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Abstract

The Call Center Industry in the Philippines has been attracting employees from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such industry requires employees to have a strong command of the English language. More specifically, American English serves as the model for English language requirements. The problem is that these requirements may have a negative impact on linguistic and cultural identity of Filipino employees. This study explored the Filipino English language trainers' integration with the American culture and language and whether this has any influence on the way they teach the language. It also investigated whether the Call Center Industry training has any impact on the language and cultural identity of employees. Methodologically, this study was a critical ethnography that was conducted by an experienced customer service representative. The results of the study can be useful to socio-linguists, school administrators, psychologists, families and educators, the Philippine government, the business process outsourcing employers, managers, and agents.

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The Call Center Industry in the Philippines has been attracting employees from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such industry requires employees to have a strong command of the English language. More specifically, American English serves as the model for English language requirements. The problem is that these requirements may have a negative impact on linguistic and cultural identity of Filipino employees. This study explored the Filipino English language trainers' integration with the American culture and language and whether this has any influence on the way they teach the language. It also investigated whether the Call Center Industry training has any impact on the language and cultural identity of employees. Methodologically, this study was a critical ethnography that was conducted by an experienced customer service representative. The results of the study can be useful to socio-linguists, school administrators, psychologists, families and educators, the Philippine government, the business process outsourcing employers, managers, and agents. Keywords: Acculturation, Approach, Call Center Industry (CCI), Cultural Identity of Filipinos, Customer Service Representatives (CSRs), Method, Native Speakers of English or NSE, Philippine English (PE), Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), Strategy

Offshore Call Center Industry (CCI) also referred to as business process outsourcing (BPO) has grown in the past 2 decades worldwide. Moreover, BPO industry and employees are called by many names across the globe. BPOs are one of the important industries in the Philippines due to the country's high unemployment rate (Bolton, 2013). Americans favor the Philippines when it comes to outsourcing services. These investors believe that the majority of Filipinos are fluent in the English language, easily trainable, and culturally closer to the American culture (Friginal, 2007; Lockwood, 2012; Vachhrajani, 2008).

Communication skills are key elements to get hired in the CCI. American English is the yardstick that is used to determine the quality of English required for call center related jobs. The problem is that this requirement may have negative impacts on linguistic and cultural identity of Filipinos employees (Salonga, 2010). This could explain why Patel (2010) defines the BPO firm as "sites of Western imperialism" (p. 38). Imperialism here is to be understood as "the forcible imposition of other people's cultural norms upon another." (Tupas, 2009, p. 222). In this context, CCI is viewed as a communication factory where employees are expected to use the American English exclusively (Cameron, 2000; Townsend, 2005).

Through this study, the researcher seeks to describe the teaching strategies used by trainers in teaching English. He aims to investigate whether the trainers' integration with the English language and American culture have an impact on the way they teach CSRs. Furthermore, the researcher explores how these trainers and CSRs view themselves as Filipino employees in the BPO industry as a result of the training they have received and experiences they have gone through.

Review of Related Literature

The researcher highlights the importance of investigating how English language itself influences English language trainers and learners at the personal and cultural levels in this chapter. He places this chapter in the context of English usage in call centers in the Philippines. He then shows that existing literature can be enriched with a focus on the impact of English language teaching approach through an investigation of English language trainers' teaching strategies in the BPO firm.

Relationship between Language and Culture: The Case of the Philippine English

The researcher divides this section in two subsections for clarity purposes. In the first section, the researcher shows that the Philippine society has its own culture and that all the Filipino languages including the English language are fashioned by the Filipino way of life, of approaching and perceiving reality, and of solving problems. In the second subsection, the researcher traces the history of the English language in the Philippines. He then presents different viewpoints of Filipino and other Asian scholars on the functions of the English language in the Philippines.

Language as a Byproduct of any Culture and Culture as a Foundation of any Language

According to Tupas (2009), culture is expressed in the language people speak; language is an important part of any culture. People cannot help talking about culture without talking about themselves, their values, and beliefs. To teach also means to express culture.

Culture denotes common beliefs, values, philosophy, tradition, music, writing, education, the way of speaking, and the accent shared by a specific group of people (Llamzon 1969; Mercado, 1977). This implies that the language of a community is a symbol and a part of all the above elements. This can be seen in the example of Peter trying to deny his Galilean origin in the Bible. However, his accent was a clear mark to reveal who he was. "After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for *your accent betrays you*" (Matt. 26:73 in N. R. S. V., 2000; emphasis added). Accent here is a cultural mark.

Considering the interconnectedness of language and culture, Llamzon (1969) describes the brand of English spoken in the Philippines as Philippine English (PE). This English is neither British nor American English, yet it is a distinctive variety of English Philippine English is the type of English spoken and accepted by educated Filipinos. This variety of English respects the constraints of the English language. Promoting PE is a clear mark that Llamzon favors the use of the English language as an official language in the Philippines. He points to aspects this language enjoys internationally in trade, science, and information technology.

In contrast, Bernado (2004; 2008) and Tinio (1990) believe that English should not be used as an official language in the Philippines. Using it as an official language would be more of a problem than a solution in education and in society. According to Tinio (1990), the Philippines will remain politically, culturally, and ideologically colonized as long as it uses the language of the colonizers. He argues that Filipinos are being held back not because of the experience of having been colonized but by the influence of education and the way of thinking brought about by the language of the colonizers. He regrets that Filipinos' joyful statement to be the third largest English-speaking country in the world is based on the fact that both the educated and uneducated Filipinos have the tendency to see the world through American eyes. Filipinos tend to view the American culture as the ideal way of life. Therefore, Tinio (1990)

favors the use of local language more than a foreign language in education and in cultural development.

