


## Mapping Philippine Studies in North East Asia: A SWOT Analysis of Southeast Asian Studies Programs from China, Japan, and Korea



Ronel O. Laranjo\*

### [ *Abstract* ]

This paper introduces the different Southeast Asian Studies academic programs of three universities in northeast Asia namely: Peking University (China); Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (Japan); and Busan University of Foreign Studies (Korea). This study mainly focuses on the Philippines as part of Southeast Asian studies program in the said universities. The researcher utilized archival work related to the Southeast Asian studies programs of each university. The study also examined the curriculum of the program, background of faculty, and motivations of students in studying Southeast Asian studies by conducting interviews and surveys. Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis was employed by the researcher in analyzing the data from the different universities. Finally, in mapping out the teaching of Filipino language and Philippine-related subjects, this paper argued that Northeast Asian universities established a Southeast Asian Studies focused on Philippines because of various socio-economic-political factors, and not only because of the Filipino diaspora in the region.

**Keywords:** Southeast Asian Studies, Global Filipino, Filipino language and culture

---

\* Assistant Professor, University of the Philippines, Diliman, rolaranjo@up.edu.ph

## **I . Introduction**

China, Japan, and Korea are associated in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) through the ASEAN Plus 3 Cooperation which began in 1997 and formally adopted by ASEAN in 1999. Through this cooperation, ties between the northeast and southeast Asian nations strengthened and deepened at various levels and areas, particularly in economy, society, and politics.

In the academe, northeast Asian universities have established programs focusing on Southeast Asian studies. As early as 1900s, northeast Asian nations have been studying and doing research on Southeast Asian nations for different purposes. In China, the origin of modern Southeast Asian Studies owed much to the initiatives of overseas Chinese nationalists who established “South Seas [Nanyang] Studies” at Jinan School [later University] (1906) and Xiamen University (1921) and focused on the history of Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and China’s relations with them (Park et al. 2013: 29).

The Southeast Asian studies program of Japan was established in Taiwan during the Japanese occupation of the island at Taipei Imperial University in 1928. The Taiwan Governor at the time reported that Taipei Imperial University established the College of Letters and Politics in order to disseminate Imperial Japan’s culture into the South Seas. The Department of Nanyo History was a crucial link in implementing this plan (Yu 2013: 81).

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Korea started to teach Southeast Asian languages and literatures (specifically Malay, Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese) during the early 1960s, right after Republic of Korea has established its diplomatic relations with Thailand and Malaysia, a starting point of Southeast Asian studies in the country.

There have been researchers on Southeast Asian studies trends in terms of historical background, type of researches, methodology, and institutional linkages in different universities in Europe, United States of America, Australia (King 2015), and even in Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia (Pamungkas 2015), Malaysia and

mainland Southeast Asia (Sathian 2015) and the Philippines (Mendoza 2017).

However, researchers on Southeast Asian Studies in China, Korea, and Japan focused more on the historical development (Park and King 2013) of the field in the academe in general. To contribute to this existing literature on Southeast Asian Studies development in China, Korea, and Japan, this paper introduces and maps out the Southeast Asian Studies academic programs of three universities in northeast Asia namely: Peking University (China); Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (Japan); and Busan University of Foreign Studies (Korea).

The researcher engaged in archival work related to the Southeast Asian studies program's history of each university. The study also examined the curriculum of the program, background of the faculty, and motivations of the students in studying Southeast Asian studies as collected from interviews and surveys.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis was employed by the researcher in analyzing the data from the different universities. Finally, in mapping out the teaching of Filipino language and Philippine-related subjects, this paper argues that Northeast Asian universities established Southeast Asian Studies focusing on the Philippines because of various socio-economic-political factors, and not only because of the Filipino diaspora in the region.

## **II. Historical development of Southeast Asian Studies courses in the Northeast Asian Academe**

The Chinese were the first among the northeast Asians to establish Southeast Asian Studies programs in the academe. As previously mentioned, overseas Chinese nationalists established the South Seas or Nanyang Studies at Jinan University in 1906. The initial subjects focused on the history of Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and China's relations with the region.

