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Leveraging Multilingual Capacity and Learner Involvement: Insights from the Osaka University Ilokano Textbook Development Project

多言語の専門知識と学習者の関与を活用する：
大阪大学イロカノ語教科書開発プロジェクトからの知見

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Abstract

During the Spring-Summer semester of 2022, Ilokano began to be offered as a language elective in Osaka University. The class mainly caters to undergraduate students who major in Filipino and other graduate students under the School of Foreign Languages and Graduate School of Humanities. The course carries the title Philippine Languages: Elementary Ilokano. Challenges to teaching Ilokano became apparent in the initial gathering and making of classroom materials because Ilokano written work in Japanese are limited to phrasebooks from the 1980s and miscellaneous online resources. In addition, books published are only in English and Filipino and were not suitable for Japanese language learners. It is due to this gap that the authors decided to develop an Ilokano textbook in Japanese. This paper describes the process of writing the Ilokano textbook and our observations and insights as textbook authors with regard to textbook development and Ilokano language. As most textbook development is expert-centered, the feasibility of learner involvement in textbook development will be explored.

要約

大阪大学では 2022 年度から「フィリピン諸語：初級イロカノ語」が開講され、外国語学部のフィリピン語専攻の学生と人文学研究科の学生を主な対象として、イロカノ語が選択授業で教えられるようになった。日本語で書かれたイロカノ語教材は 1980 年代以降の表現集と種々のオンライン資料に限られているため、開講後初期の段階で、イロカノ語を教える上では教材の収集と作成に課題があることが明らかとなった。さらに、出版されている書籍は英語とフィリピン語で書かれたもののみであり、日本語話者の学習者には適していなかった。このような背景により、筆者らは日本語によるイロカノ語教科書を開発することにした。本稿では、イロカノ語教科書の執筆過程、および、教科書の執筆者としての、教科書開発とイロカノ語に関する気づきと考察を述べる。教科書開発の多くは専門家中心型であることから、体験中心型の教科書開発において学習者が関与することの可能性を探る。

Keywords: experience-centered, textbook development, Ilokano

キーワード：体験中心型、教科書開発、イロカノ語

1. Introduction

The interest in learning foreign languages can be traced from way back to ancient times. This was not only beneficial in terms of trade but also for expansion and colonization. During the Spanish colonial period of the Philippines, several missionaries produced the first systematic analyses of several languages in the country to support their endeavor of evangelizing the locals (Zwartjes 2014, Sales 2015). Notable among these was a book on catechism in the Philippines and the first translation of Roberto Belarmino's *Doctrina Christiana* into Ilokano by Augustinian missionary Francisco Lopez in 1621. Lopez also wrote a grammar book, *Arte de la Lengua Yloca*, in 1627 and was working on an unfinished Ilokano dictionary before he died (Rodriguez 2013). Almost a decade towards the end of Spanish colonization of the Philippines, Jose Naves also a missionary published *Gramatica Hispano-Ilocana* in 1976.

During the American period, English was promoted as the language that would improve or “civilize” the Filipinos in the eyes of the colonizers (Martin 2008). Linguistics was formally established in the Philippines in 1924 with the founding of the Department of Linguistics at the University of the Philippines, led by German Otto Scheerer. Cecilio Lopez, a student of Scheerer, earned his Ph.D. in 1928 under Otto Dempwolff at the University of Hamburg. His dissertation focused on comparing the Ilokano and Tagalog languages. Lopez went on to have a career in linguistics at the University of the Philippines and became known as the first Filipino professional linguist (Quakenbush 2005).

In the 1950s to 1960s, Japanese scholars started to show interest in Southeast Asia. Courses about the region started to be offered in national universities in Japan. In 1984, Osaka University (under the former Osaka University of Foreign Studies) started to offer courses in Filipino language and society. As of the time of writing, it is one of the only two universities¹ in Japan that offer Filipino as a language major. In Japan, the study of Philippine languages is mainly on Filipino, the national language of the Philippines which is based on Tagalog (Reid 2005). For example, in Osaka University (hereafter, OU)'s Filipino Language Program, there are five required Filipino language classes for the First- and the Second-Year students. Students in their Third- and Fourth-year can choose their preferred Filipino language classes from upper-level elective subjects. In the undergraduate curriculum, it is not required for the Filipino majors to earn units in another Philippine language for them to be conferred with a degree in Foreign Languages Major in Filipino. Also before 2022, whether or not another Philippine language elective can be offered basically depended on whether a faculty member was available (and knowledgeable enough) to teach it. In this paper, we write “Tagalog” and understand that it is mostly through Tagalog language that most Filipino grammar is based. When referring to the language that is studied, including those of OU, we use the term “Filipino”. We use the word “Tagalog” when comparing the language to grammar similarities and differences with Ilokano.

