

Investigating Cross-linguistic Influence In Selected Bipartite Nouns in Philippine English

Gefilloyd L. De Castro

Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology

Ateneo de Zamboanga University

decastro@zscmst.edu.ph

aqohsidyep812@gmail.com

Abstract

Language is susceptible to changes especially when it comes in contact with another language or other languages; hence, new features may emerge due to cross-linguistic influence. This study attempted to investigate the emerging features in selected invariable plural bipartite nouns in Philippine English (PhE), which are believed to have been cross-linguistically influenced and found out a developing regularization of the said nouns in that their binary features are both inflected and uninflected due to the L1 interference brought about by perceptual linguistic salience, suggesting alternative morphologicalization and syntactization patterns of existing constructions. The findings may be in support of the claim that PhE is in or now moving towards endonormative stabilization phase at least with respect to linguistic development and structural effect.

Keywords: *cross-linguistic influence, bipartite nouns, language variation and change, perceptual linguistic salience, Philippine English*

1. Introduction

Language unquestionably undergoes changes, and a variety or varieties emerge because of many factors including L1 interference or cross-linguistic influence, region/geography, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, educational background, among others.* It has been noted that native language or mother tongue is one of the contributing factors for the changes in L2 linguistic features (see Bhela, 1999; Gass & Selinker, 1992; Odlin, 1989; Selinker, 1969, to mention a few). Locus in language change is believed to emerge in the language acquisition process (De Vos & De Vogelaer, 2011), although it also happens in language production among first language users. This is mainly the reason why achieving a native-like speech or writing style is likely impossible among L2 learners or speakers.

One of the most prominent factors for the changes that occur in L2 is cross-linguistic influence where the established habits in L1 transfer to L2 possibly due to perceptual linguistic salience (see Schilling-Estes & Wolfram, 1994). Kerswill and Williams (2002) defined perceptual linguistic salience as “the property of a linguistic item or feature that makes it in some way perceptually and cognitively prominent” (p. 81). The automatic transfer of L1 features to L2

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features occurs when the L2 features are distinct making the L1 features more noticeable or prominent to a speaker. When the said transfer occurs habitually, regularization, reconstruction, or an alternative construction is beginning to form. A case of nativization or endonormative stabilization in the linguistic development and structural effect may be considered.

This study was conceptualized to investigate emerging features in selected bipartite nouns (i.e., *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, and *pants*) in PhE by describing the morpho-syntactic features of its selected bipartite nouns (i.e., *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, and *pants*) in the corpora, and by determining how lexical and syntactic forms are being decided upon by L2 speakers in a psycholinguistic task. This study also attempts to theorize that the emerging features are due to L1-L2 cross-linguistic influences.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

In plural invariable nouns, summation plurals refer to things that consist of two equal parts that are joined together (e.g., *glasses*, *scissors*, *pants*, *tweezers*, *tongs*, etc.). These types of nouns occur only in the plural. In some cases, the number contrast phrase *a pair of* is attached. The word *pair* is typically used for countable bipartite nouns with plural non-countables to refer to objects with two equal parts or to entities that occur in two groups (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999). Some of its collocations include *arms*, *scissors*, *gloves*, *pants*, among others. Although plural in form, the phrase *a pair of* followed by the plural noun form actually refers to only a single item (Quirk, Greembaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985).

In line with this study, the use of the uninflected bipartite/pair nouns (e.g., *scissor*, *eyeglass*) and the inflected ones with lexical items that denote singularity (e.g., *an eyeglasses*; *this scissors*; *one pants*) has been observed to be widespread among Filipino speakers, a case believed to be undergoing regularization or alternative morphologicalization and syntactization. This is possibly due to L1 interference brought about by perceptual linguistic salience where L1 features appear to be prominent/noticeable than those of the L2. To better understand the study, the corresponding morphological aspects of the English bipartite nouns *scissor/s*, *eyeglass/es*, and *pants* in the Philippine linguistic system and in some Philippine languages will be discussed.

In the Philippine linguistic system, the corresponding form and meaning of the English bipartite noun *scissors* is always singular (e.g., *gunting* in Tagalog, Cebuano, Bisaya, and Tausug, to mention a few), except for Chavacano where the word *tijeras* is a Spanish derivation. Although *tijeras* is plural in form, it has now become regularized and considered singular both in form and meaning; hence, it is not said as **tijera*, neither **pares de tijeras* ‘a pair of scissors’. When *tijeras/gunting* is marked with *mga* (e.g., *mga tijeras/gunting*), it now refers to two or more pairs of scissors or units.

