

The Multilingual Situation in the Philippines: A Brief Report

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There is no question about whether the Philippines is multilingual or not. By virtue of the number of languages that it has, one can always tell that is. But how multilingual is it? In what places and circumstances do people mix languages and how does multilingualism take place? To answer these questions, it is important to set the context first beginning with an understanding of what multilingualism is and what other related concepts are used to describe the multiple uses of languages by the Filipinos.

Definition of Terms

The term bilingualism is interchanged with multilingualism and can be confusing to some who have not started reading the terrain. If the prefixes of these two words are used in the giving of semantics, then there will be no misunderstandings since **bi-**, meaning two, added to **lingualism** refers to the knowledge and use two languages while **multi-**, meaning many, affixed with **lingualism**, on the other hand, pertains to the knowledge and use of many languages both in the written and oral form. However, sources in the field are not as straightforward as these initial definitions are and do not base their meanings simply on the prefixes in combination with the word lingual/ism. These two terms are used mutually or conversely. Within **bilingualism**, there are degrees and varieties and all the more variations can be seen when one traverses the area of **multilingualism**. With some other words used by different authors in the field like **linguistic repertoire**, **plurilingualism**, **translanguaging**, **code-switching**, and **dominant language constellations**, learners may interchange their meanings and utilizations. In reality, these lexemes are not necessarily the same and definitely have terminological issues. It is only fitting, then, that at the outset in this text, such key terms are defined, explained, and cited examples as seen in the Philippine linguistic situations.

Bilingualism

The concept of bilingualism has expanded over the years. Commonly before, it was thought of as the equal mastery or the native-like control of two languages and many still adhere to this definition. Others believe that it is “the complete mastery of two different languages without interference between the two linguistic processes” (Oestreicher, 1974:9). Bloomfield considered bilingualism as “the native-like control of two languages” (Bloomfield, 1933:56). This was broadened by Haugen (1953: vol. 1, p. 7) as the ability to produce “complete meaningful utterances in the other language”. It has now been suggested that the concept be further extended to include simply “passive-knowledge” of the written language or any “contact with possible models in a second language and the ability to use these in the environment of the native language” (Diebold, 1961:111). This evolving concept of bilingualism may be due to the realization that the point at which a speaker of a second language becomes bilingual is either arbitrary or impossible to determine. It appears that if we are to study the phenomenon of bilingualism we are forced to consider it as something entirely relative (Mackey, 1956:8), and if it is so, then it can vary depending on the degree, function, alternation, and interference.

Who is a Bilingual?

As to who is a bilingual, Grosjean (2010) asserts that it is one of “those people who need and use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives”, but Valdes and Figueroa (1994: 8) believe that it is an individual (who) possesses more than one language competence”. Mackey (1970:555) thinks that a bilingual is someone who practices “the alternate use of two or more languages” while Titone (1972 in Hamers and Blanc, 2000:6–7) believe that he/she is someone who is capable of speaking “a second language while following the concepts and structures of that language rather than paraphrasing his or her mother tongue”. Haugen (1953:6–7) opines that it can be someone who may have “all degrees of accomplishment, but ... (as) ... the speaker of

one language can produce complete, meaningful utterances in the other language." Brice and Brice (2009) claim that it is someone who has "the ability to speak, listen, read, and/or write in more than one language with varying degrees of proficiency". Macnamara (1967 in Hamers & Blanc, 2000:6) argues that "anyone who possesses a minimal competence in only one of the four language skills, listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing, in a language other than his mother tongue" can be a bilingual. Finally, Skutnabb-Kangas (1984) offers a longer description of what constitutes a bilingual speaker and to her, it is a person "who is able to function in two (or more) languages, either in monolingual or bilingual communities, in accordance with the sociocultural demands made of an individual's communicative and cognitive competence by these communities or by the individual herself/himself, at the same level as native speakers, and who is able positively to identify with both (or all) language groups (and cultures) or parts of them" (p.90).

With the multiple perspectives cited for bilingualism, one arrives at the conclusion, that it is difficult to define what a bilingual is. But if there are words to label people according to the number of languages they speak, one would be sold to the idea that it makes a lot of sense to refer to a bilingual as someone who speaks or writes in two languages. After all, we have a term for someone who speaks only one language and it is monolingual, three is trilingual, four is quadrilingual, and so on. Or if multilingual is available, certainly, it can replace the term bilingual. And if we do, do we find people and places that speak two languages? The answer is a big yes!

The 16 cities in Metro Manila are some places where Filipino is the main language used while English is second. In MRT/LRT stations, the announcement of places where the trains stop is done in both English and Filipino. The English assumes that there are foreign passengers and the way to communicate with them is through English. Compared with the Philippine National Railway, the stops are announced in Filipino only, and this is the public vehicle that goes outside Metro Manila (e.g. Laguna).

On Philippine passenger planes like Philippine Airlines (PAL) and Cebu Pacific, these two languages are really mixed. PAL uses both English and Filipino in welcoming its passengers, pure English in giving the safety features, but pure Filipino in its landing announcement. Cebu Pacific, on the other hand, uses both Filipino and English in welcoming its passengers, in giving the safety features, and in announcing its landings. Having mentioned airlines, the airports also use both languages.

For the mostly English language used, it is still in Metro Manila, and this can be heard and seen in banks as an instance. For most of the written documents that banks make available to customers, they are virtually in English including their flyers and other forms of commercials. For its announcements, English is also the language preferred. The same thing goes in big commercial areas like hotels and ticketing offices of airlines.

In contrast to the usual places for the use of English in Metro Manila, Filipino is used in bus ticket counters, shipping line ticketing booths, some government offices like SSS, Civil Service, GSIS, and many more service counters that cater to the needs of the public. Of course, when people enter the University of the Philippines (UP) campus in Quezon City, the language that is commonly and propagated used is Filipino. This institution is the leading university when it comes to the use and promotion of the national language. Even in its teaching, the language mostly subscribed to is Filipino. UP Los Baños is in the same situation as UP, Diliman, and it would be good to see if UP Manila there most of the medical courses is also more into Filipino, too. We can only assume that if the use of Filipino is an institutional system, then it is safe to say that across the UPs these three UPs, Filipino is the widely used language.

In other places like Cebu, Filipinos may also be observed to be bilingual but it is no longer Filipino and English that are used but Cebuano and English. When other Filipino people visit the place, even if they speak in Filipino, they would be replied in

Cebuano unless they will insist that they do not understand Cebuano and are not from Cebu. Others still speak in Cebuano anyway not because that they are so faithful or loyal to their language but because they think that Cebuano would just be understood anyway. Frankly, when one speaks Filipino, it is not difficult to understand Cebuano, let alone if one tries hard to understand what a Cebuano speaker says. A Cebuano speaker conversely, understands Filipino almost always even if no high proficiency has been gained as a result of schooling. This is due to the many years that Filipino has been used in the media across the islands of the Philippines. Lexically, there is also a high percentage of of homology and even phonologically, too. When it comes to English used in some places in Cebu, it would be spoken in schools, banks, and posh areas like expensive restaurants and hotels or it would be heard among academicians and the professional world.

Multilingualism

Blommaert in 2010 (102) gives the following understanding of the term multilingualism:

Multilingualism . . . should not be seen as a collection of 'languages' that a speaker controls, but rather as a complex of specific semiotic resources, some of which belong to a conventionally defined 'language', while others belong to another 'language'. The resources are concrete accents, language varieties, registers, genres, modalities such as writing – ways of using language in particular communicative settings and spheres of life, including the ideas people have about such ways of using, their language ideologies.

Here, Blommaert intimates that we all have a considerable number of linguistic resources that we can deploy. These resources may be strictly separate languages or varieties of languages called dialects as we can understand, and in a highly

technological world, this can be taken to mean even digital tools that we can use in order to converse with people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds with whom we come in contact. Multilingualism, can be a matter of degree just like what Li Wei in 2000 says of bilingualism - it is a continuum, and since we all use language varieties, forms, styles, genres, and accents with people of different statuses, power, prestige, age, and distance in different circumstances like the church and other controlling domains like commerce and trade, law and governance, education, and other public spheres, we are all to a greater or lesser degree multilingual. When we switch on our TV sets and move from channel to channel on a Sunday for some sermon or mass, we hear it in different languages including foreign ones if we have a cable connection or Cignal TV. The majority of Philippine channels, however, say the mass in Filipino hoping to reach out to most of its citizens watching and to relate with them more. In contrast, on radio stations in the provinces, it is said in different regional tongues aside from English and Filipino. In some cases, preachers/priests give the homilies in a code-switched way like they would say the mass in English, reading from their text, but do their homilies according to the language spoken by the majority in a certain locale aiming to make their homily more understandable and connected to the parishioners. The languages can be Cebuano, Chabacano, and others. Nevertheless, in churches located in the city like the Cathedral, priests are aware that people come from different orientations, and therefore, use a language that can be understood by the masses and the choice would always be between pure Filipino and pure English. In some city churches, people also have the option to choose a mass schedule and the schedules offered are according to language. These can range from Bisaya, Chabacano, and English.

