

# Indigenization of Filipino: The Case of the Davao City Variety<sup>a</sup>

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## Abstract

*Filipino, the national lingua franca of the Philippines, is perceived as the Metro Manila Tagalog which has pervaded the entire country through media, local movies, and educational institutions. There are, however, emerging varieties of Filipino which deviate from the grammatical properties of Tagalog. These are influenced by non-Tagalog speakers whose native language competencies interfere with their usage of Filipino. These deviations from Tagalog are undeniably distinctive and are used by a significant segment of the non-Tagalog population in the country. The Filipino Variety of Davao City (FVD) is a case in point. Using as data actual language use –by people in the street and on cyberspace, this paper shows the indigenization of Filipino through linguistic description of FVD - its features, morphosyntax, and innovations and how they deviate from those of Tagalog. The indigenization of Filipino, an emergent phenomenon in the Philippine linguistic landscape, empowers non-Tagalog Filipino speakers to actively participate in its evolution, and to bring about the de-Tagalization of the evolving national language.*

**Keywords:** Filipino, national lingua franca, indigenization of Filipino, Davao City Filipino, emerging Filipino varieties, de-Tagalization of Filipino, Taglish.

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<sup>a</sup> This research paper is the first of a series on the varieties of Filipino spoken in Philippine urban centers. Synchronic descriptions of these varieties are significant in defining principles and parameters for a putative grammar of Filipino.

Filipino is the national lingua franca of the Philippines. It is Tagalog-based, although ‘Pilipino-based’ would be more technically or politically correct. Constitutionally mandated to evolve into the country’s national language, its basis for development and enrichment are “existing Philippine and other languages.” As it evolves, Filipino undergoes modifications by its non-Tagalog speakers to suit the grammars of their native languages; thus, the birthing of emerging varieties of Filipino which deviate from the grammatical properties of Tagalog. This phenomenon paves the way for its indigenization, the process of “changing the language to suit the communicative needs of non- native users . . . the process through which it is accommodated and adapted to its speakers and their circumstances” (Kachru, 1982 cited in Kadenge, 2009, p.156). This paper describes the indigenization of Filipino through linguistic description of FVD features, morphosyntax and innovations to explore how these deviate from those of Tagalog.

## 1.0 Introduction

“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” (Article XIV, Section 6 of the 1987 Constitution).<sup>1</sup> The evolving Filipino has ushered in (1) the rampant lexical borrowing from English and, to a lesser extent, from other Philippine and foreign languages; and (2) the “Tagalog-English code switching” commonly known as Taglish (Bautista, 2004, p. 226). Thus, the Tagalog variety of Metro Manila (FMM) came into being. Commonly referred to as Filipino, FMM has eventually found its way to other parts of the country through the media, local movies, and educational institutions. The non-Tagalog users of Filipino, however, freely apply the grammar of their respective languages on Tagalog. Such is the case of Filipino speakers in Davao City.

Davao City is the capital of Region XI (Davao Region), which includes the provinces of Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental, and Compostela Valley. Situated at the southeastern part of the island of Mindanao, it is considered one of the largest cities in the world with a land area of 2,443.61 square kilometers. A vibrant metropolis with an upbeat economy, it is a “key player in the flourishing trading hub called the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area or BIMP-EAGA” which provides “access and linkage to the 20 million market of Mindanao and the 51.4 million market of the East ASEAN Growth Area.”<sup>2</sup> Its tri-media is dynamic and brisk with quite a number of local newspapers, television and radio stations. Moreover, the city is a melting pot of the diverse cultures of natives and migrants, expatriates and Filipinos alike, who prefer to settle in the city.

The Davao City population of 1,147,116 in 2000 Census of Population and Housing has increased to 1,464,301 in 2010 (LGPMs 2010 Census: Metro Davao). Considered the Center for Learning and Education in Mindanao, its average literacy rate is 95.17%.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Supreme Court e-library:

<http://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/index7.php?doctype=Constitutions&docid=a45475a11ec72b843d74959b60fd7bd64558f6f05f5e6>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.davaocity.gov.ph/about/business-leisure.htm>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.zamboanga.com/z/index.php?title=Davao\\_City](http://www.zamboanga.com/z/index.php?title=Davao_City)

Cebuano, referred to as Bisaya or Binisaya by the people of Davao, is the language of the majority of the populace. One in every three (33.32%) is Cebuano.<sup>4</sup> The regional quarterly publication of the Davao NCSO gives the following ethnolinguistic groups distribution in Davao: Cebuano, 74.56%; Tagalog, 3.86%; Hiligaynon, 3.43%; Bagobo, Guiangao, 3.16%; Davaweño, 1.26%; Tagacaolo, 2.38%; Bilaan, 1.67%; Ilocano, 1.01%; Waray, 0.55%; Manobo, 2.15%; Maguindanao, 1.91%; Mandaya, 2.01%; other languages, 2.04%; uncertain, 0.01%.<sup>5</sup> According to Ethnologue 2009, Davawenyo is 'a synthesis of Filipino, Cebuano, and other Visayan dialects.' The language is classified as "Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Philippine, Greater Central Philippine, Central Philippine, Mansakan, Davaweño."<sup>6</sup> Other languages widely used in Davao City are English and Filipino. English is used in universities and other institutions of learning as well as in government offices, commerce and trade. Next to Cebuano, the people of Davao use their own variety of Filipino in their day to day discourse.