Thus Llamzon (1969) promotes the English language as a language that Filipinos fashion, own, and use for different purposes. However, Bernado (2004, 2008) and Tinio (1990) define the English language as a language of colonizers. According to themthen, the English language cannot help the promotion of the Filipino culture and freedom.

Philippine English and Its Place in the Filipino Society

The first English language teachers in the Philippines were American soldiers. However, the first professional American English language teachers reached the Philippines on August 21, 1901 and their number continued to grow. It was then believed that English would be the language that would unite and liberate Filipinos, and a means to empower and enlighten them (Bernardo, 2008; Gonzalez, 1997; Thompson, 2003; Tupas, 2009). Based on the results of the census taken back in 1901, English was still an unknown language to the Filipinos except for a few who had travelled abroad (Gonzalez, 1997).

By then, the English language had become a privileged tongue in the Philippines since the 1900s. For instance, from 1901 to 1935, English was the sole medium of instruction. In addition, the first ratification of the Philippine Constitution back in 1935 recommended to continue using the English language in Education after the independence from the Americans (Gonzalez, 1997). The use of the English language as an official language is still supported by the current Philippine Constitution (Republic of the Philippines, 1987) stating that "for purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and, until otherwise provided by law, English" (section 7, article 14).

However, Tupas (2004, 2009) argues that elite Filipinos have access to better education in the country or travel abroad to study. For Tupas (2004; 2008; 2009), the English language separates the rich and elite from the poor majority. Bernardo (2004; 2008), Donoso (2012), Salonga (2010), Tinio (1990), and Tupas (2004, 2008, 2009) believe that Filipinos learn English for instrumental ends. Indirectly this means that if the Philippines were a developed country, one local language might suffice for all its communication needs. In other words, if Filipino[1] or Bisaya (Cebuano) or any other local language could help Filipinos earn a living and get access to higher education, English may eventually lose its influence on the Philippine society. Filipino is one of Philippine languages referred to as Pilipino or Tagalog. Tagalog is mostly spoken in Metro Manila and the Luzon region in the Philippines. The Philippine Constitution (1987 section 7, article 14) promotes the use of English and Filipino as official languages (Department Order No. 52, s. 1987 & DECS Order No. 54, s. 1987).

Philippine English is comprised of different styles: acrolect, mesolect, and basilect "Acrolect" refers to the highest level of a language whereas "basilect" refers to the lowest form of a language (Llamzon, 1997). Peña (1997) provides the results of written "acrolectal" PE through the analysis of eight teacher's manuals written by thirteen textbook writers. He shows that most of the textbooks used the kind of English that is used in Philippine printed mass media. Peña reports that the textbooks contained some syntactic and lexical forms that were erroneous or unusual, and awkward to native speakers. However, he ponders if what looks erroneous or unusual, and awkward to native speakers might not be part of a Standard PE.

Tupas (2004) refers to several studies by Filipinos who have written about PE. He notes that all these studies took the path of Llamzon's (1969) approach to PE. He argues that

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[1] Filipino is one of Philippine languages referred to as Pilipino or Tagalog. Tagalog is mostly spoken in Metro Manila and the Luzon region in the Philippines. The Philippine Constitution (1987 section 7, article 14) promotes the use of English and Tagalog as official languages (Department Order No. 52, s. 1987 & DECS Order No. 54, s. 1987).

Llamzon's description of PE is an exclusive perception. He then suggests that PE should be inclusive so to reflect the socio-political and multicultural faces of the entire nation. Moreover, Tupas (2004) notes that the Filipino educational system has been focusing on supplying the world market with cheaper labor since Llamzon wrote his Standard Philippine English in 1969. He regrets that the major business of education is to teach Filipinos "technical skills" required by the "ruling economy" (Tupas, 2004, p. 51; See also Bolton & Bautista, 2004, pp. 2-3).

Furthermore, Tupas (2008) promotes the equality of all the varieties of English stating that "legitimized and institutionalized Englishes are, linguistically and sociolinguistically, all equal with erstwhile 'old' varieties of English, such as American English and British English" (p. 70). Tupas (2008) classifies English into two faces, namely, "the face of the colonizer (Western, Judeo-Christian) and the face of the colonized (e.g., African, Asian)" (p. 70). The colonizers tend to claim the ownership of English. Bringing up the example of the Philippines, Tupas believes that even if some changes have happened in education by adopting bilingual education, the Philippines still prioritizes English through different programs, agendas, tests, and job opportunities.

In the perspective of class divisions brought forth by the type of English spoken by Filipinos, Martin (2014) reviews Kachru's three-circle model of English language used around the globe. She applies this view to the Philippines' society and agrees that the Philippines is, indeed, an outer-circle society based on Kachru's classification. Martin adds that all Kachru's three circle model can be applied in the Philippine setting. The inner circle consists of educated Filipinos who support the use the PE in Education. The outer-circle comprises some educated Filipinos who are aware of the PE. Persons in this circle hold that for practical reasons, American brand of English is better than PE. The expanding circle includes Filipinos whose English has no practical meaning in their lives like farmers, and some indigenous communities.

This study terms the view of Llamzon (1969) of Standard Philippine English as an idealistic approach and Tupas' (2004) approach as realistic or practical. Pragmatic thinking is not totally opposed to idealistic thought. Both thoughts are markers on the same road. Practical interpretation refers to the right-now reality whereas idealistic view points to the highest expectation — the target on the journey.