Though scarce, Filipino language textbooks in Japanese language are currently available as

resource materials for those interested in the language. Aside from being a reference material to learn grammar, these textbooks also introduce snippets of Philippine culture and society. In OU, the following are the main references used for the Filipino language classes: Introduction to Filipino Grammar (フィリピン語文法入門) by Oue (2003), “Filipino” (フィリピン語) by Oue and Yoshizawa (2012), Comprehensive Textbook on Filipino (大学のフィリピン語) by Yamashita, Casel, and Takano (2018), Original Textbook for 1st Year (フィリピン語 1 年生教科書) and Original Textbook for 2nd Year (フィリピン語 2 年生教科書) by Yamoto (from 2019 and revised every year hereafter). These Filipino textbook’s authors are written by second language speakers (L2) or a team composed of first language/native (L1) and second language speakers.

In a study of religious missionaries and their translation activities in Peru (2007:12), Durston uses the term “endogenous translation” to describe when missionaries translate works in other languages into their native language. Here, foreign texts are translated into the writer’s language and are adapted to the new learners who must be guided to understand foreign cultures. The opposite of this is “exogenous translation” wherein texts are created by authors or translators from the source culture who aim to introduce their own writings into a foreign culture (Zwartjes 2014, 48).

The main objective of this paper is for us, as Ilokano textbook authors, to share our non-usual way of developing a foreign language textbook. This includes our team’s, being a mix of first language/native (L1) and non-first language/native (non-L1) speakers of Ilokano, realizations about language learning and the importance of cross-linguistic exercises in understanding different languages. This report fills the gap where the process behind writing foreign language textbooks have not been fully described. We aim to reconsider textbook development as an “experience-centered” process rather than an “expert-centered” one.

This paper is composed of four parts. The Introduction briefly traced the past to current situation of studying Philippine languages in Japan. Through our experiences as Ilokano textbook authors (one of whom is Ruiz, a current instructor of Ilokano in OU), we ponder on our writing process and what we have learned about Filipino and Ilokano to rethink the prevailing notion of textbook writing as limited only to writers who are considered as “experts” in the language. In the next section, we briefly talk about the OU Ilokano class and what transpired during the first semester of its offering that directed us to the idea of developing an Ilokano language textbook in Japanese. In part three, we describe the process of writing, particularly focusing on pre-production stage. It is in this stage where we base most of our insights about textbook writing and language learning. This is followed by this paper’s conclusion and our recommendation.

2. About the OU Ilokano Classes and the Ilokano Textbook Project

From Spring-Summer 2022 semester onwards, Ilokano was introduced as a language elective at Osaka University. The class mainly caters to undergraduate students who major in Filipino and other graduate students under the School of Foreign Languages and Graduate School of Humanities. The course is titled “Philippine Languages: Elementary Ilokano”. The subject is taught in English, Filipino, and Ilokano. The class meets fifteen times in one semester. The lessons are held once a week and lasts ninety minutes. The instructor and students meet in person at a designated time and classroom at Minoh Campus, where the School of Foreign Languages and the Graduate School of Humanities is located. The aim for offering Ilokano electives was to enrich the current course offerings of the Osaka University Filipino Program.

Compared to Filipino textbooks, there are fewer reference books in Ilokano language that are available in Japan and most are written in English. These are comprised mostly of materials that were published by University of Hawaii Press, such as: “Let’s Speak Ilokano” (1984) and “Intermediate Ilokano: An Integrated Language and Culture Reading Text” (2004) by Espiritu, “Ilokano Lessons” (1971) by Bernabe, Lapid, and Sibayan, “Ilokano Dictionary” (1971) by Constantino, and “Ilocano Dictionary and Grammar: Ilocano-English, English-Ilocano” (2001) by Galvez Rubino. In addition to these is “Ilokano Book 1” by Christian Language Study Center (CLSC). The latter is not widely available because it is from a personal collection of Kimi Yamoto, one of the co-authors, who once studied Ilokano in the Philippines. This circumstance became one of the challenges to teaching Ilokano in Osaka University, particularly in the first semester when the course was taught. As mentioned, there are very few materials in Ilokano in Japan, and these are all written in English.

