

Stylistics Variation: Understanding Gay Lingo in Social Perspectives

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Abstract Gay lingo is one of the languages commonly spoken by gays and their friends. It manifests linguistics traits that prevent non-speakers from interacting with its speakers. This qualitative research used a case study combined with discourse analysis through production task and elicitation to determine the background of gay lingo speakers, gay lexicon, coinage, social context, and social perspectives of gay lingo speaking. The researcher used semi-structured interviews and survey (using questionnaires) to gather data from purposively selected 12 (gay and non-gay) senior high school students and teachers in a secondary school. The study found that the stylistics variation of gay lingo is in the word coinage through phonology, and morphological transformations, among others. The social context of gay lingo is to provide cover for sensual topics, to gossip, and to upscale one's status. For non-gays, gay lingo speaking is a means to remove communication barriers. Gays perceive gay lingo speaking of non-gays as affirmation. Discursive studies of gay lingo is needed, while studies on the effects of gay lingo on the mainstream language is also recommended.

Keywords: coinage, gay lingo, lexicon, social perspectives, stylistics variation

Introduction

Generally, language is used in interacting, negotiating and defining identities. Subgroups are formed when some adapt a linguistic style not spoken by the mainstream society. One such group that use linguistic style are the gays. In recent years, the researcher observed the rising number of gay students in school where this study was conducted. Almost every class has gay students present that speak some gay lingo. The need to communicate and to eliminate any existing barrier between gay students and non-gay teachers prompted the researcher to conduct a research on its stylistics variation and social context.

Birth of Gay Language

Past studies on gay language across the globe yielded varied terms. In the United States, “Gayspeak” or “Queerspeak” has been elevated to a higher realm of Lavender Linguistics (Leap, 2015), since the term Lavender is a color synonymous with homosexuality. Also, Lavender has been coined to replace the term “queer” which is considered as pejorative. Across the Atlantic Ocean, *Polari* is the name used for the language spoken by gays in England (Baker, 2010). At the same time that *Polari* is developing, gays from South Africa are starting to speak a language called *Gayle* (Luyt, 2014). In the Asian region, gays from Indonesia call their language “*Bahasa*” gay, while gays from the Philippines speak gay lingo.

Linguistic Features of Gay Lingo

Through linguistic styles, gays form speech communities that create boundaries to exclude non-speakers. One could be a member in such speech community by virtue of shared experience of stereotypes fostered by a culturally dominant language. Having experienced social discrimination, members in this kind of social units have learned to oppose the cultural authority of the dominant language by switching to their own varieties of speech or lingo (Baker, 2010).

One interesting feature of gay lingo is the gays' style of employing the mainstream language yet keeping the gay discourse exclusive by distorting the English language schema, thus, the meanings of the sentences are also changed (Casabal, 2008). Gay lingo speaking does not follow the subject-predicate schema of the English language, neither does it follow the local dialectic schema. Instead, the lingo is a blend of English, Filipino and Bicol dialectic schema utilizing improvisations and affixations. In fact, Alba (2015) observed the fast gay lexical evolution of gay lingo which is why Salao (2010) asserted that it cannot be called a language, but Casabal (2008) noted that gay lingo in the Philippines is basically phonological and the meaning is determined by the sound produced by the first two syllables of the expression. Semantics in gay lexis is more connotative than denotative. Gay lingo manifests certain linguistics traits that prevent non-speakers from interacting with its speakers.

However, as time passed, the gay lingo has gradually penetrated the consciousness of the mainstream society. At present, even some non-gays have acquired a few gay lingo lexicons, which they use perhaps to spice up their conversations (Alba, 2015). The gay lingo diffusion in the mainstream language could be attributed to their usage in TV, radio, print and the social media, which enabled the lingo to gain faster and better access to the mainstream society where it also functions as a "conduit" and "progenitor" (Casabal, 2008 p.77). Gay lingo can be a convenient channel for the speaker to express their thoughts and feelings not easily conveyed via the mainstream language. Likewise, many words that have been appropriated by the mainstream language originated from gay lexis, which proves that the vast utility of its lexicon made it appealing to a wider audience.

