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Philo Henyo: An Analysis of *Pinoy Henyo*

Abstract This paper seeks to clarify the role of intensional and extensional knowledge of concepts in *Pinoy Henyo,* a popular segment on noontime television in the Philippines. It draws its primary materials from select segments of *Pinoy Henyo* in order to show how differences in knowledge of the intension and extension of concepts operate in actuality, and how differences based on beliefs, culture, age, and gender complicate the process. How the players employ their intensional and extensional knowledge of concepts, as well as how individual differences play out in the game, provide an understanding of how successfully or not concepts can be identified in guessing games.

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Guessing is like a blind person's game since one cannot really assume any knowledge of the word/concept being guessed prior to the identification of certain clues. One simply resorts to figuring out the hints just like how a blind person uses his cane to scan for curbs and steps so that he may reach his destination, without incident, or in the player's case, to guess the answer.

A guessing game, in a sense, is a series of attempts to wiretap the mind of an individual. It is about cracking what the player is thinking exactly, or, at the very least, getting a grasp of closely related ideas to the static concept in his mind. It is a mix of creativity, reasoning, logical deduction, strategies, and sometimes, luck.

One wonders how exactly guessing games work. Often, the objective of such games is to say the "hidden" words. All the while, possibilities are knocked down and others opened. In an ideal situation, the player comes closer to the word itself. Yet, in many situations, the opposite is the case.

Language becomes at once a passage and a pit, revealing and forbidding. Once accustomed to the nuts and bolts of language, the relaying of concepts from one to another becomes easier. Some concepts, however, are rich in meanings and may sometimes pose significant challenges in the way they are to be properly understood. Such a problem will be tackled to show how individuals struggle, at

times, to have not just a basic but the right knowledge of a concept, which would call for an appreciation of how different and complex it could be across cultures.

Guessing games are so common to us that we take for granted the deep semantics that is at play. It may just be a fun game for some people, but, in reality, it determines a range of concepts in one's mind. By taking a closer look at a number of factors, such as the individual's beliefs, culture, age, and gender, one will come to appreciate how variety comes to fore and complicates the way concepts are viewed. Select segments of *Pinoy Henyo* will be examined to provide concrete examples of the relationship between the intension and extension of concepts.

Guessing games may seem like the most uncomplicated of things. Practically anyone can take part in them. However, in a game show on television, it is hard to guess the names of random objects, places, movie titles, food, celebrities, and the like. On the one hand, one may leave these games up to chance, to random mindlessness, or try to win with a good knowledge of concepts. On the other hand, since words and concepts have an arbitrary relationship and do not necessarily have necessary correspondence, one may have difficulty identifying the word that they have to guess. Concepts can be represented using several words and the same words can stand for different concepts. Every hidden word used in these games is a concept linked to several other concepts. Guessing games are one of the most mind-boggling and, sometimes, the most frustrating games to play. Imagine guessing a word or two and having to start from nothing. There are endless possibilities, and the words in these games could range from the common to the outright fuzzy.

Gregg (2010) claimed that "it is hard to talk about words, sentences, and their meanings without running up against questions about concepts and how they are created and manipulated in the mind" (p. 248-249). An individual's good grasp of concepts, then, and

how he relates them to his experiences increases his chances of guessing the words. Clues or descriptions are always given about what is supposed to be identified. These clues are obviously, in one way or another, related to the concept being guessed. This is where confusion presents itself as concepts may differ from person to person. Familiarity is the key to being successful in guessing games. Those on the same team must have the same range of knowledge in such a way that they are able to relate the same concept to what the other is describing.

Pinoy Henyo

Pinoy Henyo is played in certain occasions, such as family gatherings, a night out for drinks with friends, or as a classroom activity. The premise is deceptively simple. An individual is given the task of identifying a "blind item". He is given only clues he picks up through a barrage of "yes", "no", or "maybe" answers to a string of his carefully chosen questions that have to do with some categories. The categories are as common as "bagay" (thing), "tao" (person), "hayop" (animal), "lugar" (place), "pagkain" (food) being the most common, and a handful of the less common ones, such as "laro" (game) and, "pangyayari" (event), to mention only two.

Pinoy Henyo is a popular noontime game on Philippine television. It requires those who take part in it to have a very broad range of knowledge about everything there is, be it concrete or abstract. It directly translates to "Filipino Genius", which is a misnomer for a game with simple mechanics that even the youngsters can play. However, from a more analytical and more philosophical viewpoint, we come to understand that there is more genius to this game than perceived.

In *Pinoy Henyo*, one player will be the guesser and the other will be the guide. The guesser will ask questions about the word and the guide has to answer with either "yes", "no" or "maybe". A discussion of these responses will be provided to show the subtleties of meaning assigned to them in the game. Unlike binary logic that uses only two values, *Pinoy Henyo* uses a fuzzier set of values. Instead of just a "yes"

or a "no", "maybe", which could mean either likely "yes" or likely "no", is added. The set of categories in the game may be much larger than the responses can cover.

The Many Meanings of "Yes", "No", and "Maybe"

"Yes", "no", and "maybe" literally mean, well, "yes", "no", and "maybe", respectively. However, through the course of the game, the players assign different meanings to the options. The meanings of the possible responses to the questions start to have a number of variations.

Since a mutually dependent relationship exists between the guesser and the guide, the guesser must use the guide's responses and reactions to his advantage. Aside from the guide's usual verbal responses, he can give away cues as he gets more animated and excited when the guesser is fairly close to the word, or as he becomes more quiet and less active when he thinks that victory is not likely at hand.