Japanese students begin their formal studies of English as a school subject in junior high school. While the English proficiency of public junior and senior high school students in Japan is improving according to a survey conducted by Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology or MEXT (The Japan Times 2024, MEXT 2024), in terms of ranking among 113 countries’ English language proficiency, Japan is ranked 87th in the world (EF English Proficiency Index 2023). It is through these contexts that we decided that in order to make teaching and learning Ilokano to be more effective, there has to be no other language barriers to learning the language and the materials for the class would have to be in Japanese.

The only material printed in Japanese is a phrasebook, “Ilokano Conversation Practice Book” (イロカノ語会話練習帳), by Casel and Yamashita that was published by Daigaku Shorin in 1983. This phrasebook was deemed unhelpful for the class since the students are either L2 or L3, which means that they have just started to learn Ilokano from scratch and have no prior knowledge of the language. Casel and Yamashita’s Ilokano Conversation Practice Book is merely a phrasebook that does not contain explanations on how Ilokano phrases and sentences are formed. As for CLSC Ilokano Book 1, while the dialogues were evaluated to be helpful in

providing context to how Ilokano phrases are used in real life situations, the sentence patterns after the dialogues were already in the intermediate level. Students encountered difficulties in understanding them because the sentence patterns were advanced, and students still lacked vocabulary as first-time learners of Ilokano. Therefore, during the initial semester of the OU Ilokano course's implementation, it became essential to enhance the existing materials by developing and distributing handouts tailored to the specific language proficiency levels of the learners. This was seen particularly in the earlier lessons where it was important to break down the sentences into grammar units and discuss the use of markers in nouns and noun phrases and the proper use of Ilokano markers first. Due to the absence of a published Ilokano textbook in Japanese, the authors of this paper resolved to develop a textbook for Ilokano written in Japanese.

Our textbook development team is composed of a mix of L1 and non-L1 Ilokano speakers. Frieda Joy Angelica Olay Ruiz is from Isabela, a province located in Northeastern Philippines. She is an Ilokana with grandparents and parents on both sides hailing from Ilocos Region, specifically in the provinces of Ilocos Sur and Pangasinan. She teaches Ilokano, Filipino, Filipino Migrants in Japan, and other Philippine Studies-related subjects at OU. Kimi Yamoto is a Japanese native speaker who has been studying English since her childhood up to senior high school days, after which she studied Filipino as an undergraduate and MA student, in addition to participating in a one-year study in the Philippines. She also studied basic Ilokano while in the Philippines. She has taught Filipino, and topics related to the Philippines to children with Filipino roots in some secondary and primary schools and is currently teaching Filipino to undergraduate students at OU and specializes in Filipino grammar and sentence structures. Donald Kurimura is currently a Visiting Researcher at OU. He was born in Isabela province to Ilokano parents from Cagayan and Quirino provinces. Growing up, he was brought up in a trilingual household adeptly using English, Filipino, and Ilokano. He is also fluent in Japanese and holds a JLPT N1 certification.²

In light of the necessity to advance this project and bring it to fruition, we explored the most effective avenues for proposing the project for publication, while at the same time being aware of the limited appeal of developing an academic textbook for a lesser-known language. Yamoto suggested submitting the project for inclusion in the World Language Series published by Osaka University Press. The series is a long-running initiative of OU to promote learning of foreign languages and cultures geared toward Japanese readers. Since the initiative was launched in 2009, it has published 19 volumes of textbook. The first batch of publications covered the languages mainly taught at OU and that are offered as language majors.

