concept of masculinity or being a man in the Philippines rests heavily upon one's physical traits and one's ability to demonstrate masculine characteristics.

Lastly, the idea of power and gay passing as expressed in one's preferences was observed in Italia and Oducado's (2014) study. Many of the respondents expressed their distaste of effeminate gays as sexual partners and prefer the company of the more muscular/manly ones. As a result, MSM in this study tend to label themselves as bisexuals even if they know that they are openly gay or effeminate. In other words, effeminate gays are able to hook up and fulfill their sexual fantasy with straight-acting men if they self-identify as bisexual.

Apparent in the literature is the fluidity and variation of sexual roles and queer desires of MSM identities, which may have been influenced by the loosening sexual codes and morals with modernization (Miralao, 2004). For instance, MSM learn sexual roles through exploration and experience in reading and watching pornography on the Internet. In

addition, Gagné (2012) noted that MSM online identities also attribute their self-presentation (when they describe themselves as both desiring objects and objects of desire) to sexualized meanings inherent within the virtual space of dating apps or hook-up sites.

Although specific types of language have been uncovered (e.g., racialized, masculinity, body-focused, femmephobic or anti-effeminate language), previous studies did not explore more fully other linguistic elements that convey some of the contentious issues surrounding sexual minority males. For instance, only one type of linguistic pattern has been identified (e.g., no-to structure).

1.2   Research Questions

Using lexico-grammatical analysis, especially with the concept of selective self-presentation, the present study aims to analyze different linguistic expressions used and made sense of by self-identified Filipino bisexual men when presenting their self-description and partner preferences in their online-dating profiles. More specifically, this study aims to find answers to the following questions: (1) How do Filipino bisexual men, through their use of language in their dating profiles on PlanetRomeo, privilege certain gay men (and other MSM) identities, and in effect, marginalize others?; (2) What are the different linguistic expressions that Filipino bisexual men use in their online-dating profiles to construct an identity?; and (3) How do Filipino bisexual men craft their self-presentation, in and through language, in their online-dating profiles?

1.3   Theoretical Framework

1.3.1   Self-presentation of Online Identities

Self-presentation (also known as impression management) is defined as the "packaging and editing of the self during social interactions to create a desired impression in the audience" (Toma & Hancock, 2010, p. 336). It involves two processes: impression motivation and impression construction. Impression motivation has something to do with the degree or level of how a person manages the impressions he or she creates, while impression construction refers to the method or style used by a person to create a desired impression (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). To illustrate these two components, Taywaditep (2002) underscores the following proposition: "the fact that many gay personal advertisements feature anti-effeminacy attitudes in such a candid manner suggests that perhaps many gay men perceive these negative attitudes to be common and acceptable, or even desirable" (p. 13). Therefore, a profile user is more likely to display an anti-effeminate presentation in his profile (*construction*) simply upon perceiving the social network to operate in such a manner (*motivation*). In this type of impression management, both the social environment and the target audience, including choices on what information to disclose and not to disclose, are considered (Schlenker, 2002). To get the desirable or sought impression, self-presentation must be strong, active, and strategic.

Self-presentation can be selective where it allows individuals to engage in some self-alterations or self-enhancement behaviors with strangers they encounter for the first

time (Schlenker & Wowra, 2003). In this case, users can strategically choose desirable traits. For example, if being manly or straight-acting is considered a highly desirable trait in gay-dating apps, a particular user might have the tendency to craft his profile text showing his inclination toward that masculine characteristic. In this case, the user selectively self-presents, exaggerating the desired traits of the self while, at the same time, minimizing the undesired ones (Walther, 1992).

Selective self-presentation is conceptualized by Walther (1992) under the hyperpersonal model of computer-mediated communication (CMC). According to Walther (1996), this model explains that users have the advantage to maximize CMC features to engage in a strategic and strong self-presentation and impression management. Furthermore, this model can explain the kind of profile texts or message construction produced by users online. There are two technological factors that contribute to this— editability and asynchronicity— which both allow for an unlimited amount of time for editing and refinishing. The slowed temporal nature of CMC provides online users with more time to manage their desired self-presentation in their profiles (Walther, 1992). Online-dating profiles are asynchronous, which means that users can take as much time as they need to compose or edit their profile texts.

1.3.2   Lexico-grammatical Discourse Features

1.3.2.1   Word Connotations

One of the basic kinds of linguistic analysis carried out in critical approaches such as critical linguistics (e.g., Fowler, 1991, 1996) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) (e.g., Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1998) is lexical analysis. According to Machin and Mayr (2012), lexical analysis involves looking at specific words or lexicon (e.g., noun or noun phrase) present in a text and asking what kinds of words are used and how frequent these words appear in the text. Based on Halliday's (1994) functional linguistic theory, vocabulary or lexis is a major element or determinant of ideational structure. To use his term, words have meaning potential or a multiplicity of meaning, which is realized in texts. Language and literary scholars have distinguished two kinds of meaning: denotation and connotation. To simplify, denotation is the literal or dictionary meaning of a word, while connotation is the emotional charge or cultural meaning of the word. This study is interested in both types, especially when they are applied in the analysis of texts with word connotations.

Lexical choices can foreground and, at the same time, downplay or 'background' other concepts, issues, or meanings (Machin & Mayr, 2012). For instance, when connotative words such as 'straight-acting,' 'discreet,' and 'muscular' are used to describe ideal and potential partners in an online-dating application, other users are able to perceive the values of 'masculinity' (a desirable trait of that particular group) through the preponderance of those lexical choices that are likely to form a predominant meaning in that particular text. This kind of lexical selection can then raise concerns such as "what consequences would there be in a society where certain concepts of identity become valued over others?" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 35).

1.3.2.2   Echoic Binomials

In legal English, binomial pairs are common expressions found in legal discourse such as laws, contracts, and any other formal documents with legal provisions. Bhatia (1993) identified dominant lexico-grammatical features of legal provisions including binomial pairs. In linguistics, binomial pairs or binomials are defined as "a sequence of two or more words or phrases belonging to the same grammatical category having some semantic relationship and joined by some syntactic devices such as 'and' and 'or'" (Bhatia, 1993, p. 108). Examples of binomials in English include *back and forth*, *bit by bit*, *all for nothing*, *dead or alive*, and the like. Current lexicographic studies suggest that binomials are categorized within fixed expressions or multi-word units. Gustafsson (1984) classified binomials according to the semantic relationship of their elements: (a) synonymous (e.g., *friends* and *allies*); (b) antonymous (e.g., *dos* and *don'ts*); and (c) complementary (e.g., *aches* and *pains*). Similar to synonymous binomials is another distinct type, which has an intensifying function. Mayr (2008) called it as "echoic binomials (where WORD1 is identical to WORD2), such as *more and more* and *stronger and stronger*" (p. 152). This type of binomials appears several times in online-dating profiles of bisexual men (e.g., *astig* to *astig*, *discreet* to *discreet*, *hot* for *hot*). The reiteration of the same word signals a categorical preference for a potential partner. The idea is that if a specific user advertises that he is discreet and he looks for the same one, he must be contacted only by discreet users.