"Yes" with a smile and glittering eyes. A "yes" may not simply literally mean "yes"; it could mean that the guesser is close enough to guessing the right word, that he needs to keep enumerating related extensions, or that he is just a translation away. A high-pitched, long, excited "yes" has a different meaning from a normal, calm "yes". A firm "yes" comes with excited hand movements and purposeful nodding. It now contains conviction, certain that the guesser is just about to say the word. Coupled with changes in the guide's pitch and tone of voice, a simple "yes" becomes more than just a "yes", an indicator of the proximity of the guesser to the word. It may signify the guide's high hopes that the guesser can zero in on the word. Also, it is a form of encouragement to guess more and think of words that are related to the concept. A "yes" could also have an indecisive tone. While used as a sign of affirmation, it may be interpreted that the player needs to change the question.

The angry and pleading "no". Sometimes, the guide may say "no" to the questions to mean that the guesser is still far from guessing

the word. A firm "no" comes with head-shaking. He could be telling the guesser to keep guessing. It could also be a sign of annoyance towards a guesser who keeps repeating categories he already said "no" to and that he thinks the guesser is simply going in circles, with no chance of getting the word at all. Perhaps, it is an expression of frustration over information asymmetry. Perhaps it is also an indicator for the guesser to come up with sensible questions, and less problematic/controversial descriptions.

Unsure/excited persistent "maybe". Sometimes, a "maybe" could mean more than just a plain "maybe". It could be used to ask the guesser to divert the path of questions or indicate that the word being guessed has more than one possible meaning. It could also mean that the word is just about to be guessed. As ambiguous as its nature is, a "maybe" could admit of gradations of "maybeness". There is a "maybe" that indicates a high degree of uncertainty, and there is a "maybe" that tells the guesser to try other possibilities, not too far away from the words/categories already touched on. The problem is that a "maybe" response that means more of a "yes" to the guesser can mean more of a "no" to the guide. Already confusing for an answer, the guide can still make his "maybe" sound a little more confusing. This may be done to give the guesser the idea that he needs to steer away from his current train of thought, or further build up on the pool of concepts already identified.

Both questions from the guesser and answers from the guide will serve as clues to guess the word. However, since individuals have different understandings of different concepts, it is difficult to ask the right questions and categorically answer such questions with "yes", "no", or "maybe".

The Intension and Extension of Concepts

Concepts are ideas that represent a class or category of objects, events, or activities. The importance of concepts can be seen in terms of how people use them to think about objects or events without having to think about all the specific examples of the category (Ciccarelli, 2012).

Concepts, for the most part, contain features we think about them and allow us to identify existing and possibly new objects or events that fit them.

Zhao and Mao (2010) mentioned that there is a long tradition of dividing the use of concepts into their extensional and intensional meanings. This allows speakers of the language either partial or full comprehension of them. The intension of a concept is a collection of properties or characteristics that the concept possesses. Such properties give meaning to the concept by describing the common features possessed by all the things it denotes. The extension of a concept refers to the collection of things or members correctly referred to by the characteristics that the concept possesses (Hurley, 2000; Angeles, 1992; Gregg, 2010).

After surveying various philosophers' accounts of extension and intension as features of concepts, Swoyer (1995) presented:

> The extension of a concept was typically taken to consist of the individuals to which the concepts applied; e.g., the extensions of the concept *human* was held to consist of all individual human beings. There was less accord about the nature of intensions, but it was often agreed that the intension of a concept consists of the subconcepts or attributes or qualities that compose it; e.g., the intension of the concept *human* was frequently said to consist of the concepts *rational* and *animal* (p. 99-100).

Zhao and Mao (2010) held that regardless of the changes in the terminology used to refer to the intension and extension of concepts, the bipartition pattern still sustains. Ultimately though, the intensional or extensional definitions we explicitly lay down can hardly capture the entirety of our thoughts or of the concept itself. This is especially true because language is dynamic, allowing meaning to move across cultures and geographical borders and to continually evolve over time, and also because consummate knowledge of a concept is impossible. However, these should not prevent one from exploring a multi-faceted concept and eventually defining it regardless of existing limitations. It is only a matter of opting for an appropriate

method of defining the term in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding.

The Extensional and Intensional Types of Definitions and Their Limits

Hurley (2000) and Müller-Merbach (2008) identified two types of definitional techniques – intensional and extensional.

Definition by extension. Definition by extension can be done either ostensively or enumeratively. If a child asks what "red" means, one of the easiest ways to respond is to point, if any, at the nearest red object or the referent without the intervention of language. This is the ostensive or demonstrative type of definition, and the most primitive one, too (Hurley, 2000). For the purposes of this paper, the definition will not be expounded on since it is seldom employed in guessing games. Moreover, "there are aspects of meaning that are not done justice to by simply pointing at the extension of the term" (Gregg, 2010, p. 251).

As regards the enumerative type, suppose someone were to ask for the meaning of "red" in the middle of an academic discussion. Using a box of sixty-four crayons, there will be about three or four colors that can qualify for the category "red". It becomes more difficult, though, when you expand your basis from a set of labeled crayons to the real spectrum.

A dilemma that arises is that the former limit to the number of "reds" there are, is now removed, and one is left with an interminable array of "reds" alone. Many computer programs have an extensive color palette, usually featuring either a chart or a slider. The chart displays a fixed set of pre-determined color variants, whereas a slider enables one to navigate through a rainbow spectrum of blending hues, of "red" fading into orange, then into yellow, into green, and into violet such that picking a "red" turns into a more complex process of figuring out exactly which nuance is sought and locating it in the vast field. Using the enumerative extensional definition of red and with the computer

as one's guide, one can tell another that "reds" include maroon, burgundy, ruby, sangria, cardinal, vermillion, crimson, cerise, carmine, cherry, coral, scarlet, and many more. However, if digital programmers successfully ascribe a unique code for the smallest possible point they choose to make accessible to or clickable by users, the original spectrum remains infinitely reducible at any rate, meaning that the point of minimum size can, in reality, be further decomposed into a gamut of color components. In addition, if, by some magnificent technological innovation, it has been verified that a total of twenty-eight million "reds" exist, it would still be difficult to go through each of them with another person in one sitting. In the aforementioned spectrum, "red" precedes orange and yellow and one can only vaguely separate or distinguish them. A definition's lack of an unequivocal measure for exclusivity in meaning of different concepts runs the risk of including non-members and excluding authentic members of the concept.