According to Zhang (2007), after the Sino-Japanese war (1937-

1945), the Kuomintang government founded a school called National Oriental Language School in Nanjing for Southeast Asian language training. It later on merged with Peking University in 1952 after the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949.

In the 1950s, China's new government paid great attention to Southeast Asian Studies and teaching programs. The first group of academic institutions was set up in Southern China (Zhang 2007: 77). In 1956, an institute of Southeast Asian studies was founded in Xiamen University. Zhongshan University also developed the Institute of Studies of Southeast Asian History in 1959. Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences also established Yunnan Institute of History in 1963, which became the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. In 1966, when the Cultural Revolution broke out, all academic researchers stopped engaging in research, including Southeast Asian teaching and studies, until the Cultural Revolution ended in 1976 (Zhang 2007: 78).

Institutions closed down during the Cultural Revolution were re-opened and new institutions related to Southeast Asian studies were established. Guangzi Academy of Social Sciences established the Institute of Indo-China's Studies in 1979, and was developed into Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in 1989. Zhengzhou University opened a section of Vietnamese studies in 1981, which was later developed into the Institute of Vietnamese Studies. During this time, Southeast Asian teaching programs developed at different levels with an increase of institutions of Southeast Asian Studies. In all the Southeast Asian university institutes, there were usually Southeast Asian teaching programs as well as Master's and Ph.D. programs (Zhang 2007: 78).

From 1980s to 1990s, more Chinese universities opened courses related to Southeast Asian studies. According to Zhang (2007), the greatest progress was made in teaching Southeast Asian indigenous languages. At present, there are ten major universities offering indigenous language specialties: Peking University, Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), Shanghai Foreign Language University, Guangxi Nationality College, Communication University of China, Guangdong Foreign Language and Trade University, Yunnan Minzu

University (YMU), University of International Business and Economics, People Liberation Army (PLA) Nanjing International Relations College, and PLA Luoyang Foreign Language College.

Tagalog<sup>1</sup> language and Philippine-related subjects were first offered in Peking University in 1985, followed by the Communication University of China. Yunnan Minzu University (YMU) and Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) started to offer Filipino language and Philippine-related classes in 2017, in line with the *One Belt, One Road Initiative* of the government lead by Xi Jinping.

Southeast Asian studies in Japan started in Taiwan, a Japanese colony from 1895 to 1945. As mentioned above, Taipei Imperial University became the first Japanese university to establish a Department of Nanyo History in 1928. Recognizing his significant contribution to academia, the Taipei Imperial University invited Fujita Toyohachi of the Tokyo Imperial University to be Dean of the College of Letters and Politics at Taipei Imperial University in 1928 (Yu 2013: 81).

Japan's main reason in establishing a Southeast Asian studies program is to promulgate Japanese culture to Southeast Asian region. A year after Fujita assumed the position, he passed away. He was succeeded by Iwao Seiichi, who kept the post for eighteen years, from 1929 to 1946.

During this period, Taipei became the center of teaching and research of Southeast Asian studies in Japan. In 1945, The Taipei Imperial University was handed over to the Nationalist Government of China, and its staff returned to Japan to fill in various university posts (Nagazumi 1975: 8). Southeast Asian History course was offered at University of Tokyo by Tatsuro Yamamoto in the Department of Asian History, and Iwao, Japanese History. He also occasionally gave lectures on the history of Japanese trade with

---

<sup>1</sup> Tagalog is one of the 180+ languages in the Philippines and is mainly spoken in Manila, the capital city. It is the basis of the National Language in the 1935 Constitution and called *Pilipino* by the Department of Education in 1959. The national language's name was changed to *Filipino* in 1987 Constitution and it is based on the native languages spoken in the country such as Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano and others, as well as Spanish, English and Arabic.

China, the West and Southeast Asia.

In 1949, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS) and Osaka University of Foreign Studies, now Osaka University, were reorganized and started teaching Southeast Asian languages. Osaka University taught language courses in Indonesian, Thai, and Burmese. It started teaching Filipino in 1983, the first in Japan, which eventually grew into a full Philippine Studies Program.

TUFS taught Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese, and also started offering Filipino and Philippine-related courses in 1992. University of Shizuoka also started offering Tagalog classes as early as 1987.

