

Phonological Features of Inete Language

ARMANDO S. KATALBAS & EDMER B. BERNARDO

Iloilo State College of Fisheries -Main Campus
Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, Philippines

Abstract — This linguistic study aimed to preserve the Inete language of Sitio Nagpana, Barangay Lipata, Barrotac Viejo, Iloilo for future generations through the production and publication of the Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary and Reference Grammar from the speech community for future generation. This study could be a relevant contribution to the preservation of one of those many Indigenous languages which are dying in an alarming rate. The study used the Memory Banking Epistemology and theoretical perspective underpinning the process in Language Documentation (LD) or Documentary Linguistics in gathering lexemes of Inete language in the corpora. The researcher also utilized the Direct Translation (DT) and Conversational Method (CM) in eliciting the lexemes from Fluent Native Speakers (FNSs) composed of six Fluent Native Elders (FNEs) and one Key Informant (KI). Word lists were at the same time used to elicit Inete lexemes as inputs for Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary and categorized and analyzed these lexemes into different linguistic features to produce Inete Reference Grammar based on the theoretical frameworks of Philippine languages. Based on the findings of the study, Inete is linguistically unique in phonology due to the inclusion of mid-central unrounded vowel /ə/ or schwa and predominance of the low, front unrounded /ɛ/ sounds in nucleus slot; the presence of glottal stop /ʔ/, palatal fricative /j/ and palatal affricate /dʒ/ in margin slot and consonant cluster /tr/ and /dr/; the possibility that Inete is one of the two rare r-languages; the vowel and consonant shifts from e to i and r to d, and g to d from Hiligaynon to Inete; the vowel harmony rule involving assimilation of vowels from e to i and as influenced by suffix in, and a to e in prefix pa as influenced by predominant e in nucleus slot in the lexeme; and the analysis that Inete is a stress governed language.

Keywords — *Inete, lexemes, Indigenous language, corpora, Phonology*

I. Introduction

Languages around the world are dying at an alarming rate. It is unclear to linguists and historians how many languages have vanished in the past centuries, but some estimate that more than 10,000 languages once existed. Only around 5,000 languages remain today. Even more worrisome is the likelihood that thousands more shall have become extinct by the year 2100. Language death is a problem that affects all language families, from the most powerful (e.g., Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan) to the weaker (e.g., Australian, North American Indian). The twentieth century was a century of great language loss and death; the depressing reality is that the 21st century will continue the trend: dominant languages will devour smaller languages all around the globe (Molina, 2012).

The fact that there is no reported comprehensive or even basic study on Inati language as confirmed by Bolante (1986) that a basic linguistic study of this language is yet to be undertaken.

So far, only a limited comparative study of Ati, Kinaray-a/Hiligaynon and English terms of Bolante's (1986) and Pennoyer's (1987). Nothing like the Altan languages, recently, Abreu's (2018) dissertation was designed to address the issue on language documentation and description of Southern Alta language which primarily aimed to make a grammar analysis of the language to cater to the needs of all its stakeholders: native speakers, language learners, language teachers, linguists, and language planners. Secondly, the output may provide clues on indigenous knowledge and practice and might help to fill in the gaps in the Philippine or Negrito's linguistic history. Thus, a Reference Grammar of Southern Alta (Kabuloan Dumagat) was much warranted. Before the study of Abreu, the only reported study on the Altan languages is Reid (1991, in Abreu, 2018). He examined the degree of lexical relationship that Northern and Southern Alta hold each other; this includes the surrounding languages. He also examined the phonological, lexical, and morphological innovations that may be used to determine their immediate genetic relationships.

The Ete People and their Origin

Bolante (1986) also speculated that the Ete, by and large, belongs to the Negrito racial stock and is furthermore classified under the group of pygmies. It has been contradictory concept that the Negritos alone comprise the pygmy group, for findings have pointed to the fact that there are three distinct aboriginal races which may be considered pygmies, the true Negrito: The Australian Sakai, and the Proto-Malay. Jacob (2016) further stipulated that there are still several theories as to where the Ete originated from. Some anthropologists hypothesize they are descendants of New Guineans or Australian Aborigines, while others suggest that they came in a wave of migration from Ethiopia. What we do know is the Atis are genetically related to other Negrito ethnic groups in the Philippines such as the Aeta of Luzon, the Batak of Palawan, the Agta of the Sierra Madre, and the Mamanwa of Mindanao. The word "Ete" is a corruption of the Visayan word "Agta," which literally means black.

In short, the Panayan Negritos must have been classified as the true Negrito race, as evidenced by the features of their present-day descendants who still roam Panay and Negros.

The Ete Community in Sitio Nagpana

The IP reservation in Sitio Nagpana, Barangay Lipata, is about seven kilometers from the town proper of Barotac Viejo. The 485 individuals belonging to 130 households occupy the 946-hectare reservation area. The IPs of Barotac Viejo are called the Ete. They are the descendants of what has been believed as the first settlers of the Philippine Islands. An originally wandering folk, they began settling in the vicinity of Sitio Nagpana, Barangay Lipata in the years before 1953 (Nagpana Minorities Association, 1986).

The Ete seemed to have intermarriages with the Bisaya and Panay Bukidnon tribe and therefore mixed blood. At times, people said, "it was difficult to even visually tell that they were in an Ete community." They speak a language called Inete, although the youth now prefer to speak the regional dialects of Ilonggo or Hiligaynon, Aklanon or Kinaray-a.

Why preserve the Inete language?

