

## INTRODUCTION

### *Looking Back, Looking Forward*

PHR SPECIAL EDITION FOR  
DSCTA'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

By Belen D. Calingacion and Banaue Miclat-Janssen

In 2009, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Department of Speech Communication and Theatre Arts (DSCTA), a special edition of the *Philippine Humanities Review* (PHR) was issued to mark the department's Golden Anniversary. The papers that were featured then focused on scholarship in performance studies. It is but fitting that we celebrate the DSCTA's 60th Anniversary by featuring once more the scholarly works of the Department in yet another special edition of the *PHR*.

Founded in May 1959, the DSCTA was first named the Department of Speech and Drama (DSD). The UP Board of Regents approved its name change to Department of Speech Communication and Theatre Arts in 1974 to recognize its two major areas of study. It has been 60 years since the creation of a separate Department that recognizes speech communication and theatre as distinct academic disciplines and leading components of university education. The creation of the Department also marked the historical beginnings of these two fields of study in the Philippines. DSCTA's mission is "to provide UP students and extended communities distinctly innovative approaches to instruction, research/creative work, and extension service in the areas of speech communication and theatre arts, with the aim of developing highly ethical,

critical, and creative communicators and artists.” For six decades, this mission has guided the department as it forges ahead in the academe. How far is DSCTA in terms of attaining its vision to become a Center of Excellence in the fields of speech communication and theatre arts in the country, or for that matter, in Asia and the Pacific within the next decade? That is the question we aim to examine here.

One of the indicators of attaining such goal would be the level of research activity carried on in the department. The contributions in this special edition do not depict the entirety of the DSCTA’s output, as they are but a representation of the academic research being done. The scholarship of the DSCTA’s faculty members has been quite robust in recent years as new and emerging scholars from the department have been published extensively in local and international journals. This edition highlights especially the scholarship in speech communication to assist in the honing of this academic discipline in the Philippines.

The articles in this special issue are a reiteration of our commitment to provide a creative and intellectual space for our faculty members. As we showcase the works of our scholars, we at the same time hope to contribute to the body of knowledge in the still evolving field of speech communication in the Philippines. This special issue features four research articles and one creative work. We are pleased at the opportunity to publish these works in this special issue.

Carlo de Pano’s “Speech Communication Research in the University of the Philippines Diliman from 1976 to 2015: Tracing the Trends to Map Future Directions,” is an appropriate re-view of the scholarship fostered by the department through

the theses of its students in the last forty (40) years. By examining theses submitted to the DSCCTA, this article sets the direction for scholarship in the next decade. The paper presents a preliminary analysis of speech communication theses, which reveal a shift in trends and interest among our students — from the various sub-areas to methods employed in theses completed during the four decades covered in the analysis. This shift could be a reflection of the changing tides of speech communication as a field of study in the Philippine context.

Teresa Paula De Luna’s “Internet Mediated Technologies and the Networked Communicator: An Anthropological inquiry on UP Diliman students” is a study on the impact of internet in the different facets of our students’ lives. The internet, a 20th century technological invention, has created a huge impact in various aspects of our everyday lives. It has influenced identities and socio-cultural relations. In *Internet Mediated Technologies and the Networked Communicator*, De Luna probes into the UP Diliman student’s sociality in a hypermodern academic community. This anthropological investigation employs a combination of three theoretical perspectives: Marc Augé’s concept of hypermodernity, Pierre Bourdieu’s framework of the habitus, and Christine Hine’s representation of the embedded, embodied, and everyday internet. An interesting revelation of the study is that UP students consider the melded online and offline worlds as one social world. The embodied lives of UPD students, entangled as they are with the internet and hypermodernity, are all discussed in the article.

Mary Jannette Pinzon’s “Of Ethnoscapes, Gazes, and the Struggle of the Split Self: OFW Inter-Cultural Encounters in the Middle East” represents the voice that speech communication can use for the layman’s awareness of our

OFWs. The study provides a glimpse of the unique inter-cultural encounters of our OFWs as they move from their local cultures to the cultures of their destination countries. Looking into the OFW phenomenon as an ethnoscape, and the OFWs' various expressions of racial discrimination in three cultural milieus that include Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates, is the focal point of this paper. It delves into how the OFWs deal with realities in these socially constructed inter-cultural spaces through the lenses of Arjun Appadurai's concept of ethnoscape and John Urry's issues of the tourist gaze. In using these frameworks, and connecting them to F. Landa Jocano's framework of Filipino values, the study points to a new identity borne out of a holistic sense of self where the OFW persona is empowered by their cultural energy, an interior dimension of harmony (loob), as a way of suturing the split self.

