TAGALOG EXISTENTIALS

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Frequently in the study of a language, a phonological form is encountered which seems to express two (or more) distinct meanings, and we are faced with a decision: (1) Are the two seemingly distinct meanings really extensions of the same basic meaning, the meaning of a single morpheme? or (2) are we dealing with two distinct morphemes which just happen to have the same phonological form; i.e., they are homonymous. As long as there is only a single phonological form in question, it will be a difficult decision, which probably won't make much difference in any case. If there are two forms whose shared meaning covers the same range, homonymy becomes less, and a single basic meaning more, likely. If there are four such forms, the argument for homonymy becomes extremely tenuous.

In Tagalog the forms *may* and *mayroón* can mean 'to have' and 'there is/are'; these forms also appear in sentences whose English translations contain indefinite pronouns. The form *walâ* can mean 'not to have' and 'there is/are no', and also appears in sentences whose English translations contain (negative) indefinite pronouns. The form *marámi*, in addition to its basic meaning of 'many, much', can also mean 'to have many/ much' and 'there are many/is much'; this form also appears in sentences whose English translations contain an indefinite 'many things, many ones'. These four forms constitute what I call the class of *existentials*.

Up to the present, the existentials have been treated as entering into three distinct types of construction, only one of which is called 'existential', the other two being 'possessive' and 'indefinite'. In this paper I will present arguments to show that such a division is unjustified, that there is a single existential contruction in Tagalog, and that the differences in meaning constitute extensions of the same basic existential meaning.

1.1. BACKGROUND

In his *A Grammar of the Tagalog Language (1925 : 133-4)*, Blake noted two meanings of *may* and *walâ*. (1) 'The particle *may* and its negative *walâ* are used to express the possession or non-possession of something indefinite.' Using my own examples:[1]

(1)   May bigás táyo. 'We have rice.'
(2)   Walâ tayong bigás. 'We have no rice.'

(2)   These particles are also used without subject to express *'there is'*, *'there is not'*. For example:

(3)   *May bigás sa tindáhan.* 'There is rice at the store.'
(4)   *Waláng bigás sa tindáhan.* 'There is no rice at the store.'

Blake treated *mayroón as may* + *doón* 'there', and he found corresponding forms *may-

1

dini, *maydito, and *maydityán. These forms are not confirmed by any of my informants, nor do they appear in subsequent grammars. While it is probable that *mayroón* is historically *may + doón,* there seems to be no justification for such a synchronic treatment, at least with regard to the Tagalog of Manila. *Mayroón* behaves very much like *may* and *walâ,* as in the following examples:

(5) *Mayroón táyong bigás.* 'We have rice.'

(6) *Mayroóng bigás sa tindáhan.* 'There is rice at the store.'

The distinction between possessive and existential meanings has been maintained up to the present. Thus, we find in Bowen's *Beginning Tagalog (1965 : 138,164),* 'Possession of an indefinite or non-specific thing is expressed by a predicate with *may* or *mayroón;* the negative of *may* and *mayroón* is *walá* '. A few chapters later '*may* and *mayroón* may also be equivalent to the English existential expressions, *there's/there are'.* Furthermore, 'Existential sentences in Tagalog have no topic'.

In Schachter and Otanes' *Tagalog Reference Grammar (1972),* the most comprehensive treatment of Tagalog grammar to date, we find two innovations. First, *marami* 'many, much' is included in the class of existentials: 'The label POSSESSIVE *may* PHRASE is used as a cover term for possessive phrases introduced by any one of the following: *may, mayroón, marámi, walâ* '. The following are examples with *marámi:*

(7) Marámi táyong bigás. 'We have lots of rice.

(8) Maráming bigás sa tindáhan. 'There is lots of rice at the store.'

Observe the difference between *marámi* and other quantifiers:

(9) Kauntî (lang) ang bigás natin. 'We have (only) a little rice.' (lit, Our rice is only a little.)

(10) Ápat ang anák nilá. 'They have four children.' (lit. Their children are four.)

(11) Marámi siláng anák. 'They have many children.'

It is also possible to say:

(12) Marámi ang bigás natin. 'We have lots of rice.' (lit. Our rice is much.)

(13) Marámi ang anák nila. 'They have many children.' (lit. Their children are many.)

but not:

(14) *Kauntî (lang) táyong bigás.

and while:

(15) Ápat siláng anák. 'They are four children.'

is grammatical, it means 'they *are* four children ' and not 'they *have* four children'.

