

# REVISITING, ASSESSING, AND SETTING DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCHES IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION

ANTOINETTE BASS-HERNANDEZ

## *Introduction*

IN LINE WITH THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Foundation (CAL-CASAF) Centennial Research Grant and Lecture Series, more specifically the CAL Research Agenda, each of the five departments under CAL, was tasked to formulate a research agenda for CAL. More specifically, the objectives of this project are the following: (1) Evaluate the direction of researches done by the faculty and graduate students of each department of CAL in (at the very least) the past ten years; (2) Suggest a general research direction based on the vision-mission of CAL for the various fields being developed in each department; (3) Identify specific research domains or fields of research which can serve as reference to the faculty, students, and researchers; and, (4) Suggest concrete strategies to support the research activities in the College.

The proponent from the Department of Speech Communication and Theater Arts (DSCTA) will formulate a research agenda for the field of Speech Communication. More specifically, the DSCTA researcher will try to seek the answers to the following questions:

1. What was the direction of researches done by faculty, graduate and undergraduate students in Speech Communication in the past ten years or so?
2. What general directions for research can the Speech Communication faculty and graduate students suggest which is anchored on the vision-mission of CAL?
3. What specific research domains or fields can the faculty, graduate students, and researchers suggest for future researches in Speech Communication?
4. What strategies may be suggested to support these research activities?

### ***The Research Design***

The research design of this study was both quantitative (descriptive) and qualitative.

### ***Methodology***

#### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher used both the quantitative (descriptive) and qualitative approaches in data gathering. For the quantitative data, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to all the faculty and graduate students of Speech Communication. For the qualitative portion, the researcher conducted a series of focused interviews with a majority of the Speech Communication faculty and graduate students. The researcher also read through the highlights of all existing graduate and undergraduate theses (especially those within the past ten years or so) as well as the researches done by the faculty.

#### **Data Analysis**

The results of the survey questions were tabulated. The trends were discussed in relation to the objectives. The highlights of the interviews were carefully noted and the trends determined. After reading through the highlights of the undergraduate and

graduate theses as well as the faculty researches, studies with similar areas and levels of communication were grouped together and their contents compared with each other.

### ***Presentation and Analysis of Data***

This portion of the research answered the questions formulated at the start of the research. The first question of this research was “What was the direction of researches done by faculty, graduate and undergraduate students in Speech Communication in the past ten years or so?”

#### **Faculty Theses/Researches**

##### **Faculty Theses/Researches**

| <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Number</b> |
|---|---------------|
| <u>Interpersonal Communication</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The group problem-solving patterns of Filipino students in informal group discussion situations and its relationship with group productivity and cohesiveness (1984)</li> <li>2. Cyberlove: A study on the development of internet-initiated relationships toward “real time” romances (2001)</li> </ol>   | 2             |
| <u>Organizational Communication</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gender and communication styles of middle managers in government and private organizations</li> <li>2. Organizational communication of CAL instructors (2004)</li> <li>3. Communication-related variables that contribute to the job retention of call center agents (case study) (2008)</li> </ol>   | 3             |
| <u>Speaker-Audience Communication / Communication Apprehension / Listening</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication apprehension on speech preparation and performance (2002)</li> <li>2. The attribution of communication apprehension in public speaking: Profiling new Communication 3 students (2007)</li> <li>3. An Experiment on the use of selective visualization techniques as a way of preventing anxiety contagion in the classroom (2005)</li> <li>4. Communication apprehension: A survey of studies, techniques, and treatments (2007)</li> <li>5. Mind-body communication technique: Towards a new way of developing confidence (2002)</li> <li>6. Mind-body communication technique: An alternative way of learning and</li> </ol> | 9             |

