

VALUES AND THE COMMUNICATION OF CHANGE: THE VALUE FILTERS OF THE NLP COMMUNICATION MODEL APPLIED TO AETAS IN LOOB BUNGA ZAMBALES

Joanna Eunice V. Parungao

University of the Philippines, Diliman, Philippines (joannaup@yahoo.com)

Abstract

Neurolinguistic Programming deals with the communication process behind the formation of the mind's internal representation affecting behavior. Before messages are assimilated in the internal representation, they go through filters. In this study, emphasis is given to values as filters in the communication model. The proposed model identifies sources of values taken from the Loob Bunga resettlement community. The Values Filters in the NLP Communication Model illustrates the integral role of values in perception of messages. Effective communication strategies promoting social change consider how values filter messages because these determine behavior. The model suggests that any communication strategy should consider how messages undergo deletion, distortion, and generalization. The source of values that filter messages are identified as social class, family structure, language system, available media and other means of communication, socio, economic, and political factors, and school.

Keywords: Neurolinguistic Programming Communication Model, NLP, Aetas in Loob Bunga, values, filters

Introduction

This paper utilizes a multidisciplinary approach in looking at the apparent sources of values of the Aetas in Loob Bunga Resettlement Community Botolan Zambales after the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. A Neurolinguistic Programming Model of communication that identifies the sources of values of the Aetas in Botolan is proffered, centering on the community's values as filters of received messages.

The framework presented can be used in developing strategic communication that aims to target behavior development for positive social change. Development of an individual or a community is exhibited in external behavior¹ that provides the empirical evidence for measuring significant change. Before any intended results are expected to germinate from behavior, identifying

values and working with values become prerequisites. The sources of values are based on the Loob Bunga Botolan Zambales communication context. These are social class, family structure, language system, available media and other means of communication, socio, economic and political factors, and school.

Although this paper does not aim to study the formation and evolution of values, it sets the foundation for analyzing the values system of the Aetas, which can help enrich the literature behind Sikolohiyang Filipino, also known as Filipino Psychology, and NLP applied to community work. The framework does not include a plan for the monitoring and evaluation of the target changes in behavior. Furthermore, this study does not aim to identify the values that facilitate or impede positive social change because the essence of NLP is not to box or evaluate values but to work with values (James & Woodsmall, 1988; James, 2009).

The community in focus is a province 280 kilometers north of Manila. The origin of the province's name, Zambales, came from the Malay ethnic group from Celebes, the Sambals, who settled in the north area pushing the earlier settlers - the Aetas - to the hinterlands.

The Aetas are one of the many early ethnic groups to come to the Philippines. Occupying the flanks of Mount Pinatubo, they are considered to be the direct descendants of the Pleistocene Period settlers in the archipelago some 2.588 million to 12,000 years ago (Headland and Reid, 1989). Back in 1999, there were approximately 50,000 Aetas living in the Pinatubo area (Gaillard, 2006). Aetas have kinky hair, small stature and dark skin. Other features include round eyes and short flat nose. The average height of male Aetas is 4 feet 9 inches, and 4 feet 6 inches for females. The Aetas can reach maximum height of 5 feet 2 inches (Reed, 2007).

Back in June 1991, Mount Pinatubo volcano erupted and the socio-psychological landscape of the area, along with nearby provinces and cities, has changed drastically.

Theoretical Basis of Values

In studying values, a multidisciplinary approach offers more related theories. Milton Rokeach's theory differentiated beliefs, attitudes, and values. Beliefs are basically subjective statements about the self and the world arranged from general to specific with the ego as basis for their degree of significance. Attitudes pertain to the empirical component - the behavior which is influenced by the belief system. Lastly, values are defined as "enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence" (Rokeach, 1973, p.5). These are subdivided into instrumental values, which are "guidelines to behavior or preferable modes of behavior, and terminal values, which are the ultimate aims of life" (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 144).

Allport, Venon and Lindzey (1951) made concrete the idea of values by studying their associations with day-to-day activities such as reading newspapers,

watching movies, or voting. Values are thus guiding principles of external behavior operating behind selectivity, which defines media habits, social interactions and other human activities.

Among Filipinos, the core value governing interpersonal behavior is *kapwa*², a Filipino word which encapsulates the recognition of an identity that is shared with others. This is further characterized as non-individualistic in orientation as opposed to values in western social psychology. Enriquez (1978) said that, although Filipinos are aware of the concept of outsiders or non-members of their group, they are flexible when it comes to accommodating other people from outside groups. Moreover, the Filipinos consider those relationships that potentially advance their financial aspirations as part of the *kapwa*. Hence, much of the Filipino values stem from *kapwa* and are characterized as values that preserve social relations. Some of the prominent values that preserve social relations include: *pakikiramdam* (feeling for another), *hiya* (propriety, dignity), *pakikisama* (to maintain smooth interpersonal relationship), and *utang-na-loob* (debt of gratitude).³

Other theoretical approaches to values fusing communication and psychology are presented by neurolinguistic programming theories. The study of values is based on the following premises as enumerated by James & Woodsmall:

Values are expressed as nominalizations; 2. Values are those notions that people expend resources for and obtain resources to have; 3. Values are learned (not innate) then stored in the unconscious; 4. Values govern all human behavior by fueling motivation, serving as criteria for evaluation or judgment for actions. (p.155)

Values, being perceptual filters, are not fixed. Personal crises or issues can be resolved, as values can be changed by application of meta-programs. Values are essentially filters of external events⁴ or messages that are perceived through sensory input channels. As information comes in, values operate behind the deletion, distortion and generalization of message processing (James, 2009).

