



Exploring Queens' Iconic Identity and Advocacy Through Language in Drag Race Philippines

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Abstract

This study investigated the linguistic strategies of drag queens in Drag Race Philippines Season 3 in constructing iconic identities and promoting advocacies using a qualitative research design. Grounded on Systemic Functional Linguistics' (SFL) ideational metafunction using transitivity analysis, specifically relational, material, mental, and verbal processes, and field analysis was applied to examine the contestants' oral interactions as captured in the show's subtitles. Findings reveal that drag language is an interactive device for self-presentation, cultural representation, and activism. Relational processes indicate that drag queens construct individuality and cultural pride using humor, empowerment, and local reference. Material processes reveal the queens' performance of creating identities, establishing drag as a profession and an artistic practice. Mental processes reflect introspection and resilience, while verbal processes reflect negotiation of self-concept, subversion of norms, and acceptance by society. The queens construct iconic identities through strategic linguistic selections that differentiate translocal and global drag cultures. Their language was for both self-representation and collective advocacy, addressing issues on LGBTQIA+ rights and gender equality, public health, and social justice, mixing personal narrative and social concerns. This study places the transgressive power of language in drag, subverting norms, diversity, and inclusivity in Philippine culture, at the center stage.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Language is central to the formation of identity as a vehicle for self-expression, representation, and activism (Butler, 1990), primarily in drag race performance. In a reality television show, such as Drag Race Philippines, language use shapes how audiences view participants and stories (Taylor & Rupp, 2004). Drag performance is a spectacle and counter-hegemony against norms, where drag queens deploy language to negotiate identities and subvert heteronormativity (Coupland, 2007).

Drag Race Philippines is a Philippine television show, a franchise from RuPaul's Drag Race, a reality competition series, wherein each season, a batch of drag queens compete in various challenges and fashion runways to be crowned the drag superstar (Madrangca, 2021). Drag Race Philippines overlays Filipino culture on the international Drag Race model, heightening exposure for LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual,

queer/questioning, intersex, ally/asexual, and others) (Ulla et al., 2024) stories and challenging cultural conservatism.

Guided by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), this study investigated drag queens' language use through transitivity, which relates to the way the participants present themselves and what they perform, and field analysis, which relates to issues such as drag style, personal stories, and activism. Such approaches show how language is used to negotiate identities, address audiences, and deliver advocacy (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) in Drag Race Philippines. The SFL transitivity analysis is fitting in discussing the identity and advocacy of Drag Race Philippines queens since they reveal the nuanced manner language builds up individual and group identities, expose the manner linguistic choices reinforce and embolden advocacy, and strike a balance between individual expression and socio-political discourse. This study provides a rich schema for deconstructing the mechanisms by which language builds and communicates meaning in social arenas, especially in performance spaces such as drag.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

This study analyzed the use of language in Drag Race Philippines as an aspect of identity construction and advocacy creation.

Particularly, it attempted to solve two basic questions:

1. How do the language choices of drag queens on Drag Race Philippines shape and construct their identities?
2. How do drag queens use language for advocacy within the show?

1.3.Significance of the Study

This study adds to queer media and linguistic studies as it underscores how language performs and mediates queerness and advocacies. It shows how performativity and linguistic creativity mirror queer life and construct marginalized identity. From this study of Drag Race Philippines, it is established how Filipino drag queens synthesize local and transnational elements to create rich representations of queerness.

Employing Systemic Functional Linguistics' ideational metafunctions through transitivity analysis, this study broadens the model's application to performative and multimodal discourse, strengthening SFL theory and its practicality in cultural studies.

Moreover, this study provides lessons of practical application in the field of media practitioners and advocates on how drag queens' language strategies can be employed in advocacy and cultural representation. Finally, this study emphasizes the performative force of

language as both art and politics toward promoting further inclusivity and social transformation.