English Language Teaching as a Means to Liberate or Alienate Users: A Case of Filipino Trainers and CSR

Anthony and Norris (1969) define an approach as a set of "notions of what it means to acquire, teach, or learn language" (p. 2). They define a 'method 'as a teacher's set of procedures, techniques, and structured strategies built on an approach to concretize a lesson plan and meet the pre-established classroom objectives. According to them, techniques are a classroom set of activities, strategies, and exercises to implement a method or to lead learners to a desired language outcome. In this study, the word 'technique' is used to refer to 'strategy'. Oxford (2003) classifies L2 learning strategies into six groups, namely "cognitive, metacognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective, and social" strategies (p.2). She associates L2 learning strategies with learning styles which are defined as a student's preferred ways or steps to engage in learning L2. Learning styles are influenced by L2 learner's personality, desired degree of generality, biological differences, and senses. Senses refer to sight, touch-oriented, hearing, and movement-oriented learning.

In the context of language learning, Krashen (1982) exhorts second language (L2) teachers to avoid putting learners on defensive attitudes so as to help them acquire more input. For him, L2 teaching should aim to provide as much intake for learners to be able to acquire language successfully. The natural approach is the way to teach a second language and impart

second language learners (2LLs) with communicative abilities (Krashen, as cited by Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The reality is that CCIs in the Philippines do not use the natural approach in their English language trainings. In fact, they follow the English Only Policy (EOP) —a policy that discourages the use of any other languages except English (Friginal, 2009). A critical approach to this policy uncovers its basis in Fishman's (1994) remark on the influence of powerful languages, specifically English language versus indigenous languages and cultures. Fishman (1994) laments and warns against the loss of weak languages. He is convinced that more emphasis given on the use of English language leads to the loss of local languages where people lose the "sense of sanctity, of kinship, and a sense of moral imperative" (p. 74). He argues that English language must not subjugate local languages. This view clearly goes against the idea of using the EOP in the BPO firm.

According to Donoso (2012), the imposition of the English language to the Filipino people set the nation backward from a level where the Philippines was an emerging nation in South East Asia. Furthermore, Filipinos had to learn the English language alphabet and eventually forget their past and their culture in order to be adapt to the American way of life and thus serve the American interest. English also became a language that will eventually separate the elite and educated Filipinos from the poor majority (Bernardo, 2004; 2008; Donoso 2012;, Salonga, 2010; Tinio, 1990; and Tupas, 2004; 2008; 2009). . For Tinio local values, mores, and civilization could have been integrated in the consciousness of people if taught and learned in a local language or in local languages. Worse, the English language has brought the Philippines to be "poorer than all the other Asian countries educated in their own language" (Tinio, 1990, p. 56).

Training in call centers can have negative effects on employees. Cameron (2000) sees CCI as a communication factory where employees are being alienated and controlled. She explains this through the routine job performance in call centers, the aim for quantity, the standardization of interaction, and the style of communication. She notes that workers at CCI are not only told what to do but they are also given script to use to perform a task. This is what she calls "codification." Another trait of CCI is "surveillance," which means that "workers' performance is constantly being monitored and measured" (p. 98). Cameron explains that quality in call center setting does not usually mean high standard but "getting something right first time, every time" (p. 101). Quality here also means that each CSR portrays the image or the brand of their company. As such, each CSR has to speak and behave the way the company wants.

Friginal (2007) and Forey (2013) underscore the fact that the neutral accent that is required of CSRs in the BPO sector during and after training is designed to erase mother-tongue interference. Both researchers report that BPO investors expect CSRs to sound like native speakers of English. Despite this shortcoming, both researchers believe that BPOs empower employees. Native Speakers of English or NSE refer to persons who speak English as a mother tongue or as first language learned (Llamzon, 1969; Tupas 2009).

English language becomes alienating when non-native speakers are required to lose the trace of their linguistic accent (Fishman, 1994; Rahman, 2009; Salonga, 2010; Tinio, 1990) , or to look at the world and interpret it only through the eyes of Americans, British, or Australians (Kachru, 1997; Phan, 2008; Phillipson, 2008; Salonga, 2010; Tinio, 1990; Tupas, 2004) . It is alienating when English is perceived and taught only through imported methods and approaches (Phan, 2008; Phillipson, 2008; Tupas, 2009). Imported approaches and methods in this study refer to language teaching theories and procedures that originated outside the country where the teaching approach or method is being applied. Approaches include communicative language teaching, competency-based language teaching, content-based language instructions, cooperative learning, lexical approaches, multiple intelligences, the

natural approach, neurolinguistics programming, task-based language teaching, and whole language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, pp. 244-245). Methods also include audiolingualism, counselling-learning, situational language teaching, the silent way, suggestopedia, and total physical response (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 245). The English language is a divisive force when some non-native users lose their employment for failing to master English as expected by the elites (Lockwood, 2012; Rahman, 2009; Salonga, 2010; Tupas, 2008). It is also alienating when non-native speakers master the English language but become "confused with their own linguistic" and cultural identity. (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 130).

Blommaert (2005) defines voice as the ability to make oneself understood by other people or failure to do so. He believes that people judge or are evaluated by others on the basis of the way they sound. That is why Blommaert (2005) calls for the study of functions of language in the society through ethnography to "investigate phenomena of globalization" (p. 71). Likewise, Cameron (1995) believes that the study of language use is important to help us explore types of verbal hygiene. The current study is indeed one of those kinds.

Bolton (2013) reports that BPOs are one of the important industries in the Philippines due to the country's high unemployment rate. He justifies this by stating that 10% of Filipinos are overseas' workers. . . He observes that Filipino call center employees speak a variety of English that range from mid-level to high-level "mesolectal" PE and that the majority of call center applicants speak English with a Filipino accent (Bolton, 2013). He points to other problems related to working in the BPO industry such as those associated with sleep, health issues, and family life dysfunctionality. Moreover, the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE, 2011) classifies working in a CCI as descent employment as the job pays above the average income. However, Nardin (2006) explains that cheap labor and work efficiency are key elements that attract BPO investors in developing countries. He notes though that a CCI has the power to develop universal agents by investing in training that empowers employees.