Likewise, the corresponding form and meaning of the English bipartite noun *eyeglasses* in Philippine languages is always singular, e.g., *antipara* in Chavacano; *salamin* or *salamin sa mata* and *antipara* in Tagalog/Filipino, Cebuano, and Bisaya; *samin* or *samin sa mata* in Tausug. When these different terms are marked with the plural marker *mga* (e.g., *mga antipara/salamin/salamin sa mata/samin sa mata*), they now refer to two or more eyeglasses.

In the same vein, the English bipartite noun *pants* is singular in form and meaning when equated to Philippine languages, i.e., *pantalon* in Chavacano/Tagalog/Filipino, Cebuano, Bisaya, and Tausug. To pluralize *pantalon*, the plural marker *mga* is placed before it (i.e., *mga pantalon*) which, in this case, refers to more than one pair of pants or more than one unit.

In other words, these English bipartite nouns, when corresponded, are non-inflectional in the Philippine linguistic system and technically perceived as a single unit. Thus, the concept *pair* for joined two-part nouns is morphologically non-existent in the Philippine context except for the

separated two-part nouns like in the phrase *pares ng tsinelas* for *pair of slippers*. As such, this study assumed that the English bipartite nouns *scissor/s*, *eyeglass/es*, and *pants* in PhE are undergoing a pace of regularization or alternative processes in the morphological and syntactic aspects. These processes of change may be referred to as resyntactization (Appel & Muysken, 1987) and remorphologicalization of existing constructions in the use of bipartite nouns, which is likely affected by the L1 features.

Regularization in the linguistic features of an L2 is a common phenomenon in places where there is language contact. It refers to the “development of grammatical paradigms to be uniform, that is, the elimination of forms which do not fit with general rules for grammatical categories” (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 415). This case is also common among pidgin or creole languages (Winford, 2003). This process is usually a result of mixed languages and happens when an innovative rule system rises because “the traditional system becomes too opaque to be successfully acquired” (De Vos & De Vogelaer, 2011, p. 245). Regularization may also take place through the convergence of the linguistic-systemic principles like remorphologicalization, psycholinguistic principles of perceptual salience, and sociolinguistic processes of symbolic identity (see Schilling-Estes & Wolfram, 1994).

In Schneider’s (2003) dynamic model of New Englishes, the regularization process as a beginning phenomenon can be evident in the early nativization phase where noticeable local linguistic idiosyncracies through substrate effects, interlanguage, among others, are seen and will slowly be adopted in the process of accommodation and negotiation. Hence, restructuring of the English language is most likely the greatest effect where “grammatical features of New Englishes emerge when idiosyncracies of usage develop into indigenous and innovative patterns and rules” (p. 249). The regularization process as a partial developing process may be seen between the late stage of this phase and the early stage of the endonormative stabilization phase. When this process is accepted and gradually adopted with support by a new and locally rooted linguistic self-confidence, this can be an indication that the variety is already in the endonormative stabilization phase (Schneider, 2003) as in the case of New Zealand English described by Gordon and Deverson (1998) where “in language now we can and must go alone, creating our own standards” (p. 108).

Many of the studies in the regularization process of some English features are devoted to the phonetic and phonological aspects. In other features, for instance, variation in the past tense of the verb *be* as a result of analogical leveling is widespread among English dialects such as Buckie English where *was* is highly favored by the 2nd person singular *you*, 1st person plural *we*, plural noun phrases, and existentials (Smith & Tagliamonte, 1998). A regularization of irregular past tense verbs (e.g., *When she striked me with that ...*, Bailey & Santa Ana, 2004 in Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015), and absence of past tense marking (e.g., *I saw some girl, and she look pretty*, Bailey & Santa Ana, 2004 in Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015) are found in Latino Englishes (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015).

The phonological, morphological, and syntactic characteristics of African American vernacular English (henceforth AAVE) have been seen to be regularized and distinct from other varieties of English or the so-called Standard English (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015), e.g., words such as *test*, *desk*, and *end* may be pronounced without their final consonants.

1.2 Studies in Philippine English due to cross-linguistic influence

The emerging linguistic features in PhE are well-attested as a clear manifestation of cross-linguistic influence due to language contact. In fact, PhE has been viewed to have undergone paces of change. For instance, in his model of dynamics of new Englishes, Schneider (2003) claimed that PhE is already in the stage of nativization. The use of extensive English by many Filipinos in

the society and especially in the government and education (Bautista & Bolton, 2009) and the inclusion of Filipino and Spanish words (e.g., *meryenda* and *despedida party*, Schneider, 2007) in PhE vocabulary and some changes in the morphology, syntax, and phonology have resulted in an indigenized variety of English.

