

BIBLIOGRAPHY

LAPA-AN, SHAMANY B. APRIL 2013. Intercultural Communication Benefits and Challenges among Benguet State University Grade Six Students from Mixed Marriages. Benguet State University, La Trinidad, Benguet.

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ABSTRACT

This study on intercultural communication benefits determined the languages used in the respondents' homes; the benefits gained from the languages used at home; the challenges faced by the respondents in using multiple languages at home and, how the respondents dealt with such challenges.

The study was conducted in Benguet State University – Elementary Laboratory School with 30 grade six students from mixed marriages as survey respondents.

Majority (86.66 %) of the respondents had parents who used Ilocano to communicate with each other. English and Ilocano were the dominant mother tongues of the respondents. Ilocano was the leading language used by the respondents in communicating with their siblings and other home mates. Playmates and television contributed to their being multi-lingual children.

Benefits gained from using multiple languages at home were better performance in school, more effective communication, and cultural awareness and appreciation.



Challenges encountered related to the languages used at home were on the sustainability of mother tongue, difficulty in learning languages, and learning languages simultaneously. These were dealt with by continuing to speak in their mother tongues, whether it is English or Kankanaey; persistence in learning another language and reading. The study concludes that English was an emerging mother tongue for many households in La Trinidad instead of Ibaloi or Kanakana-ey as identified by the Department of Education for Benguet; that the mother tongue was determined by the lingua franca in the area more than the parent's heritage; that children from mix marriages were more likely to be multi-lingual; and that children from mixed marriages who were raised multi-lingually more likely performed better in school, communicated effectively, and learned about their parents' heritage.

Recommendations are: the conduct of a more extensive study on the mother tongue and languages used by students in their homes to include those from households aside from mixed marriages; the review of implementing guidelines for the MotherTongue-Based Education program to ascertain which should be considered as mother tongue in urban areas like La Trinidad; and the teaching of local languages depicting the locality's indigenous culture although not necessarily as medium of instruction.

It is then recommended that implementers or teachers of Mother Tongue Based-Multi Language Education (MTB-MLE) policy may allow the use of combined languages (Ilocano, Filipino and English) - as mediums of instructions when needed in appropriate subjects. Also, since the MTB-MLE policy is a new program, other researchers may want to conduct a widespread study with the cases of non-mixed marriages children in urban areas on their written communication to compliment the implementation of MTB-MLE program.



INTRODUCTION

Rationale

La Trinidad is a first class municipality in Benguet where business has been proliferating with vegetable trading, supermarkets and fast food chains almost everywhere. Prior to this commercial boom was the establishment of the La Trinidad Farm School (now Benguet State University) in 1916 which attracted people from different places through the years.

These two developments made La Trinidad a melting pot of different cultures. People who have come for economic reasons or for educational purposes met others from other places or from the place itself and intercultural marriages took place, thus changing the demographic landscape dramatically. If the houses along the La Trinidad business district were a gauge, it can be said that only a small portion of the town's population are descendants of the original settlers in the valley.

Along with the marriage of different cultures is the coming together of different languages. According to Johanson (1991), in the general case of two people with different languages wanting to communicate, they will normally have the option of not communicating directly. They may simply refrain from doing business, or they may use an intermediary, or they may just try to get along with a very low level of understanding.

However, for married couples from different linguistic communities, they cannot simply refrain from communicating with one another. They need to reach a high level of mutual understanding without intermediaries, hence they develop an agreement of sorts as to what language to use. This language then becomes the means of communication between the married couple and with the children that they have brought into this world. In turn,



this is the language that the children are armed with as they move out of their homes and deal with other people in other social institutions like the school.

The oldest school in La Trinidad has already become the Benguet State University after almost a century of providing education to the growing population in the valley. Since it began in 1916, the medium of instruction has been English except for a few years during the Japanese era when Nippongo was taught in the school. In later years, the use of Filipino was added, first as a separate course and then later, as a medium of instruction in some subjects like social studies. For a very long period of time from the 50's until 2011, only Filipino and English were used as the official media of instruction. It followed, therefore, that instructional materials have been produced in English or in

Filipino and that teachers and students alike are already used to the two languages. However, this situation was challenged by the implementation of the mother-tongue based education by the start of school year 2012-2013.

As stated in the Multi-Lingual Education (MLE) House bill No. 162 formerly known as HB 3719, the main thrust of this bill is the establishment of a multi-lingual education program that aims to upgrade the literacy program of the government by making the native tongue as the medium of instruction (MOI) for formative years of basic education. Department Order No. 74 promulgated by the Department of Education institutionalizes mother tongue-based lingual education for the critical years of basic education in line with the K-12 Program.