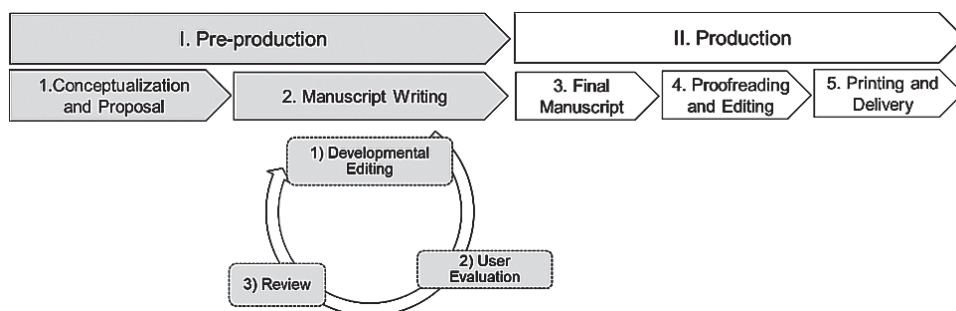
It can be considered fortunate for the authors that the initiative's committee expressed interest in incorporating a niche language into the series. In fact, the Ilokano language textbook project is among the first in the series for one country to feature two of its languages, i.e. one national

language (Filipino) and one regional language (Ilokano).

3. Observations and Insights of Textbook Authors

Our discussion of observations and insights will focus and be structured following the pre-production phases of the whole publication process, i.e. from conceptualization, manuscript preparation towards evaluation of the manuscript. We mapped out the publication process using the diagram below (See Figure 1). The flow looks typical of any publication process, but we underscore in this process map about the inclusion of “Users” during the writing of the manuscript. In a typical academic publication, this part is the “Peer Review” phase. But in our project, the ones evaluating the manuscript are the students themselves. Aside from the students or learners, “Users” also include the teacher or instructor who will be using the textbook.

Figure 1. Textbook Publication Process



3.1. Pre-Production Phase

The following describes our manuscript writing process during its pre-production stage. The original text which contained the grammar lessons and explanations was written in English by Ruiz³. This English draft was based on the reading materials that Ruiz developed to tailor-fit the needs of the OU Ilokano class during her first year of teaching the course. Basic sentences in Ilokano follow the Comment-Topic sentence structure. Markers and/or linkers are needed to form a complete sentence. Various kinds of demonstratives, locative words, time words, and determiners are also used to make a sentence more detailed. In our textbook, the usage of each word is explained in detail, including their common positioning in the sentence structure. The presentation of words in the main sentence examples are labelled according to what part of speech it is. This is to aid Japanese learners in understanding the logic of forming Ilokano sentences in a visual manner. Images 1 and 2 show examples from Chapter 4, which tackles personal pronouns under the KO set, linkers (nga/a) and adjectives and Chapter 11, which is the introductory chapter to Ilokano verbs:

Image 1. Presentation of Sentence Examples from Chapter 4

3) 限定用法

形容詞がリンカーを伴って名詞の前に置かれ、名詞を修飾する。述部として機能する場合も、主部として機能する場合もある。

【文型】 述語／述部 + 主部 (形容詞 + nga/a + 名詞)

述部 (形容詞 + nga/a + 名詞) + 主語／主部

a) Nalabbaga daytoy a baro a badok.

この新しい服は赤いです。

b) Nasingpet nga ubing ni Toto.

トトさんは親切な子です。

From F. J. A. O. Ruiz, D. Kurimura & K. Yamoto, イロカノ語 (世界の言語シリーズ 20) (p. 56), Osaka University Press, 2025.

Image 2. Presentation of Sentence Examples from Chapter 11

以下の例文「マリはジョーのために図書館でインターネットを使って本を探す」にはすべて「探す」(語根 birok) という動詞が用いられているが、焦点の種類によって接辞や主題が異なる。

行為者焦点

Agbirok

ni Mari

ti libro

para kenni Jo

iti biblioteka

babaen ti internet.

行為者焦点動詞

行為者補語

対象補語

受益者補語

場所補語

手段補語

(主題)

対象焦点

Biroken

ni Mari

ti libro

para kenni Jo

iti biblioteka

babaen ti internet.

対象焦点動詞

行為者補語

対象補語

受益者補語

場所補語

手段補語

(主題)

受益者焦点

Ibirokan

ni Mari

ti libro

ni Jo

iti biblioteka

babaen ti internet.

受益者焦点動詞

行為者補語

対象補語

受益者補語

場所補語

手段補語

(主題)

場所焦点

Pagibirokan

ni Mari

iti biblioteka

iti libro

para kenni Jo

babaen ti internet.

場所焦点動詞

行為者補語

場所補語

対象補語

受益者補語

手段補語

(主題)

手段焦点

Pagbirok

ni Mari

iti internet

iti libro

para kenni Jo

iti biblioteka.

