

DOCUMENTATION SECTION:

THE USES OF LINGUISTICS IN THE PHILIPPINE SETTING

Report on the Linguistic Society of the Philippines convention on May 5, 1979 at the
Pablo Nicolas Auditorium, De La Salle University

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The theme of this year's convention was 'The uses of linguistics in the Philippine setting'. Curtis D. McFarland, in his keynote address, discussed the various possibilities by which linguists can make use of their training and expertise in helping Filipinos solve their problems. In the national life, the development of a national language and the questions of language use in schools require that people come up with options, make decisions, and implement plans. To do this, they must be educated as to the possible alternatives and consequences. The linguist can come in not to force decisions, but to clarify issues and to share his training. Outside of academia, the role of the linguist is not as well-defined. However, it is not difficult to imagine communication problems which require expert knowledge of language structure and systems. The whole area of communication for persuasion, for instance, is definitely 'marketable'. It is a question of articulation, of getting involved, of making others know, and of convincing ourselves as well that we have relevance and that we have practical applications for our conceptual models.

Three topics were discussed by three nonlinguist panels to which three sets of linguist reactors responded. These topics were: (a) Linguists in the academic world, (b) Linguists outside of academia, and (3) Linguists and the Philippines in the future.

The panelists for the first session discussed answers to the question: 'What can a linguist do in a university beside teach Introduction to Linguistics?' The panelists were Exaltacion Ramos, Dean of Arts and Science, De La Salle University; Loretta Sicat, Executive Director, Philippine Social Science Council; Pacita Habana, Program Director, Innovative Technology (INNOTECH) Center of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO); and Angela Lansang, Dean of the Graduate School, St. Louis University.

Ramos pointed out that the linguists' participation in other departments has become very important in the university. In whatever discipline language figures as a significant dimension or parameter, the input of the linguist becomes necessary. She particularly specified the areas of psychology (verbal behavior and social interaction), anthropology (culture and language), sociology (sociolinguistics), and political science (language and politics).

Sicat focused on the role of linguists in national development. She stressed the need for national language development, the trend toward indigenization of research, the process of research dissemination and research utilization. In all these areas, the linguists can come in, actively participate and bring about the desired changes.

Habana described various programs of the INNOTECH where, through better instructional management and self-teaching modules, education can be carried on for more people with fewer teachers. The language dimension is important since basic literacy and knowledge depend on language and since teaching materials must be tested for adequacy, aptness, readability, and comprehensibility of language. Also in training implementors, the barriers in most cases are linguistic in nature.

Lansang said that the fulfillment of a linguist in the university is first of all as a teacher. But, then, he can go beyond this and help tackle problems related to language. Because he has the tools and training, he can help identify problems as well as evolve projects to solve these problems. The problems can be those related to the propagation of Pilipino, the implementation of the Bilingual Policy, the raising of literacy rates. In short, the linguist can help bring about the linkages between education and the linguistic realities of life in the Philippines.

The consensus from the reactors centered around the necessity of 'marketing' or selling the linguist. The slogan can be: See a linguist for a language problem.

The discussion at the second session was on the question 'What can a linguist do in Makati?' The nonlinguist panelists were Luchi Ticson, Group Head of the Editorial Section, Sycip-Gorres-Velayo; Herminia Barcelona, Dean of Arts and Sciences, University of the East, who acted as proxy for Josefina Patron, Research Director of the National Media Production Center; and Raquel Balagtas, Programmer at the Technology Resource Center.

Ticson enumerated a number of areas where linguists would be invaluable. They can work in the area of evaluation, that is, developing evaluative instruments, actually testing applicants on their language skills, and evaluating language training programs. They can explore the area of personnel training itself. Developing communication skills among staff is one of the major concerns of business. With their knowledge of communication systems, they can look into the networks of communication in business, the types of oral and written reports done, and the interaction among business associates. Finally, linguists can do basic research on the distinctive features of the language of business.

