Toward the Intellectualization of Ilokano: Practices and Philosophies

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Introduction

Within the Ilokano community—from the center of the Amianan all the way to the margins of the diaspora—there are contentions advocating for the “true” preservation of the Ilokano language. This debate is leading to an unfortunate split in the language’s mission for survival into the modern era. Not only are there wider disagreements regarding the distinction between the Iloko (the lingua franca) and the Ilokano (the people); there are also contentious debates about seemingly minor matters, such as when to use the contested “c” or “k” in the language’s orthography leading to a “luko/luco” situation. Hence, the main discussions at Ilokano language-based conferences typically lead to a call for the academic standardization of the language.

This paper has two parts. The first part will argue for the need to move towards the intellectualization of Ilokano. The second part, subdivided into three sections, will draw on my own research and experience as a court interpreter to explore some sources that help to historicize this issue and demonstrate how the Ilokano diaspora is contributing to the development of vocabulary and concepts that are critical to intellectualizing and ultimately standardizing the language. The sources from which I have drawn may appear very different, but in combination they provide a point of departure for thinking about the processes by which Ilokanos in the diaspora began to articulate new emotions and new expedience.

The paper is built on the assumption that Ilokano academic discourse will only be achieved once standardization occurs. A developed academic discourse will enable Ilokano children’s education through a mother-tongue medium. By not providing an option for mother-tongue medium education, governments and educators are denying basic linguistic human rights and creating all sorts of consequences that are now understood as contributing directly to the denial of these rights. Research shows that students who are taught their mother-tongue language from an early age do better academically than students who are only immersed in a hegemonic language. I also argue that “intellectualizing” involves a diachronic approach that not only seeks consistency in the language but the ability to communicate in the Ilokano language at any given place or situation. My aim, after intellectualization, is for consistency so wherever an Ilokano “interpreter” role is needed (e.g. in the areas of legal, medical, academic, early education, and cyber), a more consistent and modern interpretation of the language should replace archaic practices of only using “core” Ilokano. This is to say not to perpetuate a fossilized myth of the glorious past—the romanticized and idealized period of Ilokano history—where only good, beautiful and true things happened in the way that people would look at the grammar and semantics in their own way of who they were and what they wanted to become while still maintaining the “core” of the Ilokano (Acasioi et al., 2006, 24). Hence, to intellectualize is to revisit the Ilokano language with a dynamic view to engender its evolution and adaptation to the changing human condition of global/glocal Ilokano, while keeping up with the technological processes of globalization.

An imperative for an expeditious change, in Ilokano, must take place in the periphery. Why must changes come from the margins of the diaspora? In Intercultural Studies, it is taught that those from the fringes sometimes create a reverse-reverberation from what the center emits - what is emitted back is slightly transformed. The altered result is eventually used by the center/metropolis. The hope of this paper is to use the
robust experiences of Hawai`i-Ilokano literatures which can illustrate the processes of intellectualizing and preserving the “true” essence of the Ilokano language. Intellectualizing is still happening in Hawai`i from such places as the Ilokano Program at the University of Hawai`i – Manoa (ILOUHM) and the Hawai`i Courts. Members of the ILOUHM are debating several questions such as, “What problems develop when we stick to the ‘true’ sense of the language as we translate and interpret?” “Must there be a need to perpetually romanticize the Ilokano language when we translate or interpret English idioms or descriptive words (e.g. wild imagination)?” How do we include in our language modern global words and phrases invented from the not so distant past such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) or “cyberspace?” “How do you write in Ilokano ‘taxi’ or ‘zoo’ using current canonized convoids and contoids without misleading the reader?” These questions inform the contours of this essay.

In this paper, I am concerned with the context in which the diasporic Ilokano corpus became intellectualized. I will also attempt to discuss the periodization and the locations for the intellectualization of Ilokano. Finally, I will explain why I am interested in the intellectualization of Ilokano.

The geographical location of my physical birth was in the Amianan—in Rosales, Pangasinan. At the age of ten, I left the beauty and security of Bauang, La Union (where I grew up) and migrated to Hawai’i and have since become a “settler.” However, I have always felt my being in Hawai’i was in some ways Foucauldian, creating a personal sense of being the “other” whenever publicly invoked my Ilokano. Hence, for filial comfort and foreign-born-ethnic-survival, Ilokano has been a part of my life at home. In fact, outside my home, I have also taken on the role as a certified Ilokano interpreter for the Hawai`i Courts and the United States Federal Courts. I am constantly reminded from my assigned court appearances that although legal proceedings function efficiently and effectively, Ilokanos with limited-English proficiency can only have equal access to justice by intellectualizing Ilokano.

There is another important reason why I feel I should do this research. I would like to suggest that this paper serve as a proof (pammaneknek) that students of the ILOUHM are involved in high academic pursuits. While there is increased attendance to the ILOUHM in Hawai`i, there is no single Ilokano program in the Philippines. Hence, it is with great possibility that intellectualizing Ilokano would take place in the periphery of the Ilokano diaspora.