行為者焦点動詞

行為者補語

手段補語

対象補語

受益者補語

場所補語

(主題)

From F. J. A. O. Ruiz, D. Kurimura & K. Yamoto, イロカノ語 (世界の言語シリーズ 20) (pp. 153-154), Osaka University Press, 2025.

The storyline or dialogue that comes before the lesson proper were written in Ilokano and Japanese by Kurimura. The English draft of Ruiz was also translated into Japanese by Kurimura. After which, spelling-check, grammar editing was delegated to Yamoto for spelling-check and grammar editing. Aside from this, Yamoto oversaw that the Japanese-translated draft was consistent with all the grammar rules tackled throughout the book and made sure that the word choices of Kurimura followed the common writing conventions in Japanese⁴.

During translation and “native-checking stage⁵,” we set meetings as a team to clarify grammar rules. This part of the process took the longest time and involved consecutive days of meetings for us to talk about Ilokano grammar and at times relating it to Tagalog for the intention of understanding the nuances of Ilokano as a distinct language. There were inconsistencies and/or errors that were stumbled upon in the Ilokano language textbooks that have been published prior and the authors discussed and tested how to clarify and explain these better in the book.

We discuss these inconsistencies in the preceding section.

After thorough consultations with each other, Yamoto edited and added grammar explanations in Japanese to the draft directly and once again made sure that the text followed the style of how foreign language textbooks were written in Japanese. This writing convention is more detailed than what can be found in Philippine languages textbooks written in English such as the textbooks mentioned earlier. An example is the use of more visuals like explicitly labelling sentences' words as to what part of speech it is. Like Yamoto, Kurimura also added to the grammar discussion and made additional sections in the chapters even when these were not in the original English text of Ruiz, especially if these are relevant to the chapter. Equally important in this process is Yamoto's liaising with pertinent offices in the university to ensure that correct information on textbook publishing and proper administrative paperwork is fulfilled.

The output which usually covered one to two chapters of the textbook would then be used in the OU Ilokano class. In class, Ruiz took notes of questions, clarifications, points of difficulty and confusion encountered by the students. The students as "Users" also pointed out lapses and misspells in the material. Then, the mistakes that the students made were noted. After this, Ruiz reported to co-authors about what transpired in class especially the reception of the students to the material. Again, the authors discussed with each other how to make the text better following the cross-linguistic exercise of understanding Tagalog and Ilokano. This pre-production stage has been going in cyclical fashion from the time when we began writing the textbook. Even if the material has been used for more than two years, we still find many parts that need to be clearer or more understandable for the textbook users. Another experience worth noting in this process is the fluid multilingual interaction in four languages (Ilokano, Filipino, English and Japanese) during our team meetings and e-mail communication to exchange opinions to improve the text and share updates of the progress of each other's tasks.

3.2. Inconsistencies in the available materials

While overall serving as precious resources to the research, Ilokano language textbooks and dictionaries, typically those published in English have different theories, interpretations, and structure in presenting the Ilokano grammar. Oftentimes, the inconsistencies created stumbling blocks on how we wrote the initial manuscript.

An example of what we encountered was on reconciling various orthography to what we think is generally more accepted. For example, the use of "probinsia" (province), instead of "probinsiya," or "biblia" (bible) instead of bibliya. Other examples are in the words: "ania" (what) and "anya," "Filipinas" (Philippines) and "Pilipinas," Ilokano and Ilocano, and archaisms such "anakko (my child) vs anacco".

This was further complicated by Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino's (KWF, Commission on

the Filipino Language) Guideline, “Tarabay iti Ortograpia ti Pagsasao nga Ilokano” (Guide to the Orthography of the Ilokano Language) that was released in 2012. The guideline mandated the official orthography for Ilokano. Our orthographic choices reflect our decision to highlight Ilokano as distinct from Tagalog or other regional languages, by following established or generally accepted orthography that are used in Ilokano printed materials such as dictionaries, the Ilokano language version of the Holy Bible, Bannawag magazine⁶, and others.