Definition by intension. In the West, a typical exchange of pleasantries begins with, "Hi! How are you?" The other person will then answer, "Good," or "Fine", followed by an expression of gratitude and a reciprocation of the question. Eventually, as "good" and "fine" became hackneyed, people came up with a variety of other responses, including "epic", "awesome", "wonderful", "excellent", "superb". This leads one to wonder if people's answers necessarily differ in accordance with the gradations of their "good" feeling from day to day, or if they all mean to say the same thing.

Definition by synonymy is risky for at least two reasons. *First*, it involves deviating from one's original meaning, and particularly because words do not have an absolute degree of sameness between them. Most of the time, one can only reach a middle ground based on similar connotations. This tends to be overlooked in layman's language, in everyday conversations, in which. For example, it would generally be acceptable to substitute "pretty" and "cute" for "beautiful", vice versa, though they denote distinct attributes, and they do not possess an absolute degree of sameness.

Second, synonymy is circular definition. The explanation that the mast of a boat is a spar and that a spar is a mast will be uninformative to a novice in sailing as well as to a philosopher. The discussion leads nowhere when it ends up running in circles, when the synonym provided is equally or more unintelligible than the term to be defined, and when absolutely no synonym is available. The last case applies to terms as technical as "amphibian" and as ordinary as "red". It is difficult, if at all possible, to find a synonym for "amphibian" or "red" and retain its whole intrinsic value, without selecting a particular animal or shade of "red" that precludes all others.

In contrast, definition by antonymy entails depicting a concept with respect to what it is not, thereby effectively reducing the extension and restricting the range of potential referents. This is appropriate for concepts that are better understood by negation rather than by affirmation and are primarily characterized by a deficiency, a lack, or absence of something rather than the presence of something else. The fastest way to help a child know what a "bald" and "bachelor" mean is to define them as having no hair and no spouse, respectively. However, the dangers are that some terms have no direct opposites and those that do may be open to multiple interpretations.

Different social and biological backgrounds contribute to inconsistent standards of comparison or points of reference. For instance, what is "big", "small", "poor", "rich", "good", and "bad" for one may not be equally so to another, so one's and the other's definition will not always necessarily concur. Such variations, as Shuy (1969) explained, are "based on social status, age, race, sex, family, friendship, and others" (p. 13). Hudson (1980) could not agree more when he recognized that "the way in which a language structures the world, through the meanings which it distinguishes, depends partly on the way in which the world itself is structured and partly on the communicative needs of its speakers" (p. 92).

Consider an exchange between a senior student who walks from one class to the next every day, and a freshman who is accustomed to moving about using a car. The senior may inadvertently mislead the inquiring freshman by telling him that the building that he is looking for, which is fifteen minutes away by foot, is "not very far from here". Sociolinguistics accounts for this by looking at differences in language, and, therefore, in how people make sense of concepts by pointing out immediate social causes (Stahl, 1947). Similarly, Bernstein (1971) held that the presence of strong communal bonds, limited exercise in decision-making in one's environment, and limited intellectual stimuli can have an effect on the shaping of the intellectual, social, and affective orientation of individuals.

A stipulative definition accounts for a recently coined term for a new phenomenon or discovery, a word or phrase that has been taken out of its conventional context, or a word that has acquired additional meanings over time. Pérez (2004) held that

> new explanatory concepts are eventually introduced to account for the incompleteness of meaning brought about by the growth of knowledge or emerges within a brief period rather than being the product of a long history of mainstream usage or the result of a large-scale consensus, as of lexicographers or authorities in the international linguistic community (p. 203).

Because it rests on the discretion of a select few, such as a group of experts, then there are no right or wrong stipulative definitions. Such definitions cover scientific, slang or colloquial, "gay", and most other kinds of specialized languages or terms. A "tigon" and a "liger" are the hybrid offsprings of a tiger with a lioness and a tigress with a lion, respectively (Hurley 2010). "Echos" serves as a conversational accessory in gay lingo and loosely translates to "whatever" or "whatnot". "Salvage" refers to rescue from destruction, but it acquired grim undertones – hints of atrocity – during the Marcos regime. "Rediolet" is the mixture of red and violet, and, because it is totally made up, its rightness or wrongness can hardly be contested.

Quite apart from reference books like dictionaries, which are subject-oriented, lingual dictionaries and inter-disciplinary dictionaries provide lexical definitions that are far more intellectually penetrable than theoretical ones. Because dictionaries are kept up-to-date, with the new editions published on a regular basis, lexical definitions can be adjusted to accommodate contemporary uses of a term. Etymology is also included, so the indicated origin alone of the word or parts of it facilitates access to a constellation of other words. Such a definition may, however, miss out on how certain concepts are dealt with or understood in a subjective manner. This may be evident in the way certain cultures or social groups come up with definitions of mainstream concepts or terms that they themselves have come to understand in a different light.

A précising definition narrows down the scope of an ambiguous term to what it should exclusively become for purposes of a specific discussion, barring other possible or valid definitions from being taken into consideration. A couple of girlfriends, choosing from a motley collection of red cosmetic products, can rule out glossy, warm shades in favor of matte, cool variants of the primary reds. The danger with précising definitions, though, is the establishment of inadequately founded and imprecise boundaries. If a dozen legislators agree among themselves that a citizen must receive less than or equal to four hundred pesos a day in order to be classified as economically marginalized and to merit extensive government subsidy, what becomes then of workers who earn P401 daily? All the same, it would be a constant struggle to survive on a total income of P700 per day if the breadwinner also has to sustain a household of, say, twelve people, with some of them perhaps unemployed, too old or too young to work, gravely ill, or still studying. In this case, because salary is the sole determinant of economic status while other crucial criteria are factored out, the consequent demarcation of poverty, in the legal sense, is contentious and liable to unduly eliminating the de facto destitute.

