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| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

Influence of Phonological Errors in English Academic Discourse of Cebuano-Visayan Learners

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| **ABSTRACT**

Oral communication always demands clarity in producing a language such as English in order to minimize or avoid communication failure. However, in the context of using English as a medium of communication among speakers who consider it as their second language, regardless of their acquired proficiency, they still commit phonological errors, either intended or otherwise. Ironically, the commission of errors in the expected phonology in English consequently facilitated the communication process instead of constraining it as contended. Thus, it is interesting to know what are these phonological errors in English committed by the learners and how the commission of these phonological errors influenced the academic discourse of native Cebuano-Visayans learners. Through a qualitative single-case study, data were gathered and analyzed following the thematic analytical framework of Miles and Huberman. Findings reveal that these phonological errors fall generally within segmental and suprasegmental areas along with specific identified phonemes and elements. Moreover, the commission of these phonological errors is associated with the alignment of proficiency disparity and its factors and assessment for improvement. Therefore, it is concluded that as English as second language speakers orally communicate, either intentionally or not, the phonological errors committed facilitated the exchange of concepts in the academic discourse as speakers begin to share an abstract concept of meanings that are associated with the produced phonological error.

1. Introduction

In oral communication, clarity in the use of language greatly influences the success of the communication process, while deviation from it results in communication failure, according to Upadyaya (2018). However, there are proficient speakers of English, characterized by their clear speaking, who still commit phonological errors, either intended or otherwise, when context becomes a variable, such as in the case of Cebuano-Visayan natives who are communicative with the English language. Ironically, the commission of errors in the expected phonology in English consequently facilitated the communication process instead of constraining it as contended. Thus, it is interesting to know how this phenomenon happened to exist without causing further issues in the exchange of concepts between native Cebuano-Visayans with the use of English as the second language.

2. Literature Review

Toci (2020) says that mispronunciation mainly happens because of the complexity of words. It could be argued that proficient English speakers intentionally commit phonological errors to simplify complex words and convey them more effectively. With this, there is a need to study why proficient English speakers still commit phonological errors and how these errors actually facilitate desirable communication. Communication among individuals and groups is necessary to create, sustain, and improve social

groups. The easiest and most practical way of exchanging meaning is through spoken language. In turn, this makes the spoken language of paramount importance in mediating communication among individuals, contributing to literacy attainment, and enabling one to navigate relationships for various purposes (Miller et al., 2016). As a critical element, pronouncing words correctly avoids misunderstanding while facilitating communicative competence. The English linguistic system is very unique, making it very difficult for non-native speakers to properly pronounce (Ihsan, 2015). However, producing sounds, words, and utterances properly does not guarantee proficiency in a language, nor can it assess the overall level of the user of that particular language (Prodanovska-Poposka, 2017).

Ape (2014) argues that communicating through spoken language requires accuracy in articulation for it to be successful. He also states that proper articulation of phonemes should be observed for the audience to derive meaning. However, that is not always the case. A proficient English speaker is holistically good at all aspects of language use. However, it does not necessitate achieving native-speakerism. Phonological errors are not strictly viewed as mistakes but as a sign of progress in second language acquisition. It is actually better for language learners to commit errors to know the real scenario of learning (Sennel, 2006; as cited by Babiano et al., 2015). The Interlanguage Theory considers these errors correct (Firth, 1973; as cited by Al-Kresheh, 2015). In reality, second language speakers can be considered proficient as long as the individuals involved operate and maintain an effective level of mutual intelligibility (Keys, 2001).

The widespread contact of English with Philippine languages resulted in the nativization of English in the Philippines, giving birth to Philippine English (Martin, 2020). Berowa & Regala-Flores (2020) view the characteristics of Philippine English, influenced by local languages, as manifestations of the interlanguage of the speakers. The works of Regala-Flores (2014) and Porras-Piorac (2019) have attempted to tabulate its phonological uniqueness by examining the oral production in English of Visayan speakers. However, Berowa & Regala-Flores (2020) argue that examining subjects from only one linguistic background cannot exactly encompass and represent the linguistic diversity of the Philippines. Hence, the phonological production used in this study cannot be referred to as Philippine English. However, this paper is still grounded on the idea that the English variety spoken by Cebuano-Visayan speakers is still a manifestation of interlanguage performance.