Bianco and Aronin in a very recent publication (2020) define multilingualism as the organized and unorganized practices of using three or more languages and the handling of more than two languages by some or all members of society, as well as the

implications of these practices and this handling for the society and its members. So the situations presented in the immediately preceding paragraph qualify as such.

Additionally, in the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, by Jean-Claude Beacco and Michael Byram of 2007 (www.coe.int/lang), 'multilingualism' refers to the presence in a geographical area, large or small, of more than one 'variety of language' i.e. the mode of speaking of a social group whether it is formally recognized as a language or not; in such an area individuals may be monolingual, speaking only their own variety" (p.8). This reference to monolinguality which is speaking mostly in one language most of their time, despite the fact that they are living in a multilingual country, is true in the Philippines, but only to some people in a certain extent, especially those who have not been exposed to other mother tongues in the provinces, have not reached a high level of education, and have been confined in their areas mostly. It can also be true to some people in the metropolis (e.g. Metro Manila) who for most of their lives, have spoken only English at home and in the workplaces or simply Tagalog (referred to here as a dialect spoken in the National Capital Region and northern and southern part of Luzon). It can also be true to some people who, for most of their lives, have spoken only in Tagalog or Filipino even if they have been in contact with other people from the provinces who speak other local languages. Non-natives of the Filipino language from other places in the Philippines speak Filipino as the national language and as a lingua franca (aside from the lingua francas in their different regions) in virtually all areas in the Philippines, and hence, when they go to Metro Manila, speak Filipino. Consequently, those in Metro Manila do not have the need to speak in the tongues of other linguistic groups in the Philippines.

Some speakers in the Philippines are truly multilingual in that they speak about five languages including the foreign languages they learn in their fields of specializations but are not necessarily polyglots since strictly speaking, a polyglot is one who has the ability to speak several languages. Our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, is the best example to cite for the entire Philippines. He knew and spoke several languages

and did it mostly through self-education. In the study of Rizal's Life and Works, a subject in college created by **Republic Act No. 1425**, mandates all educational institutions in the Philippines to offer courses about Jose Rizal. This subject is part of the revised general education curriculum in college and is found under CHED Memorandum no. 20 s. 2013.

It is claimed that Dr. Jose Rizal was conversant in as many as twenty-two languages, namely: Spanish, French, Latin, Greek, German, Portuguese, Italian, English, Dutch, Japanese, Arabic, Swedish, Russian, Chinese, Greek, Hebrew, and Sanskrit; and the local languages Malay, Chabacano, Visayan, Ilocano, and Subanun. His monument erected in his hometown in Calamba, Laguna, stands twenty-two feet tall, symbolizing accordingly each of these languages. The true extent of his linguistic prowess is debatable and could have been inflated over time, but undoubtedly, he was a skilled translator of German into Tagalog and spoke and wrote Spanish with a high level of proficiency. His letters and diaries are full of shuttles between languages, but he himself was quick to acknowledge the limits of his own linguistic expertise.

Currently, since many Filipinos are interracial, very mobile and global, who by virtue of their businesses, nature of employment, and high levels of educational attainments, move from country to country like the diplomats who are assigned in various places outside the Philippines and then come back and mingle with the rest of the fellow countrymen. They can be polyglots of perhaps about 6 to 8. Those who can afford to study abroad and have high intrinsic motivation to learn languages for several purposes are polyglots. Our former president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, daughter of former Philippine President Diosdado Macapagal, had not just the means to learn multiple languages but also the upbringing, the influence of family members, the degrees and level of education obtained here and abroad, the academic honors she received, the travels that she had at different points in her life, and the kind of political career that she chose made her a skilled polyglot. She is fluent in Philippine languages such as Kapampangan, Ilokano, Hiligaynon, Pangasinense, Bikolano, Cebuano, and

Tagalog. Because she knows Spanish, she can also understand Chabacano. In terms of foreign languages, she speaks Spanish, French, and English.

The illustrious Leticia Ramos-Shahani, sister of the 12th president of the Philippines, Fidel V. Ramos, due to her various designations in different careers including politics, her high levels of education, made her a skilled polyglot. She is fluent in Philippine languages such as Kapampangan, Ilokano, Hiligaynon, Pangasinense, Bicolano, Cebuano, and Tagalog. Because she knows Spanish, she can also understand Chabacano. In terms of foreign languages, she spoke various of them. Her mother who was from Ilocos would have taught her Ilokano. But she was born in Pangasinan and would know this language, too. She also spoke Filipino. With her very brilliant and impressive careers as a lawyer, five-term legislator at the House of Representatives, a crusading journalist, and dean of a graduate, and her being a teacher gave her several exposures to people of different linguistic backgrounds. Her education also enriched her grasp of languages. Dr. Shahani finished her Bachelor of Arts in English literature at Wellesley College in Massachusetts, her master's degree in comparative literature at Columbia University in New York, and her Doctor of Philosophy in comparative literature at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) after defending her doctoral thesis with highest honors. These backgrounds afforded her the opportunity to study foreign languages and taught these languages at the Lyceum of the Philippines. She joined other schools as a member like the University of the Philippines from 1954 to 1957, Queens Borough Community College, New York in 1961, Brooklyn College, New York in 1962, and New School for Social Research, New York from 1962 to 1967. She was also the former dean of the College of International, Humanitarian, and Development Studies of Miriam College.

If we scour the list of Filipinos who have devoted their lives to government and private service, and those who belong to the upper rungs of society, we will find many of them who are proficient in at least two languages which are Filipino which is the

national language and English which is the main language of learning institutions and still knowing other local languages. Those who are members of the religious orders like priests are also very proactive in the learning of foreign languages. Many of them learn Spanish aside from English and French or the languages of the communities where they are assigned. A few mentions are those from the Society of Jesus, the Dominicans, The Franciscans, the Augustinians, the Benedictines, and the La Sallian Brothers.

Some Monolingual Places in the Philippines

Aside from what is mentioned above, there are some provinces proximal to Metro Manila that are believed to be monolingual mostly because they only speak Tagalog most of the time. These include the natives of Batangas, Laguna, and Rizal, Bulacan, Marinduque. Bikol-speaking Catanduanes, Sorsogon, and Waray-speaking Eastern Samar are some of the most monolingual provinces far from the Tagalog-speaking regions. They know English but speak it in selected domains like workplaces.

Other Languages Spoken in Metro Manila

Metro Manila is a melting pot and is the receiver of migrants from all parts of the Philippines. They naturally flock here for different purposes but mostly for education and employment opportunities. The national offices, diplomatic community, and international flights are located here and these attract people to always congregate here. Given this situation, there are many pockets of communities speaking the regional languages. Meanwhile, American English is a major language in Makati, Ortigas, and Alabang while Chinese is dominant in Manila, especially in Binondo, Sta. Cruz, Quiapo, Tondo, and San Juan.

Some Places in the Philippines that are Multilingual

In Luzon, the mountains of the Cordillera are an island of linguistic diversity amidst a sea of Ilocano-speaking provinces. Ifugao province, where more than half the households speak Tuwali or Ayangan, is the country's third most multilingual province, followed by Mountain Province, where over half of the households speak Kankanaey and Bontok.

The More Multilingual Provinces

Mindanao is generally more diverse than elsewhere in the country. Sarangani is known as the province with the highest diversity index where people are more likely to meet natives of Maguindanao or T'boli than a native speaker of Tagalog. In North Cotabato, the most spoken languages are Hiligaynon, Maguindanao, and Cebuano. This is the second most multilingual province. Zamboanga City is another polyglossic place where people speak English, Filipino, Chabacano, Bisaya, Tausug, Sama, and Ilonggo. The lingua franca here year by year as observed is Filipino in many areas, especially the business ones. In other areas, it seems to be Bisaya, although many efforts are exerted to fortify Chabacano. This latter language is now more vibrant with many media becoming more robust in their promotion of this language which is used as the rationale for calling it Asian's Latin city. There are also students and teachers who have contributed to its development through literary writings and pedagogical materials. Cultural and academic contests are being held where the aim is to produce more materials contributory to the growth, promotion, use, and preservation of the language. Songs and movies are also produced in Chabacano. At times, commercials aired on the radio are also in Chabacano, albeit some of them sound stiff or unnatural because perhaps the models they use are not native speakers of Chabacano.

The Miranda Doctrine which used to be English before is now read and played using an app which the arresting police officers are mandated to have or downloaded on their smartphones. It is now available in some local languages, viz: Filipino, Hiligaynon, Kapampangan, Tausug, Sama, Bisaya/Cebuano, and Ilocano. It is also available in Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese, Chinese/Mandarin adding to the multilingualism complexity of the country. These foreign languages are an index to the kinds of nationalities that are thriving in the country and are actually increasing. The Miranda Doctrine or Rights, when not done in the language of the arrestees, can post serious problems. Its syntax and semantics may not be readily comprehended by the arrestees. Hence, it is important that these be read to them in a way that will inform them of their rights and enable them to protect themselves.