Groundwork for the Neurolinguistic Programming Communication Model

Neurolinguistic programming is the product of the mathematician Richard Bandler and linguist John Grinder who, after studying the work of Virginia Satir, Fritz Perls and Milton Erickson, put together psychology and communication approaches outlining the principles of NLP. Basically, NLP integrates communication and psychology theories for developing techniques in studying how internal representations⁵ are formed, such as “thinking and communication patterns” that are used in applying methods and strategies to “achieve specific and desired outcomes” (“What is Neuro Linguistic Programming,” 2011).

Traditionally, NLP evolved from the Human Potential Movement, a psychological philosophy and framework that includes set of values as a form of psycho-therapy often presented as a communication model. Currently, NLP is popularized as a method for changing patterns, habits, phobias, and cognitive

distortions (Hall, 2007; Puttick, 2004). To achieve these, the principles of NLP are anchored on systems theories, cognitive behavioral approach, psychoanalysis, phenomenology, socio-psychology, information processing, and general semantics (Mathison, 2004).

Values Filters in the Neurolinguistic Programming Communication Model

Understanding the context of awareness and insight enables one to understand how people perceive reality because meanings, which include attribution of value, come from human interaction (Littlejohn, 2007). In theory, the selectivity process in meaning making organisms determines attention span which becomes important when studying how messages are prioritized by individuals. Concomitant is the notion expressed in the social construction of reality theory that states that reality is a compendium of intersubjective realities stemming from endogenous perspectives shared by people; hence, reality is one’s own making (Littlejohn, 2007; Schutz, 1970).

The model is derived from the general model of communication⁶ used by NLP practitioners, showing the filters behind the selectivity in the perception of messages from external events before assimilation and accommodation in the internal representation affecting the emotional state⁷ of the individual.

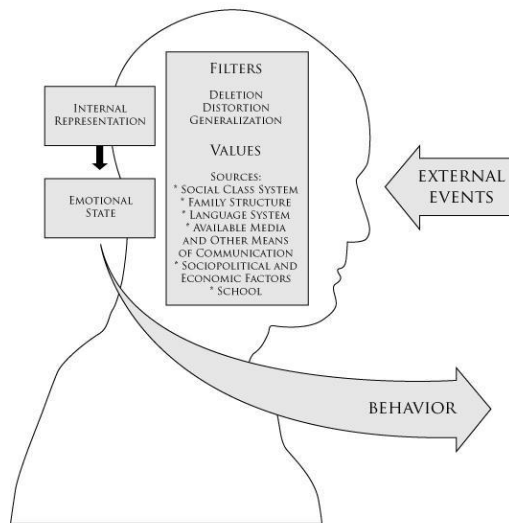


Figure 1. Values as filters in the Neurolinguistic Programming Communication Model

The Filters

Filtering of messages from the environment is likened to the gatekeeping in human communication as proffered by Kurt Lewin in 1947 (McQuail & Windhal, 1993).

Ideas and information are filtered. In this context, however, the process occurs neurolinguistically, affecting idea formations and use of internal representations. The process includes deletion, distortion and generalization. The proponents of NLP mentioned earlier state that perception and biases rely heavily on these three concepts which operate simultaneously with values.

Deletion comes from selectivity and priority in attention allotment to details of messages, which affect the reception and, ultimately, the meaning of the messages. Certain bits of information are omitted because of the limitations of the conscious mind and, with it, short term memory (Jensen, 2008; James, 2009).

Distortion happens when making “shifts in personal experience of sensory data by making misrepresentations of reality” (James, 2009, p. 99). This process fuels creativity because distortions allow manipulating perceptions of reality. In effect, the distorted version defining subjective reality plays an integral part in creating totally unique variables derived from reality (Lewis & Pucelik, 1990).

Generalization is assigning bits of information to categories where global conclusions are derived. This helps in the learning process by allowing experiences to be coded, permitting inferences which lessen the time and energy to learn new behaviors. In effect, the brain does not need to re-learn every time it is exposed to new stimuli because templates facilitate recognition (Sternberg, 2006). To do this, similarities or typicalities serve as the basis for categorization. The more diverse the categories are, the more difficult it is to take in new information which implies that novel items outside the range of perceptual categories are learned more slowly (Hahn, Bailey, & Elvin, 2005).