1.4.Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study explored the language of drag queens in Drag Race Philippines Season 3 in identity negotiating and advocating for community and LGBTQIA+ concerns. It focused on subtitles: analyzed dialogues, self-introductions, narrations, confessions, and responding to critics with the SFL, such as transitivity and field analysis. Non-verbal aspects such as gestures and visual staging were not covered, and the use of subtitles might overlook tonal undertones. Rather than measuring performances or the impact of advocacy, this study highlighted linguistic structures and strategies within the show.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1.Language and Identity Construction

Language remains at the core of identity construction and negotiation. Researchers like Bucholtz and Hall (2005), through their Sociolinguistic Theory of Identity, posited that identity is socially constructed in the context of language contact and is also firmly rooted in social and cultural contexts. This is consistent with drag culture since performers employ language in constructing their identities and claiming their individuality within the queer realm.

Studies of drag linguistics, for example, Barrett's (1999) Lavender Linguistics, examined how drag queens use certain forms of language, like code-switching, humor, and hyperbole, to build queer identity and challenge heteronormative linguistic practices. These linguistic forms enable performers to build massive identities, typically incorporating material from their individual and cultural lives.

Marjanovic (2023) also identified linguistic markers of pride in drag queens' language, analyzing how expressions of pride contribute to the political affirmation of LGBTQIA+ identities. The research focused on specific linguistic markers that convey pride in drag queens' spoken discourse. The study found that drag queens employ emphatic expressions to assert their identities and experiences confidently; frequent use of positive self-referential terms and phrases; significant use of humor and wit; instances of code-switching and creative language use; and sharing of personal stories and experiences as a means of expressing pride.

In the Philippine context, research on swardspeak (Gregorio et al, 2023), also known as Filipino gay language, establishes how language practice in the LGBTQIA+ community indexes into Filipino cultural values, social resistance, and humor. A show such as Drag Race

Philippines provides a rich field of analysis on how such practices are made actualized on an international platform.

2.2. Language as Advocacy

Drag performance has been an area of activism and advocacy for a long time. Performativity of language is at the core of the dissemination of social justice, empowerment, and inclusivity messages.

For example, Szymanska (2020) contrasted two speeches of Panti Bliss, an Irish drag queen and political activist. The research explored performativity in words in the performative performances of the drag queen. It demonstrated how performative speech can be used as a means of expression and social transformation, and concurrently narrow the gap between activism and entertainment. The research indicated that Panti Bliss well-crafted speeches to entertain while simultaneously broaching serious social issues at the same time; humor and satire are key component of the rhetorical tool kit; the speeches were built on intricate identity blending her individual self and political activist; and the performances turn around societal normative gender roles and release the performative quality of gender itself.

In the context of the Philippines, language advocacy is situated at the intersection of queer identity and Filipino cultural narratives. The Filipino LGBTQIA+ discourse has a tendency to commingle advocacy in terms of artistic and performative spaces, blending personal narrative and social critique (Garcia, 2008). Drag Race Philippine provides a space for its participants to discuss LGBTQIA+ rights, gender equality, and cultural representation, and thus it can be an adequate context wherein one may research language advocacy.

2.3. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in Media Studies

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), as Halliday (1984) conceived it, is interested in the social semiotic dimension of language. SFL's three metafunctions, such as ideational, interpersonal, and textual, have been used extensively to examine media texts, such as reality TV. Media discourse is the object of analysis, like Fairclough (1995), where emphasis is placed on the way linguistic patterns index ideological and social functions below them.

The ideational metafunction looks at the expression of experience through language in terms of processes such as material, relational, mental, and verbal, that unpack underlying stories. Material processes, for instance, highlight doing and achieving, whereas relational processes highlight building identity. On the other hand, the interpersonal metafunction addresses the interaction between speakers and their audience, observing how drag queens perform viewers through comedy, direct address, and shared cultural references. Moreover, the

textual metafunction examines how elements of language are structured to make a certain effect, specifically in advocacy claims and affective narratives.

In drag culture, linguistic features can be identified through which drag queens construct advocacy narratives, address the audience, and counteract stereotypes. Applying SFL to Drag Race Philippines allows for a depth understanding of how the linguistic decisions of queens are utilized to represent identity and advocacy at the same time. For instance, Engelmo (2018) employed Halliday's transitivity theory to examine how drag performers' gender identities influence their communication styles. The analysis revealed that drag performers utilized a variety of process types (material, mental, relational, and verbal) in their discourse, and a performer's gender identity does influence their linguistic choices.