Stakeholders have varied views on this change in the educational system. For those who have negative reactions, as cited by Braid (2011), Azurin summarized



observations made by advocates of Mother Tongue Based-Multi-Lingual Education (MMTB-MLE) as follows: (1) that many teachers have, in fact, been making use of the mother tongue (L1) as the medium of imparting knowledge despite the existing policy of bilingual instruction which is limited to English and Filipino and which is considered by many as obsolete; (2) that the use of L1 has improved scores in the national achievement tests; (3) there is general consensus that it is the most vital reform for the country's basic and general education system; (4) the use of the L1 facilitates learning a second and third language; and (5) all neighboring countries use the mother tongue and have likewise garnered better scores in international Mathematics and Science tests.

A major challenge to the application of this change in urban areas like La Trinidad is the diversity of mother tongues in the locality. While the lingua franca is highland Ilocano, it is a general observation that it may not actually be the mother tongue for many children. In fact, it may even be more accurate to say that many children in urban areas had English as their mother tongue which is defined by Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) Philippines (n.d.) as the language first learned by a child. Teachers are now in a situation where they have to innovate in order to meet the challenges posed by the mother-tongue based education.

Looking into the benefits and challenges of intercultural communication in mixed marriages may provide insights that may be helpful in crafting such innovations, hence this study was conducted.



Statement of the Problem

While studies on intermarriage communication in other countries have already been conducted, literature review shows that the case for intermarriages in the Cordillera Administrative Region is not yet documented.

To address this information gap, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What language/s is/are used at home
 - a. between the couple?
 - b. between the couple and their children?
 - c. between the children and their siblings or other housemates?
2. What were the benefits gained from using the language/s at home?
3. What were the challenges faced by the respondents in using multiple languages at home?
4. How did the respondents deal with such challenges?

Objectives of the Study

Generally, the study looked into intercultural communication benefits and challenges among BSU grade six students from mixed marriages.

The specific objectives were:

1. To determine what language/s is/are used in the respondents homes
 - a. between the couple
 - b. between the couple and their children
 - c. between the children and their siblings or other housemates
2. To determine the benefits gained from the language/s used at home



3. To determine the challenges faced by the respondents in using multiple languages at home and,
4. To determine how the respondents dealt with such challenges.

Importance of the Study

The findings of the study may help teachers in crafting innovations in order to meet the challenges posed by the mother- tongue based education in La Trinidad which is a melting pot of cultures where people from different ethno linguistic backgrounds coexist.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study focused on the intercultural communication benefits and challenges among Benguet State University grade six students from mixed marriages. It only considered oral communication, not written communication. However, it was not able to gather data on what age they learned to use other languages at home other than their mother tongue.



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Kankanaey Tribe

The term 'Kankanaey' is a linguistic category that non- Cordilleran's popularized from the turn of the century until 1900s. Popular explanation points out its etymological origin from the word 'kankanan' which means "as the saying goes" or "it is said" as mentioned before a narration song (Lunas, 2009).

The name 'Kankanaey' came from the language which they speak. The only difference among the 'Kankanaeys' is the way they speak, like intonation and the usage of some words. In intonation, there is a hard 'Kankanaey' or 'Applai' and soft 'Kankanaey'. Speakers of hard 'Kankanaey' are from Sagada, Besao and the surrounding parts or barrios of the two municipalities mentioned. Furthermore, their 'Kankanaey' differ in some words from the soft-speaking 'Kankanaeys'. The soft speaking 'Kankanaeys' on the other hand, come from Northern Benguet and from the municipalities of Sabangan, Tadian and Bauko from Mountain Province.

Rivera (1989) stated in her research that 'Kankanaey' dominating the southwest of Benguet speaks of Kalkali, a dialect similar to the Bontocs and akin to the Iloko.

The Bago Tribe

Buaquen (2003) explained that the Bagos are hill tribe dwellers in the border regions between Ilocos and Cordillera mountains who are off springs of intermarriages as well as product between tribes of the Cordillera and the Iloko of the lowlands.



Many aspects of the ‘Kankanaey’ and Ilokano cultures are practiced by the Bago people. Bago communities can be found along the province of Benguet, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Abra, La Union and Pangasinan (Anonymous, n.d.).

In Benguet, they settled somewhere along the boundaries of Bakun and Ilocos Sur. They attributed their origins to the Besao area.

The Ibaloi Tribe

Ibalois. These are the native people of Benguet that speak the Ibaloi dialect. Being mostly farmers, they occupy the agricultural valleys. They trace their seat of culture in Kabayan, an adjacent municipality of Bokod at the foot of Mount Pulag (Celino, 1983). Rivera (1989) stated in her research that the Ibaloi occupies the southern Benguet speaks the Nablai, a linguistic sound nearer to the Pangasinenses. This may be due to the free movement and interactions of Pangasinan in the pre- Spanish era.