## 2.0 The Filipino Language

"The Batasang Pambansa shall take steps towards the development and formal adoption of a common national language to be known as Filipino," (Article XV Section 3 (2), 1973 Philippine Constitution). Filipino is the country's national language in the becoming. It is anchored on Tagalog, renamed Pilipino in 1959 by virtue of the Department of Education Order No. 7, s.1959 (Yap, 2010) issued by then Secretary Jose E. Romero in order to lessen the hostile attitude of the non-Tagalogs toward the national language. Pilipino, however, is not just Tagalog. It is Tagalog plus *hispanismos* (Spanish loanwords), respelled in accordance with the Tagalog orthography. Some examples of these are given in Table 1.

Table 1 Spanish Loanwords in Pilipino

| Pilipino        | Spanish            | English Gloss |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| <i>kabayo</i>   | <i>caballo</i>     | horse         |
| <i>sibuyas</i>  | <i>cebollas</i>    | onion         |
| <i>trabaho</i>  | <i>trabajo</i>     | work          |
| <i>bakasyon</i> | <i>vacación</i>    | vacation      |
| <i>ambisyon</i> | <i>ambición</i>    | ambition      |
| <i>kumusta</i>  | <i>¿cómo está?</i> | how are you?  |

The following are also loaned from Spanish: months of the year -*Pebrero* (February, Sp. *febrero*), *Hunyo*, (June, Sp. *junio*); days of the week -*Lunes* (Monday), *Biyernes* (Friday, Sp. *Viernes*) and *Sabado* (Saturday); and time expressions -*a la una* (one o'clock), *segundo*

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.census.gov.ph/data/pressrelease/2002/pr02123tx.html>. According to SIL, 91% to 97% of Davao residents use Cebuano in its Ethnologue (2009) at <http://www.christusrex.org/www3/ethno/Phil.html>

<sup>5</sup> [http://davao.islandsphilippines.com/davao\\_dialect.html](http://davao.islandsphilippines.com/davao_dialect.html) citing *Statistical Variable*, Regional Quarterly Publication, National Census & Statistics Office, Davao City.

<sup>6</sup> Lewis, M. Paul (ed.), 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Sixteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>.

(second), *minuto* (minute), *oras* (hour/time) from *horas*. Time expressions, except for *horas*, are generally borrowed in their original spelling just like *alambre* (wire), *gramo* (gram), *pulgada* (inch), *kilometro* (kilometer), *metro* (meter), *abuso* (abuse), *amigo* (friend), *gusto* (like), and *antemano* (beforehand).

Borrowing from Spanish has gradually diminished; hispanismos have been integrated into the Pilipino lexicon while lexical borrowing from English has proliferated. *Taglish*, a blend of the clips Tag(alog) and (Eng)lish, is widely used. Tagalog tabloids, dailies, weeklies, magazines, telecasts, broadcasts, sitcoms, and blogs of Filipinos on cyberspace are suffused with English words – respelled or otherwise, and used in accordance with the grammar of Tagalog. The following words are borrowed from English and respelled: *anawnsner* (announcer), *diksyunari* (dictionary), *masaker* (massacre), *mentaliti* (mentality), *sektor* (sector), *isyu* (issue), *adbertisement* (advertisement), *titser* (teacher), *blakbord* (blackboard), *kompyuter* (computer), *websayt* (website), *bolpen* (ballpen), *drayber* (driver), *nars* (nurse), *pulis* (police), *taksi* (taxi), *bilding* (building), *keyk* (cake), *teybol* (table), etc. Some loanwords are borrowed in their original spelling like *apartment* (apartment), *blog* (blog), *bag* (bag), *basket* (basket), and *abroad* (abroad).<sup>7</sup>

The Spanish and English words listed above are used not only in Filipino but in other Philippine languages as well. Cebuano speakers, for instance, use all these words in their ordinary conversations. This is not surprising as both Spanish and English are languages of former Filipino colonizers, hence, part of the country's history. The 1987 Constitution provides that as the national language evolves, "it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages" (Art. XIV, Sec. 6, 1986 Constitution). This mandates the incorporation of words from non-Tagalog Philippine languages and foreign languages, including those which have been part of the country's history, into the lexicon of the national language to further enrich it.

There are 171 living languages of the Philippines, ten of which have a million or more speakers. These ten languages, referred to as major languages, are: Tagalog (23,853,200); Cebuano (15,807,260); Ilocano (6,996,600); Hiligaynon (5,770,000); Bikol (4,583,034); Waray-Waray (2,570,000); Pampangan (1,905,550); Pangasinan (1,162,040); Tausug (1,062,000); Magindanaw (1,000,000).<sup>8</sup> Another source, citing the 2000 census by the National Statistics Office of the Philippines, enumerates the following twelve (12) languages as having at least a million speakers: Tagalog (22,000,000), Cebuano (20,000,000), Ilokano (7,700,000), Hiligaynon (7,000,000), Bikol (Northern and Southern: 3,700,000), Waray-waray (3,100,000), Kapampangan (2,400,000), Pangasinan (1,540,000), Maranao (1,150,000), Maguindanao (1,100,000), Kinaraya (1,051,000) and Tausug (1,022,000).<sup>9</sup> What percentage of the Filipino lexicon is sourced from these languages?

