

Linguistic Research in the Philippines: Trends, Prospects, and Challenges

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The production of knowledge in linguistics in the Philippines is largely the preoccupation of the Linguistic Society of the Philippines (henceforth LSP), the only professional organization of linguists and language researchers in the country. As clearly stipulated in its Mission-Vision Statement, the LSP leads in the “advancement of the scientific study of language in the Philippine context” (www.lspil.org). Since its founding in 1969, it has been at the forefront of research and publication involving languages, especially those used in the Philippines. While knowledge creation in linguistics has had some progress largely through the initiatives of the LSP, much remains to be done, and the achievement of its goals is hampered by various factors. This paper describes what has been done in recent years insofar as linguistic research is concerned and charts directions for future research in the field. It also discusses a number of factors that constrain the conduct of linguistic research in the country. This survey is based on what has been published in the *Philippine Journal of Linguistics* or *PJL*, LSP’s official scholarly publication, in the last ten years, i.e., from 2000 to 2009. Thus, the paper makes no claim as to

the comprehensiveness and exhaustiveness of the survey.

TRENDS

The trends in knowledge production in linguistics in the country are analyzed here in terms of the number of articles published in the *PJL* during the ten-year period (2000 to 2009), the areas and topics covered by these articles, and profile of writers of the articles.

Number of articles published

A total of 103 papers appeared in the journal during the period, excluding book reviews (Table 1). As Table 1 shows, *PJL* has published an average of approximately 10 articles per year and the biggest output was recorded in 2004 with 17 articles, then in 2000 with 16, and in 2001 with 13 articles. This is due, in large part, to the publication of selected papers from national and international conferences organized by LSP, from which papers for Issue Number 1, Volume 35 (2004), were chosen.

Table 1 Number of Articles Published in *PJL* (2000-2009)

Volume	Year	Number of articles
31	2000	16
32	2001	13
33	2002	11
34	2003	9
35	2004	17
36	2005	6
37	2006	10
38	2007	8
39	2008	8
40	2009	5
Total		103
Average		10.3

Of the 103 papers published from 2000 to 2009, 58 (or 56%) deal with applied linguistics, 39 (or 38%) are related to theoretical linguistics, and six (6%) are state-of-the-art papers. Following traditional classification of the discipline's domains, phonology, syntax, and semantics fall under theoretical linguistics. Applied linguistics, on the other hand, covers language teaching, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, and bilingualism. Most of these categories are used as rubrics for the survey of studies that follows.

That a majority of the articles that appeared in the *PJL* were aligned with applied linguistics seems to be both a positive and negative development. It is positive if one looks at it as an expansion of the field, given the increasing interest of many scholars in the application of linguistic theory to practical concerns such as teaching. However, it does seem to be a negative development if one revisits the vision of the *PJL* and of LSP as an organization, for that matter, which is to lead in the promotion and advancement of the scientific study of Philippine languages. From a traditional perspective, such a vision may be interpreted as focusing on descriptions of Philippine languages, especially the minority languages, at the phonological, syntactic,

semantic and pragmatic, and discourse levels. Simply put, the dominance of applied linguistics papers, it may be argued, may be a digression from the original intent of the journal.

Survey of studies in linguistics in the last ten years (2000-2009)

The *PJL* focuses on studies in descriptive, comparative, historical, and areal linguistics. There is a clear multiplicity of topics, themes, issues, research methodologies, approaches, and scope of papers published in the last 10 years. Hence, this section is divided according to the themes and areas covered by the papers.

Special issues and themes

In the last decade, eight special issues of the *PJL* were published, which were mostly collections of selected papers from conferences organized by the LSP. These are presented chronologically below.

The 30th Anniversary Symposium of the Linguistic Society of the Philippines. This special issue in 2000 compiled papers from a conference held a year earlier in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the organization. The issue included the Welcome Remarks delivered by Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, S.J., President of Ateneo De Manila University; and the Keynote Address titled "English, Filipino and other languages at the crossroads: Facing the challenges of the millennium" delivered by Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, FSC, then Secretary of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, now Department of Education or DepEd. In addition, then LSP president, Emy Pascasio, came up with a state-of-the-art paper on the 30 years of LSP, which traced the historical background and objectives of the organization, the range of research and publications, the training programs and the other projects of the organization such as consultancy and advocacy. Another significant contribution was the article by Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, Ma. Lourdes Bautista, and Emy Pascasio, which focused on the "Social sciences and policy-making in language." Equally significant were Emma

Castillo's "Language-related recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Educational Reform" and Catherine Young's "Local participation as a basis for sustainable literacy among the cultural communities." There were also two articles on developments in sociolinguistics, and four on the implementation of the country's Bilingual Education Policy.

