



Advocacy Statement on the use of Filipino Sign Language in Formal Education

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The Philippine Deaf Resource Center as the singular research organization for Deaf concerns in the country resolutely believes in the progressive views of deafness as culture, and of Deaf communities as linguistic and cultural minorities. It regards research and information as empowerment for Deaf organizations and research-based advocacy for, and by the Filipino Deaf community, as key to its struggles.

Central to this advocacy is the documentation and promotion of the use of Filipino Sign Language (FSL) in all language domains, including education.

To this end, the Philippine Deaf Resource Center has pioneered for FSL in the past decade:

- research and publications establishing unequivocal evidence of its distinct linguistic structure at the levels of phonology, morphology and discourse;
- gathering of archival data revealing that its early beginnings date back to 16th century Leyte, antedating the influence of American Sign Language by over 400 years;
- specialized training in the ASEAN region of Filipino Deaf researchers in lexicography and historical linguistics documenting the rich and unique regional diversity of its lexicon;
- explorations into applied and forward-looking disciplines such as machine intelligence in computer science, translations in law and medicine, visual literature, sign language corpora;
- numerous presentations in academic fora and conferences locally and abroad on the structure and sociolinguistics of FSL;

- its core importance to human rights, particularly the right to language and access to information, and freedom of expression and communication, as prerequisites for independent living;
- initiatives in language policy and planning to institutionalize and mainstream accessibility and the linguistic identity of Deaf Filipinos;
- its promotion as the visual language symbolic of national pride and Deaf culture which counters a purely pathological view of hearing loss as impairment;

In view of the above, the Philippine Deaf Resource Center urgently calls on the State to:

- *Recognize the existence of Filipino Sign Language as a true and legitimate visual language in light of empirical research data;*
- *Promote it as the national sign language in fulfillment of international commitments, consistent with local policy implementation; and*
- *Accept the Deaf community as fully capable and entitled to its fundamental rights and freedoms for full participation in society on an equal basis with all other Filipinos.*



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Selected publications and for a presentations involving the PDRC

Linguistics

- Apurado, Y & Agravante, R 2006, 'The phonology and regional variation of Filipino Sign Language: Considerations for Language Policy', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 27 January.
- Cabalfin, EPG & Martinez, LB 2008, 'Determining handshape correspondences in Filipino Sign Language using vision-based recognition', paper presented to the 10th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 12 December.
- Martinez, LB 2009, 'Sign language research for and by the Deaf - Overcoming challenges in the Philippines', paper presented to the International Seminar on Sign Language Research, Kuala Lumpur, 30 May.

- Martinez, LB 2008a, 'Proving the existence of Filipino Sign Language – Evidence and challenges', paper presented to the Department of Linguistics, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 13 March.
- Martinez, LB 1996, 'Understanding the Deaf student: Phonological modifications in Filipino Sign Language'. Unpublished manuscript, University Research Coordination Office, De La Salle University, Manila.
- Martinez, LB 1995, 'Turn-taking and eye gaze in sign conversations between Deaf Filipinos', *Sociolinguistics in deaf communities*, Lucas, C (ed.), Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Martinez, LB 1994, 'A linguistic study of some aspects of Filipino Sign Language in Manila and Cebu', Unpublished manuscript, Department of Linguistics and Interpreting, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.
- Martinez, LB 1993, 'Eye-gaze as an element in Filipino Sign Language discourse', *Communication Forum (Gallaudet University)*, vol. 2, pp. 99-112.
- Martinez, LB & De Guzman, MT 2002, 'Filipino Deaf culture revealed in Filipino Sign Language', paper presented to the Deaf Way II, Washington, D.C, 10 July.
- Martinez, LB & Tanjusay, R 2006, 'Nonmanual signals and sign language syntax', paper presented to the Dept. of Linguistics, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 28 November.
- Martinez, LB, Bernardo, YA, Puson, MJ & Tanjusay, RB In press, 'Observations on regional variants and handshape patterns of six signs in Filipino Sign Language', *Philippine Journal of Linguistics*.
- National Sign Language Committee, 2008, Status report on the use of sign language in the Philippines, Philippine Federation of the Deaf, Quezon City.
- Philippine Deaf Resource Center & Philippine Federation of the Deaf, 2004a, Part I. Understanding structure, *An Introduction to Filipino Sign Language*, Philippine Deaf Resource Center, Quezon City.
- Philippine Deaf Resource Center & Philippine Federation of the Deaf, 2004b, Part II. Traditional and emerging signs, *An Introduction to Filipino Sign Language*, Philippine Deaf Resource Center, Quezon City.
- Philippine Deaf Resource Center & Philippine Federation of the Deaf, 2004c, Part III. Current issues, *An Introduction to Filipino Sign Language*, Philippine Deaf Resource Center, Quezon City.
- Puson, MJ & Siloterio, M 2006, 'Language contact and lexicalization in Filipino Sign Language: A focus on fingerspelled signs', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 27 January.
- Quilicot, DT 2007, *Filipino Sign Language: Pagkilala at umuunlad na wikang senyas ng kumunidad ng mga Pilipinong may kapansanan sa pandinig*, MA thesis, University of the Philippines, Quezon City.
- Tiongson, PV 2006, 'Making texts more meaningful to the Deaf reader for deeper levels of information and language processing and language instruction', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 27 January.
- Woodward, J 2006a, 'The universal and unique characteristics of sign languages', paper presented to the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 21 February.