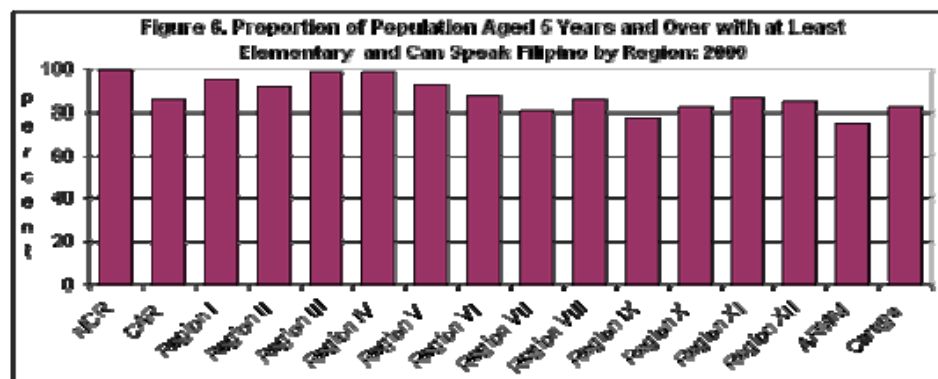
<sup>7</sup> For data and discussion on this, read Rubrico's "Metamorphosis of Filipino as National Language," at [www.languagelinks.org/onlinepapers/fil\\_met.html](http://www.languagelinks.org/onlinepapers/fil_met.html).

<sup>8</sup> Lewis, M. Paul (ed.), 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Sixteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>

<sup>9</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/index.php?title=Languages\\_of\\_the\\_Philippines#List\\_of\\_Speakers\\_per\\_Language](http://en.wikipedia.org/index.php?title=Languages_of_the_Philippines#List_of_Speakers_per_Language)

Renato Perdon (cited in Cayabyab, 2008) cites the number of entries from the non-Tagalog Philippine languages in the official dictionary published by the Commission on Filipino Language in 1991, namely: Hiligaynon, 564 words; Cebuano, 526; Samar-Leyte or Waray-waray, 459; Tausug, 328; Bicol, 301; Maranao, 222; Ilocano, 122; Maguindanao, 99; Pangasinan, 82; Kapampangan, 51; Samal, 23; Tingian, 16; Isneg, 12; and Tagbanua, 12. On the other hand, Tagalog, the basis of Filipino, has 8,463 words; Spanish, 5,210; English, 1,907; Chinese, 232; Malay, 176; Latin, 70; French, 46; Sanskrit, 29; Arabic, 28; German, 25; Mexican, 20; and Japanese, 13. The number of loanwords must have undoubtedly increased twenty (20) years since then, thus, expanding the lexicon of the evolving national language.

The use of Filipino has spread dramatically since its inception 1973. It is understood by almost all Filipinos. The 2000 Census of Population and Housing reports that, “Nine out of ten can speak Tagalog (*sic*).” About ninety-six percent (96.4%) of the household population who have gone to school can speak Filipino. Figure 1 below shows the percentages of population aged 5 years old or over who can speak Filipino across regions.<sup>10</sup>



**Figure 1 Percentage of Filipino-speaking Filipinos by Region**

Source: <http://www.census.gov.ph/data/sectordata/sr05153tx.html>

The spread of Filipino nationwide is predictable for a number of reasons. First, it is taught in all levels of learning in both public and private schools all over the country. Second, it is used as medium of instruction and as language of the academe for intellectualization. Third, it is the currency of communication in the national tri-media, which are potent and effective tools for language dissemination. Tabloids in Filipino are circulated in the urban centers; local radio stations, which service the grassroots all over the country, set aside airtime for national broadcast in Filipino from their mother stations in Manila every day; most FM radio stations in the urban centers incorporate Filipino into their programming; television channels with national viewership use Filipino in their sitcoms, talk shows, news, variety shows and *telenovelas* (soap serials which are translated to Filipino from Spanish, Korean, and other foreign tongues). In addition, actors and actresses of Tagalog movies freely use Filipino. They are influential among their young admirers whose tendency is to readily adopt their language. Additionally, the country's young people are occupied with emergent genres of pop songs and discourse which lean towards their own Filipino language idelects. Filipino, furthermore, is traded freely on cyberspace. Filipinos

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.census.gov.ph/data/sectordata/sr05153tx.html>

from all over the world meet in various online fora, write blogs, tweet and interact with each other in Filipino, which they call Tagalog. Coming from different regions of the country, they find a lingua franca in Filipino.

Thus, the following questions are asked: Are Filipino and Tagalog different languages or one and the same? Has Tagalog radically changed? Is Filipino the contemporary Tagalog?

