

# Language Governmentality in Philippine Education Policy

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English has long been a significant force in Philippine schools. A product of colonialism, scholars often erroneously view this dominance as stemming from governmental mandate. This article argues that the drive for Anglophone classrooms comes from all facets of Philippine society. Indeed, even many minority language speakers view English as integral to producing ideal citizens. Through a language governmentality framework, the perceptions of the ideal Filipino are seen to be constantly evolving. With them, the motivations behind the push for English have shifted. Recently, English has again been repositioned, with public support for the use of home languages in the classroom. The initiative, however, is designed to produce greater English proficiency and the notion of the ideal English-speaking Filipino will likely remain.

## Introduction

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 three high school students from Saviour's Christian Academy in Laoag City, Philippines were given notice that they had been expelled from the private school for violating the school's English-only policy. Carl Andrew A. Abadilla, Kleinee Xieriz Bautista, and Samuel G. Respicio each received a letter from the school that read in part,

After you have been warned by Pastor Brian Shah not to speak Iloko you still continued to defy his order. In view of this, you are advised to transfer to another school effective today July 31, 2013...[signed] Prof Cristeta A. Pedro, Principal." (Patria, 2013)

In support of the expulsion, the school cited its handbook, which lists "Speaking the vernacular [Iloko] inside the campus" as a punishable offence. Though not listed as an infraction worthy of expulsion, the school deemed the repeated use "inappropriate conduct" which is considered expellable (Patria, 2013). The expulsion quickly became a hotly debated topic. Principal Pedro defended the school's English policy and Reverend Shah wrote, "the policies we craft and implement in the school are well-intentioned and have the best interests of our students in mind" (Multilingual Philippines, 2013).

Though the Philippines is a nation of multiple languages, this story reflects a central and recurring issue in Philippines education: where to position the so-called vernacular languages? This paper will examine government language policies with special focus on those directly pertaining to education. Through the framework of *language governmentality*, this paper will argue that from the arrival

of American colonizers, language policy in the Philippines has been designed to produce an ideal citizenry capable of speaking the languages seen as promoting democracy and national unity. Though the goals of democracy and national unity are laudable, this language governmentality has had the unfortunate consequence of marginalizing minority languages and alienating their speakers from full participation in society. The expulsion of Abadilla, Bautista, and Respicio is emblematic of the consequences of following this form of language governmentality to its logical conclusion.

This examination of language governmentality in Philippine education will be done by, first, describing language governmentality. Next, the role of the Spanish colonizers in creating the multilingual Philippines while concurrently promoting a national language will be discussed. The language policy of the clandestine force known as the Katipunan, which saw Tagalog as the national language of the state and the ideal language of citizens, will be presented. The addition of English as the language of democracy will be considered. Finally, relevant Philippine language policies will be offered to show how each policy was designed to facilitate production of English and Filipino speakers. Even the most recent legislation, mandating the use of mother tongue instruction in the classroom, was done with the expressed goal of increasing English and Filipino proficiency. It will be shown that this goal, while helping to facilitate L1 literacy, should not be considered a concerted effort to place local languages on the same level as English and Filipino.

### **Language Governmentality in the Philippines**

Language governmentality has been seen as an integral extension of Foucault's concept of governmentality (Pennycook, 2002; Flores, 2014) in which societies promote organized practices to mold citizens into the desired ideal of a particular socio-historical context (Rose & Miller, 1990). Foucault explicates governmentality as:

The ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument. (1991, p. 102)

Academics have noted that public institutions, even in democratic governments, become "key resources for modern forms of government [that] have established some crucial conditions for governing in a liberal democratic way" (Rose & Miller, 1990, p. 2).

Governmentality, however, is not synonymous with governmental fiat. Rather, it originates from a general consensus. As Flores notes, governmentality

Should not be thought of as a top-down process, in which the elites at the top of the government coerce others into doing their bidding. Instead... governmentality emerges from an alignment of the administrative apparatus of the state with the knowledge being produced in other institutions, such as universities and hospitals. (2013, p. 5)

Foucault claims governmentality becomes inexorably linked with the “nation” (2003, pp. 61-62). Language, then, as an intangible exercised by all members of any given society, becomes integral to governmentality at the institutional level through framing how issues are discussed, and at the individual level through dictating how people are expected to use language (Flores, 2014, p. 5). Thus, the language governmentality of a Filipino as speaking the national language has become linked with Philippine national identity. This language governmentality has had a severe effect on the other languages of the Philippines and, of course, their speakers.

