

# PHONEMICITY OF PILIPINO ORTHOGRAPHIC SYSTEM: A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

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## 1. BACKGROUND

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Pilipino<sup>1</sup> (Pil), the Tagalog (Tag)-based national language or to be more accurate, one of the three official languages<sup>2</sup> of the Philippines (the others being English and Spanish), is presently growing phenomenally, largely through borrowing from English (Eng). Pil is now deluged with so many loanwords from Eng - words for new products of modern technology, for new concepts, places, objects of trade, for social changes. In fact, the mixing of Pil and Eng is fast becoming the normal acceptable style these days among the Tag-speaking educated Filipinos<sup>3</sup> (Fils), especially in the Greater Manila Area<sup>4</sup> (GMA).

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<sup>1</sup>Pilipino, in this paper, is being distinguished from its basis, Tagalog. There are many varieties of Tagalog - Bulacan Tagalog, Laguna-Tagalog, Batangas-Tagalog, Nueva Ecija-Tagalog, Bataan-Tagalog, Quezon-Tagalog, etc. which are mutually intelligible but each has its own linguistic peculiarities. Other varieties of Tagalog are found in non-Tagalog regions - Visayan-Tagalog, Ilocano-Tagalog, Pampango-Tagalog, etc., differing from each other according to the influence of the linguistic peculiarities of the region. All of these Tagalog varieties, aside from English, may be said to be now having their own impacts on Manila-Tagalog (Manila being the nerve centre of the country's civilisation - culturally, educationally, technologically, economically, etc.) which may rightfully be called the language that is now being formed in the Greater Manila Area where the natural amalgamation process in the formation of a true national language is now taking place.

<sup>2</sup>Article XV, Section 3 of the 1972 Constitution states that: "Unless otherwise provided by law, English and Pilipino shall be the official languages".

<sup>3</sup>In this paper, Filipino refers to the people; Pilipino to the language. In the 1972 Revised Philippine Constitution, however, "Pilipino" is the envisioned national language.

<sup>4</sup>Greater Manila Area is the geographic boundary covering the cities of Manila, Caloocan, Pasay and Quezon, and the municipalities of Makati, Mandaluyong, Pasig and Marikina.

## 1.2. THE CONTACT SITUATION: A CAPSULE HISTORY

The effect of the linguistic and cultural contacts of the Fils with their two former colonial masters - Spain and America - is mirrored in both the spoken and written Tag prevalent especially among the educated Tag-speaking Fils of the GMA. In fact, to an ordinary Spanish or American listener, Tag, with its peculiar intonation and staccato rhythm, will not sound altogether foreign because he will be able to retrieve a hodgepodge of Spanish (Spa) or Eng words woven into its intricate system of affixation. And if the listener is uninitiated, he might suspect that Tag is an Indo-European language, belonging to the same family where Spa or Eng belongs.

A little knowledge of Philippine (Phil) history, however, will make one understand that the Spa and Eng words interspersed in Tag utterances are actually loanwords from the two foreign languages; that such is the result of the contact of Tag with Spa for almost 400 years and with Eng for more than half a century.

Theoretically, the longer the period of contact, the greater would be the linguistic influence of the colonizer's language on that of the colonised. The almost four centuries of Spa rule in the Phil could have completely nativised and replaced the native languages. This did not take place, however. Frake (In Hymes 1971:223), in tracing the origins of the Spa creoles in the Philippines, says that the consequence of hispanisation in the New World and in South-East Asia differed:

In the Phil, in spite of rapid Spa conquest, almost total conversion of Christianity, and over three hundred years of occupation, the Spa language failed to establish itself. Spa replaced no indigenous Phil language, and its role as an auxiliary language was sufficiently tenuous that it was quickly supplanted by Eng after the American occupation. Today, apart from the many Spa loanwords in Phil languages and a few speakers of Spa in the upper echelons of society, the linguistic legacy of Spain in the Phil is limited to the existence of several communities that speak of Spa creole language as their mother tongue.