Method

Qualitative data were gathered from a three-day field immersion in Botolan Zambales in August 2009. Palis, Villar and Nacolcol were the *barangays* visited for the data gathering. A *barangay*, sometimes referred to as “town”, is commonly known as the smallest unit of administration recognized by Philippine government. Participant-observation, field notes, recorded informal interviews with parents, students, and community leaders, and recorded focus group discussion (FGD) with teachers and, community leaders were the research methods employed. The recorded interviews and focus group discussions were later transcribed. Other statistical information were taken from exhibited documents in the elementary schools. This included the number of enrollees, list of available textbooks, number of teachers, and status of school building.

The observation was done as unobtrusively as possible inside the classrooms to observe the students while the teachers delivered the lesson. The interaction of the students and teachers were noted; some were video and audio recorded.

The focus group discussions and the interviews with students and teachers were conducted inside the two elementary schools in Loob Bunga. The duration of the FGDs was estimated to be one hour each. Appointments with the teachers were made for follow-up interviews in their residences.

The interviews in the residences of the teachers, community leaders, parents, and other locals were longer and more in-depth. Interview sessions range from thirty minutes to one hour. Although the teachers gave their names for documentation these were not mentioned in the write-up. The informal interviews with students were fifteen to thirty minutes long, depending on how attentive the students were. Twenty students were interviewed in the elementary schools.

Results

Source of Values

The source of values acting as filters affects the fidelity of transmitted messages, which affects the messages' accuracy. Following the principles of NLP, this filtered information, in turn, determines the structure of the internal representation, which is made up of pictures, sounds, feelings, tastes and smells. The internal representation is distinct from the reality or the environment itself. It is the compendium of subjective experiences. The internal representation, in effect, influences emotional state, while emotions determine behavior (James, 2009).

The Social Class Systems Recognized by the Locals in Loob Bunga

In the community, there are two kinds of applicable class systems. One is based on the kind of hair one has – kinky or straight. As more and more intermarriages occur, straight-haired Aetas will eventually outnumber kinky-haired ones. The other is the intellectual status system.

Relative to the former, parents report that teachers have a tendency to discriminate kinky-haired Aeta students although they show the same encouragement as they do other students. Moreover, the kinky-haired Aetas are discriminated upon when they visit the *bayan* (downtown or lowlands). This coincides with the findings of Gaillard (2006) where he states that Aetas, particularly the kinky-haired ones who had stayed in the highlands all their lives, find it hard to live with people in the lowlands. Moreover, Aetas feel discriminated against by non-Aetas who live in the lowlands, especially government authorities from whom they seek help. Despite discrimination based on kind of hair, lowland and upland Aeta communities are still considered one ethnic group because of their common physical features, language which is Botolan Zambal, traditional beliefs, and sense of community (Brosius, 1983; Gaillard, 2006).

In the intellectual status system, people are judged by what they had finished (i.e., finished grade 6, finished high school, finished college, and somewhere in between). This particular class system is laden with values gestated from perceptions regarding schooling.

The locals believe that education equips one with skills to achieve his/her goals in life. This belief is better articulated as *may pinag-aralan* (a phrase describing someone with education). The label is important to the locals because the opposite – *walang pinagaralan* (a phrase describing someone without education) – is equated with shame or *hiya* in Filipino. A community leader emphasized that people who

are labeled *may pinag-aralan* are respected in the community, while those without education are stigmatized. They are called stupid or *tanga* in Filipino.

In view of the value for education, the students' greatest ambition is to finish school which is expressed in Filipino as *makatapos ng pag-aaral*. The people in Loob Bunga strongly believe that education enables a person to be a useful member of society. Usefulness is characterized as possessing communication skills that allows one to articulate issues in the community, do negotiations, and participate in community planning and activities. Communication is, therefore, perceived by the locals to be central in sustaining development. Those fortunate enough to finish high school and college become better communicators, and are considered valuable to the community. Their skills are highly regarded because the locals believe that communication is the key to preserving their culture, engaging other people to cooperate in community planning, resolving conflicts, and improving their way of life. Teachers are highly respected because they are most likely better than anyone else in the community who could read, write and speak English, Filipino and Zambal.

Family Structure of the Residents

The families of Loob Bunga are characterized as positional, which means that role structures are more or less clear. People are defined in terms of their position in the family. They conform to established rules and rarely challenge these. Based on Bernstein's (1975) theory, children from positional families do not land in managerial positions. Moreover, positional families are working class families.

The members of the family operate in a closed-role system wherein each member is viewed in accordance to its role in the family (Littlejohn, 2007). Based on observation and interviews, the parents and the children in Loob Bunga have an understanding of how they should behave, which does not require explanation only the acceptance of how things are. There is no need to negotiate with the elders. This is evident in the habitual absence of children in schools, as parents often expect them to help gather bananas, plant root crops, do *kaingin*⁸ (a word which means cutting of trees to prepare land for planting) and help with the household chores. Above all, the respect for elders' decisions influences how children view issues.

This finding differed from the perspective revealed in the interviews of Orejas (2008) of some locals in the same place. According to her article, the elders are now disregarded and disrespected. Material support is perceived to have a higher value than wisdom; hence, those who can bring in material support are regarded as leaders in the community.