Just when one thought that he already knows all there is to a term or concept, defining it thoroughly can be a fairly intricate process. The essence or factual nature of a concept may be lost amidst the highly prejudiced definitions used. Gregg (2010) recognized this problem with précising and stipulative definitions when he claimed:

> People are sloppy with their terminology. Depending on context and audience, they use terms or concepts with varying degrees of precision. Some contexts call for more precision, and so people coin new terms. Technical fields are full of specialized jargon for this reason. Sometimes, people even use a familiar term in a more restricted sense than most people do sitting around the dinner table (p. 250).

One can always refer to either intensional or extensional meaning to zero in on the word being described or guessed. There are different types of definitions to suit the different terms and audiences as described, with each definition having intrinsic advantages and disadvantages.

Intension, Extension, and *Pinoy Henyo*

Applying these concepts to *Pinoy Henyo*, the intension can be thought of as the properties and/or attributes which come in the form of guesses. The extension is none other than the word being guessed. If the properties and/or attributes agree with the real-world perception of the word being guessed, then those are indeed properties and/or attributes of the word. Such a claim implies that identifying the correct intensions is the key to guessing a certain extension. Simply put, identifying the category a term belongs to, as well as the properties that define it, is key in determining the word being guessed.

The intensional and extensional knowledge of concepts is crucial in *Pinoy Henyo*. The game is a continuous toss-and-catch game of intensions and extensions. One has to be familiar with the intension of the different categories by knowing what defines and separates persons, objects, places, and events from each other. The intension of the concept must be determined in order for the guesser to narrow

down his choice of concepts. The guesser needs to give the right intensions of the given word for his teammate for agreement or not.

The usual case in definition is that the yet-to-be-defined word is presented, followed by its definition, whether of the extensional or intensional sort. Eventually, as the guesser gets closer to guessing the word, he moves on to more specific intensional definitions, or specific characteristics that the concept could have. Examples of this would be, "Is this green?" or, "Is this used to cook with?" Here the guesser has already an inkling of what the word might be, and simply confirms this inkling by observing how the guide will respond to the guesser's subsequent questions.

In a universe of words, categories become the map. It is where one starts from. With the best classifiers or categories, the guesser can lessen the questions that he needs to ask and likely increase his chance of hitting the right word. Categorization starts from broad to more specific, giving rise to characterizations and descriptions in the course of the game. Physical descriptions are often helpful because they are the first to be utilized in the visualization of the concept. One must be knowledgeable on this. One or a few descriptions may not be enough though. Some other specific characteristics of the object are utilized to eliminate some other possibilities. Functions, relation to other objects, and other details, are used if one cannot provide physical descriptions. They are most often used in identifying people, events, or places that one does not have immediate knowledge of, or of things that are not too common. As one gets more attributes, the size of possible concepts shrinks down. In any case, one must exhaust all his extensional and intensional knowledge to give details that will eventually lead to the identification of the word.

To illustrate, when guessing a personality, one must not be limited to only the famous or and the living. Most often, people try to do this. They stick to what they see and what is popularly known. When guessing, one should include all possibilities and plumb one's

vocabulary for all the words that are closely associated with the intensions and extensions provided.

Whether or not the guesser will be able to figure out the word depends on how the guide will respond to the guesser's questions. The guide must consider all possible interpretations, or else he might end up confusing the guesser. The guesser has to formulate reasonable/sensible questions and use deduction well by starting from broad categories and narrowing down to specific ones.

When a guide identifies that the word being guessed is part of breakfast, for instance, the guesser would usually enumerate everything he eats for breakfast. The problem, though, is that the guesser may have a totally different culture or lifestyle compared to the guide (Pérez, 2004). The guesser may prefer to eat meals with bread or vegetables and fruits. The guide may prefer to eat meals with rice and egg. To each of them, their corresponding extensions of food eaten for breakfast are regular and normal. But the apparent insight we can gain from this is that "regular" and "normal" may be different from person to person.

After the guesser properly specifies the correct category, there are certain subcategories that follow distinctive classifications for each category that the guesser can utilize to narrow down the range of possible concepts to be regarded. In other words, a hierarchy of conditions serves as a guide in guessing the word wherein general or broader qualifications should be met before satisfying specific characteristics.

The process of elimination used in guessing games greatly uses the intensional and extensional knowledge of concepts. The guesser starts with asking whether a word is in English or Filipino then proceeds to ask if it is a person, place, thing, or something else (intension). Then once he already has enough descriptions, he enumerates words (extension) that match what was gathered from the interrogation. White it is always the trend, it is not for those who

get confused in the duration of the game though. With the right questioning skills and enough conceptual knowledge, a guessing game that starts from absolutely nothing becomes more and more specific until the correct word is deduced. It is amazing how the human brain zeroes in on specific and correct answers from a random of words, of anything and everything, with just a series of "yes", "no", or "maybe" questions. Now, strictly speaking, it is not actually "guessing", is it?

The intensional knowledge of the guesser about the word would lead him to many possible extensions, so this would mean that all the words matching the intension he has given may be the answer. Intensional knowledge of the word would also be the basis of all the answers the player may think of, so a wide knowledge of the intension of the word is to be needed. Similarly, the extensional knowledge of the word itself affects the game in the same way because, for the player to give the answer, he needs to identify the very word or exact extension of the intensions or clues that he has gathered (Chalmers, 2002). The player's extensional knowledge needs to be wide because there are many words with overlapping intensions or are referred to in a number of ways. Different words could be used to refer to the same concept.