Working in call centers have some positive aspects. Gray's (2009) doctoral dissertation entitled *A Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experiences of Call Center Employees in United States-Based Call Centers* focused on the benefits of working in such environments. She underscores the fact that employees cannot be equally motivated because they have different motivation and reasons for work. For instance, many CSRs believe that job motivation is "not limited to interesting work, good wages, or teamwork. [rather, it extends to] good work environment, a positive relationship with the supervisor, and providing a high level of customer service" (pp. 70-71).

In the same light, Hannif (2006) highlights that many factors determine job quality in the CCI such as working time and hours, level of monitoring, training and career development, managerial style and work strategies, relationship with co-workers, the nature of work, identification with the work, income and benefits, and work and life-balance. For him, the CCI is diversified based on working conditions. He then recommends investigating various aspects of the CCI to determine the key elements of job quality and the impact they have on workers. Taking the same angle, this study investigates linguistics and socio-cultural aspects of BPOs and the impact they have on call center employees, especially on trainers and CSRs.

Emhamed and Krishnan (2011) emphasize the importance of the English language as "the world's most widely studied, read, and spoken foreign language" (p. 182). It is evident then that most training sessions conducted in English focus on a good command of the language in the BPOs located in the Philippines. Usually, English language trainers in the BPO sector focuses on competencies that employees need to perform in their job. Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) shares some feature with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It focuses on "the functional and interactional" view of the nature of language and aims

to teach language based on "social contexts in which the language is used" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 143). Competencies here consist of a description of essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behavior that are required to effectively perform a specific task or activity in social or professional settings.

The following factors characterize a CBLT approach: a focus on successful functioning of society, a focus on life skills, task- or performance-centered orientation, "modularized instruction, outcomes that are made explicit beforehand," formative assessment, "demonstrated mastery of performance objectives, and individualized, student-centered instruction" (Auerbach, as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 146).

To be linguistically competent according to CBLT then would mean to effectively use language to perform or carry out a specific task or activity based on set expectations at the work place or in the society. Tasks vary based on the following four domains that CBLT covers, namely, "knowledge and learning competencies, oral competencies, reading competencies, and writing competencies" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 147).

Lockwood, Forey, and Price (2008/2009) believe that BPO employment contributes to the development of the Philippine society. They report that the "role of the Philippine CSRs requires the acquisition of new skills and competencies that go beyond the patterns of everyday spoken English in a local context" (Lockwood et al., 2008/2009, p. 227). They recommend that Filipino "new recruits must be provided with training that factors in the development of specific competencies for the CSRs in the practice of customer service, while at the same time acknowledging the linguistic diversity of English in the global workplace" (Lockwood et al., 2008/2009, p. 238). They invite educators, language teachers, the government, and employers to collaborate and so help Filipino youth aim for communicative competence and skills that allow them to compete locally and internationally in the global marketplace.

This is why, if training in the BPO could incorporate some 21st century literacy skills, trainers and CSRs would aspire for high achievements in their job as well. According to Binkley et al. (2012), 21st literacy skills are paths to guide learners through decision making and help them adjust to today's challenges. There are ten skills grouped into four categories. The first group applies to "ways of thinking," namely (1) creativity and innovation, (2) critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, (3) learning to learn, and metacognition. The second group contains the "ways of working" like, (4) communication, and (5) collaboration (teamwork). The third group comprises the "tools for working" which are (6) information literacy, and (7) information and communication (ICT) literacy. The fourth group applies to "living in the world" which lists (8) "citizenship – local and global, (9) life and career, and (10) "personal and social responsibility – including cultural awareness and competence" (Binkley et al., 2012, pp. 18-19). The 21st literacy skills point to collaboration between educators, researchers, employers, and the government for a better world.

In the perspective of connecting colleges, universities, and employments as a means to empower persons and help them develop the nation, Wa-Mbaleka (2015) stresses that "to see the Philippines rise steadily economically will depend on more collaboration between universities and industries" (p. 126). This statement applies also to the BPO industry and universities and colleges in the Philippines. Being an undeniable current trend in the Philippine society, the CCI needs researchers' attention as well. Moreover, it is only with the collaboration of the BPO management that researchers can explore realities within BPOs and bring to light its challenges to the country.

It must be emphasized that when offshore employers know the culture of their Filipino employees, they can easily understand their ways of communication. Timbreza (2008) stated:

"Filipino thought is more on the philosophy of life than a philosophy of being";
"it is metaphorical rather than literal in its formulations"; "it is concrete rather

than abstract"; "it is personal rather impersonal, hence often subjective and psychological"; "it is practical and socio-ethical, rather than theoretical and cognitive"; "it tends to be particular rather than universal"; "it is more rhetorical and functional than logical and empirical"; it is politically or ideologically influenced; "it is more theological than scientific" (pp. 187-192).

Any training that incorporates cultural aspects may help English language trainers and CSRs associate their job with their daily life. These employees may value their work, language, and culture, along with the target culture. When interacting with each other, with employers, or with customers, employees may realize that language, culture, and teaching are interconnected realities.

So cultural values, the English language, and acquired skills become part of what constitutes CSRs asset. This happens when they enter the BPO firm, go through training and get to transact with native and non-native English speakers. They integrate and use the English language as part of their personal, social, and professional life (Friginal, 2009; Lockwood et al., 2008/2009).

Acculturation Model and Social Identity

Training and continuous transaction with American customers is also a way Filipino English language trainers and CSRs acculturate to the target language group. Acculturation is the process through which L2 learner or a group of L2 learners acquire a L2 by learning about or becoming part of the target culture through interaction (Schumman, 1986). Acculturation is also the Filipinos' adaptation and ownership of the English language by reference to the Philippine English (Llamzon, 1969).