In another view, Malicsi (2007) noted that the perception that Filipino speakers deteriorate the use of English is actually a case of indigenization that resulted in a language variety that qualifies as a dialect even if the process which gave rise to it differs from the traditional account of dialectalization. This phenomenon is described as language drift, where English has particular linguistic features that are very unlike the so-called Standard English. Its particular linguistic features emerged out of a gradual drift in language learning away from the native language speakers, such that generations of Filipino learners of English have picked up the forms and rules of English from Filipino L2 learners trained by other Filipino L2 learners (Malicsi, 2007). Malicsi also referred language drift to a case where random changes in forms and rules are a result of diffusion throughout a speech community through cultural transmission and have become regular and systematic, especially if the diffusers are considered as English exemplars in the community.

In the early studies in PhE, the first description of the phonological features of PhE and some expressions in its grammar and lexicon, which were considered *filipinism*, was provided by Llamzon (1969) in his monograph. The distinction between Filipino and the AmE variety in the production of vowel sounds, stress, and syllables was underscored. Later, Gonzalez and Alberca (1978) noted some distinctive features of PhE phonology including the absence of vowel reduction rule and possible spelling pronunciation, the absence of schwa sound, the substitution of voiceless fricatives for voiced fricatives, the absence of aspiration of initial voiceless stops, simplification of consonant clusters, different stress patterns in individual words, among others. Gonzalez (2009) found out that PhE is syllable-timed rather than stress-timed with the full pronunciation of the vowel. The intonation and other expressive features in PhE are clearly local. The segmental features in PhE are also distinct from the standard.

Vowels in Bisaya (a variety of Bisaya/Cebuano language) and consonants in Chavacano have also been observed to overlap (Delos Reyes, Santiago, Tadena, & Zubiri, 2009). The tendency to replace the phonetic /u/ with /o/ or vice versa and /e/ and /i/ or vice versa in words among Bisaya speakers is clearly manifested in natural utterances (e.g., *beautiful* is pronounced as [bjurifəl/]). The same phenomenon also happens among other Filipino speakers, clearly showing cross-linguistic influence.

Cross-linguistic influence is also evident in the description of the grammar of PhE, which shows distinctive features in word order, article usage, noun subcategorization, pronoun-antecedent agreement, tense-aspect usage, and subject-verb agreement (Gonzalez & Alberca, 1978). In the same way, Bautista (2000) noted similar findings in the subject-verb agreement, articles, prepositions, mass and count nouns, word order, and comparative constructions. These were categorized as variants, instead of as errors, that are rule governed, widespread, and used by competent speakers as distinct features of PhE. Further, Hundt (2006) found a very interesting finding where a cross-linguistic phenomenon is conspicuous. Collective nouns (e.g., *team*) are associated with plurality (i.e., *them*) on concord patterns, e.g., *How about the present San Miguel team. How do you assess them?* The results of the study show that neither PhE, nor the Singaporean English pattern, is exactly like its parent variety. According to Hundt, Standard English shows a systematic variation in terms of regional or stylistic preferences and on-going change. It is not a monolithic entity.

Cross-linguistic influence is also evident in the use of phrasal verbs (PhV) in PhE resulting in free variation due to its absence in the L1. For instance, an interchange of particles for the same verb in PhV (e.g., *fill up* and *fill out*) is manifested in the utterances of Filipino speakers (De Castro, 2020).

In some aspects of PhE, Gonzalez (1982) has noted that Filipinos typically have mastery of the formal style or classroom English, and that there are minimal differences in the formal and informal written discourses. Loan words, nicknames, and contractions are used often in formal and informal styles, and code-switching to the vernacular is generally prevalent in informal discourses.

Nevertheless, in most studies, PhE has been considered a legitimate nativized variety of English (see Schneider, 2003, 2007; Malicsi, 2007; Bautista & Bolton, 2009; Borlongan, 2016; Gonzales, 2017, to mention a few). It is perceived to be the language used by Filipinos in controlling domains such as science and technology, the judiciary, the legislature, bureaucracy, higher education, intellectual discourse, and the like. PhE generally conforms to American English (AmE) and, in some cases, to British English (BrE). However, while PhE is derived historically from AmE, it had been observed that Filipinos rarely conform to its norms in all settings (Llamzon, 1997; Tayao, 2004). This somehow encouraged the stratification of lects (i.e., acrolect, mesolect, and basilect, see Llamzon, 1997; Tayao, 2004; Gonzales, 2017).

The PhE is most likely to develop and experience growth and sophistication as a variety to meet the needs of the expression of the speakers. New features will unquestionably emerge due to the distinct linguistic system of the Philippine languages by which English has come in contact with. In fact, PhE is undoubtedly an outcome of a cross-linguistic process, although there could also be other contributing factors. The process may be referred to as the notion substrate-influenced Englishes, which include the indigenous-language-based variety across regions that is due to retroactive interference during the language learning process.

