

Acrolectal Versus Mesolectal Speakers: A Comparative Analysis of the Phonological Features

Sophomore T. Vacalares (occ.vacalares.sophomore@gmail.com), Corresponding Author,
College Instructor, Opol Community College, Philippines

Brian Paul E. Sta. Ana (stanabrianpaul@gmail.com), Teacher 1, Pilar National High School, Siargao, Philippines



Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Licensee JRSP-ELT (2456-8104). This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the **Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial 4.0 International License**. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>). **Crossref/DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.54850/jrspelt.7.35.005>

Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to provide comprehensible findings based on a data-driven analysis of the phonological characteristics of the acrolectal and mesolectal groups of Philippine English. However, in response to Flores (2014) challenge, there is a need for additional, empirically-based analyses and descriptions of the many phonological aspects of Philippine English (PhiE) speakers, considering their varied geographical and linguistic origins. The study's results describe the similarities and contrasts between the two lectal groups, regularly interchanged based on their phonological characteristics. This group of speakers consists mainly of secondary school teachers in both private and public schools in Northern Mindanao. The acrolect group modeled its characteristics after the General American English (GAE) pattern, and features that differ from the mesolect's criteria. Finally, this study reiterates the need for more research into PhilE phonology by examining the variety of segmental and Suprasegmental features shared by diverse Acrolectal and Mesolectal PhilE speakers throughout the country.*

Keywords: Acrolectal, Mesolectal, Philippine English, Phonological Features

1. Introduction

The English language is not monolithic, but rather a term that encompasses its various linguistic and functional forms, including the many varieties spoken around the world, which are collectively known as “World Englishes” (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2010). Due to sociolinguistic, political, cultural, and individual differences and language contact experiences, English language usage is a necessary kind of language for communicating and interacting with multicultural and multilingual people. English is currently an essential element in many global types of endeavors, including in the realms of technology, business, telecommunications, and medicine, and as a means of communication in many nations and areas throughout the world (Al-Mutairi, 2019). Non-native English speakers use their language to integrate into the communicative system and to become part of the English-speaking community.

The expansion of English in the Philippines has a unique history intertwined with the country's educational development throughout American colonial control and the postcolonial period (Torres, 2020). Like many Outer Circle Asian civilizations, the Philippines was historically a colonial possession of an Anglophone colonial power (Bolton, 2012). As a society that speaks multiple languages, functional distinctions between indigenous and regional languages are evident in both official and informal settings. Code-mixing and code-switching, or the use of multiple languages in a single conversation, is also common in everyday speech. The influence of Anglophone colonial powers encouraged non-ENL speakers to acquire English from ENL speakers, leading to the development of what is now known as Philippine English (PhilE) (Gonzalez, 2006; Torres, 2020).

The widespread expansion and adoption of English as a lingua franca or global language has led to the development of various forms of English that have been adapted to local cultures and languages, known collectively as “New Englishes.” These include indigenized Englishes and creoles (Tayao, 2008). The development of PhilE resulted in the emergence of a standardized variant of World Englishes in the Philippines. It is predicted that the country has a sizable population of native and non-native English speakers (Torres, 2020). However, this variant acts as an additional language form for Filipinos. Flores

(2014) noted that the English language spoken in the Philippines, known as Philippine English or PhilE, has its own distinct characteristics, functions, and structures that differentiate it from other varieties of English spoken in the world, such as Chinese English, Singaporean English, Indian English, Malaysian English, and Thai English. One of the main features that sets PhilE apart is its phonetic characteristics. Despite having roots in American English, PhilE is not always fully aligned with American English rules and practices (Torres, 2020).

Generally, concerns about the use of PhilE as an official language, particularly in educational settings, are often raised by experts in a wide range of sectors and functions, including social media, the internet, offices, commerce, public and private institutions, and numerous educational establishments. The incorporation and use of English in everyday discourse, whether at work or on various other platforms, contribute to English's acculturation toward translanguaging by advocating for the sociocultural face or cultural identity in oral and written discourse. The deliberate adaptation of PhilE has altered the assessment of phonological characteristics unique to ENL, EIL, and EFL speakers.

