

LANGUAGE USE IN A CEBUANO CONTEXT

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The analysis of verbal interaction usually focuses on the rational, logical information-conveying function of language. According to Corder (1973:39), scholars have given more time and attention to this aspect of language for the following reasons:

Historically the people most interested in language—philosophers, logicians, etc.—were preoccupied with the propositional aspect of language.

Recently two other aspects of language have begun to attract attention. The first is what Malinowski calls the phatic use of language. This refers to the verbal content of everyday ritualistic interaction like, "Good morning, Mr. So and So; it's a fine day today." These pleasantries are essential to keep the social relations in good repair. The classic example of the phatic use of language in English is the conversational opener, "How are you today, Mr. Y?" This is not a request for a detailed statement about the emotional or physical health of the person addressed. In fact the enquirer would be taken aback somewhat if his friend began to enumerate his various ailments and begin to wonder whether he was becoming a hypochondriac. These phrases and a host of others like them are simply devices for maintaining and improving relations among a particular group. Desmond Morris, in his *The Naked Ape*, likens them to mutual grooming practiced among apes and monkeys.

Besides the phatic aspect of language there is a growing body of literature on the connotative meaning of language. Every word arouses some emotional response in a native speaker because of the idea it communicates or the particular context with which he associates the word.

Some words expressing likes, dislikes, reactions and feelings have a positive flavor while others are negatively charged. The word "mother," for example, normally arouses a strong positive feeling in most people, whereas the word "woman" is neutral or possibly even negative. Personal background accounts for some of the emotional reaction though the main determining factor is cultural. The word "fox," for example, carries a negative connotations of slyness and deceitfulness in English but not in other languages.

Studies in this area have been carried out more by psychologists than by linguists. Osgood and his group (1957), with the psychologist's penchant for measurement, have attempted to draw up a semantic differential scale to measure the connotative meaning of various words.

Findings in this area have helped broaden the base of linguistic theory. The canons of acceptability or unacceptability of an utterance are no longer determined strictly on grammatical grounds. Lyons (1968: 140) points out that a sentence can be unacceptable for a host of reasons:

Russell's sentence—Quadruplicity drinks procrastination—is grammatically acceptable but meaningless. Questions of meaning may have little to do with the acceptability of some sentences. Fairy tales and science fiction provide many instances of sentences which would be unacceptable in "everyday" English. Again, some utterances though meaningful would be regarded by certain people and or in certain circumstances as "blasphemous" or "obscene".

Social acceptability can be as important a feature as grammatical acceptability.

Profanity in speech and the use of erotic language provide an insight into the social acceptability of words. We tend to react immediately to profanities, especially if they are directed at us, not because they are ungrammatical, but because they are highly charged with negative emotions, which arouse us to action almost as if someone had physically molested us.

Psychiatrists and others speculate that profanities draw much of their offensive power from being associated with taboo areas of a culture. Many of the four-letter words in English refer to anal and sexual functions. Until recently any mention of these was considered out of

place in polite society. Otto Jespersen in his *Growth and Structure of the English Language*, records many of the euphemisms used for what was considered improper parts of the body (1927:259):

Boston ladies were so prudish that they would speak of the limbs of a piano or of their own blenders instead of legs, or say waist instead of body.

The negative emotional charge associated with profanities has something of a battery-like quality. The more they are used the quicker the power runs down. Anyone who has worked in an atmosphere where obscenities and four-letter words are the order of the day, punctuating every sentence, knows that they soon lose their sharp edge and become what are called filler words. A stranger entering the group may initially be shocked at the coarseness of the language but soon he gets used to it. To retain their shocking offensive effect obscenities need to be changed regularly. Swift, the author of *Gulliver's Travel*, observed long ago that men change their oaths as often as they change their clothes.