Schumann distinguishes two types of acculturation. The first applies to learner's social integration with the TL group—nurtured and continuous contact with the speakers of the TL promotes acquisition of the TL. The second type of acculturation contains all the aspects in type one. Moreover, L2 learners approach the speakers of the target language as an example and consciously or unconsciously want to adopt the TL speakers' "life style and values" (Schumann, 1986, p. 380).

Schumann believes that 2LL's contact with, integration in, and psychological openness to the target group and the target language are factors that facilitate or delay second language acquisition. He cites nine factors that influence L2 acquisition, namely: social factors, affective factors, personality factors, cognitive factors, biological factors, aptitude factors, personal factors, input factors, and instructional factors.

Schumann defines two groups based on social factors. The first is the 2LLs' group and the second is the speakers of the TL group. The social, affective, and personal factors have direct associations to this study and need further explanation. Social factors include "dominance, non-dominance, subordination, assimilation, acculturation, preservation, enclosure, cohesiveness, size, congruence, attitude, intended length of residence in TL area" (Schumann, 1986, p. 380). Schumann believes that economic, political, cultural, and technical development of either group may facilitate or hinder acquisition of the TL. The dominant group may impose its way of life to the learner's group and the result is "preservation." However, if the learners' group is dominated by the target group, the group may lose its linguistic and cultural identity. It may then assimilate the lifestyle of the TL speakers.

In the BPO companies and training centers located in the Philippines, for instance, Filipino CSRs or trainees may approach the American employers and customers as politically, culturally, technically, and economically superior. Some Filipinos CSRs may resist this reality and thus hardly acquire the American English language. Other CSRs or English language

trainers may decide to adopt or integrate the Americans' lifestyle. They may hereby learn easily the American English and assimilate the American culture. Another group of Filipino CSRs and English language trainers may choose to adapt to the American language and culture. They may try to use the American accent when talking to Americans but use the Filipino accent when conversing in English with fellow Filipinos. With this strategy, 2LL group "adapts to the lifestyle and values of the TL group, but maintains its own life style and values for intragroup use" (Schumann, 1986, p. 381). The acquisition of the TL can also be faster in this context.

Affective factors can facilitate or delay the acquisition of the TL. These variables depend on individual learners whereas social factors depend on a group of learners. Affective variables include cultural shock, language shock, ego permeability, and motivation. To this, "personal factors" can be added, namely, sensitivity to rejection, tolerance for ambiguity, self-esteem, introversion/extroversion (1986). When it comes to motivation, 2LLs succeed in L2 when they have integrative and "expressive motivations" than "instrumental motivation" (Schumann, 1978, p. 150).

Schumann adds that "instructional factors" may also hinder or facilitate acquisition of the TL. These variables are teachers, goals, method, text, intention, and duration. Incentive stimuli such as a class, a language teacher, a teaching method, fellow learners, TL speakers, the TL culture can help 2LLs be more involved in learning L2 (Schumann, 2001).

Ellis (1997) describes Peirce's notion of the social identity of L2 learners as complex, defined by struggle and investment. Ellis explains that "learners are not computers who process input data but combatants who battle to assert themselves and investors who expect a good return on their efforts" (p. 40). In their struggle, successful L2 learners engage with native speakers and challenge the accepted social order. L2 learners' struggle consists of constructing and asserting their own social identity.

In the context of this research, acculturation plays a role in how the trainers and CSRs (both learners of the target language) perceive the language and the target language group—either in a positive or negative light. Therefore, this model can explain how such perception influences the way they teach the language. In turn, their way of teaching may have an impact on the trainees, depending on how they are taught the language.

To further explore ways of acculturation, Tupas (2009) presents numerous contexts of English language teaching (ELT) and defines different cultures in learning or teaching English as a second language (TESL). First, the culture of inferiority that promotes a negative image of 2LLs' culture. Second, the culture of pragmatism that believes that learning a particular language leads to earning much money and so focuses on *skills* in language use. Third, the culture of dependence that awaits the arrival of native-speaker *experts* in TESOL methodology and where local teachers ask foreign *experts* for better teaching methods. Fourth, the culture of autonomy which aims to give much freedom to and put learners at the center of their learning process. Fifth, the culture of passivity that puts authority in the hands of a teachers, believes that L2 teachers are the sole bearers of knowledge, and that students are just receivers of knowledge. Sixth, the culture of silence as a culture that does not encourage much talking but that may encourage reflection and critical thinking. Seventh, the culture of social isolationism that ignores any talk about issues students confront in daily lives and focuses on forms of language, or grammar of language believing this approach is free from any political or cultural influence. Last is the culture of elitism that favors and rewards particular languages and / or practices of language while stigmatizing others

Tupas (2009) invites L2 teachers to go beyond the Native-English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) versus Nonnative-English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) fallacy. TESOL in Tupas's view is also an expression of specific culture. It is true that the acculturation model was designed for immigrants where the acquisition takes place in the target community without formal instruction. Yet for this thesis, "instructional factors" and the contexts of ELT, and the

presentation of different cultures in learning or TESOL are invitation to English language trainers to be facilitators. L2 teachers also need to be critical to different strategies they learn or choose to use in TESL and to the instructional materials.

Bakhtin's Dialogic View of Language

According to Bakhtin (1986), the essence of language is in the dialogic relation between the speaker and the listener. Participants partake in the continuous dialogue because "any utterance is connected to other utterances in a highly organized chain. Every utterance is directed to someone so that it expects. Moreover, every utterance has "its quality of being directed to someone, its *addressivity*" (p. 95, italic in original). As such, every utterance expects some kind of answers and is open to new questions.