1. It is vigorous . . .

In 1980, Summer Institute of Linguistics Philippines (SIL Philippines) classified Inati (variant of Inete) of Panay as vigorous, but the gap between 1980 and 2018 is 38 long years and no investigation has been undertaken to determine its language status. According to Jacob (2016) with cultural lines slowly becoming more obsolete, it is easy to see those languages, such as Inati, will overtime be another unspoken language. As earlier stipulated by Pennoyer (1987) and Reid (2013) that as of 1980, the speakers of Inati number at about 1,500. Today few of them know how to speak Inete, Bisaya or Hiligaynon and Kinarya-a are commonly used.

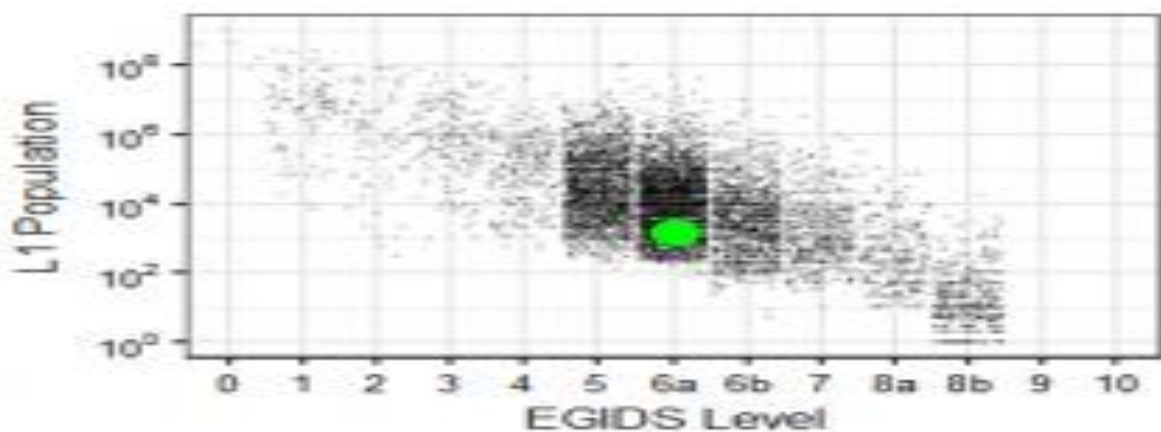


Figure 1. The Expanded Grade Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) Level of Inati Language

2. Young IPs show ‘fair’ knowledge of their language.

In the study of Catalan (2005) in Nagpana, 52 young IP participants were pre -tested to determine their level of knowledge of their indigenous socio-cultural practices. Pretttest results showed that their level of knowledge is only “Fair” which reflected that they lack familiarity with their indigenous socio-cultural practices, specifically their language, music, songs, and dance. However, the Atis still valued and recognized the importance of preserving their language.

3. Elders burning desire to preserve their language

Socio-cultural practices are expression of their unique Inati culture. Language ensures the transmission of their culture. Thus, interviewees disclosed that the Ete people swore they will do everything to preserve their language because they believed that without it, they will disappear. They stressed that, “*dapat indi gid lipatan ang lingwahi . . . gamiton gid pirmi kag itugro sa*

tamaanak . . . kon ginagamit adlaw adlaw, indi gid malipatan ang lingwahi.” (Language should not be forgotten . . . use it every day and teach them to the children, so that it will not be forgotten).

4. The importance of mother tongue

In addition, Carla Laboucan in her poem “I Am a Cree” expresses the importance of her mother tongue. She says, “you may think my words are not important. When I speak my language, you may say it is rude. When I speak my language, you may say I sound funny, but this who I am! My words define my identity. This is me; this is my mother tongue. It’s all I know, my life, my ways. To lose language that identifies you is to lose wisdom and purpose in life. My purpose is to acknowledge my identity, my identity is my language. This is me; I am Cree.”

Epistemological and Theoretical Framework

The study used the Memory Banking Epistemology which involves the collection and documentation of knowledge, social practices, and technologies associated with cultivation, harvesting and uses of traditional “heirloom” seeds. Moreover, this memory banking is developed by Virginia Nazarea, a Filipino and cultural anthropologist, as botanical preservation tool to complement conventional practices of gene banking. Part of these “heirloom seeds” is the linguistic knowledge stored in the memory of the resource persons which were elicited from and shared by them through the theoretical perspective underpinning the language documentation process of Klessa (n.d.) and Himmelmann (2006, in Abreu 2018) which involves collecting, processing and storing of linguistic data.

However, for specificity, this study adapted the theoretical framework on lexical semantic analysis as described in Hiligaynon Reference Grammar of Wolfenden (1970), Inati: The Hidden Negrito Language of Panay, Philippines of Penoyer (1987). The study of the phonology of a language is concerned with the way utterances in the language are pronounced (Wolfenden, 1970). Wolfenden categorized vowels as nucleus slot of syllables or words and consonants, the margin slot. Adding into it, the consonant clusters and accent or stress on words and morphonemics.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to preserve the Inete language of Sitio Nagpana, Barangay Lipata, Barrotac Viejo, Iloilo for future generations through the production and publication of the *Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary* and *Reference Grammar* from the speech community.

Specifically, it sought to answer the question:

1. What are the phonological features of the Inete language found in the corpora in terms of (a) minimal pairs of sounds (b) vowels, (c) diphthongs, (d) consonants, (e) consonant clusters, and (f) stress, and (g) morphophonemics?

II. Methodology

Research Design

This study aimed to preserve the Inete language of Sitio Nagpana, Barangay Lipata, Barrotac Viejo, Iloilo for future generations through the production and publication of *Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary* and *Reference Grammar* from the speech community using the process involved in Language Documentation (LD) or documentary linguistics which comprises of collecting (recording, taking pictures, gathering written documents, etc.), processing (analysing, systematizing, transcribing, translating, etc.) and storing (archiving) of linguistic data – such as word lists, and recordings of conversations, and videos.