Intension Determines Extension

Frege (1960) held that there must be something more than extension; expressions or concepts, he pointed out, must have a sense (intension). Even more boldly, he claimed that sense (intension) determines the extension of a word, a complex expression, or a sentence.

This is a view which later philosophers came to agree with, though with nary a contention (Zhou and Mao, 2010). While the extension of a term can have a referent/s or none at all, it is unlikely that a term exist with no intensional meaning. If such was the case, then the concept would become cognitively meaningless or semantically empty. As it were, one cannot denote what one cannot

connote. Intensions are essential in describing the extensions of concepts (Chalmers, 2010; Frege, 1960). Hurley (2000) held:

> The intensional meaning of a term serves as the criterion for deciding what the extension consists of. Because we know the attributes connoted by the term "unicorn", for example, we know that the term has empty extension (p. 89).

In *Pinoy Henyo*, it is the properties of a concept that ultimately lead one to the right word. Failure to grasp the intension of the hidden word will give the guesser a hard time. One's intensional knowledge of the hidden concept should match up with the essential properties that were determined in the guessing process. The game shows that examples, the members of a set, or simply extensions, all draw from an intersection of intensions (Frege, 1960).

Using the strategy of mentioning intensional definitions first would be more effective than primarily using extensional definitions, because it focuses on the properties and characteristics of the concept rather than its members. It would be faster, in most cases, since one would not need to blurt out all the possible members of a concept. For example, if one is asked to guess a "Dachsund", instead of saying all the breeds of dogs that one knows, if one knows the possible properties of dogs, one could just ask if it's tall or short, short-legged, and/or long bodied, and therefore would arrive at the conclusion that the concept is a "Daschund". If one is supposed to guess the number "4", instead of enumerating all the numbers, one could simply ask if the number is a multiple of 2 and/or if it's a single-digit number, thereby limiting the infinite set of all numbers to just "2, 4, 6, 8", making the guessing much simpler and faster.

The importance of intensional meaning is perhaps best illustrated by the existence of a certain concept that has an intensional definition, but not an extensional one. This case is manifest in what is a unicorn. A unicorn's intension would be a horse-like creature with a single horn on its forehead. However, because of its imagined nature, there are no members that exist outside of one's imagination to comprise

the unicorn extension. The intension is what constitutes a concept's being; that is, all concepts are so because they all have a corresponding intensional meaning, which are themselves a result of convention.

This is not to say, though, that intension outweighs extension in terms of importance in understanding a concept. Concepts must be grasped in both aspects in order to be known/guessed. The rules of *Pinoy Henyo* provide the guesser unlimited guesses, so he can enumerate as many extensions that belong to the set defined by the intension. However, the goal in the game is to guess the word, not to keep on enumerating intensional definitions. Having a more defined set of intensions gives the guesser a smaller set of extensions so that he can guess quickly. Once the guesser feels that he is close to getting the answer or when time is running out, he starts to guess the word by giving the extension.

Inverse Proportionality of Extensions and Intensions

Should all go well beyond the initial categories and should the right and related questions be asked, the number of possible referents is cut down considerably, though the number of questions popping up in the player's mind seems to multiply. The intension and extension of concepts have an inversely proportional relationship, such that additional qualifications reduce the number of qualifiers in the extension, while lessening the conditions permits the admission of more candidates for being the concept's referent/s (Swoyer, 1995). As the intension of the given word increases, by giving more specific categories and details to which the term applies, the extension of the word decreases because fewer things acquire those details and applications. As the categories being asked by the guesser become more specific, there will be fewer words to be enumerated because fewer terms exhibit the characteristics that the known categories require. Zhao and Mao (2010) explained this in detail saying:

In the example of "every lion is an animal", "animal" is in "lion" in the sense that a creature cannot be a lion without being an animal. Being an animal is

included in being a lion, which makes it part of the intension of the term "lion". On the other hand, lions are included in the extension of "animal". "Lion" has a smaller extension because there are fewer objects called "lion" than those that may be called "animal". However, in another point of view, "lion" is richer in intension because we know more characteristics that are shared by all lions than characteristics that are shared by all animals. Thus, as the extension decreases, the intension also increases and vice versa (p. 52).

Because fewer terms are possible to apply as the correct categories are asked, there are more chances of getting the word right. In one *Pinoy Henyo* episode, "suha" (pomelo), was the word to be guessed. As the guesser effectively asked the right categories and the guide properly responded to the questions, the guesser eventually zeroed in on the right word. Having known that the word is under the "food" category, in Filipino, and is a type of fruit, the guesser effectively ruled out other intensions that did not belong to the group and proceeded to enumerate the Filipino names of certain fruits. That is, as the categories were correctly identified, thereby increasing the number of intensions that provided clues as to what the word was, the number of extensions was significantly and effectively reduced until the word was successfully identified (MrJoshcon23, 2010a).

This is not always the case, though, considering that there are classes with an infinite set of members. Also, the guesser may not be familiar with the word to be guessed to begin with. Depending on the qualification used, the extension of a concept can either remain the same or change over time. A concept referring to all cats would include all cats in the past, present, and future. Add another qualifier and the extensional meaning of a term changes, such as when one is referring to presently living cats. It may also be the case that, without changing or adding a qualifier, a term may have changes in its extensional meaning, such as members of classes that have become extinct (dinosaurs), or the set of members of a class that gets reduced over time. An example of this would be the planets, with the eventual exclusion of Pluto (Swoyer, 1995; Hurley, 2012).