Both Engelmo's (2018) and this study applied Halliday's SFL, specifically focusing on transitivity analysis, to examine how drag queens use language to express their identities. They both emphasize that drag queens' linguistic choices are not arbitrary but are strategic tools for self-presentation, performance, and advocacy. In contrast, Engelmo's (2018) study aimed to see how different gender identities such as cisgender, transgender, and non-binary, shape linguistic patterns, this study examined a broader scope such as identity construction and advocacy.

2.4.Filipino Drag Culture and Queer Discourse

The intersection of Filipino culture and worldwide drag phenomena provides a distinctive field of research. Filipino drag culture is deeply rooted in indigenous tradition, humor, and adaptability, as noted by Garcia (2008). Language used in Filipino drag shows tends to include cultural allusions, wordplay, and baklese (Adihartono & Jocson, 2020), a variety of Filipino gay slang, which testify to the blending of global drag fashions with local linguistic innovation.

In Ulla et al.'s (2024) study, analysis of the semantic subtleties and underlying patterns of Filipino queer language using content analysis of social media entries and commentaries establishes that Filipino queer language is characterized by affixation, appropriation, clipping, association, mutation, neologism, recontextualization, and stylized reversal with affixation. The results highlight the dynamism and versatility of Filipino queer language as the manifestation of the LGBTQIA+ community's mastery of using language as a form of self-expression and cultural convenience.

In Drag Race Philippines, the contestants, called queens, use language that typically balances drama, comedy, and advocacy in appealing to their audience and the depiction of

cultural values among Filipinos. Incorporating queer discourse studies in the Philippines, the present study situates how drag queens politicize and perform language.

The analyses conducted in the literature suggest that language is a constituent medium through which identity and advocacy are forged in performative spaces such as drag. Despite the plethora of works written about drag culture around the world, the Filipino example has little literature. This study fills this gap by using SFL to examine Drag Race Philippines' language and provide explanations of how discursive practice establishes queer Filipino identity and activism intersections within the global drag phenomenon.

2.5.Theoretical Framework

This study adopts an interdisciplinary framework combining Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and queer linguistics to explore how drag queens in Drag Race Philippines use language to construct identities, build personal brands, and advocate for social concerns.

At the core of the framework is Halliday's (1984) SFL, which conceptualizes language as a social semiotic system that reflects and shapes societal realities. The study focused on the ideational metafunction, specifically using the transitivity analysis, to examine how drag queens use relational, material, mental, and verbal processes to define their identities, highlight achievements, reflect personal growth, and engage in dialogue. Additionally, field analysis investigates the thematic scope of the discourse, such as personal narratives and cultural identity, revealing how these themes influence advocacy and messaging among drag queens.

The queer linguistics makes this model even deeper by providing a way through which the critical analysis of how language performs queer identities and subverts norms is conducted. Applying Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) theory in sociocultural linguistics, the study is focused on the co-construction of identity in interaction in culture. Butler's (1990) gender performativity emphasizes how drag queens subvert and parody gendered norms using language and performance. Barret's (1999) research on lavender linguistics explores how hyperbole, code-switching, and humor are used to fashion larger-than-life personalities that appeal to the audience. Finally, local linguistic practice such as swardspeak (Kastrati, 2017, cited by Gregorio et al., 2023) emphasizes how Filipino drag queens combine culture-informed humor, multilingualism, and play with language in order to convey their life stories as well as cultural pride.

Together, these views present the ways in which language is used as an interactive agent of self-representation, cultural representation, and social activism by the drag community.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study used qualitative research design in examining language strategies used by drag queens in Drag Race Philippines Season 3. Focusing on the functions of language in identity and advocacy construction, this research sought to determine how these aspects play out in the specific cultural and performative context of Filipino drag culture. Methodologically, the approach depends on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which offers a systematic account of language transitivity processes with the assistance of discourse analysis to discuss thematic and contextual aspects.

3.2. Sampling and Data Source

This study used purposive sampling to sample participants and episodes that are culture- and language-rich. Selection criteria were: (1) participants who show effective language use in their creation of drag selves and representation of social causes; and (2) confessionals, self-introduction, dialogue, responses to judges' criticisms, and runway monologues where moments of maximum self-expression, i.e., personal stories and advocacy statements, are represented.

Ten (10) episodes of Season 3 of Drag Race Philippines were chosen to be examined in detail, struck an optimal balance between language diversity and thematic diversity.