In language learning, Cebuano-Visayan speakers are not equally privileged to receive the same language instruction, exposure, and opportunity to use the English language, which results in varied proficiency among its users. Furthermore, their native tongue may interfere with pronunciation learning, particularly in articulating phonemes (Owhoeli, 2011; as cited by Arcilla et al., 2017). This could explain whether the more proficient one is required to acknowledge the context of the communication and act on it to achieve mutual intelligibility and desirable communication.

The researchers witnessed the aforementioned scenario firsthand during a Cebuano-Visayan-to-Cebuano-Visayan conversation. The communication only became successful when the speaker uttered the nativized pronunciation after realizing that the hearer did not understand the standard pronunciation. It is argued that the receiver desired to hear the nativized pronunciation, a manifestation of interlanguage, over the standard pronunciation. This paper refers to that desire of the receiver as interlanguage desirability. Hence, this paper argues that proficient English speakers intentionally commit phonological errors to match with the other party involved to achieve mutual intelligibility.

3. Methodology
In order to gather the necessary data to answer the research questions raised for the study, an appropriate method is adopted along with the specific design, environment, instrument and identified participants. This is critical in making sure that only relevant data will be received to understand further the phenomenon at hand.

3.1 Design
This study employed a qualitative single-case study research design to determine the influence of phonological errors in the English academic discourse of Cebuano-Visayan learners. It is notable that in every case study, the important elements involved the case and its boundaries. Hence, in this particular study, the case includes the phonological errors in using the English language and the concepts of how these errors facilitate positive communication. All other elements outside these two mentioned are technically excluded from the study. However, they are considered significant in deducing the data.

3.2 Environment
The study was conducted at the Cebu Technological University-Argao Campus. It is an institution that provides quality education at the tertiary level. It is located at Ed Kintanar St. in Lamacan, Argao, Cebu, Philippines. Notably, this academic institution caters for students mainly from the island Province of Cebu, Philippines, who are well-versed both in Cebuano as their native language and English as their second language.

3.3 Participants

The participants of the study are thirty-five third year students of the program Bachelor of Arts in the English Language from Cebu Technological University-Argao Campus. The participants are identified using purposive sampling following the established criteria, which include : (a) exposed to the use of the English language in academic discourse for at least two years, (b) exhibit proficiency in the use of the English language, (c) a native of Cebu, and (d) can communicate the Cebuano-Visayan language.

3.4 Instruments

The primary instrument used in the study is the observation guide. This is a list of criteria to guide the researchers in looking for the phonological errors done by the study participants. The secondary instrument is the interview guide. It consisted of open-ended questions that were grouped into opening, content and closing type. The interview guide helped the researchers in allowing the participants to express their thoughts concerning how the commission of these phonological errors influenced their communication process. Both instruments were reviewed and validated by qualitative research experts using the tool of Caffrey (2007).

3.5 Data Gathering Procedures

The study commenced by seeking approval from authorities to conduct and gather the data. Upon approval, the identified participants were met for an orientation. This was the time for them to know their roles in the study and the rights that they have as individuals. Once everything became clear, the actual gathering of data started through an audio-video recording of their English class. After four sessions, the audio-video was transcribed with the aid of the experts and the phonological errors were identified by reviewing the audio-video recording while being guided by the transcription.

When all the phonological errors committed were already identified, the learners who were particularly and directly involved in the commission of these phonological errors were interviewed to understand how these errors facilitate their communication. The interview was transcribed, and codes were determined and guided by the concept of the question being raised.

3.5 Data Analysis

The analysis of data was done through the Thematic Analytical Framework of Miles and Huberman (1994). According to Ramos and Baldespiñosa (2021), this analytical framework is composed of three stages which are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Hence, to find out the phonological errors using this analytical framework, the raw data from the audio-video recordings, careful codification was done. Moreover, as these coded errors were deduced, they were eventually displayed in accordance with their group. The same process was done for the interview data. Finally, the conclusion drawing and verification happened when the data reached saturation, and upon a systematic review of the data, everything reached common ground.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the phonological errors in English by the study participants as they normally engaged themselves in their academic discussions. Phonological errors are a type of communication error caused by frequent interference caused by differences in the phonological system contained in the L1 of a foreign language (Habibi et al., 2019). The error of the utterance consists of three kinds, namely segmental error, combination error, and suprasegmental error. Segmental errors include consonants and vowels; combination errors include cluster consonants; and suprasegmental errors include rhythm, stress, and intonation (Purnama et al., 2019). This study focuses on the two kinds of phonological errors committed by the students upon utterance, which are segmental error and suprasegmental error.