2. Materials and Methods

Research Design

This research is descriptive in nature; thus, it aims to identify and characterize the phonological characteristics of PhilE mesolectal and acrolectal speakers. The primary objective of descriptive research is to ascertain "what is" (Esquivel, 2019). However, in this research, two variables were employed to conduct a comparative analysis, comparing and evaluating two or more things or concepts. Pickvance (2005) posits that comparative analysis is a useful method for understanding the underlying causes and processes that lead to an event, trait, or relationship, often by examining changes in the relevant variables. This approach can provide insight into the emergence of these phenomena.

The Respondents

This research has a comparative focus and aims to provide an initial description of the mesolectal speakers in comparison to acrolectal speakers. This research analyzes the phonological characteristics of PhilE of fifteen (15) random mesolectal and fifteen (15) acrolectal speakers. The acrolectal and mesolectal speakers were secondary school teachers in Northern Mindanao's public and private institutions. The mesolectal speakers used Sinugbuanon Binisaya as their primary language (L1), with English as a secondary language (L2) in their everyday job. However, acrolectal speakers with English as their first language utilized it in school, work, the market, and at home, among other places.

Table 1: Self-ratings of the Respondents' Usage of the English Language

Where do you use English?	Acrolectal		Mesolectal	
	f	%	f	%
Home	15	100	5	33.33
Neighborhood/Community	15	100	3	20.00
Workplace	15	100	10	66.67
School	15	100	15	100
Church	10	66.67	1	6.66
Malls/Marketplace/Bazaar/ Tiangge	15	100	3	20.00

The Instrument

The researchers adapted Flores's (2014) instrument tool for the chosen respondents in this investigation. The research tool comprises important consonant and vowel sounds used to ascertain the phonological characteristics, variation, and complexity of the language (Appendix A). However, the same study

instrument was altered to determine the respondents' crucial stress placement. The same dialogue-based research instrument was also used in this study to ascertain the respondents' suprasegmental characteristics (Appendix B).

The Procedure

As part of the research process, the researchers sought out affirmations from the participants and asked them to videotape or record themselves as they read words and sample dialogue derived from Flores's (2014) list of essential segmental suprasegmental characteristics words and phrases. This enabled the researchers to ascertain the respondents' Articulation Point, Segmental, and Suprasegmental characteristics.

The first section sought to profile the respondents in order to ascertain their personal information based on their names (optional), age, sex, province, employment, educational achievement, and frequency of English usage in the stated areas (home, workplace, church, mall, market, others). Participants who did not match the criteria include the following:

1. Secondary teachers from Camiguin province were not considered as participants.
2. Teachers with more than five years of experience teaching English subjects were considered qualified to participate in this study.
3. English teachers with less experience were not seen as credible or qualified participants in this study.

In addition, the second part of the data-gathering tool involved obtaining samples of the respondents' spoken English, which were recorded through audio or video recordings, depending on the respondent's preference. The participants were asked to read aloud a series of phrases and sentences that included important segmental and suprasegmental features, based on a study instrument developed by Flores (2014). They were given this task as part of the data-gathering process. The following strategies were used to elicit speech samples from the two groups of this variant of PhilE:

1. A list of salient words that includes important consonant and vowel sounds is recited aloud as part of the data-gathering process.
2. A list of prominent words with specific stress patterns is read aloud as part of the data-gathering process.
3. As part of the data-gathering process, participants are asked to read aloud a structured conversation in order to analyze their intonation patterns.

The third step of the data collection process involved transcribing and analyzing the audio or video recordings using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) system. The transcriptions, analyses, and descriptions of the distinct characteristics of the high-level and mid-level varieties of Philippine English were based on the frequency of specific phonological features.

3. Results and Discussions

The findings and discussions from the analysis of the phonological characteristics of mesolectal and acrolectal speakers of PhilE are divided into two sections. The first section covers the segmental sounds, such as vowels and consonants, while the second section deals with suprasegmental sounds, such as stress and intonation patterns, for both types of speakers.