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|---|---|
| teaching confidence in public speaking (2006)<br>7. Speech rates and its effects on listener comprehension (2007)<br>8. Perceived training needs in oral communication of selected high school teachers in Quezon City (1998)<br>9. Speaking ability and selected home variables (1976)   |   |
| <u>Intercultural Communication</u><br><br>1. The ballroom dancing culture as reflected in the communicative behavior of a group of non-professional dancers in Metro Manila (2007)<br>2. The influence of gender role expectations on the communicative behavior of selected pre-school teachers (ongoing exploratory study as of this research)  | 2 |
| <u>Rhetoric</u><br><br>1. Jaime Cardinal Sin and the issue of church and state in the Philippines: A historico-critical approach (1997)<br>2. The nature of Filipino rhetoric<br>3. Rhetoric of crisis in the Philippines   | 3 |
| <u>Oral Interpretation and Performance Studies</u><br><br>1. The relationship of puppetry and storytelling with comprehension (1986)<br>2. The effects of three modes of presentation: Silent reading, chamber theatre and aesthetic appreciation of narrative literature<br>3. Some selected variables on the speech communication performance in Filipino pre-school children in Metro Manila | 3 |
| <u>Communication Theory</u><br><br>Pagpapalit-wika sa sitwasyong komunikasyong pampubliko ng mga estudyante sa ilang piling kolehiyo sa Metro Manila  | 1 |
| <u>Speech Communication Education</u><br><br>Communicating at a distance: A study of the communication environment of UPOU (University of the Philippines Open University) distance education course (1998)   | 1 |

Quite evidently, faculty researches have been scarce in the past ten years. The areas of discipline explored by the faculty focused mostly on speaker-audience communication (nine researches). Organizational communication, rhetoric and oral interpretation (performance theory) researches ranked second with three researches each. There is plenty of room for the DSCTA faculty to explore given the proper research climate.

## Graduate Students' Theses

| Topic   | Number of researches |
|---|----------------------|
| <u>Intrapersonal Communication:</u><br><br>Self-report of Quezon City Hall of Justice and Regional Court-Manila prosecutors' communication behavior during investigative interviewing of alleged sexually abused children (2007)  | 1                    |
| <u>Interpersonal Communication:</u><br><br>1. An exploratory study of doctor-patient relationship in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, PGH (1999)<br>2. Interpersonal communication skills and leadership behaviors in female student leadership (1999)<br>3. The interpersonal communication of Filipino child laborers in Barangay Cuba, Kapangan, Benguet: A symbolic interaction view (2001)<br>4. Relationship of doctors' nonverbal sensitivity to patient satisfaction, cooperation and appointment compliance in Bulacan Provincial Hospital-OPD [Out-patient Department] (2006) | 4                    |
| <u>Speaker-Audience Communication:</u><br><br>1. Self and audience-perceived speech communication apprehension & relationship with selected speaker variables in speaker-audience communication situation (1981)<br>2. The analysis of the two modes of persuasive communication to attitude and behavior change: An implementation of the zero waste campaign among elementary school students (1998)  | 1                    |
| <u>Intercultural Communication:</u><br><br>1. Hiligaynon speech communication behavior and relationship between messages and communication situations (1979)<br>2. A speech communication profile of three generations of Filipino Chinese in Metro Manila: Their use of English, Filipino and Chinese languages in different domains, role relationships, speech situations and functions (1989)   | 1                    |
| <u>Organizational Communication</u><br><br>1. Communication practices of mid management personnel in a mining company (1982)<br>2. HOPE Worldwide Inc. a case study in organizational communication   | 2                    |
| <u>Listening:</u><br><br>1. Language variation and other selected variables on listening comprehension (1981)   | 3                    |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Relationship of self-perception as listener and self-perception as communicator to actual listening comprehension of Miriam freshmen students before and after taking the E-12 (1997)</li> <li>3. The effects of storytelling on the listening comprehension and cognitive abilities of preoperational children (A case study of International Baptist Academy preoperational children)</li> </ol>  |   |
| <u>Speech Communication Education:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Status of the teaching of speech communication in Region I: An exploratory study (1988)</li> <li>2. A development of speech training prototypes for the extension service of the UP Department of Speech Communication and Theatre Arts (1995)</li> </ol>  | 2 |
| <u>Rhetoric:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The rhetoric of 1986 snap presidential elections (1990) / The principal speeches on the RP-US Military Bases Agreement: A case study in ethnorhetoric (1992)</li> <li>2. Theory into practice: The classical rhetorical concepts of Aristotle applied to a contemporary business presentations program</li> <li>3. Patterns of ethos: A Filipino profile (1996)</li> <li>4. Subversion and reaffirmation of the Erap myth in the "Trial of the Century": A rhetorical inquiry (2003)</li> <li>5. An exploratory study on communicative competence in the pastoral ministry of Baguio-based Southern Baptist Churches (2004)</li> <li>6. The role of rhetoric in charisma and leadership: The case of Joseph Ejercito Estrada (2005)</li> <li>7. Communicator style as a predictor of teacher effectiveness (1992)</li> </ol> | 7 |
| <u>Communication Theory:</u> <p>Mga panukala tungo sa pagbubuo ng panimulang teorya ng pagmumura bilang pagpapahayag ng galit sa konteksto ng kulturang Pilipino (2003)</p>   | 1 |