Schachter and Otanes found that, in addition to the possessive and existential meanings, there is also an 'indefinite' meaning: 'If the verb in an indefinite *may* phrase predicate is an actor-focus verb, the sentence has no topic. Sentences in which *may* or *mayroón* is followed by an actor-focus verb are often equivalent to English sentences with an indefinite pronoun as subject.' 'If the verb in an indefinite-*may*-phrase predicate is a goal-focus verb, the sentence has a topic which represents the performer of the action of the verb (Note that the performer of the action is not expressed by a *ng*-phrase actor complement as it is in other constructions that involve goal-focus verbs).' The following are examples of the 'indefinite' meanings:

(16) May tumáwag sa iyó. 'Someone called you.'

(17) Mayroóng tumáwag sa iyó. 'Someone called you.'

(18) Waláng tumáwag sa iyó. 'No one called you.'

(19) Maráming tumáwag sa iyó. ' Many called you.'

(20) May nákita akó. 'I saw something.'

(21) Mayroón akóng nákita. 'I saw something.'

(22) Walâ akóng nákita. 'I didn't see anything.'

(23) Marámi akóng nakíta. 'I saw many things.'

The question I wish to raise is whether it is proper to treat these various types of sentences as having three distinct meanings, and thus to be classified as three distinct types of 'may-phrase', or should they rather be treated as different manifestations of the same construction, expressing what is essentially a single meaning? I will argue for the latter treatment; but before I do, it is necessary to dispose of a couple of other matters, namely (1) differences between the distribution of may and that of the other existentials, and (2) additional idiomatic meanings of each of the existentials. These matters do not bear directly upon our central question, but may confuse the issue if they are not clearly understood.

2.0.THE DISTRIBUTION OF MAY

May differs from other existentials in that it is 'preclitic and always immediately precedes the word (or the phrasal particle mga + the word) that represents the thing possessed'. Bowen's (1965:138) statement refers to 'possessive' phrases, but the provision applies equally to 'existential' and 'indefinite' phrases. Thus, if we define that word or phrase which describes the thing, person, etc., whose existence, non-existence, posssession, or indefiniteness is being asserted as the existential complement, then may must always immediately precede its complement, regardless of which of the three meanings is being expressed. This means, among other things, that enclitic particles are placed after the first main word in the complement, and not between may and the complement. Other existentials can be followed by enclitics. In:

(24) May bigás na táyo. 'We have rice now (already).'

the enclitics na 'already' and táyo 'we (inclusive)' are placed after bigás and not after may. In:

(25) Walâ na táyong bigás. 'We have no more rice.'

these enclitics are placed after the existential walâ. See also examples (20)-(23).

An additional difference is that 'Mayroón and walâ always require the linker /-ng/ (except after daw) before the word that represents the thing possessed'. Again we can broaden Bowen's (1965:139) statement: the complements of mayroón, walâ, and marámi, regardless of the meaning expressed, are in most cases[2] immediately preceded by the linker -ng. Note that although the linker is dominated by the existential, its position is immediately before the complement and thus after any intervening enclitics. With may, there is no linker. See (24) and (25).

The distribution of may vis-a-vis mayroón has caused some difficulty. Bowen found that 'Mayroón may be used instead of may only if the sentence contains an enclitic particle and/or an ang-pronoun'. This rule would allow sentences like (1) and (5), but would only allow:

(26) May bigás si Luisa. 'Luisa has rice'.

and not:

(27) Mayroóng bigás si Luisa. 'Luisa has rice'.

However, (27) is fully grammatical. Bowen further observes that mayroón but not may

can be used in short answers. For example:

(28) May bigás ka ba? 'Do you have rice?'
(29) (Oo,) mayroón. 'Yes (I have some).'
(30) Walâ. 'No (I haven't any).'
(31) (Oo,) marámi. 'Yes, lots.'

The answer could not be:

(32) *(Oo,) may.

Actually, this restriction can be made more general: *may* can never occur without its complement. Thus:

(33) Mayroón si Luisa. 'Luisa has some.'
(34) *May si Luisa.
(35) Si Luisa ang mayroón. 'Luisa is the one who has some.'
(36) *Si Luisa ang may.