This is in contrast with Eng, which became more widespread even after only two decades of American rule in the Phil:

By 1918, in the Phil Islands, 49.2% were literate, 26.4% being males and 22.8% being females. Of the literate native population ten years of age and over, the census of 1918 found that 33.9% of the males and 22.4% of the females spoke Eng, while only 30.4% of the males and 16.9% of the females spoke Spa: 32.1% of the males and 21.5% of the females were able to read and write Eng while only 27.0% of the males and 14.5% of the females were able to read and write Spa. The larger proportion of Fils with knowledge of Eng shows

the progress made since implantation of the American educational system.<sup>1</sup>

A study of the differences between the Spanish and the American colonial philosophies, in general, and educational and language policies, in particular, may perhaps help account for the difference in impact of the two languages on the Fils. The Spanish era in the Phil may be characterised simply as one of "raising the cross and thrusting with the sword"<sup>2</sup> and preserving Spa as an aristocratic language available only to the few elites and not to the "Indios". On the other hand, the first thing that the Americans did when they colonised the Phil, in sharp contrast with the Spaniards' indifferent policy, was to educate the Fils and teach them the Eng language side by side with the teaching of the principles of democracy on a massive scale.<sup>3</sup>

There are other factors, of course, that characterised the nature of Spanish and American colonisation in the Phil, besides their differences in policies and attitudes toward language. One of them was the nature of contact itself, i.e., the incentive to learn, where the impact of the Eng language and culture was greater. Another factor was the instructional materials, i.e., there was a dearth of materials in Spa; on the other hand, there was a deluge of Eng materials. (Phelan 1959:132).

Presently, after only more than half a century of contact with Eng, and in spite of the fact that the Phil is no longer under American domination, Eng remains as one of the two official languages of the country. This may be attributed to two principal reasons: (1) Eng continues to be an international language - the language of education, science and technology, diplomacy and foreign relations - serving as

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<sup>1</sup>Census of the Philippines, 1918, II:60-62, quoted by W. Cameron Forbes, *The Philippine Islands* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), I, 416, n.2.

<sup>2</sup>Forbes, *The Philippine Islands*, I, 49, citing a translation of S. Vidal y Soler, *Viajes por Filipinas de F. Jagor* (Madrid 1875), p.395.

<sup>3</sup>Forbes, *The Philippine Islands*, II. Appendix VII. Following is the pertinent part of President McKinley's instructions to the members of the Civil Commission leaving for the Philippines, which was actually prepared by Elihu Root, Secretary of War, with the help of William H. Taft, Chairman of the Commission:

It will be the duty of the Commission to promote and extend and, as they find occasion, to improve the system of education already inaugurated by the military authorities....The instruction should be given, in the first instance, in every part of the Islands in the language of the people. In view of the great number of language spoken by the different tribes, it is especially important to the prosperity of the Islands that a common medium of communication be established, and it is obviously described that this medium should be the English language.

the Filipinos' link with the outside world, and (2) unlike the Spaniards, the Americans left no legacy of hate among the Fils. As such, the Fils continue to look up to their former colonial master's language as a source of knowledge and advancement. This attitude of the Fils towards Eng facilitates borrowing because there is no psychological barrier that hinders it.

### 1.3. SAMPLES OF SPOKEN P1L

Consider the following samples culled from different spoken sources, just to show the extent of borrowing of P1l from Eng: (Eng loanwords are *italicised* for easy identification.)

SAMPLE 1: (PULONG-PULONG SA KAUNLARAN, 1973, TV: Topic: NCEE Examination; Interviewee - Gerry Geronimo)<sup>1</sup>

...Naghihigpit na rin sila ngayon sa *NCEE Examination* sapagkat *they won't worry about anymore* dito sa sinasabi nilang *decrease in enrolment* sapagkat magkakaroon na rin sila ng *technological, vocational* at saka *occupational courses* so that *they cannot afford anymore to get in people who are not fit for college*. Hindi po ba, Miss Sangalang?

SAMPLE 2: (School campus, PNC; three senior students)<sup>2</sup>

Student A: Uy! Bakit *absent* ka noong *Friday*, ha?

Student B: Nakipag-*date* ka, ano?

Student A: Nag-*check* ng *attendance* si *sir*. Tapos, nagbigay ng *quiz* tungkol sa mga *lessons* na na-*take up* natin for *the whole week*.

Student C: Anong *date-date*? *Emergency* ... Namatay ang *grandmother* ko.

Student A: A ganun ba? Wa na 'ko *say*!

SAMPLE 3: (Culled from the *Pilipino Express*, a daily newspaper, December 1974 issue)

Mag-*click* kaya si *Miss Aruba*?

Bagong *Research Project* ng *BAI*

<sup>1</sup>Taken from the September 1973 taperecorded data of Miss Ma. Lourdes Bautista, an Ateneo-PNC Consortium scholar for a Ph.D. in Linguistics, who has depended her dissertation just recently on 'The Filipino Bilingual's Linguistic Competence: A Model Based On An Analysis of Tagalog-English Code Switching'. Miss Bautista's tapes is made up of 1508 utterances distributed among 564 turns of speaking and 22 speakers, 66.31% of which constitute or contain some kind of code switching.

