

The Works of the Lexicography Division of the Commission on the Filipino Language - A Report

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1. Introduction

The First Asian International Lexicography Conference was a wise and very timely meeting of minds, for there is definitely a need for a significant breakthrough in a number of lexicographic areas, including the development of national languages. The Conference also provided a springboard for obtaining a comprehensive view and elucidating the many and intriguing facets of language problems.

The Conference theme was "Meeting Lexicography needs for the twenty-first century in the Pacific Region". The crying need of the hour is for national language development and for international understanding of that need as well.

2. The Present (1987) Philippine Constitution Regarding Language Development

2.1 Mandate/Mission

The Commission on the Filipino Language (CFL) established by virtue of Republic Act No. 7104 (August 13, 1991), is mandated to undertake, coordinate and promote research for the development, propagation and preservation of Filipino and other Philippine languages (Sec. 4, R.A. No. 7104) in consonance with Sentence 2, Section 6, and Section 9, Article XIV, 1987 Constitution).

2.2 Objectives

The CFL, pursuant to the pertinent provision of the Constitution, shall have the following powers, functions and duties (Sec. 14, R.A. 7104) (Letters A-L): Undertake or contract research and other studies to promote the evolution, development, enrichment and eventual standardization of Filipino and other Philippine Languages. This will include the collation of works for possible incorporation into a multilingual dictionary of words, phrases, idioms, quotations, sayings and other expressions, including words and phrases from other languages now commonly used or included in the lingua franca.

This year, 1992, marks a significant event for the CFL. On August 14, 1991, President Corazon C. Aquino signed Republic Act No. 7104 which created the CFL. Among others, the act provides that all personnel, records, assets, equipment, funds and properties belonging to the Institute of Philippine Languages under Executive Order No. 117 are hereby transferred to the Commission. This act argues well for the development and enrichment of Filipino which is our main task.

3. Works of the Lexicography Division

The Lexicography Division plans, designs, prepares and updates dictionaries, thesauri, encyclopedias or any other similar language tools in accordance with the latest development in

lexicography. Its major function is the compilation and updating of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, scientific and specified vocabularies, glossaries and terminological development.

3.1 Projects Completed (1978-1992); Titles and Objectives

3.1.1 1978 Project: *Mga Katawagan sa Edukasyong Bilingual*

This book contains 18,000 terminologies commonly used in bilingual education. In giving the Filipino equivalent in English terms, the Institute of National Language (INL) showed a keen awareness for accepted usage as well as the presence of foreign lexicon. English and/or Spanish loan words which have gained some degrees of acceptability were adopted by INL and adapted to the Pilipino orthography.

This book was printed in 1978 by the INL. A second edition was published in 1983 by INL and a third edition in 1992 by CFL.

3.1.2 1979 Project: *Mga Katawagang Panghanapuhay*

The book listed 18,083 terminologies in English with 58,756 Pilipino equivalents in agriculture, vocational/industrial education office management, fishing and home industries.

This book was printed in 1979. A revised manuscript was ready for printing in 1992.

3.1.3 1980 Projects

- a. Research Terminologies and Statistics.** This is a compilation of terminologies in research with corresponding equivalents in Pilipino. The target users are graduate students and researchers in general. This book was printed in 1980. It was computerized in 1992.
- b. Common Lexicon of Major Philippine Languages.** This is an accumulation of common lexicons of major Philippine languages intended to provide material to meet a basic need for the restatement of the language nucleus of Filipino. It consist of true and false cognates and loan words in Filipino.

This manuscript was completed in 1980.

3.1.4 1981 Project: *Diksyunaryong Wikang Filipino (Monolingual Dictionary)*

This book was designed to provide an exhaustive stock of lexicographic information in Filipino for the general users of the National language.

The manuscript was completed in 1981. In 1985 it was copyedited and was printed in 1989.

3.1.5 1982-1983 Projects

- a. Revision of appropriate vocabulary lists of commonly used terms for the development of Filipino.** This is another bilingual dictionary. Lexical items from the major Philippine Language including Maranao, Maguindanao and Tausug are the word entries.

The first manuscript form was edited in 1983.

- b. Revision of *Korespondensya Opisyal*, 1977 Edition.** The purpose of this work was to provide a source of adequate, comprehensive and accurate reference for all official transactions and communication in Filipino in all government offices.

This book was printed in 1983, with a revised edition printed in 1990 and launched on April 2, 1990

- c. **Revision of Mga Katawagan sa Edukasyong Bilingual.** The KWF accepted the presence of foreign lexicons and orthographies which has gained a certain degree of acceptability.

This book was printed in 1992 and launched August 19, 1992.

- d. **Lexical Elements for Filipino.** This book contains loan words, true and false cognates, unique words and words commonly used in three or more languages. The purpose was to accelerate the development of the common National Language, pursuant to the provision of the New Constitution.