4.1 Phonological Errors

Generally, the phonological errors are grouped as segmental and suprasegmental. Consequently, each of the themes is with corresponding sub-themes. This can be observed in Table 1.

Table 1
Phonological Errors of Cebuano-Visayan Students

Themes	Sub-themes	Phonemes	Words	Erroneous Utterance	Accurate Utterance
Segmental	vowels	/i/ and /ɪ/ /e/ or /ɛ/	▪ conditions ▪ enthusiastic ▪ miss ▪ forbidden ▪ optimistic	▪ [kənˈdiʃənz] ▪ [ɪnˌθuʃˈæstɪk], ▪ [mis] ▪ [ˈfɔrbɛdən] ▪ [ɑptəˈmɛstɪk]	▪ [kənˈdɪʃənz] ▪ [ɪnˌθuziˈæstɪk] ▪ [mɪs] ▪ [ˈfɔrbɪdən] or [fərrˈbɪdən] ▪ [ˌɑptəˈmɪstɪk]
		/ʊ/ and /u/	▪ woman ▪ holy ▪ coincide	▪ [ˈwumən] ▪ [ˈhɔli] ▪ [kɔɪnˈsaɪd]	▪ [ˈwʊmən] ▪ [ˈhoʊli] ▪ [koʊɪnˈsaɪd]
		/æ/ and /a/	▪ enthusiastic	▪ [ɪnˌθuʃastɪk]	▪ [ɪnˌθuziˈæstɪk]
		schwa /ʌ/ and /ə/	▪ advantage ▪ attract ▪ circumstances ▪ distract ▪ that ▪ father	▪ [ʌdˈvʌntɪdʒ] ▪ [əˈtrʌk] ▪ [ˈsɜrkɔmˌstʌnsəs] ▪ [dɪˈstrʌk] ▪ [dʌt] ▪ [ˈfʌdər]	▪ [ædˈvæntɪdʒ] ▪ [əˈtrækt] ▪ [ˈsɜrkəmˌstænsəz] ▪ [dɪˈstrækt] ▪ [ðæt] ▪ [ˈfaðər]
	consonants	/z/	▪ circumstances ▪ conditions ▪ sins ▪ symbolizes ▪ desires ▪ imperialism ▪ choose ▪ lose	▪ [ˈsɜrkɔmˌstʌnsəs] ▪ [kənˈdiʃəns] ▪ [sins] ▪ [ˈsɪmbɔˌlaɪsɪs] ▪ [dɪˈsaɪrs] ▪ [ɪmˈpɜriəˌlɪsəm] ▪ [tʃus] ▪ [lus]	▪ [ˈsɜrkəmˌstænsəz] ▪ [kənˈdɪʃənz] ▪ [sɪnz] ▪ [ˈsɪmbəˌlaɪzɪz] ▪ [dɪˈzaɪərz] ▪ [ɪmˈpɪriəˌlɪzəm] ▪ [tʃuz] ▪ [luz]
		/t/	▪ attract ▪ distract	▪ [əˈtrʌk] ▪ [dɪˈstrʌk]	▪ [əˈtrækt] ▪ dɪˈstrækt]
Suprasegmental	stress		▪ father ▪ getting ▪ person ▪ characters ▪ influence ▪ wherein ▪ imperialism ▪ heritage ▪ specifically ▪ passionate ▪ secret ▪ relationship ▪ symbolizes ▪ courage	▪ faˈther ▪ geˈtting ▪ perˈson ▪ chaˈracters ▪ influˈence ▪ whereˈin ▪ imperiaˈlism ▪ heriˈtage ▪ speciˈfically ▪ passioˈnate ▪ seˈcret ▪ relationˈship ▪ symboˈlizes ▪ couˈrage	▪ ˈfather ▪ ˈgetting ▪ ˈperson ▪ ˈcharacters ▪ ˈinfluence ▪ wheˈrein ▪ imˈperiaˌlism ▪ ˈheritage ▪ speˈcifically ▪ ˈpassionate ▪ ˈsecret ▪ reˈlationˌship ▪ ˈsymboˌlizes ▪ ˈcourage

In Table 1, the segmental features are described based on the transcription obtained from the recorded audio-video lecture. The forty-four letters of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) are used as a reference in the discussion to identify the phonological error committed. Since it is important to avoid prejudging the data, all possible features are considered.