3.3. Comparative typology with Tagalog

Yamoto’s observations are centered on her perspective as a Filipino language instructor in Japanese. It cannot be helped that Tagalog and Ilokano are compared and contrasted when the manuscript is tested out in class. Yet, this cross-linguistic exercise between these two languages helped enrich the class discussions and improve the content of the textbook. Below are some of our observations regarding this topic:

(1) Agglutination of pronouns

Ilokano is a predicate-initial agglutinative language (Yamamoto 2018). This means that words are made by combining morphemes (like roots, prefixes, and suffixes), which usually stay the same after they are joined together. Personal pronouns under the AK set (except for *isu* and *isuna*) and KO set are connected to the word that precedes it. If the word ends with a vowel, the KO set pronouns *-ko* and *-mo* are written as *-k* and *-m*. Below are examples:

- a) “Ayayaten**ka**.” (I love you.) and “Ayayaten ka.”
- b) “Kani**ami** daytoy a balay.” (This is our house.) and “Kania mi daytoy.”

Native speakers who typically receive education in Filipino grammar as part of their school curriculum are unaware of this unique feature of Ilokano. Confusion occurs because pronouns in Tagalog are written as a separate word. Ruiz and Kurimura often asked immediate family members and relatives to verify the example sentences, but oftentimes this led to frustration as their usage would not reconcile to what the grammar books state. To complicate things, other Ilokano online resources do not attach the pronoun to the word before it thus adding to the confusion about the rule.

(2) Aspects of time

Another dilemma encountered was the definition of aspects of time in Ilokano verbs which serve as the basis for the conjugation of Ilokano verbs (Table 1). We intently rearranged existing ideas and redefined how the aspects of verbs should be presented to make it more organized for elementary learners of the language. Compared to Tagalog, Ilokano does not have Prospective Aspect (未然相). The infinitive functions of this aspect depends on the context.

Table 1. Ilokano Aspects of the Verb as rearranged in the Textbook

不定相 (Infinitive / Neutral)	完了相 (Perfective)	未完了相 (Imperfective)	
		現在 (Present)	過去 (Past)

(3) MA- verb

Similar to Tagalog, there are verb prefixes like MA- which can be regarded as “Actor focus verbs” and a MA- prefix which is the Potentive form of the verb like shown in Table 2.

Table 2. MA- as “Actor focus verbs” and as Potentive form

	Ilokano	Tagalog	Meaning in English
Actor Focus	Natay ti mula.	Namatay ang halaman.	The plant died.
Potentive Form	Nalpasko ti trabahok.	Natapos ko ang trabaho ko.	I was able to finish my work.

These differences are not sufficiently explained in Ilokano textbooks in English. Such subtle details are extra important when explaining grammar points to Japanese students. Japanese learners tend to pursue explanation in visual format. Hence, many of the verb patterns in our textbook were presented by methodically replicating established methods in explaining verb patterns that are found in Tagalog textbooks written in Japanese.

(4) Reduplication patterns for verbs

There is a difference in reduplication patterns for verbs in Tagalog (CV) and Ilokano (CVC) as shown in Table 3. Patterns like this was initially difficult to explain to the students without having laid out basic conjugation rules including irregular verbs that they can follow.

Table 3. Tagalog and Ilokano Reduplication Patterns

Ilokano	Tagalog	Meaning in English
agLUTLUto	nagLULUto	cooking
RUMRUMuar	LumALAbas	going out
MATMATurog	naTUTUlog	sleeping

(5) Use of markers

In English, the term “marker” is often referred to as articles, demonstratives, and so on. But in Japanese, it is called マーカー or 標識辞. There is a striking difference between the uses of markers between Tagalog and Ilokano. One is in the use of markers in the oblique case in Ilokano which is different from Tagalog. Moreover, even Ilokano native speakers that we have contacted cannot distinguish the difference between the markers “ti” and “iti”. It was imperative to clarify the difference of “ti” and “iti” with the students.

Table 4. Use of Markers in Ilokano and Tagalog

Ilokano	Tagalog	Meaning in English
Akinbalay iti dayta?	Kaninong bahay iyan?	Whose house is that?
Napintas ti sabong iti (idiay) lamisaan.	Maganda ang bulaklak sa mesa.	The flower on the table is beautiful.

(6) Syntax

Tagalog and Ilokano share the basic sentence pattern Comment-Topic. But the agglutinative characteristic of Ilokano makes it difficult for first time learners to distinguish where the verb ends and where the pronoun is. Also, the frequent use the marker “ti” to mark the focused complement of the verb makes it hard to distinguish which one is the actual focus of the sentence as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Syntax

Ilokano	Tagalog	Meaning in English
Mangaarubakaminto ti (intono) baro a tawen	Mangangapitbahay kami sa bagong taon.	We are going to our neighbors' place this New Year's eve.
Purpurosen ti mannalon ti bunga ti kapas.	Pinipitas ng magsasaka ang bunga ng bulak.	The farmer is picking the cotton.