However, from these interstitial spaces, Ilokano has become a minority language in the periphery. It has to be intellectualized in order to serve the migrants away from the “heart” that pumps Ilokano blood for survival. The Ilokano community is accustomed to thinking of Ilokano projects of liberty as emanating from the Amianan-center, but less accustomed to thinking about them emanating from the periphery into the Amianan (Pratt, 1992). In order for the standardization of Ilokano to take place, the center must accept what the periphery is instigating.

**Methodology**

I will use several ethnographic-diasporic materials that are of importance to local Hawai`i-Ilokanos. The literature I discuss includes the following: Hawai`i Sugar Plantation Association (HSPA) materials, court-related documents, and publications originating from ILOUHM. From these findings I will postulate that the intellectualization of Ilokano has been a robust exercise in Hawai`i.

Before I go further there are important terms that need to be defined. First, when I discuss diaspora, I would like to add here that my scope and limitation of intellectualization is bounded to Hawai`i. I will accede that Ilokano intellectualization took place since Western contact in the Amianan. Intellectualization in the Ilocos had to take place to appease the hegemonic interlopers (i.e. “buис [tax]”). Since then, there are many locations that have created an Ilokano diaspora. I have seen occupants of the Ilokano diaspora in Banff, British-Columbia, and Toronto, Canada. Moreover, I have relatives in Israel, Sydney, Singapore, Denmark, New York, the Carolinas, Alaska, District of Columbia, California, and I mark geographically diverse communities. Diasporic literature, when used in this paper, refer to materials produced only in Hawai`i—materials produced far from our established or ancestral homeland. Some of this literature was created in English and was translated into Ilokano. In such cases, the main focus of this paper is the translated copies.

And finally, mother-tongue language, also known as “first language,” “native language,” or “L1,” is the first
language of a child and is part of his or her personal, social and cultural identity. Another impact of the first language is that it brings about the reflection and learning of successful social patterns of acting and speaking. It is basically responsible for differentiating the linguistic competence of acting.

A Word on Intellectualization

One of the proponents for the intellectualization of Ilokano, Aurelio Agcaoili, suggests that intellectualization is not reintellectualization by outside interlopers – a model created by hegemonic Spanish and English. Reintellectualization suggests a burden of allowing oneself to become an appendage of another linguistic and cultural empire. Intellectualization is to initiate the secular process by which Ilokano will gradually eliminate the dominance of Spanish/English in the controlling domains of language by creating an Ilokano lexical expansion (25).

Second, Andrew Gonzalez also provides an important caveat that in the minds of certain egalitarians … (e)ven to suggest that some languages are not yet fully capable of being instruments of ‘thinking’, ‘ratiocinating’, ‘using scientific discourse’ is tantamount to labeling certain languages as inferior (compared to ‘superior’ languages), as ‘primitive’ rather than equally ‘advanced’ (Gonzalez, 2002, 12-13). Gonzalez rejects this attack by reasoning:

To speak of stages of development is not to denigrate … those who have not yet attained such development, but rather merely to give an objective description showing that they are still in the process … of becoming what they are potentially capable of becoming, and hence are still in the process of actualization (Gonzalez, 2002, 13-15).

When one attempts to search for a lexical definition of “intellectualization,” what is usually found is archaic and circuitous explanations such as—‘the act, process, or an instance of intellectualizing” (Webster 3rd, 1966, 1174). Further research will reveal intellectualization to be a cognate of the mind. As suggested in the title of my paper, a lingual context of intellectualization suggests an enriching of the language, possibly by appropriation from other languages. It could even propose, borrowing/opening the possibilities of taking for oneself words that we do not have direct experiences for (e.g. the Japanese created the word “pasokon” to translate “personal computer”). The word may even advocate modernizing Ilokano to help us adopt the language to the changing needs of the times. Intellectualization will enable us to narrate experiences that are currently not “sayable” both in oral and written form—within the context of interest in things Ilokano in the Philippines and the diaspora.

Hence, I approach the word “intellectualization” from a certain angle—another domain. Recently, other disciplines have begun to create their own theory of intellectualization—as an example, psychology (Gabard, 2004). This paper’s discussion of intellectualization is connected to the domain of language. Although “language intellectualization” is a fairly “new” concept, it was Vilem Mathesius who coined the term in 1920 and called attention to this process as a specific aspect of language cultivation (Gonzalez, 2002, 5-27). Examples of language intellectualization are taking place in Africa, the Pacific islands of Vanuatu and Fiji, as well as in the Philippines for /P/F/ilipino (Tagalog) (Alexander, 2005; Gonzalez, 2002; Sibayan, 1991). However, a discussion and argument for the intellectualization of Ilokano has never been proposed for or presented in any academic endeavor.