The *Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF, Commission on Filipino Language)*, considers “Tagalog,” “Pilipino” and “Filipino” as varieties of Tagalog. “Filipino is that speech variety spoken in Metro Manila and other urban centers where different ethnic groups meet. It is the most prestigious variety of Tagalog” (Nolasco, 2007). The non-Tagalog language advocates agree with the viewpoint of KWF, by regarding Filipino as sugar-coated Tagalog masquerading as the national lingua franca for political correctness and acceptance.<sup>11</sup>

The academicians, on the other hand, have more or less adopted a unified idea about Filipino. Filipino linguist Ernesto A. Constantino (2011) says: "*Ang pinili naming wika na idedebelop bilang wikang pambansa natin, ang tinawag naming linggwa prangka o Filipino*" (We chose to develop as national language that which we refer to as the lingua franca or Filipino). Cruz (1997) argues that Filipino is the English-Tagalog code switch. Flores (1996) remarks that Filipino is the language of the "*kulturang popular na nagmula sa Metro Manila at pinapalaganap sa buong kapuluan*" (popular culture that originated from Metro Manila and disseminated all over the archipelago). These statements clearly show a consensus among academicians that Filipino is the lingua franca of Metro Manila which has inevitably pervaded the regional urban centers through educational institutions, print and broadcast media, movies, pop songs that local bands sing, etc. Following this line of thinking, Filipino is a dialect of Tagalog.

There are, however, emerging varieties of Filipino which deviate from the grammatical properties of Tagalog. These are influenced by non-Tagalog speakers whose native language competencies interfere with their usage of Filipino. These deviants are undeniably distinctive and are used by a significant segment of the non-Tagalog population in the country and abroad. By “deviant” is meant the difference of these languages from Tagalog is so evident that Tagalog speakers intuitively judge the morphosyntactic/syntactic constructions of these languages as “ungrammatical” or “ill-formed”. Tagalog speakers, for instance, will not consider grammatical this text from Davao Tagalog 101 (Bulseco, 2012): "*Alam man nakin `yan ba!*" or "*Saan nakin kita nakita gani?*" (Tagalog: *Alam ko na man yan; Saan nga ba kita nakita?*; English: I already know that; Where have I seen you before?)

Pamela Constantino (2009) says that since Filipino is “the lingua franca and second language, varieties of this are being formed as a result of interference or mixing of the first languages of the speakers. So if a Cebuano will use Filipino, (something like) this could not be avoided: *Nagbasa ako ng libro* (Tag., *bumasa ako ng libro*). Before 1973, the said sentence was wrong because Tagalog indeed was the basis. But now this is considered as the Cebuano variety of Filipino.” This gives a clear picture on the direction Filipino is going to take: de-Tagalization.

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<sup>11</sup>This issue has been hotly discussed in many e-groups and forums in the internet like the following: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wika/>; <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DILA-philippines/>; <http://www.FilipinoWriter.com>; <http://groups.google.com/group/soc.culture.filipino/>; etc.

As Filipino evolves it has gradually deviated from Tagalog. Rubrico (1998) cites the differences of Tagalog and Filipino as described by Constantino, namely: Filipino has (1) more phonemes – 28 compared to 20 in Tagalog;<sup>12</sup> (2) a different orthography; (3) a different grammatical construction; and (4) a tendency to borrow heavily from the English language. To elaborate on the third Constantino criteria, Filipino exhibits a radical deviation from the Tagalog phonotactics, i.e., its syllable structures do not conform to the phonotactic constraints of Tagalog. It has effectively departed from the putative phonemic clustering in Tagalog. Note for instance the consonant cluster at the onset of the second syllable in *istrayk*<sup>13</sup> giving the syllable structure CCVC which departs from the CV or CVC structure of Tagalog. Another case in point is the marked difference in the morphosyntactic processes of some varieties of Filipino from those of Tagalog.

This paper looks into the morphosyntactic processes of the Filipino variety of Davao City (FVD), which the Davaweños call Davao Tagalog, to explore how these deviate from that of Tagalog. It specifically explores the Filipino language Davaweños use in day-to-day communication in the streets and on cyberspace.

### 3.0 Methods

Data collection for this study was initially done during the researcher's frequent visits to Davao City from 2005 to 2007 while interacting with friends, acquaintances and people on the streets; listening to homilies in churches and to local radio stations; watching local telecasts; observing Filipino classroom instructions; reading the local papers and billboards and signage along the city's streets. A few clauses described in the study were sourced from billboards, a short dialog between the researcher and a petrol station attendant, and a homily. The bulk of the data, nevertheless, was sourced from blog sites of Davaweños and from an online edition of a local newspaper. The reason for this was twofold: (1) the Filipino variety online has been observed to be identical with the variety used in ordinary day to day discourse; and, (2) the orthography provided by the speakers themselves is the researcher's primary data on written text. Checking online in 2012 showed the integrity of the data collected in 2005 to 2007. (Although some of the original blog sites cited are no longer accessible, majority of the words, phrases and clauses used in this paper are still evident in today's online sites, groups and communities.)