1.3.2.3   Negations

In language studies, negation is defined as a "morphosyntactic operation in which a lexical item denies or inverts the meaning of another lexical item or construction" (Crystal, 1991, p. 231). Every language has negative particles or expressions; statements with negative particles are called negative statements. According to Gleason (2001), negation allows individuals to express what is not happening, or what they do not want. According to Van Valin and LaPolla (1997), "negation operates at three different levels: nuclear (e.g., the lexical derivation of *unkind* from *kind* in English); core, with narrow scope or internal negation; and clausal, where external negation affects the propositional content of the whole clause" (as cited in Butler, 2003, p. 486). This study is interested in the third type since most expressions of negation are quite preponderant in online dating. A majority of these negative statements appear in a form of a slogan (e.g., *no to gays*, *no to effem*, *not into chubs*, and the like) that is usually not in complete sentence. These slogan-like expressions operate at the clausal level with negative markers such as *no* and *not* at the beginning of the clause. Since the function of negation is to negate parts of or the entire sentence or clause, the word after the preposition such as *to* or *into* is the one that is negated. This word represents an identity that is not favored or desired in online dating in queer spaces. Therefore, the language of negation in online dating reveals an interactive space in which users express different values on issues of racism, misogyny, anti-effeminacy, and body-shaming practices.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature since it aims to examine written discourse, specifically the choices and patterns of lexical items and/or expressions in the textual areas of online-dating profiles, using lexico-grammatical analysis. Thus, this study heavily relies on textual analysis of online-dating profiles. Although it is primarily descriptive, this study has a quantitative nature as well. It employs frequency counts or percentage calculations, especially in determining the occurrence of specific lexical items and grammatical patterns used in headline statements (i.e., a free text section of the profile) of online-dating profiles in PlanetRomeo.

2.2 Sources of Data

The data for this study was limited to one website source—PlanetRomeo. This specific website was selected because of its unique technological features such as its flexible access to a user's location across the country and the world, and its footprint stickers. Footprints are graphic animated images that can be used as a message either to give compliments or to direct reference to other users (Dasgupta, 2017). Footprints was only used as a basis for collecting the data. The two features described above allowed the study to have varied demographics of the most active PlanetRomeo users with more sophisticated ways of textually representing one's identity.

The study's primary data for analysis consisted of headline statements (one of the free text sections of the profile), one of the elements that constitutes the PlanetRomeo users' profiles. This headline text is the one that gets to be read first together with the user's photo, username, and general data (e.g., age, height, weight, location).

The study utilized purposive sampling method. The researcher set four criteria. The first two required the profile users to self-identify as *Filipino* and *bisexual*. On the administration page of the profile account, the self-identification or 'orientation' has three options: *gay*, *bisexual*, and *transgender*. Only those users who self-identified or indicated both as *Filipino* and *bisexual* were selected. The next two criteria were considered a major parameter in this study, namely the footprints and the use of keywords. A high number of footprints can get a user in the homepage ranking or top-user list. As such, the use of footprints through the 'Top Footprints' option in the Administration section of the profile was considered to ensure that all participants belonged to the top users of the online-dating app. Lastly, headline texts must employ specific keywords related to general gender classification toward the self and self-behaviors (e.g., 'Astig/Discreet/Straight-acting here,' 'Not malamya/halata/effem') and gender-linked appearance markers, which focus on the muscular male body (e.g., 'Barako/Muscular/Daddy type,' 'I am gym-fit and toned,' 'Not a twink/chub'). The use of these related keywords in reference to the study conducted by Miller (2016b) was based on the premise that "gay masculinity is constructed as being about both looks and behaviors (e.g., Clarkson, 2007; Halkitis et al., 2004; Halkitis et al., 2008; Levine, 1998; Sánchez & Vilain, 2012)" (p. 81).

To access the aforementioned features, the researcher made a temporary account with no personal details. The account was deleted soon after the data collection. After carefully examining the headline statement of each of the collected profiles based on the four selection criteria, a total of 167 were sampled for the analysis. These 167 headline texts were put in a table, and each was assigned a profile number. Conscious of the ethics of internet research, the researcher did not include any photographs and removed all profile usernames as advised by the PlanetRomeo administration upon seeking permission to use the 167 profile texts in this study (see Appendix A). Since the study is an analysis of ideological social media content, a straightforward consent from the users of online-dating profiles was no longer needed (Townsend & Wallace, 2016).

2.3   The Discourse Analytic Tools

The headline-statement section of the collected profiles was carefully read multiple times, highlighting recurring themes, patterns, and frequency of language choices. To retain the contextual meaning, each profile content was kept within the original text of the profile from which it was published online. After the data were classified, the analysis was divided into three parts: *word connotations*, *echoic binomials*, and *negations*.

In examining word connotations, the analysis did not only look at the connotative words but also at the co-occurrence of alternative words or synonyms and modifiers to further identify the referent. Therefore, the analysis looked at specific nouns and noun phrases (e.g., 'barako,' 'gym-fit,' or 'muscular') that were used connotatively in each online-dating profile to refer either to the *self* (author of the profile) or *other* (someone else or a group of other people), or both. Analyzing echoic binomials in the online texts entailed examining how these texts construct equivalent meanings through word repetitions or parallel structures. Therefore, the analysis looked at a sequence of two or more words or phrases belonging to the same grammatical category having some semantic relationship and joined by some syntactic devices such as 'to' and 'for' (e.g., 'astig to astig,' 'discreet to discreet,' or 'hot for hot'). Finally, the analysis of the use of negations also aimed at uncovering anti-feminine language as an exclusionary and categorizing type of language in online-dating spaces. More specifically, the analysis also looked at the preponderance of the 'no-to-structure' that was often used by the participants in the study to avoid interaction with certain others (e.g., 'no to gays,' 'no to effem,' or 'not into chubs').

3.   Results and Discussion

This section answers the research questions posed. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of the analysis is to identify core lexical and grammatical discourse features in the texts through the following categories: *word connotation*, *echoic binomial*, and *negation*.