1.3 The study

The main aim of this study was to investigate emerging features in the selected bipartite nouns in PhE and the sentence production of ESL college students. Specifically, this study aimed to 1) describe the morpho-syntactic features of the bipartite nouns *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, and *pants* in ICE-PHI and GloWbE, 2) determine the lexical and constructional choice of ESL college students in using the said bipartite nouns, and 3) determine the relationship between the students' use of the bipartite nouns and their L1.

2. Method

This study employed descriptive sequential explanatory research design in investigating and validating the emerging features in the bipartite nouns *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, and *pants* in PhE using corpus linguistics and psycholinguistic approaches.

As for the corpora, the ICE-PHI (Bautista, Lising, & Dayag, 2004) and GloWbE were utilized for the data of this study. The ICE-PHI consists of 1,106,778 tokens, which include non-professional writing, correspondences, academic and non-academic writing, reportage, instructional writing, persuasive writing, private and public dialogues, and scripted and unscripted monologues. The GloWbE-Philippines contains 44,356,871 tokens (Davies, 2015). The words *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, *pants*, and their singular form, except for the word *pants* (since the noun *pants* does not have a singular form), were individually searched using the GloWbE search tool for the GloWbE corpus, and AntConc 3.5.8.0 for ICE-PHI. This study also included manually recorded data where the said bipartite nouns were used to confirm the data in the corpora. The said data

were taken from conversations with family, friends, students, and from people where the bipartite nouns were incidentally used.

Further, to enrich the findings from a different perspective, a total of 274 L2 speakers and college students participated in the meaning-focused L1-English translation task for the perceptual linguistic salience as it is one of the strategies ESL and EFL speakers use when attempting to produce English sentences. They were chosen through convenient sampling. The majority of them were Bisaya (N=106) and Chavacano (N=88) speakers, although there were also speakers of other Philippine languages like Tausug (N=40) and Tagalog/Filipino (N=40).

As seen in Table 1, the task consists of six statements whereas two statements for each bipartite noun were included. The participants were asked to translate statements from their mother tongue (Bisaya, Chavacano, Tausug, and Filipino/Tagalog) to English. The translation task was submitted to three reliable language professors for each L1 for validation of the content. All professors agreed that the task is appropriate for the study in that it seeks the correct data needed for the study. One statement in Tagalog was rephrased by a Filipino language teacher. To ensure that the speakers were not very conscious of English grammar, English and Linguistics majors were not recruited for the task.

Table 1

Translation Task

Bipartite Nouns	Chavacano	Bisaya	Tagalog	Tausug
<i>Scissors</i>				
Task 1	Donde mi tijeras?	Asa ang akong gunting?	Nasaan ang gunting ko?	Haunu in gunting ku?
Task 2	Tiene tu tijeras?	Naa ba kay gunting?	Mayroon ka bang gunting?	Awn kaw gunting?
<i>Eyeglasses</i>				
Task 1	Ya olvida yo mi antipara.	Nalimtan nako akong antipara/samin sa mata.	Nakalimutan ko ang aking salamin sa mata.	Kyalupahan ko in samin mata ko.
Task 2	Necesita yo antipara.	Kinahanglan ko ug antipara/samin sa mata.	Kailangan ko ng salamin sa mata.	Kagunahan ko in samin mata.
<i>Pants</i>				
Task 1	Ta perde mi pantalon.	Nawala akong pantalon.	Nawawala ang aking pantalon.	Nalawah in pantalon ko.
Task 2	Ya compra yo un pantalon.	Nipalit ko ug isa ka pantalon.	Bumili ako ng isang pantalon.	Nami ako hambuuk pantalon.

The task was designed as a stimulus to determine how speakers decide on the lexical and syntactic forms of the selected bipartite nouns by stimulating their sentence production, allowing them to decide whether to inflect or not the bipartite nouns and whether to treat them as singular or plural through syntactic construction. If the nouns are treated as singular, this likely suggests that the L1 features are more noticeable or prominent (perceptual linguistic salience).

For ethical consideration, the participants' consent was sought for this study. They were assured that their identity will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. It was made clear to them that the information collected from them may not directly benefit them, but shall provide general benefits.

The selected bipartite nouns in GloWbE and ICE-PHI were analyzed in terms of their morphological and syntactic structures (i.e., in terms of the word/s or phrases associated with them). These word/s or phrases signify whether the bipartite nouns are singular in form and/or in meaning. Note that the inflected bipartite nouns may either be singular or plural. The inflected nouns are singular if the lexical items that denote singularity (e.g., articles *a* and *an*, the verb *is*, numerical adjective *one*, demonstrative pronoun *this*, and the pronoun *it*) are used (e.g., *Do you have a scissors?*). Observed absolute frequency (*oaf*) and observed relative frequency (*orf*) were also used to analyze and interpret the data in ICE-PHI and GloWbE. For the translation task, since the data is categorical or nominal, a chi-square test was used to determine the association of the participants' L1 with their use of bipartite nouns.

