Nurul-in R Sadjail
Department of Languages,
Mindanao State University,
Sulu, Philippines

Dayang T Kamlian
Department of Language,
Mindanao State University,
Tawi Tawi, Philippines

Nurbarain S Laja
Department of Language,
Mindanao State University,
Tawi Tawi, Philippines

The use of only in the Philippines: A corpus-based study

Nurul-in R Sadjail, Dayang T Kamlian and Nurbarain S Laja

Abstract
The proper functions and positions of words in grammar are essential to academic linguistic study. Thus, understanding their functions and positions is necessary to construct a proper discourse. This study analyzed the functions and positions of the word *only* in the spoken text of Filipino users of English and whether these functions and positions deviate from Standard American English. The corpora used in the study are 278 spoken texts found in the Philippine Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-PHIL). The word *only* was chosen and analyzed using *AntConc* 3.5.7. The findings revealed that *only* functions effectively as both an adverb and an adjective. Likewise, the word *only* is positioned in various locations within the sentences (i.e., at the beginning of the sentence, between the subject and the main verb, between the transitive verb and the direct object for the adverb, and in front of a noun for adjective), indicating its versatile usage as both an adverb and an adjective across different linguistic contexts. The overall results showed that the positions of *only* found in the corpora conform to the Standard American English.

Keywords: The use of *only*, corpus linguistics, grammatical position, Philippine English

Introduction
The complex role of language within a diverse sociolinguistic landscape has been a subject of profound interest in linguistics [1, 2, 3, 4]. In particular, examining specific linguistic elements, such as the term *only*, within distinct cultural and linguistic contexts presents an opportunity to explore the dynamic nature of language usage. This study aims to delve into the usage of the word *only* within the Philippine linguistic framework, employing a corpus-based approach to analyze its functions and positions within spoken English.

With its rich tapestry of languages and longstanding tradition of bilingualism, the Philippines is a compelling locale for such an investigation [5, 6]. The diverse linguistic influences, coupled with the evolving nature of English within the Philippine context, provide an intriguing backdrop for exploring the nuances of how the word *only* is utilized by Filipino English speakers.

By leveraging corpus linguistics as the methodological foundation, this research offers a comprehensive understanding of the functions and positions of *only* in the spoken English of Filipino users. Employing the International Corpus of English (ICE-PHIL) as the primary corpus [7], this study seeks to elucidate the extent to which the functions and positions of *only* in Philippine English adhere to or diverge from the standards of American English.

Through analyzing a substantial corpus of spoken texts, this research contributes to the broader understanding of English language usage in the Philippines, clarifying the specific nuances of the adverb *only* within this unique linguistic context. Furthermore, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the sociolinguistic dimensions of language usage and the inherent variability in deploying linguistic elements within diverse cultural and linguistic settings.

The findings of this research are anticipated to enrich the academic discourse on corpus-based linguistics and offer practical implications for language educators and scholars in understanding and addressing the dynamic nature of English language usage in the Philippines.

Corresponding Author:
Dayang T Kamlian
Department of Language,
Mindanao State University,
Tawi Tawi, Philippines

Materials and Methods
Design
This corpus-based study employs a descriptive and analytical research design to investigate the usage of the term *only* within the spoken English of Filipino users. The design encompasses qualitative and quantitative dimensions, enabling a comprehensive exploration of the functions and positions of *only* in the selected corpus. By adopting a descriptive approach, this study seeks to provide a detailed account of the various contexts in which *only* is employed. At the same time, the analytical component aims to discern patterns and variations in its usage.

Corpora Used
The primary corpus utilized in this study is drawn from the Philippine Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-PHIL) [7]. This corpus, comprising 278 spoken texts, serves as a rich repository of linguistic data, offering insights into the multifaceted usage of English within the Philippine context. The selection of ICE-PHIL as the principal corpus aligns with the study's objective of capturing authentic instances of spoken English and facilitates a comprehensive analysis of the functions and positions of *only* in natural language use.