3.1   Word Connotations

Overall, 167 bisexual men had profiles that contained instances of connotative words (some are specifically unique in the Philippine context) or the most frequently employed words that

have become a lingo in online-dating applications among bisexual men. These connotative words were descriptions used personally and consistently by the bisexual men in the study with reference to gay men, pointing to masculine ideologies. Table 1 shows the percentage of each of these connotative words in either noun or noun-phrase form.

There were 18 profiles that contained the word 'astig' (10.8%). Eight (4.8%) bisexual men in the sample explicitly referred to themselves as 'astig,' while the other ten (6%) were instances of a bisexual man stating that he wanted an 'astig' partner. The word 'astig' often connotes male aesthetics, which marks heavily on physical appearances, as in the case of the following profiles:

> *Profile 24*:   Astig here, cute, top, 5'6".
> *Profile 41*:   Hanap ng Athletic, muscle, toned body. Astigin na
> dating. Discreet.
> (*Looking for athletic, muscle, toned body. Astig-looking.*
> *Discreet.*)

In Profile 24, aspects of physical attributes were enumerated such as the face value (*cute*), sexual role (*top*), and height (*5'6"*). All of these physical attributes can signify masculinity and are highly desirable and privileged, and 'astig' operates on the level of physical swag. This holds true in Profile 41 (*Astigin na dating*) where 'astig' is not just all about generic masculinity, but it can also be linked to certain forms of muscularity (*athletic, muscle, toned body*). In other words, 'astig' is encompassing when referring to physical attractiveness, including body physique.

Table 1
Percentage of connotative words in noun/noun-phrase form

Word Connotation	Frequency	Percentage (N = 167)
Discreet (*Manly/Straight-acting/No trace*)	87	52.1%
Barako (*Muscular*)	44	26.3%
Twinks	23	13.8%
Effem(inate) (*Malamya/Halata*)	22	13.2%
Daddy (*Daddy-looking/Dadbod*)	21	12.6%
Astig	18	10.8%
Good-looking	18	10.8%
Posers	15	9.0%
Chubs	12	7.2%
Trippers	10	6.0%
Fubu or Fuck buddy	10	6.0%

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'Astig' also suggests a high degree of discreetness or manliness; thus, it is important for an 'astig' bisexual to have no trace of effeminacy or femininity. These observations are true in the following profiles:

Profile 93:   ASTIG NA ASTIG EXTREMELY MANLY.
                 (*Extremely astig and manly.*)
Profile 142:   Para lng s mga astig hindi halata hindi out na may looks
                 naman.
                 (*Strictly for astig who is good-looking, discreet and not
                 openly gay.*)
Profile 152:   Fuckdad here searching no trace or astig bottom.

Profile 93 intensified the word 'astig' by repetition, and it used the modifier 'extremely' to express a strong sense of manliness. In effect, as observed in Profiles 142 and 152, an 'astig' bisexual is not only manly but also discreet and not effeminate. As a belief, a more masculine guy is presumed to be 'top,' while a more feminine one gets cast as the 'bottom.' However, the word 'bottom' in Profile 152 can also be considered 'astig' as long as there is no physical manifestation or trace of effeminate behavior.

These connotations also support the meanings attached to the expression 'good-looking,' which occurred in 18 (10.8%) profiles; eight of which (4.8%) stated that they are 'good-looking,' while another eight (4.8%) indicated that they prefer a 'good-looking' partner, and the remaining two (1.2%) said that a good-looking partner does not matter. This word, for instance, was used by the following profiles:

Profile 19:   Professional & gifted. Gym-fit & good-looking.
Profile 68:   ESTJ-A Looking for: Hot, Mature, Goodlooking,
                 Decent and Quality Guys   Foreign guys are a huge
                 plus.
Profile 148:   I'm a cop partnered 2 a navy officer. Both gud luking,
                 xtremely manly,   dscreet, dcent and professional.
Profile 150:   Goodlooking dicreet guy, well mannered ….looking
                 someone with similar tastes.

'Good-looking' here denotes a desirable masculine physicality that usually has reference to the face. The use of 'good-looking' here is conceived of in relation to aesthetics or physical attractiveness. To self-describe as 'good-looking' and/or to advertise for 'good-looking' partners pressures everyone within a particular group to conform to it. It can be deduced that the explicit and categorical use of the word signals a very rigid standard of masculinity in terms of physical body, especially the face. In addition, the word 'good-looking' appeared together with the body-based descriptors such as 'gym-fit' and 'hot' in Profiles 19 and 68, respectively. More interestingly, the word 'good-looking' appeared together with the word 'professional' or 'decent,' which had ten (6%) instances in the data; six (3.6%) of which were self-directed, while the other four (2.4%) were partner-focused. The word 'good-looking' is not only linked to the masculine physicality or aesthetics but to

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behavior as well such as being 'decent' and 'well-mannered' as in the case of Profiles 148 and 150, respectively. To create a desired impression, these profile users strategically combined both the physical elements of the body and the face, and the behavior. Since aesthetics are heavily weighed in gay male culture, this result supports Clarke and Smith's (2015) findings that there has been a distinguishing norm in the gay male culture that prefers particular looks that heavily focus on physical appearances.

Similar with the word 'astig,' the word 'discreet' shares similar connotations of being stereotypically masculine. It was present in 87 profiles (52.1%) in the data. It often collocates with words such as 'straight-acting,' 'closeted,' and 'manly,' as in the cases of the following profiles:

Profile 58:	Matured and muscular guy here, outgoing, loving, gym rat and extremely discreet/straight acting.
Profile 123:	26. V. discreet only. cant host.no to effem prefers regular buddy over one night stands.
Profile 126:	Closeted dad looking for safe fun. NO pics to share, so DON'T ask!!!!! Strictly for discreet only!
Profile 162:	Educated and well-mannered college student Discreet Manly for same.

Similar with 'good-looking' and 'astig,' looking 'discreet,' 'straight-acting,' or 'manly' signifies male aesthetics. Once again, these aesthetics are controlled by some levels of discretion. For instance, Profile 58 used the modifier 'extremely' to express a high level of discreetness. On the other hand, Profile 126 used the modifier 'strictly' to impress that 'out' individuals are not allowed. There were instances that the words 'straight-acting' and 'manly' appeared together with the word 'discreet' as in the case of Profiles 58 and 162, respectively. Interestingly, the mentioning of the word 'effem' together with the word 'discreet' in the case of Profile 123 was evidence that a discreet male gay identity cannot truly exist without the presence of an oppositional identity (Eguchi, 2009).

