

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As mentioned earlier, the study of language attitudes is not at all easy. Giles, et al (1983) described the situation this way:

“As Agheyisi and Fishman (1970) pointed out, the problems associated with assessing attitudes derive from the ‘mentalist’ definition supplied by Allport (1954), implying that attitudes are not directly observable, but have to be inferred from respondent’s introspection. In response to these problems in measuring a ‘mental and neural state of readiness’ (Allport, 1954), some researchers have considered attitude as a mediating ‘hypothetical construct’ which is directly related to overt behaviour, or as a verbal response to a given stimulus. Others have been more ‘behaviourist’, defining attitude in terms of observable behaviour”.

Additionally, Grimes (1995:60) mentioned that often times the attitudes expressed by people toward a language are actually attitudes they hold toward the group who speak the language. As an attempt to minimise these problems, qualitative data was collected as well as quantitative data; all of which entailed that the researcher used both direct and indirect research methods, i.e. orally-administered questionnaire, informal interviews and participant observation.

As Agheyisi and Fishman (1970:147) posited, the questionnaire has already attained a high level of sophistication and formal development as a data-gathering technique because of the extensive use by social scientists. The questionnaire adopted in this study was an adaptation of successful researches in attitude studies (Natnapang 2004; Hongli 2005; Maliwan 2005; RAID Tool 2007). The questionnaire included both closed and open ended questions. Informal interviews are the interviews done without guided questions. The researcher stayed in the research area for a total of four months as a participant observer.

Blair (1990:2-3) mentions that, “[s]urveys, by their nature, tend to be [more] descriptive than theoretical...Where these theoretical concerns are of importance to the field researcher, an attempt is made to describe some issues involved.” This

personal interviews and participant observation. Quota sampling was used to select subjects for the individual orally administered questionnaires. Location (i.e. remote or non-remote) was considered as the initial factor in selecting the respondents. Lewis and Simon's EGIDS (2009) was adopted in discussing the vitality of Agusan Manobo language. In investigating the trend in language use, the following domains were chosen: family, friendships, social & public domains, and the religious domain.

3.2 Background research

The Manobo language is not an isolated language community. The Manobo people and their language have already been studied before (Schumacher and Schumacher 1978; Loong 2000). A thorough background research was executed to help plan the survey. The researcher found books, dictionaries and articles about Agusan Manobo but there were no published sociolinguistic studies about it. The needed information to help with this research was supplemented by background interviews done in Cebuano language. The researcher created a list of questions for the "experts" of the language, i.e. barangay captains (village leaders), religious leaders, educators, government employees, Manobo speakers who are living outside the area (in a city or in a more progressive town), linguistic researchers, missionaries, and other outsiders who have lived in the area for a period of time.

The result of the background interview was recorded in the researcher's journal. During the interview, the "experts" were asked if they could be used as reference for this research and information that is too private to mention was clarified.

3.3 Site selection

The province of Agusan del Sur is subdivided into a city and 13 municipalities. Five tribal groups are found in this province, namely, Aeta, Mamanwa, Bagobo, Higaonon and Manobo. Within the province, the municipality of La Paz has the greatest number of Manobos with almost 80% percent of the population being Manobo. With this in mind, La Paz was chosen as a research site. A pilot test was done in a nearby municipality, i.e. Loreto at Barangay Kasapa I.

The initial plan was to administer the SLQ at six (6) Barangays of La Paz. Three of these six barangays were chosen as the representative of the non-remote sites because of the presence of secondary schools, markets, and the town hall. Moreover, these sites are more accessible to outsiders. Being more accessible means there is a regular trip for hired motorcycles to and from the area even if most of the road is

unpaved. These areas can also be accessed by trucks or jeeps but only when it's not raining. The other three barangays were representative of the remote sites because the places are far from elementary schools and markets are non-existent. These areas can only be reached by motorcycle or boat.

But one of the remote places chosen was inaccessible at the time of the research because of the militant group in the area. Other barangays in the same category were also not safe to visit. The researcher, then, looked for another remote Barangay in the neighbouring municipality of Loreto.

3.4 Sampling

The methods used to choose respondents to interview were cluster sampling and quota sampling. The whole sample was first clustered geographically, i.e. six (6) barangays were chosen as a representative of the whole province. Three barangays were chosen to represent remote locations and another three were chosen to represent non-remote locations. After considering the location of the respondents, quota sampling was conducted to find equal representation of different gender and age level. There are three variables that were considered to categorise the respondents: place of residency, gender, and age level as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Variables used to categorise respondents

Location	Gender	Age
1. Remote	1. Male	1. Young (15-29 years old)
2. Non-remote	2. Female	2. Middle Aged (30 to 45)
		3. Old (46 and above)

Table 3 below shows the number of people for each set of characteristics the researcher included.

Table 3 Number of respondents by age group and gender

	Remote			Non-remote			
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
Young (15-29)	6	6	12	Young (15-29)	6	6	12
Middle (30-45)	6	6	12	Middle (30-45)	6	6	12
Old (46+)	6	6	12	Old (46+)	6	6	12
Total	18	18	36	Total	18	18	36

There were 12 respondents chosen to represent each barangay, i.e. 2 respondents chosen for each age group representing each gender. A total of 72 respondents were involved in the survey.

3.5 Selection criterion for respondents

After selecting a respondent, a decision was made whether or not the person is a candidate for an interview. The screening criterion is that the subject should be ethnically from the Manobo group (i.e. one or both parents are 'identified' as Agusan Manobo, not necessarily full-blooded) regardless of their proficiency in Agusan Manobo (See page 141 for screening criteria #1 & 3). The principle behind this criterion is that the research is focused on the language use and attitudes of the Manobo people and the vitality of their language.