Since the arrival of the Spanish in 1521 and their unification of the archipelago, language became a key aspect of governmentality in the Philippines. But how did such a widespread group of islands come to be, collectively, the Philippines? An archipelago of over 7,100 islands, the Philippines has stunning linguistic diversity. Though the numbering of languages is highly subjective and methods of differentiating languages can widely vary, there are, by any reasonable definition, over a hundred spoken languages in the Philippines. McFarland (1980), for instance, counts 120 languages and Grimes (1996) believes the number closer to 170. In any event, it is well over one hundred.

Benedict Anderson (2006) views the European involvement in the Philippines as a quintessential example of an early imagined colonial state. Indeed, he notes that the Philippines was “created from the poops of Spanish galleons” (2006, p. 171). Though the Laguna Copperplate Inscription establishes 900 CE as the latest possible date for currency-based transactions and trans-archipelagic trade (hallmarks of some sort of organized government), the Philippines was far from a unified nation at that time (Scott, 1989). The largest organized area of what became the Philippines was in the southernmost islands which, with parts of present-day Indonesia and Malaysia, formed the Sultanate of Sulu. Around 1500, another Islamic force, the Sultanate of Brunei, colonized part of Luzon. It was only through the Spanish colonizers’ drive for increased territorial holdings that the archipelago was politically unified. In this, the Spanish were not overly successful—in three centuries, they were never able to fully subdue (much less Christianize) the Bangsamoro people who occupied the areas of the former Sultanate of Sulu.

Anderson notes that not even the Spanish military presence could guarantee a cohesive Philippine boundary:

In the first half of the seventeenth century, Spanish settlements in the archipelago came under repeated attack from the forces of the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, the greatest ‘transnational’ corporation of the era...Had the VOC been successful, Manila, rather than Batavia [Jakarta], might have become the centre of ‘Dutch’ imperium in Southeast Asia. In 1762, London seized Manila from Spain, and held it for almost two years...Madrid only got it back in exchange for, of all places, Florida... Had the negotiations proceeded differently, the archipelago could have been politically linked with Malaya and Singapore during the nineteenth century. (Anderson, 2006, p. 170)

The Spanish were not overly concerned with any sort of formal language policy in the Philippines and such policies were implemented on an ad hoc basis. Errington (2001) notes that, in the nineteenth century, the actions of other colonial powers

had linguistic ramifications that, while different, were often reoccurring in their “motivations, uses, and effects” (Errington, 2001, p. 23). In the Philippines, the most obvious linguistic ramification was the unification of distinct language groups into a single nation with a national language. What the Spanish termed the Philippines had certain natural boundaries: the South China, Philippine, and Celebes Seas all serve as natural demarcations of the archipelago. Moreover, Muslim armies on the other side of the Sulu Sea were an effective boundary of southern Spanish progression. Yet the midwife of the Philippines was the Spanish force. When the Americans (and, briefly, the British and Japanese) became the colonial administrators, they maintained the boundaries of their predecessors. After 350 years of colonialism, the disparate groups inhabiting the archipelago were internationally recognized as a nation, but a nation with many different languages.

Much as they created the nation, the Spanish mindset played a key role in establishing the notion of a national language. Dating from the fifteenth century Christianization of the Iberian Peninsula, the standardization of the Spanish spoken by Isabel and Ferdinand was seen as integral to the supremacy of the Spanish Empire. Spanish grammarian Antonio de Nebrija specifically saw a standard Spanish as necessary for colonial rule in the newly acquired overseas territory. Postcolonial critic Walter D. Mignolo claimed that de Nebrija knew “the power of a unified language, via its grammar, lay in teaching it to barbarians, as well as controlling barbarian languages by writing their grammars” (1995, p. 39). As with other European powers, Spain “positioned monolingualism in the standardized variety as the expectation for the ideal national subject” (Flores, 2013, p. 8). Though the Spanish remained in the Philippines for nearly 400 years, they never made a serious, systematic attempt to teach Spanish, and Spanish never became the language of the majority of Filipinos. Yet, by the end of the nineteenth century, the secret revolutionary society known as the Katipunan was formed and its leadership, perhaps unwittingly, adopted the Spanish view of seeing nationhood as inexorably linked with a national language (Woods, 2006, 43). Moreover, they embraced Spanish governmentality, believing the new Philippine nation could only be unified and governed by a national language. That is, membership in a national community was dependent on co-membership in a common language. Though the Katipunan was not a European construct, views like this have been seen as originating from a nation-state framework introduced by the colonial powers (Mühlhäusler, 1996). These early Philippine rebels explicitly rejected Spanish, the language of the conquistador, as the language of Philippine nationhood. Instead, the revolutionary leaders of the Katipunan elevated their own language, Tagalog. Though the language was different, the Katipunan had adopted the language governmentality of using societal agreements to ensure the nation was one people linked with one language.