The word 'closeted' usually comes together with the phrase 'can't host,' as in the case of Profile 123, to mean that the person cannot have sex with someone in his place where his family/partner also lives. 'Closeted' is a term used to describe somebody who is gay but thinks nobody knows it (Johnson & Roopnarain, 2008). In Filipino context, it loosely translates to *paminta*, a Tagalog gay slang term for closet gay and a verbal pun for 'pa-mhin' or 'pa-men' meaning acting like a straight guy. The prefix *pa-* indicates that someone acts like something, and in this case like 'mhin' (a corrupted form of men). Given this context, the particular looks of a straight-acting, closeted, and manly bisexual further qualify what a discreet bisexual man looks like. To hide their identity, users may use a nondisclosing photo in their profiles (Blackwell et al., 2015). For instance, in their actual profile accounts, a majority did not use their real face pictures but posted only half of their naked body (sometimes referred to as a headless profile) or sometimes black-out picture, or, in some instances, a picture of something or someone else. In other words, 'discreet' has a connotation of anonymity, as in the case of the following profiles:

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Profile 61:	Pic first I prefer keeping it low-key Discreet stocky-chub here.
Profile 89:	Pm me to see my real pic, I'm a good looking man but not smooth.
Profile 126:	Closeted dad looking for safe fun. NO pics to share, so DON'T ask!!!!! Strictly for discreet only! Prefer meetups over a cup of coffee.

As evident in Profiles 61 and 126, 'discreet' can also mean possessing a low-key attitude or keeping it on the down low. Many of the participants repeatedly made mention of the high level of anonymity, which can be done through different self-presentation strategies. For instance, Profile 89 mentioned that in order to see his real picture, he has to be sent a personal message first. On the other hand, Profile 126 categorically said that he does not have any pictures to share but preferred a personal meet-up. Interestingly, Profile 126 identified as a 'closeted dad,' which means, in all probability, he is a married man. Thus, he is a case of a bisexual man who is being on the *Down Low*, a sexual slang term that refers to bisexual men who enjoy having sexual relations with other men in secret (Green, 2006). However, Profiles 21 ('I DO NOT TRADE FACEPICS ONLINE...I DO NOT GIVE AWAY MY FB ACCOUNT.') and 159 ('Please do not ask for face pics coz I will not give one and I don't have one here for security reasons.') were examples of 'unidentifiable' identities, which are in the state of being unknown and invisible to others online in terms of identifying personal details (Suler, 2004). In effect, this aspect of anonymity gives them space for safety and control as they could interact comfortably without the need to divulge too much personal information. Those users with no profile photos and personal details may feel less inhibited than those who reveal their names, occupations, and/or post a photo of their faces. Such anonymity and control over the type and amount of information that these bisexual men posted online means that they can construct alternate identities to fulfill their romantic and sexual desires. In effect, this high level of anonymity may contribute to their disinhibited behavior, which includes the use of rude, tactless, and offensive language.

Those profiles that use pictures of other people are called *posers* or *fakers*. They select the most desirable picture of someone else as their own profile picture. Overall, there were 15 profiles (9.0%) that contained instances of the word 'posers.' It has a negative connotation of pretense or deception, as in the case of the following profiles:

Profile 71:	I don't care if you're good looking. I HATE POSERS! Pics 100% mine.
Profile 95:	Friendly talk im not a poser POSER NOT ALLOWED!!!... accept me or not i don't care.. good looking and hot guys only.
Profile 101:	NO PIC NO REPLY beware of [xxxxxxxxxx] my poser!
Profile 115:	Lol porket my abs lng poser na.. maggym ka dn kaya para maachieve mo abs. maganda lang pagkakuha sa pic ko. d naman ako machong macho ..sakto lang. manly at tropa hanap ko ..

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(*Lol doesn't mean I have abs I'm a poser..try going to the gym
to get abs. my photo just worked out nicely. I'm not that very
muscular..just right. looking for manly guys and a gang of
friends..*)

In the context of Profiles 101 and 115, the word 'poser' has an implied positive
impact. Those who present themselves as someone else through pictures or profile information
are assumed to be less attractive. For instance, the identified poser in Profile 101 can be
assumed to be less attractive or, in all probability, a stalker. On the contrary, having someone
using your personal photo may indicate that you are attractive or that photo is attractive
enough for others to notice. In another instance, there is a suspicious tagging of profiles as
poser when they find you as highly attractive, as in the case of Profile 115 where the presence
of a physically attractive attribute (i.e., abs) was put into question.

Another word that has a strong connotation is 'barako,' which was present in 44
(26.3%) profiles. The connotation attached to the word 'barako' further qualifies or adds
another shade of meaning to the word 'discreet' and 'astig,' as in the case of the following
profiles:

Profile 4:	Mas barako mas masarap…wag na mag msg mga baklang feeling barako at pilit mag astig astigan. lalo n mukang parlorista na discreet daw pero may bahid. (*More barako the better, back off gays who pretend to look like barako and astig, especially parlorist-looking.*)
Profile 29:	Top here,Hanap ng Discreet, Matured or MARRIED GUY. Yun Walang BAHID O BAKAS, BARAKO SA BARAKO lang Par. (*Top here, looking for discreet, mature, or married guy who has no trace, barako for barako only.*)

Profiles 4 and 29 drew connection from the meanings of 'astig' and 'discreet.'
When a profile advertises for 'barako,' it is more satisfying to be 'astig' and 'discreet' at the
same time. Since having a muscular body does not solely identify discreetness or manliness,
'barako' needs more qualifications to be regarded as the ideal straight-acting and manly
bisexual man. In this light, 'barako' does not only suffice the physical attribute, but it also
embodies the overall behavior or personality associated with it.

In other instances, a 'barako' bisexual does wild sex and may participate in the use
of illegal drugs, as in the case of the following profiles:

Profile 42:	Barako sa barako lang! Yung baboy sa sex. Pwede dn sa SOP. Gusto ko masubukan PNP! (*Barako for barako only into rough and hardcore sex open for sex on the phone (SOP) too I want to try Party and Play [PNP]!*)

Profile 161:   Hanap ko yung game sa babuyan. Mga macho daddy o
                 astig na bagets.
                 (*Looking for someone who's into hardcore sex muscular*
                 daddies or astig teens.)

Profile 42 mentioned the term *PnP*, which is a gay slang for Party n' Play, where *party* means drugs and *play* means sex. Profiles 42 and 161 both expressed a sexual fantasy where 'barako' was fetishized. Both profiles wanted partners who prefer wild sex (e.g., 'Yung baboy sa sex.' or 'Hanap ko ung game sa babuyan.'). The use of the word 'baboy' (wild boar) as a collocate of the word 'barako' in Profile 42 surfaced a metaphorical connotation. In the context of Profile 42, the 'barako' embodied a particular virile quality by using the word 'baboy' to intensify the quality of a sex-driven male boar ready for stud. Here, the connotation is quite positive in the sense that it was deemed as a desirable quality of masculinity.