3.6 Sociolinguistic questionnaire (SLQ)

In this study, the orally administered sociolinguistic questionnaire (SLQ) is the primary tool for data collection. The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix A (English version) and Appendix B (Cebuano translation). The questionnaire has five sections as summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 Different sections in the sociolinguistic questionnaire

Section	Contents Asked
1	Background Information
2	Language Use
3	Language Attitudes: Importance of Agusan Manobo
4	Language Attitudes: Agreement Scale
5	Attitudes towards Language Use and Language Displacement

The first part asks for the background information of the respondent. The second part asks for the Language Use of the respondent to different people in different situations. The pattern of language use was asked in simple and straightforward questions, taking into consideration that this was the first time that the Agusan Manobo people were asked to contemplate on their language. The third part asks for the Language Attitudes of the respondents by rating the importance of the Agusan Manobo language in different domains. The fourth part of the SLQ asks for Language

Attitudes by agreeing on positive and negative statements about Agusan Manobo. The fifth part consists of open ended questions concerning attitudes towards language use and language displacement.

3.6.1 Questionnaire design procedure

The researcher developed the SLQ used in this study by collecting and adopting language use and attitudes questionnaires previously used for sociolinguistic surveys in Mainland Southeast Asia (MSEA). Some of these surveys include Duan, 2004; Tuwakham, 2005; Perlin, 2007; Owen, 2008; Magaspag, 2012. The majority of the questions used in this study were taken from Blair's book (1990) *Survey on a Shoestring: A Manual for Small Scale Language Surveys*. Some questions were also adopted from the Research and Instrument Design Tool (RAID) developed by Nahhas, *et al* (2006). This tool is an outline of suggestions that helps a researcher in considering the purposes, goals and research questions of the study. The RAID Tool also provides probes that are made up of actual data collection components that could be used in a research Instrument, (e.g. words on a wordlist, or the questions on a questionnaire).

The questionnaire was designed following these procedures:

- Step 1. Determine precisely what information is desired.
- Step 2. Study reports from similar questionnaires.
- Step 3. Draft some questionnaires, and put them in a good layout and order.
- Step 4. Pre-test the draft, and analyse the results.
- Step 5. Revise the questionnaire
- Step 6. Start the survey.

3.6.2 Pilot testing

The resulting SLQ was pilot tested in Kasapa II, Loreto, Agusan del Sur and was revised accordingly. The SLQ was tested with 20 subjects first, 10 males and 10 females. The researcher went to do the test at Kasapa II, Barangay Hall. The informants varied in age, gender and education. The subjects gave good responses to the questions, but some questions were not clear and asked for repetitive information so the researcher adjusted them in the final revision of the SLQ. The questionnaire was originally written in English and then translated into Cebuano by the researcher (Appendix A & B).

3.6.3 Administration of the SLQ

Informal permission was obtained from the local government unit before the survey was conducted in the barangays. Oral informed consent was also obtained from individual respondents before they answered any question. The researcher introduced herself to each respondent and explained what she was doing. An explanation of what the researcher wanted each respondent to do was also given. Then the researcher clarified what will be done to the information that the respondent will give.

The SLQs were administered in 5 barangays of La Paz municipality and 1 barangay of Loreto municipality using Cebuano with Manobo accent. Since the researcher is a native speaker of Cebuano a translator was not seen as needed. Generally, the Manobos are also multilingual in Cebuano so the SLQs were not translated into Agusan Manobo. However, in two of the remote sites, a research assistant accompanied the researcher. In that situation, the research assistant asked questions orally into Manobo and wrote the answer on the SLQ in Cebuano.

As much as possible, the questions were asked in the same way through the whole survey with the goal that each subject should clearly understand the question the way intended by the researcher. For the open ended questions, the subjects were video recorded so that the interview would run smoothly and to save time.

3.7 Participant observation

Being able to comprehend some sentences in Manobo, the researcher who is a native speaker of Cebuano had the opportunity to be involved in the Manobo people's daily life. Living among the Manobo people during the research, she had a chance to meet a lot of Manobo people including those who live in other barangays. Sitting in the town hall led her to observe their language use patterns in a public setting.

Afternoon walks gave her the opportunity to observe the language use patterns between neighbours and friends. Invitations to birthday parties, wedding ceremonies and dinner events allowed her to discover language use patterns in a family domain. Going to the market with a local resident gave her a chance to find out how a Manobo code-switches between languages depending on the interlocutor, i.e. another Manobo speaker or non-Manobo speaker. The information gathered from Participant Observation was recorded in the researcher's journal. This recorded information was used to help supplement the discussion of the analysis of data.

3.8 Informal interviews

Informal interviews were conducted to gather important information that can be used to interpret the results of the questionnaire. During the research, a dialogue (without guiding questions) with Manobo speakers from different backgrounds was conducted. These informal interviews were given to government officials, teachers, nurses, students, farmers, shop owners, market vendors, retirees, etc. The information gathered from the interviews was recorded in the researcher's journal.

An informal interview is a more indirect way (Walker 1982) of assessing language attitudes than the questionnaire. In most cases, the interviewees gave their instant response to questions. The disadvantage of the informal interview is the difficulty in interpreting the data.

3.9 Data analysis

All the data collected through the individual SLQ was put into Microsoft Excel. Embedded questions were coded as 1a, 1b and 1c. All worksheets were checked twice to minimise the possibility of mistakes. A consistency check of abbreviations and code was done to regularise the data.

Formulas in MS Excel were used to calculate the percentages of responses and tables, bar graphs and charts were created to illustrate the evidence of answers to research questions. The Chi-square test was administered to check the significance of differences between locations, age groups and genders using MS Excel. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of analyses were used in data analysis.