Functional literacy in a multilingual context.

It should be noted that the notion of multilinguality in education is not something new. In 2001, a special issue on this featured important contributions which included Allan B.I. Bernardo's Keynote Address titled "Beyond functional literacy, towards a multiliteracy pedagogy." Other articles were "Literacy for development in multilingual contexts: Five characteristics of sustainable programs" (Susan Malone and Dennis Malone); "The development of indigenized curricula" (Catherine Young); "A new definition of functional literacy for Filipinos in the 21st century: Some implications for development, language and education" (Maria Luisa C. Doronila); "Language of instruction used in non-formal education" (Rosario J. De Guzman); "Literacy for development: A Western Subanon experience" (Melinda T. Awid); "Literacy in multilingual communities" (Santanina Rasul); and "Emergent literacy of Filipino preschool children" (Lydia Lalunio). The topics in this issue showed the depth and breadth of work on functional literacy, which contributed to ongoing discourses on the role of the mother tongue in multilingual education especially at the basic education level.

Special issue on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. In the Foreword of this special issue marking the 50th anniversary of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in the Philippines, Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, FSC, on behalf of Filipino linguists and the Filipino people as a whole, expressed his immense gratitude to SIL for its unparalleled commitment in enriching Philippine linguistics and for the Institute's efforts in establishing literacy education in the mother tongue. Also included in this issue was J. Stephen

Quakenbush's state-of-the-art of Philippine linguistics from the SIL perspective. Here, he summarized the topics that were dealt with in SIL academic publications, such as morphosyntax, discourse, and phonology, among others. Quakenbush likewise stressed that there was a notable drop in the number of studies on Philippine languages in the 2000s. The issue also featured a lexical investigation on language families in the southern Philippines (by Scott Burton); three descriptive studies on some grammar points of Sama Bangngi' (Joan Gault) and Kankanaey (Janet Allen); and an essay on the experiences of writing a communicative grammar (E. Lou Hohulin). Four other articles (written by Catherine Young, Ellen Errington, Dianne Dekker, and Howard Shelden and Kay Ringenberg) on the different issues and experiences in the basic literacy program of SIL were also included.

LSP International Conference on Applied Linguistics and Language Education. As the theme suggests, this issue featured articles that delved into applied linguistics, specifically, language education. There were 11 articles that covered different fields of applied linguistics. Emma Castillo proposed (then) a new framework in teaching English called the Communicative Approach (CA) and the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) or the CACALLA approach. Other works on language teaching were Isabel Martin's article on teachers' way of marking written works in content areas; Isagani Cruz's reengineering Filipino, English, and the lingua franca in basic education; Ikuo Koike's English language education policy in Japan; John Miles's essay on development of Test of Spoken English (TSE); and Bro. Andrew Gonzalez's state-of-the-art paper on applied linguistics and language teaching in the Philippines. Other papers were Emy Pascasio's analysis of the Filipino bilingual from a sociolinguistic perspective, Leonisa Mojica's description of apology strategies perceived to be appropriated by Filipino-speaking couples; Alice Adeva's conversation analysis of doctor-patient interactions in a government hospital; and Thomas Kral's essay celebrating the

40th anniversary of the USIS publication *Forum*. Obviously, this special issue dealt with a wide range of topics, a testament to the vastness of the field of applied linguistics and perhaps a manifestation of the great interest generated in the area, especially among Filipino researchers and scholars.

The 10th International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics (2006). Two issues were devoted to selected papers from the 10th International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics (ICAL) held in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, in 2006, which was co-sponsored by the LSP and SIL. Appearing in these two issues were the plenary lectures of the conference: Nicole Revel's "Memory of voice: Archiving and analyzing oral composition" and Lawrence A. Reid's "On reconstructing the morphosyntax of Proto-Northern Luzon."

The other papers discussed creoles (Aireen Barrios's "Austronesian elements in Philippine Creole Spanish"); theoretical issues (such as Videa De Guzman's "morpheme-based versus word-based morphology" and Masumi Katagiri's "Topichood of the Philippine topic revisited: from a cross-linguistic perspective"); discourse (Michael Walrod's "The marker is the message: The influence of discourse markers and particles on textual meaning" and Elizabeth Luquin's "To be in relation: Ancestors" or the polysemy of the Minangyan (Hanunoo) term 'apu'); sociolinguistics (Teresita Tajolosa's "The Tagbanua language in Irawan in the midst of globalization"); Philippine syntax (Josie Clausen's "Lexical relations in Ilokano for an Ilokano lexical database"); and reduplication (Allan Johnson's "Ayta Mag-anchi reduplication").