<sup>2</sup>Taperecorded conversation of three PNC Senior Students (4th year, BSEED); Student B conducts the recording without the knowledge of Students A and C.

*Disiplina sa Taxi Drivers*  
*Airport, Pier, at Feeder Road*  
*Bagong Officers ng FAMAS*  
*Ang Role ng Mass Media sa Bagong Lipunan*  
*Induced Abortion, Kinondena ng Papa*

SAMPLE 4: (Titles of Pil movies which are current in the GMA)

*VOD-A-VIL*  
*KING KHAYAM AND I*  
*KAPITAN EDDIE SET: MAD KILLER OF CAVITE*  
*OH, MARGIE, OH*  
*DRAGON FORCE CONNECTION*  
*MISSION: GET THE KILLERS ON THE LOOSE*

SAMPLE 5: (Two Teachers Talking about Family Planning and  
Contraceptives)<sup>1</sup>

Teacher A: *Sabi nila, ang Ovulation Method ay pareho rin ng pills, kaya lang... hindi ba mayroon tayong tinatawag na safe period at meron naman tayong tinatawag na fertile period, ano? Ngayon, right after menstruation, nagkakaroon tayo ng sticky...*

Teacher B: *Sticky secretion?*

Teacher A: *Oo, sticky secretion. Tapos noon, mga three days 'yon. After that, magkakaroon ka ng three days to five days na parang slippery. Doon sa mga days na iyon talagang fertile ka.*

It should be made clear at this point that it is not my intention to imply that the above is already THE Pil that we in the Phil have. There is the elegant Pil that is usually found in formal literary pieces. Rather, what I would like to show here is the type of Pil which, I am sure, is having its impact on the written Pil.

## 2. STANDARDISATION AND THE PROBLEM OF BORROWING

Logically, language standardisation (LS) should be given a correspondingly 'standardised' definition. However, as Ferguson (1968:31) claims, the "process of LS is not well understood yet". Perhaps it is because there is no certainty yet as to how certain language reaching

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<sup>1</sup>Taken from the data in a Project Paper, 1974, titled 'The Greater Manila Speech Community: Bilingual and/or Diglossic?' by seven students in the Ateneo-PNC Consortium for a Ph.D. in Linguistics: Sis. Mary Angela Barrios, Emma S. Castillo, Rosita C. Galang, Paulina C. Santos, Norma C. Tiangco, Elvira C. Vergara, and Esperanza C. Villamor.

its ideal state of standardisation would really 'look like', linguistically speaking.

Language scholars talk of the processes, dimensions, or criteria that should be considered in LS. Haugen (1966:249-252), for instance, formulated a four-step process as shown in the following matrix:

	<i>Form</i>	<i>Function</i>
<i>Society</i>	selection	acceptance
<i>Language</i>	codification	elaboration

Borrowing may be subsumed under codification.

Ferguson (1968:27), on the other hand, posits three dimensions for measuring language development: (1) graphisation - the use of writing, (2) standardisation - the development and use of super-dialectal norm, and (3) modernisation - the development of vocabulary and forms of discourse. Borrowing here falls under graphisation which is almost synonymous with codification.

Garvin and Mathiot (In Fishman 1968) give more embracing criteria for LS which may be outlined as follows:

1. Properties of a SL:
  - a. Flexible Stability
  - b. Intellectualisation
2. Functions of a SL:
  - a. Symbolic Functions
    1. Unifying Function
    2. Separatist Function
    3. Prestige Function
  - b. Objective Function
    1. Frame-of-Reference Function
3. Attitudes
  - a. Language Loyalty
  - b. Pride and Awareness of Norm.

Borrowing falls under flexible stability which refers to the requirement that a SL be stabilised by appropriate codification and that the codification be flexible enough to allow for modification in line with cultural change (Garvin 1964:521). Applied to Pil, codification mainly involves the writing of grammar books, dictionaries, thesaurus, encyclopedias, textbooks, etc. And before any of these can be produced, the problem of how borrowed words are to be spelled should first be resolved. In the writing of textbooks alone, the writer is usually perplexed by the problem of how certain borrowed words from Eng should be spelled. If, however, he tries to avoid borrowing, he ends up by producing a material which is puristic, unnatural, and archaic.