Methodology

Resource Persons/Key Informant

The resource persons were selected based on NORM: N – Non mobile people; O – Old/Elderly; R – Rural area residents; and M – Male speakers, but unfortunately there were only two available male speakers, and the rest were females.

Resource Persons: Fluent Native Elders (FNEs)

The Fluent Native Elders (FNEs) as resource persons were selected based on the recommendation of the Tribe Leader. They were active members of the Tribe Council of Elders of Sitio Nagpana Ete tribe. Their age ranges from 49 to 67 years old; all of them were literate in Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a and Inete languages.

Key Informant: The Fluent Native Leader

The Fluent Native Leader (FNL) was considered as a reputable linguist because of his training in indigenous language transcription in UP Diliman and as a retired employee of National Commission for Indigenous Peoples Region VI (NCIP VI) for 27 years.

Instruments

Word Lists

Word lists are often recommended in field methods classes as an easy way to start gathering lexical data on an unknown language (Lupke, 2009).

Word List in Eliciting the Corpora of Inete Lexemes

The more than 800 Hiligaynon words were taken from Mother Tongue Based – Multilingual Education – Unang Baitang, Ikalawang Baitang at Ikatlong Baitang Kagamitan ng Mag-aaral: Hiligaynon Unang Edisyon 2013 - 2014. Reid's 1,000-word list and the

remaining over 1,200 Hiligaynon words to complete the target of 3,000 plus words were taken from Hiligaynon Magazine, December 2, 2012, issue, and Bisayan – English – Tagalog Dictionary (Lopez, 1966) Rosano, et al. (2015) Hiligaynon Parts of Speech and Wolfenden (1973) Hiligaynon Reference Grammar.

Digital Equipment

Audio Recorder/OPPO Audio File Manager

Audio recorder was used to record all sessions in eliciting and editing the corpora of Inete lexemes from the FNSs. A total of more 150 hours documentation of Inete corpora had been recorded for more than 8 months of research work.

Cellphone Camera

This was used to photo-document the sessions, Inete text posted in classrooms and photo-shots of plants, animals, products, and natural formations, specifically the waterfalls which shall be used as the cover picture of the Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement.

Field Notes

Field notes served as the main medium in inscribing the oral responses of the resource persons and key informant during the eliciting of the corpora of Inete lexemes sessions and recording the grammar sessions with the key informant.

Data Collection Procedure

Having rationalized the need to preserve the Inete language for future generations through the production and publication of *Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary* and *Reference Grammar* of the language of Sitio Nagpana, Barangay Lipata, Barotac Viejo, the researcher presented a concept paper on “Say It In Inete: Lexical Semantic Compendium. After its approval, the researcher sought permission from the Ete Tribe Chieftain to conduct the pre-trial of the elicitation strategies (CM and DT) and at the same time filed an application to conduct the study to the Regional Office of National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and paid an Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) fee of five hundred pesos (500.00). Permission had been granted by the Ati Chieftain to conduct the pre-trial on April 2, 2018.

Filing of Application and Payment of Fees. In filing an application to study before the Regional Office of NCIP, the researcher was required to submit the research proposal as a basic requirement of the IKSPs/CLs Research and Documentation Guidelines of 2012 which contained the following: identity of the researcher; purpose/rationale of the research; methodologies or methods; materials to be used and data gathering instruments; scope and delimitation of the study;

source of fund; period of research and chronology of activities involved; and a manifestation agreeing to shoulder the administrative costs incidental to the research activities.

Review and Evaluation of the Application. The TMSD Chief, with the assistance of the Regional Legal Officer reviewed and evaluated the application attachments and other supporting documents to determine the sufficiency of the proposal.

IKSP Team. Upon the recommendation of the TMSD Chief that the application was sufficient and meritorious, the Regional Director immediately issued on March 22, 2018 Memorandum Order No. RVI/011-0320-2018 to the IKSP Team, Ms. Emma B. Barba, Community Development Officer (CDO) III Iloilo/Guimaras Community Service Center (CSC) – Team Leader, Atty. Mary Genevieve Tingson, Attorney IV, Provincial Legal Officer – Member, Mr. Jay Ardiente, Tribal Affairs Assistant (AA1), Iloilo/Guimaras CSC – Member, as members of the IKSP Team that facilitated and shall further facilitate the proceedings provided in the Guidelines.

Transmittal. After the issuance of the memorandum for the composition of the IKSP Team, the Regional Director then sent a notice of the sufficiency of the proposed research application to the researcher/applicant and to the community through their elders/leaders..

Work and Financial Plan. Thereafter, On August 2, 2018, a meeting was called by the IKSP Team for the purpose of orienting the researcher on the content of the Guidelines and preparing a Work and Financial Plan (WFP) by the applicant and the IKSP Team in consultation with the ICC/IP elders/leaders. Unfortunately, the representative of the community failed to attend the orientation and WFP. The WFP contained the following:

- a. Expenses for food and transportation of the IKSP Team and IC/IP community elders/leaders and members who attended and will attend meetings, conferences, and other activities in the succeeding sections.
- b. Documentation expenses (eg. Photo and/or video, cassette recording, and reproduction of documents; and
- c. Other logistic costs.