Bakhtin (1981) believes that language is owned not through "*authoritative discourse*" which are ways people are taught and expected to speak and sound but through "*internally persuasive discourse*" which are formed by personalizing and mastering the language with individual voice, style, and expressions (p. 324, italics in original). In the context of this research, CSRs should have some degree of control of the English language. Even those who use scripts when transacting with customers need to understand the reason behind the use of scripts. Thus, it is the responsibility of trainers to analyze and clarify the content of the message to trainees.

Different ways of looking at the world can influence the way people look at and define themselves and each other. In other words, "a person has no internal sovereign territory, he is wholly and always on the boundary; looking inside himself, he looks *into the eyes of another or with the eyes of another*" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 287, italics in original). This means that the language people speak or the way they are expected to use language can influence not only how they are looked upon by others but also affect the way they view themselves. In the CCI, Filipino and non-Filipino CSRs can reveal the detrimental psychological and emotional impacts they experience when they are told that they speak "bad" English or especially when they lose their job because of lack of competence in speaking (Salonga, 2010). Likewise, a CSR who masters the English language might be disconnected from local realities or perhaps underestimate his or her colleagues who speak the English language with their Mother-Tongue-Interference (MTI) which emphasizes the culture of elitism that favors and rewards particular languages and / or practices of language while stigmatizing others (Tupas, 2009).

Bakhtin (1986) describes the importance of "concrete utterances (written or oral)" in all spheres of human life (p. 62). By utterances, Bakhtin means speech genres or ways of using language. He believes that "language enters life through concrete utterances (which manifest language) and life enters language through concrete utterances as well" (p. 63). Dewey (1938) emphasizes the significance of experience in human life too.

Every utterance carries something of its speaker whether the utterance is oral or written, primary or spoken. Yet business documents, military comments, verbal signals in industry use more scripts or samples than personal utterance (Bakhtin, 1986). Cameron (1995, 2000) also reports the lack of personal creativity in the script CSRs use to transact with customers.

Language lives through dialogue. Users of language give life to language through their dialogic interaction. In other words, language is shaped through peoples' interaction in their daily activities in business, art, scholarship, and culture (Bakhtin, 1984). Also note that people reveal who they are through dialogue because it is when people communicate and interact that they reveal who they really are. Bakhtin promotes collaboration and dialogue within any society and throughout the world. For him, communication between two people is the minimum for life and existence. However, Hymes (1996) says that language diversity, its medium, its

structure, and its functioning make of language a human problem that must be questioned and studied.

Like Vygotsky (1986), Bakhtin conceives language as dialogue. And so, language as a dialogue applies not only to first language but to second language as well. Equally, learning or teaching of language is perceived as a shifting dialogic process. In *The Rebirth of Dialogue,* Zappen (2004) reiterates that people are interconnected and interdependent. "We need other cultures, as we need other people … to see what we cannot see for ourselves and thus to make ourselves whole" (p. 44). Language is a dialogue and dialogue is eternal, because "dialogue, by its very essence, cannot and must not come to an end" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 252). This shows that dialogue goes beyond the sphere of language and extends to human actions and life itself (Vitanova, 2005).

To the whole world, especially to BPOs as a community of speakers, dialogue leads to the highest form of being and living because, as Bakhtin (1984) states, "I cannot manage without another, I cannot become myself without another; I must find myself in another by finding another in myself" (p. 287). To put this statement in the BPO firm context, it can be said that employers in the BPO sector depend on their employees who interact with their customers. Likewise, customers depend on employees who assist them in their queries. Employees too depend on the employers who invest in the country and hire them. Therefore, interconnectedness between employer, employees, and customers should be underscored during and after training.

Rosenblatt's Transactional View of Language

Rosenblatt (2004) illustrates linguistic transactions with a face-to-face communication. She states that in a conversation two people contribute to the meaning making. "Both speaker and addressee contribute throughout to the spoken text (even if the listener remains silent) and to the interpretations that it calls forth as it progresses" (p. 1367). When the speaker and the listener engage in a conversation, they both participate actively in the interaction to create a new meaning.

In a conversation, a communicator uses his or her personal background to agree or disagree, to negotiate, to ask questions or give an answer, to clarify, to explain, and so on. In short, the conversation or "the text is shaped transactionally by both speaker and addressee" (p. 1367). For instance, the BPO has what they call probing strategies when a CSR is talking to a customer over the phone. These strategies are short series of question-answer to identify a customer's problem so that the CSR can address the problem correctly. In the transactional approach probing strategies can be said that both CSR and customer construct meaning.

Even if a face-to-face communication has different aspects from a text which lacks a physical presence, the voice, the nonverbal signs, the tone, etc. still share significant similarities. This means that speakers, listeners, writers, and readers use "their linguistic-experiential reservoirs as the basis for interpretation" in in any linguistic event (Rosenblatt, 2004, p. 1368). The attributes readers or speakers bring into a conversation or to a text include selective attention which is what James (1890) calls a "choosing activity" (cited in Rosenblatt, 2004, p. 1368). De Mello (1990) suggests that people are conditioned by the way they were taught to see things, to feel, to judge, and to speak. This means that the meaning people make depends on where their selective attention is focused. It is not a mechanical act but a dynamic focus.

Above all, one's selective attention depends on the other emotional attributes of an individual like fatigue, stress, or joy. These attributes can affect the quality of the meaning one makes out of a conversation or reading. Selective attention emphasizes Cameron's (2000) and

Salonga's (2010) fear about the CCI's expectations of CSRs. Both lamented that CSRs are expected to vividly respond to each call without considering their own emotional state.

To summarize, CCI employees are not just teaching or being taught to sound like native-speakers. They are not just learning different skills. They work in a high- pressure environment where they are expected to still be able to learn, understand, and interact even though they are going through some physical or emotional difficulties. They strive to improve their proficiency in the target language (TL). They are important to BPO employers and assets to their nation and culture.