### Undergraduate Theses (Topics)

| Topic  | Number of Researches |
|--|----------------------|
| Ethics   | 3                    |
| Intrapersonal Communication  | 11                   |
| Interpersonal Dyad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-disclosures</li> <li>• Communicative behavior</li> <li>• Communicative elements</li> <li>• Communication patterns</li> <li>• Computer-mediated</li> </ul> | 67                   |
| Interpersonal Small Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicative behavior</li> </ul>   | 26                   |

In the past ten years or so, the following topics were among the ten top choices for the undergraduate theses: interpersonal dyadic (with self-disclosures garnering almost half of the 67 researches); public speaking (61); interpersonal small group (26); teaching and training speech (21); language (20); rhetoric and rhetorical criticism (20); oral interpretation, storytelling (17); mass communication and non-verbal communication (16); and articulation and vocal characteristics (12). The theoretical bases of all these studies were American communication theories. Most of the time, the student researches would fit their findings into these American theoretical framework. There was hardly any attempt to contextualize the findings in Philippine setting. American terminologies would be used in categorizing Philippine-based discourses thus losing the Filipino temperament of the feeling or the concept being discussed.

The respondents of these researches were UP students in the classroom, dorm or their organizations; parents and their children; doctors, nurses and their patients; elementary school children; business partners; teachers; foreign students or insurance persons; couples in romantic relationships; Moslems; male and female managers; male and female lawyers; personnel in a mining company; on-line chatmates; and, female offenders of heinous crimes, and homosexuals (both gays and lesbians).

In Public Speaking, the respondents were either Speech I or Communication 3 students; student leaders; people in a courtroom; debaters; or impromptu speakers. Their ethos or credibility, levels of speech anxiety before and after a Speech Communication classes were analyzed.

Rhetorical criticism was done on a number of distinguished personalities. Among them were Presidents of the Republic of the Philippines (RP) including Manuel L. Quezon, Ferdinand Marcos, Joseph Ejercito Estrada, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and other personalities like Jaime Cardinal Sin, Benigno

Aquino, Jorge Bocobo, Jose Ma. Sison, Dr. Luis Pantoja, Park Chung Hee, Brother Eddie Villanueva, and April Boy Regino. Other respondents come from less dominant groups in Philippine setting: preachers, priests, student activists, and those involved in the 1986 Snap Elections. Speeches on the RP-US Military Bases Agreement and on the People Power were also criticized. Sufficient to say, these existing theses must be re-examined in order to formulate a rhetorical theory grounded on Philippine setting.

Oral interpretation (and its varied performance styles) of the various genres of literature and storytelling as a medium of classroom instruction was compared and contrasted with the traditional pedagogical style and its effect on listening comprehension and cognitive abilities of the following respondents analyzed: pre-school, elementary, and high school students as well as students from UP and other universities/colleges. Other related studies focused on the content and rituals of certain traditional ethnic practices such as the palpalawat of Kalinga or daniw of Ilocos. These studies on indigenous traditions and (oral) practices are but a handful. Future researches must be directed towards these phenomena.