The ultimate goal for intellectualizing Ilokano is for the language to undergo a process of standardization whereby forms and structures become more or less uniform because of social consensus among its speakers (Gonzalez, 2002, 5-27). An important register is the creation of a body of literature, usually imaginative literature, subsequently other types of writing especially for use at all levels of schooling from elementary to tertiary, assuming that the language becomes a language of the schools (5).

According to Gonzalez, what we find at the highest levels of Ilokano discourse is a process of intellectualization. In this regard, the language begins to be used not only in everyday conversational discourse, but also as a means of learning subject matter especially in legal, professional, and academic circles. Ilokano, how-
ever, is not (yet) an intellectualized language. The only language domain where Ilokano is intellectualized is literature. In Ilokano, there is a respectable body of literature, substantial writers, and support organizations and publications for the development of Ilokano literature. In spite of Ilokano’s literary achievements, one cannot acquire a university degree in Ilokano other than at the ILOUHM. Core subjects such as math and courses in the social sciences are not available in Ilokano. What is needed then is the building up of various populations such as agricultural scientists, medical doctors, lawyers, and accountants who possess different knowledge and skills as well as a good command of Ilokano. The language used in medicine differs from the language of law, that is, the two differ in registers so that even if they both speak English, the medical doctor may not understand the register of law and vice versa. This is what is crucial in the development of an intellectualized language: each domain, sub-domains and sub-sub-domains (fields of specialization) have specific registers. The registers for practically all areas of knowledge are available in intellectualized languages, but not in [Ilokano] (Sibayan, 1991).

This paper will show that developed registers of Ilokano (from various areas of knowledge) have already taken place in Hawai’i. Some are used and others should be used as educational materials for the populations who can command and use these registers. My historical samples consist of letter writing templates, printed union speeches, newspapers, ILOUHM translated documents, and my personal translation of various documents. Again let me reiterate that Ilokano is not (yet) an intellectualized language. The aim of this paper is for a standardization of Ilokano in order to achieve Ilokano academic discourse. My paper will highlight steps that are being taken in Hawaii, which support the intellectualization of Ilokano.

Reading the Romance14: an exegesis of Combined Love Letters (1929-1946)15

Ilokano was first spoken in Hawai’i on December 20, 1906. Eighteen year-old Francisco Genironella was the first English-Ilokano interpreter in Hawai’i. According to HSPA documents, Francisco served as an interpreter for the first fifteen Ilokanos who arrived in Hawai’i.16 The fifteen Ilokanos who arrived on the ship S.S. Doric were primarily investigating the housing and general plantation conditions (Hawaii Filipino News, 1981, 12).

We do know whether the fifteen Ilokanos returned to their homeland to spread the “good word” after spending sometime at Ola’a plantation (Anderson, 1984, 2; Hawaii Filipino News, 1981, 12). Small groups of indentured17 Ilokano workers followed later in 1907 and 1908 and eventually initiated the First Wave18 of Filipino immigrants, popularly called sakadas19 (Hawaii Filipino News, 1981, 12, 25). I have dropped this term, sakadas, in favor of “Filipino plantation workers.” It is from the experience of these Ilokano plantation-workers that I started to explore the availability of source materials, which would support my study of the intellectualization of Ilokano.

Before I commence my argument for Ilokano intellectualization using love letters, let me provide some background as to why these missives were created. It was noted during the early years of the twentieth-century that Hawai’i’s in-migration entailed European laborers who brought their wives (Adams, 1937, 8). In contrast, many of the Japanese and some of the Chinese and later Korean laborers secured wives from their native lands (9). The great majority of the Hawai’i-Ilokanos were living as single men (Cariaga, 1937, 2). According to the 1930 census, Filipino males greatly outnumbered Filipino females in Hawai’i, a sex imbalance not uncommon in immigrant communities—one female to every four males (Young, 1971, 54). More broadly, this absence of Ilokanas alongside Ilokano-plantation-laborers engendered criticism toward Filipinos.20 It was through love-letters that many Hawai’i-Ilokanos’ persuaded or enticed Ilokanas to join them in Hawaii. This history of romantic correspondence has been captured by Carlos Bulosan in his work, Magno Rubio.21 But there was an obstacle to the Ilokanos goal of expressing their ardent adoration. Because of the plantation experience with previous imported groups, the HSPA wanted only to accept Filipinos who had received at the most only a basic education and whose potential to conform and not complain was great (Hunter, 1971, 54).22 It was believed that most of the Hawai’i-Ilokanos laborers were illiterate and uneducated. Although the Ilokano men could not write, they were able to select “templates” of love-letters from so with assistance they could express their love.
Conchita Valdez’s work is an extensive literary work of compiled love-letters. Each letter is presented in English and in Ilokano consecutively. Valdez hoped that her work would “meet the peculiar situation which young [Ilokano] lovers find themselves in Hawaii” (“Valdez,” 1948, preface). According to “Valdez,” Hawai’i-i-Ilokano plantation-workers “often get embarrassed as they do not know how to express their admiration by letter writing” (“Valdez”, Preface). The book’s mission was to help these young men in the expression of their true love to their love interests who were thousands of miles away across the sea, in their hometowns or barrios, in the Philippines. A glance of Combined Love Letters gives the reader the impression that its use could facilitate the uneducated provincial Ilokano in the expression of his love. I selected Combined Love Letters because of its popularity among the Hawai’i-i-Ilokanos. The popularity of the book is defended by the author, “Conchita Valdez.” “Valdez” claims her work has been through editions “because of the demand of many [Ilokanos] in the Territory of Hawai’i and [the United States Mainland] for the book” (“Valdez”, Preface).