Schachter and Otanes cite an additional environment in which *mayroon* but not *may* can occur: 'When, however, the object possessed is expressed by a deictic pronoun, only *mayroon* is used, and it is followed by the *ng* form of the deictic. For example:

(37) Mayroon nito si Luisa. 'Luisa has some of this.'
(38) *May nito si Luisa.

In other environments Schachter and Otanes found the two forms to be in free alternation with the qualification that 'In sentences that do not include enclitic particles or pronouns, *may* is more common than *mayroon*'. Notice the difference from Bowen's prohibition. 'In sentences that include one or more enclitics, *may* and *mayroon* are equally common'.

In conducting a survey of written Tagalog in the preparation of *A Provisional Classification of Tagalog Verbs,* (McFarland, 1976) I found that *may* is more than ten times as frequent as *mayroón*. Together with my observations of spoken Tagalog, it is my judgment that *mayroón* generally occurs only (1) where *may* cannot occur, or (2) to place greater emphasis on the statement.

3.0. IDIOMATIC MEANINGS

Each of the existentials occurs in contexts in which the other existentials do not. This creates no problems; placing words in the same class does not require that they substitute for one another in *every* environment. To impose such a restriction would result in a very large number of very small classes—including many one-member classes—and a tremendous loss of generalization. All that we require is that a particular classification, or generalization, applies to a significant portion of the occurrences of the members of the given class. Occurrences not so covered are treated as exceptional or idiomatic. Such exceptional behavior is especially to be expected in small classes, such as conjunctions, modals, adverbial particles, etc.—and existentials. The following discussion summarizes most of this exceptional behavior of the existentials.

Marámi is also an adjective and has various intensified forms typical of adjectives, such as:

maraming-marámi 'very many, much'
nápakarámi 'so many'
pinakamarámi 'most

As seen in (12) and (13) an existential sentence with *marámi* can also be stated as a basic sentence with an adjective (*marámi*) as the predicate.[3]

Like other adjectives, *marámi* combines with nouns and other predicates to form composite predicate phrases and composite reference expressions: (McFarland 1976:5)

(39) Maráming babáe ang tumáwag sa iyó. 'Many women called you.' (= Maráming babáing tumáwag sa iyó.)

(40) Nakíta ko ang maráming anák ni Aling Luisa. 'I saw Aling Luisa's many children.'

Walâ occurs as the negative of *ná-*, as in *nása, nárító*, etc.: (Blake 1925:130)

(41) Nása báhay ang libró mo. 'Your book is at the house.'

(42) Walâ sa báhay ang libró mo. 'Your book is not at the house.

(43) Nása ákin ang libró mo. 'I have your book.' (lit. Your book is at/with me.)

(44) Walâ sa ákin ang libró mo. 'I don't have your book.'

(45) Nárító ang libró mo. 'Your book is here.'

(46) Walâ ríto ang libró mo. 'Your book isn't here.'

May has the widest distribution and semantic range. Some examples of this distribution are *sa may* 'beside, near'.

(47) Umupô siyá sa may bintána . 'She sat beside the window.'

May ka-(adjective)-*an* 'a little bit (adjective)':

(48) Matabâ siyá. 'He is fat.'

(49) May katabaán siyá. 'He's a little bit fat.'

May also appears in some constructions as a marker of actor focus. For **example:**

(50) Gustó ka niyá. 'He likes you.'

(51) May gustó siyá sa iyó. 'He likes you.'

(52) Sino ang nagsábi niyán? 'Who said that?'

(53) Sino ang may sábi niyán? 'Who said that?'

May occurs as a prefix in a number of nouns, such as:

may-ari 'owner' (lit. have-possession)

maybáhay 'housewife' (lit. have-house)

maykapangyaríhan 'authorities' (lit. have-authority)

Mayroón (*na*) and *walâ* (*pa*) also occur idiomatically with numerals, such as time and age:

(54) May alás siyéte na ba? 'Is it seven o'clock yet?'

(55) Oo, mayroón na. 'Yes, it is.' ·

(56) Walâ pa. 'Not yet.'

(57) May beynti-kuwátro na siyá. 'He is twenty-four already.'

(58) Walâ pa siyáng trénta (ányos). 'He is not yet thirty.'

These diverse environments and meanings give the existentials an appearance of great irregularity. However, with regard to the main environment, that with a purely existential meaning, this class of words is quite regular and straightforward.