Specifically, language scholars also talk of standardisation of language in phonology, vocabulary, grammar, affixes, spelling, etc. Very seldom, if ever, do they dwell lengthily and seriously on the standardisation of borrowing. This is understandable, because the



problem of how to borrow surfaces only when a language with a phonemic system of spelling borrows from a language with a non-phonemic system. Besides, each set of languages in contact should have its own style of borrowing because of the different factors involved.

This problem on borrowing has lately been becoming a really serious problem among the agglutinative Malayo-Polynesian languages of Asia which use a phonemic Romanised graphic symbols. Note that this problem does not arise when the borrowing is from a language with a phonemic spelling system to a language with a non-phonemic system. There will be no problem, for instance, if Eng borrows from Pil because any word from Pil can enter into Eng without any spelling problem.

Pil, as has been mentioned earlier, has been enriching itself through borrowing (first from Spa and now) from Eng, the languages of its two former colonial masters. To prove this, take away all the Spa and Eng words from Pil and there will be a communication breakdown among its users. Borrowing then, as a process, has been playing a major role in the development of Pil. And if Pil has to be standardised in the future, it is only logical to anticipate that its manner of borrowing, specifically from Eng, should merit serious attention from language scholars and academicians. And I say it should be now or never.

### 2.1. THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF PIL AND ENG ORTHOGRAPHIES

The borrowing process that takes place between Eng and Pil is not as simple as may have been thought of. There is a serious problem that, to the unwary, may appear to be merely a molehill from a distance but actually will loom to be a big mountain when viewed at close range. I am referring to the incompatibility between the spelling system used by the two languages; i.e., the spelling system of Pil is phonemic or consistent whereas that of Eng is non-phonemic or inconsistent. By phonemic spelling system, I mean there is a one-to-one correspondence between the phoneme or significant sound and the graphic representation.

Pil is considered phonemic because each of the 21 phonemes (except the glottal stop which is treated under the stress system) is regularly represented by only one symbol or letter. The voiceless bilabial stop phoneme /k/, for instance, is always represented by the letter 'k' in all positions, e.g. *kilay eyebrow*, *siko elbow*, *batok nape of neck*.

On the other hand, Eng is said to have a non-phonemic or inconsistent spelling system because a phoneme in this language is not regularly represented by only one symbol. Our example phoneme /k/ in Pil, for instance, is represented by 'k' in *kit*, by 'ch' in *cholera*, by 'ck' in *chick*, by 'c' in *car*, by 'qu' in *squatter*, by 'que' in *physique*, etc.

## 2.2. STANDARDISATION VS. PHONEMIC OR NON-PHONEMIC ORTHOGRAPHY

A few linguists stubbornly insist that the spelling system of Eng is very consistent, claiming that it is more consistent than that of Pil, thinking perhaps that inconsistency is a liability to the Eng language. It should be made clear that phonemicity in the spelling system is not synonymous with being standardised. The orthography of Eng is said to be the most inconsistent system among the languages using the Romanised graphic symbols. And yet it is standardised in the sense that all Eng words are uniformly spelled by the Americans. In fact, the inconsistency of the Eng spelling system is an asset if we talk of homophonous words which are differentiated in meaning because of their differences in spelling. Example: *right, rite, write, wright*.

On the other hand, Pil orthography is phonemic but it can not yet be considered standardised because there are instances when certain words can be spelled in different ways and yet the meaning is the same, depending on how they are pronounced and spelled by the writers. Example: *idea, ideya, idiya, aydiya, aydeya, aydya*. In this particular instance, it becomes clear that the spelling of a certain word in a language having a phonemic system of spelling like Pil will become standardised only after its pronunciation has been standardised. In other words, the phonological problem here is not the number of phonemes of Pil, neither its syllable structures, but the varying pronunciations and spellings which mirror the confusion of the Fils in borrowing because of the influence of two major traditions - Spa and Eng.

In this particular instance, therefore, a non-phonemic spelling system proves to be more adequate than a phonemic spelling system.

## 2.3. READING VS. PHONEMIC AND NON-PHONEMIC ORTHOGRAPHIES

If we shift, however, to the teaching of beginning reading, all things being equal, children take twice or thrice as long to learn to read via the Eng non-phonemic spelling system as comparable children do in learning to read via the Pil phonemic spelling system. This is not difficult to illustrate. In Pilipino, the syllabic method of teaching reading has been found to be the most effective way because after teaching the child all the syllable structures in that language he finds it easy to read all phonemically spelled words in Pil. For instance, the original four syllable structures of Tag (V, CV, VC, CVC) which has been used as the basis of Pil is now expanded into at least nine with the addition of the following syllable structures: CCV, VCC, CCVC, CVCC, and CCVCC. The addition of the five syllable structures, in a way, facilitates the accommodation of assimilation of foreign



words with syllable initial and/or final consonant clusters.