There are also plenty of foreign students from China, Korean, Japan, and other Asian countries who come to the Philippines to study English. The Philippines has become a hub in the learning of English by Asian neighbors because of its welcoming immigration policies, the control of the English language that it has, and the very affordable tuition fees that it offers even in big schools. Aside from wanting to improve their English proficiency, more and more foreigners have come to our shores to also pursue various degrees from the undergraduate up to the Ph.D. level. Many of them in recent times have been the Chinese. Before, people from Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and other Southeast Asian countries could come in numbers. The English language has become a very good niche for us in some respects. It has helped generate income for some schools, increased the international mix of higher education institutions - a factor pivotal in world rankings, and made the exchanges of ideas and cultures in the big cities in the national Capital Region colorful. It has also attracted other foreign nationals to come to the different islands knowing that they will not have difficulties communicating and being understood. Our being friendly and accommodating, and the low cost of living compared to other Asian countries like Japan and South Korea are

plus factors. Due to the pandemic, however, the influx of those wanting to fly in has simmered down.

Linguistic Repertoire

The varieties of speech we use to adjust with people of different orientations and situations and all the linguistic abilities that we have constitute our linguistic repertoires and these are not static but constantly fluid and dynamic. The Ecodal site of Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona refers to the **linguistic repertoire** as the set of skills and knowledge a person possesses of one or more languages, as well as their different varieties (be they diatopic, diaphasic, diastratic, or diachronic). This repertoire consists of various elements of the different levels of description of language and its use (phonetic-graphemic, lexical-grammatical, discursive-textual, or pragmatic). With regard to language use, this repertoire underpins every language learner's **plurilingual competence** (either current or prospective). If the learners' education system is composed of the study of non-living languages, like Latin, this linguistic knowledge would form part of their linguistic repertoire even though their command is usually restricted to the receptive use of written texts. The linguistic repertoire concept presented here appears to make one see that it is the closest word to plurilingualism and, therefore, can be interchangeable with this term.

Linguistic repertoire was coined by Fishman (1972: 48) in a language sociological context for the set of language varieties—including registers and dialects—"exhibited in the speaking and writing patterns of a speech community". Linguistic repertoire is also known as **verbal repertoire** (Finegan 2004: 540). As a concept, it is used for multilingual and monolingual repertoires: "Just as a multilingual linguistic repertoire allocates different language varieties to different speech situations, so does a monolingual repertoire. For all speakers—monolingual and multilingual—there is

marked variation in the forms of language used for different activities, addressees, topics, and settings” (Finegan 2004: 319).

Later, the term became widely cited in publications on language teaching and learning, in allusion both to the repertoire of resources and skills developed in an additional language being learned, and to the other diverse languages in which one is able to communicate to some degree. Therefore, the learner’s linguistic repertoire is the foundation on which their learning can progress. In relation to this, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) states that “the goal of language education is to enhance a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place” (Council of Europe 2001: 3). Later, it notes that “a single, richer repertoire of this type allows selection concerning strategies for task accomplishment, inferring from an interlinguistic variation and language switching” (Council of Europe 2001: 132).

In schools where the MTMLE is implemented, both teachers and students can be seen utilizing their linguistic repertoire in approaching the subject matters. Inasmuch as students carry with them different home languages and the Department of Education mandates that Kinder and the first three years of elementary education be taught in the mother tongues of the children, children are allowed to code-mix and code-switch. And so do teachers, especially when they translate ideas given by their students or those that come from English texts. Many teachers adopt materials from English because not too many people write educational materials in the mother tongues identified by the Department of Education. So teachers resort to adopting and translating them into the languages of their students, especially if they speak some of the languages of their students. In Zamboanga City, for instance, you will find a lot of people knowing four to five languages.

Code-switching is no longer seen as a pathological problem but a linguistic resource and learners can draw from it to solve the day-to-day academic problems they

encounter, including those that are not. After all, language was not only invented for communication but also for other cognitive, emotional, psychological, and eco-political processes. Even in tertiary education, both teachers and students use their linguistic repertoires as the situations call for these.

Plurilingualism

In the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg (www.coe.int/lang), the definition of plurilingualism is given in the following:

“ ‘plurilingualism’ refers to languages not as objects but from the point of view of those who speak them. It refers to the repertoire of varieties of language which many individuals use, and is, therefore, the opposite of monolingualism; it includes the language variety referred to as ‘mother tongue’ or ‘first language’ and any number of other languages or varieties. Thus in some multilingual areas some individuals may be monolingual and some may be plurilingual”.

In the Common European Framework of Reference, plurilingualism is defined in the following way:

(Plurilingualism is) the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has the proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experiences of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competencies, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw (Council of Europe, 2001: 168).

Adopting this definition, it is easy to succumb to the idea that plurilingualism applies to the Philippine setting, although the meaning of intercultural interaction may be different in some sense because the meaning of culture may be confined to localized ones. It is only in big cities where there are direct encounters with other cultures outside the Philippines. So even if the interactions are intercultural, these may be limited to the various sub-cultures or small cultures within the national culture as the word culture may be defined in many ways.

In the same source of the Linguistic Diversity under the Council of Europe, the meaning of plurilingualism follows a description of the linguistic repertoire which an adult European who has completed secondary education might be expected to have at a given point in time, which is not emphasized in the Philippine context but true in many cases for the multilinguals:

- A. a 'national' language spoken and written according to the standard norms of the country acquired in the education system
- B. a variety of the first language spoken according to the norms of the region and/or generation to which he/she belongs
- C. a regional or minority language he/she speaks and/or writes where appropriate as well as the national language
- D. one or more foreign languages understood, but not necessarily spoken, to a basic level as a consequence of education and/or experience of media and/or tourism
- E. another foreign language mastered to a higher level with the ability to speak and write.

In the descriptions above, **letter A** would be true in the Philippines as we have our national language learned in the classroom from elementary to college years. This is also used in the different spheres of life and, therefore, can be picked up or developed

through other means like the media. Letter B is also very true because there are many first tongues used in the Philippines. These are actually the norm, and sometimes, not just one mother language is used but two or more simultaneously depending on the linguistic backgrounds of the parents or on the structure or type of family. Extended and reconstituted families can have three or more languages spoken simultaneously at home thereby increasing the number of first languages children can learn at home.

Letter C is also veracious and almost ubiquitous outside the Metro Manila areas. Cebu, Davao, Cotabato, Jolo, Zamboanga City, and Cagayan de Oro City are only a few examples. In the case of Zamboanga City, the Chabacano language which is a Spanish creole has people only speaking the language and not writing it. The writing system of which is not followed, although efforts have been exerted to standardize the spelling system. To a large extent, the writing system standardized is not followed, especially those who had their early years of education in the Cartilla (Spanish) way or in only English and Filipino prior to the MTMLE implementation. People write in the language using the spelling system that they can read and write and are understandable to many. The writing system seems to give the words used in the language a one-to-one correspondence with the sounds that they know of.

Letter D is also true for many Filipinos who have studied one or two foreign languages in the Philippines as some schools, especially colleges, and universities offer foreign languages like Ateneo de Manila, de Cagayan (Xavier) de Davao, de Zamboanga, and de Naga; De La Salle University University at Taft Avenue, Manila and Dasmariñas, Cavite; and University of the Philippines and those following its system. Ateneo de Manila, for example, through its department known as **Modern Languages** under the School of Humanities, offers French, German, Bahasa Indonesia, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and Portuguese. These languages can be taken from the basic to intermediate, advanced, and conversational levels both in the oral and written forms. The course offerings acquaint learners with the history, art, and cultures of the countries

in which these languages are spoken. In the process, understanding and appreciation of Philippine culture are integrated.

Other colleges and universities in the Philippines offer foreign languages of their own choice, especially if they have courses on international relations, foreign service, international studies, tourism, and linguistics/languages (e.g. Lyceum Philippines University and West Visayas State University). Even DepEd schools offer foreign languages like Spanish for the Don Pablo school in Zamboanga City.

In the case of the Chab/vacano speakers, understanding the Spanish language is also achieved with different degrees without going to formal schools and even if Chabacano is not taught in the secondary and tertiary levels. Some academics from Zamboanga City, however, try to find connections with the roots of the donor language by studying at Instituto de Cervantes in Manila. These are done with personal motivations or are financially supported by the schools where they serve, especially if these are related to graduate degrees that they pursue like Ph.D. in History and another discipline in the Humanities.

Finally, **letter E** can equally be true for some Filipinos and such can be attained by formal schooling at higher education institutions or language institutes. Some can speak and write other foreign languages through other avenues of learning including those who have traveled to other foreign countries.

Since the abilities of speaking two or more languages are not static, and education, work environments, contacts with people in other societies, and now dealings of language users with other people on the internet, these various factors will cause the languages to grow. And because plurilingualism pertains to the full array of linguistic resources of the interlocutors, these would include the 'mother tongue/s' or in some contexts the heritage languages.