In relating the closed-role system and positional family to interpersonal communication, the transactional analysis of Eric Berne offers a framework. According to Berne, people have three alter ego states that determine behavior in communication, specifically, the thinking, feeling and acting of the person. These are the parent, adult, and child ego states. The parent is the authoritarian mode, the adult is the rational mode concerned with getting information and making decisions, and the child is the uninhibited, self-indulgent mode, behaving based on

feelings toward external events (Berne, 1996). In the family structures in Loob Bunga, the adult-to-adult ego state is inapplicable because it is only children who are expected to respond to commands. In contrast with the findings of Orejas (2008), alter ego states also apply to communicating with elders. Young people show respect for elders by incorporating the Tagalog words “po” and “opo” in their speech even if their language is Botolan Zambal. The words “po” and “opo” are general Filipino honorific devices used to speak respectfully with the elderly or with someone regarded to hold an important position in the community. They have no direct English translations.

Filipinos in general are very relational; their language, even when expressing themselves in English reflects the desire to address others as politely as possible. Thus, majority of Filipinos normally want to maintain a low profile when talking. This may have unfavorable repercussions in initiating and sustaining healthy discourse among the locals in Botolan, especially when elders and intellectuals impose their status.

Language Systems used by the Locals

The concept of reality for people is very much linked to how they communicate. Hence, language or languages define reality, which dictates what is normal and acceptable. This notion was elaborated by Basil Bernstein when he wrote about social class, language, and socialization. His theory states that relationships in a social group determine the kind of speech acceptable in the group, and that codes function as organizing principles behind the language used by a particular group (Littlejohn, 2007). These two codes are the elaborated and restricted codes. Elaborated codes allow speakers to make intentions explicit because they are equipped with a rich vocabulary to do so. They are presented with a lot of options in expressing themselves. In contrast, restricted codes offer fewer options. Communication becomes predictable. Here, ideas are not elaborated, which is characteristic of groups that share assumptions and expectations. Elaborated codes are used by speakers who value individuality, while restricted codes are used by speakers who value commonality (Bernstein, 1971).

The locals use three language systems. Predominantly are the Botolan Zambal regional language and Filipino. English is used sparingly in schools, and often only in circumstances where there is need to communicate using English such as when there are visitors to the community. Elaborated codes are used more by community leaders and teachers when engaging in discourse, especially when discussing social issues and making negotiations. Also, it was observed that they are the most communicative during interviews, giving examples to clarify their statements. In the household, restricted codes are prevalently used due to the closed-role positional family orientation. Here, communication is predictable, given that assumptions and expectations from each member are dictated by roles in the family.

To complicate the situation, the multi-lingual community in Loob Bunga has a high regard for the use of the English language, followed by Filipino, the national language. Botolan Zambal, the local language or mother tongue, is

regarded as mediocre. The locals do situational switching, that is, Zambal to Filipino, when they want to make a good impression on relatives and visitors. This may also be the explanation why children use the Filipino words “po” and “opo” to show respect to the elders. Situational switching occurs when another language is more appropriate because it is more respected in that situation (Gumperz, 1982).

Available Media and other Means of Communication

During the three day field immersion, no newspapers were found in the households visited. Newsletters from DepEd and other pamphlets can be found inside the faculty rooms of the elementary schools. Most of the highland houses of Aetas with kinky hair have no television. There is no electricity in the household. The midland settlers have access to electricity. The houses near the residence of the community leader in *barangay* Villar have television but not all have radio. In fact, the houses have digital video disk or DVD players; a karaoke system is installed in one of the residences. Karaoke is the center of entertainment in *barangay* Villar. Aetas gather to sing at the karaoke as early as 6 AM. The young ones are especially exposed to popular songs played in Metro Manila radio stations. They are experts at song-and-dance numbers in noontime shows. They also imitate how youngsters in Metro Manila dress, as shown in local channels.

It was observed that there are no telephone lines in the *barangay* visited. To compensate for the lack of telephones, some locals carry mobile phones. Nearby convenience stores, popularly known as *sari sari* stores (commonly referred to as small local convenient stores), sell text message (SMS) and cell phone call loads for mobile phones. But internet providers are not available in the area. People still rely on postal mail, and they go to the nearby town to make phone calls to friends and relatives working in other parts of the country.

Socio, Political, and Economic Factors

The common social ideal that centers on promoting social concerns or interests beneficial to the community. This is expected in communities with high regard for ‘communalness’ (Gaillard, 2006). The social idea is embodied in the concept, *gemeinschaftsgefühl*. Alfred Adler’s *gemeinschaftsgefühl* refers to brotherly attitude that nurtures social interest leading to social feeling or community feeling (Francis & Kritsonis, 2006). In other words, this concept marks the social concern of members of a community to improve their way of life. The trend from collected data shows that communication plays a significant role in achieving this.