The syllabic method, on the other hand, is not possible in Eng because of the inconsistency of its spelling system. It does not mean, for example, that if the learner can already read *Christ* or *child*, he can also read *Christmas* and *children*. Consider also *height-weight*, *speak-steak* etc. And because of the inconsistency of the spelling system of Eng, different methods and approaches in the teaching of beginning reading are being devised by reading experts in that language. The tragic part of this situation is that some Pil educators, who still suffer from the 'Stateside' mentality or syndrome, adopt for Pil the different reading methods being used in Eng, forgetting that what is effective for Eng is not necessarily effective also for Pil.

### 3. REASONS WHY PIL BORROWS FROM ENG

Borrowing in language is a concomitance of cultural influence. In fact, sociolinguists claim that the language of a country mirrors the extent of its cultural contacts with other countries. And the flow of linguistic borrowing generally follows the normal flow of cultural influence - from the more progressive towards the less progressive countries. Between America and the Phil, one can easily see that linguistic borrowing is almost a one-way affair - from the coloniser towards the colonised - because culture diffusion takes the same route.

Why does Pil borrow from Eng? Goulet (1971:83-6) gives seven reasons as follows: (1) for **precision**, i.e., Eng words give the exact meaning the speaker wants to convey; (2) for **comic effect**, i.e., mixing is very effective in creating humour; (3) for **transition**, i.e., a shift in language may mark a transition in thought; (4) for **atmosphere**, i.e., Pil heavily laced with Eng expressions conveys a 'Stateside' effect; (5) for **creating social distance**, i.e., 'distance' is created between two interlocutors when one starts speaking purely in Eng; (6) for **snob appeal**, i.e., parents may try to set off their children from those of their neighbours by teaching them Eng as a first language; (7) for **secrecy**, i.e., parents who do not want their small children to understand the conversation at a particular moment resort to mixing of Eng with the vernacular.

For purposes of this paper, however, I would like to limit my discussion to only three factors: **Need Factor**, **Prestige Factor**, and **Orientation Factor**.

### 3.1. THE NEED FACTOR

A speaker of Fil borrows words from Eng because there is a need for them. Usually, it is easier and more practical to borrow an already existing term from the influencing or donor language than to look for its equivalent in the recipient or borrowing language, or to coin or invent one. Besides, the borrowed word is usually more precise than its equivalent or coined term in the borrowing language because of the tie-up between culture and language. A borrowed word is tied-up with the culture where the donor language is rooted. Any translation or supposedly equivalent term in the borrowing language is also tied-up with its own culture and, therefore, the meaning that each word carries will never be exactly synonymous.

### 3.2. THE PRESTIGE FACTOR

Eng, being the language of the Fils' former colonial masters, and because of the important role it plays in today's world affairs, is looked up to as an instrument for social, cultural, educational, and economic advancement. There are instances when a speaker of Fil borrows an Eng term not because of the need for it but because of the air of prestige that goes with it. For a Fil to be able to embellish his speech with Eng borrowings is an indication that he is educated and, therefore, should be accorded more respect than others who speak purely in Fil.

### 3.3. THE ORIENTATION FACTOR

A Fil who has earned a degree through Eng can naturally express himself most effectively through that same language in the discussion of intellectual matters in line with his specific area of specialisation. A lawyer, for instance, who has been educated in Eng can argue in court the case of his client more eloquently in that same language. If he uses Fil, he will find himself groping for local terminology that would convey the idea or concept that he learned through Eng. Besides, languages are not like material objects or instruments that we can always use alternately or separately according to our needs. Languages are tools of the mind, existing only in our thoughts - in other words, metaphysical. And during the communication process, we retrieve from our repertoire of lexicon the vocabulary which is easiest to retrieve and which we believe is more appropriate and precise for the message we would like to convey. This retrieving process results in the borrowing of words from Eng by a Fil who has been educated principally through Eng but trying to communicate through Fil. And this language

mixing or shifting will continue to happen in the Phil in spite of the policy of the Department of Education and Culture on the separate use of Pil and Eng as media of instruction in definite subject areas.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. BARRIERS TO BORROWING

All languages are capable of borrowing from other languages. In fact, no language in the world is pure or completely free of borrowed words. Somehow a language borrows from other languages especially now that the world is shrinking so fast. Whinnom (In Hymes 1971:66), however, specifies four types of barriers to the hybridisation of two languages in contact: ecological which refers to the nature of the contact, e.g. geographical, political, commercial, etc., ethological which refers to the attitudes of the speakers of the borrowing language, e.g. hostile relationship hinders borrowing while cordial relationship facilitates it; conceptual which refers to the inner linguistic form, e.g. the mode of perception of reality, ideas of hierarchy, contrast, concepts which are reflected in the semantic and syntactical structures of the speakers; language; mechanical which refers to the outer linguistic form, e.g. phonological structural incompatibility, phonemic and non-phonemic orthographic system.