Gender Perception

Sociologists define gender and sex differently. Crossman (2017) asserted that sex is biologically categorized, while gender is socially classified, further asserting that gender is a learned behavior and is socially constructed. Expected behavior from men and women are different across cultures. He further opined that in the western nations like the U.S., only two genders are socially accepted, but some culture and societies accept the presence of a third gender other than that of men and women. Hence gender identity is ascribed culturally, which explains the social norms associated with gender. It also clarifies how these norms differ across cultures and societies. These social norms on gender has influenced the way gays and gay language are perceived thereby affecting the social perspectives of the mainstream society toward homosexuals. Furthermore, these norms explain the root of prejudices which gays are subjected to.

Filipino-American gays in the US were not spared from similar stories of prejudice. Nadal and Corpus (2012) investigated the experiences of Filipino gay migrants in the U.S. and identified five domains that influence the sexual and gender identity perception of the interviewees. These domains that have made great impact on the psychological aspect were: religion, family, race, multiple identities, and variant experiences. The Catholic faith is acknowledged as the primary influence to the families' inability to accept these expats sexual identities.

Function and Gay Lingo Coinage

Prejudice could have led to the birth of a secret Mediterranean slang called *Polari* (Baker, 2010), an elaborate lexicon of a mixture of Italian, Cockney rhyming slang, back-slang (pronouncing a word with a backward spelling) and sailor

slang. *Polari* was spoken by homosexual men working in the theatre and cruise ships to hide their conversation from hostile outsiders and undercover (policemen), because at the time it was first created in the 1940s, same sex relation was a punishable offense. Hence, *Polari* functioned as a cover for the speaker to avoid detection and stigmatization. Being a secret language, it had never been committed to print, but was passed by word of mouth, thereby many versions has been created (Baker, 2010). *Polari* is spoken in a sarcastic or demeaning fashion and is notable for its use of feminine words to codify other terms like “*Betty bracelets*”, “*Lily law*”, or “*orderly daughters*”, word coinage for the police – the natural enemies of the *Polari* speaker (Baker, 2010). *Polari* also gives its speakers a kind of status or “camp up”. However, Baker (2010) opines that *Polari*’s birth is more of necessity than a camp fad; hence, after its secret meaning became public knowledge through the 1960s BBC Radio, it ceased to be used.

In South Africa, Luyt (2014) traced *Gayle*’s development from an argot or secret language to its present form. It originally manifested as “*Moffietaal*”, an Afrikaan term for homosexual language. Over time, *Gayle* had developed into a stylect spoken by gay English and Afrikaans-speakers across South Africa. It manifested out of fear from getting prosecuted for homosexuality, which was previously considered illegal.

In the local scene, Salao (2010) theorized that gay lingo probably had started in the early 70’s when Filipinos were still quite old fashioned and homosexuality had not fully been comprehended. To be identified as gay at that time created a stigma, which might have been the rationale for gays to begin using codes in their discourse. Whereas, Ladlad founder and political activist, Danton Remoto (2008) asserts that gay lingo does not have a specific origin for it comes from a “carnival” of sources. He even ventured that the way Taglish is spoken now

by the educated elite and the middle class is an influence of gay language.

Regardless of origin, gay lingo can be classified as a sociolect (or social dialect). Sangga (2015) even cited different forms of gay lingo sociolects such as “Englog” a combination of English and Tagalog, Carabao English, Coño English, among others. He further asserted that gay language did not have specific formula in gay word coinage. What was highly significant was the delivery and expression which feminizes speech. Hence, gay lingo was better spoken than written.

Despite the many research conducted on gay language, few studies were conducted for the specific purpose of enhancing teaching and learning situations which this study intends to bridge. This study is anchored on Vygotsky’s Social Development Theory. It is the premise of this theory that learners are active participants in their learning, particularly when learning context is positive. This means that there is learning acquisition when teachers are perceived to work collaboratively with the learners. By speaking their lingo, gay learners may perceive their non-gay teacher as collaborators to their learning.