3. Results

3.1 The use of bipartite nouns in ICE-PHI and GloWbE

Table 2 presents the number of occurrences of the selected bipartite nouns in PhE, particularly in GloWbE and ICE-PHI. The analysis revealed that among the selected bipartite nouns, only *scissors*, *eyeglass*, and *pants* appeared in the ICE-PHI. No occurrence can be seen for the plural form *eyeglasses*. The number of occurrences is insufficient for the results to be conclusive. Besides, the number of occurrences may not be enough to tell whether or not the bipartite nouns that occur in the corpus are considered unintentional mistakes or established features. This suggests that the said repository needs to be updated to allow a wider scope of discoveries. On the other hand, all selected bipartite nouns appeared in the GloWbE with *pants* as the most frequently used (626 occurrences) followed by *scissors* (131 occurrences).

Table 2

Use of bipartite nouns in the corpora

Nouns	GloWbE		ICE-PHI	
	<i>oaf</i>	<i>orf</i>	<i>oaf</i>	<i>orf</i>
scissor	11	.000248	0	.000000
scissors (singular)	2	.000045	0	.000000
scissors (plural)3	131	.002953	3	.002711
eyeglass	10	.000225	2	.001807
eyeglasses (singular)	0	.000000	0	.000000
eyeglasses (plural)	81	.001826	0	.000000
pants (singular)	6	.000135	0	.000000
pants (plural)	626	.014113	24	.021685

- (1) The red pants is a dead giveaway in battle. Why use ominous color?
- (2) “At the time, people were all selling copies of the Levi’s 501,” Morisset recalled. “It took me 45 minutes to design the Elwood and gave it to the patternmaker. I thought, this is the pants of the future and now I have to make it.”
- (3) The loose pants doubled as working pants as it could be easily folded for farm work.
- (4) She saw a man’s legs wearing a brown pants and black shoes.
- (5) The folded portion of the Rakhi is not touched yet. Now, cut the loops at the center of this folded part using a scissors. Now, you are going to make the center of the Rakhi.

The corpus in the GloWbE shows that the selected bipartite nouns are both inflected and uninflected, but the inflected ones are higher in frequency. However, the bipartite nouns *scissors* and *pants*, which are in the plural form, are treated as singular in some instances. This is evident in the examples from the GloWbE where some lexical items denoting singularity are used: The singular verb *is* (1), the singular demonstrative pronoun *this* followed by the verb *is* (2), the pronoun *it* (3), and the article *a* (4) are used for *pants*. The article *a* was also used for *scissors* (5). In these cases, it can be implied that the bipartite nouns *pants* and *scissors* may be plural in form, but singular in meaning in the sense that they are treated as one thing/object which is physically inseparable.

The results above validate the sample manually recorded spoken conversations of speakers in Zamboanga City where the said nouns were used. Some speakers treat the said nouns as singular by removing the inflection *-s* (as in 6, 7, 8, and 9) and by using lexical items that denote singularity for the plural form nouns (as in 10, 11, and 12). The use of lexical items that denote singularity for the plural form nouns implies that the inflection *-s* or *-es* shows limited productivity and does not infer plurality. Hence, it can be implied that whether or not these nouns contain *-s* or *-es*, they are possibly perceived to be one thing/object that is physically inseparable.

- (6) After ma-serve ang fried squid they provide us scissor.
- (7) I know they provide a scissor. Wala silang binigay na scissor?
- (8) I need an eyeglass na naman.
- (9) I just placed my eyeglass here. Saan kaya yun?
- (10) I have one eyeglasses lang.
- (11) I have one short pants na lang left pang lakad.
- (12) Wow! The pants is still new. Branded pa talaga.

3.2 The use of bipartite nouns in the translation task

3.2.1 *scissor/s*. To enrich the findings in the corpora from a different perspective, Table 3 presents the result of the translation task for the bipartite noun *scissor/s*. The first translation task (T1) shows that the majority of the participants [143 (52.2%)] used the uninflected noun *scissor* (13) while others [131 (47.8%)] used the inflected ones (14) and none used the inflected singular. It cannot be assumed that the inflected noun *scissors* and the uninflected *scissor* are singular or plural because the statements in L1 are less likely to allow to them to use lexical items that denote singularity or plurality in L2.