- Woodward, J 2006b, 'Endangered sign languages', paper presented to the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 21 February.
- Woodward, J 2006c, 'Sign language linguistics: An emerging field in Southeast Asia', paper presented to the College of Education, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 19 September.

History

- Abat, R & Martinez, LB 2006, 'The history of sign language in the Philippines: Piecing together the puzzle', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress. University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 27 January.
- Martinez, LB 2007, '1907-2007: 100 years of sign language history', paper presented to the 1st Philippine International Deaf Congress and the Philippine School for the Deaf / School for the Deaf and Blind Centennial Deaf Celebration of the Philippine School for the Deaf Alumni Affairs Association, Manila, 6 December.
- Martinez, LB 2005a, 'Determining the historical relationship of Filipino Sign Language and American Sign Language', paper presented to the Japan Association of Sign Linguistics, Kyoto, 12 June.
- Martinez, LB 2005b, 'Filipino Sign Language: Understanding the past, looking to the future', paper presented to the Japan Institute for Sign Language Studies, Kyoto, 12 June.

Philippine studies, literature and culture

- Martinez, LB 2009. Advocacy for and by Deaf women: Observations on gender & disability movements in the Philippines. *Behinderung und Dritte Welt. Journal for Disability and International Development*. 20. Jahrgang.
- Tiongson, PVA & Martinez, LB 2008a, 'Visual literature and sign language linguistics', paper presented to the 10th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 12 December.
- Tiongson, PVA & Martinez, LB 2008b, 'Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Literature: Expanding the Definition of Literature', paper presented to the Inter/Sections: Crossroads and crosscurrents in literatures and cultures. A national conference, 30 January.

Lexicography & corpus

- Corpuz, R 2006, 'Ang kahalagahan ng proyektong diksiyonaryo ng Philippine Federation of the Deaf sa edukasyon ng Bingi sa Pilipinas', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 27 January.

- Philippine Federation of the Deaf 2005, A Compilation of signs from regions of the Philippines, Part 1, Philippine Federation of the Deaf, Quezon City.
- Philippine Federation of the Deaf 2007, A compilation of signs from regions of the Philippines, Part 2, Philippine Federation of the Deaf, Quezon City.
- Martinez, LB 2007, 'A corpus for Filipino Sign Language', paper presented to the Consultative workshop on Philippine Corpus, Manila, 23 November.
- Tanjusay, R 2007, 'Lexicography of sign language', paper presented to the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino National Conference on Lexicography, Iloilo, 10 February.