The vowels in the present study are described according to the inventory of phonemes or sound segments that contrast with each other. In this case, differences are based on vowel length (long or short) or tenseness (tense or lax). English long vowels are usually regarded as tense, while short vowels are lax (San & MacLagan, 2009). Long vowels are associated with the duration of the pronunciation, which takes slightly longer to utter than short vowels.

/i/ and /ɪ/
The data show that speakers realized the long vowel /i/ inconsistently, producing /ɪ/ or /e/ vowels in some cases. In the transcription of the video recorded lecture, participants tend to keep the tenseness of /i/ in words like between [btwin]; dream

[drim]; feel [fil]; and meek [mik]. However, speakers seemed to use the long vowel /i/, instead of its short /ɪ/ counterpart in words like conditions, enthusiastic, and miss, which were heard as [kənˈdiʃənz], [ɪnˌθuziˈæstik], and [mis] in their spontaneous responses. Short /ɪ/ has also had instances when it was produced as /e/ or /ɛ/ in words like forbidden [ˈfɔrbɛdən] and optimistic [ɑptəˈmɛstɪk]. Hence, there are phonological errors committed in the context of the recorded discussion. However, it is worth noting that this inconsistent realization of the long vowel /i/ and short vowel /ɪ/ is a trend caused by the speakers' mother tongue (Kirkpatrick, 2010). Thus, the inconsistency of the oral production of the vowel /i/ and short vowel /ɪ/ realization, with frequent shifts to other vowels such as /e/ or /ɛ/, is a result of the influence of the L1.

/ʊ/ and /u/

With reference to the production of /ʊ/, it was generally preserved as a high-back lax vowel in words like a woman [ˈwʊmən], holy [ˈhoʊli], and coincide [koʊɪnˈsaɪd]. It should be noted that the high-back tense vowel /u/ was used in previous studies instead of the lax /ʊ/ (Tayao, 2008; Jubilado, 2016). On the contrary, this research illustrates the speakers' preservation of /ʊ/, although there were instances in which it was realized as tense /u/ or open /ɔ/. The realization of the vowel /ʊ/, which has become a global trend (Hung, 2002), may be due to the familiarity of the words used and to the fact that short lax vowels are easier to realize since less effort is involved in the production. Like in the word coincide, it should be produced as [koʊɪnˈsaɪd], but the respondent pronounced it as [koɪnˈsaɪd], which resulted in the deletion of the vowel production of /ʊ/.

/æ/ and /a/

In this study, one of the most inconsistently distributed vowels is the low-front unrounded /æ/, which was previously realized as a low-central unrounded /a/, as in the word enthusiastic [ɪnˌθuziˈæstɪk]. This phonological situation was also observed in previous studies of PE phonology (Berowa & Regala-Flores, 2020). In their study, a number of pairs tend to realize the low-front unrounded /æ/ as a central unrounded /a/ in words like land, map, and tank that were heard as [land], [map] and [taŋk]. This use of /a/ for /æ/ has been identified as a phenomenon in PE phonology and is found in the majority of new English varieties. Tayao (2004) thinks that in PE phonology, the /æ/ is in free variation with /a/ primarily because of its absence from local vernaculars. Thus, the nonexistence of the vowel /æ/ in the Philippine languages is a possible factor in realizing it as a more central-low vowel /a/. Additionally, it is believed that the use of /a/ for /æ/ is largely a function of the spelling-pronunciation phenomenon in the Philippines, where /æ/ is geographically represented, which is consistent with the results of our study.