Understanding gay lingo may lead non-gay students and teachers to discard their gender biases and promote mutual respect instead. It may also facilitate the better implementation of the Gender Awareness and Gender Sensitivity program of the government. Since the school is the training ground of future leaders, it is the ultimate goal of this study to initiate action trained learners whose social perspectives go beyond gender preference. After these learners leave the school portals they could become community leaders who treat gays and non-gays without prejudice.

Purposes of the Research

Despite this gradual entry of gay lingo in the mainstream language, it was noted that in some parochial communities there still exist perceived stigma attached to gays or gay lingo. For instance, in the school where this study was conducted, gay discrimination still exists. Some gay students may still encounter verbal harassment or experience occasional bullying from non-gay students or even non-gay teachers. Thus, gays have learned to respond through gay lingo that are cleverly worded. Still, behind this funny and creative lexicon is the desire for respect and affirmation from non-gay students and teachers.

This study aims to eliminate discrimination and to enhance gay acceptance in the school environment as well as to concretize the Mission of the Department of Education in the Philippines:

“To protect and promote the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete basic education where students learn in a child-friendly, gender-sensitive, safe and motivating environment.”

This study identified the stylistics variation (lexical, grammatical and discourse) features of gay lingo and its social perspectives among gays and non-gay senior high students and teachers in a secondary school. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following descriptive questions:

1. What are the gay lexicons, discourse function and how are they coined?
2. What are the social contexts of gay lingo?
3. How does gay lingo affect the social perspectives of gays toward non-gays and gay lingo speaking and vice versa?

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher employed various methods in this qualitative research. Case study was used to initiate the profiling of the demographic background of gay lingo speakers who are the participants of this study. This approach was combined with discourse analysis through production task and elicitation to understand the gay lexicon, coinage, social context of gay lingo, and social perspectives of gay lingo speaking among gays and non-gay senior high students and teachers in a secondary school.

Participants

This study adapted a two tier sampling method Purposive sampling identified and included in the list gay and non-gay students and teachers that speak gay lingo in varying degrees of fluency. From this list, a total of 12 participants were randomly selected to represent a considerable population of gays and gay lingo speakers from senior high school students from different strands and from junior high school and senior high school faculty and non-teaching-staff of the target school. The participants included seven gays; four are students while three are teachers. The five non-gays are two teachers, one non-teaching staff and two students.

The gay-student-participants' ages ranged from 17 to 22, the gay-teacher-participants are in mid-30's, and the non-gays age ranged between 18 to mid-40. All gay participants admitted that their realization of their gender happened while in their primary grades either through family members, or play mates and school mates. They later learned gay lingo from other gay friends during their intermediate years which was further enhanced in high school. The non-gays who speak gay lingo learned it the same way as the gays. Lexical choices and

pronunciation depend on academic background and social status. Gays from the lower bracket are exposed to gayness and gay lingo much sooner for they utilize their talents in styling and designing to earn extra income to finance their education and support their family. During transcription, the researcher assigned pseudonyms to the participants to protect their right to confidentiality and adhere to the ethical standards of research.

Instruments

The instruments used in this research were semi-structured interview patterned after Hajek and Giles (2005) instrument (Please see attached appendix) and questionnaires.

One questionnaire was modeled after Lunzaga, Bendulo and Felisilda's (2011) instrument for the production task intended for the gay lingo speaking participants. It is divided into two columns, one column is for the gay lexis and phrases and the second column corresponds to the meaning of the gay lexis and phrases.

The other was operationally designed by the researcher wherein aside from the demographic background of the participant, a space for gender preference included choices for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender). This was designed to identify their gender preference and to determine if the gay participants openly accept their sexuality.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher first gathered data through a semi-structured interview patterned after, Hajek and Giles (2005), which included a short dialog in gay lingo and a popular Filipino children folk song in mainstream language accompanied by questions to determine the comprehension level of the participants.

The interview is divided into four parts – (1) the demographic background of the participant which focused on their sexuality realization and the time they learned gay lingo; (2) the lexical, grammatical and discourse features of the gay lexicon; (3) the social context of gay lingo and; and (4) the social perspectives of gays and non-gays about gay lingo speaking. The researchers informed the participants that the responses would be recorded in a voice recorder, but adopted strict confidentiality.