Language and Learning

Owens (n.d.) defined language as socially shared code or conventional system for representing concepts through the use of arbitrary symbols and ruled- governed by combinations of those symbols. Dialects are sub categories of the parent language that use similar but not identical rules.

The National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorder (NIDCD, n.d.) states that language is the expression of human communication through which knowledge, belief, and behavior can be experienced, explained, and shared. It further said that this sharing is based on systematic, conventionally used signs, sounds, gestures, or marks that convey understood meanings within a group or community.



Communication is man's foremost tool in dealing with his fellowmen. It is man's powerful means in either elevating or degrading his fellowmen and even himself. Between oral and non-oral, communication is more straightforward Labi (2009).

UNESCO (2002) that ethnic and linguistic minority people face obstacles to access quality basic education. This leads to high illiteracy rates and eventually poor quality of life. This too becomes threat to the survival of language and culture. Such reality is evident among the ethnic minorities in the country. Many school children academically learn using a language that is foreign to them.

On the other hand, Muhammad (2009) defines the medium of instruction as the language that is used in teaching which may or may not be the official language.

Usage of Mother Tongue

Mother tongue according to Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) Philippines (n.d.) is defined as a child's first language, the language that a child learns from birth. It is the language that is used by a child's first carers at home without any contribution from educational institutions – hence 'home language' (Bourne and Reid, 2003).

Diane Dekker as cited by Braid (2011) said that the use of the learner's home language and culture allows teachers to begin lessons with a discussion of what is already familiar to the learner. The mother tongue also provides quick access to the main concepts of the lesson (Baguingan, 2010).

Mother language is the medium of one's inner thoughts and reflections. The mother tongue being the primarily tool for thought processing and knowledge acquisition is considered as the best medium of instruction as source of creativity and vehicle for



social expressions, the mother language along with linguistic diversity matter for the identity of individuals and vital for health and societies. It opens opportunities for dialogue necessary for understanding and cooperation. As wellspring of knowledge, the mother language is starting point for greater sustainability in development and growth endeavors, and for managing more harmonious relationships with environment and necessary change (Manila Bulletin, 2012).

One's own language enables a child to express himself easily, as there is no fear of making mistakes. Multilingual education encourages active participation by children in the learning process because they understand what is being discussed and what is being asked of them. They can immediately use the mother tongue to construct and explain their world, articulate their thoughts and add new concepts to what they already know, (Nolasco, 2010).

Divindo (2012) as stated in his research said that as a result strongly propose that education should provide experiences that are relevant to learner's daily life and prior knowledge. In all these tasks, language plays a vital role because it is a basic tool in experience construction. It is therefore necessary to use the local language as a medium of instruction.

By using the child's language for basic education, we start from they already know and build on this. Since the child is already familiar with the language used, learning to read and write becomes the focus and not learning the medium of instruction.

The child can immediately use this language to add new concepts to what he has already learned. Rote memorization where the children know to "read" but do not understand can be avoided, (Nolasco,2010).



In a press release (2012) from the office of Department of Education secretary, DepEd Undersecretary Vilma Labrador said that if a child can fully understand what is being talked about, he can make sense of things and participate intelligently in discussion because a familiar language is used (www.deped.gov.ph).

Mother Tongue Based – Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) is the use of a child's mother tongue as a medium of instruction among pupils. It is also the effective use of more than two languages for literacy and instruction (DepEd, 2009).

Eight major languages or Lingua Franca and others will be offered as a learning area and utilized as language of instruction. These are the Tagalog, Hiligaynon, Kapampangan, Waray, Pangasinense, Tausug, Iloko, Maguindanaoan, Bikol, Maranao, Cebuano and Chabacano (DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2012). However, in Cordillera, other native dialects such as Kankana-ey and Ibaloi maybe used since these may also help improve the learning ability of children and preserve the culture of indigenous peoples (Dumlao, 2012). Maybe

DepEd Order No. 16 (2012) which provided the guidelines for the implementation of the program stated that the MTB-MLE program will be implemented starting school year 2012-2013 in two modes: as a learning/subject area and as a medium of instruction. It also states that as a subject, mother tongue will focus on the development of beginning reading and fluency from Grades 1 to 3.

Bilingual Child

According to Hayes (2009) bilingual is the ability to read speak and write and orevenunderstands more than one language. The extent of bilingual child disparity in



fluency depends on the child unique environment which is comprise by the language spoken by his parents, the languages of his extended family and culture the language of the community and the language he hears and uses in school. Because a child brain is so adaptable to her needs the balance between her two languages may shift if she place in different circumstances: a new country, a visiting relatives or even a new school. Bilingualism is not only learning two different words in different languages but connecting with cultures.