Although these were the only featured articles in the journal, a wide range of topics was covered in the conference, such as Austronesian transitivity and ergativity, noun phrase structures, functional elements and reference tracking, pronoun ordering typology in Austronesian, dictionaries and dictionary making in Austronesian languages, early Austronesian subgrouping, epics in Austronesian languages and cultures, language

endangerment in Central Maluku, languages and literature in Palawan, and teaching Austronesian languages. Incidentally, two important articles also appeared in these two issues: Bautista's "In memoriam: Brother Andrew" and Vilches's "In memoriam: Emy Pascasio." It should be noted that the LSP has been hosting memorial lectures in honor of these two distinguished figures in Philippine linguistics: Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, FSC and Emy Pascasio, who both passed away in mid 2000.

World Englishes and Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference. Set against the World Englishes paradigm of the day and its influence on second language learning and teaching, this special issue of *PJL* in 2008 is a collection of selected papers from an international conference held in the same year. Articles were carefully chosen to reflect the current researches in this field, not only in the Philippines but throughout the world, as well.

Claudia Kunschak and Fan Fang's paper featured China as the center stage in their investigation of teachers' and students' perspectives on the intelligibility, acceptability, target-likeness of varieties of English, and of the teaching of pronunciation within the English as International Language (EIL) framework. Melvyn Alamis's article discussed current perspectives on world Englishes and their implications for second language teaching and learning. Yazid Basthomi's paper, on the other hand, focused on Indonesian terms of address as used in the acknowledgement section of theses. Iori Kobayashi's article looked into Taiwanese learners' views on the second language (L2) varieties of English, specifically, how Taiwanese students viewed their experiences of learning English in the Philippines. Two articles compared the Philippines with other countries: Marianne Gaerlan looked into the discourse organization of want ads in Qatari and Philippine English newspapers, whereas Maya David and Francis Dumanig analyzed the nativization of English in Malaysian and Philippine dailies. Gaerlan opined that Filipino writers provided more information in the ads compared with Qatari

writers. David and Dumanig, on the other hand, concluded that English has become an Asian language, as evidenced by the intrusions and assimilations of lexical items into the Philippine and Malaysian varieties of English. Two articles explored features of Philippine English: Ariane Borlongan's paper on tag questions and Felixberto Mercado's article about cognitive structuring of research articles.

Special theme: Contrastive rhetoric. In this special issue in 2002, five articles focused on various aspects that compared Philippine culture with other cultures. In Cecilia Genuino's article, she surmised that conjunctions as used by Singaporean, Philippine, and American Englishes, revealed the culture of these countries, specifically, those in the Outer Circles, as more change-oriented and writer-responsible than the Inner Circle countries. Sydney Gonzales, on the other hand, investigated politeness in letters to the editor of these same countries. Arina Brylko and Leah Gustilo compared Philippine and American Englishes in terms of cognitive structuring of criminal appeal cases and news leads, respectively. In addition, Mildred Rojo-Laurilla delved into the presentation of self and self-disclosure of Philippine advice columns in English and Filipino.

Philippine and Austronesian Linguistics

As stated in the aims and scope of the journal, studies on Philippine languages are given priority in publication, in keeping with the mission-vision statement of LSP. Aside from the two issues from the international conference on Austronesian linguistics that revolved mainly around Philippine languages, other papers appeared in other issues that dealt with various aspects of Philippine languages. These are presented below.

Grammatical and phonological studies. Using an approximately one million-word corpus of Filipino novels, McFarland (2001) investigated the form, word order, and syntax of Filipino enclitics, and concluded that enclitics do occupy an important place in Filipino grammar. Hohulin and Donald Burquest (2007), on the other hand, investigated the morphophonology of Tuwali

Ifugao, a language spoken by approximately 25,000 people in Kiangan, Ifugao province. In order to describe the interaction of morphological and phonological phenomena, they investigated the process of affixation, reduplication, gemination, syllabification, and stress placements of excerpts from natural Tuwali Ifugao texts.

Allen (2007) explored the focus and activation of Kankanaey, a language spoken in northern Philippines. This study described how speakers of the language introduced participants, referred to accessible entities, identified participants and their roles, and activated referents for prominence, comment, or contrast in their discourses. Likewise, Mallorca (2007) looked into the rhetorical questions used in Kalagan, a language spoken in Davao with remarkably diminishing number of speakers, that is, approximately 20,000, based on the 1990 census. By giving authentic texts that exemplified the issue at hand, Mallorca listed seven specific functions of rhetorical questions in Kalagan: (1) to force the hearers to think and thus be engaged in the topic, (2) to emphasize a known fact, (3) to express an evaluation of a decision about to be made, (4) to express exasperation, (5) to administer a mild rebuke or scolding, (6) to express strong negative emotion, and (7) to indicate doubt and uncertainty.