3.3. Data Analysis

The ideational metafunction, namely transitivity analysis, of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) informed the analysis in light of the way language was utilized by contestants to describe their identities, and advocacies. Transcription coding for processes (material, relational, mental, verbal) was employed in order to understand how drag queens describe their advocacies and identities. Field Analysis was employed to ascertain which subject matters are at issue, such as drag style, personal journey, or advocacies.

These strategies intersect in a multi-levelled system: (1) SFL and transitivity construct linguistic form and function at the clause level; (2) and Field Analysis situates these forms within thematic fields relating to identity and activism. By way of their combination, depth and breadth provide a sophisticated system for the examination of how language in Drag Race Philippines functions as a tool of self-representation and social transformation.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Transitivity in Identity Construction

In the context of *Drag Race Philippines Season 3*, transitivity refers to the way queens describe their attributes, roles, and experiences. Language generally foreground processes of being (relational processes), doing (material processes), thinking (mental processes), and voice (verbal processes) in constructing identities.

4.1.1. Relational Processes

Queens utilized relational processes to ascertain their status or identity in terms of attributes and definitions. There is self-referential and relational language utilized in the statements that illustrate the identity construction of queens in *Drag Race Philippines*. The linguistic portrayal in these statements illustrates different aspects of their identities, such as cultural, social, and personal identities. The following statements illustrate a shared strong sense of self-assurance and pride as observed from the attributive relational processes.

<i>Carrier</i>	<i>Process:</i> <i>Relational</i>	<i>Attribute</i>
I	'm	such a pretty face
I	'm	the 'It' girl
I	'm	a well-rounded performer
I	am	very much glamor, very much talented
I	'm	a fierce transgender
I	am	a queen
An aunt who	is	sassy, nosy, and audacious
I	am	representing Manila, my hometown
I	am	from Bacolod
She	is	your typical, hentai-adjacent fashion illustration

Drag queens frequently employ these words to build their personas, weaving together humor, exaggeration, and strength. These words are in keeping with the performativity of drag culture, in which performing oneself is at the heart of self. The focus upon talent, appearance, and fierceness is also an allusion to the queens' insistence on building themselves up and overcoming social expectations of gender and beauty. The term *queen* places them in the world of drag culture, whereas labels such as *fierce transgender* stress the overlap between drag and trans identities. Naming the Carrier by the term *aunt* is a common, gendered cliché queered through the Carrier's drag show.

The statements suggest that self-referential discourse ensures their artfulness and uniqueness. Queens assert themselves as strong figures, breaking away from conventional gender roles and stereotypic roles. It portrays how drag performance is a platform for self-verification and exposure for queer and trans individuals.

Moreover, statements such as *“I’m representing Manila, my hometown”*, *“The place where I was born and raised is San Andres Bukid, Manila”*, and *“I’m from Bacolod City”* anchor the queens' identities on local heritage. By putting their hometowns on center stage, they advance local cultures to the forefront, making their drag not only one of self-expression but also about cultural pride. This puts the drag into a space of the personal and communal, showing the diversity of identity of the Filipinos.

The statements further implied that regional pride encourages the display of the Philippines' cultural diversity. It puts the queens in the position of cultural ambassadors, employing drag as a form of showcasing their heritage and showing that celebrating some places is a manifestation of how geographic and cultural environments shape their drag personas.

Furthermore, statements using relational processes reflect humor and wordplay as identity markers such as in statements *“That K stands for K-razy, K-onfident, and Kiki”* and *“She is your typical, hentai-adjacent fashion illustration”*. Drag is equated with humor and wit, and such flippant sentences will signal how queens rely on wordplay to declare their creativity. The application of "hentai-adjacent" appropriates cult cultural connotations, and the periphrastic reinterpretation of "K" illustrates linguistic creativity. Such applications testify to the queens' capacity to be sexy to a wide range of consumers, evoking local as well as international pop culture. These language constructions illustrate how drag is celebratory of camp as well as linguistic subversion.

Coupland (2007) further supports the focus on style and linguistic variation as constitutive elements of enacting drag identities, in addition to how queens establish individuality through cognitive and verbal means. Leap's (1996) research on gay vernacular similarly supports the findings, particularly for the use of words and laughter in queer linguistic performance.