The researcher first conducted the interview delivered in three languages – Gubatnon, Filipino and English to better facilitate an interactive interview. Then, the researcher provided the questionnaires to be filled out with the required responses by each participant.

The researcher interviewed each participant separately, which lasted from an hour to more than two hours in different places such as a classroom, the faculty room, a coffee shop and the park. The researcher used a thematic interpretation in analyzing the collected data. First, data are categorized according to themes. Then, the researcher transcribed and categorized the data collected based on the specific descriptive questions posed in the statement of the problem.

The gay lexis collected are classified and tabulated by function, and alphabetically arranged. Afterwards, the gay lexis were also later used as the basis in the gay lingo dictionary developed by the researcher.

Findings

Gay Lexicon, Discourse Function & Coinage

From the production task, the researcher made a list of gay words and classified them according to sentence function: as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Nouns in the Gay Lexicon

| Nouns | Meaning in Bikol or Filipino | Meaning in English |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Anda/Andas | Pera | Money |
| Awra | Borloloy | Accessory |
| Bagaret | | Bag |
| Beki/Bekky/Ukang/ Shukang | Bakla | Gay |
| Bes/Bff | kaibigan | Short for bestfriend |
| Bidsaru | alahas | Beads/jewelry |
| Bonakid/Kyuta/Junakes | Bata/anak | Child |
| Boomcycle | | Tricycle |
| Bugarit | Sigarilyo | Cigarette |
| Carla Lou | Kotse | Car |
| Chararat | Tsismis | Gossip |
| Char/Charot/Chos/Echos | Buwa/lokolang | A fib/ a lie/ a joke |
| Charo Santos/ Charito Solis | | |
| Churba/churva | May nangyari | Incident or happening (Sexual in nature) |
| Cloga | Takong | High-heels |
| Du-ay | | Make-up |
| Friendship | Kaibigan | Friend |
| Gelay/Girla/Girlash/Girlalu/Merlat | Babae | Girl/Woman |
| Hawdang | Bahay | House |
| Jyowa/browa | Asawa | Boyfriend/girlfriend/ spouse |
| Jujej | Huwes | Judges |
| Jumasay | Pamasahé | Fare |
| Lalala/lafus/lafang/lafangga | Pagkain | Food |
| Legamiy | Binti | Legs |
| Lokiss | | Friend |
| Kyuyam | Ayam | Dog |
| Martha/Monakels/Monarks | Pera | Money |
| Mingka/Fafa/Boylet/utoko | Lalaki | A guy/ a man |

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mirat | Kustomer | Customer |
| Mudra | Mama/Nanay | Mother |
| Nyelpak | | Cell phone |
| Nota | Pribadong parte ng lalaki | Penis |
| Pes/Pisilak | Pisngi/Mukha | Face |
| Punda | | Foundation (Make-up) |
| Pudra/Fudra | Papa/Tatay | Father |
| Otaw | Tao | Person |
| Sisteret | Kapatid na babae | Sister |
| Shu-es | Sapatos | Shoes |
| Shulangot | Kulangot | Booger/dried nasal mucus |
| Shupatembang | Kapatid | Sibling |
| Shupe | Kape | Coffee |
| Warla | Kaaway | Opponent/Enemies |
| Waley/Rowena | Wala/Wara | Zero/None |
| Wigams | Wig | Wig |
| Yaya Belle | Katulong/yaya | Housemaid |

The gay lexicon of the place where the study was conducted is a combination of Tagalog, Filipino or English and brand names or Celebrity names which are common to other gay lexicon spoken in some parts of the country. The variation occurs in some locally-based words like “*kyuyam*,” which stands for “*ayam*” a local term for dog. From nouns, gays also have pronouns.