Buck (2009) provided a phonemic description of Tobilung, a member of the Dusun subgroup of Bornean languages. Buck described both vowels and consonants, and then moved on to a description of Tobilung's syllable structure. The article also touched on interpretation of vowels, consonants, and syllables, and the issues of vowel harmony and neutralization.

Other papers on Philippine languages. Aside from grammatical descriptions, there were a few articles that provided other facts about a certain language. For instance, Gonzalez (2001) provided bibliographical sources for the study of Kapampangan language. Here, he classified the 111 resources into three: bibliographies of Philippine linguistics (6), nineteenth century (31), and twentieth century (74), respectively.

Zorc (2004) explored historical linguistics by focusing on semantic reconstruction in

Austronesian linguistics. Here, he described the semantic relationships in different aspects such as synonymy, antonymy, metonymy, polysemy, narrowing or generalization, hyponymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, litotes, degeneration, elevation, specialization, taboo, and idiomaticity. In another study, Signey (2005) attempted to trace the evolution and disappearance of the “g” in Tagalog orthography since the 1593 *Doctrina Christiana*, the first book printed in the Philippines.

A truly innovative paper that departed from the traditional definition of language as a verbal code and that expanded the scope of *PJL* is that of Martinez, Bernardo, Puson and Tanjusay’s (2009) “Observations on regional variants and handshape patterns of six signs in Filipino Sign Language.” This paper examined the variants of six lexical items—*aso* (dog), *bituin* (star), *bato* (stone), *baboy* (pig), *damo* (grass), and *matalim* (sharp)—in the Filipino Sign Language.

Articles in Filipino. Although articles in *PJL* were typically written in English, there were occasional papers written in the Filipino language. For instance, Oue’s (2001) *Pagbabago ng wika sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagkontak: Filipino sa bansang Hapon* (2005) and Fischl’s *Pag-unlad ng wikang Filipino sa sakop ng occupational therapy* (OT), both investigated how the Filipino language has evolved over the years. The former reported on the common Japanese words and phrases used in conversations among Filipinos in Japan and the latter on the translation to Filipino of the common phrases used in OT. Bonus-Adeva’s (2005) *Mga semantik koreleyt ng pagkatransitibo sa mga kwentong Sebwanon*, on the other hand, dealt with the grammar of the Cebuano language.

Studies on Applied Linguistics

Language teaching. Bautista (2002), continuing her previous work on the features of Philippine English and grammaticality judgment test, investigated the treatment of the English verb system in Philippine high school English textbooks. Using four series of English textbooks, she focused on the teaching of verb tenses and modals and showed how some textbook series

exhibited either adequacy or inadequacy in the teaching of the verb system. She concluded her study by pointing out that apart from the textbook which is in focus, the teacher, the learner, and the learning situation were equally important in the whole scenario.

Two studies looked into specific practices in English language classrooms. Cusipag (2004) investigated peer-editing patterns in the English 1 compositions of De La Salle University (DLSU)-Manila students and found out that some forms of editing resulted in considerable improvement in the students’ argumentative essays. She concluded that there is no one best pattern that produces significantly improved writing. Balarbar (2005), on the other hand, conducted a descriptive analysis of reflective essays as a metacognitive tool in portfolio assessment and contended that DLSU students have the facility and ability to do reflective thinking and writing even without prior training and that their metacognitive knowledge is both experiential and cognitive.

As for the management side of language education, Plata (2007) explores the assessment reform policy and its implementation in Philippine public secondary education. Here, she evaluated the existing policies through the policy documents and sample assessment tools and through a focus group discussion with public school teachers in Metro Manila and Region 4, respectively.

Sociolinguistics. Among the studies in sociolinguistics was Mojica’s (2000) study on gender differences in the description of male/female language in Filipino. She surmised that there exist differences between men and women, such as stereotyping and linguistic sexism. Along the same vein was Laurilla’s (2002) study on text messaging. She posited that there are gender differences in the text messaging patterns, such as women exhibiting longer conversations than men, women’s use of emoticons more than men, among others. In her 2007 study, Laurilla looked into how Filipino texters observed the four Gricean maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation (Relevance), and Manner. She concluded that

even in mediated contexts, there are cases of non-observance of these maxims, especially Relevance.

Also utilizing the Gricean cooperative principles was Lising's (2002) paper on Cebuano jocularity. By looking at 30 jokes from a Visayan magazine, she ascertained that most of the entries flout the maxim of Quality by using hyperbole and metaphor, the maxim of Relation by intentionally making use of objects and symbols that have no bearing on each other, and the maxim of Manner by purposely being unclear of their referents.