Conference or Disclosure Meeting. After the approval and signing of WFP, On August 3, 2018, the Disclosure Meeting with the Ete community of Nagpana Minority Tribe and NCIP IKSP Team was conducted. The Legal Council presented the IKSPs and CLs Research and Documentation Guidelines of 2012, and after which the researcher was allowed to present the proposed study, its purpose, parameters, methodologies, materials, cost, and source of fund of the research, related information on the intended research, the benefits that the community may derive from the research activity, data gathering tools, and research work plan. During the disclosure meeting the council elders negotiated for a daily honorium to cover hours that they are going to

spend during elicitations. The council through the chieftain had also identified the resource persons of the study.

Community Decision Making. After the disclosure meeting, on August 5, 2018, the Council of Elders of Nagpana Indigenous Culutral Community passed Resolution No. 05 Series of 2018 approving the immediate conduct of the study.

Identification of Select Resource Persons and Key Informant. After the issuance of the resolution and the IKSP Team acknowledgment of such, on August 7, 2018, the Tribe Chieftain designated himself as the key informant and six Fluent Native Elders (FNEs) as resource persons.

Collecting

Onset of Data Gathering. Subsequently, on August 8, 2018, the elicitation sessions to gather Inete lexemes from the Resource Persons and Key Informant using Direct Transaltion Method (DT) and Conversational Method (DM) started. The six fluent native elders were alternatively scheduled, having two (2) FNEs and one (1) key informant every session. These were on August 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 2018; September 3, 2018. On September 7, 2018, the Chieftain, the key informant, suggested to have a one-on-one session with him since most of the Hiligaynon words had been translated into Inete lexemes, and he alone has the full authority and expertise in terms of grammar of their language. These sessions including grammar sketch were on September 7, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28; October 1, 2, 8, 12, 2018.

Eliciting the Corpora of Inete Lexemes from Fluent Native Speakers

During the elicitation sessions with the FNSs, a complete list of more than 2,500 Hiligaynon words compiled from Grades 1 to 3 Hilgaynon Books, Reid's word list, Hiligaynon Magazine, December 2, 2012, issue, and Bisayan – English – Tagalog Dictionary (Lopez, 1966), Rosano, et. al. (2015) Parts of Speech, Wolfenden (1973) Hiligaynon Reference Grammar were ready for the resource persons and key informant to translate into Inete lexemes using two methods, conversational and direct translation.

Direct Translation Method

It is a type of elicitation used to designate the collecting of desired types of data directly from speakers, according to a previously designed scenario rather than using only what is available now (Klessa, n.d.). Using the word lists, the researcher directly asked the FNSs of the equivalent lexemes of these words into their language.

The Conversational Method

The conversational method aligns with an indigenous world view that honors oral tradition as means of transmitting knowledge and upholds the relation which is necessary to maintain a collectivist tradition (Thomson, 2008, Kovach, 2009).

During the conduct of the study, conversational method which was found to be casual and relaxing type of method along side with direct translation was further used. It allowed the researcher to elicit the Inete lexemes mentioned by the FNSs that were not included in the word lists.

Processing

Categorizing the Corpora of Inete Lexemes

With the help of the key informant, the compiled corpora of Inete lexemes were categorized according to:

1. The phonological features of Inete language found in the corpora in terms of (a) minimal pairs of sounds (b) vowels, (c) diphthongs, (d) consonants, (e) consonant clusters, and (f) stress, and morphophonemics.

These categories of the corpora of the lexemes were used as entries in the *Reference Grammar*.

Encoding the Dictionary and Grammar Sketch. After more than two (2) months of data gathering, on October 13, 2018, the researcher started the inscription of the dictionary of Inete lexemes from the fieldnotes and it ended on November 23, 2018. The inscription in the dictionary included stress mark, lexical category, meaning, clause using the Inete lexeme, and translation of these lexemes and clauses into Hiligaynon. Likewise, on December 8, 2018, encoding of Inete Reference Grammar started and it ended on March 12, 2019.

Editing. For more than a month of inscription, finally the researcher printed a copy of the first Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary. It was given to the key informant as his personal copy in the editing sessions. During the editing, each entry was religiously read and analyzed as to its correctness in terms of stress, spelling, lexical category, syntax of both Inete and Hiligaynon clauses.

Storing

Finally, storing, to avoid redundancy and for safe keeping of the corpora of Inete lexemes as linguistic data for Inete Reference Grammar; the data were inscribed in the recordbooks as fieldnotes, encoded in Laptop and stored in OPPO Cellphone Audio File Manager and later after the validation of the outputs by the NCIP and ICC/IP.

MOA Preparation, Negotiation and Signing.

Due to the hectic schedule of the IKSP Team and researcher, the MOA preparation, negotiation, and signing was done on February 26, 2019. Before the preparation, negotiation and signing of the MOA, the Council of Elders passed Resolution No. 06 Series 2019 authorizing the Tribal Chieftain, the Public Information Officer and two (2) Research Resource Persons (Elders)

as representatives of the FIRST PARTY, the Researcher as the SECOND PARTY, and the NATIONAL COMMISSION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (NCIP) Region 6/7, a government agency under the Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines, duly represented by its Regional Director, ANA N. BURGOS, hereinafter to as the THIRD PARTY as parties involved in signing the MOA.

Submission of Report. Within ten (10) days from the conduct of the MOA negotiation and signing, the IKSP Team submitted to the Regional Director their report and recommendation, together with the resolution of consent issued by the ICCs/IPs and the MOA signed by the parties for his/her appropriate action.

Issuance of the Certificate of Precondition. Within ten (10) days from the submission by the IKSP Team of their report and favorable recommendation, the Regional Director issued the Certificate of Precondition. However, due to the delay of IKSP Team to submit their report to the Regional Director as prescribed in the Guidelines.