The movie, *Lenny*, based on Goldman's life of *Lenny Bruce*, explores this theme in some detail. By the early 60's the publishing world was taking its first rather tentative steps at printing four-letter words beginning with printing the first letter followed by punctuation marks. At that time it was still taboo to utter the words in public. Here Lenny ran foul of the law. He considered it rather hypocritical of American society to be so prudish about four-letter words which were after all harmless when that society condoned a senseless war in Vietnam that was claiming thousands of lives. So nightly, in his entertainment act, Lenny hurled the word at his audience until at one point the strong arm of the law moved in and physically removed him from the stage. He was charged under the obscenity laws in California and later jailed in Chicago. Viewing the movie in Washington in the early 70's I was struck by the fact that the audience reaction to the film was mild. Then, of course, the intervening 10 years had brought a major change in public mores. Even the President of the United States used the words continually in the Oval Office. The phrase, "explicative deleted," occurred with boring monotony in the transcripts of the Watergate tapes.

If obscenities are supposed to hit a person with the force of a sledge hammer and arouse anger and violence, sweet words are aimed at

soothing a person and favourably dispose him to the speaker. Children soon become experts at assessing the nuances of various words and the likely reaction of grownups to them. The class child in Anglo-Saxon Society knows that if he says "Give me" or worse still, "Give me the sweets," he surely will not be given the sweets but, instead, may receive a verbal or non-verbal rebuke. If, on the other hand, he says, "Please, Mommy, may I have the sweets," his chances of success are enhanced. Apart from getting the sweets he may also be rewarded with a warm tender smile of approval from the parent. Most children, at some stage or another, ask why this should be. It is not a question of one request being clearer than the other. "Gi-me" is every bit as clear as "Please give me." Neither is it a question of grammatical acceptability. It boils down to the fact that one asking protocol is acceptable in the society and thus charged with a positive emotion while the other is inadmissible and censured.

Propagandists are keenly aware of the fact that words with the same denotative meaning may have different connotative meanings ranging from positive to negative. For example, members of one of the oldest profession are variously called prostitutes, call girls, whores and happy hookers. There is a world of a difference between the last two terms. Mariano Malvar Guzman in an article entitled, "Slaughterhouse," in the *Philippine Panorama* (March 21, 1976), describes an interesting case of semantic engineering. Guzman reports on the pro- and anti-abortion lobby in the U.S. Supreme Courts decision to allow a woman to terminate a pregnancy at any moment during the first three months of pregnancy. Those favouring the Court's decision speak of terminating pregnancy, and refer to embryo and fetus. Those agitating for repeal of the decision refer to the operation as abortion or often as murder and talk of the rights of an unborn baby. The contradictory results of two surveys in 1974 show the importance people place on the terminology involved. Gallup conducted a survey on the Court's decision allowing a woman to *terminate* a pregnancy during the first three months of conception. They reported that 47% of Americans favoured the decision while 43% were against it. The Committee for the Defense of Life contacted another survey company to duplicate the Gallup survey but the question this time was whether a woman should be allowed to procure

an abortion. This time only 41% favoured the Court's decision while 48.7% opposed it.

The importance of the connotative meaning of words is shown in the importance people attach to archaic forms of language in worship and in legal documents. Efforts to clarify the meanings and produce a simple straightforward text are often opposed. This is particularly evident when a new translation of the Bible or liturgical texts are introduced. *Time Magazine* (February 9, 1976), reporting on the introduction of a new translation of the Book of Common Prayer, said that while many liked it opposition to the change was mounting. A Nashville-based group claiming 100,000 members had banded together into a Society for the Preservation of the Book of Common Prayer. The correspondence column of the magazine (March 1) carried some interesting comments. Mark Stevens from Jackson, Miss., charged that to "replace the 1928 Book of Common Prayer would be similar to replacing the stained-glass windows of a medieval Church with aluminum framed transparent windows. More light comes in but at what cost." Brevity and clarity are not the only prime factors involved in determining the acceptability of language. According to Leanne Wade in the same issue of *Time*, "for many Episcopalians, the language of ritual is not a barrier to a meaningful relationship with God but a beautiful expressive key to that relationship. Brevity and blandness are not better. I want God as my guide, not my pal."