Table 2. Pronouns in the Gay Lexicon

| Pronouns | Meaning in Bicol or Tagalog | Meaning in English |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Akes/akech/Akim | Ako/akin | I/Me/mine –first person singular |
| Anek/anik/ anek-anek | Ano/ anu-ano | What/whatever/anything |
| Ikas | Ikaw | You – second person |
| Itashi | Siya | Her/Him |
| Itey/Itash/ites/itech | Ito/yan | This/that |
| Sinech | Sino | Who |
| Tayes | Tayo | Us/We-first person plural |

As gleaned from Table 2, the pronouns are mostly phonologically based on the first syllable, while the last syllable is replaced with a suffix – “*ech*”, “*sh*”, “*-s*” or “*-ek*”. Each suffix attached has a particular function in the sentence, “*akes*” stands for “I” or “me” while “*akech*” or “*akim*” stands for “mine”. On the other hand, when referring to objects, “*ites*” or “*itey*” stands for “this”, while “*itash*” refers to “that” provide transition statement from discussion of Table 2 to introduction to Table 3.

Table 3. Verbs in the Gay Lexicon

| Verbs | Meaning in Bicol or Tagalog | Meaning in English |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Bet/betaro | Gusto | Like |
| Burlog/Urlog | Tulogna | Sleep |
| Buysu/buy-sing | Bakal/bili | Buy |
| Chalita/Mating | Kalit/Nakaw | Steal |
| Crayola | Iyak | Cry |
| Dansala | Sayaw/sumayaw | Dance |
| Getswang | Kuha/kunin | Get |
| Gora/Gorabels | Tayona | Let’s go |
| JolinaMagdangal/ Bulina/Vega | Ulina/ uwina | Going home/ go home |
| Kamshi/Kamche | Halika | Come here |
| Keri | Kaya | Can do/ can manage |
| Lafang/Lafus | Kain/kumain | Eat |
| Lamyerda | Lakwatsa/Pasyal/Gala | Gallivant |
| Lefang/Lefangga | Halik | Kiss |
| Libakarnes | Libak | Backstab |
| Najee-ing | Nakita | Have seen/saw |
| Nomage/nomo | Inom ng alak | Drinking spree |
| Payang/Peyalu | Magbayad | Pay |
| Pasók | | Approve |
| Rampa/rampage | Aalis | to leave/go |
| Tita-e | Tumae | Defecate |
| Ukray | Pagalitan | Scolded |
| Umbag/Jumbag/Umbagarnes | Suntok/ sinuntok | Assaulted/had been hit |
| Zhindig | Tayó/tumayó | Stand |

The verbs are made up of Bicol, Filipino, English, and Local Celebrity mixtures. Many of these lexical terms are phonological in nature either in the first or second syllable. Some English words are transformed into gay lexis through suffixation. Also found in the list are the gay adjectives.

Table 4. Adjectives in the Gay Lexicon

| Adjectives | Meaning in Bicol or Tagalog | Meaning in English |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Brenda | Matalino | Brainy/Intelligent |
| Bokadera | Madaldal | Tattle-tale/talkative |
| Burlog | Tulógna | Asleep |
| Chaka/Chapter | Pangit | Ugly |
| Chesa/Gayonara/Gandara | Maganda/Magayon | Pretty/Beautiful |
| Corona/title | Panalo | Winner |
| Dakas | Malaki | Big (usually refers to male organ) |
| Damas/Damba | Madami | Plenty/many |
| Fayatola | Payat | Skinny |
| Gyurod/Jurod/Nyurod/ Ngyurod | Burod/Buntis Sobra | Pregnant Excessive/superlative |
| Gravity | | degree |
| Imbyerna | Inis | Annoyed/irritated |
| Kiyetom/Kyutom | Maitom/maitim | Dark skinned/Black |
| Kyuh/Kyawti | Mabaho | Smelly/stinky |
| Ligwak | Talo/Pierde | Having lost in a contest |
| Luz Valdes | Nawala | Lost/missing |
| Maharlika Highway | Mahal | Expensive |
| Nacolombia | Pina-asa | False |
| Pasok/Pasokiti | Tiyak | Confirmed/Sure |
| Peg | Sitwasyon | Situation/label |
| Purita/Purita Jimenez | Pobre | Poor |
| Shaba Ella | Mataba | Fat |
| Shala | Sosyal | Classy/luxurious |
| Shale-ara | Matalino | Intelligent |
| Shuti-ar | Maputi | Light skinned/White |
| Shunga | Tanga | Stupid |
| Shegi/Shege-ar/Tegebam | Patay/Tigok | Dead |
| Talap | Masarap | Yummy/Delicious |