For Loob Bunga locals, interpersonal communication is important because it allows one to articulate the community’s concerns, making the individual valuable to the community. To the minds of the Aetas, the ability to function well in all units of the society is the key to a progressive community. This is exemplified in the roles of community leaders.

As for the political issues, teachers of one elementary school acknowledge the helpful role of the mayor. Because of his help, the school acquired a computer, other facilities, and scholarships for selected students. According to them, the mayor sometimes gives four personal computers, based on the population of the

school. The teachers say that the mayor prioritizes information technology. This may be a long shot because having computers alone does not ensure the successful IT (information technology) learning of students. The availability of qualified IT teachers should also be considered. Scholarship grants and improvement of school and town facilities are virtually dependent upon shifting political influence. Teachers and parents revealed that there is a political agenda behind the granting of scholarships and donation of equipment by politicians and NGOs (non-government organizations). Politicians primarily use the scholarships as a way to teach students how to write the politicians' names. Qualifying examinations were not mentioned during the discussions on scholarship grants.

As for democratic processes, community leaders proudly shared that the local government accommodates Aeta tribal laws during conflict management. Conflicts are settled in the *barangay* level. The community leaders proudly say, *lahat ng mga isyu ay napapagusapan* (issues can be settled through dialogues), that issues are discussed among local government officials and *barangays* before decision were made. People who are able to articulate issues and tribal laws are consulted.

Regarding economic factors, the means of livelihood of the Aetas include "cultivating root crops, vegetables, hunting, fishing, gathering plants, wild fruit" (Gaillard, 2006, p. 11). This livelihood suffered greatly after the eruption of the Mt. Pinatubo. Damage to property and livelihood brought the Aetas to resettlement communities. In the Loob Bunga Resettlement Community, the Aetas' livelihood include *kaingin* (cutting of trees to prepare land for planting), *pag-upa* (renting), and *pagsasaging* (planting and gathering bananas from the mountains).

Poverty is the major problem in the community, which affects students' attendance in schools among other things. Teachers report that a lot of students absent themselves in the middle of the school year because of poverty. Parents are, therefore, compelled to bring their children to the mountains to cut down trees or do some planting with them. Under these circumstances, the parents' priorities shift from letting their children finish school to self-preservation. The students absent themselves from one week to three months in one school year. Although teachers check attendance, they do not put much importance on the number of absences. There is no penalty for many absences. When the *kaingin* practice and absenteeism of students were discussed with the locals, they seemed to regard these as incontestable and accepted to be the way things are. For them, *kaingin* provides a means to meet their basic needs.

It will be difficult to rectify the absenteeism of students due to *kaingin* practice because children are expected to help their parents do this. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory explains why priority is given to these practices because such fulfill the basic needs of the people. People need to work in order to eat.

In connection with *kaingin*, Legaspi (1991) investigated the Filipino social psychology on environmental issues. He identified collective responsibility as a concept to explain the consequences how individuals and groups deal with their environment. However, because developing collective responsibility depends on the needs of *kapwa*, roughly translated as "shared identity" (Enriquez, 1989), Aetas

treat *kaingin* as a non-issue. Underpinning this perspective is *ang paparaya sa kapwa* (Legaspi, 1991), a Filipino phrase which could entail the following semantic extensions: making way, giving, letting others have their way. In effect, the *kaingin* is a way to fulfill the need for income. Although partially discussed during interviews with the teachers and community leaders, replenishing trees after *kaingin* was not the main focus of the discussions.

Expounding more on the application of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the majority of the interviewed teachers said that the stealing of food, not money, is common in classrooms. In short, food is more valuable than money; the immediate relief from hunger is more important than what money symbolizes. In fact, hunger has the power to suspend other principles. The teachers out of pity or *awa*, do not punish the children who steal food.

School Setting

Much of the priming for interest in social issues is carried out by education. It is the microcosm of the whole community where values are introduced, revisited, and affirmed. It is in this light that the school context is taken into consideration.

The primary concern of the two elementary schools in Loob Bunga is to address the literacy rate of the students. Illiteracy can be attributed to the lack of newspapers in the area. During the three-day field immersion, it was observed that *sari-sari* stores do not sell newspapers. However, it was observed that some locals read tabloids. There were no story books found in the households and children only have textbooks to read at home. This was compounded by lack of reading materials which are not even enough to cover half of the student population. This is one major obstacle to development as discussed by MacBride (1980).

Given the shortage in available media, it was observed that much of the learning of the children in the community is aided by their exposure to popular media as demonstrated in their proclivity to sing popular songs in perfect English. They even mimic every inflection and pause of the music artists. While it was initially assumed that the Aetas were reading lyrics from the karaoke screen, their illiteracy became evident when they were asked to sing an unfamiliar song. Indeed, the influence of popular media is vast and can extend to other norms and practices in the community, contributing to the formation of worldviews and political stances (Wasserman, 2010).

Interestingly, the interviewees all agreed that the indicators of being able to communicate efficiently rest on writing, reading and speaking skills. The teachers stressed that their policy for promoting grade 1 students to grade two is: no read and write, no pass.

