

# Another Look Into Philippine English: Towards Users' Awareness And Celebration

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**Abstract:** This paper is a review of literature and studies on Philippine English (henceforth PhilE) which have been conducted in almost two decades. I argue that a big number of Filipino speakers of English, particularly the ESL/EFL teachers in the provinces are either incognizant or still unopen to the thought of celebrating Philippine English; hence, I present briefly the concept of World Englishes (WE), review the existence of PhilE, and briefly describe its lexicon and grammar, as well as teachers' attitude towards the language which has become one among more than a hundred Philippine languages. I advance its implication to ESL/EFL teaching while encouraging readers, especially my fellow speakers of PhilE to respect World Englishes paradigm and to celebrate PhilE.

**Keywords:** World Englishes, Philippine English, ESL/EFL teaching, language attitude

## 1. Introduction

My interest in writing and talking about Philippine English (henceforth PhilE) is triggered by a number of observations gathered in at least five (5) years. My casual and formal observations of obvious incognizance or misconceptions of most of the Filipino speakers of English concerning the plurality of English urge me to scribble this article primarily for Filipino ESL and EFL teachers from Basic Education to University Education. Some of these observations include, among others, 1) Filipino English speakers, especially teachers of English (ESL) and all content area teachers who keep on correcting other speakers' diction, structure, and vocabularies even when its impractical to; for instance, there are teachers who reprimand Refrigeration and Air-conditioning (RAC) students for not articulating the schwa lexes correctly. Where and with whom will these vocational experts use the schwa sound anyway? Secondly, there are Filipino English speakers who stigmatize PhilE variety but unconsciously speak it. Thirdly, I also remember an Australian father of my old student who got mad with a colleague after telling him that his son who received a final grade of 80 was *quite* good. Indeed, many educated Filipinos still equate the semantic meaning of the adverb *quite* to *a bit*; however,  $L_1$  *quite* means *exactly, precisely, or completely*.

The fourth and fifth factors that made me write this article include revelation of unawareness of ESL teachers in the nonurban areas of New Englishes/World Englishes sociolinguistic reality. My personal communication with a friend and fellow ESL teacher, (January 15, 2015) about an awakening incident in connection with her attendance in a 2014 National Conference held at the Teachers' Camp in Baguio City intensified all the more my desire to write this article. According to her, a language teacher presented a study on PhilE to some 30 teachers of English from higher education institutions across the Philippines. She was thrown questions and suggestions by another teacher who was supported by fellow attendees. The skeptical listeners questioned the existence of Philippine English and claimed that the language has to be proven original of the Filipinos before it should be called Philippine English.

The sixth strong motivator for the publication of this paper was the discussion that we had on our very first TESOL class meeting. The first day discussion's revealed the participants' and the  $L_1$  English speaker's, our British teacher who has

been in the Philippines for less than 10 years show the same incognizance of the World Englishes paradigm that subsumes PhilE. My classmates seemed to insist and fight for the teaching of what they perceive is the only standard variety of English, the British or American English.

Finally, my casual indirect explanation of the World Englishes phenomenon to my colleagues as well as to Basic Education teachers in our province disheartened me, for they too, revealed their complete incognizance or misunderstanding of this sociolinguistic phenomenon. The same truth has been repeatedly revealed by my 2005-2017 graduate students from Laguna and neighboring provinces (MAED-Physical Education, Science, Technology and Home Economics, and Speech Communication, MA in English, and MAED-English) whenever I would introduce the concept of World Englishes.

I am convinced, therefore that it may be necessary to revisit the history of the English language very briefly. The mother English is the British variety named Old English or Anglo-Saxon English from about 450-1150. The language (i.e., pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling) is very different from what is now called modern English. By 1553, English ships traded with West Africa (now Nigeria), and in the 1580s, the first English settlements were made in North America, Canada, and to the state now called North Carolina. Scholars show that the traces of their varieties of English can still be found in North American English, particularly in the eastern seaboard dialects of Virginia.

The Middle English had changed a great deal. It lost many of its inflections, spelling, and words in favor of French words brought by the Norman conquerors. The eighteenth-century modern English period introduced and brought English to many parts of the world such as: New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and North America through traders and scholars. Bauer (2002) says that by the opening of the nineteenth century, English had spread to every corner of the world, and in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, its number of speakers and its own prestige grew. English has become the Lingua Franca of the world and its regions. It has become one of the Asian languages (e.g., Singlish, PhilEnglish/Taglish, IndiEnglish). Studies prove that it serves a multitude of purposes for its different owners.