4.0. HOW MANY MEANINGS?

Having disposed of these matters, we are prepared to return to the central question: do the existentials (aside from the environments discussed in the preceding section) express single, extended meanings or three distinct meanings: possessive, existential,

indefinite? We can try to answer this question in four ways: on the basis of (1) intuition, (2) translation, (3) structure, and (4) innovations.

4.1 INTUITION.

Many modern linguists have great faith in intuition, especially when it comes to semantic problems. So let's see. My own intuition tells me that the three meanings are distinct, but then my intuition speaks English, and in English the three meanings are expressed with very different constructions:

(59) There is rice. (existential)
(60) We have rice. (possessive)
(61) Someone called you. (indefinite)

So let's ask a native speaker of Tagalog, Surprisingly, it turns out that this question is not so easy to ask, or answer. On the average, the native speaker looks at you with a puzzled expression, and replies rather hesitantly, 'Yes, I think the meaning is the same in all three.' Even when you find a Tagalog who claims there is a difference, you can't be sure about his reply. Nor can you be sure of those who say there is no difference. After all, a person may say that there is or is not a difference, but speak the language as though the reverse is true. Well, intuition is like religion; either you believe in it or you don't. And if we disagree, we have no way to settle the issue. I don't believe in intuition as a primary source of semantic information.

4.2 TRANSLATION

A more concrete procedure is to find out what happens when we translate the relevant sentences into other languages. If we fail to find other (unrelated) languages with the same association of meanings, we may be inclined to feel that the expression of these meanings by a single set of forms in Tagalog is accidental—that there is no natural connection between the meanings. At least with regard to possession and existence, this is not the case. It is true that these meanings are clearly distinguished in English (see (59) and (60)) and other Western languages such as German:

(62) Es gibt Reis. 'There is rice.' (lit. It gives rice.)
(63) Wir haben Reis. 'We have rice.'
(64) Es gibt keinen Reis. 'There is no rice.' (lit. It gives no rice.)
(65) Wir haben keinen Reis. 'We have no rice.'

However, in a number of unrelated languages, possession and existence are expressed by a single set of terms. This is true of other Philippine languages, and other Austronesian languages, such as Malay:

(66) Ada beras. 'There is rice.'
(67) Kita ada beras. 'We have rice.'
(68) Tidak ada beras. 'There is no rice.'
(69) Kita tidak ada beras. 'We have no rice.'

In Chinese (Mandarin):

(70) Yǒu mǐ. 'There is rice.'
(71) Wǒmèn yǒu mǐ. 'We have rice.'
(72) Méi yǒu mǐ. 'There is no rice.'
(73) Wǒmen méi yǒu mǐ. 'We have no rice.'

In Japanese:

    (74) Kome ga arimasu. 'There is rice.'
    (75) Watashitachi wa kome ga arimasu. 'We have rice.'
    (76) Kome wa arimasen. 'There is no rice.'
    (77) Watashitachi wa kome wa arimase 'We have no rice.'

Even in some Indo-European languages, ch ͞ Russian:

    (78) 'There is rice.' — Yest ris.
    (79) 'We have rice.' — U nas yest ris.
    (80) 'There is no rice.' — Nyet ris.
    (81) 'We have no rice.' — U nas nyet ris.

From these examples it would appear that perhaps there is a natural or universal semantic connection between possession and existence, and the Philippine languages are simply following this universal tendency.

With regard to indefiniteness, I know of no non-Austronesian languages which connect this with possession or existence (but I don't know that many languages). Most languages have some kind of indefinite pronoun; these are for the most part lacking in Philippine languages.

Nonetheless, I trust that most readers will be more impressed, as I am, with the agreement of a number of unrelated languages with regard to possession and existence, than with the absence of such agreement with regard to indefiniteness. After all, we do not expect words in unrelated languages to cover the same range of meanings—*unless* there is a natural connection between the meanings in question, e.g., between possession and existence.

4.3. STRUCTURE.

Except for the differences (pertaining to *may*) noted earlier, Tagalog existential sentences all have the same structure, regardless of the type of meaning expressed. That is, they can all be treated as being derived from the same transformation.