In relation to 'barako,' the word 'daddy' has a connotation of muscularity as well, but in a different type. For instance, it is often referred to the expression 'daddy-looking' or 'dadbod,' which implies a body type that is slightly paunchy or stocky and not necessarily very muscular, as in the case of Profile 78 ('Dadbod here top 5'7 175lbs chinito. No abs, may tiyan ako.'). Here the body is compartmentalized and objectified in the sense that a specific part of the body is made salient (e.g., 'No abs, may tiyan ako.'). Clearly, the body type described here is not muscular but a case of 'softly round' body-based category. Even though this type of body does not correspond to the hegemonic ideals (e.g., gay muscle bear), it was deemed desirable in four profiles that explicitly mentioned this masculine type of body. Overall, 21 profiles (12.6%) had instances of the word 'daddy'; nine of which were self-directed, while 12 were partner-focused.

Another connotation associated to the word 'daddy' is the idea that they are more experienced in sex, as indicated in the following profiles:

Profile 81:   For discreet daddies/older guys Daddies know how to
                do it right.
Profile 48:   Professional top dad here alone with placel looking
                4 astig bottom with big butt for safe fun, dads are
                delicious, try me and u wont regret coz ill make u as my
                baby.

Similar with 'barako' and 'dadbod,' 'daddy' is fetishized as well. Profiles 81 and 48 found it very pleasurable and satisfying to have sex with a daddy type because daddies are 'delicious' and 'know how to do it right.' In this context, the image of a daddy is projected as 'hot dads' or 'sexualized and objectified father.' There is also a sense of role-play among daddies as evident in Profile 48 ('dads are delicious, try me and u wont regret coz ill make u as my baby.'). This case of Profile 48 recreates and sexualizes roles within a family. The implication of this role-playing is that it can enhance power dynamics and allow a 'daddy' partner to feel more comfortable in submitting with him (as his 'baby').

The words 'tripper' and 'fubu' or 'fuck buddy' likewise have a strong connotation. Overall, an equal number of profiles contained the word 'tripper' (*n* = 10; 6.0%) and 'fubu'

(n = 10; 6.0%). For instance, 'tripper' connotes straight guys doing wild sex without any emotional attachment, just purely fun (e.g., sex on the phone, outdoor sex, orgies, and the like), as in the following cases:

> *Profile 8*:   Looking for Top/tripper straight acting/discreet/barako/
> tigasin/malibog at mjo wild sa kama.
> (*Looking for top/tripper straight acting/discreet/*
> *masculine/tough/horny and slightly wild in bed.*)
> *Profile 56*:   I am a hot top looking for a power bottom! Sop trip?
> Skype?
> *Profile 57*:   Nakakasawa pala mag top haha ! Now looking for hairy
> biggie top. Send your pics. Manila area. Free place ko
> 3am to 6am. Pwede outdoor sa mga malilibog dyan
> magtrip sa labas hehe!
> (*Tired of being a top haha! Now looking for hairy biggie*
> *top. Send your pics. Manila area. My place is free from*
> *3am to 6am. Open for an outdoor sex!*)

This is also true with the word 'fubu,' except that sometimes there is a certain light connotation attached to it. It is commonly known as 'friends with benefits,' as observed in the following profiles:

> *Profile 113*:   FuBu TroPa Hnap
> (*Looking for a fuck buddy [FuBu] and friends*)
> *Profile 74*:   Daddy look here, discreet. Looking for friends or
> FUcking Buddy.

Here, there is a personal connection that exists between fuck buddies, as signaled by the words 'tropa' and 'friends' in Profiles 113 and 74, respectively. However, this personal connection does not usually yield a romantic commitment. The common term for this kind of relationship is often expressed as NSA (No strings attached) fun.

In contrast to 'barako,' the words 'twink' and 'chubby' have a different orientation of body type. In gay slang, 'twink' refers to a young, attractive, usually slender or physically fit gay male, while 'chubby' refers to someone who is pudgy or fat. With the assumption that bisexual men must be 'astig,' being too slim or too fat (or closer to it) is not a desirable trait of an 'astig' bisexual man. It gives an impression that twinks and chubbies are not clean-looking and have issues with hygiene or health compared to *muscular* or *fit* bisexuals who are attractive and physically fit.

Contrary to the masculine male ideals, the word 'effem' or 'effeminate' usually carries a negative connotation because it implies unsuitable feminine qualities such as being soft-spoken. In the data, there were a total of 22 profiles (13.2%) that contained instances of the word 'effem(inate).' For the bisexual men, it is a characteristic that is never associated with manliness. In specific instances, the collocates of the word contribute to its meaning by providing information about the most frequent concepts associated with it. For example,

the word 'effeminate' appeared together with the words 'softies,' 'twink,' 'lady boy,' and 'barbie,' as in the case of the following profiles:

Profile 40:   Not interested in softies, twinks, lady boys, effeminates.
Profile 153:   Barbie and Effem, Not interested.

These instances suggest that images of softness or femininity when referred to men are undesirable. The case of Profiles 40 and 153 stretches the possible variations of effeminacy. It suggests that effeminacy can strongly be linked to being 'softie,' 'twink,' 'lady boy,' and 'barbie.' The word 'softie' comes from the word *soft*, meaning weak or cowardly. Similarly, the term 'lady boy' is often an English translation of the Thai term *kathoey* that refers to either transgender women or effeminate gay men in Thailand (Winter, 2003). Finally, the word 'barbie' means "a ditzy drag queen" (Johnson & Roopnarain, 2008, p. 5). All these definitions seem to favor toward effeminacy, and they are quite consistent with the 'feminine' construction of an effeminate identity. Thus, *effeminacy* is an encompassing term to describe any associated feminine qualities in terms of behavior, mannerisms, style, or even gender roles.

In other instances, connotative words are usually paired with some modifiers appearing before or after it. Table 2 shows the percentage of each connotative noun phrase with modifier(s).

Table 2
Percentage of connotative noun phrases with modifiers

Word Connotation with Modifier*	Frequency	Percentage (N = 167)
'looking for' + NP (e.g., *looking for a power bottom*)	51	30.5%
NP + 'only' (e.g., *muscular/gym-fit/athletic only*)	27	16.2%
'into' or 'interested' + NP (only) (e.g., *into daddy(ies)/interested in twinks only*)	7	5.4%

Note: This category describes examples of connotative words or noun phrases with modifiers (in pre- and post-positions) that further identify the referent.