Data gathered were grouped according to their morphosyntactic feature deviations from those of Tagalog. Representative FVD clauses were then parsed for morphosyntactic analysis. Data from classrooms, radio stations and television channels<sup>14</sup> of Davao City were not used because of their similarity to the Filipino spoken in Metro Manila (FMM). This might be due to the H status of FMM in the speech community's diglossia (Fergusson, 1959 cited in Sridhar, 1996). Hence,

<sup>12</sup> Filipino has 28 phonemes: /a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, ñ, ng, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z/; Tagalog has 20: /a, b, k, d, e, g, h, i, l, m, n, ng, o, p, r, s, t, u, w, y/.

<sup>13</sup> <http://tl.w3dictionary.org/index.php?q=istrayk>; [www.athina984.gr/node/20682](http://www.athina984.gr/node/20682); [www.tagalog-dictionary.com/cgi-bin/search.pl?s=strike](http://www.tagalog-dictionary.com/cgi-bin/search.pl?s=strike); [www.wikapinoy.com/glossary/index.php/.../Tagalog+English.istrayk.xhtml](http://www.wikapinoy.com/glossary/index.php/.../Tagalog+English.istrayk.xhtml)

<sup>14</sup> This was observed in a class of *Sining Pangkomunikasyon* (Communication Arts) in Brokenshire College in Davao City last Sept 09, 2005 and in local radio and television stations. However, this description of Filipino language use in these domains is not conclusive.

textbooks used in classrooms follow the national curriculum for Filipino; the academe's Filipino conforms to the grammar of Tagalog; announcers and broadcasters who are generally part of a national network use FMM. A sample of FMM Davao is, nevertheless, discussed briefly in (4.1).

#### 4.0 The Filipino variety of Davao City

There are two varieties of Filipino in Davao City: (1) the Tagalog - English code switch or Taglish (Bautista, 2004; Cruz, 1997); and (2) the Tagalog - Bisaya code mix. The former is not treated comprehensively in this paper because it closely resembles FMM. The latter, also labeled TAGBIS by its speakers, is treated in this study as the Filipino variety of Davao.

##### 4.1 Tagalog-English code mix (Taglish)

The Tagalog-English code mix which resembles the Metro Manila variety of Filipino is considered FMM, not FVD. This is seen in billboards and signage and used by television and radio hosts as well as some of the locals. It retains the original spelling of loanwords, even when attached to Tagalog (TAG) affixes. Examples (1a) and (1b) are from blogsites ([www.tristancafe.com/forum/46](http://www.tristancafe.com/forum/46) and [mannypacquiao.ph/forum/viewtopic.php?t=12132&sid=996b764ed88d5d35bfd3c495f4a7cb63](http://mannypacquiao.ph/forum/viewtopic.php?t=12132&sid=996b764ed88d5d35bfd3c495f4a7cb63) respectively); clauses (1c, d, and e) are from billboards along the city's main thoroughfares. The italicized words are borrowed from English.

1a) Nagpapakaserious sa work and naglilibang sa net  
Eng: pretending to be serious at work and keeping busy at the internet,

kung bakit pa kasi ako nainlove.  
why did i have to fall in love.

1b) *Bro, dont do that...* naglilibang si pareng bobby alvarez, eh...  
Eng: brother. . . . . our friend bobby alvarez is relaxing, you know.

1c) *Let's go* na po, sa paborito nato!  
Eng: Come now, let's go to our favorite (place)!

1d) *Dad, I love it here, BUY NA, NOW NA!*  
Eng: . . . . . buy now, this instant.

1e) *MAGRECYCLE NA*  
Eng: recycle now

Three things are observed in the examples above. First, English words are borrowed in their original spelling. Second, morphosyntactic rules of the native language are applied on these words. Note the blending of Filipino affixes (*in italics*) and English root words (in their original



spelling) in the following verbal constructions: *nagpapakaserious* (pretending to be serious), *nainlove* (fall in love) and *magrecycle* (to recycle). The third observation is code-mixing, which is another feature of this variety. All the clauses above exhibit a degree of ease in shifting from Filipino to English, or vice versa. They are very Taglish, except in (1c) where the Bisayan lexical item *nato* (1<sup>st</sup> Person, Plural, Genitive) is used instead of Tagalog *natin*. Because of the similarity of this variety to FMM, this will not be discussed any further.

#### 4.2 The Tagalog Bisaya (FVD), also known as TAGBIS or BISLOG.

The second variety of (FVD) is indigenous to the Davaweños; a blending of Bisaya<sup>15</sup> and Tagalog. Lizada (2005) calls this “*Tagalog na Binisaya*” (Bisayan Tagalog) in his column, Papa’s Table, in *Sunstar Davao*. This lingo is also referred to casually as BISLOG from the clips Bis(ayang) (Taga)log or TAGBIS from Tag(alog) Bis(aya). Note sample sentences (2a-c) from “*Tagalog na Binisaya*”. The italicized words are awkward or ill-formed in Tagalog.

- 2a) Dahil wala ako-ng magawa ay *naglibang-libang* ako.  
Because neg 1SGen-link do-Apt IM amuse-Perf 1PNom<sup>16</sup>

Because I could do nothing, I amused myself /kept myself occupied.