### Why Tagalog?

Spain established a capital of their overseas territory in Manila, on the island of Luzon. Following Magellan’s 1521 first contact on the island of Cebu and the failed attempt to set up a colonial capital on that island, the Spanish moved north to Luzon. On 24 June 1571, fifty years after Magellan’s landing, Miguel López de Legazpi established Manila as the great Spanish capital of the Philippines

(Woods, 2006, 22-23). It remained so for the next 330 years, later becoming the capital of the American and Japanese colonizers before becoming the capital of the independent Philippines. The predominant ethnic group in the Manila area were the Tagalog people. Thus, from the time of López de Legazpi, the home language of the indigenous people involved with government was Tagalog. With the establishment of Universidad de Santo Tomás in 1611 and Ateneo de Manila University in 1859, the educated elite during the Spanish period were all based in the metro-Manila area. As Manila prospered as an imperial city, so too did the local language, Tagalog. While Spanish was the language of government, Tagalog remained the language of the governed in the capital city.

### Revolution and America

Given the elevated position of Tagalog, it is unsurprising that the educated elite who formed the backbone of the rebellion against Spanish rule were predominantly Tagalog speakers from the capital. The 1896 discovery of the Manila-based Katipunan by the Spanish authorities led to the Philippine revolution (Woods, 2006). On 22 March 1897 the Tejeros Assembly elected the first Philippine President, Emilio Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo presided over the writing of the Constitution of Biak-na-Bato. This constitution, written exclusively by the Tagalog members of the Katipunan, was originally released in only Spanish and Tagalog. Article VII reads simply, "Tagalog shall be the official language of the Republic" (Constitution of Biak-na-Bato). Though the writers of Biak-na-Bato rejected Spanish, the colonial language, as the national language of the Philippines, they nevertheless retained the language governmentality of European colonizers—to be a unified and manageable nation, a nation must have a national language. If the Philippines were to be an independent nation, it would require a national language, Tagalog.

The Philippine Revolution coincided with the 1898 Spanish-American War and the destruction of the Spanish Pacific Squadron in the Battle of Manila Bay. This effectively ended Spanish involvement in the Philippines and the revolutionary forces worked to establish a new government, including the writing of the 1899 Malolos Constitution by the former revolutionaries. In terms of language governmentality, the Malolos Constitution represented a significant shift from the 1897 Biak-na-Bato Constitution. Unlike the latter's mandate of Tagalog, the Malolos Constitution took a more decentralized view of language policy. Title IX, "On Constitutional Observance and Oath of Office, and on Languages," reads: "The use of the languages spoken in the Philippines shall not be compulsory. It cannot be regulated except by virtue of law and only for acts of public authority and judicial affairs. On such occasions, the Spanish language shall temporarily be used" (Political Constitution of 1899). The ideal citizen, therefore, was not necessarily a Tagalog speaker and Spanish would be used not as a model national language, but rather as a *de facto* lingua franca.

The Malolos Constitution, however, was short lived. Though many rebel leaders assumed that with the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Spanish-American War, the Philippines would become an independent nation, they were mistaken (Woods, 2006). For the next three years, the Philippine-American war was fought between the United States and the Philippine revolutionaries. This rebellion ended and the Americans set up a permanent provincial government—



again in Manila and centered around an educated, Tagalog-speaking aristocracy. The language governmentality of the new colonizers saw English as uniquely qualified to serve as the single, cohesive language for national and democratic unity. In this, they were similar to the framers of the Biak-na-Bato Constitution with the notable difference that the governmentality of the original revolutionaries required an indigenous language as the unifier.