Research shows children who are brought up to be bilingual have a sense of where they came from and feel proud of their heritage. These children sometimes describe themselves as bridge between cultures. For instance a U.S. study of adolescent who are second immigrant shows that those who kept their parents native languages have better relationship with their families feel better about them, and have a more positive attitude about school than their peers who “lose” their heritage and become a monolingual English- speakers.

Linguist describes levels of proficiency in many different ways. Level one is being able to understand a second language. This level is sometimes called “passive” bilingualism because while the people understand the language she doesn’t “actively” speaks. Level 2 is being able to speak second language more or less fluently. At this level a person can carry on a conversation in the language and speaks his thoughts with ease. Level three is being able to speak, read and write in two languages. It’s important to note, though, that even people who can write, read and speak fluently in two languages usually have a stronger or dominant language. It is unusual to be called “balanced bilingual” which is someone who is equally high proficient in both language (Haznedar, 2008).



Labi (2009) stated on his research that one such difficulty may arise from differences between the learner's native language and the target language not found in one's native language will prove speaking difficulties to the learner. Hence, the learner would substitute a sound in his native language not found in one's native language similar to the sound in the target language.

Operational Definition of Terms

Bilingual child/children. Children who were raised by mixed marriage parents with 2 or more languages at home where in they can speak, write and understand them.

Children. They are born of mixed marriage parents.

Ethnic affiliation. Refer to designs made by indigenous people to be classified to their own group.

Intercultural communication. It refers to the people coming from different backgrounds.

Language. Owens (n.d.) defined language as socially shared code or conventional system for representing concepts through the use of arbitrary symbols and ruled-governed by combinations of those symbols.

Mixed marriage. It is the union of couples having different cultures.

Monolingual child/children. Children who were raised by mixed marriage parents in one language at home.

Mother tongue. Defined by Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) Philippines (n.d.) as the language first learned by a child.



Mother Tongue Based – Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). It is the use of a child's mother tongue as a medium of instruction among pupils. It is also the effective use of more than two languages for literacy and instruction (DepEd, 2009).



METHODOLOGY

Locale and Time of the Study

The study was conducted in BSU Elementary Laboratory School, La Trinidad, Benguet (Figure 1). La Trinidad, the capital town of Benguet, is a first class municipality. According to the 2000 census, it has a population of 67,963 people in 13,658 households from sixteen barangays.

Benguet is a landlocked province in the Cordillera Administrative Region in Luzon. It is surrounded by Pangasinan on the south, La Union, and Ilocos Sur on the west, Mountain Province, Ifugao and Nueva Vizcaya on the east. It is home to three major tribes: the 'Kankanaey', the 'Ibaloi' and the 'Kalanguya.' The languages mainly spoken are Kankanaey and Ibaloi. Other languages spoken are 'Kalanguya,' 'Karao,' and 'Lowak.' Majority of the population can speak and understand English.

The study was conducted from January to February 2013.

Respondents of the Study

Thirty grade six students from Benguet State University- Elementary Laboratory School were chosen as respondents of the study. They were chosen based on the following criteria: they should be children from mixed marriages and they should be residing in La Trinidad, Benguet. Out of 83 grade six students from two sections, 30 met the two criteria. Eighteen of them were male and 12, female. Majority of them have resided in La Trinidad for at least ten years.





Figure 1. Map of Benguet, showing the surrounding provinces including the location of the study, La Trinidad

Each respondent was asked about his/her fathers and mothers ethnic affiliations to check if they indeed come from mixed marriages.

To support information from the student-respondents, 10 parents were also interviewed. They are chosen based on the following criteria: they should be from mixed marriages and that they have children who were studying at BSU Elementary School.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a survey. The researcher requested for two periods from their teachers and she gathered the thirty students in one room. The researcher then provided a background of the study to the students. This included the definition of mixed marriage and being monolingual or bilingually-raised children. A questionnaire was distributed to the students who answered the questions simultaneously in one sitting. Each question in the instrument was read and explained, and then students wrote their answers. Queries from students regarding the questions were clarified.

Ten parents from mixed marriages were also interviewed using guide questions. The interviews were done using the lingua franca, Ilocano.

Data Gathered

The data gathered were on languages used in mixed marriages, the perceived benefits, challenges encountered and solutions employed by the children in dealing with languages used at home.

Data Analysis

The data were consolidated and tabulated for presentation. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the data.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Languages Used at Home

Ethnic affiliation of parents in mixed marriages. The respondents were asked to indicate the ethnic affiliation of their parents to show the different combinations. Table 1 shows that Kankanaey-Ilokano was the more common combination with 11 respondents. This was followed by Kankanaey-Ibaloi with seven; Ilocano-Tagalog with six; Kankanaey-Tagalog with four. Tagalog-Ibaloi and Tagalog-Pangasinan combinations had one each.