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Thunder/Rangler | Matanda/Gurang | Old/Elderly |
| Trulili | Totoo | True/truth |
| Viola | Gwapo | Handsome |
| Walley/Wasang/Washington/ | Kapos/Wala | Nothing/None |
| Waseley | | |
| Yamanar | Mayaman | Wealthy/rich |

The adjectives presented in Table 4 are likewise combinations of English, Bicol and Tagalog or Filipino. Coinage is based on the phonology of either the first, middle or last syllable of the original term. Either the prefixes- “nyu”, “shu”, “ju” or “kyu” or the suffixes-“ar” or “er” are attached to the first, or last syllable to create the adjectives in the gay lexicon.

Some words have dual usage as adjectives or as verbs. The adjective “chapter”, gay lexis for ugly, is used with an accompanying number to indicate the degree of ugliness. For example: “chapter 1” means slightly ugly, while “chapter 3” stands for much uglier or very ugly. Thus, the higher the number would imply severity or intensity.

Table 5. Adverbs in the Gay Lexicon

| Adverbs | Meaning in Bicol or Filipino | Meaning in English |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Chekaro | Tama | Check/Correct/Right |
| Ditey/Ditech/Ditesh/Denshi | Dito/Dini | Here |
| Doonek | Doon | There |
| Plangak/Plang/Planggana | Oo | Yes |
| Wiz/Wish/Winchel | Hindi/Diri | No/Wala |
| Whereshalo | Saan | Where |
| 48 years | Matagal | Something is taking a long Time |

Table 5 shows that some of the adverbs can be interchanged, depending on how the speaker uses them in the sentence. It can be noted that the last syllable usually changes in form and a suffix is attached to it.

Overall, nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives and adverbs are coined through phonology and morphology, by attaching or replacing prefixes to the first syllable; or suffixes to the last syllable. A few lexicons are given new form by inverting them which supports the study of Lunzaga and colleagues (2011) and Casabal (2008) on affixation and morphological transformation of words coming from the mainstream language.

Examples of how the gay lexis are used:

1. *Kanina pa tayesh ditey.* – We have been here for quite some time.
2. *Uyy, Najeeing ko an browa you, may kaopod na mirlat.* – Hey, I saw your boyfriend with another girl.
3. *Ka-shala san bagaret mo, amigs.* – Your bag is so classy, friend.
4. *Nag-crayola an shupatembang ko kay inukray ni Mudra, pan-o najeeing na naki-lefangga sa kaniya jowa.* – My sister cried for she got scolded after Mama saw her kissing her boyfriend.
5. *Winchel akech maka-peyalu saimo kay wiz akech monakels.* – I can't pay you because I have no money.

To further assess the gay lingo speaking fluency of the gay participants, they were asked to translate both in writing and speaking a popular children folk song, which had been circulated some time ago in the mobile phones.

| Leron, Leron Sinta | Jeron, Jeron Zhinta | Leron, Leron, My Love English translation By Roberto Verzola |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Leron, leron sinta | Jeron, jeron zhinta | Leron, Leron, my love |
| Buko ng papaya | Juko sin piyaya | Papaya seeds above |
| Dala-dala'y buslo, | Bitbitar an juslo | He took a bamboo box |
| Sisidlan ng bunga. | Kyutangan ng junga | To keep the fruits he'd get |

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Pagdating sa dulo | Pag-abutar sa shulo | Then as he neared the top |
| Nabali ang sanga | Nashutol an shanga | The entire branch broke up |
| Kapus kapalaran | Waley shupalaran | It's not my lucky day |
| Humanap ng iba. | Finding na <i>ng Shiba</i> . | I'll find another way! |

Only one of the young gay-participants managed to translate the whole song. For words that did not previously have equivalent gay lexicon, the gay-participant coined new ones by adding the prefixes “*sh*”, “*zh*” and “*j*” to the first syllable of the words. The cited gay translation in the preceding page is taken from the young gay-participant’s own translation and not from the mobile phone.