In 1963, Kyoto University founded its multi-disciplinary Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS). It is mainly focused on conducting researches about the region using interdisciplinary approach, including the natural sciences. In 1964, the Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa was established to teach non-Western languages. Towards the end of its first decade, the Institute grew to include twelve departments, three of which devoted study to Southeast Asia (Nagazumi 1975: 14).

In 1976, CSEAS started a seminar that offered intensive lectures by center staff on the nature, culture, society, economy, and other aspects of Southeast Asia to graduate students of Kyoto University, as well as students from other Japanese universities. This seminar has become an annual affair, and still runs at present.

In 1991, Kyoto University established the Graduate School of Human Environmental Studies. One of its departments became the Department of Southeast Asian Studies. After 7 years, CSEAS also established the Graduate School of Asian and African Studies (ASAFAS) in Kyoto University, offering classes and researchers with interdisciplinary and integrated approaches to area studies.

At present, courses related to Southeast Asian Studies are offered in The University of Tokyo, Kyushu University, Sophia University, and Temple University. In 2000s, Takushoku University also started offering Tagalog language and Philippine-related courses under its International Studies program.

Southeast Asian Studies in Korea was a much more recent phenomenon. As previously mentioned, it started in 1964 when Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS) taught Malay-Indonesian language and literature courses to undergraduate students. HUFS also included Thai in its teaching in 1966 and Vietnamese in 1967.

Busan University of Foreign Studies (BUFS) also offered Southeast Asian languages in undergraduate programs starting 1982. It first held lectures on Thai and Malay-Indonesian languages in 1982, Vietnamese in 1991, and Myanmar languages in 1992.

The Institute for East Asian Studies at Sogang University (SIEAS), established in 1981, eventually expanded its East Asian Studies to also cover Southeast Asian studies.

Another development for Southeast Asian Studies in Korea is the establishment of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) at HUFS in November 1990. Comprised mostly of the faculty members and former students of HUFS College of Oriental Languages, CSEAS has continued to play an important role in the development of Southeast Asian Studies in Korea (Park 2013: 121-122).

Other universities which offer courses related to Southeast Asian Studies are Seoul National University, Korea University, Kangwon National University, Pusan National University, Yeungnam University, Busan National University of Education, and the Catholic University of Daegu.

With the advent of multiculturalism in Korea and stronger ties of Korea with ASEAN, HUFS and Sogang University, in partnership with ASEAN-Korea Center, started offering separate classes in their respective universities for Filipino language in 2010. In 2015, BUFS introduced a Filipino track for its Southeast Asian Studies undergraduate program.

From the above discussions, it may be seen that Filipino language and Philippine-related courses were introduced to the northeast Asian academe around the 80s. Osaka University started it in 1983. Peking University followed suit in 1985, and then by University of Shizuoka in Japan in 1987.

Two other Japanese universities, TUFs and Takushoku University, also started to offer Philippine Studies courses, in 1992 and the 2000s, respectively. Korean universities started to be interested in Filipino language and culture by 2010s when in HUFs and Sogang University began offering courses. The latest university to institutionalize Filipino language and Philippine-related subject in Korea is BUFS in 2015. In the next sections, the researcher will discuss in detail the Philippine Studies programs of Peking University, TUFs, and BUFS as part of Southeast Asian Studies.

### **III. Philippine Studies in China, Japan, and Korea**

#### **3.1. Peking University Philippine Language and Culture Studies Program**

The Philippine Language and Culture Studies Program in Peking University (PKU) started in 1985. It is under the College of Humanities, School of Foreign Languages, Department of Oriental Languages. PKU is the first university to offer Filipino language and Philippine-related academic subjects in China, with the aim of training students for diplomacy, foreign trade, foreign-related enterprise management, news media, teaching, research, and translation.