The Consonants

This study presents the result of a table to visually show the connection to the respondents' development of consonant sounds, as shown in Table 1. A modified consonant map was utilized in this research, and it was based on Ladefoged (1995) and the Language Samples Project for American English (2001). Mesolectal speakers of PhilE tend to replace the use of labiodental fricatives /f/ and interdental fricatives /ð/ with bilabial stops /p/ and alveolar stops /d/, respectively. This is similar to the observation in Tayao's (2004) study of the basilectal speakers. This is often done unintentionally. For example, when pronouncing words such as "*Philippines*" and "*Those*," the speakers may not use aspiration when pronouncing the /p/ sound at the beginning and end of the word.

In other words, mesolectal speakers (speakers from the middle of the language population) do not include voiced stops and affricates like /ð/ and /z/ in "*These*" and "*Buzz*." Even among the acrolectal speakers who are distinguished by their highly unrestricted vocabulary, aspiration of the sounds /p/ and /k/ in stressed syllable-initial position is not common. Similarly, the mesolectal speakers, who also have a limited vocabulary, aspiration is also uncommon. However, it is observed that sometimes the /k/ sound is voiced among this group of speakers, in words like "*Perfect*" and "*Thank*." See the table below for the summary of the result:

Table 2: Comparative Consonant Sounds of the Two Lectal Groups

		Place of Articulation																																
Manner of Articulation		Bilabial				Labio dental				Inter dental				Alveolar				Alveo-palatal				Palatal				Velar				Glottal				
		Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	Ac	Me	
	Stop	p	p	b	b (p)									t	t	d	d									k	k		k					
	Fricative					f	f (p)	v	v	θ	θ	ð	ð (d)	s	s	z	z (s)													h	h			
	Affricate																tʃ	tʃ																
	Nasal			m	m											n	n																	
	Lateral Approximant															l	l																	
	Retroflex Approximant															r	r							y	y									
	Glide			w	w																													
		State of Glottis																																
		Voiceless														Voiced																		

Note: When there is more than one phonetic symbol in a cell, the one in parentheses shows deviation from the GAE pattern.

1. The interdental fricatives (voiced) were lacking in the mesolectal group, and as a result, these sounds are replaced by the voiced alveolar stop /d/ (voiced) in *Those* as they pronounced it as /doʊs/.
2. No matter where the fricatives are placed inside the words *Zoo*, *Thousand*, and *Buzz*, it will always be /s/ since this is what the mesolect produced by the sound known as the alveolar fricative /z/, as in /su/, /θaʊsənd/, and /bʌs/.
3. At the acrolectal and mesolectal levels, both the affricative /tʃ/ and the starting and final location of /tʃ/ was understood by both the acrolectal and mesolectal speakers to occur in a majority of examples, such as /tʃɜrtʃ/, /tʃart/, and /tʌtʃ/.
4. There were two distinct groups of acrolectal or retroflex speakers in the mesolectal, and one of those groups highlighted or underlined that the mesolectal speakers rendered the

pronunciation /fɔ̃ti-fɔ̃r/ with rolled or one-trap /r/. In contrast, some of the acrolect speakers used deletion of the consonant /r/ like /fɔ̃ti-fɔ̃/.

5. Only five (5) out of the twelve mesolectal speakers were able to stress the location of the consonant clusters like in *twelve*, *shepherd*, but even then, none of the clusters in which the consonants are respectively pronounced as /t/ and /perfekt/ instead of /perfek/ were completely accurate.
6. On the other hand, both lectal speakers were quick to comprehend that consonant clusters such as *twelve*, *shepherd*, etc. appeared at the beginning of the word and at the final of the phrase, but were able to grasp that fact only when the words ended in /k/, /d/, and /v/, such as *fork*, *thank*, *thousand*, and *five*.