- (13) Where is my scissor?
- (14) Where is my scissors?

Table 3

Results for scissor/s

First Language	Scissor				Scissors Singular				Scissors Plural				Chi Square Test	
	T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1	T2
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Chavacano	35	12.8	28	10.2	0	0	51	18.6	53	19.3	9	3.3		
Bisaya	55	20.1	52	19	0	0	29	10.6	51	18.6	25	9.1		
Tagalog	25	9.1	25	9.1	0	0	0	0	15	5.5	15	5.5		
Tausug	28	10.2	25	9.1	0	0	8	2.9	12	4.4	7	2.6		
Total	14	52.2	130	47.4	0	0	88	32.1	131	47.8	56	20.4	.007	.0003

To guide the participants to the choice of whether to use lexical items denoting singularity or plurality and whether to inflect or not, a second task for *scissor/s* was chosen. The second translation task (T2) reveals that the majority of the participants [130 (47.4%)] used the uninflected noun *scissor* preceded by an article *a* (15). In this case, the noun is treated as singular not only because it is uninflected but also because of the article that denotes singularity. Other participants used the inflected noun *scissors*; however, the majority [88 (32.1%)] seem to have treated it as singular because the article *a* that denotes singularity was used (16) while the rest [56 (20.4%)] seem to have treated it as plural (17).

- (15) Do you have a scissor?
 (16) Do you have a scissors?
 (17) Do you have scissors?

Further, a Chi-square test reveals a significant association between L1 and the use of bipartite nouns both for translation task 1, $X^2(3, N=274)=12.23, p<.05$, and translation task 2, $X^2(6, N=274)=52.99, p<.05$, suggesting that the uninflected noun *scissor* was and would likely be used with the Bisaya participants as the most significant predictor.

3.2.2 eyeglass/es. Table 4 presents the results of translation tasks on the use of the bipartite noun *eyeglass/es*. Task 1 allowed the participants to choose either the inflected noun *eyeglasses* or the uninflected *eyeglass* when translating from L1 to L2. The majority of the participants [150 (54.7%)] used the inflected noun *eyeglasses* (18) while the rest [124 (45.3%)] used the uninflected noun *eyeglass* (19), and none used the inflected singular. In this case, it cannot be concluded whether they treated the inflected noun *eyeglasses* and uninflected noun *eyeglass* as singular or plural because of the absence of lexical items that denote singularity or plurality.

- (18) I forgot my eyeglasses.
 (19) I forgot my eyeglass.

Table 4

Results for eyeglass/es

First Language	Eyeglass				Eyeglasses Singular				Eyeglasses Plural				Chi Square Test	
	T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1	T2
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Chavacano	32	11.7	31	11.3	0	0	26	9.5	56	20.4	31	11.3		
Bisaya	50	18.2	46	16.8	0	0	25	9.1	56	20.4	35	12.8		
Tagalog	14	5.1	14	5.1	0	0	4	1.5	26	9.5	22	8		
Tausug	28	10.2	25	9.1	0	0	6	2.2	12	4.4	9	3.3	.002	.007
Total	124	45.3	116	42.3	0	0	61	22.3	150	54.7	97	35.4		

To allow the participants to choose lexical items that denote either singularity or plurality and to choose to inflect or not, a second task for *eyeglass/es* was designed. The majority of the participants [116 (42.3%)] used the uninflected noun *eyeglass* preceded by the article *an* that denotes singularity (20). Some of them used the inflected *eyeglasses* as plural [97 (35.4%)] (21) while others as singular [61 (22.3%)] (22). The use of the article *an* that precedes the inflected noun *eyeglasses* indicates that the noun seems to have been treated as singular.

- (20) I need an eyeglass.
 (21) I need eyeglasses.
 (22) I need an eyeglasses.

A Chi-square test reveals a significant relationship between L1 and the use of the bipartite noun *eyeglass/es* in task 1 $X^2(3, N=274)=14.55, p<.05$ in favor of the use of the inflected bipartite noun *eyeglasses* and task 2 $X^2(6, N=274)=17.65, p<.05$ in favor of the use of the uninflected noun *eyeglass*. This implies that the use of the inflected bipartite noun *eyeglasses* was and is likely to be used for constructions that do not require the use of lexical items denoting singularity or plurality. In addition, it also implies that when the construction required/s the use of lexical items that denote either singularity or plurality, the uninflected noun was and would likely to be used with the Bisaya as the most significant predictor.