Students under the Philippine Language and Culture Studies Program take the following subjects: Basic Filipino, Audio-Visual-Oral Filipino, Filipino Grammar, Filipino Writing, History of Filipino Language, Practical Filipino Writing, General Introduction to the Philippines, History of Philippine Literature, History of Sino-Philippine Communication, History of the Philippines, Philippine Contemporary History, Philippine Culture, Philippine Folk Literature, Philippine Politics & Economy, Philippine Religions, Selected Readings from Philippine Newspapers & Journals, Selected Readings from Philippine Short Stories, Selected Readings in Philippine Literature, Philippine Folklore, and Survey of Ethnic Chinese in the Philippines.

The above-mentioned subjects encompass different aspects of Philippines from language, culture, literature, history and China-Philippine relations. There are three Chinese faculty teaching Philippine-related subjects. The current professors are also alumni of



the program holding doctorate degrees. They have done researches related to the Philippines. There is a Filipino visiting professor every three to four years from Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU), tasked to teach Filipino language-related subjects for one year.

PKU accepts 10 to 12 students to study under the Philippine Language and Culture Studies Program. Unlike other majors in PKU, there is no entrance exam for students who want to study Philippine Language and Culture Studies. The Foreign Language School recruits students from foreign language high schools and screen them according to their language of interest. Once they get into the program, they will study for four years and may shift out to other majors if they want.

However, transferring from another program to Philippine Language and Culture Studies is not possible because there is just one batch of students every four years, meaning there are no other subjects being offered for those who may want to shift in the program. Currently, the program has nine majors, and in an informal interview with some of them, there is a positive perception about the Philippines before and while taking the course.

The students have various reasons in taking up Philippine Culture and Language/Studies. Some have Filipino friends back home and this got interested in studying Filipino language and culture. Some were recommended by their high school teachers to study under the program. There were also students who got curious about the Philippines after hearing and reading about Philippine-Chinese relations in the media. After graduation, students believe they can use what they learned about the Philippines when they work in research institutes, study in graduate school, do international business in China and Philippines, or even move to the Philippines.

As of 2018, around 60 to 70 majors graduated from the program. Alumni usually work in universities, media companies, research centers and institutes, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and private companies in China and in the Philippines. Current professors handling the program were graduates of the Philippine Language and Culture Studies Program. Current students may study in the Philippines for one semester during their sixth

semester or third year of study.

Peking University sends Chinese students majoring in the program to ADMU to study for one semester. They take regular Filipino language and Philippine literature subjects in ADMU and earn credits. Chinese students also participate in summer school, a cultural immersion program designed by ADMU for PKU, through a memorandum of agreement, for students from May to June.

In 2017, Peking University Press published three textbooks on Filipino language, *Wikang Filipino I, II, III* / 基础菲律宾语第一,二,三册 / *Filipino Language I,II,III*. There is also a plan of publishing a fourth book soon. Before the publication of the textbooks, professors have been using teaching materials published in the Philippines.

Despite being published recently, one of the problems observed from these teaching materials is that the language is outdated because these were based on textbooks published in the Philippines in the 90s. When PKU students go to ADMU for study, they noted difficulty in understanding the language. The Filipino they learned is quite different from what currently being used in Manila. This shows that even while intensively studying Filipino language at PKU, they lack practice and have limited interactions with Filipinos in Beijing.

Another problem the program is facing is the limited number of professors teaching the subjects in the curriculum. The limited number of students who can study in the program is also an issue. Budgetary constraints also exacerbate the problems.

In spite of these, the program continues to have a bright future ahead. What was started by PKU was also undertaken in 2015 by BFSU and YMU. PKU has been supporting the said universities by recommending some of their alumni to develop different Philippine Studies programs. In fact, the professors heading Philippine Studies and Filipino programs in BFSU and YMU are alumni of the PKU Philippine Culture and Language/Studies program.

### 3.2. Tokyo University of Foreign Studies Philippine Studies Program

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS) started its Philippine Studies Program in 1992. TUFS is the oldest institution in Japan specializing in international studies. Currently, the Philippine Studies Program can be chosen by students under the School of Language and Culture Studies and School of International and Area Studies.

In the School of Language and Culture Studies, students may choose one from 28 languages they can major in. The four-year program also lets students decide on their own fields of specialization through introductory and survey subjects.

Students also choose an area to major on in the School of International and Area Studies program. Students studying multilingual areas choose a focus language, and study this in the first two years of the program. Philippine Studies is under Southeast Asia Studies.