Schwa /ʌ/ and /ə/

In relation to central vowels, the stressed schwa /ʌ/ emerged in the spontaneous responses obtained from the participants, although it was frequently realized as a full vowel /a/. Its occurrence was mostly found in words produced from the recorded video discussion, such as advantage [ædˈvæntɪdʒ], attract [əˈtrækt], circumstances [ˈsɜrkəmˌstænsəz], distract [dɪˈstrækt], father [ˈfɑðər] and that [ðæt]. The frequency of occurrence, on the other hand, revealed that it was typically realized as a full vowel /a/, particularly in words with letters /ae/ such as advantage [ʌdˈvʌntɪdʒ], attract [əˈtrʌkt], circumstances [ˈsɜrkəmˌstʌnsəz], distract [dɪˈstrʌkt], and that as [dʌt], and /a/ such as father that was heard as [fʌðər]. Other instances also include when an unaccented schwa /ə/ was replaced by an accented schwa, such as woman, which was heard as [wumʌn]. The inconsistent realization of the schwa /ʌ/ sound and speakers' preference for full vowels /a/ is likely due to the speaker's mother tongue, as Philippine languages do not have stressed schwa /ʌ/ except for the Waray language (Berowa & Regala Flores, 2020), as well as the spelling pronunciation phenomenon that persists in Philippine society (Jubilado, 2016). Moreover, it was unexpected to discover a number of attempts made by speakers to produce the unstressed/unaccented /ə/ schwa. Although it was used interchangeably with other full vowel sounds, such as producing the long, tense back vowel or inverted /ɔ/ like words symbolizes [ˈsɪmbɔlaɪzɪz], consider [kɔnsɪdər], courage [kɔreɪdʒ] and circumstances ˈ[sɜrkɔmˌstænsəz] which were produce by the students in the recorded video discussion.

On the other hand, generally, the consonant features of the speakers in this study are almost similar to the results found in the previous studies of PE phonology and in the other varieties of English, except for very few speech forms that were distinctly realized.

4.2 Fricatives

One of the most important discoveries in this study is that, for the overwhelming majority, there is no evidence of a voiced and voiceless contrast. While inner circle Englishes have nine (f, v, s, z, h, ʃ, ʒ, Ɵ, ð) fricatives, the participants in this study reflected only six: /z/, /ð/, /sh/,/ʒ/, /s/ and /ʃ/. The presence of voiceless fricatives as PE features, according to the researchers, demonstrates the influence of Philippine languages in which fricatives are not voiced (Tayao, 2004). As regards voiced fricatives, the consonantal /z/ did not emerge in words like circumstances [ˈsɜrkəmˌstænsəz], conditions [kənˈdiʃənz], sins [sɪnz], symbolizes [ˈsɪmbəˌlaɪzɪz], desires [dɪˈzaɪərz], imperialism [ɪmˈpɪriəˌlɪzəm], choose [tʃuz] and lose [luz]. It seems that the minimal attempts to produce such a

sound were mainly found in words where the voiced /z/ is explicitly represented. With this, it is worth reiterating the observation that Filipino English speakers largely rely on 'spelling pronunciation.'

However, there were also instances when it was produced even when the target sound was not represented by /z/, just like thousand [Θaʊzənd] and villagers [vɪlɪdʒɚs], among others. But the idea of the spelling pronunciation phenomenon was strengthened when all speakers produced /s/ instead of /z/ at the nucleus and coda positions in words like circumstances, symbolizes, imperialism, choose, sins, desires, and conditions that were heard as circumstances [ˈsɜrkəmˌstænsəs] symbolizes [ˈsɪmbəˌlaɪsɪs], lose [lus], imperialism [ɪmˈpɪriəˌlɪsəm], choose [tʃus], sins [sɪns], desires [dɪˈsaɪərs], and conditions [kənˈdɪʃəns]. Such an observation seems to suggest that the English sound production of Filipinos is primarily based on how it is graphically represented. Still, on the consonantal fricatives, there were few attempts to recreate the palatal-alveolar fricative /ʒ/ sound that almost all speakers produced in the word decision [dɪsɪʃən] using the voiceless /ʃ/.