English has been globalized and been called English as an international language (EIL) e.g., Jenkins, 2000; English as a

lingua franca (ELF) e.g., Seidlhofer, 2001; English as a global language e.g., Crystal, 1997; English as a world language e.g., Mair, 2003; and English as a medium of international communication e.g., Meierkord, 1996. Each of these Englishes is not the English spoken by the Londoners, Americans or Australians but the English spoken and understood by the nonnative speakers i.e., EFL and ESL speakers. When English comes to an ESL or EFL country, it penetrates, adapts to the culture of its new ecology and multiplies i.e., produces varieties. Both the less informed and well informed users of a variety reshape it creatively, consciously or unconsciously.

The Englishes spoken in the different parts of the world give rise to different registers and dialects, just as the UK and U.S.A. Englishes have. Their lexicon and grammar show endonormative features that distinguish them from the L<sub>1</sub> English. New Englishes, World Englishes or Dialects of English inevitable sprung. World Englishes refer to indigenous nativised varieties that have developed around the world and reflect the cultural as well as pragmatic norms of their speakers (Kirkpatrick 2007, p3). This paradigm recognizes the different Englishes used around the world as more than just imitations of American or British varieties; they are languages in their own rights, and they are not measured against the more established varieties (e.g., Kachru 1987, 2005, 2012; Kirkpatrick 2007, 2010).

Bauer's (2002) hypothetical partial Family Tree for Englishes, McArthur's (1987) Wheel Model of World Englishes, Gortlach's (1988) Framework of World Englishes and other models of World Englishes explain this unprecedented sociolinguistic phenomenon; however, Kachru's 1985 Model which has been modified in the later years seems to be the most acknowledged framework. The heart of the definition is found in the following quote:

*The current sociolinguistic profile of English may be viewed in terms of three concentric circles. The Inner Circle refers to the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English. The Outer Circle represents the institutionalised non-native varieties (ESL) in the regions that have passed through extended periods of colonisation . . . The Expanding Circle includes the regions where the performance varieties of the language are used essentially in EFL contexts (Kachru, 1985, p.366).*

The bottom line runs, the World Englishes models all suggest that English has totally become an international language, which is not just one language but a number of varieties; hence, as Kirkpatrick (2007) advances, English has become many Englishes. Relatively, numerous studies on World Englishes (e.g., Dayag, 2004, 2007; Graddol, 1997; Jenkins, 2003, 2006; Kachru, 1985, 1997, 2005, 2006, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2007, 2010; Seidlhofer, 2004; and Widdowson, 1994) establish the prestige of different varieties and promote the call for mutual intelligibility. Richly recorded are Asian Englishes, one of which is Philippine English (e.g., Bautista, 1998), also called Filipinism and Filipino English (e.g., Llamzon, 1969, 1997).

## 2. The coming of English and the birthing of Philippine English

The English language was introduced to the Philippines by the American colonial power in 1898 after 333 years of Spanish rule with the Thomasites as our first teachers and teacher trainers as well. Through the public school system established by the Americans in 1901, English began to

spread throughout the islands. The rapid spread of the English language in the Philippines was unprecedented in colonial history. "Within 41 years, the American regime had done more to spread English than the Spanish government did in 333 years (1565-1898) of colonization, for after the Spanish period, only 2% spoke Spanish" (Gonzales as cited in Bautista & Bolton, 2009, p.4). The 1980 Census gave an estimated 64.5 percent of the 48 million Filipinos speaking in English.

The 1974 Bilingual Education Policy which was revised in 1987 mandated its use as the medium of instruction for Science, Mathematics, and English Communication Arts, as well as the use of Filipino as the medium for Social Studies, Arts/Music/Physical Education, and Filipino Communication Arts. The 1987 Constitution recognized it as an official language together with the national language, Filipino then Pilipino). Being an official language in the multilingual Philippines, it has been the major lingua franca among Filipinos in the different regions.

Bautista and Bolton (2009) claim that by 1921, 91% of Filipino teachers of English were native born Filipinos; thus, almost from the beginning, Filipinos learned English from fellow Filipinos and Philippine English began to evolve (Gonzalez, 1997). "English is now ours. We have colonized it too", declares Abad (as cited in Tupas, 2009, p.77). From WE's concentric circles view, Tupas (2009) identifies the *we* as the people who speak English in the Philippines, and this English is presumably different from one being spoken by native speakers in the inner circle. Nonetheless, he explains that from the perspective of class, the *we* is the much more exclusive group of people whose English is correct and who share with other educated speakers of Englishes a sort of international mutual intelligibility based on received notions of grammatical correctness and appropriateness of use.