On another note, Gustilo (2007) explored the language and self-presentation of Filipino personal homepages (PHP) by looking at the sentence types and speech functions used by the owners of homepages. Gustilo arrived at the conclusion that PHP authors used linguistic features that presented them as individuals who were mainly engaged in material processes of "being." Victoria (2009), by contrast, explored linguistic politeness and the power teachers wielded in Philippine higher education classrooms, using Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework. Finally, Estipona's (2009) "Sociolinguistic centrifuge: Comparing language attitudes from urban center to urban periphery" reported findings of a survey on attitudes towards English and Filipino of students from two locales: urban center represented by Manila and urban periphery represented by Romblon.

Discourse analysis. Studies in this sub-area of applied linguistics dealt with various topics, most notably, the discourse of print ads (Dayag, 2001 and 2002) and evidentiality in newspaper editorials (Dayag, 2004). Likewise, Suarez-Crizaldo (2005) examined the linguistic and rhetorical features of televangelism as persuasive discourse. Goheco (2007) likewise came up with a discourse analysis of mediated political advertisement campaigns.

Madrunio (2004), on the other hand, compared Philippine and Singapore English in their discourse organization of letters of complaint to editors. Although she asserted that there were more similarities than differences in the discourse organization between the two varieties, she

concluded that Filipinos employed a more elaborate writing style as opposed to the Singaporeans who are more direct and thus, curt and simple.

Bilingualism and code-switching. Although these two areas are widely investigated in academic research such as in theses and dissertations, there is an obvious paucity of research in this area in *PJL*. Two studies are noted here. Lorente (2000) revisited Tagalog-English code-switching using a congruence approach and concluded that there is evidence to suggest that 'Taglish' could be an emerging hybrid language in the Philippines. In a more recent study, Doplon (2008) suggested that code-switching in Philippine tabloids could be a symptom of subservience and resistance in a post-colonial society. Along a similar line, Valdez (2009) viewed Tagalog-English code-switching from an ideological perspective, using data from interactions in the business domain.

Pascasio's (2000) study reported an update on the language behavior profile of the Filipino bilingual by attempting to identify the critical correlates of English and Filipino language proficiency. She emphasized that language use and a positive attitude towards the language are important in achieving language proficiency. Castro's (2004) study, though focusing on the role of Tagalog in ESL writing, looked into the bilingual nature of Filipino students in their composing behaviors as reported in their think-aloud protocols. Castro concluded that the students' first language, Tagalog, played more of a facilitative rather than interfering role as they wrote in English.

Dench (2004), on the other hand, described the variations in hyphen usage when writing 'Taglish' verbs and highlighted six different patterns in hyphen usage. Interestingly, Dench also looked into the possibility of making 'Taglish' (a merging of Tagalog and English with the former as the dominant language) a creolized variety soon.

Second language acquisition. There was very little research on second language acquisition in recent years. One study, that of Concepcion (2005),

explored the impact of inflectional awareness on syntactic bootstrapping and fast mapping of novel verbs in Filipino, English, and Chabacano.

State-of-the-art papers

In addition to the reviews included in special issues mentioned earlier and the empirical papers, grammars, essays, and reports that *PJL* has published, there was also a considerable number of reviews and state-of-the-art papers.

Three other important state-of-the-art papers appeared in the last decade. The first one by Gonzalez (2000) reported on the overall success of the Philippines in language teaching from 1898 to 1946. Here, he identified the factors that contributed to this success during the American period and the independence period. In addition, he explained that the factors behind the success of the experience came from various points. The second paper by Llamzon (2001) gave an update on the intellectualization of Filipino through a quantitative report and a comprehensive analysis of the three representative works on intellectualization of the language. He outlined these three works: (1) Ernesto Constantino's "The contemporary English-Filipino dictionary," which gives 20,000 English lexical items in Filipino; (2) Roque J. Ferrriol's *Pambungad sa metapisika*, which contains many examples of word associations and collocations, as well as expectancy chains; and (3) Florentino Timbreza's *Intelektwalisasyon ng pilosopiyang Filipino*, which uses mechanisms like loanwords, calques, derivations, paraphrases, and compounding. Llamzon admitted though that the process of Filipino intellectualization has a long way to go.

The third paper by Bautista (2000) gave an update on the studies of Philippine English (PhE). She divided the review into three strands, which she admitted as either separate or interweaving: (1) the status of PhE as a standard variety of English, (2) the linguistic features of this variety, and (3) the intelligibility and acceptability of PhE. Bautista argued that PhE, specifically the educated variety, is legitimate. Likewise, she described the phonology, grammar and lexicon, as well as the

intelligibility and acceptability of PhE. The review culminated with an account of what had been done and what needed to be done in this area of linguistic research. In addition, Bautista also commented on the different methods utilized in PhE studies.