Translanguaging

Translanguaging comes from the Welsh *trawsieithu* and was coined by Cen Williams (1994, 1996). In its initial use, it appertained to a pedagogical practice where students were asked to alternate languages for receptive or productive use. For instance, students might be asked to read in English and write in Welsh and vice versa (Baker, 2011). Since then, the term has been broadened by many scholars in the field like García (2009a, 2011c, 2014b), Blackledge and Creese (2010), Creese and Blackledge (2010), Canagarajah (2011a, 2011b), García and Sylvan (2011), and Hornberger and Link (2012), and Li Wei (2011b) to relate to both the complex language practices of plurilingual individuals and communities, as well as the pedagogical approaches that use those complex practices in, for example, the school.

In the first use of the term translanguaging with the Welsh, Baker, who first translated the Welsh term as 'translanguaging', defines it as 'the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages' (2011: 288). Lewis, Jones, and Baker moreover assert that in this linguistic phenomenon, both languages are used in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner to organize and mediate mental processes in understanding, speaking, literacy, and, not least, learning. It also concerns with effective communication, function rather than form, cognitive activity, as well as language production (2012a: 1). Both these definitions go beyond additive concepts of bilingualism, but still refer to two languages. To Garcia and Wei (2014) translanguaging goes beyond the concept of the two languages of additive bilingualism or interdependence and differentiate between traditional understandings of bilingualism, those of Cummins's (1979) interdependence and those of dynamic bilingualism. To them, the trans- prefix relates to the concept of *transculturación* coined in the 1940s by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in the prologue to Ortiz's monumental study *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y del azúcar* (1940/1978). They also

pick up from the *transculturación* idea espoused by Bronislaw Malinowski who elucidates that this is a process in which *a new reality emerges*, compounded and complex; a reality that is not borne out of a mechanical agglomeration of characters or even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original and independent. Garcia and Wei argue that in the same way, translanguaging does not refer to two separate languages nor to a synthesis of different language practices or to a hybrid mixture. Rather translanguaging refers to *new* language practices that make visible the complexity of language exchanges among people with different histories, and releases histories and understandings that had been buried within fixed language identities constrained by nation-states.

Further, Garcia and Wei elaborate that translanguaging is the enaction of language practices that employ various features that had previously moved independently and constrained by different histories, but that now are experienced against each other in speakers' interactions as one *new* whole as an analogy of what they have seen in the concept of counterpoint in music. Given this, translanguaging, they add, also has much to do with Derrida's concept *brissure*; that is, practices where difference and sameness coincide in an apparently impossible simultaneity.

Canagarajah (2011a) defines translanguaging as 'the ability of multilingual speakers to switch between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an *integrated system*' to which Garcia and Wei (2014) agree with most of this definition. Canagarajah then goes on further to say that translanguaging is the ability that is part of the *multicompetence* of bilingual speakers (cited in Cook, 2008) whose lives, minds, and actions are necessarily different from monolingual speakers because two languages co-exist in their minds, and their complex interactions are always in the foreground (Franceschini, 2011). Multicompetence considers the languages of a multilingual individual as an interconnected whole – an ecosystem of mutual interdependence. From this perspective, the idea of a single language as a

reducible set of abstract structures or as a mental entity is effectively misleading, Garcia and Wei believe. Their concept of translanguaging goes beyond the idea of the multicompetence of bilingual speakers.

Translanguaging and Code-switching

Translanguaging is not exactly the same as code-switching as some might think, although loosely, people use translanguaging in the sense of code-switching. Translanguaging is more loaded in terms of the understandings that it subsumes because it does not only refer to a shift between two languages but also to the speakers' skills to creativity and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of a language, but that makes up the speakers' complete linguistic repertoire. The non-verbals and other kinds of language signing including memories that speakers use are part of the bounds of the term. García (2009a) claims that it is an approach to bilingualism that focuses not on languages as has been often the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that can be readily observed. These worldwide translanguaging practices are seen here not as marked or unusual, but rather taken for what they are, namely the normal mode of communication that, with some exceptions in some monolingual enclaves, characterizes communities throughout the world (p.44). García (2009a) further reveals that translanguaging is many discursive practices which bilinguals utilize as they participate in the many activities of this world. She clarifies that translanguaging takes as its starting point the language practices of bilingual people as the norm instead of the language of monolinguals, as described by traditional usage books and grammars' (García, 2012: 1, emphasis in original).

In Li Wei's research article titled "Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language" published by Oxford University Press (2018), he presents translanguaging as a language theory and "contextualizes it in the linguistic realities of the 21st century",

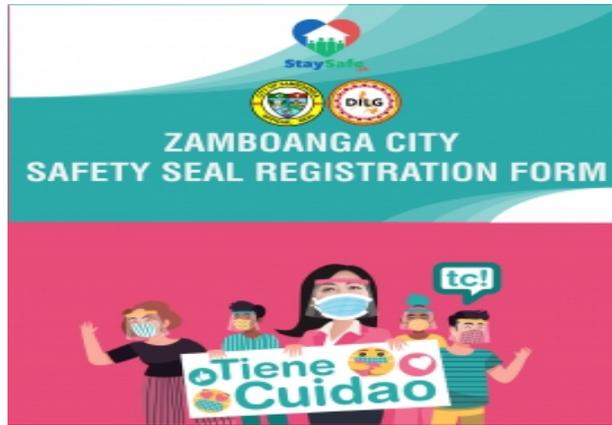
most especially “the fluid and dynamic practices that transcend the boundaries between named languages, language varieties, and language and other semiotic systems”. He underscores the contributions of translanguaging as a theoretical concept it can make to the debates over the Language and Thought and the Modularity of Mind hypotheses. Here, he stresses the multimodal and multisensory nature of the social interaction of speakers when they are into multilingual practices. He also explains two major concepts of this term which are **translanguaging space** and **translanguaging instinct** to emphasize “ the necessity to bridge the artificial and ideological divides between the so-called socio-cultural and the cognitive approaches to translanguaging practices” and in doing so, he addresses some of the confusions about the notion of translanguaging. One of which is whether translanguaging could be an all-encompassing term for diverse multilingual and multimodal practices, replacing terms such as code-switching, code-mixing, code-meshing, and crossing. Other terms used in reference to translanguaging are polylinguaging, polylingual languaging, multilinguaging, heteroglossia, hybrid language practices, translingual practice, flexible bilingualism, and metrolingualism, for academic discourse space. According to Li Wei (2018), dissents exist that question the need for the term, and indeed the other terms as well, dismissing it as merely a populist neologism and part of the sloganization of the post-modern, possibly also post-truth era.

So with the foregoing explanations of what translanguaging is, do Filipinos translanguage? The answer is yes in a lot of ways, in many spheres of life, and almost on a day-to-day basis. We either mix languages or we separate them. The school scene would prove to be one avenue where translanguaging happens a lot between the teachers and the students and among themselves. Discussions in the classroom are done by teachers in two tongues: English and Filipino, and they do this back and forth. In explaining Philippine History and Social Studies, to cite two cases, teachers in private higher education institutions use English, but the concepts are presented in Filipino, and so these languages are inevitable to them and the students. In other

scenes in the classroom, there are teachers who teach literatures of Mindanao who discuss the pieces in Cebuano and Filipino or Filipino and English whichever the teachers are more at home with and which ones have the best impact on the students in terms of understanding and appreciation.

In linguistic landscapes in many places in the Philippines, the translanguaging is also very visible. The ecpay signboards, for example, give the notice to the public in English and Filipino as shown below:





The rest of the adverts shown here also use translanguaging as a way to convey important information to the public. In the first signboard, the phrase *Ang Payment Center ng Bayan* is translated as “The Payment Center of the Town”. In the third signboard, below the Mercury Drug store name, the Filipino statement *NAKASISIGURO KA GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO* is translated thus: YOU ARE SURE MEDICINES ARE ALWAYS NEW. In the fourth signboard where the Zamboanga City Mayor is seen in the foreground, the words *Tiene Cuidao* mean “Take Care”. This is in relation to COVID -19. The fourth signboard has the Filipino words *Sulong Educalidad* which mean “Advance EduQuality” also related to COVID-19 information. The logos seen represent the origins of the signboards or who are giving them. They are also aided by colorful graphics.

In different sidewalks in several places in the Philippines, money changers are also good at dealing with customers in several languages. It is to their advantage if they speak the languages of their clients. They earn their trust and are welcomed. The languages that they speak are also a form of currency to them.