The American occupation force quickly opened the first public school in the Philippines on Corregidor Island, a prelude to a system of universal public schools (Tupas, 2002). Previous to this, there was no government-sponsored public education. Spanish attempts at universal education had been half-hearted at best and, as such, there was no standardized instruction in the Spanish language. Indeed, after 400 years of colonization, Spanish remained virtually unknown outside of the Philippine elite (Churchill, 2003). The American colonizers, however, instituted a universal education system, open to all Philippine children with a general mission, in words attributed to President William McKinley, “to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them” (Rusling, 1903). The Education Act of 1902, enacted “By authority of the President of the United States,” directed the United States Philippine Commission to establish a system of schools. One goal of these schools was, “The English language shall, as soon as practicable be made the basis of all public school instruction...” (Act No. 74, 1901). The establishment of a single language for education was deemed “essential to the success of democracy in the Philippines” (Isidro y Santos, 1949, p. 5) as mass education was viewed as a key component of this form of governmentality.

English was viewed as the best choice because, as William Howard Taft, the first governor of the Philippines, opined to the United States Congress,

They [the Filipinos] would never learn individual liberty or the power of asserting it, and I am afraid they would continue separated from each other, shut out from the light of civilization by a continuance of the knowledge of the dialects only and of no common language, which would prevent their taking in modern ideas of popular government and individual liberty. One of our great hopes in elevating those people is to give them a common language and that language is English, because through the English language certainly, by reading its literature, by becoming aware of the history of the English race, they will breathe in the spirit of Anglo-Saxon individualism. (Graff, 1969, p. 42)

The American policy of English as the language of democracy was the beginning of a program to directly shape language use in the Philippines and, as such, represents a shift in language governmentality. The Spanish colonial presence never mandated the use of Spanish for the general populace and certainly never viewed Spanish as the key to Filipino improvement. The American presence was seemingly sincere in the desire to rid Filipinos of “the burden cast upon [them] by heredity and a few hundred years of Spanish dominion” (Bellairs, 1902, p. 221). Central to raising the general lot of Filipinos was a national language. Through a language, Americans could turn Filipinos into versions of the idealized American citizen—democratic and Protestant. In order for this goal to be realized, the American colonial authority established a language policy in which English was viewed as the natural instrument for progress of democracy in the Philippines.

The American forces established public schools with English as the medium of instruction (MOI). English became the mandated language of government and education. Flores notes that, “Language plays an integral role in the circulation of governmentality” (Flores, 2014, p. 6) and the languages seen as beneficial in the Philippines, English and Filipino, circulate that nation’s governmentality. This fulfills Pennycook’s observation that language governmentality impacts “how decisions about language and language forms across a diverse range of institutions (law, education, medicine, printing) and through a diverse range of instruments (books, regulations, exams, articles, corrections) regulate the language use, thought, and action of different people, groups, and organizations” (2006, p. 65).

The Philippines, then, became an extension of the linguistic xenophobia that grew in the United States during the nineteenth century. During this time, the republican ideals of the United States “were thought to be inextricably entwined with the English language; the concepts could not be understood unless one spoke English” (Mertz, 1982). The American presence in the Philippines continued as linguistic xenophobia reached new heights in the United States, peaking during World War I when any non-English language was viewed with suspicion (Ricento, 2003; Wiley, 2013). Viewed through the lens of language governmentality, it is easy to see how this English-only ideology was transferred to the overseas territory, though the colonial government never engaged in an overt and systematic policy of banning Philippine languages.

This transfer was perhaps most clearly seen in the classroom—where the MOI continued to be English and linked with democracy. More than two decades after the enactment of the Education Act of 1901, Paul Monroe, an educator sympathetic to the overall goals of the American colonial presence in the Philippines, led the Board of Educational Surveys, which noted the difficulties this posed for children in the Philippines:

From the day a Filipino child enters the school he is confronted by the double necessity of mastering a strange tongue and of carrying on school work in it. At no time in his career does he enter the single task of studying in his mother tongue. He is required to learn to read, not in Visayan, not in Tagalog, not in Ilocano, not in Bicol—but in English. He faces the necessity of mastering the intricacies of oral speech in language almost completely with unphonetic organization [*sic*] from the one which he hears on the playground, in the home, and in the community. During seven years of childhood (more for most Filipino children) he has acquired the difficult coördinations [*sic*] of pronunciation in his native dialect. When he enters school he must disregard and attempt to blot these out of his habit system... This Filipino child, we emphasize, must learn to read and write and speak a difficult foreign language—English is a very difficult language—before he can proceed in his school studies. (Monroe, 1925, pp. 127-128)