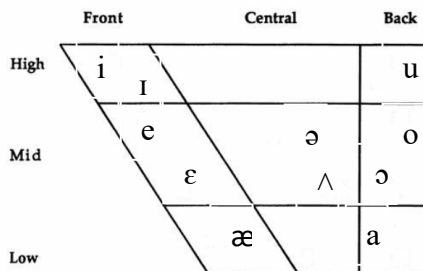
A salient fact to be noted is that the acrolect's consonant phonological features are similar to those found in the GAE consonant phoneme inventory. The consonant sounds used by mesolectal speakers are similar to those used by basilectal speakers, but there are some differences when compared to the acrolectal speakers. Further study revealed that interdental fricatives /ð/ were replaced by alveolar stops /d/ and bilabial stops (voiceless) /p/ were produced as voiced for the mesolect speaker group. Therefore, the findings show that consonant phonemes that are part of the acrolectal variety and aspiration of the voiced stops /p/ and /z/ in the final clusters were not seen in the mesolectal group. Thus, the mesolect group tends to voice the /k/ in the final clusters.

Either the first consonant was retained in the cluster, or the final one was dropped, as in "*kissed*" pronounced as /kɪs/ instead of /kɪst/, or the cluster was simplified by maintaining the first consonant in the cluster, and the other consonants were removed, as in "*kiss*" pronounced as /kɪs/. The GAE consonant sound /z/ is pronounced as /s/ by mesolectal speakers, as seen in words like "*thousand*" which is pronounced as /θaʊsənd/ rather than /θaʊzənd/. Based on a study of GAE sounds by Llamzons (1997), it seems that the consonant sounds used by acrolectal speakers are similar to those of GAE. In the study of the mesolectal speakers, researchers discovered that the sounds were often produced, but there were also instances when these sounds were not produced. Filipino speakers are either acrolect or mesolect. This means they may not speak or follow the conventions of "native" American English standards. To be clear, however, there were documented instances in which they emulated the accent and sounds of the local speakers, although it is unavoidable that the L1 native accent was noted in their discourse.

In a nutshell, this work validates prior research that examined the consonant inventory of both populations and found that, in terms of overall consonant sound, there were only little variations in both acrolectal and mesolectal speakers but many has significant commonalities. In this regard, it is worth highlighting that many of the participants in the research were secondary teachers who taught English topics, yet both teachers educate in very different learning environments. The acrolectal speakers had been teaching at private schools for seven years or more, where English was the primary language of instruction, while the mesolectal speakers had the same amount of experience teaching in public schools, where both the first language and English were used to deliver instructions. Furthermore, all these teachers have had a significant amount of exposure to the English language, both in terms of the length of time spent teaching and the quality of their experience. However, due to the school's Speak English Policy in the private school, the teachers learned to master the phonological features, such as speaking English. Most of the lectal groups have earned graduate degrees/units. Flores (2014) argues that regardless of the origin, mispronounced sounds are commonly associated with the substitution of sounds from another language, and are often seen as remnants of that language.

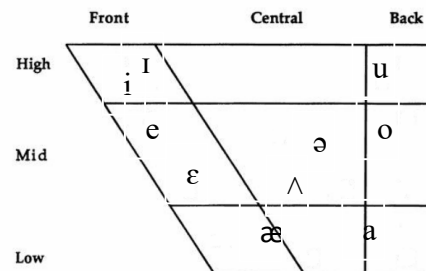
The Vowels

The chart that follows depicts the vowel system of the acrolect and mesolect speakers in this research. As a consequence, the following are the study's findings and results:



Acrolectal

Figure 1. Vowel Placement of the Acrolectal Speakers



Mesolectal

Figure 2. Vowel Placement of the Mesolectal Speakers

1. The vowels such as /ɪ/ in *dip*, lower high /i/ in *Deep*, mid /e/ in *Edge*, mid-low /ɛ/ in *Lend*, and low-mid /æ/ in the central portion were all observed in the acrolectal speakers. Still, these were restricted to the front upper high of the placement and articulation of the mesolectal speakers; the /ɪ/ and /i/ are interchanged, respectively.
2. The acrolect groups were observed that at the upper end of the front of placement for /i/ in a *Feel*, the mid-upper end of the front of placement for /ɪ/ on a *Ship*, mid-end of the front of placement for /e/ on an *Edge*, and low-end of the front of placement for /æ/ on a *Map* these are patterned to the GAE standard.
3. There were two mid vowels with a mid /æ/ sound between the front and center positions; the mid /ə/ vowel that was near the rear portion of a *Tricycle*, and the mid-low /ʌ/ vowel for the *Truck* are seen in the mesolectal.
4. The two vowel sounds were present for acrolect speakers, with the mid /ə/ and low mid /ʌ/ tongue positions realized as in for a *Truck*.
5. There were a series of vowels found in the mesolect present on the back upper high, between the center and back. These were (1) a dorsal upper /u/ in *Luke* and (2) a dorsal mid /o/ in *Full*. A lower-back vowel /a/ tongue position in *Mop* is evident in the mesolect and acrolect but differs in tongue placement. The mid-back /ɔ/ is present in acrolect but sometimes absent in acrolect that tends to be interchanged by /a/ or /o/.