3.2.3 pants. Table 5 presents the findings of the translation tasks for the bipartite noun *pants*. Both tasks 1 and 2 allowed the participants to choose lexical items that denote either singularity or plurality. In these tasks, the noun *pants* was assumed to be inflected before giving the tasks, as it typically is in the AmE and other varieties. It was also assumed that the bipartite noun *pants* would be treated as singular if the lexical items that denote singularity would be used, and as plural if these denote plurality. The study reveals that the majority of the participants treated the bipartite noun *pants* as singular in task 1 [201 (73.4%)] (23) and task 2 [235 (85.8%)] (24, 25 and 26). This case is evident in the examples below where the singular auxiliary verb *is*, the numerical adjective *one*, and the article *a* were used in the construction. Some participants treated it as plural in task 1 [73 (26.6%)] (27) and task 2 [39 (14.2%)] (28).

- (23) My pants is missing.
 (24) I need one new pants.
 (25) I need a new pants.
 (26) I need a denim pants.
 (27) My pants are missing.
 (28) I bought a new pair of pants.

Table 5

Results for pants

First Language	Pants Singular				Pants Plural				Chi Square Test	
	T1		T2		T1		T2		T1	T2
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Chavacano	67	24.5	77	28.1	21	7.7	11	4		
Bisaya	75	27.4	89	32.5	31	11.3	17	6.2		
Tagalog	30	10.9	32	11.7	10	3.6	8	2.9		
Tausug	29	10.6	37	13.5	11	4	3	1.1		
Total	201	73.4	235	85.8	73	26.6	39	14.2	.853	.380

A Chi-square test reveals no significant relationship between L1 and the use of bipartite noun *pants* both in task 1 $X^2(3, N=274)=.78, p>.05$ and task 2 $X^2(3, N=274)=3.07, p>.05$. This implies that their choice in using lexical items that denote either singularity or plurality was and is less likely to be affected by their L1. In this case, it can be assumed that *pants* is perceived to be a single unit that is uninflected, albeit with –s ending.

4. Discussion

As noted in the previous section, the corresponding bipartite nouns of English in the Philippine linguistic system are not inflected and are technically perceived as a single unit. Morphologically, these are not considered as bipartite nouns in the Philippine languages. Neither are these plural in form nor in meaning. In other words, the concept *pair* for joined two-part nouns is morphologically non-existent in the Philippine context.

The findings, when analyzed from the lenses of the Philippine linguistic system, suggest that the said bipartite nouns are undergoing regularization process or alternative morphologicalization and syntactization processes that can be reanalyzed as inflected and uninflected even if they are with –s or –es ending (i.e., *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, and *pants*). It is considered inflected when the lexical items that denote plurality (e.g., verb *are*, demonstrative pronoun *these*) and the phrase *a pair of* are used in the syntactic construction, e.g., *Where are the scissors?* It is uninflected if the lexical items denoting singularity (e.g., article *a* or *an*, the verb *is*, demonstrative pronoun *this*, numerical adjective *one*) are used, e.g., *I need an eyeglasses*. In the case where there is no lexical item/s denoting singularity or plurality, the noun/s with –s or –es ending may be assumed as inflected. Moreover, the bipartite nouns *scissor* and *eyeglass* without –s or –es ending may not necessarily refer to only the other part of the pair; hence, *scissor/scissors* and *eyeglass/eyeglasses* mean the same thing unless otherwise the other pair is explicitly specified or emphasized. These

bipartite nouns are perceived as something that is whole or one and are possibly perceived as physically inseparable.

The corresponding structure and meaning of English bipartite nouns in Philippine languages are distinct. The distinctions from the common understanding of the rules of English bipartite nouns and the emerging features in the use of these nouns are a clear manifestation that the established habits in the native language interfere or influence L2 production because of the perceptual linguistic salience making the L1 features more noticeable or prominent than the L2 features. This only shows how the architecture of convention of the Philippine languages is very unlike the English language which makes it difficult for Filipinos to achieve native-like speech. In fact, the phrase *a pair of* followed by the bipartite nouns is very rarely used in the Philippine corpora and translation task. Hence, the English bipartite nouns used by Filipinos may not necessarily be syntactically similar to the AmE variety or other well-known English varieties.

In light of cross-linguistic processes and perceptual linguistic salience, if the L1 and the L2 are morphosyntactically distinct, there is a tendency for a speaker to subscribe to L1 features or to resort to subscribing to L1 features especially if the L2 features are unfamiliar or confusing like in the case of *pants* where the majority of the participants treated it as singular. This case may also be similar to what Schwartz and Kroll (2006, p. 983) note: “if a bilingual’s two languages follow different syntactic arrangements and if those differences give rise to distinct parsing preferences, then bilingualism potentially poses a problem for language processing if the two languages are not represented and accessed independently”, although in this study I do not consider it as a problem. Studies of linguistic convergence show that a pattern of language that is distinctly bilingual at all levels of linguistic description is produced when a language comes in contact with another (Schwartz & Kroll, 2006).