Profiles of writers

A close look at the profiles of the authors of the articles included in the foregoing review reveals that a good majority of them are Filipino academics teaching in colleges and universities in the Philippines. Most of these academics are teachers of English. Aside from teaching, a few of them hold administrative posts. The only ones who are not in the teaching profession are the staff of SIL, most of whom do translation work and research on Philippine languages, especially those used by cultural communities. Their full-time job enables them to conduct field work and to employ ethnographic methodologies, resulting in fine-grained descriptions of Philippine languages.

PROSPECTS

On the basis of the trends in linguistic research, based on the articles published in the *PJL* in the last ten years, some directions are described below.

More emphasis on Philippine Linguistics

As Quakenbush (2003) lamented, there has been a significant drop in the number of studies on theoretical linguistics involving Philippine languages since 2000, compared with the output in the previous decades. A close examination of the papers published in *PJL* from 2005 to 2009, for example, shows that roughly 10 out of a total of 37 papers, i.e., less than one-third of the total, deal with topics in connection with Philippine languages. With 171 living Philippine languages listed in *Ethnologue* (Lewis, 2009), some of which have yet to be codified, more theoretical papers should be published that focus on Philippine languages as there is no shortage of topics for research in the field. Possible areas of research include descriptions of so-called minority

languages at the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and discourse levels.

On the applied side of linguistics, more research should be conducted on how first languages inform the teaching of other languages such as Filipino and English and of content area subjects. This underscores the need for more studies on mother tongue-based multilingual education, along the lines of the Lubuagan experiment (Dekker & Dumatog, 2003). This study showed evidence that students gained higher scores when the mother tongue was used in teaching content rather than English and Filipino. If more studies involving other first languages in the Philippines are conducted, this will strengthen arguments for mother tongue-based education at the basic level, which will then translate to research-based language and educational policies affecting the entire country. In particular, this would give way to a change in the English-only policy in most schools in favor of a mother tongue-based basic education.

The need for Filipino academics to conduct more research on Philippine languages

Judging from the profile of *PJL* authors in the last ten years, it seems that the task of doing research in linguistics in the country rests on the shoulders of Filipino academics. This is because there are no existing research institutes in the country devoted exclusively to linguistic research. The only organization at the forefront of language development efforts including the description of languages, particularly those belonging to the Austronesian family (Philippine languages included), is SIL International, a nonsectarian, nongovernment organization “dedicated to a professional, scholarly, community-based approach to language development” (Quakenbush, 2007, p. 49). Working with cultural communities in the Philippines, SIL staff do both academic work primarily through describing languages, especially the minority ones, and community development tasks in the form of translation and literacy development. Thus, inherent in their work is the opportunity to do

fieldwork through which SIL personnel live in local language communities for extended periods of time and specialize in “the application of linguistic research to literacy and translation needs” (Quakenbush, 2007, p. 49). No similar self-liquidating organization operates at the national level. If at all, research centers or institutes devoted solely to studies on Philippine languages are based in, affiliated with, and receive funding from local universities. In effect, personnel overseeing the operations of these institutes or centers and those conducting research are academics who juggle between teaching and research, and sometimes, administration.

Given that one of the overarching goals of a university is research, Filipino academics have no choice but to conduct research, notwithstanding the challenges they face in the light of their heavy workload and other concerns, as described below. With special reference to Philippine languages, there is a wealth of information relative to them that needs to be explored and disseminated to the larger community. One interesting area of research involving Philippine languages, especially the minority ones, is the documentation of endangered languages, i.e., those languages that are likely to become extinct in the near future because they are falling out of use and are being replaced by others that are more widely used in the region or nation (Woodbury, n.d.). The latter includes the Philippines’ official languages, Filipino and English, and the regional lingua franca (e.g., Ilokano in Northern Luzon and Cebuano in the Visayas and Mindanao). A number of minority languages in the Philippines are endangered. Headland (2003), for instance, argues that there are thirty Negrito languages which are endangered. These languages and others scattered all over the Philippines need documenting.

As Quakenbush (2007, p. 59) puts it, language documentation “has to do with producing a lasting record of representative samples of [a] language.” This focuses on “the production of resources for the linguist or academician more than on resources that directly benefit speakers of the language being documented” (Quakenbush, 2007, p. 59). The

resources produced may be in the form of grammatical descriptions and text collections (Quakenbush, 2007). A key component of the process is the publication of resources for future use by fellow linguists and academics. In the case of endangered languages in the Philippines, the grammatical descriptions and text collections may be published by SIL International, which has been at the forefront of this endeavor in the last five decades, or publishing houses based in universities that have an interest in Philippine languages, especially the endangered ones.