Two works are in Filipino: that of Rex Sandro Nepomuceno's "Implikaturang Politikal ng Diskursong Pangmilitar ni Rodrigo Duterte," and a creative contribution by Banaue Miclat-Janssen's "Pagkahaba-haba man ng Prusisyon, Ako pa rin ang Maglalakbay." Nepomuceno's essay analyses President Rodrigo Duterte's ten speeches in 2018, using the Political Discourse Analysis outlined by Teun Van Dijk. The year's speeches were rife with the President's rationalizations of militarization during the first two years of his presidency. The article explicates on the political dangers of the speeches based on text, subtext, and context. This article is certainly timely as it could be one of the processes used to evaluate President Duterte's style of leadership through the study of his public discourses. It may well be a gauge of the political situation of the country, which will have ramifications on the public judgement of his presidency.

Miclat-Janssen's creative work is sourced from historical texts as well as inspired by Shakespeare's "All the world's a stage" monologue. The play "Pagkahaba-haba man ng Prusisyon, Ako pa rin ang Maglalakbay" is about the seven stages of MAN and WOMAN's life. Each scene originates in the texts of existing Philippine literature, i.e. precolonial dances and epics for the infancy and childhood stages; Balagtas for teenage love, Rizal and revolutionary texts for young adulthood; Nick Joaquin, Cirilo Panganiban, and Bienvenido Noriega, Jr. to tackle midlife; Floy Quintos and Glenn Sevilla Mas in facing old age; and finally a song from Miclat-Janssen's sister, Maningning Miclat. The song is interspersed throughout the play, but finally presented in full as the characters face Death, in the same pose as the beginning of the play. This work displays an ingenious weaving of different texts that results in the creation of a powerful performance text.

This collection of scholarly works, representative of DSCTA scholarship, is located in the context of the many changes that are taking place in the academe and in particular the department as it is constantly evolving. One of the recent developments in the Speech Communication Division is that it has strengthened its areas of specialization. In 2018, we succeeded in establishing these areas of specialization: interpersonal communication, instructional communication, rhetoric, and performance studies. The exploration of these different areas will shape the content and material that will feed into the body of scholarship in the future as it is our goal to increase the output in these different streams. Although it remains a challenge, it is not insurmountable. Also, with the emergence of new paradigms, we believe it will expand scholarship that ensures a diversity of voices. By its very nature, the study of speech communication intersects with other scholarly traditions, such as history,

linguistics, English, sociology, psychology, political science, along with ethnic and gender studies; hence there is a need to reach out across disciplinary boundaries. Through these areas of specialization DSCTA can encourage its scholars to collaborate with other faculty from outside the department, in future researches. We still lag behind in terms of collaborative research.

With renewed optimism that our scholarly research will grow stronger in the near future, we could possibly revive the long defunct *Mask and Voices* Journal of the DSCTA. Most of the department-based journals in the College of Arts and Letters (CAL) no longer exist, except those of the Department of Filipino and Philippine Literature (DFPL) and the Department of English and Comparative Literature (DECL) each of which has a journal for their faculty while DECL also has one that is dedicated to the best research works of their students. The Department of Arts Studies (DAS) has two journals initiated by its own faculty members. It has been argued that a department-based journal can be quite insular and not viable. On the other hand, it would provide opportunities for new writers among our young faculty members to engage in a critical exchange of knowledge through their research. Such a journal could address the role of speech communication in the Philippine society. The other half of DSCTA, theatre arts, remains a well-placed and strongly established field in the Philippines and therefore has no problem with identity.

It has been sixty years since speech communication was recognized as a separate and distinct academic discipline. It is time we asked ourselves if it has truly reached the status where it is recognized as a distinct field in Philippine education and at par with other academic fields. Among all the universities in the country, only UP and Silliman University presently offer

this program. The *raison d'être* of any journal is the promotion of scholarship in its field of study. The DSCTA leads in its mission to promote the study of speech communication and of theatre in the Philippines. As of this time, speech communication remains a little recognized field and is generally confused with the more popular field of mass communication. Here rises the need to expand and reinforce concerns about the identity of speech communication as an academic field. While there are theatre departments or specialization within a department in other universities, UP DSCTA still leads — as the only institution that offers a Master's program in both areas. Soon it will have its first PHD program in Performance Studies. The expansion of speech communication scholarship, then, is more than ever crucial.