Sign language interpreting

- Martinez, LB 2007, 'Initial observations on code-switching in the voice interpretation of two Filipino interpreters', in Translation, sociolinguistic and consumer issues in interpreting, Metzger, M & Fleetwood, E (eds), Gallaudet University Press, Washington, D.C.
- Martinez, LB 2006, 'Institutionalizing linguistically-based measures in legal interpreting: A focus on the rights of deaf women', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 27 January.

Translation studies

- Philippine Deaf Resource Center, 2007, Pagsasalin at pagbuo ng talatinigang pambatas sa wikang senyas ng mga bining Pilipino, Unpublished manuscript, National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Language Policy

- Andrada, J & Domingo, R 2006, 'Key findings for language planning from the National Sign Language Committee', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 27 January.
- Benjamin, GS & Martinez, L 2008, 'The right to language – a call for sign language policy in the legal and judicial systems', paper presented to the 10th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 12 December.
- Corpuz, MRE 2009, 'Wikang senyas - Yaman ng Pilipinas', paper presented to the Tinig ng senyas: Pagbubuklod tungo sa pagpapanday ng isang makabuluhang pambansang patakaran sa wikang senyas, Quezon City, 26 August.
- Martinez, LB 2009, '2009 SONA ng wikang senyas', paper presented to the Tinig ng senyas: Pagbubuklod tungo sa pagpapanday ng isang makabuluhang pambansang patakaran sa wikang senyas, Quezon City, 26 August.

Philippine Deaf Resource Center 2005, Preliminary sectoral position papers for an initiative in language planning for sign language policy for the Republic of the Philippines: A compilation. Unpublished manuscript, Quezon City.

Education

Bustos, MTAP & Martinez, LB 2008, 'Is UP education linguistically accessible to its Deaf students?', paper presented to the 10th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 12 December.

Bustos, MT & Tanjusay, RB 2006, 'Filipino Sign Language in deaf education: Deaf and hearing perspectives', paper presented to the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Quezon City, 27 January.

Martinez, LB 1995, 'Filipino Sign Language: May kaugnayan at kabuluhan ba sa Deaf education?', paper presented as the Tan Chi King Professorial Chair Lecture, De La Salle University, Manila.

Martinez, LB, Tanjusay, R & Puson, MJ 2008, 'Tingin dito! Views from a language with no sound', paper presented to the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino Lecture for Mother Language Day, Quezon City, 12 February.

Martinez, LB 2009, The use of Filipino Sign Language and Shared Reading in improving English literacy of young Deaf students, unpublished manuscript.

Tanjusay, R 2007, 'Filipino Sign Language in Deaf education: A Deaf perspective', paper presented to the Philippine Children's Medical Center, Child Neuroscience Center Lecture series, Quezon City, 25 October.

Early Childhood Development

Martinez, LB 2005, 'Insights from the Deaf adult world – What pediatricians need to know', paper presented to the 3rd Biennial Convention of the Philippine Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, Quezon City, 9 September.

Martinez, LB 2007, 'Sign language for the Filipino Deaf child', paper presented to the Philippine Children's Medical Center, Child Neuroscience Center Lecture series, Quezon City, 25 October.

Human rights

Martinez, LB 2006, 'Where do the deaf women belong? Reproductive health considerations for a language minority', paper presented to the 1st International Conference on Reproductive Health Management, Manila, 3 May.

Mendoza, J, Corpuz, MRE & Martinez, LB 2008, 'Fighting for access to communication for Deaf women in the Philippine legal system – A Situationer',

paper presented to the Regional Conference on women with disabilities 2008,
Hong Kong, 5 January.
Tiongson, P & Martinez, LB 2007, Full Access: A Compendium on Sign Language
Advocacy and Access of the Deaf to the Legal System, Philippine Deaf Resource
Center and Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal
services, Quezon City.

Machine intelligence & sign language recognition

Cabalfin, EPG In progress, Filipino Sign Language recognition system, MS thesis,
University of the Philippines, Quezon City.
Sandjaja, IN 2008, Filipino Sign Language number recognition. MS thesis, De La Salle
University, Manila.