- 2b) Wag lang dagat na *magtabok* kami dahil takot akong  
neg just sea that ConAF-cross 1PNom because afraid 1SGen-link  
  
sumakay ng bangka para *tumabok*.  
board- ConAF indefM canoe to cross

Not just the sea where we need to cross because I’m afraid to board a canoe to cross.

- 2c) mas mabuti *kung muhawa na lang mi kay kusog* lagi<sup>17</sup> ang ulan!  
more good if AFleave-Con just 1PGen because hard part the rain

It is better if we just leave because the rain is really hard (it’s raining hard)

Let’s look at clauses (2a-2c). The Verb *naglibang-libang* in the context of (2a) is from TAG*libang* (to amuse or to keep busy), which does not appear in this form (viz., V<sub>af</sub> – Root*libang*-totalReduplication) in TAG. In BIS, *libang* affixed with *ma-* means “to defecate.” *Libang* does not co-occur with the affix *mag-* in BIS.

<sup>15</sup> The people of Mindanao call their language Bisaya or Binisaya. For them, Cebuano is the language of the people of Cebu. Bisaya and Cebuano mean the same in this paper and are used interchangeably.

<sup>16</sup> Abbreviations: neg, negative; 1SGen-link, 1stPerson-Singular-Genitive-Linker; Apt, Aptative; IM, Inversion Marker; Perf, Perfected; 1PNom, 1stPerson Plural Nominative; ConAF, Contemplated-ActorFocus; indefM, indefinite Marker; 1PGen, 1stPerson Genitive.

<sup>17</sup> BIS particle *lagi* puts emphasis on what is stated.

In (2b), BIS root *tabok* (TAG*tawid*) is affixed with two actor-focus affixes *mag-* and *-um-* to convey the infinitive “to cross.” The prefix *mag-* is found in both TAG and BIS. The infix *-um-* is Tagalog in this context, hence, *tumabok* (TAG*tumawid*) is a blend of a BIS root word and TAG affix. It is also infixed to TAG and BIS root *sakay* deriving Verb *sumakay*. It should be noted at this point that although the affix *-um-* is rarely heard in the contemporary BIS, it has been used until the 1960s when older people would say ‘*umari ka*’ (come here); ‘*umanhi ka*’ (you come); ‘*kumaon kamo*’ (you eat) ‘*sumalom ka*’ (you dive). Thus, infix *-um-*, though relegated to the imperative utterances of older people nowadays, is also a BIS affix.

The sentence in (2c) is Bisaya with one TAG word, *mabuti*; verb *muhawa* (rootword: *hawa*, TAG*alis*; English depart); the phrase *ang ulan* is both BIS and TAG.

The foregoing examples show that, generally, TAG is the lexifier in this code-mix; yet it is always convenient and natural for speakers to use BIS words in expressing emphasis, assertions, confirmations, and other modes of emotion in the discourse. This is shown in the insertion of BIS particles in clauses (2d-i) and (2l-n) from “*Galenga Talaga Niya Gyud, Uy!*” (<http://thespoke.net/blogs/yeoj/archive/2006/01/12/931047.aspx>). This is one feature of FVD.

2d) Mabait bitaw<sup>18</sup> gyud si Weng  
good-natured part really AM<sup>19</sup> Weng

Tag: Totoong mabait si Weng.

Eng: Weng is really good-natured.

2e) Huwag lagi ba!<sup>20</sup>  
neg part part

Tag: Sinabi nang huwag!

Eng: You shouldn't do that!

2f) Galenga talaga niya gyud, uy!<sup>21</sup>  
excellent really 3SGen part

Tag: Ang galing niya talaga!

Eng: She really is excellent!

Besides the particles, note the two morphemes in *galenga*, [*galeng* and *-a*], in (2f). The morpheme *-a* is usually affixed to BIS adjectives to express intensity, like *dakoa* (how big), *gamaya* (how little or how small).

Another process observed in FVD is deriving verbs from question words via affixation as shown in (2g).

<sup>18</sup> BIS particle *bitaw* signifies agreement on what is being stated;

<sup>19</sup> AM, actor marker

<sup>20</sup> BIS particle *ba* here expresses the impatience of the speaker.

<sup>21</sup> BIS particles *gyud* from *gayud* expresses certainty while *uy* at clause final express delight or surprise.

2g) *Anohin* man<sup>22</sup> natin yan?  
 what-Con part 1PGen that

Tag: Aanhin natin iyan?  
 Eng: What shall we do with that?

The BIS correspondence of TAG *ano* is *unsa*. This can be made into a verb by affixation –e.g., *mag-unsa* (what will one do), *unsaon* (how to do something), *maunsa* (what will happen). This is one of the morphological properties of interrogative morphemes in BIS. Another example is given in (2h) where the BIS verbal affix *na-* is prefixed to TAG root *ano*:

2h) Na-ano ka diyan, Bryan?  
 ProgAF-what 1SNom there Bryan

Tag: Anong nangyari sa iyo diyan, Bryan?  
 Eng: What happen to you there, Bryan?