The future of a department-based journal is probably more feasible now with the use of online platforms. It can help provide the space for reflexive analysis of the community at practice, reflections on the purpose and meaning of speech communication education and research, and on its pedagogy, all within the Philippine context. As there is no publication in the Philippines devoted to research in speech communication, we rely on the *Philippine Humanities Review* (PHR) which is CAL's peer-reviewed journal to publish works in this field of study.

As with other disciplines, the backbone of any academic department is theory and research. Speech communication is no exception. There is really so much to be done in this area. We have barely scratched the surface of the many possible researchable topics of speech communication in the Philippine context. One of our prominent young scholars,

Oscar T. Serquiña, Jr. in his forthcoming article “Institutionally Speaking: Speech Departments and the Making of a Philippine Eloquent Modernity” observes that:

The departments in UP and Silliman University, in particular, have surely inflected the disciplinary study and practice of Speech with Philippine effects and realities. Additionally, they vigorously pursue scholarly work that revises the teleological metanarratives of modern communication from Euro-America and the rest of the developing world. This means that these speech departments do not fully succumb to Western aesthetic exceptionalism. Nor are they simply derivatives of Anglo-American intellectual traditions. (17)

The reality, however, is that there is need to develop our own home-grown theories anchored in a context that is Filipino and Asian, avoiding reliance on the Anglo-American perspective in the study of human-to-human communication. An online platform could possibly encourage our faculty to put out high quality research that emplaces localized theorizing of speech communication phenomena — which up to this time has remained elusive. We seek to foster and stimulate a community of academics and researchers with interest in speech communication even beyond our sphere. As the lead institution in this field, it is but expected that the DSCTA faculty should be in the forefront of research output on speech communication.

Our field by its nature is dynamic. Historically, as an academic discipline, speech communication has responded to the changing requirements of its constituents and society as a whole. In DSCTA, we continue to work on the program to



make it more competitive. Our commitment to the discipline lies not just to the practice by cultivating skills in oral expression and critical thinking, but also to significant scholarship that conceptualizes the functions of communication. By examining how communication fosters success in personal relationships and society and teaching both the theory and strategy behind effective communication might help in drawing more students to specialize in the discipline. Applying what we learn from research to our teaching is important if we want to fulfil our vision to lead in this discipline in Asia and the Pacific.

As mentioned earlier, the content of this special issue does not reflect the full range of scholarship of the DSCTA faculty members. The works of some prominent scholars in both the Theatre division and Speech division have been reserved for an international publication to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of DSCTA that will feature not only our home-grown scholars but also those from other local and international institutions. Theatre arts, in the past few years, has seen vigorous scholarship from a few prolific faculty members; they have published not only locally but internationally as well. These few DSCTA scholars with their creativity and energy have sustained the intellectual quest of the department.

The DSCTA envisions itself as a Center of Excellence in the fields of speech communication and theatre arts in the country as well as hopes to make inroads into Asia and the Pacific within the next decade. So what can we look forward to in the next ten to fifteen years, when the department reaches its 75th year? Will the department take on a different shape? Will it usher in a change by separating the two major disciplines, just as in US universities from where we have sourced our curriculum and programs? As a result of the debate among

scholars and academics in the late 80s who believed that the word “speech” in Speech Communication failed to capture the extent to which the discipline had developed — in terms of sub-areas and courses that have emerged through the years. — Speech Communication and Theatre Arts diverged and were integrated with separate Colleges or Schools. Part of the argument is that the term “speech” is limiting to the discipline because it emphasizes skills and practice rather than research and scholarship. So in the USA, academic institutions have in fact, divorced the word “speech” from speech communication, thus making it just a communications program and moved it to a College or School of Communication. Theatre Arts, on the other hand, became part of the College or School of Fine Arts. Are we going in the same direction? Only time will tell. But for now, these two distinct but related fields have been held by a long-standing bond for sixty years in UP. We don’t know what the future will bring. But we are certain that the Department will continue to pursue its search for relevance in the Filipino context.