Analysis of Data
The data analysis in this study entails a systematic examination of the occurrences of *only* within the ICE-PHIL corpus. Using corpus linguistics tools, particularly *AntConc* 3.5.7, the study involves the extraction, categorization, and quantitative assessment of instances where *only* is employed as an adverb or an adjective. Furthermore, qualitative analysis is undertaken to scrutinize the specific linguistic contexts in which *only* occurs, shedding light on the syntactic and semantic characteristics associated with its usage. The combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis methods aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted functions and positions of *only* in Filipino English, thereby contributing to a comprehensive portrayal of its linguistic behavior within the spoken domain.

Results and Discussion
The analysis revealed that there were 278 frequencies found in the concordance of word *only*. Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distributions of the word *only* in the ICE-PHIL Spoken Texts (Dialogue: Private-Direct conversations).

Table 1: Concordance of a word *only* in the ICE-PHIL Spoken Text (Function Analysis)

Functions	Frequency	Percentage
As an Adjective	137	49.28%
As an Adverb	141	50.72%
Total	278	100.00%

The frequency distribution of the word *only* functioning as both an adjective and an adverb reveals interesting patterns in its usage within the ICE-PHIL Spoken Texts (Dialogue: Private-Direct Conversations). The almost equal split between its usage as an adjective and adverb suggests that speakers in private-direct conversations employ *only* to

emphasize and modify different types of words within their dialogue. The high frequency of its occurrence indicates that this word plays a significant role in shaping the meaning and emphasis of the spoken texts. Below are samples of the text that can be found in the corpus used in the study:

[204] <ICE-PHIL: S1A-014#373:1: A> "It 'll only take five minutes to make that…"
[208] <ICE-PHIL: S1A-052#125:1: A> "…teacher, you don't only teach…"
[12] <ICE-PHIL: S1A-030#78:1: A> "She's the only actress I know who doesn't really."
[72] <ICE-PHIL: S1A-0A-076#229:1: A> "…cause you 're the only girl0."

In [204], the word *only* functions as an adverb, modifying the verb *take*. It emphasizes the short time required for the action, indicating that it will take a minimal time. This usage aligns with the adverbial function of *only* as it specifies the limitation or restriction in terms of time concerning the action. This example highlights how *only* is employed in specific linguistic contexts to convey nuances and emphasis within the dialogue.

In [208], the word *only* functions as an adverb. It modifies the verb *teach* and emphasizes that the action of teaching is not the sole function or responsibility of the teacher. This usage aligns with the adverbial function of *only* as it specifies the limitation or restriction regarding the teacher's role, indicating that the teacher's responsibilities extend beyond teaching alone. This example further illustrates the versatility of *only* in conveying specific meanings and nuances within spoken language.

However, in [12], the word *only* functions as an adjective, modifying the noun *actress*. It emphasizes the uniqueness or exclusivity of the actress in question, suggesting that among the individuals known to the speaker, she is the sole actress with a particular characteristic or quality. This usage aligns with the adjectival function of *only* as it describes and distinguishes the specific noun it modifies. This example showcases how *only* is utilized to convey qualities and characteristics within language, highlighting the speaker's perception of the uniqueness of the mentioned actress.

Additionally, in [72], the word *only* functions as an adjective, modifying the noun *girl*. It emphasizes the uniqueness or singularity of the girl in the context of the speaker's statement. This usage aligns with the adjectival function of *only* as it describes and distinguishes the specific noun it modifies, highlighting the exclusivity of the girl being referred to. This example illustrates how *only* is utilized to convey the specific qualities or characteristics of the individual being discussed, emphasizing her singular status in the given context.

The examples above demonstrated the versatile usage of the word *only* as both an adverb and an adjective by Filipino English speakers. Whether emphasizing the exclusivity of a noun, as seen in "the only actress," or pinpointing a short amount of time for an action with "only take five minutes," *only* adds depth and specificity to the conveyed meaning. These examples showcase how *only* can modify verbs, nouns, and adjectives, allowing speakers to convey nuances and emphasis in their communication. This linguistic versatility provides insight into the speaker's perception and the specific qualities they wish to emphasize when using the word *only* within their dialogue.