In addition to language documentation, more work needs to be done in describing the languages of cultural communities. One promising direction that must be taken is to employ corpus linguistics as a methodology in gathering naturally-occurring data. As used in this article, a corpus is a body of massive language data—usually running to hundreds of thousands or even millions of words—stored electronically. In the Philippines, a pioneering work is the Philippine Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-PHI) compiled by a group of scholars based at DLSU-Manila (Bautista, Lising, & Dayag, 2004). To date, several linguistic studies have been conducted—and many more are being pursued—by both Filipino and foreign scholars using this corpus, which points to the richness of the data stored in it.

Realizing the urgent need for a corpus on local languages, another research team at DLSU-Manila—this time an interdisciplinary one, the La Salle Corpus of Philippine Languages (LASCOPHIL)—is currently building corpora of Philippine languages as a major step towards providing descriptions of these languages. Each corpus comes from various texts and genres, both spoken and written. Corpus-based descriptions of languages have the advantage of including and analyzing only those language data that are authentic, i.e., those actually used by speakers, and filtering out those which are not. This then makes linguistics meaningful and dynamic because language is authentic and dynamic, which is a departure from the abstract and idealized notion

of language in the 1950s and 1960s. The use of corpora in language descriptions also allows for a more bottom-up, inductive approach to analyzing language data. Rather than making general principles first and then presenting carefully selected language samples, some of which may be idealized, to exemplify the principle in question, the researcher lets the data speak for themselves to arrive at general principles and to build a model. The success of these corpus-building projects should encourage other Filipino researchers to do the same for other Philippine languages, especially the minority ones.

Another promising area of research on Philippine languages is the application of theoretical models in the analysis of these languages. Well-known models such as Chomsky's Minimalist Program for the Principles and Parameters Theory and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics come to mind. The former may be used to test its applicability in explaining the behavior of sentences in Philippine languages and their learnability, whereas the latter may be employed in describing authentic texts in the local languages. Grounding in these models presupposes, however, that linguistics departments of local universities produce graduates at both the undergraduate and post-graduate levels who are properly trained and are well-equipped and have the necessary temperament to do real linguistics. This then raises the question of whether the people giving the training, namely, the teachers, have themselves received the proper training in linguistics which they can pass on to their students. Without meaning to sound condescending and based on casual observation, perhaps the Filipino teacher of linguistics needs some re-tooling.

More research activities by LSP involving Philippine languages

As the premier organization of linguists and language researchers in the country, LSP has the responsibility of taking the lead in linguistic research. This is because it enjoys a long tradition of excellence in research primarily through the

efforts of its pillars who were its former Board members—the late Bro. Andrew A. Gonzalez, FSC, the late Dr. Bonifacio P. Sibayan, the late Dr. Emy M. Pascasio, Dr. Teodoro A. Llamzon, and Dr. Ma. Lourdes S. Bautista. Their studies have shaped national policies on language and education and this legacy must continue.

The need for LSP to conduct more research activities is articulated in the organization's ten-year strategic directions and targets (2010-2020) approved by the Board recently. These include the conduct of research by the Board members which is of national scope and significance, such as mother tongue-based multilingual education at the basic level and code-switching in the content classroom. To stimulate the interest of members and non-members of LSP in linguistic research, the LSP shall also continue to implement research dissemination activities like the annual Bro. Andrew Gonzalez and Dr. Bonifacio Sibayan distinguished professorial chair lectures and the Dr. Emy Pascasio memorial lecture. This is on top of capacity building initiatives of LSP Board members involving linguistic research.

CHALLENGES

The directions described in the previous section may be successfully carried out in perhaps a very ideal situation. In reality, however, their implementation is constrained by both external and internal factors.

Low priority given to research in many Philippine universities

As has been mentioned, research is one of the goals of a university, the others being instruction and extension or community service. This means that a university is not only a consumer of knowledge, but a producer or creator of knowledge, as well. If all local universities are faithful to this goal and are aggressive in implementing it, the state of research in general and linguistic research in particular, will be in a much better shape. The problem, however, is that many local universities rank research as the least

priority, thereby paying lip service to this goal. The problem will become more vivid if one realizes the fact that most of those who have done research in linguistics—based on the review of papers appearing in the *PJL* in the last ten years—are also academics in local universities who have heavy teaching loads. That research ranks last in the hierarchy of priorities of universities stems from the fact that it is expensive and the return of investment in research is slow and minimal. The problem is felt even more by universities that thrive only on tuition fees that students pay, thereby leading to minimal support, if at all, for research, in general.