Philippine English as suggested by Ansaldo's (2011) Evolution and Ecology theory emanated from L<sub>1</sub> English brought by the American soldiers. It is a transplanted variety which is the product of L<sub>1</sub> English presence and contact with other languages in this linguistically diverse country. English comes in contact with Philippine languages primarily Tagalog, which is the lingua franca of the region. It is also used with other external languages spoken by other nationalities in the country, for examples: Koreans, Vietnamese, Chinese, or Indians as well as L<sub>1</sub> English varieties spoken by Americans and other L<sub>1</sub> English speakers in the country.

A multilingual ecology like the Philippines is a national locus of change and the multilingual or at least bilingual Filipinos are natural and unconscious innovators. The English language takes in Philippine local languages as well as Filipinos' local language behavior; these local social and cultural contexts, therefore reshape English into another variety slightly different from other varieties.

Philippine English may be defined as an ESL legitimate variety, an edulect (i.e., dialect of the educated) which emanated from American English, developed into a distinct one due to its new sociolinguistic environment. It is used in the Philippines by educated speakers and writers when communicating [intra]nationally and internationally (Dimaculangan & Gustilo, 2017). The definition is inspired by Gonzalez and Bautista's (1985) argument that the best way to describe the varieties of Philippine English is to refer to them as edulects more than acrolects, mesolects and basilects; inasmuch, as these types are a function of

education and the kind of English tuition Filipinos received in school.

### 3. Philippine English morphological lexicon, phonology, and structure

Akin to other varieties, Philippine English undergoes changes because of its Philippine ecology and its speakers' communicative needs. Relative to its lexicon, Kirkpatrick (2010) advances that varieties of English adapt words that suit the culture in which they are used, and those words are enriched by words from local languages. Indeed, PhilE lexicon becomes richer, and word-formation becomes more productive in this era of globalization with English as the lingua franca. PhilE lexicon refers to locally formed expressions, distinct PhilE, and to those that developed elsewhere, and have spread throughout other English speaking countries. PhilE supporters like me are proud of Salazar's (2013) big lexicographic project sponsored by the Oxford University Press which paved way to the inclusion of 40 new PhilE words in the Oxford English Dictionary reflected in its June 2015 update and to the Publication of the online *Pinoy English Community Dictionary*.

Inspired by Bautista's (1997) study on PhilE lexicon and Salazar's (2013, 2014) Mellon post-doctoral fellowship big lexicographic project, we, Dimaculangan and Gustilo, (2017) looked at word-formation processes in Philippine English and argued that the lexicon deserves continual attention and recognition for they are linguistically acceptable. We culled lexical items from a corpus of 400,000-word texts parallel to ICE, Phi component but written in 2005-2014 which we built prior to the study. We augmented the words and expressions with lexical items that we manually gathered from documents not covered by the text types in the corpus and from announcements publicly posted by known institutions, and offices in the country.

We analyzed the lexical items gathered using the framework that we adapted from both L<sub>1</sub> English and ESL variety lexicology scholars (i.e., Bautista's, 1997 normal expansion; Bauer's, 2002 and Bautista's analyzed, 1997 concept of coinage; Biermeier's, 2011; Lieber's, 2004 and Wardhaugh's, 2003 notion of compounding; Bauer and Hudleston, 2000 and Gramley's, 2001 initialism; Yule's, 2006, 2010 framework of clipping; and Gramley's, 2001 with Bauer's, 2002) models of borrowing.

Our analysis revealed a total of 681 linguistically acceptable words and expressions that confirmed productive word-building in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century PhilE writing. Five hundred three lexical items were coined through the existing L<sub>1</sub> and ESL mechanisms namely: 1) *normal expansion*, 2) *coining through compounding, blending, derivation, and analogy*, 3) *shortening through clipping and initialisms*, and 4) *borrowing*. Coining recorded 235 lexical items 140 of which were compounds. The numbers were the highest frequencies which incidentally affirmed the productivity of coining and compounding among the identified traditional processes. Normal expansion which covers shift in part of speech and unidiomatic verb-preposition combinations registered the least number of lexical items.