TUFS offers the following Philippine-related subjects: Basic grammar, reading and writing; grammar and reading; Advanced Tagalog/Filipino, Tagalog Linguistics, Conversation, Filipino in different contexts (film, advertisement, literature, pop culture, media), Tagalog for academic purposes and Introduction to Philippine Studies.

Three Japanese professors teach basic Filipino grammar and content subjects while two Filipino native speakers handle classes for conversational Filipino. One Japanese professor is a graduate of PhD Linguistics specializing in Filipino, while the other two professors hold master's degrees studying Philippine topics or concerns. The two Filipino professors were Linguistics major in the Philippines and are also holders of master's degrees. In 2018, TUFS published the textbook *Komprehensibong Tekstbuk ng Filipino/ 大学のフィリピン語 / Comprehensive Filipino Textbook*, used by Japanese and Filipino professors to teach basic Filipino grammar.

Some of the problems identified by one of the Filipino professors were the lack of teaching materials and the need for better course design. The textbook was published in 2018 only focused on grammar. Each professor had to make their own teaching materials.

For the first and second year language courses, professors only used one textbook, with lessons divided among them. Sometimes, there were overlapping or repetitive lessons. All of the Japanese and Filipino professors need to teach language courses aside from their specialized courses. Unfortunately, only one professor has a background in language teaching. This affects the level of skills of the students. Most students are skilled in analyzing grammar but are not that competent in communication. Also contributing to this is the lack of interaction with Filipino speakers outside the classroom.

Every year, 10 to 15 students choose Filipino to major in, and the Philippines as an area of study. Approximately 40 students are now taking Philippine-related classes from School of Language and Cultures and School of International Studies under the new curriculum implemented in 2012. In their junior year, students may cross enroll at the University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD) or ADMU.

Each year, 10 students go to the said universities as exchange students, though they do not earn credits. Despite a year's delay in graduation, students still take advantage of this opportunity to experience first-hand Philippines life and culture. They also avail of a short-term program at De La Salle University which provide a month-long Philippine culture immersion.

Some 30 students finished in the old curriculum. Alumni are currently working in different universities, international organizations, government agencies in Japan, and mass media outlets. Some are now working in the Philippines.

The researcher conducted an online survey to determine the perception of current students about the Philippines before and while studying under the program; their reasons for choosing the course; the Philippine Studies topics they found most interesting and the importance of the program in their personal lives or careers after graduation. Twenty-seven students majoring in Philippine Studies, from first to fourth year, participated in the survey.

56% of the majors had a neutral perception of the Philippines before taking Filipino related courses; 34% had a positive opinion,

and only 11% had a negative perception about the country. While studying Philippine Studies, 93% yielded a positive outlook; 7%, a neutral opinion.

Students have different reasons for choosing Philippine Studies. Most or 30% are interested in Southeast Asia in general while 19% are particularly interested with the Philippines. Some 14% choose the major because they had Filipino friends or encountered Filipinos in Japan. Some 0.7% interacted with Filipinos host families in their United States and Australia visits. A student (0.3%) pursued the major because he studied high school in the Philippines. 11% ended up taking Philippine Studies due to the recommendation of high school teachers while another 11% opted to join the program because of the low competition rate. A student (0.3%) joined the program to eventually work in the Philippines.

The most interesting topics in Philippine studies for these students are language and food (26% each), economy and tourism (19% each), tourism and the Filipino people (11% each), and religion (0.7%). The students were also interested with topics related to politics, society, and English language in the Philippines (0.3% each).

Students were also asked about the importance of Filipino language and culture in their personal lives or careers after graduating. 30% maintained that the course provided a better understanding of Philippine culture and gave them a deeper sense of values and a broader perspective. A Japanese-Filipino student also responded more personally: "Learning Filipino language and culture is beyond important for me even after graduating because I believe that it will give me the identity I've been yearning for a long time." 26% said they intend to find work related to their major in Japan or in the Philippines. Another 26% wanted to interact and help Filipinos living in Japan. Five students, mostly freshmen, are yet to figure out the importance of their major in their lives.

