

THE HISTORY OF THE INSTITUTE FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING (NOW DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE TEACHING), COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

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1. INTRODUCTION

To speak of an organized second language teaching program in the University of the Philippines is to speak of the Institute for Language Teaching (now Department of Language Teaching) created on June 1, 1959 by a memorandum¹ from the Office of the President, then President Vicente G. Sinco, the Dean of the Graduate College, Dean Alfredo T. Morales. In this memorandum, President Sinco spelled out the functions of the Institute:

...to plan its program of teaching and research, for the institution and administration of such new courses as are necessary, provided it includes as much as possible in its curricula, those relevant courses which are already in existence...

Included in the above memorandum was an added function of the Institute which said:

The present program of the Intensive English training for foreigners, started with ICA assistance, is assigned to the Institute.

Included, too, in the October 10, 1959 Memorandum was the confirmation of the appointment of a Director and an Assistant Director, addressed to Dean Morales:

I am glad to confirm effective as of June 1, 1959, your appointment in the Institute as Director and that of Miss Aurora L. Samonte as Assistant Director.

2. INSTITUTE FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING

Unlike other institutes of the University, the Institute for Language Teaching was a part of the College and not a separate unit.

When Alfredo Morales was no longer Dean of the College of Education, the Assistant Director, Aurora Samonte, assumed his functions of carrying out the programs of the Institute.

Thus, the Institute for Language Teaching came into being. It was organized with the objective of helping improve language instruction in our school system through the training of teachers of English in the techniques of second language teaching.

Among the tasks of the Institute in order to carry out its objectives, were the following:

1. To take care of the intensive course for beginners in English, intended mainly for adult Asian students in the country. (The Institute gave up the job when ICA withdrew its assistance; it continued servicing Asian students, however, on a tutorial basis.)

2. To take care of the methods courses in English in the undergraduate programs of the College of Education.

3. To plan a program of studies for a Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language (MATESL).

2.1. Outstanding Projects of the Institute

A discussion of the Institute would not be complete without a discussion of its two outstanding projects:

1. The UP-BPS Advanced English Teacher Training Program

2. The Philippine Association for Language Teaching (PALT)

2.1.1. The UP BPS- Advanced English Teacher Training Programs

In 1963, the Institute, together with the Bureau of Public Schools, sponsored the teacher training program for outstanding teachers, the program to be called the UP-BPS Advanced English Teacher Training Program. This was a continuing program for a period of 10 years to be given to selected teachers from all over the country, to pursue a master's degree in Second Language Teaching, at the University of the Philippines for a period of one summer and two semesters. Under the terms of agreement, those grantees, upon finishing their degrees, were under contract to go back to their respective divisions to assist in the promotion of better language instruction in English through helping regular in-service training programs; working closely with the Division Supervisors of English or Head Teachers for better articulation of the Elementary and High School English programs; and acting as

demonstration teachers for the teachers of English in the division.

Under the agreement, the University would give free tuition privileges to the grantees; the BPS, their salaries while on leave, plus stipend plus travel and book allowances.

In 1967², the training program was expanded to include grantees in Spanish and Pilipino, besides the usual English grantees. This expansion was detailed in a supplemental program registered by the Bureau of Public Schools to include, among other things, the following:

1. Increasing the period of the grant from one summer and two semesters to two semesters and two summers.

2. Requesting accommodation of additional number of grantees; 10 more teachers or Department Heads of English in High Schools; 3 to 5 Division Supervisors of Pilipino; 10 - to 15 teachers or Department Heads of Pilipino in High School; 5 to 10 teachers of Spanish in Secondary and Normal Schools.

It was envisioned by the agreement that by the end of the program, each division would have at least one trained teacher in second language teaching. The grantees underwent screening before they were recommended to the program.

Through this jointly sponsored program, the Institute was able to train grantees all over the country, from divisions as far north as Cagayan and as far south as Sulu.

2.1.2. The Philippine Association for Language Teaching

The Institute for Language Teaching, in order to continue carrying out its objectives effectively, that of improving language instruction as well as reaching individual language teachers throughout the country, saw the advisability of forming an organization. The idea was received with much enthusiasm by educators and language teachers and students. Thus the Philippine Association for Language Teaching (PALT), as a major project of the Institute, was organized on May, 1960³ with the election of Jesus Perpin-an, Director, Bureau of Private Schools, as its first President. Other officers that formed the Executive Committee then, were:

- Vice-President Alfredo T. Morales
- Secretary-Treasurer Aurora Samonte
- Representatives of Language Groups:
- English Emma F. Bernabe
- Pilipino Felicidad V. Pineda
- Spanish Antolina Antonio

The aims of the organization and its proposed undertakings were expressly stated in an article 'Language Teaching Groups Cites Aims'⁴, published in one of the local dailies, as it reported the election of the officers of the organization.