One hundred seventy-eight new lexical items were formed through creative expansions or modifications of the traditional processes and through the deliberate integration of figures of speech like: anagram, metonymy, onomatopoeia, oxymoron, and pun in the word-formation processes. These

included: 1) *blending English and non-English elements*, 2) *affixing non-English lexemes with English morphemes*, 3) *borrowing Tagalog blends and compounds as well as oral expressions*, 4) *redefining borrowed words*, 5) *clipping hypocoristically*, 6) *narrowing and shifting L<sub>1</sub> semantic sense*, 7) *punning and forming metonymic, puny, and common collocations*, 8) *using onomatopoeic expressions*, 9) *compounding Tagalog and oxymoronic elements*, 11) *creating special types of initials*, 12) *changing L<sub>1</sub> English words' graphological structures, calquing English spelling*, and 13) *overgeneralizing a linguistic rule*. We, then proposed a tentative modified word-formation framework for early 21<sup>st</sup> century PhilE writing based on our findings.

Butler (1999) identifies determinants of a variety of English. She claims that a variety has: 1) a standard and recognizable pattern of pronunciation handed down from a generation to another; 2) particular words and phrases which spring up to express key features of physical and social environment which are regarded as peculiar to the variety; 3) history of the language community; 4) a written literature in that variety; and 5) reference works, dictionaries, and style guides which show that the users look to themselves with some authority to decide what is right and wrong in terms of how they use their English. Having met the first four identified requirements, Philippine English qualifies as a variety. Current scholars (e.g., Salazar, 2015) are addressing the fifth requirement which points to the need of more printed materials like current dictionaries that may describe the variety.

As regards its phonology, Tayao's (2009) descriptive study using Llamzon's (1997) lectal approach, i.e., the use of three groups: acrolect group whose members' first or home language was English with professions that entailed extensive use of English and rated themselves as excellent in the language; mesolect group or speakers whose professions necessitated English and rated themselves as good or average in the language; and basilect group composed of sub-professionals whose use of English was limited to job-related matters and rated themselves as average or poor in the language.

Compared to General American English, Tayao (2009) found differences in both segmental (i.e. vowels and consonant sounds) and suprasegmental (i.e., prosodic features: stress, intonation and juncture). For instance, the segmental analysis showed the rare aspiration of the /p, t, k/ with the acrolectal group and was never evident among the mesolectal and basilectal groups. Morphophonemic change in the past form of regular verbs was observed in three groups; however, in case of the plural form with the suffix *s*, all were pronounced /s/ even in words where *s* is pronounced /ʃ/, /z/, or /ɪz/. The suprasegmental data revealed deviations as well; for instance, the final rising intonation was used in all types of questions, and the primary and secondary stress for some words were interchanged.

Relative to PhilE grammar, we, Dimaculangan and Gustilo (2017) still found existence of unidiomatic verb-preposition combinations which have been in high frequency use since the 1990's (e.g., Bautista, 1997) such as: *avail of, based from, despite of, effect to, result to, share to* whose L<sub>1</sub> forms are: *avail* reflexive pronoun *of, based on, in spite of or despite the, effect on, result in, and share with*. Oral and written discourse reflects PhilE speakers' unusual use of perfectives and overgeneralization of grammar rules e.g., *Have the students report to the class what they had observed,*

or yesterday, we have talked about semantic roles of nouns in an utterance, and she was awarded, the most friendly in the class.

Despite the above sample deviations, the PhilE speakers (acrolectal, mesolectal, or basilectal) make sense, understand each other, and are understood by other ESL or EFL speakers. Nevertheless, for Filipino ESL teachers who are not aware or not yet open to the idea of World Englishes, the English language is still a singular language, that of either UK or USA which is used in the different parts of the globe, whose speakers are in agreement about what it means, and restrict themselves to using and promoting what they call Standard English. While we, Filipino students, teachers, and speakers of English think that we are using a unitary language, this PhilE indigenized and localized variety sprouts, and we unconsciously speak it.

It is an interesting truth that while we esteem the L<sub>1</sub> English varieties, a majority of us speak the legitimized PhilE variety without acknowledging it. If not incognizant that there exists such a variety, some downgrade it. When I asked those who need proof of PhilE existence, “Do you speak the way Londoners or Americans do?”, they replied without batting an eyelash, “Of course not! Why should I? I’m a Filipino.” The answer is precisely right and indeed an unconscious admission that phonology wise, ours is neither British nor American English but Philippine English.