### **3.3. Busan University of Foreign Studies Southeast Asian Studies Philippine Track**

The Philippine track under the School of Southeast Asian Studies

(SSEAS) was opened in 2015. The track, along with Cambodian, was opened by means of funding from the Korean government under the Creative Korea 1 Project. It aims to support and strengthen Southeast Asian Studies programs in the country. As a result, BUFS became the first Korean university to offer an academic degree on the Philippines.

Southeast Asian Studies Philippine track majors take ten subjects about Southeast Asia and sixteen classes related to the Philippines. The subjects about the Philippines are categorized into two—Filipino language and content subjects (specific topics) about the Philippines. Filipino language classes are composed of Filipino Basic and Advanced Speaking and Listening (Basic Filipino 1-2); Filipino Basic and Advanced Reading and Speaking; Basic and Advanced Filipino Conversation (Conversation 1-4). These subjects are being taught by a Filipino native speaker, a visiting professor from the University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD).

On the other hand, the content subjects are Introduction to the Philippines (Seminar), Philippine History and Culture, Understanding Philippine Politics, Understanding Philippine Economy, Research on Philippine Society, and two Philippine Seminar classes. All subjects, except for the seminar classes, are being handled by a Korean professor who studied in UPD for his masters and doctoral degree in political science. He is also a researcher at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, which engage in research, seminars, colloquia, and conferences, as well as publishing books and a journal.

Majors taking the Philippine track may opt to study for four years (4+0 model) or three years plus one or two semesters (3+1 model) in UPD as an exchange student. The university has an existing Memorandum of Agreement with the UPD, enabling Korean students to cross-enroll and take creditable Filipino language and Philippine content subjects.

Aside from the cross-enrollment arrangement, from 2016 to 2019, BUFS also sent students to UPD every winter break in January, to study in a three-week Intensive Filipino Language program, which includes cultural field trips.

In the summer break of July 2018, BUFS also sent students for a five-day Philippine Cultural Program in UPD. The participants came from the Philippine and another track under SSEAS. These programs attract more students to major in the Philippine track program. Since the track was introduced, more than 100 students had already taken subjects related to the Philippines. However, as of writing, only two students have graduated under the Southeast Asian Studies Philippine track. Before they graduate, they must pass at least the intermediate level of the Test of Proficiency in Filipino conducted by the college.

According to the Filipino professor, one of the problems he has encountered is the unevenness of student competence in his language classes. The university is not strict on prerequisite subjects and students may take advanced classes without passing basic classes of Filipino language. The professor addressed this problem by adjusting his pedagogy inside the classroom.

In 2016, BUFS has published an application/app type textbook *Panimulang Pag-aaral ng Wikang Filipino 필리핀어 (초급)/ Basic Filipino Language*, used as a textbook for Basic to Advanced Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. The professor said the textbook is still not enough, which compelled him to develop modules for Intermediate to Advanced Filipino Conversation.

Another problem identified is attitude of Korean students towards Filipino. The presence and use of English in the Philippines makes Korean students think that they can survive in the Philippines without learning Filipino. The Filipino professor addresses this by explaining the importance of studying the Filipino language, especially in having a deeper understanding of Philippine culture and society. Despite all these challenges, the Southeast Asian Studies Philippine track is relatively stable as students continue to take Filipino language and content subjects every semester.

The same survey used to Japanese students was administered to fifteen freshmen to senior BUFS students taking different classes in Filipino. Most of the students or 67% have a positive perception about the Philippines before taking classes related to the Philippines while only 13% of them perceived the country negatively; 20% were

neutral. While taking Philippine-related subjects, 93% yielded positive perception about the country, with 7% maintaining a neutral perception.

Students' motivation for studying Filipino language classes and content-subjects vary. 27% chose the subjects in Philippine track to fill in their lack of units; another 27% selected the said subjects because of the Filipino professor's good reputation. Three Korean students or 20% were swayed by their friends to take up the subjects; 13% meanwhile decided to study Filipino language and culture because they travelled to the Philippines. A handful at 13% wanted to improve their foreign language skills.

What interested them most are the following: language (33%), tourism (26%), food (20%) politics (20%), and economy (1%).