To some extent, this approach worked: twenty years after the arrival of the Americans, the 1918 Census found 30.4% of Filipinos and 16.9% of Filipinas were literate in some language (Gonzalez, 1980, p. 27) and the 1939 Census revealed over a quarter of Filipinos were able to speak English (Gonzalez, 1980, p. 26). Despite this, English was a challenge for most children. At the same time, English was the

official language of the civil service ensuring, in essence, that every advancing government employee was proficient in the language (Tupas, 2002, p. 1).

### The National Language

In 1935, the Commonwealth of the Philippines, a transitional government segueing between the American colonial administration and full independence, was established. Manuel L. Quezon won the first presidential election and, with the election of a president, came the advent of a legislative body. Governmental policies in this new Commonwealth were designed with an idealized citizen in mind and the new legislature considered how to establish a national language other than English or Spanish. Though the revolutionaries had begun this process decades earlier, the language governmentality of the American presence had worked for the promotion of English over any local language. While the Commonwealth saw a national language as instrumental to build a cohesive Philippine nation, the Commonwealth mandated the adoption of an indigenous language—Tagalog—as the standard language of the Philippines. The Commonwealth, however, also emphasized the need for proficiency in English as the perceived language of democracy and a connection with America and Spanish as a link to the Philippines’ Latin heritage (Quezon, 1937, p. 4).

In 1936, this first legislative body passed Commonwealth Act No. 184, s. 1936, funding an Institute of National Language (INL). The INL was given the task of “the study of Philippine dialects in general for the purpose of evolving and adopting a common national language based on one of the existing native tongues” (Rubrico, 1998). Each language in the Philippines with at least 500,000 speakers was studied and critically compared. They were to select the language which was considered the most developed in structure and literature as the basis of a national language and one which would be “widely accepted” by Filipinos (Rubrico, 1998). Quezon, a Tagalog speaker, appointed seven people to the INL, representing the larger linguistic groups in the Philippines:

- Hadji Butu, Tausug<sup>1</sup>
- Santiago S. Fonacier, Iloko
- Cecilio López, Tagalog<sup>2</sup>
- Casimiro F. Perfecto, Bicol
- Felix S. Salas Rodriguez, Panay Visayan
- Filemon Sotto, Cebuano
- Jaime C. de Veyra, Chair, Waray-Waray

The unanimous recommendation of the INL was the establishment of Tagalog as the national language. The reasons for this were outlined in the official proclamation in which Quezon proclaimed Tagalog as the indigenous national language:

[I]n fulfillment of the purpose of evolving and adopting a common national language based on one of the existing native dialects, and comply-

<sup>1</sup> The official proclamation “Filipino National Language” described Butu as a “Moro” speaker. There is, however, no Moro language. Butu, from Jolo in Sulu Province, was a speaker of Tausug. (Philippines Senate).

<sup>2</sup> An academic from the University of the Philippines, López was also the secretary of the INL (Gonzalez & Lopez, 1973).



ing with the conditions and proceedings to be observed by the Institute in the discharge of its duties, as set forth in section 5 of said law, the Institute has made studies of Philippine tongues in general...in the light of these studies the members of the Institute have come to the conclusion that among the Philippine languages, the Tagalog is the one that most nearly fulfills the requirements of Commonwealth Act No. 184;...this conclusion represents not only the conviction of the members of the Institute but also the opinion of Filipino scholars and patriots of divergent origin and varied education and tendencies who are unanimously in favor of the selection of Tagalog as the basis of the national language as it has been found to be used and accepted by the greatest number of Filipinos not to mention the categorical views expressed by local newspapers, publications, and individual writers. (Quezon, 1937, p. 2)

Moreover, Quezon claimed, Tagalog “was not only the native tongue of Rizal but also is the most developed of all the existing languages” of the Philippines, meaning Tagalog was perceived as having the most consistent orthography and the most developed written, literary tradition. The use of Tagalog as a national language was of the utmost importance because, “[T]he national thought takes its roots in a common language” (*ibid.*). Though Tagalog would be elevated as national language, English would remain the language of democracy:

The fact that we are going to have our national language does not mean that we are to abandon in our schools the study...[of] English which, under, our Constitution, is the basis of primary instruction ...English, the great language of democracy, will bind us forever to the people of the United States and place within our reach the wealth of knowledge treasured in this language. (Quezon, 1937, p. 4)

This represents a notable shift in the Philippines’ language governmentality. Previously Philippine society had seen education as a way to create an ideal citizen, speaking English—the language of democracy. Though the American policies had striven for the use of English as the cohesive language of the nation, the Commonwealth government instead adopted the revolutionary model of a Filipino language for Filipinos. At the same time, the connection between democracy and English was not going to be severed. The governmentality had evolved into one where the ideal citizen would speak English as the language of democracy and Filipino as the language of national unity. There was little role for mother tongues (MTs) other than Tagalog. Speakers of other MTs were forced to learn Filipino and English; if not, they continued to be, in large measure, marginalized out of the national debate.

In 1938, the INL was replaced by the National Language Institute (NLI), which was charged with developing a grammar book and an orthographically standard dictionary for the implementation of a Tagalog-based curriculum. The 1940–41 school year was the first to teach this national language as part of the national curriculum. The surrender of the American forces, however, entrenched in Corregidor by the Japanese Imperial Army, severely disrupted national education. For the next three years, the Philippines was promised independence (and, in fact, was declared an independent republic by Japan in 1944) but was, in fact, under the direct rule of the Empire of Japan. Like the previous colonizers, Japan maintained

Manila as the seat of government. José P. Laurel, the nominal president of Japan's puppet government, was a Tagalog speaker from Metro Manila. As the Japanese were only in the Philippines for a relatively short time and were preoccupied with the Pacific Campaign, they were unable to seriously implement the Japanese-only policy they had established in longer held colonies such as Korea and Manchuria. Aside from the Japanese themselves, the *de facto* language of the national government remained Tagalog (Gonzalez, 2003).

### **Independence, Martial Law, and the 1987 Constitution**

Following the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945, control of the Philippines returned to the United States but with a firm date for complete independence: 4 July 1946. Slightly more than a decade later, in 1959, the independent Philippine government renamed Tagalog, Pilipino, "to [provide a] national rather than ethnic label and connotation" (Gonzalez, 1998, p. 487). This name change represented a shift in language governmentality, with the language policy makers of the time trying to bring marginalized language users into a homogenous national identity through a homogenous national language. Many whose MT was not Filipino, however, resisted this, believing that a person could be a Filipino without speaking Pilipino. In the end, the constitutionality of this move was settled by a 1970 Supreme Court decision that affirmed the right of elected lawmakers to rename the Tagalog-based national language Pilipino (Gonzalez, 1980). Despite this, minority language speakers still protested that the language was not inclusive enough. A limited compromise was reached in 1970 when the name was changed to Filipino, in an effort to include "those Philippine languages with the voiceless labiodental fricative." In addition, lawmakers decided to take a "'universalist' rather than 'purist' approach of accepting phonological units and other features from other Philippine languages and from second or foreign languages, in this case, Spanish and English" (Gonzalez, 1998, p. 488). Semantic debates aside, the dominance of Tagalog—now Filipino—as the national language and English, the language of democracy, remained throughout the Third Republic of the Philippines. Despite the effort to re-represent Filipino as a national language, speakers of other languages continued to speak their MT in the home. When students from non-Filipino or English backgrounds started school, they were immediately placed in the position of needing to learn a second language.

The Third Republic came to an end in 1972 as President Ferdinand Marcos, who had been elected in 1965 and had presided over the country during the language debates previously discussed, declared martial law, effectively becoming a dictator (Marcos, Proclamation No. 1081, 1972). Throughout the remaining nine years of Martial Law, language in education policy was not at the forefront of policy makers' minds. Indeed, Marcos' Educational Development Decree of 1972, "Authorizing the Undertaking of Educational Development Projects, Providing for the Mechanics of Implementation and Financing thereof, and for Other Purposes," did not mention language at all (Marcos, Presidential Decree No. 6-A, 1972). Moreover, the 1973 Constitution, forced through the Philippine Congress, addressed language only by affirming Filipino was the national language. There is no other mention of language in that constitution (Rappa & Wee, 2006). Marcos, however, increased the promotion of English for economic gain, focusing on direct

