

CONSTANTINO, ERNESTO A. 1999. The Contemporary English-Filipino Dictionary. Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines: EAC Center for Philippine Languages, University of the Philippines, i-xii and 1-382.

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Ernesto A. Constantino's new dictionary of English-Filipino is destined in many ways to be a landmark in the difficult process of intellectualizing Filipino. It is just what many in academe and the professions have been waiting for. As a compilation of some 20,000 English terms and lexical items, this dictionary provides teachers and students in universities as well as translators and other professionals the equivalent of English words, phrases, and sentences in Filipino for use in the task of intellectualizing the National Language. It took the author some 13 years to complete this work.

Its original objective, as the author explains in the preface of the dictionary, is to serve as a "mother dictionary" of the more than 100 English to Philippine language dictionaries which he started to compile in 1986. These bilingual dictionaries have now been merged into a single "universal dictionary" of Philippine languages which numbers 20 volumes. The author intends to publish this monumental work this year.

The specific objectives of THE CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH-FILIPINO DICTIONARY (CEFD) are: (a) "to encourage and assist Filipinos, especially those who are English-dominant, in shifting linguistically from English to Filipino in their educational, academic and professional activities; and (b) to show that Filipino has equivalents for all English words and phrases which Filipinos use, thus giving the lie to the blatantly spurious and egregious claim made by some critics and non-users of Filipino that this language lacks intellectualization. For, indeed, it is the non-knowledgeable and non-user of the language that lacks intellectualization (*sic*). This dictionary is a concrete manifestation of this truism" (p.iv). It goes without saying that the author achieved these twin objectives to a great extent.

The author mentions the word "intellectualization". The term is taken from the Prague School of Linguistics, specifically from Havranek's concept, which is quoted by Garvin and Mathiot and after them by Sibayan (1999: 448) and also Gonzalez (1985: 2) as meaning the use of language for scholarly discourse in academic and more abstract discussions. Briefly, what is involved is the development of terms for use in different disciplines, sciences, technology, and literature such that fundamental concepts can be further elaborated in scholarly discussion.

In other words, the CEFD is intended to show that there are enough terms already available to those who wish to start using Filipino as medium of instruction especially at the tertiary level of education in accordance with the Bilingual Education Policy of 1987 (DECS Order No. 52 and Order No. 54, Series 1987). As a matter of fact, however, the work of intellectualizing Filipino has just begun; and although this dictionary is a very encouraging beginning, the arduous journey still has a long way to go.

Actually, what this dictionary demonstrates is that Filipino, or any language for that matter, has built-in mechanisms for generating the terms necessary to refer to anything whatsoever in the universe. What are those mechanisms? There is first and foremost

borrowing. Most of the loanwords in the CEFD are from English and Spanish. Frequently, loanwords, from both languages are cited, e.g. English *absolute* adj. 1. (unrestricted) are: *ábsolút* and *absoluto*; and the loanwords for telephone, are: *téléfón* and *teléponó*. The first words in the two pairs are from English, and they are distinguishable by their accent and pronunciation.

Second, there are *derivations* from Tagalog stems; e.g. English abortion, n. is *paglalaglág*; and for abortive, adj. 1. (producing abortion) is *nagpápalaglág*. Sometimes, a whole sentence is employed to give the equivalent meaning of a lexical item, e.g. fornicate, v. 2 (have sex with someone one is not married to) is *makipagtalik (sa di-asawa)*; *cul-de-sac*, n. is *kalsada o dáaman na bukás sa isáng dulo lang*.

Third, there is the use of compounding, e.g. casino, n. is *bahay-sugalan*; furrow, n. is *daán-araro*; and effeminate, adj. is *kilos-babae*. In addition there is the mechanism called calquing or loan-translation, e.g. cease-fire, n. is *tigil-putukan*; and counterattack, n. is *balik-atake*. Then, there is description, e.g. dying, adj. *nag-ágaw-buhay*; and dawn, n. 1. (first light of day) is *bukáng-liwaywáy*.

The cardinal principle implied in the items included in the CEFD seems to be whatever is used in the spoken language — a well-established principle in linguistics. This seems to be the reason why such items as *simunò*, *panaguri*, *balarilà*, *pang-uri*, or *pandiwà* are not included in the dictionary. Instead, we find the equivalents *sabjek*, *predikeyt*, *grammar* or *gramátiká*, *ádjektiv* or *adhetibo*, and verb or *berbo*. However, this does not mean that Lope K. Santos' lexicon is excluded from the dictionary, for we also find the words *páaralán*, and *salitá* for the English words *school* and *word* in the book.

Following the principle implied in the compilation of the dictionary, some popularly used words should be included like *tapsilog* meaning 'breakfast fare' composed of *tapa* (dried meat), *sinangag* (fried rice), and *ilog* (eggs). This word has become so popular that other words have been coined analogically based on this model, e.g. *longsilog* meaning 'breakfast fare,' composed of *longanisa* (sausage), *sinangag* (fried rice), and *ilog* (eggs). There are also other coinages based on the same analogical model.

Again, based on the cardinal principle mentioned above, some words have been accepted in everyday usage, with an accepted spelling. For example, proper names do not seem to be the same when spelled the "Filipino way". A good example of this is the name *Felipe* or *Jesuita* or *Zialcita*. In fact, this seems to be one of the reasons why the new alphabet of Filipino was enlarged to consist of 28 letters. Following this principle, commonly used words with accepted spelling should no longer be changed, like *Dios* (instead of CEFD *jos*), *taxi* (instead of CEFD *taksi*), *czar* (instead of CEFD *sar*) *quartz* (instead of CEFD *kwart*), *cremeyt* (instead of CEFD *kremeyt*), and finally *affection* (instead of CEFD *apeksyon*).

With regard to spelling, although the principle followed in the CEFD is based on the phonemic principle of one-to-one phoneme-grapheme correspondence (considered to be the most efficient, scientific, and economical way of orthographic representation), there are few exceptions which could be mentioned based on the cardinal principle of what is commonly used in the spoken language.

It goes without saying that this dictionary is by no means a complete compilation of all the terms that are presently used for academic and other special professional purposes. There are probably thousands of others which remain to be collected and codified. But this dictionary is certainly a big contribution to the intellectualization of the National Language.

It is not always the case that lists of words, which have been pre-fabricated *à la Del Rosario's Maignayin* style, and offered to interested users, is a commendable contribution to the intellectualization of Filipino. However, this dictionary is quite a departure from such lists because: (1) this list includes only those terms actually used in the spoken language; and (2) it tries to specify the different contexts in which the term is used; and gives the corresponding meanings that the term has in those different contexts. Sometimes, as many as *seven* different contexts are given for a given English term or word (e.g. see the entries for the English word *perspective* (p. 252).

Of course, there are other ways of enlarging the stock of technical and professional terms in the Filipino language. Other ways are, for example, translating the various tracts and treatises of the major authors in the different sciences and creative literatures. Another is utilizing the results of the original writings of authors in their attempts to re-experience the realities and objects of their investigation. Finally, one can summarize and express in Filipino the major concepts and principles of well-known thinkers in the world of ideas. Any advances along these fronts are very welcome, for they promote the use of the language in scholarly discourse.

In the enormous task of intellectualizing Filipino, it is well to remember the old Chinese saying that a long journey begins with the first step forward; and it seems to me the CEFD is one such important step.

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