They were also asked about the importance of Filipino language and culture in their personal lives or careers after graduating. Some students think they may use it in their future jobs (27%), while others will use it when they travel to the country (13%). Some 13% said it will enable them interact and help Filipinos living or working in Korea. Two students have yet to figure out its importance in their personal lives, though it definitely broadened their knowledge about the world.

#### **IV. SWOT Analysis**

In this section, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis will be used to examine the aforementioned Philippine-related academic programs in China, Japan, and Korea.

One of the strengths of these academic programs is curriculum. All three universities have holistic language courses (grammar, reading, writing, speaking, and conversation) and content subjects (introduction to the Philippines, history, literature and culture). Another strength is the composition of faculty, usually northeast Asian professors specializing in the Philippines and native Filipino teachers, who teach the language components of the programs.



Two weaknesses were identified: the lack of teaching materials, and lack of opportunities for northeast Asian students to practice Filipino language outside the academe. While all three universities have published textbooks about Filipino grammar, all are yet to put out textbooks concerning content subjects. Japan has the highest number of Filipino immigrants (workers, students, spouses) among the three nations, but this has yet to be tapped by our Japanese subjects.

Opportunities identified are the linkages of Northeast Asian universities with Southeast Asian counterparts and the positive attitude of the students majoring in Philippine-related courses. All three universities have linkages with Philippine universities which enable students to go on exchange arrangements from one to two semesters. Students can earn credits for the subjects they will take in UP or ADMU. This is true for Peking University and BUFS, but is not the case for TUFS.

Students from the subject universities generally have a positive perception about the Philippines before and while studying Philippine-related courses. Some common factors shaping this are their interaction with Filipinos in their countries; travels to the Philippines; and teacher recommendation. Students also have high hopes in the usefulness of their knowledge about the Philippines in the future.

The main threat to the said programs is the financial support from the government. Peking University and TUFS are state-run. PKU only accepts 10 to 12 students every four years and there is no chance of taking in transferees. It is highly dependent on budget from the central government. BUFS, on the other hand, is a private university and opened a Philippine track mainly because of funding from the Korean government. When funding from the government ends, the future of the program is uncertain and will greatly depend on student enrollment.

## **V. Beyond Northeast Asia: Mapping Out the Teaching of Filipino around the Globe**

Filipino language and Philippine-related subjects are also taught in more than 10 other countries, and is also dubbed as Global Filipino. Global Filipino was introduced at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Filipino as a Global Language held on March 17-19, 2008 at the University of Hawaii-Manoa (Yap 2012: 57).

Global Filipino pertains to Filipino as a global or international language being spoken to different countries around the world. What inspired this are the ten million Overseas Filipino Workers who use Filipino as lingua franca. As a result, Filipino is used and taught in elementary, secondary schools, colleges, universities, language institutes and language learning centers. According to Yap (2012: 72):

The Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) has listed more than 22 Filipino schools established in America, Norway, United Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, etc. that are teaching Filipino language, culture and history.

In the United States of America, Filipino language and Philippine-related subjects are also being offered in more than 10 universities. According to Ramos and Mabanglo (2012: 3):

A growing number of American universities regularly offer courses in Filipino. The expansion of the field can be illustrated by the following facts: in the 1960s, the University of Hawaii and the University of California at Los Angeles were offering regularly listed courses in Tagalog. Today, Filipino courses are offered every year at the University of California, Berkeley; the University of California, Los Angeles; Cornell University, the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Loyola Marymount University; the University of Pennsylvania; Northern Illinois University, the University of Pittsburg, and San Francisco State University, all of which are now part of a nationwide consortium to promote the teaching of Filipino.

Based on the aforementioned facts (Ramos and Mabanglo 2012; Yap 2012), it could be observed that in the US, Europe, and

Middle East, the teaching of Filipino language and Philippine-related subjects is mainly driven by the Filipino diaspora.

This researcher's mapping and analysis of Southeast Asian studies Philippine track programs show another facet of it—at least in China, Japan, and Korea. A survey of program history, and also of student perception from our subject universities, attest that various socio-political-economic factors have also given rise to the establishment of Filipino language and culture programs.