Dominant Language Constellations (DLC)

Finally, the term that is used synonymously with all the foregoing key terms is the dominant language constellation. In the introduction of the book titled "Dominant Language Constellations: A New Perspective on Multilingualism" by Bianco and Aronin as editors (2020), the mentioned editors claim that a language repertoire aims to account for and include the totality of linguistic skills in all the languages possessed by an individual or by a community, while a Dominant Language Constellation embraces only several languages (typically but not always three) that are deemed to be of prime importance. Phrased otherwise, DLC is the active part of one's language repertoire. One may contend that a language repertoire is about the linguistic assets available in their totality, their plenitude or completeness, with, theoretically, no pre-defined limit, whereas a DLC pertains to the active usage of an empirically verifiable cluster of languages only. A DLC operates as a coherent whole and hence is the account of what an individual or wider grouping's specific repertoire of used languages is in a given time and setting. Within the unit of a DLC, the editors believe that languages play different roles and various linguistic and cognitive skills in several languages serve to carry out the necessary functions of a human language. Some important notions of DLC are the following: a) It gets rid of the monolingual use and goes beyond bilingualism; b) it is applied to at least three languages or clusters of languages acquired and developed over time for different purposes; c) it can be a combination of immigrant and autochthonous languages; d) it is multilingualism in usage that carries out all the functions with overlapping DLCs made by users based on the available choices they have and are useful for them and allowing them to exist in a multilingual society; and e)

it includes only the most expedient languages for a person rather than the totality of linguistic capacities and therefore pertains to only the active, working part of the language resources.

If we take on the notions of what DLCs are, one may still be confused as to where to draw the line of what constitutes a DLC from the other synonymous terms mentioned above. So two criteria are identified by Bianco and Aronin (2020), and the first one is **Carrying out the complete set of functions characteristic of a human language**. The foremost condition for harmonizing several languages in a DLC is that *together they carry out the complete set of functions characteristic of a human language*. The classification of these functions between languages may be and oftentimes is uneven. One language can perform most of the functions, while the other two take the rest upon themselves.

The second criterion is **'Reasonable immediacy'**. For DLC to be 'in a working condition', the languages should be immediately available for communication. The question is, what is the reasonable time of reaction? Perhaps it is one that enables a person to respond without waiting for several minutes. One may grope for words but not take a long time to reply to an interlocutor so that the communication flow continues and the purpose for which the exchange is conducted is obtained. A language should be readily available for its users either in order to produce a remark or a written output or receive and understand a response. In the case of multilingual in the Philippines, say in teaching where the Filipino and English as the official languages are used but where the students have other mother tongues like Tausug, Hiligaynon, Sama, Subanon, and Cebuano, the availability of words to express concepts can be found in their mother tongues. So when they have difficulties figuring out the right words for concepts they need to share in the class in the main media of instruction, they ask teachers' permission to allow them to use their mother tongues. If the situation is reversed, that is, teachers do not have the words to express the ideas that they want to

convey to their students, the latter just use the words in their first languages and go on explaining the concepts in detail for clarity and transfer of learning. Examples are Chabacano kinship terms like *man primo'y prima* (cross-cousins who are males and females), *bes-besabuelo* (great-great-grandfather), *prometida* (fiancée or a lady arranged/promised ahead of time to be married to another man). Tausug kinship terms in a culture class would be unfamiliar to students in another culture if the kinship terms were not used or heard like *iras* who can be siblings or in-laws. In Chabacano, this word is “concuño/a” which in Tagalog is “bilas” and is used for both males and females.

In another scene, if the DLC is to have immediacy but the communication takes place among foreigners via Zoom and where two languages are shared like English and Spanish by the members plus another one is used, say Filipino, but where most of the participants in a meeting do not use but can understand somehow, and the Filipino member uses a Filipino term *kamalayan*, and all members have digital tools to help them in the translation and are able to respond, such a situation qualifies as reasonable immediacy because the digital tool serves as an aid to keep the conversation flowing.

In the current period, technology is already used in communicating in varied tongues. I see Turkish nationals coming to Zamboanga City to get a degree. Getting by in the classroom is through their digital dictionaries translating words from Turkish to English to Filipino. In a short span of time, they learn English quite well as well as Filipino. There are also Filipino teachers who teach English online to students residing in Japan, Korea, China, and Saudi Arabia who learn the translations of their languages through the online applications such as Google translate. Online dictionaries such as Cambridge, Encarta, Reverso, Wiktionary, and Word Reference also offer translations in many languages for meaning of words.

If DLC is to be assumed to be the use of three languages where two or three languages are active, then it can be found in many places, especially outside Metro Manila. To illustrate, in Iloilo, Davao, and Zamboanga City, English and Filipino are applied actively in professional, formal settings, and academic settings, while the first languages of these places are used with families at home, with friends and colleagues in the work places, in wet markets, regular stores, and other very public areas where the common people go to.

Knowing that Filipino and English are the dominant languages used in the country - and are actually ubiquitous, then advisories, news, alerts, and notices to the general public are also done in these two languages. To demonstrate, our Department of Health passes the information to the public in Filipino on TV, radio, signboards, streamers, and advisories, precautions, updates, and other similar quick ways of getting vital information across like infographics, especially those in relation to COVID - 19. The national news networks, mostly use Filipino but offer options to those who prefer to hear it in English like CNN and ANC (now on Facebook for those who have no cable or Signal connection). Those who utilize these pieces of information in other provinces communicate about these in their mother tongues. Below are examples of infographics from the Department of Health, an advisory from CNN, and from ANC.



DOH INVESTIGATES CASE OF PNEUMONIA

Ang coronaviruses ay pamilya ng mga virus na nagdudulot ng iba't ibang klaseng sakit, mula sa karaniwang ubo't sipon hanggang sa mas malubhang impeksyon. Ang mga sintomas ay:



Sa mga malubhang kaso, maari itong maging sanhi ng Pneumonia, Acute Respiratory Syndrome, problema sa bato, at pagkamatay



Maghugas lagi ng mga kamay



Umiwas sa mga taong may sintomas ng ubo at sipon



Lumayo at takpan ang bibig at ilong sa tuwing ubo o babahing



Iwasan ang contact sa mga hayop



Uminom ng maraming tubig at siguraduhing luto ang mga pagkain



Agarang kumonsulta sa health facility kung may sintomas ng ubo't sipon (lalo na kung bumiyaha sa Wuhan, China)



2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS
Acute Respiratory Disease
(2019-nCoV ARD)

HUWAG MANIWALA AT MAGKALAT NG FAKE NEWS!

Alamin ang mga importanteng impormasyon ukol sa **2019 novel coronavirus Acute Respiratory Disease (2019-nCoV ARD)** mula sa:



Department of Health (Philippines)
facebook.com/OfficialDOHgov



2019-nCoV ARD Webpage
www.doh.gov.ph/2019-nCoV



ToDOH Laban Kontra 2019-nCoV ARD!



DAPAT BA AKONG MAGSUOT NG FACE MASK?



Oo! Kapag may ubo't sipon, respiratory symptoms, o natitirapang humanga.



Oo! Kapag ikaw ay health worker na nag-aalaga ng mga pasyenteng may respiratory symptoms



Oo! Kapag may inaalagaang pasyente na may ubo't sipon/ respiratory symptoms.



Hindi na! Sa publiko na walang sintomas ng ubo't sipon/ respiratory symptoms.

HINDI SAPAT ang paggamit ng FACE MASK lamang. Kinakailangan gawin din ang ibang pang paraan upang makaiwas sa mga sakit.

IMPORTANTE ANG HAND WASHING!!!



OfficialDOHgov
doh.gov.ph



8-711-1001
8-711-1002

2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS Acute Respiratory Disease (2019-nCoV ARD)

HEALTH ADVISORY

For Filipinos returning to the Philippines
from China, Hong Kong, Macau,
and Taiwan

- 1** DOH will take care of you if you return home.

4 Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- 2** Upon arrival in the Philippines, you will be taken care of in a health facility for monitoring and further management for 14 days.

5 Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or shirt sleeve when coughing and sneezing.

Dispose tissue properly.
- 3** If you have fever and/or cough upon arrival, immediately inform the quarantine medical officers on duty at the airport or seaport.

6 Observe social distance from loved ones if you are manifesting flu-like symptoms.

www.doh.gov.ph
[OfficialDOHgov](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialDOHgov)
711-1001 711-1002



DOH ADVISORY

2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS ACUTE RESPIRATORY DISEASES

REMEMBER "NCOV" BEFORE YOU SHARE

N

Never share unverified news/ articles

O

Only source information from DOH Official Channels

C

Check your sources before sharing

V

Verify news information at:

www.doh.gov.ph/2019-nCoV



OfficialDOHgov
doh.gov.ph



8-711-1001
8-711-1002

PROGRAMMING ADVISORY

CNN Philippines will be off the air from Maundy Thursday, April 9 to Black Saturday, April 11 for annual maintenance work of our technical and broadcast facilities.

During this period, we will continue to report news you can trust on our website cnnphilippines.com, our social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and on our Viber community.

Regular programming will resume on Easter Sunday, April 12, with live news programs at 10:00am and 6:00pm.





Jollibee is another trend setter when it comes to language use. Ever since it started, its use of Filipino has been primal. It is like a republic of its own. When you enter Jollibee in the provinces, you immediately switch to Filipino because the attendants and everyone else including the guards speak in Filipino. The company applies this policy somehow to the letter that to some die-hards of their mother tongues can be irritating. Some accuse Jollibee for not being culturally sensitive and pretty sure some have written to Jollibee about it just like my colleague who is a professor of Religious Studies and an advocate of peace. Other fastfood chains like McDonald's and Greenwich follow this trend but are not quite strict.