Affixation of BIS verbal affixes to TAG roots are done in accordance with BIS morphological rules. This is another feature of FVD. Other examples are given below:

2i) Hindi pa man siya nag-dating, uy.<sup>23</sup>  
 neg part part 3SNom ProgAF-arrive part

Tag: Hindi pa siya dumarating kasi.  
 Eng: S/he has not arrived yet. (What’s taking her/him so long?)

Clauses (2j-k) taken from Raut (2005).

2j) Ayaw kasi nilang mag-lapit sa akin, di ayaw ko na ring  
 neg because 3PGenLinker ConAF-come near to 1SLoc so neg 1SNom part part

maglapit sa kanila.  
 ConAF-come near to 3PLoc

Tag: Ayaw kasi nilang lumapit sa akin, eh di ayaw ko na ring lumapit sa kanila.  
 Eng: Because they don’t want to come near me, so I don’t also want to go near them.

From the foregoing examples, it is shown that the TAG  $V_{af} -um-$  is generally replaced with *mag-* in FVD. In (2k), BIS  $V_{af} gi-$  is affixed to TAG *sabi* and in (2l) BIS  $V_{af} maka-$  is affixed to TAG *inis* in accordance with BIS morphosyntax. Note the BIS translation of the clause.

<sup>22</sup> BIS particle *man* is used here after a question word for euphony.

<sup>23</sup> BIS particle *pa* means “yet”; The TAG *hindi pa* phrase here means “not yet.” BIS *uy* particle expresses irritation or anxiety.

2k) *Gisabi* kasi ni Helen na mag-absent si Bernard bukas  
 PerfOF<sup>24</sup> -say because AM Helen that ConAF-absent AM Bernard tomorrow

Tag: Sinabi kasi ni Helen na aabsent si Bernard bukas.  
 Eng: Because Helen said that Bernard will be absent tomorrow

2l) *Maka-inis* man yan siya, uy!  
 AptCon-irritate part that 1SNom part

Tag: Nakakainis talaga siya!  
 Bis: Makalagot man na siya uy!  
 Eng: S/he really makes one mad!

A remarkable innovation in FVD is the *nakin* form of the TAG personal pronoun *ko*. The pre-post first person singular genitive pronoun in BIS is *ako* which when put after the verb becomes *nako*. The TAG correspondence for *nako* in (2m) is *ko*.

2m) *Alam* man *nakin* `yan ba!  
 know part 1SGen that part

Tag: Alam ko na man yan.  
 Eng: I already know that.

In (2n), *nakin* seems a redundancy considering that TAG *kita* conveys the I-You duality.

2n) *Saan* *nakin* *kita* *nakita* *gani*?<sup>25</sup>  
 where 1SGen PerfAF-see part

Tag: Saan nga ba kita nakita?  
 Eng: Where have I seen you before?

Clause (2o) is a dialog between the researcher (A) and an attendant (B) in a petrol station in Ulas, a suburb in Davao City. This is given a free translation to English. A speaks in FMM<sup>26</sup> and B answers in FVD.

2o) A: (FMM): *Saan ang Marco Polo Hotel?* (Where is the Marco Polo Hotel?)

B<sub>1</sub>: (FVD/BIS): *Medyo layolayo pa.* (FMM: Medyo malayo pa.)  
 (English: It's A bit farther on.)

A: (FMM): *Saan kami dadaan?* (Where do we pass?/Which way do we take?)

<sup>24</sup> PerfOF, perfected Object Focus

<sup>25</sup> *Kita* is a Tagalog pronoun that express the I-You paradigm as in *Mahal Kita* (I love you) or *Isumbong kita* (I'll tell on you). BIS particle *gani* is used here to express remembrance of something or someone.

<sup>26</sup> The researcher uses FMM as she is not a native speaker of Tagalog and uses the Filipino variety of Metro Manila

B<sub>2</sub>: (FVD) (Pointing to the map):

*Ulas tayo.* (FMM: Nasa Ulas tayo. Eng: We are in Ulas).

B<sub>3</sub>: *Bankerohan man ito.* (This is Bankerohan.)

B<sub>4</sub>: *Kung dito ka magdaan, trafik man gud ngayon.*

(FMM: Kung dito ka dumaan, matrafik kasi ngayon.

English: If you take this road, the traffic is heavy now)

B<sub>5</sub>: *Pero mas ideal dito.* (FMM: Pero mas maigi dito.

English: But this is the best way.)

These actual dialog (2o) and homily transcripts in (2j-k) show the same FVD features of clauses sourced from the internet.

## 5.0 Features of FVD: How do they differ from those of Tagalog?

5.1 *The combination of words from BIS and TAG in a clause, including the insertion of BIS particles, like bitaw, gyud, lagi ba, gyud, uy.*

The Bisayan-Tagalog code-mix is a feature of FVD. Not only does it integrate BIS lexicon into Filipino but it also stamps FVD's character into the evolving national language. It alters Tagalog clauses with the insertion of BIS particles. Moreover, it renders FVD clauses indigenous as it allows for BIS morphosyntax processes on TAG lexical items, making these words unintelligible to Tagalog speakers.