There is a letter signed by a “Nicolas Rania” entitled, “To a Japanese Girl” (“Valdez,” 1948, 102). Here, “Valdez” helps to facilitate Ilokano migrant expression of love toward another ethnicity particularly during territorial Hawaii’s anti-miscegenation laws. Ilokanos “could” now write, “Perhaps this will be a surprise to you for I belong to a different nationality from that of yours, but we who live in Hawaii, the melting pot of races disregard mere racial differences ...” (22–23). Readers of Combined Love Letters are able to see how an “un-educated” migrant is enabled to express Western notions of race (burik) and the mythical-egalitarian concept of a “melting pot” (nagitipunan dagiti nagduduma a burik) (ibid). But for this research, what is more important is a letter entitled, “A Favorable Reply” to Mr. Rania. In the template, “Valdez” pretends “Yuriko Tanabe” has written the following to Mr. Rania:

I too, like you, don’t believe in race prejudice...I know you are a Filipino, but what difference is there between you and a Japanese or a Haole. The color of a person is merely due to the pigment of the skin. Some Haoles are darker than others while some Japanese are taller than some Haoles, etc. These things are merely in the outside and do not mean anything

From this letter, we glean words that were created to describe social and democratic experiences of Ilokano plantation workers used as steps in the intellectualization of Ilokano. The intellectualized Ilokano words bring about the traced and genealogical presence of Said’s (1978) hierarchical notions of “us” against “them.”

Another letter goes beyond race and tackles love-war memories. Philosophical notions of “war hysteria (guranggura a bunga ti gubat),” atrocities (kina-darwal), and “inhumanities (kinadangkok)—words already present in the Amianan—are now being used to communicate horrifying war concepts between two migrants coming from nations that recently experienced wars amongst each other (“Valdez,” 1946, 102). “Valdez” portrays her fictional Japanese letter writer, “Ms. Gladys Yamauchi” to encourage “Gregorio Udarbe” by penning:

I too, like you, was not affected by the hysteria of the war. In spite of those bitter and cruel words that I had read from day to day in the newspapers my love for you had been true. ‘What,’ I said, ‘even if those atrocities and terrible inhumanities were really committed they had nothing to do with us.’ Beside those people were hating and were engaged in war which General Sherman called, ‘hell’.


Other fictional characters such as “Narciso Pambid” intellectualized Ilokano and provided explanations for such metaphors as “blood is thicker than water” (ti dura napuspuskol ngem ti danum) to explain why it
was possible for him and his interest to elope—“since
you are their daughter and they are your father and
mother, they would be reconciled by and by after we
have been married” (“Valdez,” 1948, 75).

From Combined Love Letters, new words introduced
new concepts because of the location for the use of
the words. Intellectualized Ilokano had to be created to
negotiate the plantation workers’ world for survival.
However, Combined Love Letters was not the only
HSPA era text that was produced for the Hawaiian
Ilokano for their survival. Years later, the Filipino la-
borers became a collected group and challenged once
again the narrative of labor in Hawaii—again, for their
survival.

Ilokano as a Bridge To Your Rights—A
Discussion of Fear (Buteng)

In 1951, Ilokanos were part of a larger group seeking
to unionize in order to achieve the “American dream.”
On Labor Day (1951) attorney Harriet Bouslog Sawyer
gave a speech to Ilokano union members. Arinaga
writes of the scene, “Out of the gloomy crowd of tired
women who have been up since before dawn and uns-
schooled men who have never before heard any lawyer
speak heard Bouslog call them “brothers and sisters”
(Arinaga, n.d.). Bouslog was considered an advocate
for the poor, ordinary laborers, and union sympathiz-
ers. According to Arinaga (n.d.), on that particular
Labor Day, her speech enlightened a crowd as to how
they might achieve justice for those accused of sup-
porting Communism. Therefore, her speech should be
considered as a part of the intellectualization of di-
asporic Ilokano literature since it was later printed as
“information” to help Ilokanos partake in organizing a
union “against the powerful opposition of the Big 5.”
The Big 5 did not hesitate in their struggle to use all
the offices of the government—police, the legislature,
and the courts—to interfere with every attempt to or-
ganize a successful union (Bouslog-Sawyer, 1951, 1).
The printed form of her speech is entitled, “Fear (But-
eng)” (Bouslog-Sawyer, 22).²⁵

Bouslog’s main question in Fear (Buteng) is, “How
does it happen, then, that the government of the
United States calls a man who has contributed so much
to bringing democracy to Hawaii, a dangerous person?
(Bouslog-Sawyer, 1951, 3). Upon inspection as to
whether this should be considered literature or not,
one can find a considerable amount of instances of
Ilokano intellectualization taking place. In this section,
I will present intellectualized Ilokano in bullet forms to
highlight the strong presence of intellectualization.