The lack of support for research, which is manifested in the absence of a research agenda, has resulted in run-of-the-mill studies on very generic and parochial topics in education and the sporadic appearance of graduate research journals which contain research outputs by faculty members. Typically, there is pressure from higher administration for faculty members to do research and publish their findings in the university's research journal for presentation during accreditation period. After accreditation, research dies a natural death. The situation is, indeed, pathetic.

For some universities that have a well-articulated research agenda, the problem is not so much the lack of support for research in general as research on languages. A case in point is the situation at the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) that has a long tradition of excellence in research in agriculture and the natural sciences. According to unverified feedback from teachers of the UPLB, language does not enjoy as high a rank as agriculture and the natural sciences in their order of priorities, which then translates to the lack of institutional support for research involving languages.

The heavy workload of university faculty members

While most of higher education institutions do not fully support research activities, they, in turn, exact heavy teaching loads on their teachers. In

many colleges and universities, the normal full-time load is 24 units, and in some, as many as 30 units or even more. In big universities such as DLSU-Manila, Ateneo de Manila University, and UP Diliman, teachers have a lighter load of 12 units, with the expectation that they will do research as part of their normal duties and responsibilities. However, the latter schools are more of an exception to the rule as teaching is given emphasis in many Philippine schools.

In most universities, a college teacher has a teaching load of 24 units which is equivalent to 24 hours a week and is still expected to set aside consultation hours for students, attend meetings, and do committee work. There is hardly any time left for research. It is even more problematic for those who have to teach part-time in other schools to augment the meager salary they receive from their mother unit.

The Filipino academics' aversion to linguistics and to research

Apart from earlier mentioned external and institutional challenges, another factor that affects the growth of linguistic research is attitudinal and internal to university teachers—the aversion to anything linguistic and to any endeavor involving the conduct of research. Perhaps a large part of the reason is the kind of language education these teachers received in college where language is typically taught as an abstract system that hardly has relevance to a student's life. Similarly, college teachers are averse to research as the latter is perceived to be a highly cerebral activity not fit for teachers who are more inclined to do practical activities such as teaching. The aversion is compounded when one talks about research on languages.

This negative attitude was expressed at a national seminar-workshop organized in April 2010 by the Department of English and Applied Linguistics, DLSU-Manila, that had to do with teaching and researching on texts within the framework of systemic-functional linguistics. The main speaker/facilitator is an internationally renowned scholar who has done extensive work

in the area. It was participated in by more than 100 teachers, mostly college faculty members, who came all the way from various regions of the country. A close look at both the numbers and qualitative comments in the evaluation forms reveals that most participants hardly appreciated the linguistic and research part of the speaker's presentation, with several clamoring for teaching strategies they could use in their English classes, the recipe-type collection of teaching methodologies which they could adopt slavishly without regard for the specific context in which they are teaching the language.

CONCLUSION

This paper describes the state of knowledge production in linguistics. Though by no means exhaustive and comprehensive, the survey was based on studies published in the *PJL* in the last ten years (2000-2009). The papers were classified under various headings, such as grammatical and phonological studies, language teaching, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, bilingualism and code-switching, second language acquisition, and the like, in addition to special issues and themes. The survey highlights the wide range of areas which researchers, mostly Filipino academics, investigate and publish in. It also underscores the focus of the papers on themes and issues in applied linguistics.

The results of the survey provide guideposts to the directions that linguistics may take in the next several years. More emphasis should be given to Philippine linguistics, in particular, theoretical papers on Philippine languages. Local researchers, most of whom are academics, should conduct more studies involving Philippine languages. As an organizational commitment, LSP must take the lead in initiating research activities involving Philippine languages. However, implementation of these directions is constrained by factors internal and external to the Filipino researcher of languages. These challenges include the low priority that many Philippine universities give to research, the heavy teaching load of university

teachers, and the aversion of Filipino academics to research and linguistics.

It then goes without saying that, based on the review of articles published in *PJL*, the state of linguistic research in the Philippines, especially in theoretical linguistics, leaves much to be desired. Unless institutional cultures change, unless priorities are reassessed to pay more attention to studies involving Philippine languages, and unless a more favorable attitude is displayed by Filipino academics towards linguistic research and a greater interest in languages is generated from them, the situation may remain or even become

worse in years to come. The Philippines continues to lag behind other Asian countries like India, Singapore, Japan, China, and South Korea in creating knowledge in linguistics. Filipino linguists seem to content themselves in consuming knowledge about the local languages that is being churned out by researchers from these countries. The situation may also deprive Filipino linguists of the opportunity to appreciate the richness and beauty of the local languages, and as language and culture are intertwined, it may create gaps in our understanding of Filipinos as a people.

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