Barcelona spoke for Patron on the areas in mass media and professional communications where linguists can find applications for their training. The National Media Production Center is the major information-education arm of the government. Among its tasks are: drawing up media strategy, producing media materials, distributing and disseminating materials, and conducting research and evaluation. The linguists can be involved directly in the numerous projects in their capacity as communications experts. Linguists can also be involved indirectly on a consultancy basis.

Balagtas stressed the fact that linguists can help immensely in manpower development, in project management of language programs, and in copywriting and advertising.

After the panel presentation, the reactors responded and agreed that there is a necessity for setting up a mechanism for consultancies. One of the first steps to take is to compile a directory of linguists and make this available to different companies.

The last session explored the question 'What can a linguist prepare for?' The panelists were Co King Uy, Director of the Computer Center, De La Salle University (for computers), Alfonso De Guzman, Educational Development Projects Implementing Task Force (EDPITAF) (for communications), Arlyne de los Santos of De La Salle University (for population) and Robert Salazar of De La Salle University (for regional development).

Co King Uy brought up the topic of cybernetics and the points of contact between artificial and natural languages at a theoretical level. In the Philippines, hardware technology is imported wholesale; that is, computers come to us with fully built-in systems. Thus, research is not possible at the present time. The question then is not how linguists can help computer science, but rather, how the computers can help the linguists.

De Guzman made a plea for keeping in mind the producers (the printer and the compositor) and the consumer (the reader) in any kind of language use. He pointed out the need for a programmer to do a special program for syllabifying Pilipino for printer's use, for instance. He also pointed out the intrinsic difficulties connected with the IPA symbols.

De los Santos said that in any kind of demographic projections about the future of the Philippines, inputs from linguists are needed for the following areas: census data, number of speakers of dialects, trends in the growth or decay of dialects, spread or dissemination of Pilipino. As the Philippines grows in population (the projection for the year

2000 is twice the present population), we need a more efficient network of communications, one requirement of which is a common language. At a lower level, there is a necessity for translations to disseminate important information especially about planning of families.

Salazar focused mostly on the necessity of adequate language use for disseminating concepts of development and innovation in a region and possible communication barriers arising from language. The right kind of language (the local dialect, the local *lingua franca*) will make the agencies of development accessible to people, and help them become aware of their rights and of the need for proper legislation.

The consensus was that linguists need to define their role and themselves more precisely for nonlinguists, since judging from the different nonlinguists requested to respond to the questions, it is clear that linguists are identified mostly as language teachers, particularly teachers of English. An interesting question came up, one for which no consensus was reached: Do we narrow down the concept of a linguist, or do we expand it to include all the various roles possible for him?

Obituary

DR. CECILIO LOPEZ

February 1, 1898-September 5, 1979

Professor Emeritus of Linguistics and Oriental Studies,
University of the Philippines

Professor Cecilio Lopez began as an undergraduate student of zoology at the University of the Philippines and developed a life-long interest in linguistics under the tutelage of Otto Scheerer, the founder of the Department of Linguistics at the University in the early 1920's.

Trained in linguistics at the University of Hamburg under Otto Dempwolff, the first systematizer of Austronesian Comparative Studies, Lopez wrote a doctoral dissertation in 1930 comparing Ilocano and Tagalog (his first language).

He then became the first trained linguist of the country and spent the rest of his life connected with the University of the Philippines as a professor and Head of the Department of Oriental Languages and at one time Secretary of the Graduate School, except for two periods of government service as full-time Secretary of the Institute of National Language (1936-1941) during the Quezon Administration and again as Director of the Institute of National Language for a short period (1954-1955) during the Magsaysay Administration.

Lopez taught basic linguistics to the founding members of the Institute of National Language, commissioned by a Presidential Executive Order under the National Language Law (Commonwealth Act Number 570) to select and standardize a national language for the Philippines, which was granted Commonwealth status in 1936 and was to be granted independence ten years later in 1946.