- True democrats (padubu a demokrata); demo-
cracy in action (maipagn a ti demokrasia)
- Human dignity (kapibayana)
- Participated in the making of union policy (naki-
paggamulo iti pannaka-tubay dagiti pang-
ngedeng ken pag-takderan (policy) ti Union)
- A charge of spies and subversives in Hawaii, the
  national frontier (Ti panag-darum nga adda da-
giti espi ken agdadael ditoy Hawaii, isu a ma-
kunkura nga igid ti nasion)
- “We have nothing to fear except fear itself”
  (”Awan aniyan a kabutengtayo no di ti panag-
uteng met laeng”)
- Thought police (kayatina a saoen, panagturnay
  polis)
- Fascist technique (wagas fasista)
- Brand as subversive (markaan nga agdadael)
- Since 1848, when the communist Manifesto was
  published by Karl Marx, there have been advo-
cates in the United States of the doctrine known
as Marxism … (Manipud idz 1848, panangang-
maldit ni Karl Marx iti Communist Manifesto,
adudan ditoy Estados Unidos, ti nangkas-
kasaba iti doktrina managan Marxism)
- The danger in the United States today is not that
  the ink on the Declaration of Independence is
fading, or the ink on the Constitution and Bill of
Rights is fading. The danger is that officials of
the government are destroying the substance of these
documents (Ti peggad ita ditoy Estados Unidos
saan a ti panag-kusnav tinta ti Declaration of
Independence wenno ti Konstitusyon ken ti Bill of
Rights. Ti peggad isu dagtoy, a dagiti oficiales iti
gobierno did-dadaelenda ti sustansia wenno
anag dagitoy a dokumento) (Bouslog-Sawyer,
1951, 1-18).

As we can see, Fear (Buteng) provides a glimpse of
the steps toward intellectualizing Ilokano in Hawaii’s
But, the most notable occurrence in Fear (Buteng) is
the Ilokano’s attempt to intellectualize the Declaration of Independence (Deklarasion iti Panag-waywayas). To date, I have not seen any other Ilokano translation of the Declaration of Independence. On page 18 of Fear (Buteng), a complete Ilokano translation of the Declaration of Independence is printed adding a testament that those in the periphery made an attempt to intellectualize Ilokano.

Prior to gaining membership as a collective bargaining unit, the Ilokano’s future in Hawai‘i was bleak. The translated Ilokano version entitled, Buteng may have made an impact on Ilokanos in gaining solidarity to unionize. They were eventually part of a successful group who was able to unionize. Hence, Bouslog’s speech (the Ilokano copy) played a part in helping intellectualize the Ilokano in Hawai‘i.

During the period when Combined Love Letters and Fear (Buteng) were created, Ilokano newspapers flourished in Hawaii. I make a mention of this not as a tangent but to include Gonzalez’s argument that, “news-papers are likewise indicator of intellectualization of a language and constitute part to the publication output (Gonzalez, 2002, 5-27).

Samples of Hawai‘i newspapers compiled by Chapin (2000) that had Ilokano titles include:

• Masakbayanmi nga Filipinos
• Ti Mangyuna (Pioneer)
• Naimbag A Nakem
• Ti Progressibo (Progressive )
• Pudno A Damag
• Ti Pudno (Truth)
• Ti Bannawag
• Ti Silaw (Light)
• Ti Ling-et
• Ti Timek Ti Vibora Luvmindarn
• Ti Managservi
• Ti Trabajador (Worker)
• Ti Mangitandodo
• Ti Union (Union)
• Ti Mangiturong
• Wagayway

Further research of these materials could lead to more findings of Ilokano intellectualization. It would be an excellent research topic to see if some of the new terminology was being used and popularized. However, proof of most Ilokano intellectualization in Hawai‘i seems to point to the recent past. This section will now attempt to present modern findings of Ilokano intellectualization.

Rethinking the Center from the Margin

Today, there is an Ilokano group that has successfully made a claim in Hawai‘i’s contested spaces and is taking the lead in the intellectualization of Ilokano—the University of Hawai‘i’s Indo-Pacific Languages and Literature Philippine Program with concentrations in Ilokano, which I have termed: ILOUHM.