The research findings demonstrate that even though the participants in this study were able to produce identical sounds and articulation of words, they differed in tongue positioning. This result is in contrast to the findings of Torres (2020) study, which discovered that mesolectal speakers of Phile do not reduce unstressed vowels to the schwa sound. A substitution of vowels in the mesolect may not be immediately apparent to the mesolectal speaker. Still, the tongue location differs from an acrolect since it will be influenced by an ethnic tongue that forms the substratum (Llamzon, 1997). The L1 may also affect the placement of articulation of the speakers in pronouncing and producing sounds.

It is worth mentioning that, though mesolectal speakers may not fully or clearly understand the production of eleven (11) vowels, they do produce ten (10) vowel sounds owing to their different tongue placement from that of acrolectal speakers. These acrolectal speakers were able to produce these vowel sound variants as a result of their exposure to the social environment, music, school, community, movies, and social media, all of which these acrolectal respondents confirmed they were actively listening to,

watching, and attending international conferences where English is the medium of discussion rather than local meetings, particularly during the summer or class breaks. Additionally, acrolect individuals reported watching American films and worldwide news reports (e.g., CNN, ABC News) at home, but mesolect participants reported watching teleserye and local news. Additionally, Flores (2014) indicated that the advent of text messaging might have contributed to respondents admitting to often transmitting or receiving English quotations. The process of communication within the institutional system, whether written or verbal, plays a vital role in developing the teachers' communicative competence. Acrolectal teachers spoke with parents and students in English, and mesolect speakers spoke with parents and students in English while incorporating local dialect or code-mixing/switching elements in their oral discourse.

The Suprasegmental

The creation of vowels and consonant sounds, stress, and intonation were used to emphasize Suprasegmental characteristics of phonology in this research. The following are the results of in-depth examinations of each Suprasegmental area.

Stress

The examination of word stress in acrolectal and mesolectal speakers was enabled by reading aloud a set of words with differential stress locations modified from Flores (2014) instrument comparing the two groups. The second stage of this study's data collection involved eliciting the recordings that were transcribed and evaluated. The table below presents a comparison of the findings for acrolectal and mesolectal speakers of PhilE in terms of the syllabication per word and the frequency of primary stress locations. The following summary was observed and highlighted based on the data presented:

Table 3: Comparative Stress Placement of the Two Lectal Speakers

Placement and Frequency of the Primary Stress per Word															
Words		Ac	Me		Ac	Me		Ac	Me		Ac	Me		Ac	Me
Bamboo	<i>Bam</i>	4	15	<i>boo</i>	11	0									
Cemetery	<i>Ce</i>	11	9	<i>me</i>	2	5	<i>te</i>	2	1	<i>ry</i>	0	0			
Determine	<i>De</i>	3	11	<i>ter</i>	12	2	<i>mine</i>	0	2						
Category	<i>Ca</i>	12	10	<i>te</i>	3	5	<i>go</i>	0	0	<i>ry</i>	0	0			
Elementary	<i>E</i>	0	0	<i>le</i>	0	0	<i>men</i>	15	14	<i>ta</i>	0	1	<i>ry</i>	0	0
Talented	<i>Ta</i>	15	14	<i>len</i>	0	0	<i>ted</i>	0	1						
Menu	<i>Me</i>	4		<i>nu</i>	11	15									
Ceremony	<i>Ce</i>	11	8	<i>re</i>	3	6	<i>mo</i>	1	1	<i>ny</i>					
Honorable	<i>Ho</i>	2	2	<i>no</i>	13	12	<i>ra</i>	0	0	<i>ble</i>	0	1			
Seventy	<i>Se</i>	14	14	<i>ven</i>	1	0	<i>ty</i>	0	1						
Percentage	<i>Per</i>	12	13	<i>cen</i>	3	2	<i>tage</i>	0	0						
Carton	<i>Car</i>	13	4	<i>ton</i>	2	11									
Comfortable	<i>Com</i>	5	2	<i>for</i>	4	9	<i>ta</i>	0	0	<i>ble</i>	0	0			
Utensil	<i>U</i>	12	10	<i>ten</i>	3	5	<i>sil</i>	0	0						