Despite this regulation, most of the students do not go through pre-elementary schooling. They are enrolled in grade 1 immediately because the parents are in a hurry for them to finish school. To enter Grade 1, incoming students take the School Readiness Assessment or SRA test. Those who pass are placed in section 1; those who fail are placed in section 2. The parents, oblivious of child readiness, disregard pre-school thinking, that skipping it can help hasten their child's graduation from elementary. Teachers report that section 2 classes

comprise mainly of special children who need an education suited to their cognitive development needs. The belief in schooling in the early grades contributes to the high attrition rate of students in the intermediate level. Only half of the students enrolled in Grade 1 make it to Grade 6.

The teachers and the school system assign value to writing and reading more than listening and speaking. The hierarchy is: writing, reading, speaking and listening. Both the students and teachers believe that reading skill is instrumental to obtaining high grades in school, to extending services to the community, and ultimately to achieving one's ambitions. Reading, along with memorization, according to the students, is the solution when they need to understand difficult lessons.

In spite of the high intellectual status accorded English, it is the least favored subject of the students. Most of the students prefer Math, Heograpiya, Kasaysayan at Sibika or HEKASI and Science subjects, followed by Filipino. Interestingly, Math is the consistent favorite of all the students interviewed, and it shows in their grades.

Mathematical computations are perceived as useful by the students since they can easily relate to these skills when working the field and selling goods. Unlike learning English, Math becomes an immediate useful tool in their environment, as it is readily applicable. Parents reinforce these skills when they engage in mathematical computations themselves in their everyday dealings, as reflected in Vygotsky's Theory of Social Development that acknowledges culture as an important factor in cognitive development (Parungao, 2009). Here lies the irony in the perceived value of English and Math. English is valued as an indicator of high intellectual status but it is rarely applied in the community; Math is regarded as a common skill but its value is defined by its use in everyday activities.

Continuing this discussion on school life, students disclosed that teachers make them bring Manila paper and plastic cover for the tables as school projects. This is the extent of the educational value put by teachers on school projects which, based on ideals of academic excellence, is not much. Nevertheless, such practice is not questioned because the students respect their teachers. It was observed that the students, along with their parents, address the teacher as *madam*, a title of a respected woman in the community.

On classroom management, whenever there is conflict among the kinky haired Aetas and the straight haired Aetas, the teachers reconcile the conflicting groups by saying *isa lang ang lahi natin*, roughly translated as, "we are all Filipinos here". This statement may be translated into *pakikisama*, which is a construct defining harmonious relations. Its roots are in *kapwa*, which, according to Enriquez, is the core value governing Filipino interpersonal behavior.

As for the aspirations of the students, the male students said that the following professions are the common aspirations of students their age: teacher, soldier, seaman, engineer, policeman. The girls, on the other hand, aspire to be nurses, teachers, agriculture specialists, and computer secretaries. Apparently, the children think that these careers will make them useful members of their community. Students who finish high school in Botolan have the opportunity to

enter college, and this was expressed with much glee by the locals during the interviews.

These sources of values are behind the distortion, deletion, and generalization of messages from external events. Based on NLP principles, the filtered messages form the internal representation affecting the emotional state which determines the behavior of the individual (See Figure 1).

Conclusions

This exploratory study has sought to capture Filipino communication contexts through the application of the NLP model. In this case, the Aetas selected in the sample are from the towns of Palis, Villar, and Nacolcol. The general communication paradigm of NLP was used to organize the existing values of the Aetas in the mentioned towns, illustrating how such values operate behind the Aetas' communication contexts. NLP respects change; hence, this study does not assume that the Aetas selected in the sample still adhere to traditional Aeta values. Moreover, unearthing traditional values of Aetas were not included in the study as historical and personal backgrounds are not important in the discipline of NLP (Lam, 2009). What is important, however, are the ways present values and beliefs shape culture (Cooper, 2008). Therefore, the values presented in this study are drawn from the experiences of the selected Aetas after the calamitous Pinatubo eruption of June 1991 among other things. Finally, despite the limitations of the sampling method, the primary aim of this study is to provide qualitative data that would describe the values of the sampled Aetas. On that note, the following conclusions were drawn.

Any amount of change, be it personal or social, is exhibited in people's behavior. In NLP, this is commonly referred to as external behavior. This process does not necessarily follow the behaviorist perspective, which operates behind stimulus-response relationship alone. Nevertheless, the principle of NLP deals with the communication process that forms people's internal representations while respecting the knowledge and practices of the community. NLP teaches that before messages are assimilated in the internal representation, they go through filters (Lewis and Pucelik, 1990). Although the proposed model does not introduce any new construct in the NLP Communication Model, the values component here identifies sources of values taken from the Loob Bunga resettlement community. Hence, before any form of social change in Loob Bunga can be instigated, the Values Filters in the NLP Communication Model suggests that any communication approach should consider how messages undergo deletion, distortion, and generalization. This is relevant to know as the same values may be involved in selecting community leaders. The sources of values that filter messages are identified as social class, family structure, language system, media and other means of communication available, socio-economic and political factors, and education.