This is another important aspect that the players should be aware of, or, at least, figure out before playing the game. They should strive to provide as many intensions as they can, and build on the ones that are likely to lead them to the extension being guessed. It is from the established intension that the extension of the concept can be identified. Failure to identify the proper intension of the concept can give the guesser a hard time. The guesser tries to make the intension as specific and as narrow as possible until he decides that the intension is enough for the next phase. With a specific intension, the guesser can usually think of the possible extensions that belong to that set.

Elephants are Different to Different People

Given how intensions and extensions significantly figure in one's success in guessing, if one does not have adequate knowledge of them, it is nearly impossible to guess the word being guessed.

Even if one possesses such knowledge of concepts, another challenge still needs to be addressed. Zhou and Mao (2010) held that "sharing the same sense (intension) of a term is a prerequisite for a term to be used by a community as a means of communication" (p. 60). Going back to *Pinoy Henyo*, there are occasions when the intensions of the guide do not always match up with those of the guesser. To have a shot at the mystery word, the guesser must share the same knowledge of the hidden concept as the guide, or the intension could be lost in translation amid varying cultural backgrounds and/or personal preferences.

The players can have different means of specification that help them close in on the word being guessed. Words involving difficult referents can make the players argue as to how definitely "yes", "no", or "maybe" responses should be. In an episode involving two students, "Lapu-lapu" proved difficult to guess. When the guesser asked if it is an animal, the guide was forced to respond with a "yes". He could have said "maybe" but he was more inclined to say "yes".

And the problem began. The guesser started to focus on the "animal" category, with no chance of him mentioning "Lapu-lapu", because he, unbeknownst to the guide, classified it as a person (forevereatbulaga, 2013).

Also, there are so many different aspects of our being human that influence the way we ask questions, respond to questions, and analyze answers. Zhao and Yao (2010) held:

> The comprehension of the intension of a term largely depends on the language user's knowledge about the references of this term, and that can vary quite dramatically. This can be exemplified by the word "airplane". The extension of the word "airplane" is about the same for people ranging from little babies, pilots, and flight attendants. However, the intensions of "airplane" are much less common among different people. Linguistic meanings at the extensional level are rather public, while those at the intensional level are more private (pp. 63-64).

In an episode involving couples, the foreigner husband/wife had a rather difficult time responding to questions which most Filipinos would consider basic. Asked if "tuyo" is a type of food or if it is fried, the American husband said "no" (MrJoshcon23, 2010b). Similarly, a Persian husband answered in the negative when asked if "lechon" is a type of local food. The same difficulty was experienced by an American wife when she failed to say "yes" to her Filipino husband's questions about Manny Pacquiao: "Is this a showbiz personality? A politician?" (MrJoshcon23, 2010d).

Pérez (2004) acknowledged Putnam's proposal that in determining the meaning of several types of words, the actual world, or society for that matter, contributes to the meaning of concepts (p. 202). As such, the intension and, consequently, the extension of a concept may vary from person to person because of their varying experiences of the world. The intensional knowledge can vary depending on the information one knows, one has been to, people one has met, things one has obtained and even movies or dramas one has watched.

Bernstein (1971) acknowledged that one's speech and thought are affected by the class one belongs to. This could result in restricted/enriched vocabulary, imprecise/precise use of words, rigidity/creativity in the employment of adverbs/adjectives, repetitive/concise use of words, or a limited/unlimited degree of conceptualization. The following episode provides a good example: A guesser from an underprivileged family asked if the mystery word (cockroach) falls under the animal category. The guide said "maybe". She kept repeating questions she already asked. She asked if it is an insect. The guide said "yes". After confirming that it flies, the guesser blurted out that it is a bird (OfficialEatBulaga, 2013). In light of difference due to social class, Stahl (1975) recognized that "the causes of linguistic and cognitive differences between the social classes are cultural and educational resulting most often in simple vocabulary and syntax, much redundancy, and many digressions (p. 150).

The two players, the guesser and the guide, may be peers or could come from the same family or background; however, they maybe communicating and thinking at different wavelengths. What the game poses as a challenge is that different people may have different viewpoints. Nowadays, people tend to be overly opinionated, holding rather strong, almost radical beliefs, and idiosyncratic ways of thinking. This leads to a very big chance that they may have different definitions of the concepts and terms which are used in the game. It may therefore be useless to talk about meanings unless one knows the factors behind why certain terms are coined and used to begin with (Gregg, 2010).

Each player is different with his unique understanding of the world and all that it holds. This influences the player's intensional and extensional understanding of concepts and in turn, affects the way he asks questions and the way he reacts to the answers. If the guesser has no idea what the word is due to his limited vocabulary or exposure to certain terms, he is doomed from the start. If he is familiar with the term, personal history and experience come into play and

make the guessing either easier or more difficult. Now, even a player's firm notion about a concept could change overtime. One's knowledge of Pluto as a planet, for instance, while true for the longest time, and may have been considered a conventional connotation of it, fell short of being considered a "planet" after it was shown to be not like the other planets of the solar system. Gregg (2010) neatly summarized this saying:

> We all go about our lives knowing that whatever clusters of properties we use to identify things are somewhat ad hoc, and subject to revision if we come across evidence that the underlying reality is different than what we thought it was (p. 262).

Regarding misinformation, most people think that tomatoes, eggplants, and squash are vegetables, when they are actually fruits. So when a guesser with a good grounding in botany asks if the word is a vegetable and the guide incorrectly says "yes", then the guesser is likely to eliminate those in his range of extensions. The guesser drew on his technical definition, while the guide relied on a common misconception. As an effect, the guide's response could lead the guesser off track.

The Different Levels of Information Asymmetry

As it were, there might be an information asymmetry in the game and in the way the players make sense of concepts. On the *first level*, there are certain concepts that are personal. Though they are not necessarily secrets, these concepts are hardly ever talked about because *one*, they are probably not needed to be talked about because no one would care about them. *Two*, there are concepts that are actions of the subconscious, and, therefore, even the individual is unaware of them. *Three*, there are concepts that are assumed to be known to other people even when the contrary is more common than not.