Number of Languages in the Philippines

In the listing of the Philippine Ethnologue (www.ethnologue.com/country/PH) currently, the number of established languages listed for the Philippines is 186. Of these, 184 are extant or living and 2 are extinct. Of the living languages, 175 are indigenous and 9 are non-indigenous. Furthermore, 36 are institutional, 67 are developing, 36 are vigorous, 34 are in trouble, and 11 are dying. Also listed are 3

unestablished languages and 2 macro languages. In the current listing of the Philippine Ethnologue, there are 190 languages in total, and these are inclusive of the foreign languages as the succeeding pages would show.

In 2016, I attended a seminar at De La Salle University, Taft Avenue, Manila in honor of the late and former President Br. Andrew F. Gonzales. One of the speakers is Dr. John Stephen Quakenbush. In his presentation, he gives 187 as the total count of Philippine languages. Of these, 183 are living, 4 are extinct, 175 indigenous, 8 are indigenous, 41 institutional, 73 developing, 45 vigorous, 13 in trouble, and 11 dying. In classifying these languages, he uses the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale also known as EGIDS. Our languages can be evaluated using EGIDS and by answering five key questions regarding the identity function, vehicular, state of intergenerational language transmission, literacy acquisition status, and a societal profile of generational language use. This scale picks up from the 8 levels that Joshua A. Fishman gives in his book titled *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages* (1991). His 8-level GIDS has served as the first chief and best-known evaluative framework of language endangerment for almost two decades. It has offered the theoretical underpinnings for most practitioners of language revitalization. UNESCO has developed a 6-level scale of endangerment more recently while Ethnologue uses yet another set of five categories to characterize language vitality. With only minor modifications the EGIDS can also be applied to languages that are being revitalized. Below are its 13 levels with their corresponding descriptions:

Table 1. Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale

Level	Label	Description
0	International	The language is widely used between nations in trade, knowledge exchange, and international policy.
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media,

- and government at the national level.
(English and Filipino)
- 2 Provincial The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government within major administrative subdivisions of a nation.
- 3 Wider Communication The language is used in work and mass media without official status to transcend language differences across a region. (Bikol, Central; Cebuano; Hiligaynon Ilocano; Kapampangan; Masbatenyo; Pangasinan Tagalog; Tausug; Waray-Waray)
- 4 Educational The language is in vigorous use, with standardization and literature being sustained through a widespread system of institutionally supported education. (Aklanon; Balangao; Chabacano; Ibanag; Ifugao, Mayoyao; Ifugao, Tuwali; Inabaknon; Isnag; Ivatan; Kagayanen; Kalinga, Limos; Kalinga, Lubuagan; Kalinga, Southern; Kallahan, Keley-I; Kinaray-a; Manobo, Obo; Maranao; Paranan; Sama, Central; Surigaonon; Tagabawa; Tagakaulo; Tboli; Yakan)
- 6 Developing The language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable. Binukid; Blaan, Sarangani; Bontok, Central; Buhid'; Cuyonon; Ga'dang; Hanunoo; Higaonon; Ibaloi; Ifugao, Batad; Inonhan; Iraya; Itawit; Kankanaey; Kankanay, Northern; Manobo, Agusan; Manobo, Ata; Manobo, Dibabawon; Manobo, Ilianen; Manobo, Sarangani; Mansaka; Minamanwa; Palawano, Brooke's Point; Palawano, Central; Romblomanon; Sama, Pangutaran; Sama, Southern; Sangir; Subanen, Southern; Teduray; Agta, Casiguran Dumagat; Agta, Central Cagayan; Agta, Pahanan; Agutaynen;

American Sign Language; Ayta, Mag-Indi; Bantoanon;
 Blaan, Koronadal; Bontok, Eastern; Caluyanun,
 Filipino Sign Language, Ifugao, Amganad; Kalanguya;
 Kalinga, Butbut; Kalinga, Tanudan; Karao;
 Maguindanaon; Manobo, Cotabato; Manobo,
 Matigsalug; Manobo, Western Bukidnon; Mapun;
 Molbog; Sama, Balangingih;
 Sambal, Botolan; Sangil; Subanen, Central; ubanen,
 Northern; Subanon, Western;
 Tagbanwa; Tagbanwa, Calamian; Tawbuid)

- 6a Vigorous The language is used for face-to-face communication by all generations and the situation is sustainable.
 (Atta, Pamplona; Bantayanon; Baybayanon; Bikol, Buhi'non; Bikol, Libon; Bikol, Miraya; Bikol, Northern Catanduanes; Bikol, Rinconada; Bikol, Southern; Catanduanes; Bikol, West Albay; Binukidnon, Northern; Binukidnon, Southern; Bontok, Southern; Capiznon, Davawenyu, Gaddang, Iranun, Itneg, Banao, Itneg, Binongan; Itneg, Maeng; Itneg, Masadiit; Itneg, Moyadan; Kalinga, Mabaka Valley; Kalinga, Majukayang; Kamayo; Kasiguranin; Kinabalian; Malaynon; Mandaya; Manobo, Rajah Kabunsuwan; Palawano, Southwest; Porohanon; Sorsoganon, Northern; Sorsoganon, Southern; Subanon, Kolibugan; Tandaganon)
- 6b Threatened The language is used for face-to-face communication within all generations, but it is losing users.
 (Adasen; Agta, Dupaninan; Agta, Mt. Iraya; Agta, Mt. Iriga; Agta, Umiray Dumaget;
 Alangan; Alta, Northern; Alta, Southern; Ati; Atta, Faire; Atta, Pudtol; Ayta, Abellen; Ayta, Ambala; Ayta, Magbukun; Bangon; Bogkalot; Bolinao; I-wak; Ibatan ; Isinay; Itneg, Inlaod; Kalagan; Kalagan, Kagan; Manide; Manobo, Kinamiging; Subanen, Eastern; Sulod; Tadyawan; Yogad)
- 7 Shifting The child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves, but it is not being transmitted to

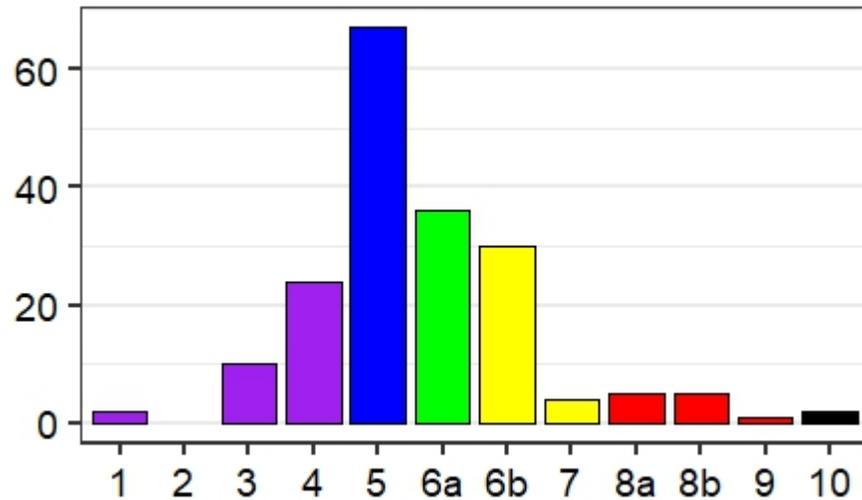
children. (Bagobo-Klata; Batak; Butuanon; Sambal)

- | | | |
|----|----------------|---|
| 8a | Moribund | The only remaining active users of the language are members of the grandparent generation and older. (Arta; Bontok, Northern; Bontok, Southwestern; Dumagat, Remontado; Inagta; Alabat) |
| 8b | Nearly Extinct | The only remaining users of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language. (Agta, Katubung; Ata; Ayta, Sorsogon; Ratagnon; Tagbanwa, Central) |
| 9 | Dormant | The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community, but no one has more than symbolic proficiency. (Eskayan) |
| 10 | Extinct | The language is no longer used and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language. (Agta, Dicamay; Agta, Viciosa) |

Among the Philippine languages, Basque; Chinese, Mandarin; Chinese, Min Nan; Chinese, Yue; Sindhi; Spanish are labeled dispersed. There are also classified as unestablished ones such as Japanese, Hindi, and Spanish, and Katabagan is unattested.

Profile of Language Status for the Philippines

The Philippine Ethnologue also uses EGIDS to show the condition of our



country's languages.