In line with the word association model (Potter, So, Von Eckardt, & Feldman, 1984), the bipartite nouns *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, and *pants* are perceived and treated as singular in the process of associating words with the equivalent translations in L1. The feature in the L1 influences L2 in the process of language production and association, but the degree of influence may vary depending on the relative level of proficiency of the speaker in the L2 (Schwartz & Kroll, 2006). This means that if the speaker has a high level of proficiency in AmE or even in any other language, then the L1 transfer is less likely to occur. This may be the reason why some participants subscribe to the conventional rules of English bipartite nouns in AmE as seen in the findings above. However, this does not always guarantee that those highly proficient were actually the ones who subscribe to the AmE. For example, it was reported that there are asymmetries in the magnitude of semantic priming with significant facilitation only with L1 primes and L2 targets even if the speaker has a high proficiency level in both languages (Keatley, Spinks & De Gelder, 1994, cited in Schwartz & Kroll, 2006), and processing sentences in L2 may be slower than L1 (see Hoover & Dwivedi, 1998). Thus, additional working memory resources are likely to be recruited by the speaker (see Hasegawa, Carpenter, & Just, 2002; Miyake & Friedman, 1998).

In light of the Dynamic Model of New Englishes, Schneider (2003, p. 250) described the linguistic features of English in the endonormative stabilization (Phase 4): “an indigenous identity result in the acceptance of local forms of English as a means of expression of that new identity”, noting the structural patterns as a result of shared variety due to mutual negotiation where “learners carry over some features of their native language into their version of the TL, which can be called TL₂ learners” and/or learners “may fail (or refuse) to learn some TL features, especially marked features, and these learners’ errors also form part of the TL₂” (Thomason, 2001, p.75). The emerging features in this study are clearly a manifestation of L1-L2 linguistic convergence

resulting in alternative morpho-syntactic patterns, an indication that PhE is progressing towards or already in the early stage of phase 4 in the aspects of linguistic development and structural effect.

5. Conclusion

This study attempted to investigate emerging features in the selected invariable bipartite nouns in PhE utilizing a corpus linguistics approach and in the sentence production of ESL college students using a psycholinguistic task. Findings in the corpora and the task show that the bipartite nouns *scissors*, *eyeglasses*, and *pants* are both inflected and uninflected but refer to two equal entities and single units, and are singular in meaning. The pieces of evidence can be found in their morphological structure and syntactic environment. For the morphosyntactic structure, the bipartite nouns with *-s* or *-es* ending can be identified as inflected and uninflected depending on how they are denoted by the lexical items in the syntactic environment. The bipartite nouns are uninflected if the lexical items denoting singularity (e.g., demonstrative pronoun *this*, the verb *is*, numerical adjective *one*, article *a*) are used instead of those that denote plurality while they are inflected if the lexical items denoting plurality (e.g., demonstrative pronoun *these*, verb *are*) are used. Further, these nouns may be assumed inflected if the syntactic construction does not contain any indication of singularity. It should be noted that the lexical items in the syntactic environment serve only as indicators that determine whether the nouns are inflected or not.

One of the responsible factors for these emerging features is assumed to be L1 interference or cross-linguistic influence where the L1 feature influences L2 in the process of production and association due to perceptual linguistic salience, considering that the corresponding form and meaning of these bipartite nouns in L1 are distinct. This process may be considered as a case of morphological regularization due to differences in rules in L1 and L2 suggesting remorphologicalization and resyntactization of existing constructions or just alternative morphological and syntactic patterns. The findings may be very unusual for those who are well-versed with the conventional rules of bipartite nouns. If the new features are consistently stabilized and diffused, they may be used as a support, at least from the perspective of linguistic development and structural effect, for the claims that English in the Philippines is in the stage of nativization and is already in the stage of or moving towards endonormative stabilization if proven to have been widely accepted with a positive attitude.

Also, the emerging features in the selected bipartite nouns in PhE may be subject to a debate and another investigation or introspection for their use and acceptance. Hence, researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies using more recent corpus and/or using different approaches to come up with rigorous conclusions. Other bipartite nouns may also be investigated to determine the presence of cross-linguistic influence and perceptual linguistic salience. The data in this study may be compared with very recent data and with other varieties of English to determine whether this case exists only in PhE or also in other English varieties.

For the pedagogical implication, the language learners need not conform to the AmE variety in using these bipartite nouns, especially in natural conversation and in classroom discussion, in order for them to be understood or in order for their sentences to be accepted. They may, however, be informed about the differences in the use of bipartite nouns and be educated about how their established L1 linguistic system can influence their L2 production and learning.

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