Due to these, there was a desire for us to create more structure in presenting the grammar part. Instead of translating and reorganizing the ideas from Ilokano books written in English to create the Japanese text, it became more logical to rely on Filipino language textbooks written in Japanese to conceptualize the flow and structure of the chapters. Also, these resources helped us to adopt consistent linguistic terminologies and convention used in Japanese in language teaching especially that of Austronesian languages.

Even though many learners in the Ilokano class have knowledge of Filipino, we cannot explain the contents of the textbook using the similarities and differences with Filipino as Ilokano is a different language in itself. But adopting technical terms and the expressions that are also used in Filipino textbooks in Japanese helped the learners who have learned Filipino to recognize and easily compare and contrast Ilokano and Tagalog.

3.4. Capturing the audience

The creation of the textbook was generally aimed to address the gap of the lack of a comprehensive classroom material written in Japanese. Enrollees in the class were expected to have varying knowledge and understanding of Filipino. The textbook was designed not only for those who have earlier knowledge of Filipino but also for self-studying learners who do not have someone who can teach them in person. We want our textbook to be easily understood by learners who do not know or have not yet studied Filipino, other Philippine languages, and other

Austronesian languages. We wanted that the contents of the book should be understandable even without the help of others.

Kurimura and Ruiz sometimes found it difficult to express Ilokano sentences in its entirety, and it was important to discuss sentences and its various nuances to Yamoto in Tagalog and Japanese to be able to capture its meaning upon translation. Having a native Japanese speaker in the team through Yamoto was valuable as she could point out what were not immediately recognized or not paid attention by Ilokano L1 speakers Ruiz and Kurimura. Through Yamoto's lens, we were able to point out which grammar explanations or parts of the explanations native Japanese speakers may get confused with.

3.5. Avoiding cultural biases and enriching the content over a limited space

Typical Ilokano stereotypes are often nonchalantly caricatured even in mainstream media in the Philippines such as being spendthrift and having strong intonations in the utterance of words. We tried to avoid prejudice and stereotypes, such as avoiding the use of example sentences that may give a wrong impression about Ilokano traits and culture especially to audience being introduced to it for the first time. We sometimes struggled with the balance between the policy and what we call “culture” (i.e. what are popular in the region, how Ilokano people are cited for, and other generalizations and stereotypes).

As the textbook is for elementary/beginner learners and the space is limited, we could not include all grammar explanations. Only minimum questions and drills could be included in the Unit Practice section found at the end of every chapter. Therefore, questions and drills where there was more than one possible answer, together with ambiguous questions were deleted or amended in order to avoid confusion among the learners. Also, for dialogue comprehension, we avoided questions where the learners would encounter unlearned vocabularies and sentence structures even though these questions were thought of as important for understanding the contents of each dialogue. Again, we pondered and used ample time to formulate our Unit Practice questions to what would be easy for learners and what were actually tackled in the textbook. We also added elements where Ilokano society, culture, history, and others, can be learned in the dialogues and included thematic columns on Ilokano way of life. In so doing, we were able to balance between what content should be presented, because if too much, the students or learners might feel difficulties to learn vocabulary, grammatically important points and sentence structures.

3.6. Manuscript evaluation through student participation

For the OU Filipino majors, learning Ilokano is not the first Philippine language learned/studied. As discussed in the introduction of this paper, the Filipino majors already had two years of learning Filipino intensively prior to taking up Ilokano.

There were glaring differences observed in the first year of teaching when the materials were

still in English and when the materials handed in class were in Japanese. In the first year when the draft was all in English, even those with prior knowledge of Filipino grappled with Ilokano. Naturally, it became easier for the Filipino majors to understand Ilokano when the materials were in Japanese even if the explanations in class were in English. There was less confusion on the grammar points and the Filipino majors were observed to be able to test their understanding of the language by comparing and contrasting Tagalog and Ilokano languages. The students were also observed to discuss Ilokano grammar among themselves more and independent of the instructor.