Positive Words in Cebuano

This brief introduction to the connotative meaning of words in English alerts us to the fact that English speakers are extremely sensitive to even slight variation of meaning. The connotative aspect of Cebuano is extremely important as we might expect in a culture which places a high premium on pleasant, non-conflictual personal interactions. Using words to create pleasant environment begins at an early stage as Nurge (1965:85) observes in her study in *A Village in Leyte*:

It is interesting to note that promises are defined for the child at a very early age as being merely words, which may not and, in fact, probably will not be observed. The child learns to interpret words as representing a pleasant verbal picture which seldom has any cor-

relate in reality. Most American middle class mothers are careful not to make promises to the child which will not be fulfilled.

Jocano (1969:47), in discussing techniques of social control adopted by parents, enumerates verbal bribery as a commonly used technique:

Bribery is used to make the child toe the line of adult behavioral requirements. For example, all don'ts are accompanied by a promise of reward, generally in terms of food. Sometimes the promise is kept. Oftentimes it is not. The effect on the child is that he mistrusts other people's words and actions.

This tendency to use language itself as a reward for good deeds and a punishment for wrongdoing sharpens the Filipino's sensitivity to harsh and offensive words. This sensitivity has deep roots in Philippine history. Juan Delgado (1754), an early Spanish missionary, states that the Filipino would prefer a hundred lashes to a single harsh word. The same idea is graphically expressed in Tagalog proverb, "*Ang sugat ng itak ay mas madadala kay sa sugat ng masamang pangungusap.*" (The wound from the knife is more bearable than the wound from the offensive tongue.) It is hardly surprising then that pleasant words or purr words loaded with a positive emotional charge are extremely common in Cebuano.

In line with Lynch's observation (1970) that smooth interpersonal relationships and *pakikisama* are extremely important elements in Philippine lowland culture, structuring key interactions and roles, I argue that *pakikisama* is the cultural storehouse injecting positive emotional charges into numerous lexical items. These items called "post positive" by Wolff (1965:153), because they appear after the first word of the predicate, enhance and cultivate *pakikisama*. There are numerous post-positives in Cebuano. Here I will confine my discussion to three commonly used expressions. *Ra gud* is used in the context of a command—it helps to soften it. *Ra ba* often appears with excuses and *tingali* is a gentle way of saying no. Actually it means "perhaps," but everyone takes the gentle hint that the answer is "no," so nobody loses face. Finally, *lain pay ato*, is an acceptable protocol for changing the subject of conversation.

Ra Gud—Protocol for Polite Ordering

Every society demands political and social machinery to legitimize the inequality whereby some people give orders and others are forced to obey. In a sensitive society like the Philippines ordering someone about can be quite offensive, particularly if done harshly. *Ra gud* transforms the order into a polite request. The one ordered does not feel he is being forced, rather, he is being gently invited to pursue a course of action which is made to appear advantageous to both.

In the first example, taken from Wolff's *Beginning Cebuano* (1965) Miss Wilby, an American visitor, is inspecting her future apartment. The landlady is anxious that Miss Wilby meets one of the servants, so she calls the young girl to come down (Wolff 1965:80):

<i>Cebuano</i>	<i>English</i>
Landlady: Dali <i>ra gud</i> kadiyut 'Day. Mao ni siya si Miss Wilbi, ang moabang sa usa sa mga kwarto.	Landlady: Come here, please Inday. Meet Miss Wilby, who is going to rent a room.

In another situation, Nida is visiting with her friend, Linda. It is snack-time, so Linda requests her maid to bring some Coke and biscuits for the visitors (Ibid.:267)

<i>Cebuano</i>	<i>English</i>
Linda: Lina, dad-i <i>ra gud</i> mi dirig Koka-kola.	Linda: Lina, please bring some Coke.

Mrs. Miller uses the same form to ask her maid to bring some water:

<i>Cebuano</i>	<i>English</i>
Lina, Lina dad-i <i>ra gud</i> ngarig tubig.	Lena, lena, please bring some water.