United States investment. The government also continued to push private and elite colleges and universities to use English; these have been seen as “educational nurseries” reproducing the “culture of previous generations of rulers in the Philippines—the descendents and the successors to the Spanish Conquistadors and American neocolonists” (Rappa & Wee, 2006, p. 60). This is, perhaps, the greatest way language governmentality has led to practices that perpetually marginalize non-English and Filipino speakers. English as the language of schools, a policy established a century ago by Americans, remains the general rule in the top Filipino universities. The graduates of these universities largely make up the national business and government leaders. These leaders, of course, are largely Filipino or English speakers and they enact legislation and establish business practices which keeps English and Filipino at the forefront of education. Students wishing to excel must attain proficiency in those languages, creating a perpetual cycle.

Aside from these steps, which largely began with Quezon, Marcos did little during Martial Law to promulgate Filipino. While he had been in office at the time of the Tagalog—Pilipino—Filipino discussion and saw Filipino as a national goal and identity, he did not make Filipino a central goal during Martial Law. This has been ascribed to distractions of greed and a “loss of political will” (Rappa & Wee, 2006, pp. 75-76) following the 1983 assassination of Benigno Aquino, Jr. On 21 August, following three years of exile in the United States, Aquino, one of the most outspoken Philippine critics of the Marcos administration, voluntarily returned to Manila to enter prison on trumped-up charges. Shortly after exiting his plane, Aquino was shot. This outraged Filipinos and a three-year series of largely non-violent protests and strikes followed. Called the EDSA Revolution (named after the Epifanio de los Santos Avenue which crisscrosses Metro Manila and was the site of many protests) or the People Power Revolution, these demonstrations forced Marcos to call for an emergency presidential election. Though Marcos was declared the winner, allegations of election fraud forced his departure for Hawaii and the inauguration of Corazon Aquino, the wife of the slain Benigno, as the 11<sup>th</sup> President of the Philippines.

Aquino worked to restore a bicameral legislature and pass the Saligang Batas ng Pilipinas, the 1987 Constitution that is still in effect. Resisting decades of martial law, nationalistic rhetoric, and top-down policies, the result of the People Power Revolution was that the new constitution was very specifically written to reflect the nation’s new shift in governmentality, one that favored broad participation and was suspicious of a strong centralized government. The ideal citizen of the Philippines remained one who was fluent in Filipino and English but, under sections 6 and 7 of Article XIV, “Education, Science, and Technology, Arts, Culture and Sports”, allowances were made for the use of the MT in the classroom:

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. (Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, 1987).

Corazon Aquino produced the concurrent DECS Order No 52. Order No 52 laid out the specific language of instruction for each subject area:

- Filipino:
  - Social Studies
  - Character Education
  - Work Education
  - Health Sciences
  - Physical Education
- English:
  - Science
  - Math

The order also expressly allowed for the use of so-called regional languages as auxiliary languages (Nolasco, 2008, p. 134). With the 1987 constitution and Order No 52, English, for the first time since the American colonization, was not the dominant language of instruction in the Philippines and allowances were expressly made for local language use.

Opposition soon arose. As globalization increased in the 1980s, another shift occurred in language governmentality. Although President Aquino had initially allowed for the use of MT and limited English to two subject areas, English proficiency again began to be seen as a key attribute of an ideal citizen. Unlike the language governmentality of the colonial period, which saw democracy and nationhood as conditioned on English ability, English was now seen as the link to economic progress. Despite English's continued presence in the classroom, its decrease was held responsible for stymieing growth and led to the reemergence of an English first policy under the administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Macapagal-Arroyo issued Executive Order No 210, titled "Establishing the Policy to Strengthen English as a Second Language in the Educational System." Claiming, English was necessary for the "technology-driven sectors of the economy," Macapagal-Arroyo mandated:

- a. English shall be taught as a second language, starting with the First Grade.
- b. As provided for in the 2002 Basic Education Curriculum, English shall be used as the medium of instruction for English, Mathematics and Science from at least the Third Grade level.
- c. The English language shall be used as the primary medium of instruction in all public and private institutions of learning in the secondary level...As the primary medium of instruction, the percentage of time allotment for learning areas conducted in the English language is expected to be not less than *seventy percent (70%)* of the total time allotment for all learning areas in the secondary level. (Macapagal-Arroyo, 2003).