In like manner, statements like *“Drag queens from our town are very street-style and all about parties”*, *“She’s gonna be luxurious”*, and *“She’s gonna be a tough competition”* reflect how queens situate themselves within broader social and drag contexts. By referencing other drag queens or competitors, they construct a relational identity that both praises and criticizes their own community. Language, thus, represents the social processes of drag, such

as competition and amity. They depict how relational identity comes about through self-presentation and receiving recognition by one's group.

4.1.2. Material Processes

The data gathered reflects the material processes of the queens on Drag Race Philippines, focusing on what they do and how their actions contribute to the construction of their identities. Their actions as identity performance is reflected in the following examples.

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Process: Material</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Circumstance</i>
I	've been doing	drag	since 2008
I	've built	a platform	for myself
I	'm werking	the runway	
I	represented	the Philippines	on the international stage
Us	scare	the bitches	
I	might bring	the earthquake	here
I	will fight	for this	until the very end
I	would wear	this Kum-Haute Couture	in the runways of Paris

These statements make drag not only a performance but a process of cultural legitimization, community formation, and self-expression that spans a lifetime. Stress on “*been doing since 2008*” (endurance) and “*represented the Philippines*” (accomplishment) situates the queens as pioneers and representatives of Filipino queer culture. These performances situate drag both career and a cultural movement, stressing its value beyond entertainment. Through their experience and work, the queens stand as authentic, seasoned performers.

Moreover, humor and irreverence are hallmarks of drag culture, such as “*Let’s scare the bitches*”, and “*I might bring the earthquake here*”. These statements indicate that queens employ playfulness to subvert assumptions, express confidence, and entertain. For instance, the sentence “*I put cunt in discount*” is a creative wordplay that balances amusement and empowerment, reclaiming a historically derogatory word as a sign of pride and fabulousness. These words construct their personalities as forceful, outgoing, and unembarrassed.

The material processes of identity formation are also a reflection of ambition and reflections. The statements “*I will fight for this until the very end*”, “*I would wear this Kum-Haute Couture in the runways of Paris*”, and “*I make it the most extravagant it’s ever been*”

reveal the queens' aspirations and determination. Drag is not only introduced as a form of art but also as a path to global greatness, either globally represented or aspiring to become high fashion. When Parisian runways are mentioned, for instance, their art is situated on global fashion and performance circuits, putting drag in proximity to luxury and aspiration. This trend only signifies that drag goes beyond its place as it is placed between Filipino queens and global icons in fashion and cultural circles.

The findings on material processes conform to the study of Marjanovic (2023) whereby the frequent use of positive self-referential terms and language highlights strengths the drag queens are confident about and defies negative stereotyping. In addition, through the use of humorous comments, puns, and playful language, drag queens confirm their identity and reverse society's norms, making potential stigmas places for empowerment.

4.1.3. Mental Processes

The mental processes identify the Drag Race Philippines queens' self-descriptions, introspections, and emotional reactions that govern how they create and present their identities in terms of language.

Mental processes reveal the queens' self-discovery and growth, just like in the following statements:

<i>Senser</i>	<i>Process: Mental</i>	<i>Phenomenon</i>
I	found out	that I'm a comedian
I	Think	I have a great chance at winning this because I'm a well-rounded performer
I	Feel	that I am unique
I	Believe	that I'm a queen now
I	Think	they're insecure
I	don't know	if they're intimidated by me
I	always felt like	it (growing up in the slums of Caloocan) would hold me back from my dreams
I	've heard	stories of sleeping, giant Oro fish in the CDO river

These statements summarize the queens' confessions of inner struggles along with embracing their reinvention into confident independent entities. The reference to outside factors, e.g., raising up in poverty, gives depth to their stories, mapping how their past informs

their strength and resilience. They emphasize the queens' capacity to transform adversity into drive and strength.

Additionally, drag as an art form requires not only skill but also the belief in one's potential to stand out just like in the statements *"I think I have a great chance at winning this because I'm a well-rounded performer"*, *"I feel that I am unique"*, and *"I feel really cunt in this outfit"*. By ascribing to themselves their talents and individuality, the queens build themselves as confident competitors and assertive performers. They articulate these as affirmations of how self-confidence takes precedence in drag identity-making, as requiring self-confidence within contesting spheres like Drag Race.