This is not a problem, according to Lewis & Deterding (2018), since it is not necessary to differentiate /ʒ/ and /ʃ/ as they have low functional loads that would still be understood. During the transcription of the data, it was observed that not all speakers were able to produce a word that contained such an alveolar fricative in the spontaneous tasks. Thus, the researcher considered this sound to have zero occurrences in spontaneous verbal speech, which further validates the argument of Deterding (2010) that it is the least common consonant sound in English and only occurs in a few basic words. This study maintains the inconsistent distribution of the voiced-interdental fricative /ð/ because speakers frequently produce it as a dental plosive /d/. The speech samples illustrated those words like the [ðʌ], those [ðoʊz], that [ðæt], they [ðeɪ], other [ʌðər], father [faðər] and with [wɪð] were produced by some speakers as [dʌ], [doʊz], [dʌt], [deɪ], [ʌdər], [fʌdər] and [wɪd]. For most speakers, the dental /d/ might have served as an automatic, reflex manner of pronouncing the /ð/ sound since it is readily available in the sound inventory of the participants' L1, in addition to the fact that they are homorganic consonants.

4.3 Stops
According to the researchers' findings, the consonant /t/ is dropped in the words attract (əˈtrækt) and distract (dɪˈstrækt). Participants frequently drop /t/ after the consonant /k/. This is in consonance with the analysis of PE Philippine English phonology that claims that when the consonantal stops /p/, /b/, /d/, /t/, /k/, and /g/ were narrowly transcribed, errors occurred in the consonantal stop /t/. During stop consonant perception, speakers are also known to extract and adapt to the context, such as speaker characteristics (Plauche, 2001).

4.4 Suprasegmental
The suprasegmental feature in the stress of the spoken English words from the video-recorded discussion is one of the study's findings. There are words with "distinctive" stress placements, such as faˈther, geˈtting, perˈson, chaˈracters, influˈence, whereˈin, imperiaˈlism, heriˈtage, speciˈfically, passioˈnate, seˈcret, relationˈship, symboˈlizes, and couˈrage. The participants tend to interchange the stress-timed rhythm of the words (Tayao, 2008). According to Liu (2017), stress performs different functions in different types of languages. A word usually has one syllable that stands out more than the others. It is pronounced with more prominence so that it stands out acoustically and perceptually. The word results seem to indicate generally that the stress pattern differs from its standard counterpart, as seen especially in the cases where it falls to three- and four-syllable words and reveals a slight change for the primary stress (Eden, 2014).

4.5 Influence of Phonological Errors in the Academic Discourse
A translated transcript of the focus group discussion was used during thematic coding using NVivo, a qualitative data software. It was then manually rechecked to make sure all codes were identified. Afterwards, themes and subthemes were developed. Coded excerpts from the transcript were used in this part to constitute the developed themes. Pseudonyms were used in presenting the excerpts to preserve the anonymity of the participants.

Themes	Categories
Aligning proficiency disparity and its factors	▪ English speakers' proficiency ▪ Cebuano-Visayan internalized phonology ▪ Learning by imitating
Assessment for improvement	▪ One-way communication ▪ Two-way communication

4.6 Aligning proficiency disparity and its factors

In English, which is orally produced by Cebuano-Visayan, it is reasonable to point out the disparity in proficiency brought about by its nature as an L2. The sounds of English are not uniform and phonetic as so many languages have influenced it, which is why the disparity in the speaking proficiency of the speaker occurs. Hence, the primary emphasis is on one's ability to understand and communicate successfully in the language (Hikamah et al., 2021). Despite the disparities, these phonological errors bridge the gap between speakers to achieve mutual intelligibility.

One of its subthemes is the proficiency of English speakers. Language proficiency includes both receptive and expressive skills. Language skills can be seen in syntax, vocabulary, semantics, and other domains. In line with this, producing sounds, words, and utterances properly does not guarantee proficiency in a language. With this, it is reiterated that the proficiency referred to in this subtheme is the oral production of the language.

The main goal of a communication process is to get a message across through multiple mediums. We first must establish a mutual understanding for it to succeed. We need to consider the form of the message, how it was delivered, and its purpose. The essence of a language is to serve as a medium for communication. Linguistic skills are needed to maximize its function. We call this language proficiency. The term "language proficiency" describes one's ability to use a specific language. According to Manuel (2022), proficiency is regarded as a continuum, which means proficiency can be considered as a scale of related language skills that is slightly and continuously changing at each level. Specifically, "proficiency" is referred to as the competence of a speaker with his oral performance of a language in this paper.