In the modern context, there is more active people-to-people exchange and dynamic socio-economic, political, and cultural ties between the southeast and northeast Asian countries. As a result, continuous interest in Southeast Asian Studies, with focus in Philippine Studies, in China, Japan, and Korea, is also expected to grow.

## References

- Asia Pacific Pathways to Progress, Inc. 2015. *Promoting Philippine Studies in Beijing*. <https://appfi.ph/news-events/20-china/130-promoting-philippine-studies-in-beijing>. (Accessed April 12, 2019).
- Busan University of Foreign Studies Website. [https://www.buufs.ac.kr/html/00\\_main/](https://www.buufs.ac.kr/html/00_main/). (Accessed April 12, 2019).
- Pamungkas, Cahyo. 2015. Approaches in Southeast Asian Studies: Developing Post-colonial Theories in Area Studies. *SUVANNABHUMI*, 7(1): 59-76.
- King, Victor T. 2015. Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies: Issues in Multidisciplinary Studies and Methodology. *SUVANNABHUMI*, 7(1): 13-57.
- Kyoto University Center for Southeast Asian Studies Website. *50 years of History at CSEAS* <https://history.cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/>. (Accessed April 12, 2019).
- Mendoza, Meynardo P. 2017. An Overview of Southeast Asian Area Studies in the Philippines. *SUVANNABHUMI*, 9(1): 133-148.
- Nagazumi, Akira. 1975. Southeast Asian Studies in Japan. *Archipel*, 9: 3-20. <https://doi.org/10.3406/arch.1975.1210>. (Accessed April

- 1, 2019).
- Park, Seung Woo. 2013. The Historical Construction of Southeast Asian Studies in Korea. *The Historical Construction of Southeast Asian Studies: Korea and Beyond*. Park Seung Woo and Victor T. King, eds. 112-155. Singapore: ISEAS Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Victor T. King, eds. 2013. *The Historical Construction of Southeast Asian Studies: Korea and Beyond*. Singapore: ISEAS Press.
- Peking University Website. [http://english.pku.edu.cn/research\\_humanity.shtml](http://english.pku.edu.cn/research_humanity.shtml). (Accessed April 12, 2019).
- Ramos, Teresita and Mabanglo, Ruth. 2012. *Southeast Asian Language Teaching: The Language Learning Framework for Teachers of Filipino*, Special Issue. [http://cotseal.net/cotseal/pages/documents/Journal\\_of\\_SEA\\_Filipino\\_2012.pdf](http://cotseal.net/cotseal/pages/documents/Journal_of_SEA_Filipino_2012.pdf). (Accessed April 12, 2019).
- Sathian, Mala Rajo. 2015. Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies: Beyond the Comfort Zone. *SUVANNABHUMI*, 7(1): 89-103.
- Tokyo University of Foreign Studies Website: [http://www.tufts.ac.jp/abouttufts/pr/multi\\_brochures/filipino.html?fbclid=IwAR0keaGG0yguvunydwrmZ6z8NkntTuIOGr2ylcZy\\_w5-ERvyxLDsaZkMeg8](http://www.tufts.ac.jp/abouttufts/pr/multi_brochures/filipino.html?fbclid=IwAR0keaGG0yguvunydwrmZ6z8NkntTuIOGr2ylcZy_w5-ERvyxLDsaZkMeg8). (Accessed April 12, 2019).
- Yap, Fe. 2012. *Global Filipino crossing borders*. Manila: De La Salle University Pub. House.
- Yu, Insun. 2013. Studies of Southeast Asian History in Contemporary Japan: The 1990s and 2000s. *The Historical Construction of Southeast Asian Studies: Korea and Beyond*. Park Seung Woo and Victor T. King, eds. 73-111. Singapore: ISEAS Press.
- Zhang, Xizhen. 2007. Overview of Teaching Programmes and Curriculum Development on Southeast Asian Studies in China. *Southeast Asian studies in China*. Saw Swee-Hock and John Wong, eds. 75-86. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Received: Aug. 28, 2019; Reviewed: Nov. 16, 2019; Accepted: Jan. 10, 2020