Table 1 further show that among the fathers of the respondents, 22 were Kankanaey; six, Iloko; and two, Tagalog. This indicates that almost three-fourths of the fathers were mostly native highlanders from Benguet and Mountain Province, and the remaining one-fourth came from the lowlands.

Table 1. Ethnic affiliation of parents in mixed marriages

MARRIAGE COMBINATIONS		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
FATHER	MOTHER	(n=30)	(%)
Kankanaey	Ilocano	11	36.66
Kankaney	Ibaloi	7	23.33
Ilocano	Tagalog	6	20.00
Kankanaey	Tagalog	4	13.33
Tagalog	Ibaloi	1	3.33
Tagalog	Pangasinense	1	3.33
Total		30	100.00



On the other hand, 11 mothers were Iloco; ten, Tagalog; eight, Ibaloi; and one, Pangasinense. This indicates that 22 or almost three-fourths of the mothers were lowlanders while the remaining one-fourth were from the widely-perceived “shy” tribe of the Cordilleras, the Ibaloi.

Languages used between couples in mixed marriages. The respondents were asked to indicate the languages used by their parents in communicating with each other. Table 2 shows that majority (86.66 %) used Ilocano which is the lingua franca in La Trinidad. This was followed by English with 73.33 %. Kankana-ey came in third with less than half of the couples using it despite the fact that almost three-fourths of the combinations had a Kankana-ey father. This implies that the fathers’ ethnic affiliations had little influence on the languages used at home among the couples.

There were more non-Ilocano mothers than the Ilocano mothers, yet a great majority (86.66 %) used Ilocano to communicate with their partners.

Table 2. Languages used between the parents of the respondents

LANGUAGES	FREQUENCY (n=30)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Ilocano	26	86.66
English	22	73.33
Kankanaey	14	46.66
Ibaloi	6	20.00
Filipino	3	10.00

*multiple responses



Among the six couples who used Ibaloi, an Ibaloi mother married to a Kankanaey said, “I want my husband also to learn my language so he would be able to talk with my parents very well when we visit them”.

Mother tongue of the respondents. In Figure 2, half of the respondents claimed that their mother tongue is English. This means that their parents used English in communicating with them from the time that they were born. This is quite common in homes in the Cordilleras, and maybe even in the Philippines. It follows therefore that when we talk to babies or toddlers, we use English.

Figure 2 further illustrates that almost half of the respondents (47%) said their mother tongue is Ilocano, the lingua franca in La Trinidad. Only one of the respondents had Filipino as mother tongue, the child of the Tagalog-Pangasinense combination.

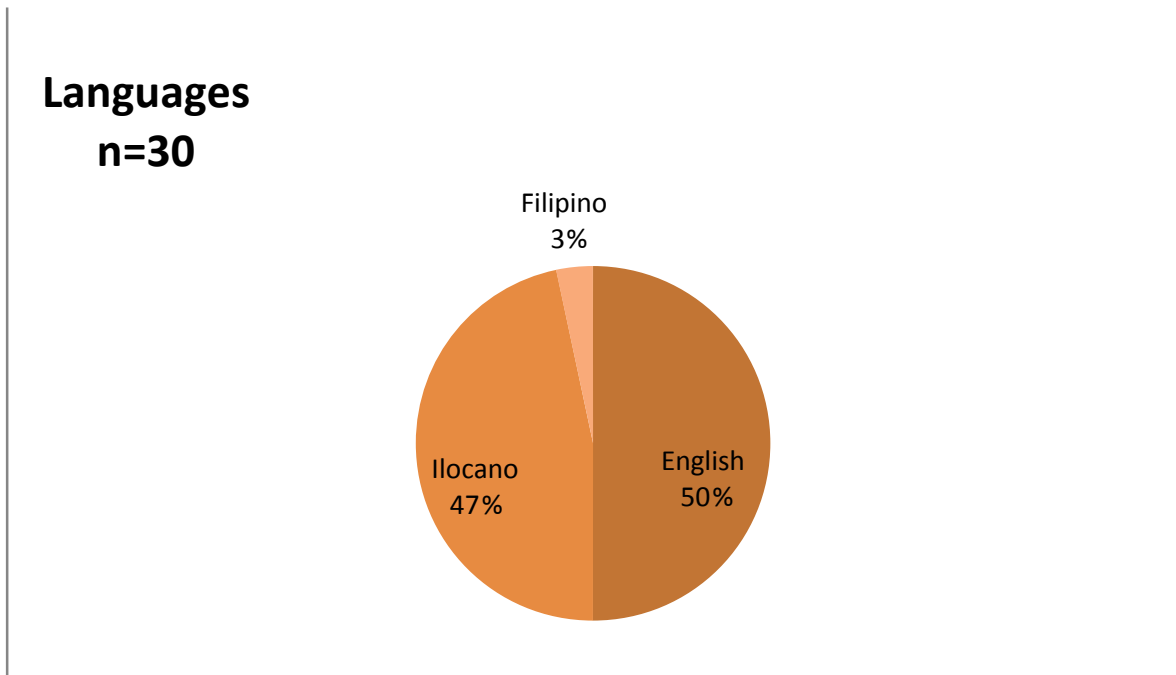


Figure 2. Mother tongue of the respondents



Mother tongue of respondents as influenced by their parents' mother tongue. Of the 15 respondents whose mother tongue is not English, Figure 3 shows that 10 of them or two-thirds claimed that their mother tongue is Kankanaey. Kankanaey is the leading ethnic affiliation of the fathers in the different combinations.