Overall, 40 bisexual men (24.0%) had profiles that contained instances of connotative words with modifiers. As far as the connotative words are concerned, there are three kinds of modifiers associated with them, which all have a categorical impression. First, the modifier 'looking for' attached to a noun phrase (e.g., 'Daddy type here..Looking for nsa fun with muscular or gymfit guys') had 51 instances (30.5%) based on 167 profiles. This modifier is categorical as it calls for very specific types of individuals, their qualities, and traits. Second, the modifier 'into' or 'interested in' has the same effect with the first modifier (*looking for*), which appeared in seven profiles (4.2%). The third modifier, which has a very

high categorical preference, is the word 'only,' which was present in 27 profiles (16.2%). The modifier 'only' is strictly selective of what has been set as ideal or desirable in terms of partner selection.

3.2   Echoic Binomials

In other instances, the language forms a sequence of two identical words separated by a syntactic device such as *to* and *for*. Examples are shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Percentage of echoic binomials

Echoic Binomial	Frequency	Percentage (N = 167)
Discreet to discreet only (*Discreet for same*)	11	6.6%
Manly for/to manly	8	4.8%
Decent/Professional for same	8	4.8%
Astig to Astig only	6	3.6%
Barako sa Barako lang (*Hot for Hot/Hunk to Hunk*)	5	3.0%

Overall, 29 bisexual men (17.4%) had profiles that contained instances of echoic binomials. There were 11 (6.6%) instances of the expression 'discreet to discreet only,' and an equal number of bisexual men used the expressions 'decent/professional for same' (*n* = 9; 4.8%) and 'manly for same' or 'manly to manly' (*n* = 9; 4.8%). In addition, there were six (3.6%) and five (3.0%) bisexual men who used the expressions 'astig to astig only' and 'barako sa barako lang,' respectively.

The lexical and semantic parallelisms and repetitions of a word suggest a strict category (in a sense that it is only selective of what is ideal) and equal relationship or status (the idea that the online dater's potential partner should be of the same desired image as his). These ideal or desired qualities are consistent with the privileging of masculinity and the physical body. This body entails certain layers of enactment of masculinity, which becomes a site for performance of power among bisexual men in the study because they can dictate a rigid set of standards of physical attractiveness that creates pressures for others to conform to them.

The set of echoic binomials found in the data contains the following content words: 'astig' (tough), 'barako' (muscular), 'fit,' 'manly,' 'discreet,' 'hot,' 'good looking,' 'decent,' and 'professional.' These contents do not only signify equal status in terms of sexual desire and physical beauty, but more interestingly, in terms of behavior and class as well, as in the case of profiles, which call for 'professional' or 'decent' qualifications. This suggests that social class is one of the indicators of the bisexual men's community ideals.

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3.3   Negations

Another observed pattern is the language of negation. Some users made reference to people they do not prefer as potential partners by using a negative expression. Table 4 shows the list of different kinds of negations used by the participants.

Overall, 64 bisexual men (38.3%) were seen to employ the language of negations in their profiles. The most frequently used type of negation is the expression 'no to effem/ malamya/halata/softies/lady boys/gays/shemales' with 19 instances (11.4%), followed by 'no pic no reply' (n = 18; 10.8%), 'no to posers' (n = 13; 7.8%), 'no to chubs' (n = 9; 5.4%), 'no strings attached' (n = 8; 4.8%), 'no to masseurs/masahista' (n = 7; 4.2%), and 'no to twinks/slim guys' (n = 5; 3.0%). A majority of these expressions are examples of anti-effeminate language, except for 'No pic no reply' and 'No to posers' (although they are still exclusionary in nature). This set of data is consistent with the findings of previous research, which established anti-feminine language as the most common type of exclusionary language in MSM online-dating applications (e.g., Birnholtz et al., 2014).

Table 4
Percentage of negations

Negation	Frequency	Percentage (N = 167)
No to effem/malamya/halata/softies/lady boys/ gays/shemales	19	11.4%
No pic no reply (NPNR)/No face pic	18	10.8%
No to posers	13	7.8%
No to chubs (chubby)	9	5.4%
No strings attached (NSA)	8	4.8%
No to masseurs/masahista/moneyboys	7	4.2%
No to twinks/slim guys	5	3.0%

The 'No to' structure in the expressions of the bisexual men is very exclusionary in the sense that it categorically excludes specific identities to avoid interaction with those whom they find unsuitable or unattractive. Based on the data in Table 4, the most common identities 'negated' or unwanted within PlanetRomeo are the following: effem/*malamya*/ *halata*/softies/lady boys/gays/shemales, posers, headless profiles, chubby, and masseur/ *masahista*. Although there were five profiles that had an instance of 'no to twink/slim guy' expression, there were six that mentioned that they are only interested in *twinks* if they are discreet, good-looking, and straight-acting. More crucially, in this type of language structure, certain derogatory terms have been used by bisexual men (e.g., barbie, *parlorista*, shemale, softies, *desperadang bakla*) to describe effeminate gay men.

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Profile 39:   No to shemale or bayot og porma haha sorry
                  (*No to shemale or gay-looking in appearance haha
                  sorry*)
Profile 40:   Not interested in softies, twinks, lady boys, effeminates
Profile 153:   Barbie and Effem, Not interested

All of these femmephobic profiles put down femininity or effeminacy by simply using negative words such as 'no' or 'not interested' and specific derogatory terms. For example, the use of the word 'shemale' is quite offensive, especially for several transgender people, for it implies that they work in the sex trade (Castañeda & Campbell, 2006). Scholars have found that the term has a negative connotation and is often used in a demeaning and derogatory manner (e.g., Finnegan & Mcnally, 2002; Serano, 2007; Spears, 1991). Similarly, the use of the term 'softies' is quite negative, for it implies being soft-hearted, weak, unmanly, or effeminate. For gay men to be called as 'softies' implies a potent public put-down (Elliott, 2004). In selective self-presentation strategies, this kind of self-presentation does not create a desired impression in MSM-populated online circles, for their profiles are framed in an especially femmephobic manner, as in the case of the following profiles:

Profile 4:   Wag na mag msg mga baklang feeling barako at pilit
                  mag astig astigan. lalo n mukang parlorista na discreet
                  daw pero may bahid
                  (*Back off gays who pretend to look like barako and
                  astig, especially parlorist-looking gay claiming to be
                  discreet but with trace*)
Profile 114:   Wag manghingi ng picture ng titi. Wag kang
                  desperadang bakla. Kung wala kang picture dont even
                  dare. Use your brain.
                  (*Don't ask for dick pics. Don't be a desperate bakla. If
                  you don't have a picture to share dont even dare. Use
                  your brain.*)