Output Validation. Within ten (10) days from the presentation of the research to dissertation panel, the researcher presented the output to the community for validation. The IKSP Team facilitated the conduct of validation. The result of the validation shall be contained in a resolution to be issued by the community indicating therein the ICCs/IPs' general impression on the genuineness of the output and compliance to the MOA and research process. A Certificate of Validation shall also be issued by the ICCs/IPs immediately after the conduct of the validation process.

Certificate of Validation. The certificate of validation refers to the certificate issued by the authorized ICC/IP representatives evidencing that the researcher presented his/her research output to the community for validation and that the ICCs/IPs are fully satisfied with the correct extent and manner of presentation of the information or knowledge that may be published or communicated.

Submission of Output. A copy of the validated and approved research output was submitted to the community registry, Regional Office, Central Office, through the OPPR, and the NCIP Central Office Library through the OECH.

Publication. The community shall have the sole and exclusive right to determine the extent, content, or manner of presentation of the information or knowledge that may be published or communicated if the research output pertains to their religious, cultural beliefs, ceremonial paraphernalia, or sites

Data Analysis Procedure

The Inete lexemes gathered from the elicitation sessions with FNSs were first used as entries in the Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary. Further analyzed by determining the lexemes' stress, spelling, lexical category, syntax of both Inete and Hiligaynon clauses.

Then these gathered data were subjected to linguistic data analyses of the linguistic features present in the corpora in terms of phonological linguistic features which concentrated on the nucleus and margin slots of the language, vowel and consonant minimal pairs, diphthongs, consonant clusters, stress, and morphonemics.

III. Results and Discussion

A. Vowel and Consonant Minimal Pairs

Inete has four contrastive sounds of vowels, /a/aram (intelligent) vs /ε/ erem (borrow) , /I/ bîbî (brink) vs /ε/ bebe (mouth), /ʊ/ busug (full) vs /ɔ/ bosog (bow) and /a/ mam (ours) vs / I/ mim (yours); and eight consonant minimal pairs, /p/ pato (duck) vs /b/ b́átóh (money), /p/ payo (liquor) vs /k/ kayo (wood), /p/ pilos (died) vs /t/ tinos (stand), /b/ baka't (no) vs /n/ nala't (none), /n/ ne (ligature) vs /s/ se (still), /k/ kangay (there) vs /w/ wangay (there yonder), /k/ ke (you) vs /t/ ta (we), and /r/ ribo (many) vs /b/) bido (new). Abreu (2018) has also categorized four contrastive vowel sounds and ten consonant minimal pairs in Southern Alta language as also found in Inete lexemes.

B. The Nucleus Slot: The Vowel Phones of Inete Language

Inete has six-vowel system: (1) high front unrounded /I/, (2) mid front unrounded /ε/, (3) low central unrounded /a/, (4) mid back rounded /ʊ/, (5) low back rounded /ɔ/, and (6) mid central unrounded /ə/. In contrast, Southern Alta (Abreu, 2018) has four vowels [i, ε, a, u/ɔ,], Sarangani Bilaan (Reid, 1971) has seven [i, e, ʌ, ə, u, o, ɔ,] and Atta (Northern Cagayan Negrito) in Reid (1971) has only three vowels [e, a, o]. These vowels function as the nucleus slot of the syllables or words. Figure 2 shows the vowels of Inete indigenous language.

The Vowels of Inete

Front	Central	Back	
I			High
ε	ə	ʊ	Mid
	a	ɔ	Low

C. Diphthongs

The bilabial or velar glide /w/ and palatal glide /j/ are combined with vowels sounds /a/, /ɪ/, /ɔ/, and /e/ (borrowed from IPA vowel sounds) to form diphthongs (1) /aʊ/ (aw), (2) /aɪ/ (ay), (3) /ɔɪ/ (oy), and (4) /eɪ/ (iw). Abreu (2018) also noticed the presence of diphthongs ay, Əy, aw, and ow in Southern Alta language. The diphthongs /aʊ/ daláwdaw (galay, shoots), ablaw (palataghól nga ido, dog that is always barking), and sipraw (gakipát ang mata, blinking eye); /aɪ/ wáyte (didto, there, yonder), kápáy (haból, blanket); /ɔɪ/ koyba (kweba, cave), maotoy (manyak, maniac), and tamaropoy (mga tigulang, old people); and /eɪ/ tariwtiw (sobra ka taliwis, very pointed object), balábiw (ilaga, rat), and sápiw (balay, house).

D. The Margin Slot: The Consonants of Inete Language

There are nineteen (19) distinct consonantal sounds in Inete language which comprise the marginal slot of the syllables or words as shown in the chart below. These are (1) stops /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, and /ʔ/, (2) fricatives /s/, /ʃ/ and /h/, (3) nasals /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/, (4) liquids /r/ and /l/, (5) glides /w/ and /j/, and (6) affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/. Southern Alta has sixteen consonant sounds [b, k, d, g, ʔ, h, l, m, n, ŋ, p, r, s, t, w, j] Abreu (2018). The difference between Inete and Southern Alta is the inclusion of /ʃ/ and /dʒ/ in Inete which is considered as borrowed sounds in Southern Alta.