The association's first undertaking was putting up a quarterly journal to service language teachers on all levels, irrespective of language. This was the beginning of the *Philippine Journal for Language Teaching (PJLT)* which placed the Institute and the Association on the academic map of language teaching and research. The Journal has served as outlet for articles and research in linguistics and language teaching done by the faculty and members of the organization, students, as well as lecturers of note in the field. It has included demonstration lesson plans to help teachers in the field; it has for its regular feature, book reviews and an annotated bibliography of recent books in the field.

The Association, in cooperation with the Institute, has sponsored annual conventions since then. It has invited distinguished authors and language experts here and abroad. Such notable authors from abroad were Pike, Francis, Lambert, Strevens, Shen, to mention a few.

3. FROM ILT TO DLT

In a Board of Regents' (BOR) decision during its 775th Meeting on October 24, 1968⁵, the College of Education underwent a major structural reorganization, when the BOR approved the College's recommendation to create seven new departments to replace its various existing units, one of which was the Institute for Language Teaching.

The rationale behind the reorganization was expressly stated by Felixberto M. Sta. Maria, then Dean of the College, in his communication to the President, at that time Carlos P. Romulo:

The proposed organization is designed to make the College of Education not only receptive to the changing needs of the times but also more efficient and flexible in carrying out its mission of preparing teachers and providing leadership in the field of education. With the creation of a uniform

system of departments, the administrative structure which at present includes one institute and two centers, will be considerably simplified.

The BOR, in its decision, emphasized the automatic change of name of the various existing units to their respective departments; thus, the Institute for Language Teaching (ILT) became the Department for Language Teaching (DLT), a name it has carried since then.

When the Institute became a Department, Samonte was appointed its first Chairman, a position she held until she left the University in 1969.

3.1. The Department of Language Teaching (DLT)

The Department goal, which is to develop manpower resources in the field of language teaching, research and extension services, is supportive of the main concern of the College of Education in particular, and of the University in general, which is to serve as agent of social change for the improvement of Philippine society. Thus, a discussion of the Department of Language Teaching (formerly Institute for Language Teaching) is a discussion of its academic programs, its research and its extension services.

3.2. Its Academic Programs

The DLT continued the administration of existing programs initiated by the Institute as early as 1960.

As of this writing the Department has 7 programs as follows:

1. M.A.T. English
2. M.A.T. Pilipino
3. M.Ed. (English/Pilipino) Plan A
4. M.Ed. (English/Pilipino) Plan B
5. BSE major in Communication Arts (English/Pilipino)
6. Ph.D. in Education, major in Language Teaching (First/Second Language)
7. Intensive English

3.3. The M.A.T. and M. Ed. Programs

The first academic program organized by the Institute in 1960 was the Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language (MAT ESL). In 1967, the program was expanded to include an MAT in Spanish, an MAT in Pilipino and an MEd in Second Language Teaching (MEd-SLT).

The MAT and the MEd programs differed mainly in requirements and clientele. While there was a seminar paper requirement in the MAT, there was a thesis requirement for the M.Ed. While both intended to serve the BSE and the BSEEd degree holders, the M.Ed. included as its clientele, language administrators, supervisors and key personnel in education.

These masteral programs, in fact all programs of the Department, undergo periodic evaluation, review and revision. This is done to keep the programs relevant and abreast with changes in the field.

Among the major revisions in the masteral programs were the following:

1. Abolition of the foreign language requirements;
2. Revision of the comprehensive examination by giving area examinations, not subject examinations, and making the preparation of the examination truly comprehensive through joint preparation by areas concerned.
3. Integration of some courses, abolition of others in order to make the programs responsive to changes in theory and practice.

To cite one example: Courses in Linguistic Analysis (Applied Linguistics 220 and Contrastive Linguistics 223), both cognates in the old program, were fused into one course EDL 201, Applied Linguistics for the Language Teacher.

4. Institution of new courses reflective of new concepts in language education. Courses in language acquisition, English for special purposes and, lately, discourse analysis were instituted.

5. Streamlining and simplification of labels and units. As a result of the creation of the departments and of the Self-Study Project of the College in the mid 70's, each department used its own acronym to label its courses; thus EDL 201 is a course in the Department of Language Teaching; EDFD 201 is a course in the Department of Educational Foundations.