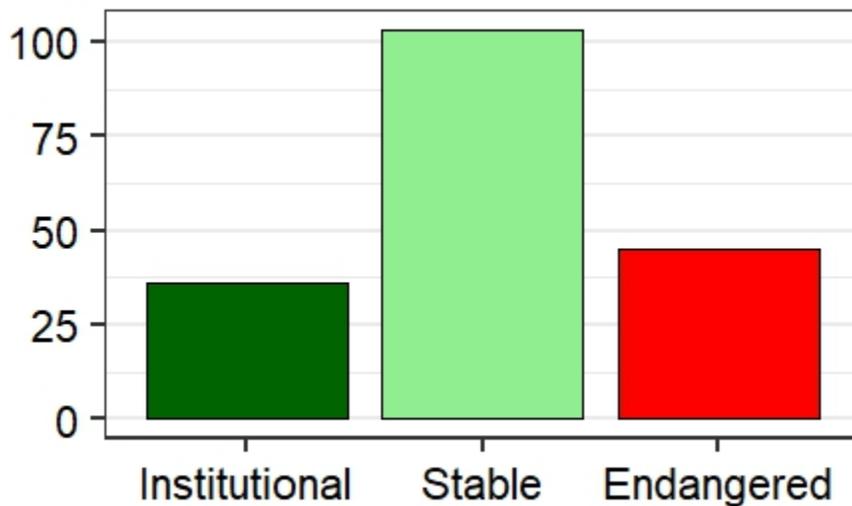
This graph profiles the Philippine languages in relation to language development versus language endangerment. Each language that has an entry for the Philippines is included in the profile. The horizontal axis represents the estimated level of development or endangerment as measured on the EGIDS scale. The height of each bar indicates the number of languages that are estimated to be at the given level.

The color coding of the bars matches the color scheme used in the summary profile graphs on the navigation maps for the site. In this scheme, the EGIDS levels are grouped as follows:

- **Purple** = Institutional (EGIDS 0-4) – The language has been developed to the point that it is used and sustained by institutions beyond the home and community.
- **Blue** = Developing (EGIDS 5) – The language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable.
- **Green** = Vigorous (EGIDS 6a) – The language is unstandardized and in vigorous use among all generations.

- **Yellow** = In trouble (EGIDS 6b-7) – Intergenerational transmission is in the process of being broken, but the child-bearing generation can still use the language so it is possible that revitalization efforts could restore transmission of the language in the home.
- **Red** = Dying (EGIDS 8a-9) – The only fluent users (if any) are older than child-bearing age, so it is too late to restore natural intergenerational transmission through the home; a mechanism outside the home would need to be developed.
- **Black** = Extinct (EGIDS 10) – The language has fallen completely out of use and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language.

Profile of Language Vitality for Philippines



This is a graph of Philippines languages with respect to their level of language vitality. Each individual language that has an entry for the Philippines is included in the profile. The horizontal axis represents the estimated level of vitality. The height of each bar indicates the number of languages that are estimated to be at the given level.

The vitality levels and the color-coding of the bars match the scheme used in the guide on How many languages are endangered? In this scheme, the levels and colors are as follows:

Dark green = Institutional (EGIDS 0-4) – The language has been developed to the point that it is used and sustained by institutions beyond the home and community.

Light green = Stable (EGIDS 5-6a) – The language is not being sustained by formal institutions, but it is still the norm in the home and community that all children learn and use the language.

Red = Endangered (EGIDS 6b-9) – It is no longer the norm that children learn and use this language.

These three summary levels are a result of the grouping levels in the EGIDS, which is the more fine-grained scale that Ethnologue uses to assess the status of every language in terms of development versus endangerment.

What are the Philippine Languages?

There are 4 indigenous languages with approximately 9 million or more native speakers, and these are **Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, and Hiligaynon**. There are 10 languages identified with 1 million to 3 million native speakers, and they are the following:

1. Waray
2. Bikol
3. Kapampangan
4. Pangasinan
5. Maranao
6. Tausug
7. Maguindanao
8. Chabacano
9. Karay-a
10. Surigaonon

The complete listing of the Philippine languages based on the Philippine Ethnologue (2021) inclusive of the foreign languages is given below.

1. Adasen
2. Agta, Casiguran Dumagat
3. Agta, Central Cagayan
4. Agta, Dicamay
5. Agta, Dupaninan
6. Agta, Katubung
7. Agta, Mt. Iraya
8. Agta, Mt. Iriga
9. Agta, Pahanan
10. Agta, Umiray Dumaget
11. Agta, Villa Viciosa
12. Agta, Agutayre
13. Aklanon
14. Alangan
15. Alta, Northern
16. Alta, Southern
17. American Sign Language
18. Atta
19. Ata
20. Ati
21. Atta, Faire,
22. Atta, Pamplona
23. Atta, Pudtol
24. Ayta, Abellen
25. Ayta, Ambala
26. Ayta, Mag-antsi
27. Ayta, Mag-indi
28. Ayta, Magbukun
29. Ayta, Sorsogon
30. Bagobo- Klata
31. Balangao
32. Bangon
33. Bantayanon
34. Bantoanon
35. Basque
36. Batak
37. Baybayanon
38. Bikol
39. Bikol, Buhi'non
40. Bikol, Central
41. Bikol, Libon
42. Bikol, Miraya

43. Bikol, Northern Catanduanes
44. Bikol, Rinconada
45. Bikol, Southern Catanduanes
46. Bikol, West Albay
47. Binukid
48. Binukidnon, Northern
49. Binukidnon, Southern
50. Blaan, Koronadal
51. Blaan, Sarangani
52. Bogkalot
53. Bolinao
54. Bontoc
55. Bontoc, Central
56. Bontoc, Eastern
57. Bontoc, Northern
58. Bontoc, Southwestern
59. Buhid
60. Butuanon
61. Caluyanun
62. Capiznon
63. Cebuano
64. Chabacano
65. Chinese Mandarin
66. Chinese, Min Nan
67. Chinese, Yue
68. Cuyunon
69. Davawenyo
70. Dumagat, Remontado
71. English
72. Eskayan
73. Filipino
74. Filipino Sign Language
75. Ga'dang
76. Gaddang
77. Hanunoo
78. Higaonon
79. Hiligaynon
80. Hindi
81. I-wak
82. Ibaloi
83. Ibanag
84. Ivatan
85. Ifugao, Amganad

86. Ifugao, Batad
87. Ifugao, Mayoyao
88. Ifugao, Tuwali
89. Ilocano
90. Inabaknon
91. Inagta, Alabat
92. Indonesian
93. Iranun
94. Iraya
95. Isinay
96. Isnag
97. Itawit
98. Itneg, Banao
99. 100. Itneg, Binongan
100. 101. tneg, Inlaad
101. Itneg, Maeng
102. Itneg, Masadiit
103. Itneg, Moyadan
104. Ivatan
105. Japanese
106. Kagayanen
107. Kalagan
108. Kalagan, Kagan
109. Kalanguya
110. Kalinga, Butbut
111. Kalinga, Limos
112. Kalinga, Lubugan
113. Kalinga, Mabaka Valley
114. Kalinga, Majukayang
115. Kalinga, Southern
116. Kalinga, Tanudan
117. Kallahan, Keley-I
118. Kamayo
119. Kankanaey
120. Kankanan, Northern
121. Kapampangan
122. Karao
123. Kasiguranin
124. Katabagon
125. Kinabalian
126. Kinaray-a
127. Maguindanaon
128. Malaynon

129. Mandaya
130. Manide
131. Manobo, Agusan
132. Manobo, Ata
133. Manobo, Cotabato
134. Manobo, Dibabawon
135. Manobo, Illanen
136. Manobo, Kinamiging
137. Manobo, Matigsalug
138. Manobo, Obo
139. Manobo, Raha
140. Manobo, Kabunsuan
141. Manobo, Sarangani
142. Manobo, Western Bukidnon
143. Mansaka
144. Mapun
145. Maranao
146. Masbatenyo
147. Minamanwa
148. Molbog
149. Palawano, Brooke's Point
150. Palawano, Central
151. Palawano, Southwest
152. Pangasinan
153. Paranan
154. Porohanon
155. Ratagnon
156. Romblomanon
157. Sama, Balangingih
158. Sama, Central
159. Sama, Pangutaran
160. Sama, Southern
161. Sambal
162. Sambal, Botolan
163. Sangil
164. Sangir
165. Sindhi
166. Sorsoganon, Northern
167. Sorsoganon, Southern
168. Spanish
169. Subanen, Central
170. Subanen, Eastern
171. Subanen, Northern

172. Subanen, Southern
173. Subanon, Kalibugan
174. Subanon, Western
175. Sulod
176. Surigaonon
177. Tadyawan
178. Tagabawa
179. Tagakaulo
180. Tagalog
181. Tagbanwa, Calamian
182. Tagbanwa, Central
183. Tandaganon
184. Tausug
185. Tawbuid
186. Tboli
187. Teduray
188. Waray-waray
189. Yakan
190. Yogad

For the languages recognized in the Philippines and ordered and permitted by the Department of Education (Philippines) under the Mother Tongue-Based Multi-Lingual Education (MTB-MLE) strategy, they are the following:

1. Aklanon
2. Bikol
3. Cebuano
4. Chabacano
5. Hiligaynon
6. Ibanag
7. Ilocano
8. Ivatan
9. Kapampangan
10. Kinaray-a
11. Maguindanao
12. Maranao
13. Pangasinan
14. Sambal
15. Surigaonon
16. Tagalog

17. Tausug
18. Waray
19. Yakan

Constitutional Basis

Part of what underpins the country's multilinguality can be seen in the 1987 Philippine Constitution under Article XIV: Education, Science and Technology, Arts, Culture, and Sports. Below are the provisions:

Section 6. "The national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages. Subject to provisions of law and as the Congress may deem appropriate, the Government shall take steps to initiate and sustain the use of Filipino as a medium of official communication and as language of instruction in the educational system.