It is saddening that educated speakers of PhilE, including some ESL teachers are not yet ready to celebrate its existence but rather see it as a result of poor language learning. Some have positive attitude towards it; while some manifest ambivalence towards its acceptability and prestige (e.g., Bautista, 1997, 2001). In short, its acceptability remains an issue. In the cosmopolitans, its educated speakers still find its emergence and acceptability debatable. It is seen as either right or wrong, as a result of the speaker’s creativity and vitality, or as a result of poor ESL instruction.

We, Gustilo and Dimaculangan (2018) subjected 99 samples of PhilE words for acceptability test to determine the ESL teachers’ attitude towards the variety. Our survey revealed the 200 ESL teacher respondents’ ambivalence towards the legitimacy and prestige of PhilE lexicon. The first part of our questionnaire, the Likert-scale statements divulged their healthy attitude; whereas, our acceptability test revealed unhealthy and negative attitude. Out of the 99 lexical items subjected to acceptability test, only five were accepted for formal writing, and only two were accepted for informal writing. Not even one of the lexical items was accepted for formal oral context, and only 33 were accepted for use in informal oral contexts; nonetheless, only 20 were judged unacceptable PhilE lexicon for use in any of the four given domains. The figures suggest the ESL teachers’ ambivalence as to accept or reject PhilE lexicon.

Bautista (2001) described the attitudes of selected Luzon University students and faculty towards Philippine English. She involved convenience samples, i.e., all the faculty and students who were available to fill out the questionnaires from three state universities in Luzon and private university. Initially, the finding pointed to the participants’ acceptance and recognition of Philippine English. A majority of the student and faculty respondents rejected the questionnaire’s statements that were derogatory towards it. In addition, they reported speaking it. The investigation revealed their awareness of the English variety they speak which has features identifiable as Philippine variety; however, the result

was not a manifestation that they were satisfied with the state of affairs. Almost half of the student respondents chose American English as the variety to be learned; while, 12% chose British English. Only 31% favored Philippine English. Relatively, over half of the faculty respondents believed that the English, Filipinos should learn must follow exonormative standards. Teachers and students acknowledged speaking Philippine English but aspired to speak either American English or British English, which implied that the English they spoke was not good enough. In general, the respondents preferred Philippine English variety when communicating with fellow Filipinos.

Another interesting revelation was that 70% of the faculty, and 81% of the students believed that English teachers should be those who are knowledgeable and fluent in American English. Students showed more positive attitude toward American English than their teachers did, and one third of them associated Philippine English with poor English. Thirty-seven percent of the students, and 23% of the faculty respondents agreed that Philippine English was a mistake made by poor speakers of English.

#### 4. Closing remarks

The inner-circle-oriented English curriculum in the Philippines like other English curricula in ESL/EFL countries along with their teachers of English show little sensitivity to local contexts. Most of our local learning objectives, instructional materials as well as assessment tools to measure our students’ proficiency may be described as dysfunctional inasmuch as they are incompatible with the real English language we, PhilE speakers, use in the real language world outside the classrooms. Our disregard for the localized functional variety and preference for L<sub>1</sub> English, leave our most of our students grammatical but kind of incompetent communicators. The learners manifest mastery of rules, yet they remain communicatively incompetent or passive listeners who can hardly express themselves orally.

When a bit stressed, I comfort and remind myself of the reality that many Filipino speakers of English are like other speakers of EFL or ESL Englishes who are still skeptical about it and not yet ready to hoist their varieties in favor of their idolatry of Western varieties.

Indeed, Jenkins’ (2009) research on attitudes towards English as Lingua Franca in East Asian context reveals that many English speakers still cling to the notion that only near-native accents are acceptable, and that the quality of an English accent can only be evaluated in relation to its closeness to British or American varieties. This is the interesting part, Jenkins’ (2009) sees that in the near future, those who occupy the top of the English language hierarchy will no longer be the native speakers of English, but internationally-competent bilingual speakers of English, who have the skills to function comfortably in multilingual communication.