Languages used between the respondents and their parents. Table 3 shows the languages spoken at home between the respondents and their parents. Among the languages used in their daily conversations were Ilocano (83.33%), English (63.33%), Filipino (40%), Kankanaey (33.33%), and Ibaloi (13.33%). The multiple responses show that the respondents used at least two languages at home. Those whose mother tongue was English continued using English in communicating with their parents. This also Table 3. Languages used between the respondents and their parents

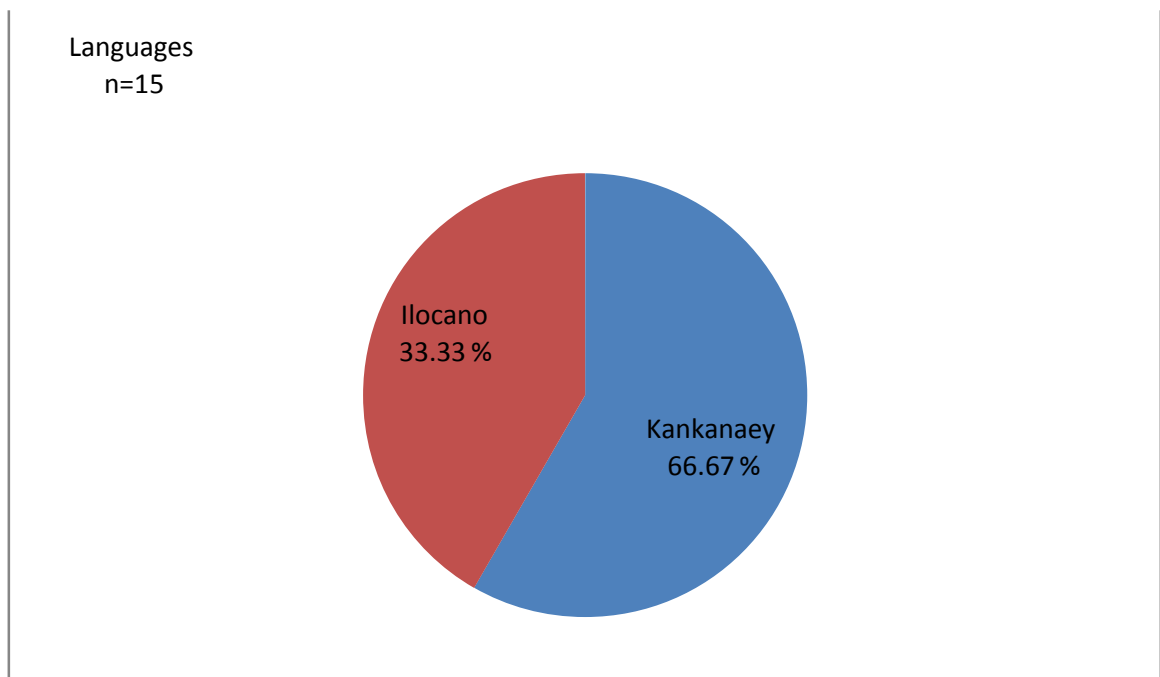


Figure 3. Mother tongue of respondents as influence by their parents' mother tongue



LANGUAGES USED AT HOME	FREQUENCY (n=30)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Ilocano	25	83.33
English	19	63.33
Filipino	12	40.00
Kankanaey	10	33.33
Ibaloi	4	13.33

*multiple responses implies that they learned other languages aside from their mother tongue. Unfortunately, the study failed to find out when exactly the respondents started acquiring other languages.

Languages used between the respondents and their siblings or other housemates.

Table 4 shows that Ilocano was the leading language used by the respondents in communicating with their siblings and other home mates at 93.33%. This is followed by English, Kankana-ey and Filipino with 76%, 60% and 50%, respectively.

It is noted that Kapampangan was an additional language used at home for two respondents. Though none of the respondents had any of the parents from the Kapampangan group, these two claimed to have learned the language from their Kapampangan nannies. “My nanny tends to speak straight in Kapampangan every time she gets mad. She would explain afterwards when we asked so we learned a little of Kapampangan language,” as said by the respondent.