CCI employees, their employers, and customers are brought together through a dialogic relation that calls for the end of self-glorification. Each of them then is called to engage in "cooperative choice" with the other to build the society by taking "humanity as the ground of existence" (Gripaldo, 2009, p. 247). In the context of this study then, to teach dialogically is to partake in a community where each voice has the right to be heard.
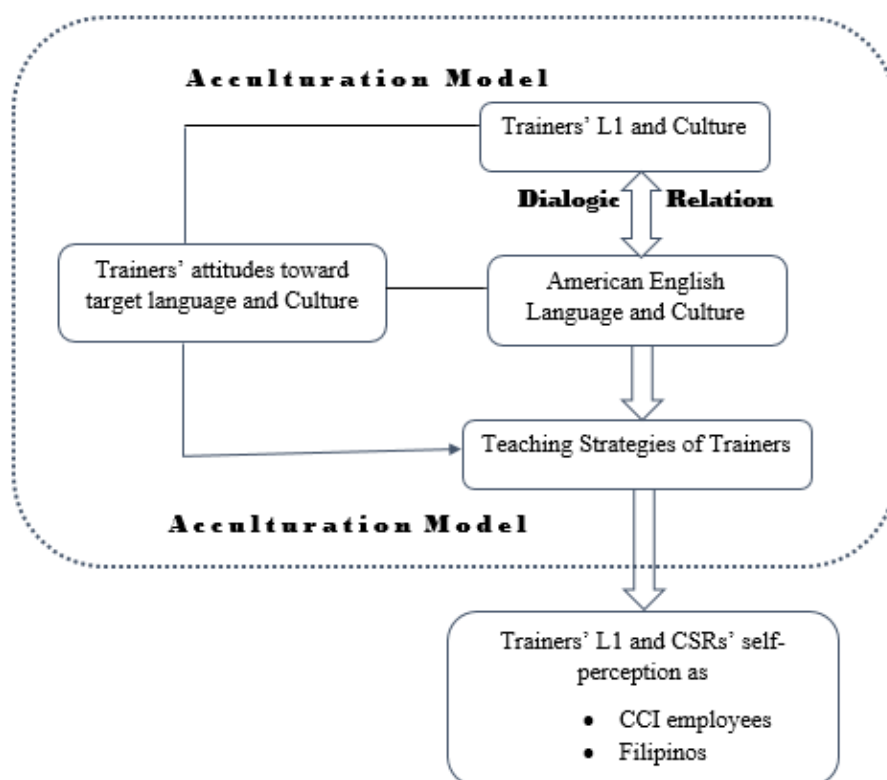
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Trainers' integration with target language and culture, teaching strategies, and their impact on CCI employees.

In a CCI setting, culture plays a huge part because the American culture and language permeate the atmosphere. Within this setting, there are several elements that needs to be considered. First, the trainers who teach the target language to the trainees have their own L1 and culture. English language trainers go through a "dialogical" process (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984). They have individual backgrounds, such as mother tongue (L1), local culture and mores.

Another element is the trainers' intergration with the target culture and language. The target language and culture transacts with trainers' first language and culture and impact their personal, social, and professional lives. In this transactional process, "each element conditions

and is conditioned by the other in a mutually constituted situation" (Rosenblatt, 2004, p. 1364). They receive knowledge and values from both cultures and both languages. All of these may play a role in the way they teach the trainees. Thus, the acculturation model explains how language and culture are interconnected.

Trainers who have the desire to socially integrate with the American English language and culture are more likely to socially integrate andcan easily adopt the values and lifestyle of the target group (Schumann, 1986). This favorable inclination makes it easier for them to learn the American English. On the other hand, negative attitudes and the lack of desire to integrate with the target language and culture makes them resist the influence of adopting and learning the language. This attitudes may subconsciously influence the way they teach the language to trainees. In turn, the experiences in teaching and learning the target language have an impact on how the trainers and the learners view themselves as call center employees and as Filipinos.

Research Questions:

This paper will answer the following questions:

1. How does trainers' integration with the American English and culture influence the way they teach English in the CCI?
2. In what ways has the training in CCI influenced the way Filipino English language trainers' and Customer Support Representatives' perceive themselves as CCI employees and as Filipinos?

Methodology

This chapter presents the research design, sample, research locale, instruments, data collection, and data analysis procedure. Since this study is an ongoing research, the last part highlights the importance of the study. Thus, no results of the study are presented.

Research Design

This study uses phenomenology, a qualitative approach that seeks to understand "the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). This study is also a critical ethnography that explores the accounts of English language trainers and CSRs at CCI by looking at different ways they use English.

Critical ethnography is not only a qualitative, anthropological, participant, and observer-based research, it is also built on critical theory (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). As a critical ethnography, this study promotes change in the CCI in particular, and in society in general. This research aims to explain and create awareness of the lived experiences of CCI employees. It examines the effects of power-relation on the English language teaching perspective between members of a community to suggest ways on how to develop or change that relation (Blommaert, 2005; Creswell, 2012).

Sample

Twenty call center employees will be selected using "purposeful sampling" (Seidman, 2006, p. 52; Cohen et al., 2000; Creswell, 2012), ten English Language trainers and ten Customer Service Representatives. English Language trainers include product trainers who conduct training in the English Language since these trainers combine language training with product training in some BPOs. The ten CSRs who will be selected include trainees, CSRs, and

Technical Support Representatives (TSRs) on production. Working with 20 call center employees aims to provide a deeper understanding of the topic being studied.

On the ethical issue, participants will be informed of the purpose of the study and asked to sign a consent form which the researcher will cosign. The selection of participants will be facilitated through "friends of friends" (Salonga, 2010; Seidman, 2006). The crucial point in ethnographic studies is to have informants who can provide more reliable data about the phenomena being investigated (Creswell, 2012; Seidman, 2006).