The constituents of an existential sentence are (1) the existential, (2) the complement, and optionally (3) a subject.[4] An existential complement is very similar in structure to a relativized predicate phrase, (Schachter and Otanes 1972:157 ff) which is in turn very similar to a basic sentence predicate phrase. In some cases these three structures are identical, namely, if the predicate phrase does not contain an actor complement or an object complement.[5] For example:

    (82) Gurò siyá sa Central School. 'She is a teacher at the Central School.'
    (83) Mayáman siyá. 'She is rich.'
    (84) Nagtátrabáho siyá sa bánko. 'She is working at the bank.'
    (85) Tumúlong siyá kay Aling Luisa. 'She helped Aling Luisa.'

Any basic sentence predicate phrase (which has a subject) can be relativized to form an *ang*-phrase (common reference expression) or a *na*-phrase. In most cases, the relativization transformation can be applied only to the subject.[6] The transformation consists of deletion of the subject and the placement of *ang* (*ng* or *sa*) or *na* before what remains (the predicate phrase). Thus

    Relativization:
        PredPhr Subj → ang/na PredPhr
        Gurò siyá sa Central School → ang/na gurò sa Central School

One occurrence of the *ang*-phrase (CRE) is in identificational questions, question

which request the identity (or nature) of one of the variables to which a particular predicate applies. In Tagalog most identificational questions include one of the interrogatives *síno* 'who', *anó* 'what', or *alín* 'which'. In most cases, these interrogatives apply only to the subject. The transformation is something like this:

Identification-Interrogation:
  PredPhr Subj → Interrogative ang PredPhr
  Gurò siyá sa Central School → Síno ang gurò sa Central School

For example:

(86) Síno ang gurò sa Central School? 'Who is the teacher at the Central School?'
(87) Síno ang mayáman? 'Who is the rich one?'
(88) Síno ang nagtátrabáho sa bánko? 'Who is working at the bank?'
(89) Síno ang tumúlong kay Aling Luisa? 'Who helped Aling Luisa?'

Other environments for the *ang*-phrase (CRE) are in co-referential sentences (McFarland 1976:1) and as the subject of a basic sentence:

(90) Si Perla ang gurò sa Central School. 'Perla is the teacher at the Central School.'
(91) Si Perla ang mayáman. 'Perla is the rich one.'
(92) Si Perla ang nagtátrabáho sa bánko. 'Perla is the one working at the bank. '
(93) Si Perla ang tumúlong kay Aling Luisa. 'Perla is the one who helped Aling Luisa.'
(94) Babáe ang gurò sa Central School. 'The teacher at the Central School is a woman.'
(95) Babáe ang mayáman. 'The rich one is a woman.'
(96) Babáe ang nagtátrabáho sa bánko. 'The one working at the bank is a woman. '
(97) Babáe ang tumúlong kay Aling Luisa. 'The one who helped Aling Luisa was a woman.'

Na-phrases occur if something else precedes the relativized predicate phrase within a composite reference expression. For example a deictic pronoun, such as *iyón* 'that':

(98) Síno iyóng (iyón + na)[7] gurò sa Central School? 'Who is that teacher at the Central School?'
(99) Síno iyóng mayáman? 'Who is that rich one?'
(100) Síno iyóng nagtátrabáho sa bánko? ' Who is that one working at the bank?"
(101) Síno iyóng tumúlong kay Aling Luisa? 'Who is that one who helped Aling Luisa?'

Or another predicate, such as *babáe* 'woman':

(102) Síno ang babáing (babáe + na) gurò sa Central School? 'Who is the female teacher at the Central School?'
(103) Síno ang babáing mayáman? 'Who is the rich woman?'
(104) Síno ang babáing nagtátrabáho sa bánko? 'Who is the woman working at the bank?'
(105) Síno ang babáing tumúlong kay Aling Luisa? 'Who is the woman who helped Aling Luisa?'

For this type of predicate phrase (no actor complement or object complement), the existential complement is identical in structure to the relativized predicate phrase (and to the basic sentence predicate phrase).

Existentialization:
  PredPhr Subj → Existential (*-ng*) PredPhr

Gurò siyá sa Central School → May guró sa Central School

For example:

(106) May guro᾽ sa Central School. ' There is a teacher at the Central School. '
(107) May mayáman. 'There are rich ones; some are rich.'
(108) May nagtátrabáho sa bánko. 'Someone is working at the bank.'
(109) May tumúlong kay Aling Luisa. 'Someone helped Aling Luisa.'
(110) Waláng gurò sa Central School. ' There is no teacher at the Central School. '
(111) Waláng mayáman. 'There are no rich ones; none are rich.'
(112) Waláng nagtátrabáho sa bánko. ' No one is working at the bank. '
(113) Waláng tumúlong kay Aling Luisa. 'No one helped Aling Luisa.'
(114) Maráming gurò sa Central School. ' There are many teachers at the Central School. '
(115) Maráming mayáman. ' There are many rich ones. '
(116) Maráming nagtátrabáho sa bánko. 'Many are working at the bank.'
(117) Maráming tumúlong kay Aling Luisa. 'Many helped Aling Luisa.'