Questions that implicate information asymmetry are usually subject to preference. Guessers would ask questions like, "Do I know this?", "Is it in my room?", "Do I eat this?" or, "Is this person attractive".

A guide who is not personally familiar with the guesser's life would find himself thinking, "How am I supposed to know what is inside one's room, what one knows, eats, or finds attractive?" Such was the case in an episode. One of the players asked, "Do I eat this?", "Is this my favorite?" (KrisAquinoGLOBAL2, 2013). Though the players worked together, it was still difficult for the guide to successfully identify what the guesser ate or considered as her favorite food.

Information asymmetry relies on the inability to know what people's interests are, and how these interests generally affect their psyche, how thought processes go, and so forth. A person's worldview is culturally structured by assumptions and commitments underlining one's perception of reality (Ciccarelli, 2012). Thus, it can only be directly accessible to the person who owns such thoughts (Davidson, 1994).

On the *second level*, there is a disparity in terms of the educational attainments of people. More learned people might have a wider vocabulary because of constant practice and learning in schools. Some people have limited knowledge because of lack of formal education and/or consistent reading. These things hamper their ability to guess words more accurately as well. A freshman may not probably know concepts in higher physics; so, if a term like "quantum" comes up, he may not be able to guess it (Zhao and Yao, 2010).

A kid could not guess "lamok" (mosquito) in one *Pinoy Henyo* episode. This happened because his dad answered in the affirmative to the "animal" category, so he started to mention names of animals and not of insects. He proceeded to ask if the concept has two or four legs but this did not help much because he might have excluded insects as possible extensions of the category, which was the closest class the father could categorize mosquitoes in (Joshcon720, 2011).

On the *third level*, personal biases may change the views of a person towards a certain concept. People have different personalities, have grown accustomed to different things, honor different religions,

and believe in different ideas. It is partly for this reason that their respective intensions, extensions, and associations are different from each other. When asked if "bagoong" is made of fish or if it is in liquid form, a Nigerian husband answered with a loud "no". He probably had in mind "bagoong" made of shrimp fry, which is neither fish nor in liquid form (MrJoshcon23, 2010c).

We live differently, and subtle differences in our perspectives affect the way we play the game. What may be an extension for an intension of one may not apply to another. In another episode, a guesser from an underprivileged family correctly placed "bagoong" under the right category of food. She, however, confused the guesser when she said "yes" to the question, "Ulam ba 'to?" (Is this a type of dish?), since the guesser tended to focus on types of dish, of which "bagoong" was not at all a part (KrisAquinoGlobal2, 2013).

This illustrates a rather important quality of the intension and meanings we give to concepts. By nature, individuals possess varied perspectives and opinions from which certain intensions are created. In the long run, according to Zhao and Mao (2010), "the intension of a term can expand its 'horizon' from some core sense to including its generic consequences as well, as the knowledge acquisition goes along. The further this process continues, the richer the intension will be" (p. 65).

As the levels of semantic structure increase from the empirical to the evaluative, sharing the same usage of a term is possible, but the degree of difficulty to achieve the sharing increases. Ciccarelli (2012) affirmed the variation of perspective people come from saying, "In everyday life, people are surrounded by objects, events, and activities that are not as clearly defined as the concepts of science and mathematics" (p. 256).

On the *fourth level*, there are different classifications of concepts, and such classifications are being disputed. To name a few, there are concepts that are considered empirical, with physical representations

in the here and now. Some concepts are fictitious like dwarfs, leprechauns, and fairies are. Others are metaphysical, believed to have existence beyond the physical limits of this world. Among these three, people argue as to whether one concept necessarily belongs to a particular classification. A ghost will be thought of by some as under the fictitious classification, while others will argue that it is metaphysical. To an atheist, a divine being may be nothing but a fictitious concept, while a theist would argue for it's being metaphysical, while others would go as far as claiming that it is empirical. Controversies like these are almost always the hardest to resolve. If the guesser and the guide happen to have different classifications of concepts, chances are they will never agree on anything, and they are not likely to guess the mystery word (Zhao and Mao, 2010).

On the *fifth level*, there really are too many concepts in this world that it is impossible to guess something, randomly, like the words that are flashed in a guessing game. Some things are beyond an individual's imagination and cannot be determined under time pressure. The guesser's pool of information is limited in a way that, even though most of the words seem simple, some of the words being guessed may not be within the scope of the player's knowledge of the words.

There is usually a struggle for the guide to say either "yes", "no", or "maybe" to the questions being asked by the guesser. The guesser would often get derailed or set off track from zeroing in on the word whenever the guide hesitates or reluctantly responds to the question. No matter how simple certain concepts are, differences in the players' intensional and extensional knowledge can prove problematic in achieving the purpose of the game.

Pinoy Henyo expresses that people's different intensional and extensional definitions of concepts affect how they guess the word. It is grounded on how people have different mindsets and how they

think of concepts differently. The guesser might be asking questions that he thinks would lead to his understanding of an unknown word, but the guide may be thinking of another concept or may have another understanding of the word altogether.