Semantics is determined by the phonology produced by either the first or last syllables of the term. Some terms are results of malapropisms or onomatopoeic words that resemble a preexisting word like “Crayola”, which originally is a brand of a particular crayon, but is a gay lingo substitution for the English word “cry”. Another is “Jolina Magdangal”, a Filipina celebrity where the sound of the first two syllables of her name resembles the Bicol-Gubatnon expression for “*uli na*” or go home.

Meaning can also be in a form of an allusion such as “*anda*” short for Andalusian horse, one of the most expensive horses in the world, which explains its use to replace the word “*pera*” or “*kwarta*”. Another allusion is the term “*char*”, a contraction of “*charlatan*” equivalent for “joke only” or for something stated that is a lie or untrue.

Gay words from Bicol-Gubat, that are coined based on Tagalog or Filipino, English or Celebrity names, conform to the normative gay expressions in other places with few local variants, which confirms Casabal’s (2008) claim about the presence of standard gay expressions understood and spoken by the general gay population. Hence, gays from the town of Gubat can communicate with gays from other places in the country.

The stylistics variation of gay lingo is manifested in the coinage and the style of attaching or replacing prefixes to the first syllable or suffixes to the last syllable. Gay lingo speakers do not have specific formula or rule about which particular prefix or suffix should be attached to a word appropriated from the mainstream language, but what the speaker follows is the euphony of the lexis and the similarity of the sound of either the first or the last syllable with the original word. The style in which mainstream language are utilized and transformed into a new register is what gives gay lingo its variation that also helps maintain its exclusivity.

Social Context of Gay Lingo

As for the social context of gay lingo, the speakers unanimously answered that it is intended as a secret language of the gays when gossiping, saying unkind words, being sarcastic and mocking others, or in elevating the speaker's social status or demonstrating new learning. The gays admitted switching to gay lingo if there are non-gays around, when back stabbing someone, or talking about somebody like a new boyfriend or a prospective lover or about sexual exploits. The gays also revealed gay lingo speaking was another way to show sophistication because some English terms are used.

This response tells about the gay lingo speakers' strategy of shifting from one language to another which can be called code-switching. Code-switching is alternating between two or more languages or language varieties in order to emphasize a point, to affirm one's identity or status (Mabule, 2015).

Social Perspectives of Gays and Non-gays

The non-gays unanimously admit that they only speak gay lingo in the presence of other gays, or when having light and informal discussion. Furthermore, the non-gay participants do not think

it appropriate for teachers to converse in gay lingo with the gay students while classes are being conducted. Instead, they suggest that gay lingo be used sparingly with gay students during light talks or to lighten the discussion.

On the other hand, the gay-participants agree that it may be slightly disadvantageous on the part of the gays for non-gays to learn the lingo, however, they think of it as a positive manifestation of the acceptance of the gays because it eliminates communication barrier supporting Wyatt, and colleague (2008) in their assertion about the effect of teacher's attitude toward gay students' development and Vygotsky's Social Development Theory. These social perspectives of both the gays and non-gays may be viewed as the way in which various systems in society interconnect and maintain social equilibrium.

Discussion

This study identified the stylistics variation and social perspectives of gay lingo among gays and non-gay senior high school students and teachers in a secondary level. This research was conducted for the specific purpose of enhancing teaching and learning situations.

The major findings posed in this paper about gay lingo: a) gay lexicons, discourse function and coinage; b) the social contexts of gay lingo and c) the social perspectives of gays toward non-gays and gay lingo speaking and vice versa in the school environment.

The gay lexicon have discourse function as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Gays use these gay lexicon as substitute to regular mainstream words. The gay lexical usage and meaning can be gauged from the phonology of either the first or last syllable of the word, by malapropisms or through allusion, while coinage is manifested by adding prefixes or suffixes to either the first syllable or last syllable of

a lexis adapted from the mainstream Bicol, Tagalog or Filipino, or English as well as Celebrity names and brand names that have a similar sound with some terms. The stylistics variation of gay lingo is in the transformation of mainstream words into new register by attaching or replacing prefixes to the first syllable or suffixes to the last syllable.