In connection with his work at the Institute, Lopez wrote a *Manual of the Philippine National Language* in English at the behest of President Manuel L. Quezon for use by teachers in their teaching of the new national language based on Tagalog. The Manual was based on Bloomfield's classic 1917 Tagalog grammar but was supplemented by a section on syntax which was Lopez' specific contribution.

In spite of administrative work at the Institute and at the University, Lopez continued his research, gathered data, and spent his retirement years as Emeritus Professor (1963) not only continuing to teach Comparative Austronesian to University of the Philippines graduate students but also preparing his manuscripts for publications by the University of the Philippines Linguistics Department journal, *The Archive*.

A Festschrift was presented by his friends and colleagues here and abroad on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday and subsequently a collection of his writings was compiled in 1977 by Ernesto Constantino, Professor of Linguistics at the University of the Philippines, his student and later colleague, and editor of his manuscripts.

Lopez suffered from cardiac arrest on September 5, 1979 after a bout of illness from which he seemingly recovered. At the necrological services in his memory, his colleagues and former students paid tribute to their dean and to the Philippines' first native linguist.

ANDREW GONZALEZ, FSC

LINGUISTIC SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES ACTIVITIES 1978 – 1979

1. The Board met monthly on the last Friday of the month to consider pending matters. The meeting was usually followed by the monthly lectures.

Lectures for last year were the following:

Prof. Dr. Heinrich Kelz	:	'Oppositions in Phonology: Theoretical Dichotomies'
Prof. Kazuo Akasaka	:	'Trends in English Language Teaching in Japan'
Teresita C. Rafael	:	'Pidginization and Creolization in Hawaii'
Michael Smithies	:	'Practical Approaches to English for Special Purposes'
Thomas Scott Goodrich	:	'Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies of Language Use in a Multi-Ethnic Philippine Classroom'
Stanley Kurtz	:	'The Case for English Spelling Revision'

2. PUBLICATIONS:

The combined June and December 1978 (Vol. 9 Nos. 1 and 2) issue of the *Philippine Journal of Linguistics* were distributed.

3. ACTIVITIES:

- 3.1. Under the sponsorship of the Ford Foundation, Bangkok, Prof. Ladislav Zgusta conducted a workshop on lexicography on May 14 to June 12, 1979. Participants from the LSP were the consortium students, LSP members and key lexicographers of the Institute of National Language. An Indonesian and a Malaysian representatives also participated.
- 3.2. The Ministry of Education and Culture with the assistance of the Surian ng Wikang Pambansa, Linguistic Society of the Philippines and Philippine Association for Language Teaching, sponsored a conference on "Bilingual Education Four Years After and Beyond" on October 18 to 20, 1979 at the Health Education Auditorium of the Philippine Normal College. The conference was attended by language supervisors of the different Ministry of Education and Culture regions. Problems were discussed regarding the implementation of the Bilingual Education Policy in the Philippines and some solutions to these problems.
- 3.3. With the cooperation of the Goethe House German Cultural House, the LSP and PNC sponsored a series of lectures by Dr. H.E. Piepho, Head of the Linguistics Department of Giessen University, West Germany.

- 3.5. A summer workshop was held under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Education and Culture, with the cooperation of the Linguistic Society of the Philippines, Philippine Normal College and Pambansang Samahan ng Linggwistikang Pilipino on updating the Teaching of English in Philippine Schools and Using Pilipino as a Medium of Instruction in Social Studies and the Social Sciences. Participants were teachers and supervisors at the Primary and Secondary Levels, both private and public.

4. FINANCES:

We obtain subsidies for our publications from the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the National Science Development Board through the Philippine Social Science Council. For operating funds, we depend on income generated by our workshops, the sales of our publications and membership dues.

ANDREW GONZALEZ, FSC
Executive Secretary

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