The Filipino majors are not the only students taking up Ilokano. There are graduate students whose mother tongues are in Chinese languages. These students are mostly fluent in Japanese (many are N1, except for one who is N2) and have varying knowledge of English. The Filipino majors help in explaining grammar points to their classmates, especially those who never had any background in Philippine languages. This point could serve as an example on the advantage of learning two languages at the same time because doing so may help a learner become aware of the similarities between languages and cultures. Linguistic similarities in Tagalog and Ilokano makes it easier for the Filipino majors to remember translations of words. However, a downside to learning two languages at the same time is the mixing of words. We exemplified this in the previous section when we showed grammatical features that are specifically only found Ilokano and not in Tagalog.

The students in the Ilokano class served as additional eyes to check for misspells and inconsistencies. Mistakes that the students made in class made the authors aware on what important grammar points need to be added to the textbook and what grammar points needed more explanation. The opinions of the students were always asked for, so it promoted student involvement in the classroom. Students did not hesitate to ask questions and ask for clarifications.

User evaluation is a crucial part in the process of textbook writing. Ruiz regularly updated and shared how the draft was received in class for each chapter with co-authors. According to user evaluation, the authors review the existing material and decide if the chapter is good for submission or if further edits are needed.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

Writing language textbooks need not to be “expert-centered.” In this paper, our mixed team of first language/native (L1) and non-L1 Ilokano speakers was able to establish how we accomplished the pre-production phase of our Ilokano textbook writing. We traversed Ilokano, English, Tagalog, and Japanese and used these languages to compare and analyze the subtle features of these different languages. Doing so, we were able to enhance our understanding of Ilokano language structures, functions and the logic behind these. Our knowledge of various languages helped us draw connections between our own native language and the language to be

taught and learned, which we opine fosters deeper comprehension of various languages.

This paper narrated how the knowledge of Ilokano, Japanese, and English of Kurimura was valuable to translate the initial draft written by Ruiz in English to Japanese and to write additional material directly in Japanese. Having Yamoto as part of the team as the Filipino grammar expert (and with basic knowledge of Ilokano) was important to understand and analyze Ilokano grammar better. Her experience in teaching Filipino language to Japanese students helped in creating clearer grammar explanations and formulating additional sentence patterns to explain the logic of how parts of sentences are used in Ilokano. Previous Filipino grammar textbooks that were written in Japanese were helpful during our manuscript writing stage because these served as a “paradigm” on how to write a Philippine language grammar textbook for a Japanese audience more effectively. We also realized in the process, that the way Filipino language textbooks are written in Japanese is a fresh way of exploring Philippine languages and could be adopted when writing Philippine language textbooks in other languages.

We describe our Ilokano textbook process as “experience-centered.” The textbook is written using the published materials available, native speaker knowledge (personal knowledge and consultations with family members), and consultations with fellow authors. The experiences in our OU Ilokano textbook project showed the feasibility of learner involvement in textbook development. This focus on experience is also beneficial for the learners. The reception of the students to the material, the additional checks that they point out, and even the mistakes that they make form part of the pre-production stage of developmental editing, user evaluation and review. Our team’s experience is mostly positive. Therefore, we can recommend that the process that our team followed can be replicated when developing textbooks in other Philippine languages in the future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT

All authors discussed the outline of this paper together. Ruiz wrote Introduction, first half of Part 2, Part 3.6 and Part 4 and ensured the whole paper’s direction and continuity. Yamoto wrote Part 3.3. Kurimura wrote Part 3.1, Part 3.2 and Part 3.5. Sub-sections that are not specifically attributed are those that were created and wrote as a team.

注

- 1 The other one of which is Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS).
- 2 The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) is an exam that certifies the ability of Japanese language by non-native Japanese speakers using a scale system. It has five levels: N1, N2, N3, N4 and N5. The most primary level is N5 and the most advanced level is N1.
- 3 The latter half of the textbook, specifically Chapters 14 to 20, contains grammar rules that were added to Ruiz’s draft and written directly in Japanese by Kurimura. These chapters also saw rearrangements from the original chapters upon our team’s decision on how Ilokano verbs will be presented and

grouped.

- 4 Except for Chapters 1 and 2 which were directly translated to Japanese from English by Yamoto.
- 5 “Native-checking” is a wasei-eigo (和製英語, Japanese-made English word) to mean having a native or L1 speaker review or proofread a material.
- 6 The Ilokano weekly magazine, Bannawag, first saw publication in November 1934. It contains various literature (serialized novels/comics, short stories, poetry, essays, news features, entertainment news and articles, and the like) that are written in Ilokano.

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