Table 4. Languages used between the respondents and their siblings or other housemates

LANGUAGES	FREQUENCY (n=30)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Ilocano	28	93.33
English	23	76.66
Kankanaey	18	60.00
Filipino	15	50.00
Ibaloi	6	20.00
Pangasinense	3	10.00
Kapampangan	2	6.66

*multiple responses

Other factors contributing to the acquisition of additional languages. As shown in Table 5, all of the respondents claimed that their playmates and television contributed to their being multi-lingual children. The languages they did not hear, speak or use at home were learned from their playmates or from television. One respondent said he did not know how to speak Ilocano since no one used it at home. But his best friend who lived nearby spoke Ilocano with him every time they were playing even if he answered him in English. As a result he learned how to speak Ilocano.

All the respondents also claimed that their parents encouraged them to watch shows in English.



Other contributory factors identified were reading materials (60%), radio (43.33%), and extended families and nannies (40.00%). “Listening to Bombo radio every morning and on weekends helped me to know more Ilocano words and I used them to Table 5. Other factors contributing to the acquisition of additional languages

FACTORS	FREQUENCY (n=30)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Play mates	30	100.00
Watching Television	30	100.00
Reading materials	18	60.00
Listening to Radio	13	43.33
Extended families and nannies	12	40.00

*multiple responses speak with my Lolo who does not speak English fluently,” one of the respondents also added.

Benefits Gained from Using Multiple Languages at Home

When asked what could be the benefits gained from using multiple languages at home, the respondents pointed out better performance in school, more effective communication, and cultural awareness and appreciation.

Better performance in school. All of the respondents agreed that the multiple languages they used at home helped them in their performance in school (Table 6). The good exposure to the English language at home helped them to have self-confidence and therefore actively participate in class discussions.



Since English is the main medium of instruction in school, they did not have to adjust to the language anymore as they are already comfortable with the language. “It

Table 6. Benefits gained from the languages used at home

BENEFITS OF LANGUAGES USAGE AT HOME	FREQUENCY (n=30)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Active class performance	30	100.00
Effective communication for socialization	30	100.00
Culture education and appreciation	26	86.66

*multiple responses lessens my fear to recite in front of my teachers who spoke English fluently because I was already taught English at home,” shared one of the respondents.

This better performance in school can be explained by Diane Dekker’s statement, as cited by Braid (2011), that the use of the learner’s home language and culture allows teachers to begin lessons with a discussion of what is already familiar to the learner. Baguingan (2010) also added that the mother tongue also provides quick access to the main concepts of the lesson.

In like manner, the lone respondent who used Filipino only at home in communicating with her parents, siblings and other home mates also said that her familiarity with Filipino in subjects like Heograpiya Kasaysayan at Sibika (HeKaSi) and Edukasyong Pagpapahalaga where the medium of instruction is Filipino.

Effective communication. Almost all the respondents agreed that having been raised bilingually or multi-lingually raised helped them to be more flexible and therefore more



effective in communicating with others. If the person they are talking to could not understand English, they use Ilocano or Filipino.

Culture education and appreciation. A third benefit, according to almost 87% of the respondents is culture education and appreciation. These respondents claimed that they learned how to appreciate their culture because they were also exposed to the languages of their parents. With this, they found it more comfortable and easy to participate in the community practices of their parents' provinces, like cañao, burial and occasions like weddings, house blessings and clan reunions. This corroborates Hayes (2009) who said that bilingualism is not only learning two different words in different languages but connecting with cultures.

Table 7 shows how many of the respondents benefited from the opportunity to learn other languages by virtue of their parents' heritage. Of the 22 respondents with one parent belonging to the Kankana-ey tribe, 14 and 18 used the corresponding language Kankana-ey in communication with their parents and with their other home mates, respectively.

Speakers of Ilocano and Filipino (the corresponding language for Tagalogs) either with their parents or other home mates exceeded the number of those with Ilocano heritage. This is attributed to the fact that Ilocano is the lingua franca in the locality while Filipino as the national language is commonly used in school.



Table 7 .Distribution of respondents according to ethnic affiliation of both parents and non-English languages spoken at home

PARENTS' ETHNIC AFFILIATIONS	FREQUENCY*	USING CORRESPONDING LANGUAGE WITH PARENTS	USING CORRESPONDING LANGUAGE WITH OTHERS AT HOME
Kankana-ey	22	14	18
Ilocano	17	25	28
Tagalog	12	12	15
Ibaloi	8	8	4
Pangasinense	1	0	3

*multiple responses

Perceived Challenges Encountered and Solutions Employed by Respondents on Languages Used at Home

Three challenges encountered related to the languages used at home were on the sustainability of mother tongue, difficulty in learning languages, and learning languages simultaneously (Table 8).