If we examine the borrowing process that is taking place between Pil and Eng we will note that the first two types do not exist as barriers. Geographically, the Phil and the U.S.A. are on the opposite sides of the globe but the Phil has been colonised by the latter and

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<sup>1</sup>In consonance with the provisions of the 1972 Constitution and a declared policy of the National Board of Education on bilingualism in the schools, in order to develop a bilingual nation competent in the use of both English and Pilipino, the Department of Education and Culture hereby promulgates the following guidelines for the implementation of the policy:

- a. Bilingual education is defined, operationally, as the separate use of Pilipino and English as media of instruction in definite subject areas, provided that additionally, Arabic shall be used in the areas where it is necessary.
- b. The use of English and Pilipino as media of instruction shall begin in Grade I in all schools. In Grades I and II, the vernacular used in the locality or place where the school is located shall be the auxiliary medium of instruction; this use of the vernacular shall be resorted to only when necessary to facilitate understanding of the concepts being taught through the prescribed medium for the subject, English, Pilipino, or Arabic, as the case may be.
- c. English and Pilipino shall be taught as language subjects in all grades in the elementary and secondary schools to achieve the goal of bilingualism.
- d. Pilipino shall be used as medium of instruction in the following subject areas: social studies, social science, character education, word education, health education and physical education.

the political relationship has been relatively cordial ever since. The conceptual type of barrier may also actually be a barrier in the borrowing process but what I would like to focus on right now is the mechanical type of barrier - specifically, the incompatibility of the spelling systems of the two languages involved: the phonemicity of that of Pil and the non-phonemicity of that of Eng (as discussed in 2.1.). Eng words can be generally classified into two: (1) those that are phonemically or consistently spelled, and (2) those that are not phonemically or are inconsistently spelled. Consistently spelled Eng words, when borrowed into Pil, do not create any problem. Words like *transistor, apartment, desk ruler, pentel pen, bonus, etc.* easily become part of the Pil lexicon because they easily fit into its phonemic orthographic system.

The problem, and this is a serious problem, is when inconsistently spelled Eng words are borrowed into Pil. As expected, there is no problem during the spoken stage of the borrowing process. The problem surfaces only during the written stage, especially during formal language use and in the preparation of translation or instructional materials for educational purposes.

## 5. BORROWING: PIL STYLE

I will attempt to show here a seemingly standard way, perhaps a pattern, of borrowing words from Eng although this can be considered as strictly tentative because of the unpredictability of the atmosphere of the contact situation, specifically the attitudes of the Pils.

I have tried to isolate here three styles or types or ways of borrowing from Eng to Pil. There may be other styles but allow me to limit myself to only three which I consider most prevalent.

### 5.1. STYLE 1: BORROWING VIA SPA

Although unique, this is the most popular style of borrowing from Eng to Pil nowadays. It is brought about by the hangover from a system of borrowing from Spa which up to this time proves to be the most convenient way to most Pils. This style of borrowing is resorted to because of the spelling incompatibility of Eng and Pil. Notice that it is easier to borrow from Spa because its orthography is also classified as phonemic although there are phonemes in that language that are represented by more than one graphic symbol but in a regular, mutually exclusive manner, e.g. the phoneme /k/ in *casa house, porque because, quinta market, circo circus, curva curve.*

Here is how borrowing via Spa is done:

1. An Eng word is borrowed, e.g. *electricity*;
2. Then its equivalent in Spa is taken - *electricidad*;
3. Then the Spa equivalent is spelled according to the Pil orthography - *elektrisidad*.

Of course this is possible only under two conditions: (1) If the Spa and Eng words are cognates as manifested by the general similarity of their phonetic features, and (2) if the equivalent Spa word is understood and used by the Fils.