Recommendations

The proposed framework may be extended to see how research can be used for developing praxis that takes into account the environment-dependent lifestyle of the Aetas, as well as their need for cultural change triggered by the Pinatubo eruption. In addition, an in-depth discussion on how Aetas protect their environment to maintain their livelihood can help further explain the relationship of the Aetas and their surroundings.

For mass communication majors, a comparative analysis of the media habits of the locals with the media habits of people in NCR will help explain the extent of how media becomes useful and influential in people's way of life. In so doing, media as instruments for change or community development can be devised to target specific desired outcomes.

A study on the preferred representational systems⁹ of the locals in Loob Bunga will work in the construction of messages for social change, along with the values filters. Knowing the prominent representational system in the community allows the correct use of sensory based process words in message construction.

Finally, the tenets of Filipino Psychology or *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* can be enriched by analyzing how the Aetas construct their self-image and how this self-image defines what it is to be an Aeta in the 21st century. Many studies have been conducted about the Aeta's culture. In a recent study by Gaillard, he concluded that despite the disaster brought about by Mt. Pinatubo, the Aetas have proven to be resilient. This requires a certain level of cultural change and adaptation to the new environment. According to Shimizu, Aeta social life "hinges on the flexibility and durability of the Aeta social system."⁵³ It will be interesting to know how this flexibility and durability have affected the self-image of Aetas, and how far they would go in welcoming changes that affect their relationship with the environment.

Endnotes

¹External behavior or simply behavior is the result of the internal representation and physiology. - Tad James. *A Model of Communication and Personality. NLP Leadership Practitioner Certification Training Manual*. (Certification Manual, 2009), p. 7.

² The closest English equivalent of *kapwa* is the English word "others". However, the Filipino word *kapwa* is very different from the English word "others". In Filipino, *kapwa* is the unity of the "self" and "others".- Virgilio G. Enriquez. *Indigenous Psychology and National Consciousness*, (Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1989), p. 33.

³ Definition of mentioned Filipino Values: a) *Pakikiramdam* - Rogelia Pe Pua. "Pagtatanung-tanong: A Method of Cross Cultural Research," in Virgilio Enriquez, *Indigenous Psychology: A book of readings* (Quezon City: Akademya ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino, 1990), p. 242; b) *Hiya* - Virgilio G. Enriquez. *Indigenous Psychology and National Consciousness* (Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1989), p. 130; c) *Pakikisama* and d) *Utang na loob* - Virgilio G. Enriquez. "Indigenous Personality Theory," in Virgilio Enriquez ,

Indigenous Psychology: A book of readings (Quezon City: Akademya ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino, 1990), p.297- 299.

⁴External events make the environment of individual. This is interchangeably referred to as “reality” in other NLP literature which corresponds to “territory”. This is the source of stimuli. – Tad James. “A Model of Communication and Personality,” *NLP Leadership Practitioner Certification Training Manual*, (2009), pg. 7; Byron Lewis and Frank Pucelik. *Magic NLP Demystified: A pragmatic guide to communication and change*, (Portland, Oregon: Metamorphous Press, 1990), p. 32; Steve Bavister and Amanda Vickers. *Essential NLP*, (UK: Macmillan Company, 2010), p.5.

¹⁴Lewis and Pucelik, pp. 5-9.

⁵Internal representation in NLP consists of patterns of information people create and store in their minds in combination with images, sounds, feelings, smells and tastes. This is the way memories are stored and encoded. - “NLP-Neurolinguistic Programming,” *NLP Training Business*, 2007

<http://www.nlp-training-business.com/nlp.html>. (10 Aug 2009).

⁶ NLP Communication Model is also known as the Model of Communication and Personality or just The NLP Model. James (2009) refers to this as the general communication model used by NLP Practitioners. In NLP Practitioner Certification Training, this model is introduced as the creation of Grinder and Bandler. It was not copyrighted which is why different literature on NLP make use of this model freely, even making simplified versions along the way. – Yorgos Lam, NLP Trainer, NLP Certification Course 2009 from [www. http://nlp-philippines.com/](http://nlp-philippines.com/) (15 June 2011).

⁷Emotional state refers to the *internal emotional state of the individual -- a happy state, a sad state, a motivated state, and so on.* - James, 2009, p.99.

⁸*Kaingin* of the Aetas is different from illegal logging. Aetas cut down trees to prepare land for planting and they cut considerably fewer trees than illegal loggers. Sources in Loob Bunga say that the trees are replenished after *kaingin* although this paper does not discuss anymore how replenishing of trees are done and monitored.

⁹Representational systems refer to the *internal coding system based around the five senses: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory and gustatory* (Bavister & Vickers, 2010, p.305).