Sustainability of mother tongue. For those who learned English as their first language, the sustainability of mother tongue became a challenge when second and third languages were introduced to them. Even when their parents talked to them in English, they answer in Ilocano or in a mixture of languages with only a few English words included. In like manner, those whose mother tongue was kankana-ey also started talking in mixed languages. For both cases, adeptness in either English or Kankana-ey is compromised. To address this challenge, some respondents claimed that reading and continuing to speak



Table 8. Perceived challenges and solutions encountered by mixed marriages respondents in their languages used at home

CHALLENGES	FREQUENCY (n=30)	PERCENTAGE (%)	SOLUTIONS
Sustainability of mother tongue	29	96.66	Continue using mother tongue at home Reading materials at home
Difficulty in learning the vocabulary of other languages	18	60	Perseverance in asking meanings, of new encountered words
To learn other languages simultaneously	9	30	Consistency of speaking one language at a time.

*multiple responses in English will help maintain their command of English. Continuing use of the Kankanaey will likewise help those whose mother tongue was Kankanaey.

Difficulty in learning the vocabulary of other languages. Sixty (60%) of respondents agreed that they had a hard time learning vocabulary of a second language. They were referring to words that are unfamiliar. According to respondents, for them to become more familiar with these vocabularies, they spend more time communicating with their housemates who know the language as well as in the community for more exposure.

One parent, a native of Benguet married to an Iloko with two children studying at BSU-ELS, said that personally it was a challenge for her to speak and use Filipino and Ilocano to her children. “It was more convenient for me, as a highlander to speak in the English language rather than in Ilocano simply because English is the common household language when you have children at home,” she explained.



To learn other languages simultaneously. The table further shows that 30% of the respondents said that learning languages simultaneously was also a challenge. Respondents claimed that in school they tend to mix English with Ilocano and other languages even while reciting in class. Respondents said that in order to avoid this, they tried hard to speak in the language they were asked to use whether at home or in school.



SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study looked into intercultural communication benefits and challenges among BSU grade six students from mixed marriages. The specific objectives were to determine what language/s is/are used in the respondents' homes; to determine the benefits gained from the language/s used at home; to determine the challenges faced by the respondents in using multiple languages at home and, to determine how the respondents dealt with such challenges.

The study was conducted in Benguet State University – Elementary Laboratory School, La Trinidad, Benguet. Thirty grade six students from mixed marriages were chosen as survey respondents using questionnaires. Ten parents from mixed marriages were also interviewed using guide questions.

Kankana-ey-Ilokano was the more common combination with 11 respondents. This was followed by Kankana-ey-Ibaloi with seven; Ilocano-Tagalog with six; Kankanaey-Tagalog with four. Tagalog-Ibaloi and Tagalog-Pangasinan combinations had one each. Majority (86.66 %) of the respondents had parents who used Ilocano to communicate with each other. Half of the respondents claimed that their mother tongue is English and 47%, Ilocano. Among the languages used at home were Ilocano (83.33%), English (63.33%), Filipino (40%), Kankanaey (33.33%), and Ibaloi (13.33%). The respondents used at least two languages at home. Those whose mother tongue was English continued using English along with other languages in communicating with their parents. Ilocano was the leading language used by the respondents in communicating with their siblings and other home



mates at 93.33%. This is followed by English, Kankana-ey and Filipino with 76%, 60% and 50%, respectively.

All of the respondents claimed that their playmates and television contributed to their being multi-lingual children. The languages they did not hear, speak or use at home were learned from their playmates or from television. All the respondents also claimed that their parents encouraged them to watch shows in English. Other contributory factors identified were reading materials (60%), radio (43.33%), and extended families and nannies (40.00%).

Benefits gained from using multiple languages at home were better performance in school, more effective communication, and cultural awareness and appreciation. Challenges encountered related to the languages used at home were on the sustainability of mother tongue, difficulty in learning languages, and learning languages simultaneously. These were dealt with by continuing to speak in their mother tongues, whether it is English or Kankanaey; persistence in learning another language and reading.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, these conclusions were drawn:

1. English is an emerging mother tongue for many households in La Trinidad instead of Ibaloi or Kanakana-ey as identified by the Department of Education for Benguet. The mother tongue is determined by the lingua franca in the area more than the parent's heritage.
2. Children from mix marriages are more likely to be multi-lingual.



3. Children from mixed marriages who are raised multi-lingually more likely perform better in school, communicate effectively, and learn about their parents' heritage.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, these recommendations are forwarded:

1. A more extensive study on the mother tongue and languages used by students in their homes should be done to include those from households aside from mixed marriages.
2. There should be a review on implementing guidelines for the MotherTongue-Based Education program to ascertain which should be considered as mother tongue in urban areas like La Trinidad.
3. Teaching of local languages depicting the locality's indigenous culture should be encouraged although not necessarily as medium of instruction.



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