The focus group discussion has presented implications on why phonological errors occur relative to proficiency. In a native-to-non-native exchange, it was implied that when a foreigner whose L1 is English speaks to a non-native English speaker and his native pronunciation is not understood; he should try speaking it with a local accent, implying that he should adhere to the local norm, which is an error. Next, on a non-native-to-non-native exchange, where one is more proficient than the other, a participant implied that the communication exchange would fail if the more proficient one did not consider the proficiency of the other. He insinuated that if one only understands the local pronunciation, which is considered an error, and that to achieve mutual intelligibility, the proficient one should commit those errors. Moreover, according to one participant, one's level of proficiency is directly related to one's educational attainment. He claims that the more educated one is, the more proficient he is.

With these implications, it is inferred that proficient English speakers rely on language transfer in dealing with the IL performance of English speakers. Language transfer refers to a bilingual or multilingual speaker's use of linguistic elements from one language to another. This is to accommodate the disparity of proficiency between speakers to achieve mutual intelligibility and, in turn, a successful communication exchange. The transfer is defined in language learning as "the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired" (Arcilla Jr., 2017). A transfer is a psychological term that is used to describe a situation where one learned event influences the learning of a subsequently learned event.

The second subtheme is the internalized phonology of Cebuano-Visayan. The success of spoken language communication is heavily dependent on the phonological performance of its speakers. However, as bilinguals, if not multilingual, Cebuano-Visayans speak English with more than one internalized phonology, resulting in nativized oral production.

The phonology of a language is one of the factors contributing to its identity. Its uniqueness sets it apart from others. The similarity in sound inventory is observed between languages belonging to the same language group. With this, being native-like in producing the sounds of those languages with their respective speakers is effortless. It is unheard of to have difficulty achieving native-like proficiency in that language. But it is a different thing when it comes to the phonology of languages belonging to entirely different groups. A person's knowledge of the sound system of a language can affect that person's perception and production of speech sounds in another language (Magno, 2017).

Cebuano-Visayan is an Austronesian language spoken in the southern Philippines. It is spoken by the Visayan ethnolinguistic groups that are indigenous to Northern Mindanao, the Zamboanga Peninsula, the islands of Cebu, Bohol, and Siquijor, as well as the eastern and western halves of Negros and Leyte. On the other hand, as an Indo-European language, English is a member of the West Germanic family of languages originating in Europe. The groups of the two languages originated at opposite ends of the globe. It can easily be inferred that their differences in phonology are massive. One participant pointed out that the difference between the two is the absence of English vowel and consonant sounds in Cebuano-Visayan. In English, there are 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds, while Cebuano-Visayan has only 5 vowel sounds and 16 consonant sounds.

The absence of these sounds is the main contributing factor in a Cebuano-Visayan speaker's committing phonological errors. Instead of correctly producing a phoneme of the target language, the speaker makes do with the closest phoneme in her L1. Whether speaking in English entirely, code-mixing or code-switching, or speaking Cebuano-Visayan with English loan words, nativization of English will oftentimes, if not always, be evident among Cebuano-Visayan speakers. However, it is important to note that this factor is only one of many. When a Cebuano-Visayan makes a mistake, a variety of factors come into play.

The third subtheme is learning by imitating. From toddlers to adult L2 learners, imitating the oral production of others in a language boosts one's language performance. In this subtheme, the concept of imitative learning surfaced among the codes.

This subtheme is grounded in imitative learning. Imitative learning refers to individuals, especially children, imitating others around them. In language learning, it is necessary to exercise the theoretically learned fundamentals of a language to showcase progress, which means exercising the utterances you hear. Carney (2011) stated that imitation is a kind of knowing. The concept of imitation implies that when one truly imitates a language, one is not simply repeating a phrase or linguistic convention but rather understanding why such a phrase or linguistic convention is used. When Cebuano-Visayans learn English, they imitate others as to how they speak it, with no regard for whether it is correct or not. Individuals pay attention to how the group pronounces English words. In this case, imitation enables the spread of phonological errors.