The second question of this research asks: What general directions for research can the Speech Communication faculty and graduate students suggest which is anchored on the vision-mission of CAL? CAL's mission is "to achieve the highest standards of academic integrity and excellence in arts and culture; to foster creative, critical and innovative culture with a nationalist and humanist orientation; and to serve the Filipino ideals through Instruction, Research/Creative Work and Extension." The DSCTA researches must continue to ascertain the reliability and validity of data gathered. Furthermore, the underlying rationale of each study must guarantee that the benefits of the research will not only be for the researcher but more so for the respondents of the research. Researches must be founded on commitment, honesty, and diligence in formulating new knowledge (new theories) beneficial to the development of the Filipino as an individual, family, community, nation, and global partner.



Future researches must be heavily founded on the nationalist and humanist orientation which means going “back to our roots as Filipinos.” Researches on rituals and oral traditions of our indigenous, local and emerging cultures must be prioritized (Agravante, Bulan, and Tiatco). These researches must also try to contribute to the solutions of some of the social problems of society (Tiatco). The use of indigenous or culture-based methodologies to arrive at theories grounded on Filipino communicative behavior is preferred. These methodologies include the induction method, observation of rhetorical artifacts, “hiyang” approach, “pakapakapa,” “pakiramdam,” and other methodologies that would bring out the true nature and temperament of the Filipino.

Ethnographies of communication studies must also be emphasized. These would include cross-cultural comparisons of the social uses of speech and how the uses of speech have changed over time.

Topics on ethics must also be given more emphasis alongside computer-mediated communication situations. Therefore, the pendulum must strike a healthy balance between the extremely traditional rhetorical theories (adapted to the Filipino culture) on the one hand and the highly technical concepts of computer-mediated communication on the other. These would serve as the underlying foundation of the various levels of communication (intrapersonal, interpersonal, public, mass, intercultural, organizational, and developmental) and the major areas of discipline (rhetoric, oral interpretation / performance arts, radio, argumentation and debate, audio-visual communication and others).

The third question asked of this research is: What specific research domains or fields can the faculty, graduate students, and researchers suggest for future researches in Speech Communication? The DSCTA faculty suggests the following domains

or fields: ethos; ethics of communication; ethnographic communication studies; intrapersonal communication, interpersonal (relational) communication; intercultural and cross cultural communication; business and communication or organizational communication; political communication; family communication; gender communication; health communication; performance studies; communication education (traditional teaching methods vis-a vis information technology and instructional design); computer-mediated communication; communication theories and philosophies grounded on traditional and emerging Philippine traditions evolving from innately Filipino methodologies.

The fourth question asked of this research is: What strategies may be suggested to support these research activities? The Speech Communication faculty suggests the following strategies:

1. Offer more Professorial Chairs for research;
2. Require mini-research papers among the Speech majors as early as Speech 100 based on the guidelines to be agreed upon by the Speech Communication faculty;
3. Organize group or collaborative researches either within the DSCTA or with other departments, colleges, and universities within and outside of UP;
4. Provide financial incentives for those who present in local and foreign forums;
5. Make the latest journals in Speech Communication available and accessible to the faculty;
6. Conduct regular seminar-workshops on the latest findings in Speech Communication research;
7. Allow the faculty underloading of three to six units for research each semester so that they may have every opportunity to publish in refereed journals;
8. Inform the faculty about all available research grants (both local and foreign);
9. Encourage senior faculty members to mentor junior faculty members in research

### ***Summary***

This paper served to provide the baseline data of all available theses (undergraduate, graduate, and faculty) and faculty researches as documented in the UP CAL library and in the private collections of the Speech Communication faculty. Hopefully, this research shall assist in identifying areas and methods of research that will strengthen the foundations of communication studies grounded on Philippine theories resulting from emerging Philippine methodologies.