Other samples for Style 1:

ENG	SPA	PIL
1. <i>population</i> <i>situation</i>	<i>populacion</i> <i>situacion</i>	<i>popuiasyon</i> <i>sitwasyon</i>
2. <i>liquid</i> <i>atom</i>	<i>liquido</i> <i>atomo</i>	<i>likido</i> <i>atomo</i>
3. <i>delegate</i> <i>delicate</i>	<i>delegado</i> <i>delecado</i>	<i>delegado</i> <i>deiikado</i>
4. <i>biology</i> <i>anthropology</i>	<i>biologia</i> <i>antropologia</i>	<i>biyoiohiya</i> <i>antropoiohiya</i>
5. <i>mathematics</i> <i>linguistics</i>	<i>matematica</i> <i>linguistica</i>	<i>matematika</i> <i>linggwistika</i>
6. <i>barricade</i> <i>lemonade</i>	<i>baricada</i> <i>lemonada</i>	<i>barikada</i> <i>lemonada</i>
7. <i>cemetery</i> <i>monastery</i>	<i>cementerio</i> <i>monasterio</i>	<i>sementerio</i> <i>monasteryo</i>
8. <i>specialist</i> <i>economist</i>	<i>specialista</i> <i>economista</i>	<i>ispesyalista</i> <i>ekonomista</i>
9. <i>ceremony</i> <i>colony</i>	<i>ceremonia</i> <i>colonia</i>	<i>seremonya</i> <i>kolonya</i>
10. <i>communism</i> <i>colonialism</i>	<i>comunismo</i> <i>coioniaiismo</i>	<i>komunismo</i> <i>kolonyalismo</i>

## 5.2. STYLE 2: BORROWING DIRECT FROM ENG WITH SPELLING ADAPTATION

This style of borrowing - directly getting the Eng word and then re-spelling it according to the system used for Pil - is resorted to under also two conditions:

- (1) If Style 1 does not apply; i.e. if there is no Spa equivalent that is acceptable and understood by the Fils, and

(2) if there is no indigenous term that can be used as translation of the Eng word.

The advantage of adapting loanwords into the Pil orthographic system is simple: Pil has an infix which Eng does not have. Infixation is practical only in a language which has a phonemic spelling system.

Initially, 'Pilipinised' loans may appear ridiculous, especially to those Fils who have been oriented and exposed so much with the Eng language. In fact, because Eng is still the principal language of education in the Phil, the Eng spelling of certain words are usually learned first by the learner. He gets so used to the visual image of these words in Eng that he reacts negatively when they are spelled according to the Pil orthography. This is the problem that entails when, as a result of conquest, the 'upper' language co-exists with the 'lower' language as one of the official languages and remains to be the principal medium for the intellectual pursuits of the natives.

The disadvantage, therefore, of this style is that the borrower sounds as being barely able to read and write in the Eng language; as if he spells the Eng loanwords according to the Pil orthography because he does not know how to write it in Eng. In fact, there are not a few instances in the classroom wherein the teacher in Pil is being corrected by her pupils for 'mis-spelling' a word which they know very well in Eng.

Here are some examples for Style 2:

ENG	PIL
<i>Christmas Tree</i>	Krismas Tri (*Puno na Pamasko)

We have Pil equivalent for *Christmas* - Pasko - but not for *Christmas Tree*.

<i>smuggle</i>	ismagel
<i>He smuggles gold.</i>	Nag-iismagel siya ng ginto. (*Nag-ismuggle siya ng ginto)

Notice that letter 'i' is very necessary for the word ismagel. We cannot adopt *smuggle* as is because there will be a problem in affixation. Nag-iismagel is in the present progressive tense while nag-ismuggle is already in the past tense.

<i>coach</i>	kots
<i>Did you coach him?</i>	Ikinots mo ba siya? (*Icinoach)

Notice also that is is not possible to put an infix in *coach*.

<i>tricycle</i>	traysikel
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The equivalent we give for *bicycle* is bisikleta by way of Style 1.



*Tricycle*, however, is not *trisikleta* but *traysikel* by way of Style 2. There is a possibility that ten years hence, *bisikleta* may be replaced by *baysikel* as a manifestation of the strong impact of Eng loanwords.

### 5.3. STYLE 3: BORROWING DIRECT FROM ENG WITH NO SPELLING ADAPTATION

This style - no change in spelling - is used for technical or scientific terms and proper names. Usually this is resorted to when Styles 1 and 2 do not apply. It is here where the eleven letters (c, ch, f, j, ll, ñ, rr, q, v, x, z.) added by the INL to the former 20-letter *Abakada* are used.