A participant stated that one's learning environment is a factor in committing phonological errors. He implied that when one is commonly exposed to phonological errors, he will eventually adopt them and pass them on to others. He also added that this is the reason for his errors; since he is unconscious of his utterances, he just freely adopts the manner of speaking of those around him. This supports the idea of phonological errors being normalized within a linguistic group. Research in educational sciences has shown that there are learning differences among students, and one of the main reasons for this is the learning environment (Ozerem, 2015). Another participant added to this matter. When phonologically incorrect words are the norm in the group, contact with their proper utterance will eventually cause a misunderstanding.

One participant stated that his learning environment includes the way others speak. And because he didn't care about his pronunciation, he picked it up and eventually made it his own habit. He is only after the functionality of a language, regardless of whether it is proper or not. Moreover, he added that since his knowledge of proper pronunciation is limited, he no longer attempts to find out whether it is correct. Unfortunately, such knowledge is usually only available during formal schooling.

4.7 Assessment for improvement
To achieve proficiency, it is necessary to move from theoretical knowledge and put it into practice. In language learning, constant practice and feedback are the main factors in shaping the interlanguage of a speaker into the rules of the target language. The assessment of the language's oral production yields appropriate feedback in this study. In theme 2, different types of assessments emerged across several forms of communication.

Two subthemes were also identified, namely, "one-way communication" and "two-way communication." In two-way communication, it is important to receive feedback to determine whether the delivery of a message was successful. On the other hand, self-awareness for self-assessment is the pivotal character of a speaker while engaging in one-way communication. Assessments are critical in dealing with phonological errors.

Communication is mainly categorized into two types: one-way and two-way communication. One-way communication flows from a sender to a receiver, but nothing goes back in return. Information is shared with others without a response. Bhasin (2021) stated that it only requires the sender to send the message to the receiver without hoping for a response. He also added that it is nearly impossible to maintain accuracy without the feedback system. One of the participants stated that during the conversation, he practices self-assessment, during which he utilizes speech repair within himself. He also added that it trained him to improve his pronunciation and not make mistakes the next time. Another participant also agreed with his statement, to which he added that it also helped develop his oral production. In addition, a participant also mentioned that the more knowledgeable you are about phonology, the more conscious and aware you are of your mistakes. Furthermore, one of the participants deviated and raised an issue related to self-assessment. She verbalized that self-evaluation could cause self-depreciation. She explains that his assumptions about Standard English cause her to question herself and develop self-judgment.

On the other hand, two-way communication involves information being shared back and forth. Feedback is essential to the conversation. Both parties can exert power. One of the participants mentioned that being corrected in the middle of the conversation helped clarify the message or the meaning. He also added that immediate feedback helps in assessing the users of L2. This supports the idea of language repair, specifically other-repaired (Nordquist, 2019). Furthermore, another idea based on

behavior change communication resurfaced, in which a participant stated that even though there is no correction directed at the receiver, the receiver's changed behavior clearly indicates that he made mistakes.

It is inferred that speakers commit language repair because of recurrent problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding (Schegloff, 2007). Language repair in two-way communication is usually caused by the other party being repaired (Nordquist 2019). According to Rabab'ah (2013), during repair, L2 speakers encounter problems due to their lack of linguistic resources; they modify their message with the intention of sending a comprehensible message and achieving their communicative goal. However, language repair in one-way communication is dependent on the theoretical knowledge of the speaker himself. Additionally, once conscious awareness of the commission of phonological errors is achieved, Krashen's Monitor Model is applied to improving the oral production of the language.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the reality of phonological errors in an authentic conversation demonstrates a reliable subjective understanding. First, phonological errors accommodate a disparity of proficiency between speakers to achieve mutual intelligibility. Second, they serve as prompts for correcting language use. No matter how much speaking nativized English gets frowned upon, its role in descriptive phonology among Filipinos is undeniable. Furthermore, the study's findings support the Interlanguage Theory by Larry Selinker. In this study, the actual utterances of Cebuano-Visayan in English are considered correct when the context is considered. The English variety they use is different from the standardized ones, i.e., American and British. With this, the standard production of English by Cebuano-Visayans is yet to be standardized. As a result, they are correct in actual conversations, as well as their utility in achieving desired communication.

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