Both profiles used a more pronounced anti-effeminate language as their sentences show how 'effems' should not message them. What these two profiles are doing here is boxing gays into different stereotypes. The use of the term 'parlorista' (beauty-parlor working gay) is highly offensive and femmephobic as it looks down on the very identity of the 'bakla' as a 'parlorista.' 'Parlorista' as a stereotype of 'bakla' gave the prestigious reputation of the gay men in the arts and entertainment during the 70s (Garcia, 2009). However, in the context of Profile 4, it was put down and held in contempt for the sake of attracting potential mates. The act of distancing himself from the parlor 'bakla' easily transforms into a form of denigration. A more extreme anti-effeminate language was observed in Profile 114 as it used the term 'desperada' (desperate) to describe 'bakla.' Calling them *desperate* is quite offensive and implies a very negative image about gays. It seems to suggest that the 'bakla' are more probably associated with doing a desperate act or behavior (e.g., 'Wag manghingi ng picture ng titi.') just to get a hook-up. All of these stereotypes mentioned in the profile

texts leaned toward the 'bakla,' who is the very subject of ridicule and discrimination in macho and masculine societies such as the Philippines.

In addition, issues of body shaming are also evident in this exclusionary language (e.g., 'no to chubs,' 'no to twinks'). These slogan-like expressions create a pressure to look physically fit and healthy as opposed to skinny and chubby in order to attract partners. The negative words are too rigid when it comes to policing body types and enforcing hegemonic masculinity ideals.

3.4   Hierarchy and Continuum of Online Identities in MSM Networks

To illustrate the hierarchy present in online-dating apps such as PlanetRomeo, the researcher made a diagram showing the interconnection of the two groups of online identities in MSM networks (see Figure 1). At the left end of the continuum, identities are considered as feminine out-group, showing undesirable or unmarketable qualities of femininity and effeminacy. This left end of the continuum also includes other out-group identities showing no discernable masculine or feminine qualities. Moving into the center, identities are considered neutral, showing that they can be sometimes considered as marketable or not depending on existing norms of the dominant culture. At the right end of the continuum, identities are considered as masculine in-group, showing marketable or desirable qualities of masculinity and muscularity.
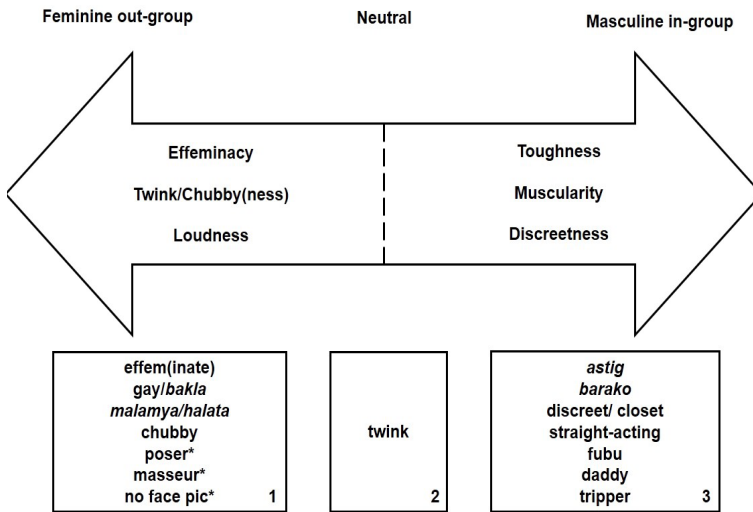

Figure 1. **A continuum of gay and bisexual identities**

Note: Box 1 in Figure 1 includes out-group identities such as 'poser,' 'no face pics,' and 'masseurs, which are not identified as either masculine or feminine, except for the 'masseurs,' which are an obvious male. The case of 'masseurs' is an out-group identity simply because the participants of this study were not interested in sexual-massage services that involve payment. In the case of 'poser' and 'no face pic' profiles, they were considered an out-group simply because they chose not to disclose their identities through photos within the website.

Below the continuum, there are three boxes (labelled as Box 1, 2, and 3, respectively), which enumerate the specific identities of the in-group, neutral, and out-group. Box 1 consists of the unmarketable identities who are marginalized or subordinated in gay online-dating sites: effem(inate), gay/*bakla*, *chubs* (chubby), and *malamya/halata*. In addition, this box also includes other unmarketable identities: poser, masseur, and no face pic. On the other hand, Box 2 consists of the neutral identity: *twink*. Finally, Box 3 includes the marketable identities, which are considered the privileged ones: *astig* (tough gay guy), *barako* (muscular), tripper, gym/sport/ drinking/sex buddies (FUBU or fuck buddy), closet, and discreet. The broken line indicates the symbolic border between the marketable and the unmarketable identities, which has a gatekeeping mechanism. This means that the border symbolizes the very rigid requirements of the privileged identities based upon culturally prescribed ideals of hegemonic masculinity.

Based on bisexual men's class and sexual/physical preferences, this continuum, on the one hand, illustrates dominance and hierarchy of value in the sexual market. On the other hand, it poses discrimination and rejection. The appropriations and classifications manifested in the continuum can be seen as processes in terms of market forces (Bourdieu, 1991). Jones (2000) argues: "Physical, behavioral, and personality traits as well as ways of expressing them are 'symbolic resources,' unequally invested with varying degrees of 'cultural capital' and available to individuals in unequal proportions (p. 50). The online-dating profiles offered 'commodified' versions of both the self and the potential partner; and a closer look at the self-commodifying attributes being presented and sought can help reconstruct the symbolic marketplace presently operative in the gay community in the Philippines, and how relations in this marketplace mirror the workings of power and ideology in the larger 'mainstream' marketplace.

It should be noted that these bisexuals have expressed denigration of effeminacy, cross- dressing (and even cross-gendering), and absence of 'astig' (tough) qualities of gays. In other words, they do not want to be seen as effeminate or gay acting. The masculinity privileging, anti-effeminacy, and body-shaming practices are very much operative in social networks such as PlanetRomeo or Grindr and any other online clans (an informal group of MSM who stays connected via short message service [SMS] and social networking sites [SNS]), but the actual consequences of these toxic practices can extend beyond the virtual spaces of PlanetRomeo. The pressure brought about by these toxic practices does not only create normative conformity but may lead to certain kinds of oppression such as body dissatisfaction and body oppression (Signorile, 1997; Strong et al., 2000), lowered self-esteem (Sánchez et al., 2009), eating disorder (Lakkis et al., 1999), drug abuse (Halkitis et al., 2004; Halkitis et al., 2008), and internalized homophobia (Sánchez & Vilain, 2012; Sánchez et al., 2010).