### MTBMLE

Juxtaposed with Executive Order 210 was the 2003 publication of the results of the First Language Education Bridging Program Pilot Project in the Lubuagan District Public Schools (Dumatog & Dekker, 2003). Though the use of MT had

previously been shown as effective in increasing L2 proficiency (Cummins, 2007; Dutcher & Tucker, 1994; Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997), the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) determined to study the results of MT instruction in the Philippines (Dumatog & Dekker, 2003). SIL's work in Lubuagan was the first study in fifty years done with children not speaking the national language in their homes, the previous study being the oft-overlooked Iloilo Experiment of the 1940s and 1950s (Orata, 1953). In 1998, SIL chose five local schools to begin their work.<sup>3</sup> Test groups and control groups were established; each followed the guidelines established by DepEd. The control groups used English and Filipino as the MOI and the test groups used Lubuagan, the local language, as the MOI for 4.5 hours of each day. English and Filipino were taught as second languages but again with Lubuagan as the MOI (Dumatog & Dekker, 2003, p. 4). After five years, the first results were published, showing that the test groups substantially out-performed the control groups in every subject area. This included English and Filipino.

This study was presented to the government and, realizing that the use of the MT could greatly increase citizens' proficiency in both English and the national language, DepEd issued Order No. 74, s. 2009, "Institutionalizing Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MLE)." This order recognized, "pupils 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" (Lapus, 2009). As such, the order established MT was to be used in the first three grades of Philippine schools as a bridge to the national language.

In 2012, this order became law as the Philippine Congress passed Act No. 10533, "Enhancing the Philippine Basic Education System" (Congress of the Republic of the Philippines, 2012). Act No. 10533 contains a number of provisions. Part of this act mandates,

The Department of Education (DepED) shall formulate a mother language transition program from Grade 4 to Grade 6 so that Filipino and English shall be gradually introduced as languages of instruction until such time when these two (2) languages can become the primary languages of instruction at the secondary level. (Congress of the Republic of the Philippines, 2012)

Supporters of MT, including SIL Philippines and the Linguistic Society of the Philippines, have generally hailed this as a victory and, in many ways, it is (Martin, 2011). For the first time in decades, local languages will be used in classrooms. Indeed, their presence is mandated now by law. However, the language governmentality model of a Filipino speaking English and Filipino remains. This law is not designed to elevate the regional languages to an equal level as much as it is to increase the proficiency of English and Filipino. The law specifically transitions students out of their language and into English and Filipino.

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<sup>3</sup> Agagama, Dongoy, Mabilong, Pudpud, and Uma.



## Conclusion

This paper has described the effect of language governmentality on the educational policies of the Philippines. This language governmentality began with a European colonial power and became entrenched by decades of American governance. Throughout the Republic, this language governmentality has sought to produce citizens capable of speaking the languages deemed necessary for the advancement of a cohesive, democratic nation geared towards global commerce. To that end, English and Filipino have been continuously positioned as the languages spoken by Filipinos as national languages. Others languages have, likewise, been positioned as less prestigious. Though the recent efforts of the Philippine government, notably Republic Act 10533, have brought indigenous MT languages into the classroom, this has been done with an eye towards an eventual increasing of proficiency in the national languages.

While Republic Act 10533 has been seen as a move to legitimize local languages the prevailing view still sees languages other than English and Filipino as less legitimate in the national sphere. Given this history, it is unsurprising that, despite the DepEd orders on MTBMLE, institutions, including private schools, establish policies prohibiting MT. Sometimes, as in the case of Saviour's Christian Academy discussed earlier, students are punished or dismissed if they speak in their home language.

As the Philippines has begun to implement an MTBMLE-based curriculum, it seems likely the MT will continue to be used for the foreseeable future and expulsions for language use will no longer be prevalent. While many proponents of marginalized languages have seen this as a positive step, and rightly so, there remains more to do. By transitioning students from their language by the fourth grade, these languages are still being positioned as not legitimate in the wider Philippine society. Policy makers should consider a later-exit model, while continuing to teach Filipino and English. By doing this, students would have their home languages elevated to a coequal level and also become proficient in the national languages. Then, marginalized segments of the Philippines, using their languages, could be fully participatory members of society.

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