Filipinos are finely tuned to nuances involved here.

According to Fuch (1967:182) they are often more sensitive to

the emotions displayed in a group than to the content of the discussion:

A Filipino sitting in a group discussion may not be able to tell you the content of the discussion, but he will be able to interpret with sensitive detail the feelings of friendliness or hostility of every member of the group.

Snyder (1971:183) writes that this exquisite sensitivity underlies the way teachers direct students in grammar school. They avoid ordering as much as possible so that "when a teacher is behaving in his role as a teacher, he usually suggests rather than directly orders the pupils to do something."

Ra ba—Protocol for Politely Apologizing

Ra ba is used to politely apologize for failing in one's duty. It aims at defusing a potentially dangerous situation which arises when a person, for one reason or another, is unable to fulfill his obligations or finds that he must refuse a request.

In the following dialogue, Miss Wilby, who is planning to attend a fiesta in Dalaguete, asks her maid to prepare some fried chicken so that she might bring it as a gift. The maid apologizes for not fulfilling the command (Wolff, 1967:63):

	<i>Cebuano</i>		<i>English</i>
Maid:	Uy, gisugo man tuod ko nimo palutog manok no?	Maid:	Oh, you asked me to have some chicken cooked, didn't you?
	Wa <i>ra ba</i> ko kadakop ug manok. Wa ko kapriparar ug piniritong manok.		I wasn't able to catch a chicken so I couldn't prepare fried chicken.

The same form is used later on that evening during the Fiesta dance. Miss Wilby is approached by one of the local boys and asked to dance the tango. As she is unfamiliar with that particular dance, she politely refuses:

	<i>Cebuano</i>		<i>English</i>
Man:	Aa, makabayli ba ta nimo Mis ug tanggo?	Man:	May I dance a tango with you, Miss?
Miss Wilby:	Di <i>ra ba</i> ko kahibawo mosayaw aning tanggo da.	Miss Wilby:	I'm sorry, but I cannot dance a tango.

About a week later, Miss Wilby hails a jeepney, thinking it is bound for Carbon. The driver uses the postpositive *ra ba* to politely inform Miss Wilby that Carbon is not on his route.

	<i>Cebuano</i>		<i>English</i>
Miss Wilby:	Asa man ning dyipa Dong? Paingon sa Karbon?	Miss Wilby:	Where is this head- ing, Boy? To Carbon?
Driver:	Dili <i>ra ba</i> nis Karbon, Day.	Driver:	Sorry, lady, this is not for Carbon.

Protocol for Politely Refusing

In the Philippines an abrupt no to a request is unacceptable as it could cause the one asking to lose face. One should never close the door irreversibly to further dialogue. Still, it is necessary that ways be found to indicate to all concerned that someone wishes to say no. The postpositive *Tingali* (perhaps, maybe) is often used, as in the following dialogue, to indicate refusal. Miss Wilby and her future landlady are inspecting her future apartment. At the appropriate moment Miss Wilby raises the delicate question of rent. The landlady replies that the former tenant paid ₱40 pesos, implying that Miss Wilby would be expected to do likewise. Miss Wilby thinks that the price is exorbitant and begins to bargain. The landlady refuses to be drawn but, nevertheless, leaves the door open to further dialogue. (Wolff 1966:77):

<i>Cebuano</i>	<i>English</i>
Landlady: Aa, kadtong unang nag-abang nganhi, nagbayad silag kwarinta pesos matag bulan. Libre man gung ug tubig.	Landlady: Well, the previous tenant paid ₱40 pesos a month. You see, light and water are free.
Miss Wilby: Mahalmahal gyud nagdyutay. Di na ba ta makahangyo?	Miss Wilby: That's really expensive. Can't I bargain?
Landlady: Dili <i>tingali</i> , kay naa may suga ug tubig nga bayranan. Ug maayo sad kay may kaugalingon nga kasilyas.	Landlady: Probably not because the light and water must be paid for. It's a good room with its own toilet.