CHART OF THE INETE CONSONANTS

MANNER OF ARTICULATION	PLACE OF ARTICULATION				
	BILABIAL	ALVEOLAR	PALATAL	VELAR	GLOTTAL
Stops voiceless voiced	p (<u>p</u> abagti) b (<u>b</u> aláng)	t (<u>t</u> aanak) d (<u>d</u> alawdaw)		k (<u>k</u> abiliw) g (<u>g</u> ulang)	ʔ (<u>ʔ</u> otah)
Fricatives (voiced)		s (<u>s</u> akmurû)	ʃ (<u>ʃ</u> bosyed)		h (<u>h</u> abháb)
Nasals (voiced)	m (<u>m</u> aawot)	n (<u>n</u> alang)		ŋ (<u>ŋ</u> usyan)	
Liquids (voiced) (central) (lateral)		r (<u>r</u> isgo) l (<u>l</u> akap)			
Glides (voiced)	w (<u>w</u> edte)		j (<u>j</u> anga)	w (<u>w</u> edte)	
Affricates voiceless voiced			tʃ (<u>tʃ</u> otsi) dʒ (<u>dʒ</u> odje)		

Adapted from Introduction to Linguistics, Fromkin (2010)

Figure 3.. The Chart on the Manner and Place of Articulations of Inete Consonants

E. Consonant Clusters

Consonant clusters are combination of two or more consonants that come together in a word. In Inete lexemes, it seems that there are only two consonant clusters, /tr/ and /dr/, that have pure Inete lexemes in this cluster classification. These are ‘trakpal’ (tawo nga gakupo sa lawas sang daku nga kahoy samtang gapasaka, man embraces the trunk of the tree while climbing), trisha (tatlo ka bahin ang parti sa ginaraab nga humay, one third part of the harvested rice), and trisho (panigahan o sulukban sang humay, wooden container used to measure harvested rice) for /tr/, and drapogan (sa kusina, the whole kitchen), drin (suhuton, will crawl under), and dro (suhota, to crawl under) for /dr/. With this analysis, the researcher has included consonant clusters in words borrowed from Hiligaynon as reference for future reference in Hiligaynon lexemes.

F. Stress.

Pennoyer (1987) in his preliminary study of the Inete language suggested that future researchers may comprehensibly study and establish the stress or accent in Inete lexemes. Moreover, neither Huholin et al. (2018), nor Abreu (2018) has included stress in their comprehensive study of Keley-i and Southern Alta, respectively. However, Wolfenden (1972) in his Hiligaynon Reference Grammar touched a little of it specifically in stress shifts in morphophonemics.

Thus, considering the scenario, the researcher together with the key informant has established the following types of stress used in Inete lexemes in different lexical categories: (1) the primary stress on the first syllable (ˈ) on words, áko (I); (2) primary stress (ˈ) on the second syllable itók (monitor lizard) ; (3) pakupya (borrowed from Tagalog) stress (ˈ) on the second syllable aprô (bile); (4) pakupya (ˈ)(ˈ) stress on both syllables súp-súp (sip); (5) primary stress (ˈ) on the first syllable and secondary stress (ˈ) on the second syllable bébè (mouth); (6) primary stress (ˈ) on the first and second syllable bétkén (shoulder); (7) three-four syllable words with primary stress (ˈ) on the second syllable binóhat (wife); (8) three to five-syllable words with primary stress (ˈ) on the last syllable alipongóg (ignorant); and (9) primary stress on the second syllable and first syllable of reduplicated words besé-bése (drenched).

However, data on stress and vowel length were presented with no conclusion, e.g., bohí (*ps* (adj) - alive) and bóhi (*lg* (v) – to release) ánay (*p* (n) – termite) and anáy (*lg* (v) – to wait) in Pennoyer (1987) on suprafix. Unlike in English language, suprafix is established between nouns and verbs (récord – noun, recórd – verb), in Inete, it is somewhat complicated as shown in the examples above ‘bóhi’ (to release) is verb and ‘anáy’ (to wait) is also a verb with different stress placement.

G. Morphophonemics

Morphophonemics deals with the classification and description of the pronunciation changes which occurs when morphemes come together in word formation or syntactic sequences (Wolfenden, 1972). In Inete, the changes are limited to sounds in the syllables on the border where two morphemes meet. The types of changes occurring in this language involve assimilation of one

sound to another, change in position of two sounds, loss of sounds, replacement of sounds, and various combinations of these types.

1. Stress Shift. Stress or accent is frequently shifted from its original place on a stem when affixation occurs. The principal types of shifts are either to the right towards the end of the word, or to the left towards the beginning of the word.

1.1. Stress shift to the right. Stress shifts to the right when a suffix is added to a stem, but no further changes occur. Changes in pronunciation and meaning of words occur when stress shifts to the right towards the end of the word, or to the left towards the beginning of the word. When suffix *an* is added to a verb stem having stress on the first syllable, stress shifts to the right towards the end of the word occurs and thereby changes also the meaning of the word. Changes in shift and meaning are exemplified in Inete verb stem *dóyag* (*dalagan*) ‘to run’ which becomes *doyagán* (*dalaganan*) ‘place for running.’

1.2. Stress shift to the left. Stress shifts to the left when the suffixation is accompanied by vowel lost in the stem syllable next to the suffix. When suffix *in* is added to a verb stem having stress on the last syllable, stress shifts to the left towards the beginning of the word. Thus, from *dará* (*dala*) ‘to bring’ it becomes *dár-in* (*dal-on*) means ‘will bring.’ A verb marked for goal focus indicates that the topic of the sentence is the object which directly receives the action.