The project is a vocabulary preparation of the eight major languages: Bicolano, Kapampanga, Hiligaynon, Ilocano, Pangasinan, Samar-Leyte, Cebuano and Tagalog, including vocabularies available from Moslem and other ethnic dialects.

A first draft was completed consisting of 15,812 word entries. The manuscript is ready for printing.

3.1.6 1986-1987 Project: *English-Filipino Dictionary*

The 1987 edition improved on the original main entries of the 1974 edition which consisted of 9,361 lexical items by adding 1,139 more items. This is the first illustrated bilingual Filipino dictionary. The newly incorporated word forms are provided with basic, relevant and accurate facts, idioms and illustrative phrases.

This book was printed in 1960 by INL. A second edition was printed in 1974 by INL and in 1987 by INL and IMC; a third edition was published by CFL in 1992 and printed by Anvil.

3.2 Ongoing Projects

3.2.1 *Diksiyunaryo Ng Wikang Filipino*

This monolingual dictionary is the first dictionary of its kind. The main entries as well as the subentries, including loan words, are Filipino lexical items. All items are arranged in a way considered to be easiest or most convenient for the user.

3.2.1.1 Objectives of the Project

- a. To provide an exhaustive stock of lexicographic information in Filipino for general users of the national language.
- b. To give greater impetus to the development and propagation of Filipino.
- c. To publish a systematic listing of the commonly-used Filipino vocabulary items designed to strengthen the teaching/learning process in Filipino in the context of bilingual education.

3.2.1.2 Significance of the Project:

Fundamental changes have been introduced into the present governmental system in order to achieve maximum national development. One of the main thrusts in education is strengthening the teaching of vocational education so as to prepare the youth for gainful employment as well as enhance his role in the community. Teachers encounter difficulties due to lack of vocabulary compilations and/or dictionaries in Filipino. This project is designed to

cope with the problems especially in relation to teaching in this area. This will provide assistance to teachers and students in the matter of uniformity of terminologies.

3.2.1.3 Work Plan for the Project

The lexicography group expanded and edited the original manuscript consisting of more than 31,000 word entries. Considered were orthography, currency, standardness, variants in spelling, extended meanings and synonyms. At present the expanded manuscript is composed of less than 1,000 pages with word entries, excluding derivatives, extension of meanings and synonyms. The manuscript was printed in 1989.

3.2.2 *Encyclopedic Dictionary*

This dictionary is designed for those who have a special appreciation and use for encyclopedic information. Subject to the limitation of collecting satisfactory data, entries consist of the following fourteen parts:

1. The main lexical entries, usually root-words, a) spelled according to general practice or rules, b) provided with accent marks over the vowels to guide pronunciation, and c) with separately numbered entries if the word has multiple meanings.
2. Etymological information consists of two types, both immediately following the main entry: a) the source language, usually Spanish (Sp.), Chinese (Ch.), English (Eng.), Latin (Lat.), Greek (Grk.), Italian (It.), or French (Fr.) and b) the morphological etymon is given in parenthesis following the entry word, especially for affixed words and compound words, since they do not per se clearly indicate their structural formation.
3. The part of speech in English abbreviation: n., pron., adj., adv., v., pre., etc. If the entry takes different parts of speech in usage, these are given in separately numbered definitions as if having multiple meanings.
4. If the entry is a technical term, the field of science to which it belongs follows the part of speech.
5. If the entry term is found identical in spelling and meaning with other Philippine languages, these are enumerated before giving the semantic definition.
6. The meaning of the entry in an equivalent word, phrase, or definition or description is in English.
7. Synonyms in Filipino follow the meaning, or each meaning.
8. After syn. and cf. in Filipino, the known synonyms in other Philippine languages follow, marked accordingly as Bk., Kpm., Hlg., Ibg., Ilk, Ind., Ivt., Mal., Mar., Sb., S-L, Tau.
9. Important word entries include lists of morphological derivatives and/or idiomatic expressions using the word.
10. There are notes added, marked with two asterisks (**). These are further explanations of usage situations involving the main entry, in folklore, history, tradition, region.
11. Forms marked with an asterisk (*) are homonyms of an entry in other Philippine languages. These are followed by cf. and their Tagalog or Filipino equivalents.

12. When a generic term has many words under its jurisdiction or related to it, some of the more common of such words are given, with meanings if available, but mostly without meanings.
13. We have conscientiously avoided coining terms.
14. Any additional information unclassified in the foregoing 13 items is usually given immediately following the part of the structure in which it is most useful.

The compiler believes that the foregoing fourteen items are sufficiently encyclopedic, commensurate with the capacity, adequacy, opportunity for research through informants, documentary sources and authoritative individuals.

3.2.3 *Filipino-English Dictionary*

The Filipino English Dictionary is one of the dictionary projects of the CFL. It contains commonly used Filipino terminologies with its corresponding equivalent and meanings in English.