Fifteen years ago, I translated a document entitled, “Statement of the Patient Bill of Rights” for one of the local hospitals. From that document, many medical terms were intellectualized into Ilokano. Concepts such as:

• Human relationships essential to the provision of dignified and proper medical care (panagglalan-gen ti tao a kasapulan ti panaangted iti natakneng ken unmo a panakaagas)
• Major overriding objective (panggep)
• Your rights as a patient and human being are respected at all times (marespeto ti karbenganyo kas pasiente ken kas tao ket mabigbig ti amin nga oras)
• Diagnosis (naamuan a sakit)
• Prognosis (pagbanagan ti sakit)
• Informed consent (naipakaamo a pammalubos)
• Possible result of non-treatment (posible a ma pasamak no saan a maagasan)
• Significant alternatives (sabali pay a wagas iti pannaagaas)
• The patient also has the right to be free from chemical and physical restraints … (Ti pasiente ket adda pay karbengan a saan nga agusar ti kimikal ken pagel ti bagi …)
• Advance directives (nasakbay a pakaamo)
• The right to exercise the patient’s own cultural/religious beliefs within the hospital as long as such practice is not medically contraindicated and/or does not infringe upon the rights and safety of others (Kalintegan na nga irupir ti kultura/pammati iti uneg ti ospital no saan a maiparit ti kultura/tungo nga oras nga makadangran iti sabali).
• Therapeutic purposes (plano ti nasayaat a pannaayo)
The preceding examples were medical and other terms intellectualized by me into Ilokano in the interest of better patient care. However, my performance for the intellectualization of Ilokano was not limited to the medical field.

Several years ago, I also co-wrote with now-retired ILOUHM professor, Josie P. Clausen, *Interpreting for an Ilokano Immigrant in the American Legal System*. That paper was presented to coincide with the 1st *Nakem* Centennial Conference in 2006. In that paper we wrote, “Besides court representations, Ilokano clients are also assisted in what we consider non-legal experiences” (Clausen & Flores, 2006, 110). These locations would be medical, governmental, private, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) interpreting settings. In these settings we set out several scenarios how to intellectualize Ilokano.

If a word or concept does not exist in the Ilokano language for cultural reasons, the Ilokano interpreter may resort to these procedures: (a) the interpreter explains this situation to the presiding decision-maker, such as a judge or the attending physician; (b) the interpreter would courteously remind everyone that the word used such as an idiom, cannot be literally interpreted; and (c) the interpreter asks the decision maker if the interpreter may be allowed to resort to the use of a definition ... to convey its meaning, or to use words equivalent to those used by the speaker. An instance for this would be the use of “struck.” The word “assaulted” would not serve; the appropriate equivalent for this would be the use of “struck.”

Aside from the medical and legal fields, intellectualizing Ilokano has also been undertaken by other ILOUHM faculty. Academic products emanating from this program range from plenary papers, published materials, and translated documents (e.g. court, government, university, etc.). ILOUHM has translate the following judicial materials:

- Guilty Plea
- No Contest Plea
- Motion to Defer
- Waiver of Indictment
- Arraignment & Plea Advisement
- Waiver of Trial by Jury
- Rules and Condition of Probation and Order
- Waiver of Preliminary Hearing

**Conclusion**

In this essay, I have argued and sought to demonstrate how the intellectualizing of Ilokano has been occurring in Hawai‘i. *Combined Love Letters* not only contains reflections of commodified-humans in border-crossing contexts, but these love letters also speak to the intellectualization of Ilokano. *Combined Love Letters* provides a lens to see the Filipino’s difficult working and living conditions and their efforts at cultural preservation and assimilation using intellectualized Ilokano concepts. *Fear (Bateng)* conveys the plight of migrant laborers and serves as an exposé to the moral attacks and criticisms that Filipino migrant workers were forced to endure after coming to America in pursuit of “the dream”. Intellectualizing words and concepts was a way that helped them to communicate how they could garner a place in a contested space.

In addition, I have noted how ILOUHM has been actively creating Ilokano registers in order to achieve the vision of Ilokano standardization. In fact, the ILOUHM program continues to take steps to end the divide between a language and the people speaking that language. It is my hope that one day the program
can say that their standard (ILOUHM’s) of definition of plain and simple ‘Ilokano’ to mean both [the lingua franca and the people]; and the use of writing ‘Ilokano’ with a ‘k’ (using the Ilokano syllabary as the reference point), without being accused of impurity or linguistic pollution when using other variations. Then the [ILOUHM] standardization would be consistently used in our classrooms as well as in our Ilokano publications. The score has been settled for us and we try to become as aware as everyone else of the uneasy difficult history behind this need to settle it” (Agcaoili et al., 2006, 24). I myself will continue to take part in intellectualizing IIokano and will keep on creating new intellectualized words and concepts to ensure that Ilokano evolves and stays relevant in relation to today’s changing times. Translations seem to be the greatest location to locate the process of intellectualization. My research and translation work as well as my colleagues’ translational scholarship serve as a corpus of writings that can be built up to thematize topics of value in Ilokano society. This body of writing connects to Gonzalez’s “registers of the language” (or what the Program Coordinator of the ILOUHM calls a “repertoire”) and supports the process of intellectualizing Ilokano within the domain of language policy and planning. Further, intellectualizing Ilokano demands a long-term commitment to language development (corpus planning) and to the use of Ilokano in all facets of everyday life. As such, it is a long-term process that will test the political will and stamina of the Ilokano diaspora to the fullest.