All trainers must be either English or product trainers in a BPO company or BPO training school with experiences answering offshore customers' calls for at least one year. CSRs or trainees will include male and female with experience in the CCI of six months and above. They must have experience answering American calls in BPO. They will be contacted via email, skype messages, LinkedIn, Facebook, text messages, and word of mouth.

Research Locale

Five (5) call centers will be purposefully selected within Metro-Manila. Metro-Manila is selected since it houses more call centers than any cities in the Philippines. Plus, Filipino who speak other local languages live in Metro-Manila. Criteria for selection includes: an offshore call center industry; providing service to American customers via phone calls. The company must be conducting product training or English language training for new employees. It should be employing CSRs who use English as a second language. Training approach is not mentioned since each call center has its training approach.

Instruments

Qualitative studies in general and ethnographies in particular present the researcher as the primary instrument of his or her own research which reveals his or her reflexivity (Cohen et al., 2000; Creswell, 2012; Hymes, 1996). In other words, qualitative researcher does the following activities during the collection of data: conversing, hearing, paraphrasing what the participants say during interviews, asking for clarification, observing, interpreting the unspoken language, revealing his/her stand during research. The researcher should be aware of his or her own cultural background and history and consider his or her interpretation as one among others.

Other instruments include participants' profile form, one interview schedule with two sections, at least one observation, and "unobtrusive" data like "artifacts" and "documents." (Hatch, 2002, p. 117). The background form will be used to gather each participant's personal and professional background. Participants will be code-named to partially resolve the ethical issue on personal identification.

Interviews will be used as means of gathering information from English Language trainers and CSRs. The interview has two sections. The first section will partially answer research question one and the second section will provide partial answers to the second research question.

Observations will focus on English language trainers' teaching strategies and on all participants' English language use at work place to capture their behaviors and practices in relation to the topic. It will provide more insight in answering both research questions. A pen and a notebook will be used to write drown observed data based a researcher's checklist.

Unobtrusive data will be used to gather factors and skills emphasized in CCI. "Their collection does not interfere with the ongoing events of everyday life" (Hatch, 2002, p. 116). This tool will provide additional information to answer questions one (1) and two (2). Unobtrusive data include Quality Assurance (QA) audit form which will be used ─ to analyze

and understand how productivity is measured at BPO; job postings will be used─ to enumerate rewarded qualities and skills in the CCI. To help reduce biases, prior to fieldwork, the background form, the interview schedule and criteria for inclusion and exclusion were presented to the panel committee for review, feedback, and approval.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct research will be sought from both the CCI management team, then from potential participants. Researcher requested for a letter from a faculty member of his university to present at the sites. Data collection procedure was updated after the researcher faced many rejections from more than thirty (30) BPO companies. Participants were selected through friends of friends.

The interview is adapted from the structure of in-depth, phenomenological interviewing (Seidman, 2006). At the beginning of the interview, each participant will be reminded of the consent form. Then, he or she will be given a background form to fill in information about his or her background which will take 5 minutes. The whole interview schedule will be 30 to 60 minutes long and will be scheduled based on each participant's availability. The venue and time will be negotiated between interviewee and interviewer. After the interview, the researcher will transcribe the interview the same day.

During observation, the researcher will be a silent observer and will note down observed data. Each observation will be coded based on researcher's checklist- to correspond to the participant who was observed and the date the observation was done. Unobtrusive data will be collected by photocopying the documents, taking photographs, or asking willing participants to email them to the researcher.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data will be analyzed in order to categorize them into themes or sub-themes. Data will be compared using "triangulation" which would utilize all the data collected from the instruments mentioned above." Triangulation is defined as a "comparison across multiple data sources" (Harklau, 2005, p. 180). Triangulation is used to lessen biases, to reach a more balanced analysis and interpretation of data, and to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena being investigated.

This will lead to a better understanding of the phenomena being investigated. As of now, the part that follows presents the importance of the current research since this topic is part of an ongoing study. Thus, no results, conclusions or recommendations are presented in this paper.

Significance of the Study

This research is to be conducted by a user of English as a second language who is also a CSR with nine (9) years of experience working at CCI. As an internal employee, the researcher's work experience in CCI will provide a deeper insight into important areas of language research.

The results of this study may be helpful to socio-linguists who can quantitatively investigate whether teaching strategies and the use of English in BPO in the Philippines empower Filipino CSRs. The results can also be useful to school administrators and language teachers. They may get insights on which strategies are helpful in teaching cross-cultural communication and communication strategies to their students. School officials may then

organize workshops or programs to promote cross-cultural communication awareness among teachers and students and teaching strategies among teachers.

Psychologists may also benefit from psychological implications of this study. By understanding the impact, the English language training on CCIs have on Filipino's language attitudes and cultural identity, they can look for ways to prepare Filipino students who may work in BPOs or in international companies in the future. For instance, psychologists and councilors can prepare and present practical strategies to help Filipinos handle stress, resolve cross-cultural problems, and work in a highly stressful environment.

Families and educators may also benefit from the results of this study. They will rediscover whether the CCI has positive or negative impacts on the linguistic, social, and personal lives of the employees in terms of linguistic and cultural aspects. They will see other aspects of working in CCIs and not just dwell on the negative stigma attached to working in CCIs.

The Philippine government also may benefit from the findings of this study. It can take further steps on the English language planning and teaching methods from high-school through colleges. Likewise, the Philippines Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) can define additional means to solidify relationships between employees and employers in BPO.

BPO employers, managers, trainers, and quality assurance (QA) analysts can also benefit from this study because they will know whether the language trainings they give to the trainees actually empower or alienate their employees. They can gain insights in coaching and training non-native English speaking CSRs. In short, this study will contribute to existing literature on sociolinguistics, world "Englishes," call center training, and teaching English as a second language.

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