Existential complements can also be composite (compare composite CRE):

(118) May babáing gurò᾽ sa Central School. 'There is/are female teachers at the Central School.'
(119) Mayroóng babáing mayáman. 'There are rich women.'
(120) Waláng babáing nagtátrabáho sa bánko. 'No women are working at the bank.'
(121) Maráming babáing tumúlong kay Aling Luisa. 'Many women helped Aling Luisa.'

A predicate phrase which contains an object complement with indefinite reference (but not an actor complement) can occur as a basic sentence predicate phrase, a relativized predicate phrase, or an existential complement:

(122) Nakakíta siyá ng babáe. 'She saw a woman.'
(123) Nagbigáy siyá ng péra kay Aling Luisa. 'She gave some money to Aling Luisa.'
(124) Síno ang nakakíta ng babáe? 'Who saw a woman?'
(125) Síno ang nagbigáy ng péra kay Aling Luisa? 'Who gave some money to Aling Luisa?'
(126) May nakakíta ng babáe. 'Someone saw a woman.'
(127) Waláng nagbigáy ng péra kay Aling Luisa. 'No one gave money to Aling Luisa.'

If the predicate phrase contains an object complement with definite reference, it can occur as a relativized predicate phrase or an existential complement, but not a basic sentence predicate phrase:[8]

(128) Síno ang nakakíta kay Perla? 'Who saw Perla?'
(129) Síno ang nagbigáy nitóng péra kay Aling Luisa? 'Who gave this money to Aling Luisa?'
(130) May nakakíta kay Perla. 'Someone saw Perla.'
(131) Waláng nagbigáy nitóng péra kay Aling Luisa. 'No one gave this money to Aling Luisa.'

but not:

(132) *Nakakíta siyá kay Perla.
(133) *Nagbigáy siyá nitóng péra kay Aling Luisa.

A predicate phrase which contains an actor complement with indefinite reference can occur as a basic sentence predicate phrase, a relativized predicate phrase, or an existential complement:

(134) Anák siyá ng mayáman. 'She is a daughter of rich (parents).'
(135) Násagasáan siyá ng bus. 'She was run over by a bus.'
(136) Síno ang anák ng mayáman? 'Who is the daughter of rich (parents)?'.
(137) Síno ang násagasáan ng bus? 'Who was run over by a bus?'.
(138) May anák ng mayáman. 'Some are children of rich (parents).'
(139) Waláng násagasáan ng bus. 'No one was run over by a bus.'

If the predicate phrase contains an actor complement with definite reference, it can occur as a basic sentence predicate, or a relativized predicate phrase, but not as an existential complement:

(140) Anák siyá ni Perla. 'She is Perla's daughter.'
(141) Nákíta siyá ni Perla. 'Perla saw her.'
(142) Ibinigáy ni Perla itóng péra kay Aling Luisa. 'Perla gave this money to Aling Luisa.'
(143) Binigyán ni Perla ng péra si Aling Luisa. 'Perla gave some money to Aling Luisa.'
(144) Tinulúngan ni Perla si Aling Luisa. 'Perla helped Aling Luisa.'
(145) Síno ang anák ni Perla? "Who is Perla's child?"
(146) Síno ang nákíta ni Perla? 'Who did Perla see?.'
(147) Anó ang ibinigáy ni Perla kay Aling Luisa? "What did Perla give to Aling Luisa?"
(148) Síno ang binigyán ni Perla ng péra? 'Who did Perla give money to?'
(149) Síno ang tinulúngan ni Perla? 'Who did Perla help?'
(150) *May anák ni Perla.
(151) *May nákíta ni Perla.
(152) *May ibinigáy ni Perla kay Aling Luisa.
(153) *May ibinigyán ni Perla ng pera.
(154) *May tinulúngan ni Perla.

The correct existential sentences corresponding to (140)-(144) have complements from which the actor complements (with definite reference) are missing, but have subjects of the same type as those actor complements. Note: an existential sentence has a subject only if the corresponding relativized predicate phrase contains an actor complement with definite reference.