The language of description is called Filipino because its lexicon is basically different from previous vocabularies prepared by the CFL, for it contains Filipino terminologies and elements/terms from selected native/ethnic dialects and foreign language.

Included as sources of native languages are Bicol, Kapampangan, Ilocano, Ifugao, Ivatan, Hiligaynon, Samar-Leyte, Cebuano, Maranao, Pangasinan, Tausug, Maguindanaon, Ibanag, Igorot, Guinaang, etc. Meanwhile, foreign language sources include that of English, Spanish, Chinese, French, Italian, Latin, German, Japanese, Hebrew, Malay Indonesian, Arabic, Sanskrit. All in all the Filipino-English Dictionary has 16,713 word entries and 9,289 derivatives or run-on entries which are considered part of Filipino terminology.

This project started as listing of Filipino terminologies, each with its etymology or source language/languages. A meaning is given for each word. Ambiguous words are supplied sample phrases or sentences both in English and Filipino to make the meaning clearer.

Later on, to be able to cope with the development of Filipino as the official national language in accordance with the provisions of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the dictionary was expanded by adding selected vocabularies/terminologies, including words which carry cultural meaning and values from other ethnic/native languages which are used by several ethnic groups.

3.2.4 *Diksyunaryong Filipino-Ingles*

Also, in contributing to the development of Filipino as the official national language, the CFL started implementing a project titled *Diksyunaryong Filipino-Ingles*. The original title was *Leksikon para sa Filipino*. The dictionary project shows the participation of various languages in the lexical elaboration of Filipino. The objectives of the project are:

1. To develop a lexical system that aims to unify and integrate the nation linguistically.
2. To infuse Filipino with the unique cultural heritage of the different ethnic groups in the country.
3. To attain national objectives in the field of education and culture, economics, politics, government and society.

4. To enhance the efficiency and elegance of Filipino.

The guidelines for the selection of lexical items are unique words (root words, affixed or derived forms in such order), loan words and cognates.

In the codification of norm, the controlling considerations are:

1. Words for ideas, customs and things that have no equivalents in Filipino, although such words may be found only in one native language.

bulanon (Bk.) *n.* full moon.

intawon (Sb.) *Interj.* What a pity!

jihad (Ar.) *n.* the ninth month of the Mohammedan year; the fasting month.

2. Words found in at least three languages are listed as synonyms unless a similar form in Filipino has a different meaning.

inday (Hlg., S-L., Sb.) *n.* affectionate term for a girl.

kalipay (Hlg., S-L., Sb.) *n.* joy, happiness Tagalog. *tuwa, ligaya.*

kasingkasing (Hlg., S-L., Sb.) *n.* heart

3. Native words whose meanings might have a funny or pejorative meaning in the other languages.

baba (Hlg., S-L., Sb.) *n.* mouth

baba (Kpm., Png., Tg.) *n.* chin

4. Words that are similar in form but different in meaning.

agay-ay¹ (Tg.) *n.* atmosphere, ambient air; breeze.

agay-ay² (Hlg.) *n.* tiny worms that feed on and spoil husked rice and bread.

babag¹ (Sb.) *n.* hindrance, obstacle around.

babag² (Tg.) *n.* impact; collision; clash.

babag³ (Tg.) *n.* scuffle; fight.

kabyaw¹ (Tg.) *n.* milling of sugarcane.

kabyaw² (Hlg., S-L.) *n.* blanket fish net.

5. Words that are currently used by media, including foreign borrowings that have influenced Filipino language and literature.

karate (Jap.) *n.* the art of self-defense.

sauna (Finnish) *n.* a steambath treatment.

smorgasboard (Swedish) *n.* a meal featuring a varied number of dishes served buffet-style.

6. Words whose original forms have national currency and are stable in the lexicon of the native languages.

balcony (Eng.) *n.* projecting platform with an entrance from an upper floor or building.

chess (Eng.) *n.* game played by two persons on checkered boards divided into 64 squares.

xerox (Eng.) *n.* an apparatus for making photographic copies of drawing, maps, etc., without a negative or prepared paper; a trade mark name.

4. Conclusion

As the pace of change quickens and language passes through different facets of modernization, it is also inherent and vital that corresponding changes be effected in the context of a country's language. This will also include other influences brought about by the adoption of other languages. Truly there is still much to be discovered about the society of a country that goes hand in hand with the languages used.

Lastly, the need for language experts and scholars who will rally to the cause of the national language is very vital. There is the arduous mission to move and inspire people to help plan, implement and propagate programs and projects relative to the language problem. Realistic goals must be set so as to achieve the desired ends.

Now, more than ever before, we must pool our resources in a united bond of purpose and aspirations and, through an atmosphere of inspired cooperation and coordinated action, face the challenge - that of clearly defined national language.