1. For the two-syllable word "Bamboo," which has the stress on the second syllable in GAE, most of the mesolectal speakers correctly emphasize the first syllable, however, eleven (11) speakers in the acrolectal group correctly emphasized the second syllable. For the word "Menu," the stress is on the first syllable and most of the mid-level speakers read it incorrectly, meanwhile, four (4) speakers in the acrolectal group read it correctly.
2. For three-syllable words with primary stress on the first syllable in GAE, such as "Talented" and "Seventy," both the acrolectal and mesolectal groups followed the same GAE pattern of stressing the first syllable. However, one (1) respondent of the mesolectal group emphasized the third

syllable. For the word "*Utensil*," which has the stress on the second syllable in GAE, both the acrolectal and mesolectal groups stressed the first syllable instead.

3. Among the four-syllable words where the first syllable is stressed according to GAE pattern (*Cemetery*, *Ceremony*, *Category*), eleven (11) acrolectal and nine (9) mesolectal speakers correctly stressed the first syllable when pronouncing "*cemetery*." However, eleven (11) acrolectal speakers emphasized the first syllable when pronouncing "*ceremony*," while eight (8) mesolectal speakers followed the GAE stress pattern. In the word "*Category*," most of the speakers in both groups correctly emphasized the first syllable.
4. When it comes to five-syllable words, such as *Elementary*, acrolectal, and mesolectal speakers emphasize the third syllable. However, under the GAE syllabication pattern, the word /el.'men.tri/ included four syllables, with the emphasis falling on the third syllable.

The data shows that both the acrolect and mesolect PhIE stress patterns are highly similar comparing to the GAE primary stress placement. Even though some mesolectal speakers differed in their stress placement, this was visible on the table when two- and three-syllable terms such as *Bamboo*, *Determine*, and *Utensil* were read aloud. In both lectal groups, there is a minor variation in the location of principal stress. Additionally, this study suggests that both groups of lectal speakers should be evaluated and detailed investigations conducted on their distinctions, particularly in terms of stress placement.

Intonation

The other characteristic of Suprasegmental analysis is intonation. In order to evaluate the intonation patterns of each group in this study, the second part of the data-gathering tool involved eliciting the participants' speech patterns through an oral reading of a constructed conversation, which was adapted from Flores (2014). The interviewees were recorded, and their responses were afterward transcribed and examined. The following summarizes the study's conclusions and findings:

1. In this study, the majority of acrolectal speakers use GAE rising and falling intonation patterns. The speakers' voices start at a medium pitch and rise to the highest pitch on the last stressed word of the phrase before falling to the lowest pitch at the end, and they follow the punctuation of the structured conversation.

Excuse me, Miss.

By the way,

In comparison, mesolectal speakers begin with the intermediate tone and conclude with the highest tone before falling to the lowest tone and increasing it again at the conclusion of the phrase. However, they often depart from the GAE intonation pattern towards 2-3, as if the statement were a request.

Excuse me, Miss.

By the way,

2. When asked yes or no questions, the findings indicate that acrolectal speakers begin with the middle tone and conclude with the highest tone. At the last phrase or inquiry, all participants maintained a high tone.

What's your name?

How about you?

3. In a yes-no inquiry, the mesolect group begins with the highest tone and descends to the middle tone before returning to the highest tone of the word.