(155) May anák si Perla. 'Perla has a child.'
(156) May nákíta si Perla. 'Perla saw something.'
(157) May ibinigáy si Perla kay Aling Luisa. ' Perla gave something to Aling Luisa. '
(158) May binigyán si Perla ng péra. 'Perla gave somebody money.'
(159) May tinulúngan si Perla. 'Perla helped somebody.'

Let us pause for a moment to recall that in many respects, nominal predicate phrases in Tagalog are not distinguished from other types of predicate phrases, such as verbal. For example, the 'possessor' of a noun and the 'doer' of a non-actor-focus verb are expressed by the same terms—namely, by actor complements:

(160) Anák ko siyá. 'She is my daughter.'
(161) Nákíta ko siya. 'I saw her.'
(162) Anák siyá ni Perla. 'She is Perla's daughter.'

(163) Nákíta siyá ni Perla. 'Perla saw her.'
(164) Anák siyá nitó. 'She is this one's daughter.'
(165) Nákíta siyá nitó. 'This one saw her.'
(166) Anák siyá ng guro. 'She is the daughter of the teacher.'
(167) Nákíta siyá ng guro. 'The teacher saw her.'

Likewise, in the relativization and existentialization transformations, no distinction is made between nominal and other types of predicates, or between possessive, existential, and indefinite meanings. That is, there is no structural justification for distinguishing different types of existential sentences.

4.4.INNOVATION.

At this point, I feel that I have already fired my big guns, and have already made my case. No further evidence is necessary. And yet more evidence is available, evidence which I find rather persuasive. Within the Philippine languages, the existentials have undergone many formal innovations and replacements (McFarland 1977:2,31) For example:

	There is	There is not
Tagalog	mayroón	walâ
Cebuano	dúna	walâ
Bikol (Naga)	igwá	mayo
Sambal (Tina)	main	humín
Pangasinan	wára	anggapó
N. Kankanaey	wáda	maíd
Ilocano	addá	awán
Ibanag (P.)	eggá	áwan
Ivatan	ará	raváh

There is also some disagreement as to how the 'possessor' or 'doer' should be expressed. Many Philippine languages, such as Bikol (Naga), agree with Tagalog; the 'possessor' is expressed by the subject of the existential.

(168) Aki ko siyá. 'She is my daughter.'
(169) Igwá akóng (akó + -ng) aki. 'I have a child.'
(170) Mayo akóng aki. 'I have no children.'
(191) Náhilíng ko siyá. 'I saw her.'
(172) Igwá akóng náhilíng. 'I saw something.'
(173) Mayo akóng náhilíng. 'I didn't see anything.'

In others, such as Ilocano, the 'possessor' is expressed by an actor complement within the existential complement:

(174) Anák ko isúna. 'She is my daughter.'
(175) Addá anák ko. 'I have a child.'
(176) Awán ti anák ko. 'I have no child.'
(177) Nákitak (nakíta + ko)[9] isuna. 'I saw her.'
(178) Addá nakítak. 'I saw something.'
(179) Awán ti nakítak. 'I didn't see anything.'

One or the other group has innovated.

Yet, with all of these innovations, and the multitude of other innovations which have made the Philippine languages so different from each other, there has rarely been an innovation with regard to two points. (1) I know of no Philippine language which distinguishes the 'possessor' of a noun from the 'doer' of a verb. (2) The same structural identity between sentences with 'possessive', 'existential', and 'indefinite' meanings is found in many, if not most, Philippine languages. If these meanings had come together, by accident as it were, we would expect that over a period of time innovations would appear in a number of the daughter languages to separate the meanings again. The absence of such innovations would seem to indicate that the association among these various meanings has been, historically, and still is very strong in the minds of Filipinos.

5.0. CONCLUSION.

I have shown that a number of unrelated languages express 'possession' and 'existence' with a single set of terms, which seems to indicate a natural association between these two meanings. I have further shown that Tagalog makes no syntactic distinction among sentences expressing 'possession', 'existence', and 'indefiniteness', and that many other Philippine languages agree with Tagalog on this point. It should again be emphasized that we are dealing with a question of unity vs. homonymy with regard not to a single phonological form, but to four distinct forms: *may*, *mayroón*, *walâ*, and *marámi*. These four forms diverge syntactically and semantically, but with regard to the three meanings in question their behavior is uniform.