2. Methathesis. The loss of the vowel in the stem-final syllable may bring two consonants together. In some instances, these consonants undergo methathesis of position. In methathesis, the loss of the vowel in the stem-final syllable may bring two consonants together, and is affected by the inflection of suffix *in* or *an* is added to the stem. When suffix *in* is added to the stem *gurut* (*gulot*) ‘to slice’ methathesis occurs due to the loss of medial vowel *u* in the stem and brings two consonants together *tr* as it becomes *gutrin* (*guluton*) ‘will slice’. Suffix *in* may be used only to words with initial or medial *o* and *u* while *an* for words with medial *e* and *a* as in *tahup* to *taphan*, *seled* to *sedlen*. The later *sedlen* is affected by vowel harmony rule which has caused a /a/ in suffix *an* to assimilate to *e* /*ɛ*/ (Pennoyer, 1987). Methathesis is in contrast with Syncope in Huholin, et al. (2018) *Keley-i Dictionary and Grammar Sketch* where the vowel *e* is the usual one to undergo the syncope process when prefix *na* and infix *in* are added to the stems. To illustrate the loss of vowel *e* in syncope: prefix *na* + *behi* becomes *nabhi* (a hole was made); and prefix *in* + *bedad* is *bindad* (loosened the tie).

3. Assimilation. When consonants come together in a word or morpheme boundaries, assimilation frequently occurs. This involves (3.1) assimilation of velar nasal /*ŋ*/ in prefix *pang* into bilabial stops /*b*/ and /*p*/, and (3.2) assimilation plus consonant loss.

3.1. Assimilation of velar nasal /*ŋ*/ in prefix *pang* into bilabial stops /*b*/ and /*p*/. In Inete, there are only two consonants involved in the assimilation of /*ŋ*/ in prefix *pang* into *mb* and *mp*, the bilabial stops /*b*/ and /*p*/. When prefix *pang* with final velar nasal /*ŋ*/ is connected into a stem with /*b*/ and /*p*/ initial consonant sounds, assimilation of /*ŋ*/ occurs, and articulation of the

combined lexemes changes. These words become pambonak and pampokot with assimilation of /ŋ/ + b equals mb and /ŋ/ + p is mp.

3.2. Assimilation plus consonant loss. Further complication sometimes arises when the prefix pang is attached to Inete stems with initial stops consonants. With stems the initial consonant of the stem is lost after the nasal is assimilated and the nasal assumes the place of both itself and the lost consonant. This process appears true to bonak, porot, and turuk which becomes pamonak, pamorot, and panuruk respectively after the velar nasal /ŋ/ in prefix pang is assimilated when it is added to the stems and consequently a consonant loss on the stem, b in bonak, p in porot and t in turuk. This consonant loss allows the presence of a new consonant as result of assimilation, m in pamonak, m in pamorot, and n in panurok. However, with stops k, the nasal /ŋ/ in prefix pang assumes the place of both itself and the lost consonant k in kayo and kewkew which becomes pangayo and pangewkew.

4. Vowel change from e /ɛ/ into i (I) in and a /a/ into e /ɛ/. The last one in morphophonemics is vowel change, e /ɛ/ to i (I) as influenced by suffix in and a /a/ to e /ɛ/ in prefix pa as influenced /ɛ/ in the stem. This is probably one of the distinct features in Inete language. In kin-in (silingon, will say), the vowel i in the first syllable is influenced by the i in suffix in. That is why from the stem kenê (to say) it becomes kin-in after suffix in was added to it. On the other hand, the a in prefix pa is influenced by the /ɛ/ in sound in terped (tabok, cross over), and instead of pa + terped is paterped; it becomes peterped (patabok, to be across from) which undergoes assimilation caused by vowel harmony rule.

IV. Conclusion

Pennoyer (1987) attests that it is remarkable that Inete has survived as a separate language. It has been under tremendous pressure for centuries and yet it has preserved its separate identity, its uniqueness within the Central Philippine geographical area. Surrounded by Visayan speakers and linked especially close with the Kinaray-a through constant intermarriage, the Ete people of Panay have successfully kept their language as an exclusive means of communication.

It is believed that its uniqueness lies on the following linguistic components in the corpora:

Phonological Features

As a result of comprehensive analyses of the phonological features of Inete corpora, the uniqueness of Inete language is probably true due to the inclusion of /ə/ sound in words with primary stress in the first, second, and third syllable (kabilíw), and predominance of vowel sounds /ɛ/ in the corpora and emphasis on the pronunciation /ʊ/ in the nucleus slot.

Almost all the diphthongs except for one which may be a cognate from Kinaray-a are probably purely Inete lexemes, and these are found in medial and final position.

The presence of consonant sounds, /ʔ /, /ʃ/ and /dʒ/ in the margin slot which may be considered as borrowed from English but not true in Inete, the dissertation analysis of Yap (1973) supports this claim that there is a possibility that Inete is one of the rare two *r* Philippine languages.

In addition, Inete as a stress-governed language, and the vowel harmony rule are probably parts of the distinct features of the language.

V. Recommendations

This study is probably the first comprehensive attempt to document the indigenous Inete language of Ete community in Sitio Nagpana, Barangay Lipata, Barotac Viejo, Iloilo. However, this is still somewhat limited as to the bulk of lexemes elicited in Inete to Hiligaynon Dictionary and the linguistics features covered in Inete Reference Grammar. There are still more lexemes to elicit and more linguistics features to study to unlock and discover the complexities of this indigenous and other indigenous languages within the contexts of Panay and Negros.

The numerous recommendations are for the future Filipino linguistic researchers who want to be involved in the preservation of the minority languages in the Philipinies. To those who love to do challenging works in unveiling the linguistic intricacies of an indigenous language . . . without considering the cost, effort, time and even health.