Bibliography


Hawaii Sugar Plantation Association (HSPA) archival materials


End Notes

1 Literally in the Ilokano language, “the north.” Ilokanos occupy the narrow, barren strip of land in the northwestern tip of Luzon, squeezed in between the inhospitable Cordilleran mountain range to the east and the South China Sea to the west. Although the Ilokano’s homeland originally constitutes the provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union and Abra, their population has spread east and south of their original territorial borders. In metaphorical terms, it designates everyone within the Ilokano diaspora.

2 A play on the colonized-Ilokano word *luko-luko* which refers to something that cannot be taken seriously.

3 Following Cribb’s coining of “euphoric couplet,” “intellectualization of Ilokano” creates a sense of nuance that reaches far beyond the specific conditions for which the term is coined, it is easily remembered, and the ambiguity gives a potential value far beyond the empirical framework within which it is developed. See: Cribb (2001).


6 According to the Program’s brochure, the Bachelor of Arts in Philippine Languages and Literature--with concentrations in--Ilokano was approved by the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa (UHM) Board of Regents on May 17, 2002. The program’s mission is to prepare students for future careers in community service and education, and for advanced research and/or graduate studies in various fields in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

7 A few Hawai‘i scholars argue that Hawai‘i-born Asians and immigrants are equally guilty (albeit unknowingly) in the settler colonial agenda of disenfranchisement of Native Hawaiians. See: Fujikane & Okamura (2008).


9 It is my hope that this exploratory paper will be expounded or challenged by other researchers thereby adding more branches to this research.

10 When activist and scholar Gloria Anzaldúa (who helped define “the new mestiza”) was asked to explain if her lesbian perspective evolved she responded by elaborating languages she used to identify herself during phases of her life. In south Texas the word “queer” was very much what she called the “de lang” variety of language. “A play on the CoL in the Ilokano language, “the north.”” Anzaldúa comments, “I started seeing that what the white lesbian community was imposing on me was a Eurocentric view, a label that derived from Greece, Sappho, and was very white and that I wanted to articulate my queerness because it was different from their queerness and so I needed a different kind of language.” By embracing the “white lesbian’s” books and their theories, and the way they dressed and everything began to be very constractive for her in that she thought she was in a cage and the white lesbians were defining the bar. She didn’t want to be a lesbian, because a lesbian is somebody who is white and middle class. Anzaldúa started chatting at the boundaries and limitations set by the white lesbian community and instead created herself a concept that came into play in her life—a mestiza. See: Reuman (2000).

11 I argue “new” since as I write this paper, no language since Mathesius introduced his concept of the word have not been formally intellectualized.

12 This paper will skirt around a discussion of language intellectualization. Other researchers have already written many papers discussing theories of language intellectualization. For a superb introduction to and discussion of intellectualizing a language see: Gonzalez (2002).

13 This is in line with Sibayan’s argument that language has three classes of language domains. These are the non-controlling domains (NCDs) of the home and the lingua franca, and the semi-controlling domains (SCDs) which include religion, politics, and entertainment. What we are interested in is the controlling domains (CDs) chief of which are (1) government, with sub-domains of executive, judiciary, and legislature, (2) education, with sub-domains of elementary, secondary, vocational-technical, and higher education, (3) the professions, such as law, medicine, accountancy, etc., (4) science and technology, (5) business, commerce and industry; (6) information technology, which includes mass media, (7) literature and (8) international relations. The main language used in the CDs of language is always intellectualized. An intellectualized language is that language that can be used for giving and obtaining a complete education in any field of knowledge from kindergarten to the university and beyond. Knowledge and information on any subject are stored in and retrieved from various written sources and new knowledge and information as a result of research are reported in an intellectualized language. See: Sibayan (1991).

14 Sub-title is borrowed from Radway’s (1991) work of the same title.

15 “A rare book authored by ‘Conchita Valdez’, was published in Honolulu, Hawai‘i presumably right after the Second World War. The book, Combined Love Letters in English and Ilocano, does not bear any year of printing but the letters bear the years spanning 1929 to 1946. The book’s reference to S.S. Maunawili, the last ship that would bring the last batch of workers from the Philippines to the plantations of Hawai‘i, suggests that the ‘Letters’ could have been printed in 1946 or a bit later. But we must understand that this book that I have is the third edition, which explains the earlier letters bearing the year 1929.” See: Agcaoili (2008).