Section 7. For purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and, until otherwise provided by law, English.

The regional languages are the auxiliary official languages in the regions and shall serve as auxiliary media of instruction therein. Spanish and Arabic shall be promoted on a voluntary and optional basis.

Section 8. This Constitution shall be promulgated in Filipino and English and shall be translated into major regional languages, Arabic, and Spanish.

Section 9. The Congress shall establish a national language commission composed of representatives of various regions and disciplines which shall undertake, coordinate, and promote researches for the development, propagation, and preservation of Filipino and other languages.

It must be noted that when the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) released the CHED Memorandum Order no. 20, series of 2013, also known as the “General Education Curriculum Holistic Understandings, Intellectual and Civic Competencies,” which excluded the study of Filipino, Panitikan, and the Philippine Constitution as core subjects and whose constitutionality was upheld by the Supreme Court (SC) on October 9, 2018, many protested and criticized the decision of the SC. The resentment of many, especially those in the education sector, in particular those teaching Filipino and defenders of this national language (e.g. *Tanggol Wika*), is the removal of the Filipino subject as part of the required general education curriculum. From the 63/51 units of previous general education subjects, the number has been reduced to only 24 units of required subjects, 9 units of elective plus one mandatory course which is “Rizal’s Life and Works. This cannot be removed from the curriculum as it was created by law under Republic Act No. 1425 enacted into law by Congress in 1956. One of the accusations hurled against the SC and CHED is that they are anti-Filipino and are colonial-minded.

Analyzing the issues that the people had debated upon, one would see that it is not true. The SC would not be the first one to be anti-Filipino as the Constitution provides that Filipino will be one of the media of instruction. By removing Filipino as a required general-education subject, the SC never had in mind that it would no longer be used. Rather, it is now up to the teachers and schools to decide which one they prefer for the learning of the students. By supporting the move of the Commission, it is not tantamount to rendering the provisions of the Constitution in relation to Filipino useless. Filipino is now part and parcel of the linguistic repertoire and remains in force to be one of the media of instruction. It is just that it is no longer a required subject. One may argue that in the first place, even the English language has also been removed. The Purposive Communication left as one of the 24 units is not a language course per se.

The accusation is not also a fair one because both Filipino and English can be used or are optional as CHED stipulates in the said CMO which means that teachers and schools are given the discretion and the prerogative to decide what to use in all the other subjects with the exception of the language-specific fields of concentration like Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Filipino, Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies (BAELS, offers 12 units of foreign languages), and Bachelor of Secondary Education major in ED in Filipino.

As announced in an official CHED Press Release, dated May 29, 2019 and signed by **J. Prospero E. De Vera III, DPA**, Chairman of CHED, CMO 20 does not limit the academic freedom of universities and colleges to require additional courses in Filipino, Panitikan and the Constitution in their respective curricula." In fact, universities are given the freedom to institute programs that develop not just the Philippine languages but even other foreign languages. Silliman University, as a case in point offers mandarin, French, German, Greek, Niponggo, Latin, and Spanish under Department of Filipino and Foreign Languages.

Other Legal Bases Supporting Philippine Languages

1. Republic Act No. 7104, approved on August 14, 1991, created the Commission on the Filipino Language (CFL). This body reports directly to the President. Section 14 enumerates some of the following powers, functions and duties of the CFL:

(a) Formulate policies, plans and programs to ensure the further development, enrichment, propagation and preservation of Filipino and other Philippine language;

(b) Promulgate rules, regulations and guidelines to implement its policies, plans and programs;

(c) Undertake or contract research and other studies to promote the evolution, development, enrichment and eventual standardization of Filipino and other Philippine languages. This will include the collation of works for possible incorporation into a

multi-lingual dictionary of words, phrases, idioms, quotations, sayings and other expressions, including words and phrases from other languages now commonly used or included in the lingua franca;

(d) Propose guidelines and standards for linguistic forms and expressions in all official communications, publications, textbooks and other reading and teaching materials;

(e) Encourage and promote, through a system of incentives, grants and awards, the writing and publication, in Filipino and other Philippine languages, of original works, including textbooks and reference materials in various disciplines; and

(f) Create and maintain within the Commission a division of transaction which shall encourage through incentives, undertake and vigorously support the translation into Filipino and other Philippine languages of important historical works and cultural traditions of ethnolinguistic groups, laws, resolutions and other legislative enactments, executive issuances, government policy statements and official documents, textbooks and reference materials in various disciplines and other foreign materials which it may deem necessary for education and other purposes.

On May 13, 1992, the commission issued Resolution 92-1, specifying that Filipino is the

...indigenous written and spoken language of [Metro Manila](#) and [other urban centers](#) in the Philippines used as the language of communication of [ethnic groups](#).

2. DepEd Orders (DOs)

A. DO 74, s. 2009 of institutionalizes Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education also known as MLE. Both private and public elementary schools are mandated to implement this order for the following summarized reasons:

1. The use of the learner's mother tongue or first language in improving learning outcomes and promoting Education for All (EFA) is superior as seen in many studies.
2. MLE is the effective use of more than two languages for literacy and instruction, a fundamental educational policy and program of the whole stretch of formal education including pre-school and in the Alternative Learning System (ALS).
3. The preponderance of evidence in consonance with the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) recommendations affirms the benefits and relevance of MLE. Examples of notable research supporting the goodness and implementation of MLE are Lingua Franca Project and Lubuagan First Language which demonstrate a) that learners learn to read more quickly when in their first language (L1); b) those who have learned to read and write in their first language learn to speak, read, and write in a second language (L2); and third language (L3) more quickly than those who are taught in a second or third language first; and c) cognitively, pupils taught to read and write in their first language acquire such competencies more quickly.
4. The Department of Education Region IV-B (MIMAROPA) titled "Double Exposure in Mathematics: a Glimpse of Mother Tongue First" has validated the fundamental observation that top performing countries in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) are those that teach and test students in science and math in their own languages.
5. For all learning programs of the Alternative Learning System (ALS), the learners' L1 shall be used as primary medium and thereafter, depending upon the previous level of functional literacy and pedagogical requirements of accreditation and equivalency, the Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS) shall determine the suitable second and third languages that will maximize the educational benefits and competencies of the ALS clients.

It must be noted that this order is supported by materials to guide the administrators, teachers, and other administrators in implementing the MLE. One of which is the 155-page K to 12 Curriculum Guide on MLE which was also produced by DepEd.

B. DO 16, s. 2012 offers guidelines on the Implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based- Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). It mandates the following:

1. Beginning academic year 2012-2013, the MTB-MLE shall be implemented in all public schools, specifically in Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2 and 3 as part of the K to 12 Basic Education Program and shall support the goal of “Every Child-A-Reader and A-Writer by Grade 1.”

2. The Lingua Franca Project (1999-2001) and the Lubuagan Project (1999 to present) have provided valuable inputs in the implementation of the MTB-MLE. Nine hundred twenty-one (921) schools including those for children of indigenous people have been modeling MTB-MLE with support from the following:

- a. Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM);
- b. Third Elementary Education Program (TEEP);
- c. Translators Association of the Philippines (TAP);
- d. Save the Children, and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL).

3. Eight (8) major languages or Lingua Franca and others as cited below shall be offered as a learning area and utilized as language of instruction for SY 2012-2013:

- a. Tagalog;
- b. Kapampangan;
- c. Pangasinense;
- g. Hiligaynon;
- h. Waray;
- i. Tausug;

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| d. Iloko; | j. Maguindanaoan; |
| e. Bikol; | k. Maranao; and |
| f. Cebuano; | l. Chabacano |

C. DO 28, s. 2013

Additional Guidelines to DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2012 (Guidelines on the Implementation of the Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) are cited in DO 28, S.2013 and states the following:

1. In addition to the languages of instruction mentioned in DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2012 entitled Guidelines on the Implementation of the Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) under the K to 12 Basic Education Program, the following shall be used as the languages of instruction for Grade 1 pupils who speak the same languages. These languages will be used in the specified regions and divisions starting school year (SY) 2013-2014: 2

Mother Tongue and other Language	Region	Geographical Location
1. Ybanaq	Region II	Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, Isabela
2. Ivatan	Region II	Batanes Group of Islands
3. Sambal	Region III	Zambales
4. Akianon	Region VI	Aklan, Capiz
5. Kinaray-a	Region VI	Capiz, Aklan
6. Yakan	ARMM	Basilan Province

The MTB-MLE aims to improve the pupil's language and cognitive development, as well as his/her socio-cultural awareness as provided in the enclosure of DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2012. The child's language will serve as the fundamental language for literacy and learning.

2. As soon as the Teacher's Guide (TG) and Learner's Materials (LMs) of these languages are ready, the Department through the Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS) shall issue a Memorandum announcing the schedule and manner of distribution to the schools.
3. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.

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