4.   Conclusion

This study explored the 167 online-dating profiles of Filipino bisexual men on PlanetRomeo. More specifically, the study critically analyzed how Filipino bisexual men used language in their dating profiles to privilege certain gay men identities and, in effect, marginalize

others. Using lexico-grammatical analysis, the findings indicated an emerging subcultural lingo within bisexual men's dating profiles, which is characterized by the use of word connotations, echoic binomials (repetitions), and negations. Generally, the analysis revealed that the use of 'astig' and 'barako' is the one preferred and chosen by the subjects to construct an identity, while the use of 'malamya/halata' (effeminate) is the one unwanted or avoided in online dating. The findings of the study suggest hierarchical identity connections within gay and bisexual men communities and how they are telling of which kinds of identities are privileged or not.

The study has been quite insistent that the linguistic features identified in the first dimension of analysis reflect issues on masculinity privilege, anti-effeminacy, and body-shaming practices. For instance, the analysis of word connotations indicated that bisexual men self-categorized based on masculinity and muscularity that were frequently primed in a positive and desirable manner. On the other hand, bisexual men categorized others based on femininity and a lack of fitness that were frequently primed in a negative and undesirable manner.

Furthermore, the set of echoic binomials analyzed in the data revealed that the lexical and semantic parallelisms and repetitions of word suggest a strict category and an equal relationship or status. The language content did not only signify equal status in terms of sexual desire and physical beauty but more interestingly, in terms of behavior and class as well. Lastly, the analysis of negations indicated that the 'No to' structure in the expressions of the bisexual men is very exclusionary and discriminative. A large number of profiles were found to be framed in a femmephobic manner. This linguistic structure has become a slogan for promoting an exclusionary mentality or anti-effeminate attitudes among bisexual men in online-dating spaces. By using this linguistic structure, bisexual men plaster their dating headline texts with demands, which begin right away with the kind of qualities and identities that they do not prefer in a potential partner. The implication of these negations, being so prevalent on PlanetRomeo, is that femme-shaming and body shaming are something that one should not embrace, value, or perform.

The findings of the study are limited by the fact that the data were collected from only one website source, which could reflect a sampling bias to the groups of online users who prefer to use particular online-dating services. Future research should also expand upon the scope of the current work by exploring other similar dating apps such as Grindr, Blued, or Hornet. Examining more dating apps is a necessity if we want to strengthen the claim that bisexual lingo truly exists. It can also be a great opportunity to describe more fully and contextually the linguistic production of Filipino bisexual men in online spaces. It would also be equally interesting to study not only bisexual men spaces but also gay women's online-dating spaces. Future research can also be conducted using an ethnographic approach. It would be interesting to find out how self-identity manifests in the social identity that bisexuals portray or construct on social-dating sites.

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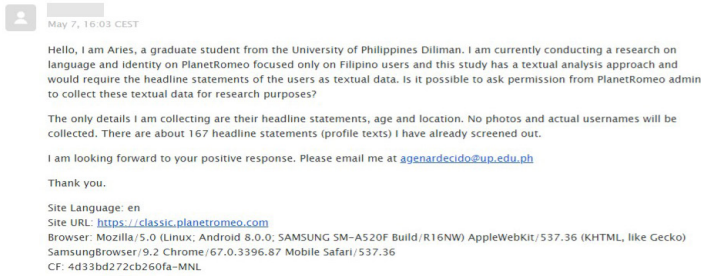
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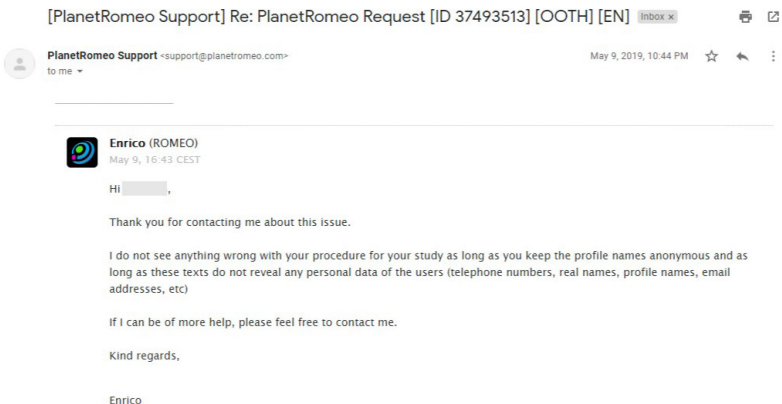
Appendix A
Permission from PlanetRomeo administration

Screenshot of Email Sent to PlanetRomeo Administration

May 7, 16:03 CEST

Hello, I am Aries, a graduate student from the University of Philippines Diliman. I am currently conducting a research on language and identity on PlanetRomeo focused only on Filipino users and this study has a textual analysis approach and would require the headline statements of the users as textual data. Is it possible to ask permission from PlanetRomeo admin to collect these textual data for research purposes?

The only details I am collecting are their headline statements, age and location. No photos and actual usernames will be collected. There are about 167 headline statements (profile texts) I have already screened out.

I am looking forward to your positive response. Please email me at agenardecido@up.edu.ph

Thank you.

Site Language: en
Site URL: https://classic.planetromeo.com
Browser: Mozilla/5.0 (Linux; Android 8.0.0; SAMSUNG SM-A520F Build/R16NW) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) SamsungBrowser/9.2 Chrome/67.0.3396.87 Mobile Safari/537.36
CF: 4d33bd272cb260fa-MNL

Screenshot of Email Received from PlanetRomeo Administration

[PlanetRomeo Support] Re: PlanetRomeo Request [ID 37493513] [OOTH] [EN]   Inbox ×

PlanetRomeo Support <support@planetromeo.com>
to me ▾   May 9, 2019, 10:44 PM

Enrico (ROMEO)
May 9, 16:43 CEST

Hi _____,

Thank you for contacting me about this issue.

I do not see anything wrong with your procedure for your study as long as you keep the profile names anonymous and as long as these texts do not reveal any personal data of the users (telephone numbers, real names, profile names, email addresses, etc)

If I can be of more help, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards,

Enrico

Aries John G. Enardecido is an Assistant Professor at the Department of English and Literature, University of the Philippines (UP) Rural High School, Los Baños, Laguna. He has an M.A. in English Studies (Language) from the University of the Philippines-Diliman. He is a recipient of One UP Faculty Grant Award in English (Discourse Studies) for Outstanding Teaching and Public Service in UP Los Baños (UPLB) from 2019-2021. He also received the Faculty Research Grant 2019 from UPLB Gender Center. His research interests include language and gender, critical discourse analysis, recontextualization, and online dating.