References

- Bavister, S & Vickers, A. (2010). *Essential NLP*. UK: Macmillan Company.
- Berne, E. (1996). *Games People Play: The psychology of human relationships*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Bernstein, B. (n.d.) *Social Class, Language and Socialization*. Karabel and Halsey, 1473-510.
- Bernstein, B. (1971). *Class, Codes, and Control: Theoretical studies towards a sociology of language*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Bernstein, B. (1975). *Class and Pedagogies: Visible and Invisible*. Center for Educational Research and Innovation.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. (1977). *Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction*. Karabel and Halsey, 487-510.

- Brosius, J.P. (1983). The Zambales Negritos: Swidden Agriculture and Environmental Change. *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society*, 11: 123-148.
- Cooper, L. (2008). *Business NLP for Dummies*. England: John Wiley & Sons
- Debats, D.L. and Bartelds, B.F. *The structure of human values: a principal components analysis of the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS)*, <http://dissertations.ub.rug.nl/FILES/faculties/ppsw/1996/d.l.h.m.debats/c5.pdf> (19 March 2008).
- Enriquez, V.G. (1978). Kapwa: a core concept in Filipino social psychology. *Philippine Social Science and Humanities Review*, 42.
- Enriquez, V. G. (1989). *Indigenous Psychology and National Consciousness*. Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
- Francis, N. and Kritsonis, W. (2006). A Brief Analysis of Abraham Maslow's Original Writing of Self-Actualizing People: A Study of Psychological Health. *Doctoral Forum, National Journal of Publishing and Mentoring Doctoral Student Research*, Vol 3, Number 1.
- Gaillard, J.C.. (2006). Traditional Societies in the Face of Natural Hazards: The 1991 Mt. Pinatubo eruption and the Aetas of the Philippines. *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*. Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 5-43.
- Gumperz, J. (1982) *Discourse Strategies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hahn, Ulrike, Bailey, Todd, and Elvin, Lucy. (2005). Effects of Category Diversity on Learning, Memory, and Generalization. *Memory and Cognition*, 33 (2), 289-302.
- Hall, M. (2007). Repositioning of NLP. *Self Actualization*. Retrieved from www.self-actualizing.org/articles.
- Headland, T.N. and Reid, L.A. . 1989. Hunter-Gatherers and their Neighbors from Prehistory to the Present. *Current Anthropology* 30 (1): 43-66.
- James, T. (2009). A Model of Communication and Personality. *NLP Leadership Practitioner Certification Training Manual*.
- James, T & Woodsmall, W. (1988). *Time Line Therapy and the Basis of Personality*. USA: Meta Publications.
- Jensen, E. (2008). *Brain-based Learning: The new paradigm of teaching*. California: Corwin Press.
- Lam, Y. (2008). NLP Certification course of December 2009, <http://nlp-philippines.com/> (15 June 2011).
- Legaspi, A. (1991). *Pagsasalarawan ng Kolektibong Pananagutan*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of the Philippines Diliman.
- Lewis, B. & Pucelik, F. (1990). *Magic NLP Demystified: A pragmatic guide to communication and change*. Portland, Oregon: Metamorphous Press.
- Littlejohn, S. (1996). *Theories of Human Communication 5th ed.* Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Littlejohn, S. (2007). *Theories of Human Communication 9th ed.* Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- MacBride, S. (1988). *Many Voices, One World: Communication and society today and tomorrow*. Paris: Kogan Page Ltd.

- Mathison, J. (2004). *The Inner Life of Words, and inquiry into teaching and learning*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Surrey.
- Mathison, J. (2006). Phenomenology. *Neurolinguistic Programming and Research*. Retrieved from www.som.surrey.ac.uk/NLP/
- McQuail, D. and Windahl, S.. (1993). *Communication Models for the Study of Mass Communications*. UK: Longman Publishing.
- NLP Subjectivity Structure. (2010, July). *NLP structure of subjectivity*. Retrieved from <http://www.exforsys.com/tutorials/nlp/nlp-structure-of-subjectivity.html>.
- NLP - Neurolinguistic Programming. (2007). *NLP Training Business*. Retrieved from <http://www.nlp-training-business.com/nlp.html>.
- Orejas, T. (2008). Aeta: From 'Lubay' to Levis - 15 years after Mt. Pinatubo Eruption. *fPcN interCultural:friends of Peoples close to Nature*. Retrieved from <https://www.fpcn-global.org/node/174>.
- Parungao, J. (2009). Vygotsky and Piaget Theories Applied in the Philippine Setting. *Associated Content*. Retrieved from www.associatedcontent.com, June 28, 2010.
- Reed, W.A. (2007). *Negritos of Zambales: Revised Edition*. U.K.: Dodo Press
- Rokeach, M. (1973). *The Nature of Human Values*. New York: Free Press.
- Schutz, A. (1970). *On Phenomenology and Social Relations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shimizu, H. (1989). *Pinatubo Aytas: Continuity and Changes*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Sternberg, R. (2006). *Cognitive Psychology* 4th ed. Australia: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Wasserman, H. (2010). *Popular Media Democracy and Development in Africa*. London: Routledge.
- What is Neuro Linguistic Programming NLP*. (2011). Retrieved June 1, 2011 from <http://www.opt2xl.co.uk/general.asp?Type=NLP>.