Competition and relational identity are also reflected in the mental processes. These statements: *"I know she's also gonna be tough competition"*, *"I think they're insecure"*, *"I don't know if they're intimidated by me"*, and *"We'll see who has the last laugh"* highlight the queens' awareness of their relationships with others in the competition, where competition and camaraderie coexist. The recognition of others' weakness and strength also captures the sociality of drag where competitiveness and self-advertisement are central to the story. They demonstrate how language was used strategically to exercise power while at the same time recognizing the collaborative nature of drag.

Furthermore, the cultural and social contexts reflected in mental processes also reflect how the queens ground their identities in shared cultural narratives and social experiences. References to local myths just like in the statement *"I've heard stories of sleeping, giant Oro fish in the CDO river"*, migration (*"You know everyone has a relative who migrated abroad"*), and childhood nostalgia (*"Kids would wish and love to ride (carousel) because of its enchanting beauty"*) enrich their identities with elements of Filipino culture and lived experiences. They locate themselves in the context of broader societal and cultural contexts, making their identity familiar and intelligible. The mental processes further reflect emotional vulnerability and reflection just like in the statements *"I always felt like it would hold me back from my dreams"*, *"I didn't want my parents to go to school during recognition and graduation programs"*, and *"I know he's super proud"*. The queens speak their own inner battles with social expectations, family life, and internalized self-doubt. In these confessions, the queens' personas are not only performed but also hugely human and universal.

4.1.4. Verbal Processes

The queens employ verbal processes in establishing self through speech, and the verbal activities are embedded within the negotiation of self-image, others' image, and group relations within the drag subculture.

<i>Sayer</i>	<i>Process: Verbal</i>	<i>Verbiage</i>
I	'm just saying	she's a woman of experience
Most of the queens	said	that I was doing the most
They	say	that provincial queens are the first to go out

The verbal processes in the above statements indicate that queens are in the direction of a person who recognizes and appreciates another queen's experience or knowledge, employs outside input to build self-image, and moves away from stereotyping. The above statements reveal the interlinked relationship between other-sent validation and self-presentation.

The queens of *Drag Race Philippines* employ language as an intricate instrument of self-construction, mixing self-descriptive statements, cultural discourse, humor, and self-reflection to constitute themselves. The evidence sees how drag queens negotiate personal, group, and cultural identities negotiating visibility and self-expression through relational, material, mental, and verbal processes.

4.2. Transitivity in Advocacy Expression

Transitivity also reveals how queens employ language as advocacy, especially in advocating for LGBTQIA+ rights and transgressing social norms. The queens use utterances that fight the status quo and challenge social justice through material, relational, and mental processes.

4.2.1. Relational Processes in Advocacy

The relational processes of the queens reveal how they position themselves as symbols of resilience, social justice, and empowerment.

<i>Carrier</i>	<i>Process:</i> <i>Relational</i>	<i>Attribute</i>
My hometown runway look	represents	the resiliency of Marikeños in the face of calamities
My inspiration for this gown	is	my embodiment of the flood
I	represent	every person living with HIV
I	represent	every person that has had a very traumatic background

It	's	the fear of people to come out about it
The most important thing for a growing young community both the LGBT and non-LGBT communities	is	information, truth, and the information of self-empowerment
I	am	a young queen who started this full-time doing drag to help my family

Statements like *"My hometown runway look represents the resiliency of Marikeños in the face of calamities"* and *"My inspiration for this gown is my embodiment of the flood"* illustrate how queens use their art to bring awareness to regional and national struggles. Through the connection of their personal experiences to the histories of their respective communities, they cement their solidarity and resilience.

The results are consistent with Szymanska (2020) research that explains the way drag queens deploy performative discourse as a site of social commentary. Social concerns and entertainment were treated together in speeches by a drag queen, like homophobia and equal marriage. These provide the basis for relational positioning processes of queens as beacons of resilience and empowerment.

Additionally, phrases such as *"I represent every person living with HIV"* and *"I represent every person that has had a very traumatic background"* demonstrate how queens use their drag personas to raise awareness about public health issues and personal hardships. This type of representation is simultaneously a political and individual statement and provides voice for systematically marginalized or silenced groups. Also, the statement *"It's not the disease (HIV) that's killing anymore, it's the fear of people to come out about it"* challenges societal stigma, particularly surrounding HIV/AIDS. By establishing fear as the main barrier against confronting public health, the queens make others more conscious of the call for openness and acceptance. Their campaign is less about the disease and more about breaking the stigmas that keep individuals from seeking assistance and living openly.