Protocol for Changing Conversational Topics

Yet, another area of potential conflict in a sensitive society is the delicate maneuver of changing the subject in conversation. When one remembers what Morga (1609:128-129), an early Spanish commentator on Filipino culture, said, "The Filipino today prefers a beating or a scolding to a harsh word, except from good friends or sworn enemies," one is careful not to interrupt a conversation with an abrupt "just a moment please," but employs a much more delicate and diplomatic strategy. The postpositive *usa pa diay* and *lain pay ato* are standard protocols for changing the topic of conversation with tact and grace, and thus avoiding the impression that one is grabbing the spotlight or unceremoniously stampeding the incumbent from the center of the stage. In the first dialogue, Noy Tibo and Miss Wilby are speaking about Noy Tibo's family. Noy Tibo, however, wishes to change the topic of conversation and asks Miss Wilby about life in the United States:

<i>Cebuano</i>	<i>English</i>
Noy Tibo: <i>Usa pa diay</i> , Americana ka?	Noy Tibo: Excuse me, you're an American, aren't you?

On another occasion, Miss Wilby, while serving at a book store in Cebu, is encouraging a young gentleman to buy a book. He, however, is much more interested in her, so he changes the topic of conversation (Wolff 1966:469):

<i>Cebuano</i>	<i>English</i>
Young man: <i>Lain pay ato</i> , Americana ka, Day?	Young man: By the way (lit., ours is different), are you an American, Miss?

Later on in that conversation, he uses the same strategy, this time to ask for a job in the store.

Young man: <i>Lain pay ato</i> . Wala ka ba magkinahanglag katabang sa imong tindahan?	Young man: By the way, do you need a helper in your store?
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It is difficult to explain the effect of these small lexical items on the totality of a discourse. An analogy from the world of music may help clarify the point. In a typical musical score, for example, Bach's, *Two Choreless for the Christmas Oratorio*, there are thousands of elements-notes woven together in harmony. One single discordant note or an unwarranted variation in the timing adversely affects the whole piece.

Cebuano and Tagalog Avoids Unflinching Words

If sweet words are encouraged in Philippine society unflinching words or postures are condemned. In this respect it differs very much from Western society and especially American society. In Europe and particularly in the U.S. one often hears people boasting that they had the courage to disagree with one another. On hearing such incidents the

audience is expected to applaud the informant for his courage in taking a stand or unmasking an impostor. Firmness even in business is also commended. Many business transactions end with "You can take it or leave it, I'm not going to move another inch." Though the move may be considered economically foolish, nevertheless, Westerners admire people who take a stand, stick to their principles, or are willing to stand up and be counted. In a survey of national and regional values in the United States, John Gillen (1955:107-113) reports that Americans value frankness and honesty in human relations. Filipinos eschew frankness and are willing to tell you what you would like to hear so long as peace, harmony and friendship prevails. Lawrence Fuch (1967:90), at one time the director of the Peace Corps operation in the Philippines, singled out this aspect of *pakikisama* as the one which annoyed Americans the most: "What was smooth interpersonal relations to the Filipino was plain dishonesty to the American." If resolute, uncompromising action is at times lauded in American culture it is roundly condemned in the Philippines. Here it is seen as predator-like activity, cornering an injured animal and resolutely moving in for the kill. This may be one way to annihilate an enemy, but it is extremely crude and unworthy of a human being, especially when so many other avenues are open! No matter how firm one wishes to be it is only good manners to allow an opponent a way out through which he can make a hurried, if not always graceful, exit.

Actually, sealing off all exits, confronting a person with his mistakes and causing him to lose face is considered a cardinal sin in the Philippines. In such a situation one can often expect swift and oftentimes violent retaliatory action. Jocano (1969:62) tells of a young man who was upbraided publicly by his father at a baptismal party and in a fit of temper stabbed his father to death:

Notwithstanding the consensus of opinion that the young man was at fault, some also blamed the father for what happened. He could have called the boy aside and talked to him instead of lashing at him right then and there, some people commented when the case was narrated to me.