16 “[T]he U.S. Bureau of the Interior reports (1846-1854) lists ‘Two Gentlemen from Manilla’ (sic) among the applicants for Hawaiian citizenship during the reign of King Kalakaua. The two might have been part of a group of Filipino musicians/entertainers who were on a ship bound for the United States and who while the ship rode at anchor in Honolulu Harbor for provisions or repairs, made use of their time by wangling engagements to entertain ashore. The chronicles have it that they were enthusiastically received by the Islanders. Filipinos were later to be known throughout Asia as musicians. When it was time for the ship to leave, there was dispute about pay that the musicians were supposed to receive for their work on the voyage. Dissatisfied, disgusted and angered, the musicians walked off the ship which sailed without them. The surprise is that the Filipinos settled in Hawai‘i but no one can say that they left any foot prints.” See: Hawaii Filipino News (1981).

17 “a form of standing [status] between free labor and unfree labor. It is distinguished from peonage by its definite period of service... It is distinguished from free labor in that neither the employer nor the employee is free to bargain the terms and withdraw their services whenever conditions are unsuitable.” See: CLEAR, 2006, Glossary: Indenture.
If one were to define a ‘wave’… as a series of regular arrivals within a given period of time with a break in between… using this definition,” there were three Waves of Filipino immigrants to Hawai‘i, the First Wave “consisting of arrivals from 1906 to 1919 when approximately 24,400 men, 3,056 women, and 2,330 children were brought into the territory by the HSPA; the Second Wave: 1920 – 1929; and the final Third Wave of Filipino immigration to Hawai‘i taking place from 1930 – 1934. See: Hawaii Filipino News (1981). UHM-Ethnic Studies dates the First Wave as 1906 – 1934, the Second Wave from 1946 – 1960 (through “windows of opportunities”), and the Third Wave from 1965 – present.

The term sakada is used advisedly. But you say you are not going to use it! In a continuing discussion with Dr. Aurelio Agcaoili, he has registered a revisiting of the term and is not exactly comfortable with it, given some conflicting accounts of how it began. Another opinion of the meaning of the term is “[probably derived from the Ilocano phrase ‘sakasakada amin’ meaning, barefoot workers struggling to earn a living.] Filipino term that has come to be applied to workers recruited from the Philippines to work in Hawai‘i’s sugar plantations between 1906 and 1946.” See: CLEAR, (2006), Glossary: Sakada.

A related reason for the undertaking of this research is that in my previous research (2008) I concluded that the presence of a sex-imbalance led to a local rhetoric against twenty-four executed Hawai‘i-Filipinos. I argued in Sex, Sharps, and Strangulation: Journalistic Demonization of Hawai‘i Filipinos, 1911-1944, that an abnormal sex ratio among Filipinos in the United States led to social and psychological maladjustment which in turn led to moral problems, assault, and murder. Also see: Cariaga (1937); Domingo (1983); Hawaii Filipino News (1981); Jung (2006); Ngai (2004); Porteus & Babcock (1926).

I have to concede that some readers of my research may find it academically irresponsible to use a fictional work as a framework to my discussion of Ilokano love-letters. However, there are certain fictional texts that clearly and truthfully represent the Filipino’s life experience. Jose Rizal’s (2006) Noli Me Tangere is a creative indictment against the patronato real – the close relationship of colonial Spain and the Catholic church. From this literary fictive, we are able to get a glimpse of “true” Filipino life experiences. See: Rizal (2006).

In reality, it was doubtful that many of the uneducated and non-English speaking Ilokano who came to Hawai‘i as laborers fully understood the nature of the legalities involved. The HSPA’s ideal hires were men who could only sign their name with an “x” or men with calluses on their hands that was believed by the HSPA agents to show that they were hard-workers who skipped schooling. See: Anderson (1984).

In Combined Love Letters, the name Conchita Valdez is written in quotes. Besides three other locations where her name is also mentioned in quotes, “Valdez” becomes absent. There is no background, no achievements, and no history presented for “Ms. Conchita Valdez.” In fact the bottom of the Preface is signed in bold letter, “The Author” - no longer “Conchita Valdez.” I concluded in another research that a close search for the author leads us to conclude that “Valdez” is a phantasm. The purported author, “Valdez,” could be just a metaphor for any Filipina that male Hawai‘i-Ilokano lover is seeking for. It is reasonable to conclude that the real “author” could be anyone – even a non-Ilokano that have a personal agenda. See: Flores (2009).

I presented my argument at the 4th Nakem Conference that the templates’ purposes could be bifurcated – possessing another sharpened and tainted edge. My close reading of Combined Love Letters led me to conclude that if we use a colonial-study lens to study the grand narratives of the love-letters, we will see traces for the colonizing of the Ilokano.

Fears(Buteng) was a reprint of a speech for the International Longshoremen’s & Warehousemen’s Union in defense of Jack Hall, a Hawaiian ILWU leader, against a frame-up. See: Bouslog-Sawyer (1951).