Gay lingo is spoken when discussing private matters which are usually sensual in nature, or when gossiping specially if within hearing distance of the subject of gossip (Casabal, 2008; Alba, 2015). The basic function of gay lingo is to provide a cover for its speakers to freely express their thoughts and feelings. Moreover, gays code switch to create exclusivity amongst themselves, to project a semblance of sophistication and elevate their status. Educated gays use gay lexicon that signify their scholastic and social status, while gays from lower strata speak gay lingo to create a semblance of sophistication because some gay lexis are mixed with English words. Similar assertion may be deduced from Salao (2010) and Casabal (2008) that educated gays use gay lexicon that reflect their academic background and social standing in the community, while gays from the lower strata speak in gay lingo to provide them an illusion of elevating their status since some gay lexicon are used as alternatives to speaking in straight English.

The gay lingo speaking non-gays appreciate both the creative style in its coinage and usage. However, they are averse to using it during formal conversation especially with persons of authority. The gays, on the other hand, consider gay lingo speaking by non-gays as a sign of affirmation of their gender preference and as a key to gain entry back into the mainstream society.

The above-mentioned findings may have implications in the teaching and learning environment. By understanding the

principles of affixations in gay lexis, non-speakers can interact with gay lingo, speakers which could eliminate communication barriers. Also, familiarity with the social context of gay lingo would guide non-gay educators of the appropriate occasion to code switch when in the company of gay lingo speakers. Supported by Vygotsky's Social Development Theory (1978), the principles of gay lingo affixation and its social context may concretize the implementation of the Mission of the Department of Education in the Philippines.

When students perceive teachers as collaborators in their learning, meaning and understanding can be constructed. Teachers' attitudes are critical to the overall development of students. They can grossly influence how learners will perceive themselves and their environment especially if these gay learners are experiencing family persecution because of their sexual identity (Wyatt, et al, 2008). Wyatt and Colleagues (2008) further asserted that most learners perceive school as their second home where they stay for about ten (10) hours a day and they regard teachers as their second parents. So a positive environment will benefit them. Hence, teachers must ensure that learning can transpire especially among students belonging to the LGBT community.

Recommendations

Teachers handling lower level students should be provided with trainings to equip them in recognizing and counselling students with gay tendencies. Non-gay students, teachers and administrators should have more exposure to gay lexis through seminars on linguistics and discursive studies on gay lingo to facilitate better communication between gay and non-gay students and teachers. Gays and non-gay students, and teachers should interact more often using gay lingo to remove the biases toward gays. However, teachers are cautioned to speak gay lingo during informal class discussions, consultations and

conferences only. This study has limited participants, thus a similar study wherein the demographic background of the gay lingo speakers, the lexical, and grammatical as well as discourse features of gay lingo, the social context and the social perspectives among gays and non-gay students and teachers in other secondary schools combined with quantitative approach is recommended to have bigger number of participants. Finally, a new study is recommended to determine the effects of gay lingo on mainstream language.

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Appendix

Interview Schedule

| Interview Schedule for Gays: | No. _____ |
|---|-----------|
| I. Preliminary | |
| II. Body | |
| A. Participant's demographic background | |
| 1. How long have you been speaking in gay lingo? | |
| B. Origin of gay lexicons | |
| 1. Who taught you to speak in gay lingo? Or where did you first learn to speak gay lingo? | |
| 2. Can you cite examples how gay words are created? | |
| 3. Meaning of Gay lexicons | |
| • Please translate the following gay lingo dialog in our regular language. | |
| <i>Gay A: "Hoy Baklush, may monakels ka ba today?"</i> | |
| <i>Gay B: "Hay naku, waley. Purita an peg san lolah mo niyan."</i> | |
| <i>Gay A: "Lafang tashi sa La Comida, bes?"</i> | |
| <i>Gay B: "Ay, winchel! Ma gora akech kun Liberty an lolah mo!"</i> | |
| • Can you translate the folk song "Leron, Leron" into gay lingo? | |
| C. Context of gay lingo | |
| 1. When do you speak in gay lingo? | |
| 2. What are the situations that would make you switch to gay lingo? | |
| D. Social Perspectives | |
| III. Closing | |