This style of borrowing should not be cause for alarm to the conservatives of the language. If Pil has to be standardised, its orthography should possess that property of flexible stability (as discussed in 2.). No language can survive the onslaught of modernisation if it clings to a rigid spelling system. Strict adherence to phonemicity in spelling cripples the natural growth of any language. Restraint, however, should be observed because while flexibility is important, stability is equally important. Borrowing without restraint will soon 'de-stabilise' Pil as a result of the overpowering impact of Eng as the 'upper' language. And this means death for Pil and the emergence of a creolised variety of Eng.

Here are some examples for Style 3:

xerox	lingua franca	Frigidaire
Manila Zoo	chess	Quezon City
Coke	Juan de la Cruz	visa

It should be made clear at this point that the inclusion of the eleven letters of the 20-letter *Abakada* does not mean that the problem of borrowing words from Eng is already solved. As explained earlier, this is not a matter of merely pairing letters between the two languages. There is no doubt, the addition of the 11 letters facilitates borrowing under Style 3. Moreover, the rigidity of the *Abakada* has been made flexible through the addition of the 11 letters. Notice, however, that the added 11 letters will add to the confusion on spelling if we do not know how to handle them. In other words, the use of the 11 letters should be limited only to technical and scientific terms and proper names. Never should they be included in the spelling of common words. Let me illustrate what I mean. *Coffee*, for example, is *kape* in Pil. However, if there will be no restriction in the use of 'c' and 'f', the following forms can be acceptable: *cape*, *kafe*, *cafe*, *kape*. And to further add to the confusion, we can still add the following forms: *kofi*, *copi*, *kopi*, *cofi*.

## 6. CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

Is the phonemicity of its spelling system a blessing to Pil because it is relatively very easy to learn to read in this system or is it a curse because it dooms the language by way of hindering the assimilation of inconsistently spelled loans from Eng?

A phonemic spelling system is ideal for any language. In fact, even Eng is going towards consistency or regularisation in its spelling system. But languages continually impinge upon one another as a result of culture diffusion. As such, the lexicon, the phonology, and even the syntax, the affixes, the spelling of a language are exposed to the influence of other languages. Most languages, in fact, usually start with a phonemic spelling system but because of contact with other languages, they eventually become inconsistent as a result of borrowing.

Pilipino is now at the crossroads, literally speaking, not knowing what to do with the avalanche of Eng loanwords. While it delights itself in having a phonemic or consistent spelling system which did not become a problem during its contact with Spanish, it is now finding itself inadequate in assimilating the inconsistently spelled loans from Eng.

This paper focuses on the following problems which I believe should be resolved if a standardised system of borrowing as part of the development of Pilipino has to be adopted: Should the phonemic spelling system of Pil be abandoned to facilitate the borrowing of the inconsistently spelled words from Eng? If so, may this not let loose a deluge of loans (words, phrases, sentences) from Eng which will 'inundate' Pil - drastically changing its phonological, morphological, and syntactic properties, corrupting and 'bastardising' it, thus becoming eventually creolised? On the other hand, if the phonemicity of the spelling system of Pil is maintained, may this not be a sure way of crippling the natural growth of the language because assimilating the Eng inconsistently spelled loanwords becomes a problem?

My position is this: Both extremes are bad for Pil. For instance, Pil will not be standardised nor modernised by stubbornly clinging to a rigid 20-letter Abakada. There must be some flexibility, an 'elbow room' for the language by way of relaxing its inflexible system of borrowing. And flexibility may be attained through the three styles of borrowing as discussed in this paper. On the other hand, stability should also be maintained by way of putting some constraints in borrowing. I agree with Dauzat as quoted by Weinreich (1970:67) who says that the vocabulary of a language is the one most exposed to influence; then the phonology follows; then the syntax, and then the "morphology

... the fortress of a language, surrenders last." In other words, Pil is still Pil as long as its affixes are Pil. Let Pil borrow the nouns, the adjectives, the verbs, from Eng but let us not "surrender" to Eng the Pil affixes. So far, no Eng affixes as separate morphemes has yet entered Pil.

Let Pil enrich itself, therefore, by borrowing from Eng. What we envision for Pil is a language which is virile and dynamic, a language which is still recognisable as a Phil language, enriched by heavy Eng borrowings, even exceeding perhaps the borrowings from Spa. We dream of a language that will be used and proudly owned not only by the Tagalogs but by all Fils, Tagalogs or non-Tagalogs alike, a language which will mirror the Fils as a distinct race who, as a consequence of fate and history, belongs to a nation of mixed tongues and mixed cultures, Fils who is no longer parochial in outlook and disposition.

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