Truly heartening is her observation that a majority of native English speakers tend to be less competent than many nonnative speakers in their acquisition and use of accommodation strategies, and instead expect nonnative speakers to make all the adjustment (p.53). Consequently, “they will need to take note of the new and changing hierarchy of Englishes, if they wish to participate effectively in international communication.” This implies and confirms one thing-- it may be time to realize that the Lingua Franca, the English spoken and understood in the bigger part of the

Philippines and in Asia as well, is not the L<sub>1</sub> or inner circle English (Kachru, 1985) but the L<sub>2</sub> or outer and foreign (EFL) or expanding circle Englishes. In this era of globalization, we may negate the myth of superiority of the native speakers' variety of English, but patronize the variety we easefully use. The World Englishes paradigm treats each English variety as standard and prestigious in its distinct way. I encourage my fellow ESL teachers therefore to go beyond the teaching of L<sub>1</sub> English; let us teach language awareness as recommended by Kirkpatrick (2010) i.e., teach other varieties, specially, our Philippine English.

How can we teach in a world where the English language is grammatically, semantically and pragmatically plural? Well, first and foremost, we should become increasingly aware of the reasons why EFL and ESL learners experience the problems they verbalize. Let us read increasing published literature on TOEFL and ESL. Inside the ELL classroom, it is understandable that we should work hard to approximate only, not necessarily imitate L<sub>1</sub> English. As we get familiar with varieties of English used by our students, we should exert extra efforts to sensitize our ears to decoding the Englishes spoken in the students' real workplace. We should recognize the motivated innovations in EFL and ESL Englishes and refrain from making impractical judgments of these varieties and their speakers.

Let us also teach PhilE; we just need to be more resourceful and practical enough to decide which categorical language levels of PhilE may be integrated in our lessons. This teaching of PhilE may trigger acknowledgement of the variety as a tool for success as well. This way, PhilE may gradually be accorded the same recognition accorded to its mother Englishes. In due time, positive endonormative attitude may be developed among us, speakers.

Nevertheless, before we can teach and develop among students, awareness of the globalization and plurencentricity of English, ESL and EFL teachers and the In-Service students should be well informed of the World Englishes (WE) and English as Lingua Franca (EFL) realities, and this may be done by including WE and WE pedagogy in the English Language Curriculum. As suggested by English as a Lingua Franca and English as an International Language proponents (e.g. Jenkins 2000, 2007; Seidlhofer 2004; Kirkpatrick 2010) Filipino teachers' of English as well as Filipino learners' of English success in using English should not be measured against their ability to memorize vocabulary and grammatical rules but against their ability to fluently engage in natural communications.

The present Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) program is developing among Filipino learners' multilingualism and multiculturalism skills. Teaching them varieties of English may enhance the development of their linguistic, academic and cultural skills. We should be tolerant, respectful and appreciative of our Asian brothers' Englishes and cultures as well; thus, we will enjoy communicating with one another and will learn cross cultural communication strategies that may support the intelligibility of our Englishes.

Let us contemplate on Kachru's (1985) critique on the label deviant, deficient, and fossilized outer circle Englishes. He argues that the Inner Circle language norms are irrelevant to the linguistic and cultural situations within the outer circle, and the utterances which are considered errors may not apply to the local Englishes because these deviant utterances may be perfectly acceptable to them. Likewise, Canagajara (as

cited in Weltzl, 2013, p.206) posits that language variation is not considered a mistake but rather a rhetorically and communicatively functional deviation.

Let us therefore celebrate the growth of Philippine English; let us not stigmatize our own variety. It is only a matter of making our students aware of when, where, and with whom to use the specific variety.

Let me borrow Bautista's (2008) encouragement and pieces of advice given to Philippine English speakers, scholars, and learners to conclude this article. It goes:

*Philippine English is not English that falls short of the norms of standard American English; it is not badly learned English as a second language; its distinctive features are not errors. We should not be afraid of Philippine English and I would like to add that we should not be ashamed of it. We should try to describe its features-phonological, grammatical, lexical, discursal, pragmatic-and try to understand how the features have come to be the way they are. I hope that other linguists, language educators and researchers also find this area to be fascinating and that they will help in the task of describing the feature of Philippine English (p.3).*

Finally, let us accord all varieties of English equal respect and celebrate the World Englishes phenomenon. If we are not ready yet to celebrate Philippine English existence, let's at least accept it and not downgrade it; it is not a result of poor language classroom but a product of our linguistic creativity and rich multilingual ecology.

The author would like to thank her students, colleagues, World Englishes linguists whose works contributed to the development of this commentaries, and her research collaborators on Philippine English for having inspired her to propagate Philippine English variety that it may become a marker of national identity apart from the hundred Philippine languages as suggested by my friend, Francis Dumanig in his forthcoming paper.

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