5.2 *The application of BIS morphosyntactic rules on TAG morphemes in the clause.*

5.2.1 The suffixing of *-a* to adjectives to convey their intensive form, like in (2f) where *-a* is suffixed to adjective *galing*, deriving *galenga*. This is not grammatical in Tagalog which marks intensive adjectives with *ang* instead. The interjection in (3a) below is ill-formed in TAG; (3b) is the acceptable form:

3a) \*Galenga ni Kulasa!

3b) Ang galing ni Kulasa!

Eng: How excellent Kulasa is!

5.2.2 The affixation of BIS  $V_{af}$  on TAG words. Note the use of verbal affixes *mag-* or *nag-* in lieu of the TAG *-um-* or other more appropriate affixes of the language; or, the use of BIS  $V_{af}$  *gi-* in lieu of TAG *-in-*. The use of BIS  $V_{af}$  in the derivation of verbs from TAG words in FVD is a strong argument for the difference between FVD and Tagalog.

### 5.3 The innovation in FVD pronoun.

The use of the pronoun *nakin*, TAG *ko*, in FVD is illustrated in (2m and 2n). The researcher is not sure whether there are other pronoun innovations in FVD. Further study is needed to come up with conclusive statements on this innovation.

There may be other features of FVD which are not mentioned in this paper. This is a seminal study of the TAGBIS variety of FVD which hopes to initiate more comprehensive studies by scholars of the Filipino language, documenting how its variants differ from Tagalog as it evolves into the national language.

## 6.0 Conclusion

Two varieties of Filipino are spoken in Davao City: FMM and FVD. FMM, also referred to as Taglish, is the Tagalog-English code switch of Metro Manila which has pervaded the area. FVD, on the other hand, is the Tagalog-Bisaya code mix indigenous to the Davaweños. Commonly referred to as Tagalog na Binisaya, TAGBIS, or BISLOG, it combines Tagalog and Bisaya in clauses.

A linguistic description of FVD has been presented in this paper. This study has shown two significant features of FVD, namely: (1) most words in its clauses are from the TAG lexicon; and, (2) these Tagalog words are processed using BIS morphosyntactic rules. There is, therefore, a TAG lexicon–BIS affixation construction. Can clauses consisting of Tagalog words with BIS affixes derived through BIS morphosyntactic rules be called Tagalog still? If they are, is FVD a dialect of Tagalog? If it is, why do native Tagalog speakers disown it?<sup>27</sup> Their native linguistic intuition judges this variety of Tagalog as ungrammatical. And rightly so because, despite FVD's seemingly Tagalog form, it still violates the rules of grammar of their language. It is not Tagalog.

On the other hand, can these clauses be considered BIS because they are derived through BIS morphosyntactic rules? Native speakers of Bisaya or Cebuano will never agree that these FVD clauses are BIS. For them, these are definitely Tagalog. So if native speakers of both Tagalog and Cebuano disown this language, what is FVD then?

FVD is the germination of Filipino *per se* evolving into a language distinct from Tagalog. The national language provisions of both the 1973 and 1987 Constitutions are aimed at a language different from Tagalog; a language that emerges from usage of Filipino by Filipinos, inclusive of Tagalog and non-Tagalog speakers. As Nemenzo (2005) has aptly articulated, "The core of the real Filipino language is the Filipino as spoken in Davao and not the Balagtas Tagalog in Bulacan [Luzon]. . . A language and its usage should grow and that is what is happening in

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<sup>27</sup> Two cases prove this: First is the comment of Professor Prospero R. Covar, Filipinologist, who said (in a personal conversation in 2008) that he cannot understand anymore the Tagalog of his sister who has been based in Davao City for over 20 years. The Covars are Tagalog native speakers from Laguna Province. Second is a blogger's comment on FVD: "I have a hard time teaching Filipino (or Tagalog) to my son. . . I noticed that every time he tries to speak Tagalog, he mixes it up with some Bisaya words. I am trying my best to correct his grammar in Filipino but still the same, he speaks Filipino the Davao way." (Source: <http://www.probinsyana.com/2012/01/16/how-davaoenos-speak-tagalog/>)

Davao."<sup>28</sup> Filipino is a language evolving in its usage. Its movement toward the non-Tagalog urban centers of the country has paved the way for its indigenization, allowing Filipino speakers all over the Philippines to freely explore the national language in the context of their native tongues; empowering them to actively participate in its development.

The indigenization of Filipino is an emergent phenomenon in the Philippine linguistic landscape. FVD has blazed the trail by adopting Filipino on its own terms. It has indelibly imprinted into Filipino its own features and characteristics –resulting in an innovation that is distinct and significant from the morphosyntactic domain; features that definitely sets it apart from Tagalog.

Other non-Tagalog Filipino speakers have also been observed to be using their respective varieties of Filipino, which clearly deviate from Tagalog grammaticality. Documenting these varieties can contribute toward defining principles and parameters governing the evolving national language; and, ultimately, toward the diminution of its Tagalog centrality or de-Tagalization.

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<sup>28</sup><http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2005/jan/23/yehey/metro/20050123met1.html>

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