In this context, Bienvenido Lumbera, a professor of Pilipino at the Ateneo de Manila, tells an interesting story of the linguistic difficulties

he encountered trying to compose a banner in Tagalog. During the late 60's and early 70's student demonstrations flared up around the world from Paris to Bangkok. The students in Manila were as active as their international peers demanding educational, political and societal reforms. Sweet talk, diplomacy and compromise were shunned as signs of moral weakness. The wave of nationalism and anti-American feeling swept the universities in Manila adding a new impetus to the demand to introduce Pilipino (the National Language) at all levels of schooling. Lumbera (1971:71) reports how one student came to him one afternoon to enlist his help in composing a banner in Pilipino. The crux of the problems was that they could not find a satisfactory equivalent in Pilipino for the simple uncompromizing English word 'demand'. Lumbera said:

"I was stumped. Together we searched our vocabularies, and consulted available Tagalog-English dictionaries. We came up with the expression *Hinihingi namin* (literally we are asking for it) and *hinihiling namin* (we are petitioning for it), trying out modifiers like *mapilit* (insistently) or *mariin* (emphatically). However, we found no expression having the same urgency and insistence as 'demand'."

The Role of Rumour and Gossip

This study has concentrated on the importance of *pakikisama* in face-to-face interactions in the Philippines. Evidence is drawn from surveys, dialogues and ethnographic data. As the case builds up there is always the danger of overkill, conveying that all is sweetness and roses in the Philippines and that here at last we have located Rousseau's natural man among a people who never raise their voices in anger and always seem to be flashing smiles. Needless to say this would be a false impression. If, as we have argued, Filipinos find it extremely difficult to express hostility towards each other directly, this does not stop them from venting their anger to a third party, as Leny did in the first dialogue. Fuch observes (1967:97):

To talk about others to their faces would be intolerable; to talk behind their backs becomes the national preoccupation in a highly personalized society where the principal recreation is talking.

Gossip is a perennial occupation of the men as they sit around in

the late afternoon massaging their fighting cocks. The same is true of the women as they gather at the pump or nearby stream to do their daily washing. The target of conversation may range from the local politician to the teacher, the priest, a government representative or some other faction in the barrio. The subject matter may involve some plans of the above with which the speaker disagrees to rather scurrilous details about his private life. Prior to Martial Law, the uncensored press and mass media kept the gossipmongers' arsenal well supplied with lurid details of the sexual aberrations of leading politicians.

Rumour is another method of social control prevalent in the Philippine Society. This operates both at the barrio and national level. On September 9 and 10, 1976, the *Daily Express*, a government controlled newspaper, ran an article on the Christian left which was full of all kinds of unsubstantiated allegations about the activities of the so-called Christian left. The purpose of the article was simply to discredit any opposition to the Government. On September 20 a group of Bishops, priests and sisters in a letter to the *Daily Express* answered the charges:

Beginning on Thursday, 9 September 1976, the Philippine Daily Express carried front-page a series of articles called—"The Christian Left: Just What Is It?" written by Alex D. Allan. The series is the most recent effort so far in the controlled press to defame and slander pastors, priests and sisters. The articles offer no evidence—the article on 10 September used the words, "reportedly," "allegedly," etc., thirteem times—in a string of misleading statements and subtle insinuations which purport to be an insight in the Christian Left.

How to Signal Annoyance

Apart from gossip and rumours there are also prepositives which convey anger and annoyance. Miss Wilby (Wolff 1966:286) is intent on catching a boat for Ormoc. When she and her companion arrive at the docks a host of young boys descend on her and offer to carry her bag. One boy in his eagerness to carry the bag and collect the tip (presumably a large one from an American lady) grabs the bag and begins to walk on ahead. Miss Wilby is quite taken aback by such tactics and addresses the boy rather sharply using the prepositive *gung*:

Cebuano

Ngano *gung* kuptan nimo
ang akong bag?