What's your name?

How about you?

The findings indicate that both acrolectal and mesolectal speakers have distinct intonation patterns. The acrolectal group adheres to the tone and movement patterns of GAE intonation, particularly in following the general rules such as the rising-falling intonation in statements of fact, commands, and questions or requests. The transcribed data from the study showed that the mesolectal speakers did not always conform completely to the GAE intonation pattern. Their natural flow of tones and consistency in raising and lowering the pitch may not always match the GAE intonation pattern. It is worth noting that both acrolects and, more specifically, mesolects are capable of using the mid-tone, highest tone, and lowest tone in conversation and reading. In general, this merely proposes that more research be conducted on the intonation patterns of the acrolectal and mesolectal PhilE.

4. Conclusion

This research aimed to give preliminary data on the similarities and differences between acrolectal and mesolectal Philippine English (PhilE) as spoken by people in Northern Mindanao. This study responds to Flores (2014) challenge by conducting a more data-driven examination and detailing the various phonological characteristics of the diverse geographic and linguistic backgrounds of PhilE speakers. However, the researchers concentrate only on the two-lectal groups due to the study's limitations and time constraints. This research follows Flores (2014) study of developing an inventory of the PhilE subgroups of speakers based on their segmental and Suprasegmental characteristics. Apart from the indicated country of origin, the research further narrows its sample of respondents to ascertain if this group of persons belongs to the lectal group. Factors such as employment and frequency of English usage are considered in identifying the qualified participants of the study. This is to guarantee that the acrolectal and mesolectal qualities mentioned by Llamzon (1997) are strictly adhered to.

The results and findings section summarizes the fieldwork inquiry conducted in visiting schools around the area. A straightforward quantification was employed to examine the data collected from the various groups: basic occurrences such as the location of stress phrases were highlighted. The research suggests that individuals who speak the acrolect dialect do not differ greatly from the general American English pattern when it comes to both segmental and Suprasegmental features. However, the mesolect group appears to deviate from the standard American English norm, particularly in terms of Suprasegmental characteristics. These results support the claim made by Llamzon in 1997 and Tayao in 2004 that speakers of the mesolect dialect are more likely to adopt features of the basilect dialect than those who speak the acrolect dialect.

Generally, the findings demonstrate that PhilE phonology is unique from GAE phonology. Thus, establishing diverse elements in PhilE phonology should serve as a springboard for language instructors, policymakers, and linguists to pursue additional research into the spectrum of accents displayed by

various community members (Torres, 2017). This would be a major step forward in eliminating discrimination and embarrassment toward Filipinos who are not able to produce sounds using the standard American English method. If this is achieved, it would lead to the acceptance of the different pronunciation variations within the country. It is hoped that this article will help to further examine and compare the phonological features of the acrolectal and mesolectal groups of Philippine English.