Moreover, statements like *"The most important thing for a growing young community both the LGBT and non-LGBT communities is information, truth, and the information of self-empowerment"* emphasize the value of education in social progress. The queens are not just

fighting for personal identity but for educating communities as a whole with information. It is a representation of their role as teachers, promoting self-emancipation and education.

Many of the queens' statements reflect deeply personal reasons for their advocacy. By sharing their own struggles and the influence of family and heritage, such as in "*I'm a young queen who started this full-time doing drag to help my family*", "*My joining here is all for my mom and for my papa*", "*My father is under the influence of drugs*", "*They were broken children like me*", they provide a humanizing angle to their activism. These personal narratives enable audiences to relate to the queens at a personal level, sympathizing with them as artists but also as women who are dedicated to changing their lives and the lives of others through activism. Resilience, growth, and empowerment are involved in their cause-related work because it shows that healing and success are possible, even for people with questionable pasts.

The study of Garcia (2008) supports this, which discusses how Filipino LGBTQIA+ discourse blends personal storytelling with social activism, mirroring the advocacy strategies deployed by Drag Race queens.

4.2.2. Material Processes in Advocacy

The data on the material processes from the statements of the queens of Drag Race Philippines reveals their language use for the struggles and empowerment of individuals as well as groups, and socio-cultural issues.

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Process: Material</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Circumstance</i>
I	am bringing	Marikina back	
I	am celebrating	people	
I	am aiming	high	
I	am teaching	values	
I	celebrate	people living	in discrimination
by 13 men	was raped	I	
They	faced	stigma and discrimination	
They	teased	me	
Us	not abuse	nature	

Positive actions like *bringing Marikina back*, *celebrating people*, *aiming high*, and *teaching values* reflect pride, empowerment, and hope. Negative actions, on the other hand, like *hurt*, *teased*, *abused*, and *laughed* highlight systemic and interpersonal struggles such as discrimination, violence, and bullying.

These material processes emerge themes such as advocacy for marginalized communities, challenges with systemic inequality, economic empowerment, and environmental responsibility. Statements such as *“I celebrate people living in discrimination”*, and *“aim high, trans Pinay”* directly address issues of stigma, marginalization, and resilience. Additionally, experiences like rape (*“I was raped by 13 men”*), stigma (*“They faced stigma and discrimination”*), and teasing (*“They teased me”*), reflect systemic issues in gender, class, and societal attitudes toward LGBTQIA+ individuals. The mention of *“earning money even in sleep (passive income)”* and *“bitch better have money”* ties advocacy to financial independence, an important topic in drag culture. Finally, statements like *“Let us not abuse nature”* and *“I’m bringing Marikina back”* show the queens’ efforts to connect their drag personas with broader cultural and environmental advocacy.

This affirms Fairclough’s (1995) highlights on the hegemonic ability of language in media discourse to challenge society's norms, complementing the analysis of material processes in activism. This is the way Drag Race queens use language to challenge issues such as HIV stigma, gendered injustice, and cultural representation. Workman (2020) affirms the findings through the analysis on the intersection of drag culture and activism by showing how testimony becomes politicized as a weapon of visibility for social change.

4.2.3. Mental Processes in Advocacy

Most statements conveyed thought processes, and these were the queens' advocacies, beliefs, and ideologies. These processes reflected their intellectual investment in their advocacies. The mental process emphasizes the way that queens build and express their concept of advocacy objectives, some of which have a leaning towards directing change on the system level like halting discrimination for HIV and leprosy individuals, generating greater awareness on HIV medicine, enhancing passive income and work, and guaranteeing a good life for the family. Also, their LGBTQIA+ rights advocacy was depicted in a statement where they believed that their feminine orientation, which they embraced in their appearance, defined their abilities, and acceptance and equality with drag groups.