English

Hey, what do you think
you are doing, holding my bag?

In this article I argue that *pakikisama* is valued and sought after in the Philippines. I repeat that it would be misleading to give the impression that logic, reasonability, flashing smiles and pleasantries are the only features of the Filipino interpersonal scene. Like every other race of homo sapiens Filipinos can be cranky, cantankerous, rude, unreasonable, selfish, disruptive, violent and downright cruel. The following conversation (Wolff 1967:136-138), between Mrs. Quintana and her maid show how one can 'kick the dog' in Cebuano as unreasonably and as uncouthly as in English:

Cebuano

Quintana: Syaa! Ablihi kunu.
Syaa!

English

Quintana: Sya... open the
door!

Maid: Uh, maayong gabii
Mam. Dugay ka
man lagi niabot.

Maid: Good Evening,
Ma'am. You're late.

Quintana: Da. Kinsa bay dili
maatrasawu! Dugay
man kaayo kong
kasakayg dyip. Gi-
libut-libut mi sa
lungsod.

Quintana: Why the hell
wouldn't I be late.
I've been waiting
for a jeep all even-
ing. When it final-
ly came the guy
must have circled
the town ten times.

Maid: Bugnaw na ning
panihapon Mam.
Gusto ka nga ini-
tun ug usab?

Maid: Supper is already
cold, Ma'am. Would
you like me to re-
heat it.

Quintana: Aa. Initun gyud ni-
mo. Kahibawo ka
bitawng dili ko
gustong mokaon
ug bugnawng itlog
pinirito, di gusto
anang pagkaona.

Quintana: Of course. Be sure
to heat it. You
know I don't like
cold food ... espe-
cially fried eggs.

Maid: Oo. Di na bitaw ko
mosirbinimo'g bug-
nawng pagkaon
human ko kasab-i
niadtong usang ad-
law.

Maid: I'll never serve you
cold food again,
after being scolded
the other day.

Quintana: Na hala, dali-a ...
gutom baya kaayo
... Ikaw gyuy kan-
on nako ron.

Quintana: Now hurry up or
I'll eat you.

Maid: Ania na Mam.

Maid: Here it is now,
Ma'am.

Quintana: Hoy! Ginoo ko in-
tawon. Nangitom
mang ilawom unya
bugnaw pang iba-
baw.

Quintana: My God! The bot-
tom is black while
the top is still cold.

Maid: Bitaw Mam, pero
di man gud kalika-
yan. Ako'ng giinit
na, mao man gyuy
mahitabo sunog
man gyod.

Maid: I couldn't help it
Ma'am. It got
burned when I re-
heated it.

Quintana: Sus Maryusip! Wa ka ba kahibalo, In-day, nga dili mahimo ang piniritong itlog initog usab.

Quintana: God give me patience! Don't you know you cannot reheat fried eggs.

Maid: Mag-unsang man ako? Isirbi lang nakong bugnaw?

Maid: What shall I do? Shall I serve it cold?

Quintana: Da, ambut nimog unsaon nimo. Ilabay kana. Basta ayaw ko pakan-ag ingon ani kabugnaw.

Quintana: I don't care what you do. Throw it out eat it. Just never, never give me that stuff again.

Summary

In this paper the focus of analysis shifted from the informational aspect to the emotional dimension of language. I introduced the discussion with some general remarks on the how positive and negative emotions are attached to words with special reference to profanities and semantic engineering in English. I argued that cultural factors were fundamentally responsible for cathecting the words with emotional overtones.

In Cebuano, also, *pakikisama* charges many small lexical items with positive emotions. These words are used to maneuver through the mine field of potentially explosive situation—ordering, correcting, rebuking someone. The positive emotion associated with these words acts as an antidote by transforming orders into polite requests and softening the sharp edge of a rebuke. When they are liberally used in a discourse it sounds courteous, unthreatening, refined and relaxing—an embodiment of *pakikisama*. When they are absent the language sounds harsh, uncouth, disjunctive and offensive to all the canons of *pakikisama*.

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