Common courses (i.e. courses used by all departments like research courses) retain the Education label, thus Ed. 299, Educational Research. Uniform units credits of 3 were given all courses except laboratory courses.

6. The institution of a Certificate program for those who, for some reason, could not finish the

Masteral degree programs.

7. Institution of M.Ed. Plan A and M.Ed. Plan B, the former with thesis but no comprehensives; the latter with comprehensives but no thesis. The latter is intended to include language administrators, and supervisors; hence, a course in Supervision (EDL 261, Supervision of Bilingual Education) became a requirement.

Plan A is intended for those with research potentials; so the Department spots students earlier in the program and encourages them to pursue Plan A.

Without abolishing the programs, with the institution of the M.Ed. Plan A and Plan B, the MAT programs were no longer implemented.

3.4. The Ph.D. Program

The Ph.D. in Education, major in Language Teaching (First/Second), instituted in the early 70's aims to '... develop professional competence and high scholarship in the area of Language Teaching and to provide leadership in Applied Linguistics research. An interdisciplinary program, its curriculum consisted of courses in anthropology, speech, sociology, and psychology designed to ... meet the needs of language teachers, supervisors and administrators for a comprehensive and modern scientific background in the theory and practice of language teaching with the context of Philippine situation'.⁶

It underwent revision in 1980 when new courses were instituted and old courses integrated to meet the need for change due to knowledge explosion in the discipline.

3.5. The Undergraduate Programs

As part of the College Reorganization of 1968, Undergraduate programs were placed under the Office of the undergraduate Studies. The Department of Language Teaching coordinated with this office in handling BSE and BSEE programs, major in Communication Arts (CA) English/Filipino. The department handled major courses in these two programs, including their practice teaching classes.

Curricular revisions in these programs were generally taken up by the College Curriculum Committee with recommendations for revisions emanating from the Department.

With the abolition of the Office of Undergraduate Studies in 1987, these two programs were placed under the charge of the Department.

3.6. The Intensive English Program

The tutorial services in Intensive English for foreign students that the then Institute undertook became a continuous service program of the Department of Language Teaching.

However, this service function of the Department was institutionalized when the BOR in its 879th meeting dated January 19, 1973⁷ gave the Department ...

Authority to offer a special intensive course in English as a Foreign language for those... whose native language or whose medium of instruction is not English and to others whose working knowledge of the English language is inadequate for pursuing their respective academic programs in the University.

From the above decision it appears that this service function extends to non-foreign students, therefore Filipinos, whose working knowledge of English is inadequate.

Since this decision, the department has been servicing all units of the University through a system of referrals from the various units. For one semester, foreign students enroll simultaneously in two courses, namely:

Intensive English A. Basic Oral Skills (with emphasis on listening and notetaking).

Intensive English B. Academic Reading and Writing.

After finishing these two courses, the students are given a certificate of proficiency which they can present for enrollment in their respective units.

It is interesting to note that in this same BOR decision, the second provision stated:

2) In this connection, in as much as the special instruction program will be undertaken by the faculty of the Department of Language Teaching... reestablishment of the Institute for Language Teaching to undertake the University-wide service function as [the faculty] have done in the past [shall be undertaken].

This has not been implemented; the Department has remained a department and the Intensive English Program is still a part of it. Lately, by way of implementing the 1987 Bilingual Education Policy, the Department started to offer Intensive Course in Filipino for non-native speakers. This program was initially intended for the College of Education faculty. At present, it plans to extend the program to the faculty of the other units of the University, even to others outside the University. It has likewise

offered a short term program in Translation and in Filipino for Teacher Trainors.

3.7. The Research Program

Faculty and student research has been the department concern in its effort to improve instruction in our schools since its Institute days.

Research on instructional materials, on theory application, etc. and lately on policy studies specific to the Philippine Bilingual context has occupied the faculty and students of the Department. It is hoped that this latter research can influence decision-makers and educators in their efforts to improve language instruction.

There is research completed and on-going on such topics as nativization of English, patterns of language acquisition, teacher-pupil classroom interaction, and survey of language attitudes, to mention a few.

Government funding agencies as the Department of Science and Technology, Philippine National Science Society, etc. have been tapped for funding purposes.

3.8. Extension Services

The Department has extended services to different schools even as early as its Institute days whenever resources were available. The Institute in 1959-1960 held weekly in-service training for teachers of English in the units of the University, including the Los Banos unit. It has participated in national as well as international conferences such as the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional English Language Center conferences in Singapore and Bangkok, the East-West Center in Hawaii where its faculty read papers on language teaching and language study.