5. References

- Al-Mutairi, M. (2019). Kachru's Three Concentric Circles Model of English Language: An Overview of Criticism & the Place of Kuwait in it. *English Language Teaching*. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n1p85>
- Bolton, K. (2012). *World Englishes and Asian Englishes: A survey of the field*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4578-0_2
- Brutt-Griffler, J. (2002). World English A Study of its Development. In *MULTILINGUAL MATTERS LTD*.
- Esquivel, O. J. D. (2019). Exploring the Filipinization of the English language in a digital age: An identity apart from other World Englishes. *Journal of English as an International Language*.
- Flores, E. R. (2014). Phonological features of Basilectal Philippine English: An exploratory study. *International Journal of English and Literature*. <https://doi.org/10.5897/ijel2014.0586>
- Gonzalez, A. (2006). The language planning situation in the Philippines. In *Language Planning and Policy in the Pacific, Vol 1: Fiji, the Philippines, and Vanuatu*. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853599224-005>
- Horibe, H. (2007). Models of world Englishes. In *World Englishes: Implications for International Communication and English Language Teaching*.
- Kachru, B. B. (1990). World Englishes and Applied Linguistics. In *Learning, Keeping and Using Language*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/z.lkul2.19kac>
- Kachru, B. B. (2005). Asian Englishes: Beyond the canon. In *Asian Englishes: Beyond The Canon*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2006.10801179>
- Matsuda, A. and P. Matsuda. (2010). World Englishes and the Teaching of Writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 309-374. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27896730>
- Llamzon, T. A. (1997). The Phonology of Philippine English. In: M.L.S. Bautista (Ed.), English is an Asian language: The Philippine Context. *The Macquarie Library Pty Ltd*, 41–48.
- Nero, S. J. (2012). Dialects, Englishes, Creoles, and Education. In *Dialects, Englishes, Creoles, and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203928660>
- Pickvance, C. (2005). The four varieties of comparative analysis: the case of environmental regulation. *Paper for Conference on Small and Large-N Comparative Solutions, University of Sussex*.
- Tayao, M. L. G. (2004). The evolving study of Philippine English phonology. *World Englishes*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2004.00336.x>
- Tayao, M. L. G. (2008). A lectal description of the phonological features of Philippine English. In *Philippine English: Linguistic and Literary*. <https://doi.org/10.5790/hongkong/9789622099470.003.0009>
- Thirusanku, J., & Yunus, M. M. (2012). The Many Faces of Malaysian English. *ISRIN Education*. <https://doi.org/10.5402/2012/138928>
- Torres, J. M. (2020). The Phonological Features of Acrolect, Mesolect, and Basilect Speakers in Central Luzon. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3622088>

APPENDIX-A

WORDS USED IN THE STUDY OF CONSONANT AND VOWEL SOUNDS

(Adapted from Flores (2014) study)

Critical Vowel Sounds			
Deep	Lend	Nurse	Track
Brow	Mop	Luke	Mango
Age	Fifteen	Poll	Sheep

Edge	To	Bough	Please
Tricycle	Dip	Land	Feel
Gate	Map	Tool	Ship
Put	Fill	Get	Tool
Look	Full	Truck	Saw
Call			

Critical Consonant Sounds			
Fork	Watch	Five	Telephone
Church	Buzz	Twelve	Ban
Chorus	Zoo	Chart	Elephant
Vote	Thousand	Dose	Thank
Teacher	Shepherd	Watts	Base
Those	Touch	Perfect	Tank
Fine	Forty-four	Boat	Fifty-five
Philippines	Twelfth	Busses	Vibes
Kissed			

APPENDIX-B

WORDS USED IN THE STUDY OF STRESS PLACEMENT AND THE STRUCTURED DIALOGUE

(Adapted from Flores (2014) study)

Critical Stress Placement			
Bamboo	Elementary	Honorable	Carton
Cemetery	Talented	Seventy	Comfortable
Determine	Menu	Percentage	Utensil
Category	Ceremony		

Dialogue	
A:	Excuse me, Miss, but you look familiar!
B:	Do I?
A:	Oh, yes, Miss. I think I have met you before. Are you from Cagayan de Oro?
B:	I am. By the way, what's your name?
A:	I'm Joseph. How about you?
B:	I'm Grace. Now I remember, Joseph. We must have met in school at De La Salle University.
A:	You're right, Grace. We used to be classmates, remember?
B:	Were you the boy who used to skip classes every Math period?
A:	Ha, ha, ha. Your guess is right. Well. Nice to see you again, Grace.
B:	So with me, Joseph.

AUTHORS' BIO-NOTES

Sophomore T. Vacalares is an Instructor at Opol Community College. In 2021, he earned PhD units in Applied Linguistics from De La Salle University-Manila. His research interest includes World Englishes, Forensic Linguistics, Phonology, Methodological Strategies, and understanding linguistic differences between speakers. In addition to his academic responsibilities, he also serves as an adviser for student research projects and participates as a panelist in various research defense presentations.

Brian Paul E. Sta. Ana is a Senior High School Teacher at Pilar National High School. He is currently pursuing his Master's degree in Educational Management at St. Paul University-Surigao. His research interests are related to Teaching English and Grammar, Curriculum Evaluation, and Development. Aside from teaching, he conducts various lectures and seminars for students and teachers on research and attends several conferences, both national and international events for professional growth.