Problem of Vagueness/Ambiguity

The mind orders what one perceives of the world using language. *Pinoy Henyo* could not have taken place without the aid of language. Language is the grand mediator, though an ambiguous one, lacking in clarity more often than not. As we experience in everyday life, words normally have a lot more to them than their mere dictionary definitions. More than their literal meanings, they have meanings that, in some cases, their intensions may not always universally hold as different contexts can change the way they normally mean to others (Frege, 1960). Sometimes, the person will have assigned his own definitions to the words he has in mind. There are times when these definitions are in sync with that of the other player, resulting in that person's being able to guess the word. However, there are also times when we can imagine the exact opposite, that is, the words operate differently among people. There, too, may be occasions when the users of a language are satisfied with using a concept with a tolerable amount of ambiguity or are using it without being aware that the term is already being used ambiguously (Gregg, p. 249). Gregg (2010) further held:

> If possible worlds are interesting fodder for speculation at all, it is because of the ambiguous cases. Are terms defined absolutely, because of some inherent essence of the thing described? Or are terms (and concepts, for that matter) defined relationally, in terms of their functional interactions with other things? (pp. 252-253).

Gregg's posing such questions is an attempt to show how terms cannot be unequivocally known all the time. The presence of ambiguity in almost every possible context provides a convenient opportunity for people to understand concepts differently and, therefore, create varying representations of these as well.

In an episode involving two students where "Turkey" was to be guessed, the guide had difficulty categorizing the concept either as a place or an animal. In instances when the guide said "yes" to the question "Is this an animal?", the guesser proceeded to identify names of animals. Realizing that he is not at all close to zeroing in on the word, he asked if it is a place, to which the guide said "yes", too. The guide then proceeded to identify names of places, complicating the whole guessing process (forevereatbulaga, 2013).

The broadness of the meaning of a concept will determine the capacity of an individual to provide the right clue or description for the word to be properly guessed. By citing the proper characteristics of the concept and focusing on its intension, the vagueness of the word is dissolved and its scope limited. The more descriptions are given and the more accurate they become, the easier it is to guess the correct word.

Some extensions are vague and require justification for them to be zeroed in on (Waismann, 1953). Take for example an episode where "tomato" was the mystery word. The wife asked if it is under the "food" category and the husband said "maybe". When asked if it is a type of fruit and if it is green, the husband said "no" (MrJoshcon23, 2010e). As all botanists would know, tomatoes are classified as fruits and they can be green too. Since tomatoes are usually tossed in salads, together with other vegetables, they are considered vegetables as well.

Ciccarelli (2012) held:

> In everyday life, people are surrounded by objects, events, and activities that are not as clearly defined as the concepts of science and mathematics. What is a vehicle? Cars and trucks leap immediately to mind, but what about a bobsled? How about a raft? Those last two objects aren't quite as easy to classify as vehicles immediately, but they fit some of the rules for "vehicle". There are concepts people form not as a result of the application of a strict set of rules, but rather as the result of their experiences with these concepts in the real world (p. 256).

Synonymy and other intensional definitions such as précising and stipulative could also cause ambiguity or vagueness. This is so because "the same sense [intension] has different expressions in different languages or even in the same language" (Frege, 1960, p. 58). When a guesser rephrases his questions using synonymy, a wide range of terms may be used, but none of them will mean exactly the same since synonyms do not have an absolute degree of sameness. If the word to be guessed was "Yao Ming", for example, and the guesser asked, "Is this person large?" when what he really meant was, "Is this player tall?" If the guide says "no" to the question, the guesser might automatically eliminate Yao Ming in his list of players, given of course that he maintains that "large" is not different from "tall". Even if "large" can be used as a synonym for "tall", "large" denotes a person that is not just tall but chubby as well. "Large" can in fact be used to describe a person who is not at all tall, but just fat.

Concepts that could mean different things to different people could also fall under the problem of vagueness and ambiguity. Concepts, which guessers choose to qualify as either 'fast", "big", "luxurious", "light", or "thin", are problematic because they can be vague and ambiguous. There is no exact formula to deal with ambiguity in the game as the problem itself may be caused by a variety of factors. Gregg (2010) held:

> In real life, as we generate and parse natural language, things are almost never that neat. Symbol evaluation in natural language is not an either/or kind of thing, as it can be in mathematics. For most of the terms we use in daily life, there are various degrees of specificity of resolution, and we resolve terms or inhibit their resolution to the appropriate degree, and in the appropriate order according to all kinds of rules of contexts as we string thoughts together in our thoughts or utterances (p. 276).

Conclusion

Playing guessing games like *Pinoy Henyo* is based on knowing the right questions to ask. These questions narrow down, without being

preemptively specific, and enable the introduction of other related concepts. A good question would eliminate extraneous concepts while defining the intension of the hidden word. A very familiar concept would seem like a haze, without the right definitions provided by right questions.

Intensional and extensional knowledge of concepts comes into play when thinking creatively to imagine common phrases in a different light. It is rather entertaining to watch people guess "forehead" given the clue, "a fat fleshy thing below the hair". Getting the right word in a guessing game requires a systematic approach in dealing with the intensional and extensional knowledge of a concept. Accurate intensional definition must be satisfied by all and only those things that are included in the extension of the term it defines. Simply put, our knowledge of definitions (intensions) and words associated with those definitions (extensions) helps us in narrowing down to the specific categories in order to guess the word.

If the intension of the concept is wrong or differently understood, one's extensional knowledge, however wide it maybe, would be useless. Similarly, one may find it difficult to guess the right word if he has little existing knowledge about a particular concept, even if the intension is correct.

Language continues to bring up as much ambiguity as it does get rid of it. Sensitivity to the idea that a common pool of knowledge and understanding is not shared among all individuals can create not only a more successful guessing game, but perhaps also better relations and more enriching conversations as well.

Perhaps, the more important purpose of intension and extension is not the identification of knowledge, but that of the facilitation and transfer of it. Humans are increasingly burdened with keeping up with more and more concepts every day. Whereas the first human beings just managed by pointing, the modern child now needs to daily absorb, learn, and re-learn concepts. Imagine a process of knowledge acquisition

wherein one is introduced to a high information world without any sort of system to help one file, sort, and call concepts at will. This knowledge doomsday of man can be avoided through the proper handling and understanding of the extension and intension of concepts.

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