In 1984, the University opened its Olongapo and UP Extension classes where the Department was tapped to offer an MEd program, in consortium with:

- a) The University of Southern Philippines in Davao City, and
- b) The Bukidnon State College in Malaybalay, Bukidnon.

These universities offer the program in their respective campuses, and professors from Diliman go there to handle the classes.

The Department has likewise engaged in Teacher Renewal programs sponsored by some agencies, like the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) and the Language Education Council (LEDCO).

It has participated in the UP-DECS Training Program for tryout teachers on the New Secondary Curriculum since 1985. Its faculty have done consultancy services in the preparation of Values Oriented Curriculum Guides in Pilipino.

It has offered outreach programs to nearby schools that need upgrading in the latest in second language teaching.

3.9. Linkages

To carry out its commitment to the improvement of Language Instruction in the Philippines, the Department has developed linkages to carry out its academic research and extension services.

It has worked quite closely with the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc. (SIL). This cooperation with SIL was made possible through a Contract of Affiliation⁸ in August, 1960. This affiliation afforded the Institute with faculty to handle courses especially during the summer sessions. It has also worked with SIL in the publication of papers on Philippine Languages and has been recipient of some of its publications. This affiliation was revived when a lecturer from SIL was sent to teach in Summer, 1981. Linkages with DECS (formerly MECS/earlier DEC) was through national seminar-workshops as co-sponsor with DECS; consultancy services and indeed the UP-BPS Advanced Language Teacher Training Program discussed elsewhere in this paper.

The Department also worked with the National Development Education Center (NADEC) when some faculty of the Department developed, for the NADEC, sample instructional materials in English.

Linkages have also been established with the British Council and the United States Embassy Cultural Division.

In Summer of 1981, the British Council Exchange Program agreed to send a language expert to the Department to handle courses in English for Special Purposes. The Department sent DLT personnel to ESP centers in the United Kingdom for study and observation tours.

The Language expert from the United States Cultural Division of the United States Information Services (USIS) used to send language experts to the Department to lecture and/or to assist the

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Department in its needs on the development of its academic programs.

The Department has been recipient of donations in the form of books and magazines as a result of these linkages.

The Department has established linkages with other local organizations and agencies. Its linkage with the Philippine Association of Universities and Colleges (PASUC), for instance, has given the department scholars through the PASUC Local Fellowships, on the masteral and doctoral levels.

It has likewise been an active member of the Language Education Council (LEDCO), and the Department has been one of the training centers for the short-term programs for teachers of English and Pilipino under the sponsorship of LEDCO. The Department has also participated in the LEDCO Teacher Renewal Programs.

4. CONCLUSION

Looking into almost 30 years of its existence since 1960, the Department (formerly Institute) has graduated more than 500 on the masteral level and 30 on the doctoral level not only from the Philippines but from other parts of the world as well.

We have graduates on the masteral level from such places as India, Japan, Spain, Guam, the United States, Thailand and Indonesia; we have graduates on the doctoral level from Puerto Rico, Thailand and Korea.

With the UP-BPS Advanced Language Teacher Training Program I which ran for 20 years, the Department feels that it has helped, in its own way, to meet the needs of the field by serving teachers all over the country through the department academic programs, short-term courses and extension activities.

It can boast with pride that graduates of the Department are now holding key positions in our educational system. All these things have become possible because of the dedication of the men and women who unselfishly pursued the vision and commitment of the founders of the Institute for Language Teaching (now Department of Language Teaching) to improve language instruction in the country.

NOTES

¹Memorandum to Alfredo T. Morales, Dean, Graduate College of Education, U.P., from the Office of the President, dated October 10, 1959 (true copy).

²An excerpt from Carolina S.A. Rionda, 'The Institute for Language Teaching', *The UP College of Education Golden Jubilee (1918-1968)*, a souvenir program.

³Excerpt from the minutes of the First Annual PALT Annual Election Meeting, Benitez Hall, U.P. (undated but the year was established because the date of the second annual meeting was given as May 1961).

⁴A copy of a news write-up entitled 'Language Teaching Group Cites Aims', dates and name of the daily not included. This was found in the files of the Department.

⁵Excerpt from the Minutes of the 775th Meeting of the Board of Regents held on October 24, 1968.

⁶This was taken from the course offering for the Ph.D. in Education, major in Language Teaching (First/Second Language) effective 1972.

⁷Excerpt from the 879th Meeting of the Board of Regents (BOR) held on January 19, 1973 (on file with the Office of the Secretary, College of Education).

⁸Excerpt from a paper read by Nelia G. Casambre on the occasion of the lecture series in honor of Cecilio Lopez, Professor, College of Arts and Sciences, U.P.