Table 2: Concordance of a word *only* in the ICE-PHIL Spoken Text (Position Analysis)

ADVERB		
Position	Frequency	Percentage
Beginning of the sentence	13	4.68%
Between the subject and the main verb	92	33.09%
Between the transitive verb and the direct object	83	29.86%
Adjective		
In front of a noun	90	32.37%
Total	278	100.00%

It is evident in Table 2 that the word *only* is positioned in various locations within the sentences, indicating its versatile usage as both an adverb and an adjective across different linguistic contexts. The high frequency of *only* occurring between the subject and the main verb indicates its significant role in modifying the action or verb within the sentences. Similarly, its positioning between the transitive verb and the direct object showcases its function in emphasizing restrictions or limitations about the actions being described. The placement of *only* as an adjective in front of a noun underscores its role in specifying the exclusivity or uniqueness of the noun it modifies. These findings suggest that Filipino speakers of English employ *only* strategically to convey specific meanings and nuances within their dialogue, highlighting the importance of this word in shaping the syntax and semantics of the spoken text. Below are samples of texts showing the word *only* in the four identified positions:

[54] <ICE-PHIL:S1A-013#66:1:A> "Only for April for the tour and then on May…."

[67] <ICE-PHIL:S1A-053#243:1:C> "They only gave me the…."

[234] <ICE-PHIL> S1A-076.txt "She handed only the book to him."

[37] <ICE-PHIL> S1A-062.txt "I'm an only child and my mother is always there for me."

In [54] where *only* occurs at the beginning of the sentence, it serves as an adverb, emphasizing a restriction or limitation at the outset of the statement. This placement of *only* draws immediate attention to the restriction being conveyed, potentially indicating a focus on exclusivity or limitation right from the start of the utterance. The positioning of *only* in this manner sets the tone for the rest of the sentence, directing the listener's attention to the specific constraint or condition being emphasized. This example highlights how the initial placement of *only* at the beginning of the sentence plays a crucial role in shaping the emphasis and meaning of the spoken text, engaging the listener with the highlighted restriction or limitation from the outset.

In [67] where *only* occurs between the subject and the main verb, it functions as an adverb, modifying the verb *gave*. This placement of *only* emphasizes the restriction or limitation about the action of giving. It suggests that the action is constrained or restricted in some way, potentially conveying a sense of exclusivity or limitation in the act of giving. This positioning of *only* between the subject and the main verb highlights and emphasizes the specific nature of the action being described, elucidating the speaker's intent to convey a particular restriction or limitation in the given context.

In [234] where *only* occurs between the transitive verb and the direct object, it functions as an adverb, modifying the verb *handed*. This positioning of *only* emphasizes the restriction or limitation concerning the object being handed.

It suggests that handing is constrained or limited to the specific object mentioned, potentially conveying a sense of exclusivity or specificity in the act of handing something. This usage of *only* between the transitive verb and the direct object underscores the nature of the described action, stressing the speaker's intent to convey a specific restriction or limitation within the given scenario.

On the other hand, in [37] where *only* occurs in front of a noun, it functions as an adjective, modifying the noun *child*. This usage emphasizes the exclusivity or singularity of the child in the context of the speaker's statement. It underscores the unique status of the child within the family dynamic, conveying the specific quality of being the sole child in this context. This positioning of *only* in front of a noun serves to distinguish and describe the specific noun it modifies, highlighting the singular status and potentially conveying a sense of individuality or exclusivity within the given scenario.

The diverse examples provided illustrate the versatile positioning of the word *only* within spoken text of Filipino English speakers, showcasing its roles as both an adverb and an adjective across distinct linguistic contexts. Whether it occurs at the beginning of a sentence, between the subject and the main verb, between the transitive verb and the direct object, or in front of a noun, *only* functions to add depth, emphasis, and specificity to the conveyed meaning.