In phonology, the inclusion of the schwa sound /ə/ in the nucleus slot of the Inete phonemes is maybe a call for future researchers in Hiligaynon to analyze further the sound systems of this language delving on establishing the suprasegmentals specifically on stress to discover if this schwa sound is present in the nucleus slot of the language. Further analysis is on the articulation of /ʊ/ in Hiligaynon if it is really the /ʊ/ of the English language or the long /u/ since it seems that Hiligaynon has slight variations on the production of /ɔ/ and /u/ where it was found out that the in Inete /ʊ/ is pronounced the same in English. This may also be used to compare the nucleus and margin slots of neighboring languages especially variants of Kinaray-a within the contexts of Iloilo including the language of Panay Bukidnon. Moreover, in Inete, further study on suprasegmental specifically on intonation patterns, juncture and the like can be pursued to establish the shift and glide in utterances since it was observed further that Ete people are fast speakers.

In morphophonemics, further investigation on the Vowel Harmony Rule (HVR) is needed since changes occur only in two-syllable words. Also, a study can do cross analyses of phonological features of neighboring Ete communities within Iloilo and Guimaras.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researchers are indebted to Dr. Ma. Asuncion Christine V. Dequilla, Dissertation Adviser, Dr. Leah E. Gustilo, Outside Expert, Dr. Daisy A. Rosano, Hiligaynon Specialist, Dr. Genesis G. Camarista, Program Adviser, Dr. Elvira V. Arellano, Associate Dean WVSU Graduate School, Chieftain Gregorio G. Elosendo and the Ete Community of Sitio Nagpana, Barotac Viejo, Iloilo, Philippines.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abreu, M.M. (2018). A reference grammar of Southern Alta (Kabuloan Kumagat).
- [2] Unpublished doctoral Dissertation, Department of English and Applied Linguistics
- [3] Br. Andrew Gonzalez FSC College of Education, De La Salle University, Taft Avenue, Manila
- [4] ANA (Administration for Native Americans) (2014). Native language project compendium
- [5] Retrieved January 15, 2018, from https://www.asf.hhs.gov/sites/files/ana/2014languagecompendium_finalpdf
- [6] Bolante, J. (1986). The atis of Panay: A glimpse into their indigenous world. Iloilo City,
- [7] Philippines
- [8] Catalan, R. (2005). Knowledge of socio – cultural practices: Basis for an alternative
- [9] education among the indigenous people of Nagpana, Barotac Viejo, Iloilo, Philippines. University of San Agustin, Iloilo City. Philippines
- [10] Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (2008). The grammar book: An esl/efl teacher's
- [11] course. Second Edition. Heinle and Heinle Publishing. USA
- [12] Galla, C. K. (2010). Multimedia technology and indigenous language
- [13] revitalization: Practical educational tools and applications used within native communities. Arizona State University. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 3427681
- [14] Garcia-Laguia, A. (2017). Documentation of Northern Alta, a Philippine Negrito
- [15] language, London: SOAS, Endangered Languages Archive. Retrieved April 18, 2018, <https://elar.soas.ac.uk/Collection/MPI1032028>
- [16] Geeraerts, D. (2009). www.lingaerts.kuleuven.be/.../Geeraerts.2009.draft.Theories_of_Lexical_Semantics
- [17] Lexical_Semantics
- [18] Greszcyk, A., Sr. (2011) Language warriors: Leaders in the Ojibwe language
- [19] revitalization movement. University of Minnesota, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2011. 3450904.
- [20] Harsta, K. G. (n.d.). Descriptive grammar of two Magar dialects: Tanahu and
- [21] Syangja Magar. Retrieved April 18, 2018, from [https://elar.soas.ac.uk / Collection/MPI1029706](https://elar.soas.ac.uk/Collection/MPI1029706). Accessed April 18.
- [22] Hohulin, E. et al. (2018). Keley-i dictionary and grammar sketch. Linguistics Society of
- [23] the Philippines. Manila
- [24] Jacob, (2016). The tumandok people of the island of Panay. Retrieve April 4, 2018 from
- [25] <http://www.jacobimages.com/2016/01/>
- [26] Klessa, K. (n.d.) Language in danger. Retrieve April 7, 2018, from <http://anguagesineubook-of-knowledge-languagedocumentation>
- [27] anguagesineubook-of-knowledge-languagedocumentation
- [28] Molina, G. (2012). Disappearing languages in the Philippines. Ethnic Groups of the
- [29] Philippines Retrieved January 16, 2018 from <http://www.ethnicgroupsphilippines.com/2012/05/12/disappearing->
- [30] Penoyer, D. F. (1987). Inati: the hidden negrito language of Panay, Philippines.

- [31] Philippine Journal of Linguistics 18/19. 1-36.
- [32] Pomo Language Assessment and Documentation Project in California. (2012). ANA
- [33] (Administration for Native Americans) (2014). Native language project
- [34] compendium. Retrieved January 15, 2018, from [https://www.asf.hhs.gov](https://www.asf.hhs.gov/sites/files/ana/2014languagecompendium_finalpdf)
- [35] /sites/files/ana/2014languagecompendium_finalpdf
- [36] Rosano, D. A., et al. (2015). Hiligaynon as a language. Primer in teaching
- [37] mother tongue: Hiligaynon. West Visayas State University Press. Iloilo City
- [38] Say It in Samala in California (2014). ANA (Administration for Native Americans) (2014).
- [39] Native language project compendium. Retrieved January 15, 2018, from https://www.asf.hhs.gov/sites/files/ana/2014languagecompendium_finalpdf
- [40] Sibaya, B.P. (1999). The intellectualization of Filipino and other sociolinguistics and
- [41] education essays. Linguistic Society of the Philippines. De La Salle University Press Inc. Manila
- [42] Wolfenden, E.P. (1973). Hiligaynon reference grammar. University of Hawaii Press.
- [43] Honolulu