Against these arguments, my English-speaking intuition is left alone to argue for distinguishing three meanings, and three types of existential construction. Under the circumstances I will overrule my intuition in favor of more solid syntactic evidence.

I conclude that there is but one type of existential construction with but one general meaning. Perhaps this means that we will treat the meaning of:

(180) May anák ako. 'I have a child.'

as something like 'there is something/somebody such that it/he is my child.' Compare, for example, the meaning of *have* in

(181) We have a new boss.

Does *have* mean 'to possess'? Likewise, we may treat

(182) May nákita akó. 'I saw something.'

as meaning something like 'there is something such that I saw it.'

On the other hand, this common meaning is not 'to exist' as this is understood in Western philosophy. In Philippine languages, it is very difficult to express something like 'God exists.' About the closest we can come is:

(183) Nása lángit ang Diyós. 'God is in Heaven.'

(184) Nabúbúhay ang Diyós. 'God is alive.'

Similarly, Descartes' 'I think, therefore I exist,' would be:

(185) May ísip akó, kaya nárító akó. 'I think, therefore I am here.'

A concept somewhat a closer to Western existence vs. non-existence is found in sentences like:

(186) Talagá bang may multó? 'Are there really (such things as) ghosts?'

Thus we may conclude that the meaning is not 'possession' or 'indefiniteness' or 'existence', but some meaning that is an average or combination of all three. Whatever we decide, it is a single meaning and not three distinct meanings. There is one existential construction, not three.

NOTES

[1] The transcriptions used in this paper follow the standard Pilipino orthography, with the addition of accents to indicate vowel length and glottal stop. This accentual system is similar to the one currently in use at the Institute of National Language. The essential points are as follows:

(C)V́CV (C) = /(C)V:CV (C)/ (e.g. péra = /peːra/)
(C)VC(C)V́(C) = / (C)VC(C)V(C)/ (e.g. kamí = /kami/)
(C)VCV̀ = / (C)V:CVʔ/ (e.g. batà = /baːtaʔ/)
(C)VC(C)V̂ = / (C)VC(C)Vʔ/ (e.g. pintô = /pintoʔ/)

Any word beginning (orthographically) with a vowel begins phonetically with a glottal stop; e.g. *ákin* = /ʔaːkin/. An orthographic sequence of vowels is separated by a glottal stop; e.g. *babáe* = /babaː ʔe/. A glottal stop following a consonant is indicated by a hyphen; e.g. *mag-abót* = /magʔabót/.

[2] In other environments, the linker has two forms: *-ng* after vowels, *-n*, and glottal stop, *na* elsewhere (see fn. 27). With existentials only the *-ng* alternant occurs. If *na* would be called for, the linker is omitted:

Walâ raw (no linker) bigás si Luisa. 'It is said that Luisa has no rice.'

[3] The terminology used in this paper is that developed in *A Provisional Classification* and ' Definite Objects and Subject Selection in Philippine Languages ', *Studies in Philippine Linguistics*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1978), pp. 139-182. It is also similar to the terminology used by Schachter and Otanes. For *basic sentence*, see *A Provisional Classification*, p. 1; Schachter and Otanes, p. 59. For *predicate*, see 'Definite Objects' , p. 165.

[4] My *subject* = Schachter and Otanes' *topic*. *A Provisional Classification*, p. 1, Schachter and Otanes, p. 60. See also 'Definite Objects' , fn. 3, p. 179.

[5] *Actor complement: A Provisional Classification*, p. 6; Schachter and Otanes, pp. 74-75. Object complement: *A Provisional Classification*, pp. 6-7; Schachter and Otanes, pp. 75-76.

[6] Schachter and Otanes, *op. cit.*, p. 96. For convenience of presentation, relativization and existentialization are treated as transformations of basic sentences. In 'Definite Objects' I treat basic sentences, existential sentences, and relativized constructions as all transformationally derived from similar deep structures.

[7] The linker has the form *-ng* following words ending in a vowel, glottal stop, or *n*; otherwise it has the form *na*. Schachter and Otanes, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

[8] This restriction is the basic theme of my paper, 'Definite Objects and Subject Selection in Philippine Languages' . See fn. 19.

[9] In Ilocano, following a word ending in a vowel, *ko* 'my' and *mo* 'your' become *-k* and *-m*, respectively.

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