These examples demonstrate that the positioning of *only* influences the tone and emphasis of the utterance, whether it be at the outset, about the action, or in terms of specificity to the object or noun. The various placements of *only* serve to highlight specific restrictions, limitations, and exclusivities within the spoken text, emphasizing the speaker's intent to convey nuanced meanings and qualifications within their dialogue.

The examples showcased how the strategic positioning of *only* plays a significant role in shaping the syntax and semantic nuances of the spoken text, offering insight into the speaker's perceptions and linguistic strategies in delivering their intended message.

Conclusion

The present study attempted to analyze the functions and positions of *only* in direct conversation found in the ICE-PHIL. The findings demonstrate that *only* functions effectively as both an adverb and an adjective. Whether it occurs at the beginning of a sentence, between the subject and the main verb, between the transitive verb and the direct object, or in front of a noun, *only* strategically highlights restrictions, limitations, and exclusivities within the spoken text. This linguistic versatility of *only* provides valuable insights into the speaker's intent to convey specific nuances and qualifications, emphasizing the significance of this word in influencing the pragmatic and syntactical features of the spoken text. The analysis underscores the importance of

considering the various positions of *only* in understanding how speakers of Filipino English utilize language to convey nuanced meanings and emphasis within their discourse.

In Standard American English, the usage of *only* as both an adverb and an adjective is well-established, and its positioning within sentences can convey similar nuances and emphases of which the specific positioning and functions of *only*, as observed in this study, align with the linguistic patterns of Standard American English. However, the specific frequencies and positions of *only* observed in the study may reflect the unique linguistic patterns and usage tendencies within the Filipino English context.

The present study's findings may significantly lead Filipino ESL/EFL teachers to explicitly inform their students about the functions and positions of the word *only*. Firstly, this linguistic assumption may help the teachers gradually eliminate their prejudice against the supremacy of English in the inner circle, American English in particular. One helpful way is to discuss with them in a seminar or in-service training the concentric circles proposed by Kachru (1985) [8] and the significance of the Kachruvian paradigm; thus, this may help them be cognizant of the globally progressive emergence of World English.

References

1. Bakun CJD, Kamlian DT, Rajik JA. Adapting to the dominant language: Challenges and coping strategies. Int J Multidiscip Res [Internet]. [Cited 2024 Jan 15]; c2023, 5(6). Available from: https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2023.v05i06.11164
2. Banda F, Jimaima H. Linguistic landscapes and the sociolinguistics of language vitality in multilingual contexts of Zambia. Multilingua [Internet]. [Cited 2024 Jan 15]. 2017;36(5):595-625. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2017-3047
3. Moriarty M. Languages in motion: Multilingualism and mobility in the linguistic landscape. Int J Bilingualism [Internet]. [Cited 2024 Jan 15]. 2014;18(5):457-463. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006913484208
4. Rajik JA. Second language lexical acquisition: The case of extrovert and introvert children. Psychol Educ: A Multidiscip J [Internet]. [Cited 2024 Jan 15]. 2022;4(4):414-423. Available from: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7087757
5. Boquet Y. The diversity of the Philippine population. In: The Philippine Archipelago. Springer Geography; c2017. p. 159-179. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51926-5_7
6. Rajik J, Tarusan MA. A grammar sketch of Southern Sinama language. Int J Linguist Stud [Internet]. [Cited 2024 Jan 15]. 2023;3(1):09-61. Available from: https://doi.org/10.32996/ijls.2023.3.1.2
7. Bautista MLS, Lising JL, Dayag DT. ICE-Philippines lexical corpus. Digital or Visual products, International Corpus of English; c2004.
8. Kachru B. Standards, codification, and sociolinguistic realism: English language in the outer circle. In: Quirk R, Widowson H, editors. English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; c1985. p. 11-36.