<i>Senser</i>	<i>Process: Mental</i>	<i>Phenomenon</i>
I	don’t want to see	her get hurt
I	want to show	how strong and beautiful people living with HIV can be

The perceptive mental processes revealed how the queens framed their advocacies as responses to lived experiences or observed realities such as in the clauses “*I don’t wanna see her get hurt anymore (battered wife)*”, and “*I want to show the world how strong and beautiful people living with HIV can be*”. These processes highlight that their advocacies are based on real observation and experience, which makes their messages authentic and believable.

The findings affirm the idea of Engelman’s (2018) study that drag queens perform politically and socially by performing in a certain manner. They perform with gender in an even more overt manner by building their own unique narratives and points of view, as opposed to examining the gender subject and social issue through the lens of the queer community.

5. CONCLUSION

Drag Race Philippines’ transitivity analysis places at the forefront how queens employ language to build identity and advocate for social change. In material, mental, relational, and verbal processes, the queens cast drag as an effective means for self-expression, cultural representation, and activism.

The relational processes focus on queens’ identity through humor, cultural pride, and affirmations that combine individuality and collective recognition. The queens deploy relational language to proclaim themselves queer, provincial chauvinism, and linguistic humor, designating the way drag is not merely spectacle but a profession of lived existence and difference. Material processes feature their performances as identity-making, representing drag as an individual and cultural spectacle. The material language reveals drag as a bodily, purposeful performance characterized by aspiration, invention, and persistence. Mental processes show analysis and survival as connecting personal narratives to wider social and cultural spaces. The mental language displays emotional depth, self-knowledge, and assuredness, showing how drag queens are created both through struggle and triumph. Verbal processes demonstrate the employment of dialogue in negating norms, building solidarity, and exercising self-image.

The drag queens’ advocacy leverages transitivity to address issues like LGBTQIA+ rights, public health, and social justice. By combining personal storytelling with broader advocacy, they foster empathy and challenge stigmas. Relational processes locate the queens in the role of symbols of resilience, educators, and spokespersons for marginalized groups, especially in concerns like HIV stigma, trauma, and socio-economic injustice. Material processes reveal actual displays of empowerment and resistance where queens confront injustices and reinterpret life history as a means to use their narratives for wider advocacy.

Mental processes continue to assert their ideological grounding, emphasizing that their activism is based on personal, communal, and affective commitments to justice and change.

The Drag Race Philippines queens' discursive use of language presents drag as a tool of empowerment for visibility and social change that weaves together artistry, culture, and activism to enable diversity and disrupt norms. Their stories transcend the confines of competition, speaking to issues of wider struggles for acceptance and representation, utilizing language as activism. In speaking out on individual and collective struggles, queens reconstitute public discourse around gender, sexuality, and social justice, utilizing their platform to mobilize change within communities.

This study advances SFL theory by demonstrating how particular linguistic options such as transitivity are used in a particular performance setting to construct identity and facilitate social action. It further contributes to queer linguistics by presenting empirical evidence of how LGBTQIA+ people use language in mundane contexts to perform queer identities, subvert heteronormative language, and campaign on behalf of minorities within the context of an international popular culture.

This study can inform future research on multilingual drag performances by offering a framework for investigating the intersection of linguistic features, cultural contexts, and social effects. Future research can address (1) how different linguistic systems are mixed and code-switched to produce certain comedic or affective effects; (2) the contribution of non-verbal communication supplemented by verbal processes to produce meaning; and (3) the use of these language strategies by various audiences, both within and outside of the LGBTQIA+ community.

The findings have a number of practical applications to emphasize societal impact:

- **Media Training for LGBTQIA+ Activists.** Knowledge about how queens effectively use language in bringing about social change can be incorporated into media training for LGBTQIA+ activists. This will allow them to craft more effective messages, use personal narrative effectively, and use multiple linguistic processes to engage effectively with audiences and desensitize stigmas.
- **Curriculum Design.** This study can be used to guide the design of school curricula for queer studies, media studies, and linguistics, offering real-life examples of language in use for social justice.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns.** The queens' approaches towards generating empathy and dismantling stigmas can be transferred to public awareness campaigns aimed at raising understanding and acceptance levels of LGBTQIA+ communities.

- Empowerment Workshops. This realization of the way language constructs identity and advocacy can be applied to empower marginalized communities and give them workshops through which they are able to utilize their narratives for expression and advocacy.

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